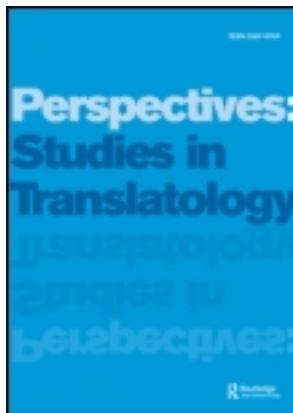


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Using corpora for awareness-raising purposes in translation, especially into a foreign language (Spanish–English)

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Translating into a foreign language is no simple task, but, in Spain at least, it is not uncommon for professional translators to be asked to do so. Translation trainees in Spain therefore ought to acquire competence in translating into the foreign language(s) with which they work, a goal that most of the country's university translation programmes seek to fulfil. This paper presents a wide range of corpus-based language and translation exercises designed primarily to highlight issues that translating into English entails for non-native speakers of the language, but also to introduce the use of electronic corpora for guidance on language usage (natural equivalents, appropriate collocations, frequency data etc.). The exercises have been designed for native Spanish-speaking trainees translating into English, but are perfectly adaptable to other language combinations.

Keywords: translation teaching; translation into a foreign language; electronic corpora; awareness raising; Spanish–English

Inverse translation in Spain

Inverse translation is one of a number of terms used to refer to translating from one's mother tongue into a foreign language. The activity has been written about in the literature, although not always in a positive light. This is recognised by various authors who, in contrast, are very enthusiastic about it (McAlester, 1992; Fox, 1996; Beeby, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Stewart, 1999; Mackenzie & Vienne, 2000; Kelly et al., 2003; Neunzig, 2003; De la Cruz, 2004; Neunzig & Grawinkel, 2006; Roiss, 2001, 2006; Pokorn, 2005; Rodríguez-Inés, 2008; Wimmer, 2011). There has been much debate as to whether professional translators are really asked to carry out inverse translation and, thus, if it constitutes a market need and ought to be taught in translation programmes.

Systematic surveys and statistical data on inverse translation in professional practice in Spain are in very short supply. However, the handful of studies that have been carried out reveal that it is by no means unusual for the country's translators to translate into a foreign language.

A survey conducted by Roiss (2001, p. 403) among 230 professional translators, 50 graduates from the Faculty of Translation and Documentation of the University of Salamanca and 50 translation agencies from Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia found that 84.4% of the translators had undertaken inverse translation at some point in their career. Nearly 7 per cent reported that such translation accounted for over

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two thirds of their work, 13.3% for over half, 23.3% for over a quarter, and 41.1% for around a tenth. More recently, Zimmermann (2007) and Rodríguez-Inés (2008) have carried out studies on the practice of inverse translation in Spain with smaller samples. Sixty per cent of the 54 translation trainees involved in Zimmerman's investigation had performed inverse translation in a professional environment at some point. All the 35 subjects of Rodríguez-Inés' survey, which specifically focuses on native Spanish-speaking freelance translators working with English, had been asked to translate into English at one time or another in their career, and only five of them had declined to do so.

While limited in scope, the aforementioned studies clearly show that it is not uncommon for translators in Spain to engage in inverse translation, and suggest that the practice is more widespread than is often perceived or acknowledged in some academic circles. This leads to the conclusion that Spanish Faculties of Translation ought to prepare their students to carry out such work.

With at least 19 universities in Spain offering a degree in translation at the time of writing¹, and most of them in the process of adapting their curricula, we have drawn on research carried out by Wimmer (2008) to gauge the extent to which inverse translation features in translation teaching at undergraduate level. Wimmer studied the curricula of Spain's top five translation and interpreting undergraduate degree courses, as ranked in an annual survey carried out by the newspaper *El Mundo* (2007), and, among other findings, her analysis revealed that there is no consensus regarding how many of a degree programme's compulsory credits should correspond to inverse translation, and that the number of credits in question can represent anywhere between 0% and 50% of all those involving practical translation (although that situation may change with the new degrees currently being implemented in Spain under the Bologna Process).

This paper proposes combining the development of competences specifically related to inverse translation with the use of electronic corpora. Such corpora are large collections of texts in electronic format, which have been put together according to a set of criteria and with the aim of being representative of a language or part of a language (i.e. a subject field, a genre, a mode, a dialect etc.). As 'representations' of (a subset of) a language, corpora can help language learners, translation trainees and language professionals alike gain a better insight into a language. Since inverse translation involves the translator producing a text in a language other than their mother tongue and in which they are likely to be less proficient and confident, corpora, and target language (TL) corpora in particular, can be a useful resource for aiding their translation decisions. Adab (2005) and Thelen (2005) are just two of the scholars who have stressed the need for students learning to translate into a foreign language to be computer literate. The use of electronic corpora for training translators in inverse translation, meanwhile, is advocated by various authors (Gavioli & Zanettin, 1997; Zanettin, 1998, 2001, 2002; Bowker, 1999; Corpas Pastor, 2001, 2002; Corpas Pastor & Postigo Pinazo, 2002; Varantola, 2003; Wilkinson, 2005; Rodríguez-Inés, 2008; Cheng, 2011). Although some may be loath to acknowledge it as such, English is generally regarded as the lingua franca of business, science, technology, diplomacy and the media in our globalised world. It is used for education purposes and commonly spoken in various multilingual countries (e.g. India and Singapore), while the inhabitants of countries whose indigenous languages are not widely used beyond their own borders (e.g. Denmark and Finland) carry out many of their professional and even leisure activities in English. Thus, if we

accept the school of thought that says it makes sense, in Spain at least, to prepare translators to translate from their mother tongue into the foreign language(s) with which they work, inverse translation from Spanish to English takes on particular relevance in the context in question. The exercises presented in this paper have been designed for native Spanish-speaking trainees translating into English, but are perfectly adaptable to other language combinations.

Inverse translation: who and why?

Given that studies show that inverse translation is practised as a professional activity in Spain, who are the clients in this market?

The clients who had asked the subjects of the small-scale survey carried out by Rodríguez-Inés (2008) to perform inverse translations mainly comprised of companies (48.3%) and individuals (40%), and also included translation agencies (8.3%) and other sources, such as institutions (3.3%). While the study does not claim to be statistically representative, given its sample limitations, its results are actually very logical. Companies and individuals are less likely to be aware of how translating out of one's mother tongue differs from translating into it, or of the extra demands that the former task places on translators. Additionally, a translator may work for a company in a multilingual capacity (secretary, clerk, receptionist etc.) and therefore be expected to produce texts in various languages, translating into and out of them as required. Individual clients might include acquaintances seeking an inverse translation of a letter or their CV, or self-employed workers wanting to make their website available in the language of an overseas market. Translation agencies, in contrast, are much more aware of directionality issues in translation and able to locate translators who are native speakers of the TL(s) involved in any given job. Institutions may outsource their translations or have them done by internal translation departments, in which case they will be well versed in tackling any translation brief. Having said that, however, even the EU admits that it sometimes asks its translators to perform inverse translations and regards being able to translate in both directions as an asset².

Pros and cons of inverse translation

Consequences of poor quality work

Aside from the extra effort and time it requires in comparison to direct translation (i.e. translation into one's mother tongue), the main drawback of inverse translation is that it is much more likely to generate erroneous output, particularly when translators fail to work to professional standards (although this, of course, does not apply exclusively to inverse translation). In our experience, there are three scenarios that can arise from such erroneous output.

(1) People will understand the message but...

In the first scenario, the translated text (TT) is comprehensible, despite minor mistakes that clearly identify the translator as a non-native speaker of the TL. Such occurrences are not uncommon when reading tourist brochures, information in museums, notices in hotels etc.

The example that follows is a notice seen in an airport bus in Spain.

<SP>	<EN>
No se permite comer, fumar o beber en el autobús.	→ Not allowed eat, smoke and drink in the bus

(2) People will understand little or nothing of the intended message

In the second scenario, communication fails partially or entirely, leaving people confused by what they are reading. They may understand only part or nothing at all of the intended message, due to major lexical or syntactic mistakes.

The two examples below are from a menu at a holiday resort in Spain. A more comprehensible translation is proposed in brackets in each case.

<SP>	<EN>
Varitas de merluza al limón	→ Twigs of hake to the lemon (Fish fingers with lemon)
Salsa de judías negras	→ Black jew sauce (Black bean sauce)

The next example is taken from an interview in *Ronda Iberia Magazine* (October 2001).

<SP>	<EN>
¿Le ha visto las orejas al lobo con su reciente paso por el hospital?	→ Did you see ‘the ears of the wolf’ on your recent hospital visit? (Did the time you spent in hospital recently serve as a wake-up call regarding your health?)

(3) People will get the wrong message

The third scenario involves major meaning-related errors in the TT. Translations so incorrect they actually directly contradict the intended message of the source text (ST) can have all kinds of undesirable consequences, potentially even placing people in danger.

The example that follows is taken from an instruction manual on chromatography.

<SP>	<EN>
En muchas pantallas en la que esta tecla es activa la flecha NEXT aparece en el extremo inferior izquierdo de la pantalla.	→ On most screens where this key is active, the NEXT arrow appears in the lower-right corner of the display.

The great advantage of inverse translation

While inverse translation is generally considered to require greater effort and produce output of a lower quality than direct translation, the former does offer a major benefit (Neunzig & Grauwinkel, 2006). Translators working out of their native language will be better able to understand the ST, as they are more likely to be able to make sense of it despite any grammatical or syntactic errors, lack of cohesion and

coherence, verbose passages etc., and because of their superior grasp of their own language.

The benefit in question should not be lightly dismissed. Tackling translation briefs involving poor quality STs is the bread and butter of many translators. The features of such texts may include repetitiveness, inconsistency in the use of terminology, a lack of cohesion and coherence and a generally poor writing style. Such features can be present in an ST regardless of whether it has been produced by a native or non-native speaker of the source language (SL), be they highly specialised in the relevant field or otherwise. To the best of our knowledge, there are no statistical data on the poor quality of STs that reach professional translators. Nonetheless, it is not difficult to come across examples of genuine Spanish STs that have been written by experts, published and sent to professional native English translators to be translated. For illustrative purposes, two such examples are included below.

The first example is an extract from a public notice regarding a corporate spin-off from a Spanish company. The full text was published both in a Spanish national newspaper and the Official Gazette of the Mercantile Registry (BORME). It contains a conceptual error, in that it refers to 'all the shares' of the parent company, suggesting a total division rather than the partial division actually being announced.

‘[...] se hace público que en la junta general extraordinaria y universal de X, S. A. (sociedad escindida), celebrada en fecha 1 de febrero de 2006, se acordó, por unanimidad, la escisión de una parte del patrimonio de la sociedad escindida, consistente en la totalidad de las acciones en que se divide el capital de la sociedad X S. A. [...]’

Source: Spanish Official Gazette of the Mercantile Registry.

The second example is an extract from a book on water pumps published by the Spanish Association of Pump Manufacturers. In this case, the problem involved is stylistic and related to the way information is presented. Specifically, the subjects of some verbs are unclear, leading to confusion.

‘Para evitar el frenado en la inmersión, la parte sumergida se reduce de tamaño tomando la forma de una cucharilla. En una cuchara o cuerno situada en la parte inferior de la cabeza de la biela se sumerge, en cada revolución, en el aceite de engrase que se encuentra en el cárter, tomando una pequeña cantidad.’

Source: Book on water pumps.

Potentially problematic SL features (Spanish)

This section of the paper presents examples extracted from real SL texts in Spanish to illustrate the features referred to in the previous section, and to which particular attention must be paid when translating from Spanish to English. These examples are potential translation problems arising from mismatches across Spanish and English at different levels of language analysis.

Unnecessary repetition

Some repetition may be deliberate, for the purpose of emphasis or gaining time to think. Translators need to be aware of this aspect and identify when such repetition may be relevant, to ensure that it is only reproduced where necessary in their output. Some examples of superfluous repetition are shown below.

‘Esa noticia es total, absoluta y completamente cierta.’

Source: Presenter on Spanish TV.

‘[...] el principio de transmitir a la sociedad de una forma clara, diáfana y transparente lo que hacemos y cómo lo hacemos, está en nuestro código genético.’

Source: Website of an information management company.

‘En el siguiente diagrama se pueden ver de forma gráfica los pasos a seguir.’

Source: White Paper on ICT security.

Some cases of repetition are more evident than others, such as when several synonyms are juxtaposed. Less obvious, however, may be cases such as the examples below, which involve the repetition of an idea already conveyed by the node word. In the first, ‘embarazo femenino’ would be a tautology, unless the text refers to seahorses or the possibility of males being able to gestate. The second contains an unnecessary element (i.e. a ‘semantically empty’ verb) that would pose problems for a translator, who would have to ascertain which equivalent of ‘realizada’ (‘made’/‘done’/‘carried out’) best collocates with ‘investment’, when such an equivalent could simply be omitted (e.g. ‘an investment of more than X million’).

‘[...] El embarazo femenino será considerado en el ámbito laboral como una enfermedad no contagiosa, que permitirá a la mujer trabajadora disfrutar a partir de ahora de las mismas condiciones en todos los países de la CE [...]’

Source: Spanish newspaper *ABC*.

‘[...] una inversión realizada de más de X millones [...]’

Source: Spanish newspaper *20Minutos*.

Terminological variation

All the underlined words and expressions in the text below refer to the same concept related to an abnormality in chromosome counts. A translator would need to realise that this is the case in order to convey the intended message correctly. Additionally, it may be that there are fewer variants of the term in English than in Spanish, the latter being a language in which repetition of words or terms is generally frowned upon. Translators would need to carry out research in specialised sources to establish hierarchical categories among the different variants (hyponyms and hypernyms) in the source and target languages alike. Ad hoc comparable corpora would be useful for identifying related terms and establishing hierarchies through searches such as ‘X is Y’, ‘X is a type of Y’, ‘X is part of Y’, ‘X is a variant of Y’ etc. Furthermore, a corpus of the kind in question would offer information on differences in the frequency of use of synonyms and near-synonyms.

Diagnóstico prenatal y cribado de cromosomopatías

http://scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?pid=S1131-5768200100100003&script=sci_arttext

El diagnóstico prenatal engloba a todas aquellas actividades diagnósticas que buscan conocer la existencia de un defecto congénito, que, según la definición dada por la OMS incluye a toda anomalía del desarrollo morfológico, estructural, funcional o molecular, presente al nacer, aunque pueda manifestarse más tarde, externa o interna, familiar o esporádica, heredada o no, única o múltiple.

La trisomía 21 o síndrome de Down (SD) ha sido el objetivo prioritario en el diagnóstico de anomalías cromosómicas fetales, ya que es la aneuploidía más frecuente en nacidos, causa común de retraso mental severo y supervivencia postnatal más prolongada, no existiendo ningún método de prevención primaria.

Los factores de riesgo para presentar un feto afecto de cromosomopatía son: [...]

- Antecedentes de embarazo previo con anomalía cromosómica
- Abortos de repetición, nacidos muertos o malformaciones congénitas o esterilidad sin causas establecidas

Bibliografía:

Fortuni Estivill A, Borrell Vilaseca A, Cortés León M, Gallo Vallejo M, González de Agüero Laborda R, González Gónzalez A, et al. Screening de cromosomopatías fetales. En: Documentos de Consenso S.E.G.O 2000; 139–77.

Opaqueness or poor writing style

Texts of a specialised nature may appear somewhat opaquely written and confusingly punctuated to lay people and non-specialised translators, due to the characteristics inherent to texts of certain genres or possibly because they genuinely are opaquely written and confusingly punctuated. The example below, an extract from the terms and conditions of use of a company's website, contains an erroneous preposition ('a las condiciones' should be 'en las condiciones'). Additionally, the entire extract consists of a single sentence, which, while typical of the legal genre, may cause non-specialised translators difficulties. In this case, being a native Spanish speaker could help a translator understand the ST better. There are aspects of the Spanish language (such as verb endings) that enable readers to keep track of a sentence's subject ('el Usuario', in this case), no matter how long the sentence may be. The translator would need to be aware that the structural differences between Spanish and English may make it necessary to break sentences down and render their meaning more explicit when translating.

[...] Queda expresamente prohibido cualquier uso diferente a la finalidad de este Sitio Web.

En este sentido, el Usuario renunciará a utilizar cualquiera de los materiales e informaciones contenidos en este Sitio Web con fines ilícitos y expresamente prohibidos en las presentes Condiciones Generales de Uso así como a las condiciones particulares que, en su caso, se habiliten que resulten contrarios a los derechos e intereses de LA EMPRESA, sus miembros y/o terceros, y deberá

responder frente a los mismos en caso de contravenir o incumplir dichas obligaciones y/o que, de cualquier modo (incluida la introducción o difusión de “virus informáticos”), dañe, inutilice, sobrecargue, deteriore o impida la normal utilización de los materiales e informaciones contenidos en el Sitio Web, los sistemas de información o los documentos, archivos y toda clase de contenidos almacenados en cualquier equipo informático (hacking) de LA EMPRESA, de sus miembros o de cualquier Usuario del Sitio Web.

Source: Terms and conditions of use of a company's website.

The text that follows, a brief extract from the book on water pumps referred to previously, features examples of unclear references. For instance, does the word ‘peso’ refer to ‘aceite’, ‘anillo’ or ‘árbol’? Does ‘velocidades bajas’ mean below 100 rpm or just above 100 rpm? What exactly may be affected by a ‘ligero deslizamiento’?

‘La velocidad de transición puede aparecer entre 100 y 200 rpm, según la viscosidad del aceite, el área de contacto del anillo con la superficie del árbol y el peso de aquel. Para velocidades bajas, el anillo sigue al árbol y ambos tienen la misma velocidad periférica. En esta fase, las revoluciones por minuto del árbol y del anillo son inversamente proporcionales a sus diámetros, aunque se acusa un ligero deslizamiento.’

Source: Book on water pumps.

Cohesion and/or coherence

As mentioned previously, there are aspects of Spanish, such as number and gender agreement, which help readers establish relationships between words. In the example below, that characteristic of the language enables readers to work out that ‘las mismas’ and ‘las fincas’ (both feminine plural forms) are related, despite the anaphoric referent appearing first in the text. Similarly, it is possible to ascertain that ‘la misma’ refers anaphorically to ‘planta sótano’ (both feminine singular). A translator would need to be aware of the need to restructure an English version of the text to make it properly coherent and cohesive.

‘Art.3º: No obstante por su destino exclusivo al uso y servicio de las mismas, son comunes a las fincas de la planta sótano el pasillo de distribución o maniobra situado en la misma y la rampa de entrada y acceso.’

Source: Articles of association.

The next text, another extract from the aforementioned book on water pumps, contains an example of an unclear deictic, which is likely to lead to confusion.

‘En este grupo se encuentran las bombas de cilindros o pistones axiales o radiales rotativos y sin válvulas, prácticamente de uso exclusivo en oleohidráulica y que no

trataremos aquí. En los otros, un rotor, interno o externo, gira creando unas cámaras o celdas limitadas por el rotor.

Source: Book on water pumps.

Tried and tested exercises for raising awareness in inverse translation

In her 2006 paper, Roiss attempts to identify the types of exercise best suited to inverse translation. One of her suggestions involves initially working with exercises that focus on the ST to help students overcome the lack of confidence they often experience when translating into a foreign language. She also notes that, as in any other learning environment or process, previous knowledge should be taken into account and students' motivation enhanced.

Rodríguez-Inés (2008) has designed several teaching units for the acquisition of direct and inverse general and specialised translation competence on the basis of the use of electronic corpora. Due to space limitations, only a selection of sample exercises from a larger teaching unit on inverse translation will be shown here.

The exercises shown in the rest of this section aim to simultaneously develop corpus management or corpus analysis skills and raise awareness of issues related to inverse translation or use of a foreign language (English, in this case). The main goal of the overall teaching unit is to make students reflect on the act of translating from their mother tongue (Spanish) into English by setting them a wide range of brief exercises involving the use of corpora and other resources. Students are thus introduced to inverse translation as well as to some principles of corpus work, online corpora and corpus-analysis tools, all in a meaningful context and with a view to stimulating their critical thinking. Where appropriate, possible solutions are shown in shaded cells.

Task: 'From a native speaker's perspective'

The following exercises are intended to make students more aware of and reflect on the repetitive, predictable nature of language and the relative value of a person's intuition and expectations where their mother tongue is concerned.

- (1) An air hostess tells passengers that 'está [...] prohibido fumar dentro del avión'. Write down the word you think is missing.
- (2) What options did you consider before choosing the word you have written down?
- (3) Into what grammatical category does your chosen word fall (noun, verb etc.)?
- (4) Into what grammatical subcategory does it fall (time, modal etc.)?

Using strong collocations makes a text 'sound' natural. Collocation (getting the right word) often goes hand in hand with colligation (getting the right grammatical category). Native speakers will have clear (and sometimes very restricted) expectations in relation to words or expressions that appear in the proximity of other words or expressions. In the case of the above example, a Spanish speaker would expect to hear a modal adverb, such as 'terminantemente', 'absolutamente' or 'totalmente'.

- (1) 'Tengo un televisor en color y otro en [...]' . Complete the sentence.
- (2) 'I have a colour TV and a [...] one too'. Complete the sentence.
- (3) Would you understand a native English speaker if they were to say 'tengo un televisor en negro y blanco'?
- (4) What would you think of them?

Correct word order is also part of collocation, as native speakers have expectations in that regard. While rendering an expression in an unconventional order might not prevent communication, it does highlight non-nativeness and/or a lack of knowledge of a community's specialised discourse. The above example is part of everyday language. Every native speaker would know that the right word order in Spanish is 'blanco y negro', as opposed to 'black and white' in English. Similarly, native speakers of English familiar with the field of finance would expect to read 'mergers and acquisitions' rather than 'acquisitions and mergers'.

- (1) Make up a sentence containing the Spanish idiom 'a simple vista'³.
- (2) What verb have you chosen to go with this expression?
- (3) Does your sentence have a positive or a negative connotation?

Native speakers have expectations in relation to the semantic prosody of a word or expression. Semantic prosody describes the connotation of a word or expression in association with its collocates. In the case of the above example, native Spanish speakers would expect 'a simple vista' to appear in the context of verbs such as 'observar', 'mirar', 'detectar', 'descifrar', 'descubrir', 'apreciar', 'discernir' etc, and the expression to have a positive semantic prosody.

- (1) Are you familiar with the word 'sinergia'?
- (2) Look up its meaning in a dictionary.
- (3) Is merely knowing what 'sinergia' means enough to enable you to make up a sentence containing it?
- (4) What types of 'sinergia' are there? What characteristics may a 'sinergia' have? Does the word 'sinergia' have a plural form? Does it have derived forms, such as an adjective? What verbs does it usually appear with? Does it take a preposition?
- (5) Enter 'sinerg*' at <http://corpus.rae.es/creanet.html> and answer the questions above.
- (6) Based on what you now know, make up a sentence including the word 'sinergia'.

Familiarity with a word or expression entails various types of knowledge. It is not simply a matter of knowing how it is spelled or what it means, but also how it is used. In the example above, the Real Academia Española's Spanish corpus⁴ shows that 'sinergia' has derived forms (sinergias, sinergético), is used most frequently in the field of business, can be accompanied by verbs such as 'crear' and 'establecer', and usually takes the preposition 'entre'.

- (1) What do you think the collocates of the word 'pesetas' were in the past?
- (2) What do you think the collocates of the word 'pesetas' are nowadays?

Collocates change with the passage of time, hence the importance of consulting up-to-date resources. With regard to the above example, Spain's pre-euro currency generally used to be accompanied by figures, quantities or other words that commonly appear in the context of a currency. Nowadays, however, 'pesetas' is most frequently accompanied by the adjective 'antiguas', meaning 'old'.

- (1) Can the word 'house' function as a verb?
- (2) Try to make up a sentence in order to provide an example.
- (3) Enter the search 'house = VVB' at <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/index.xml> and observe the types of subject this verb usually takes.

Not even a native speaker of a language can know absolutely everything about it. Intuition is closely related to experience, and it is impossible for a speaker to have experience in every area of life, let alone those that involve highly specialised knowledge. In the above example, students are able to observe that the subjects of the verb 'to house' are usually different types of premises or spaces (suburbs, boulevards, buildings, institutions, stables, villas, cottages, hospitals etc.).

- What have you learned about language through these exercises?

Additional exercises and their solutions can be found in Appendix 1.

Task: 'Finding inspiration and evidence to support decisions'

The following exercises challenge students to use a corpus, in this case an online general language corpus, to find: evidence to argue for or against a translation decision made by somebody else; and various translation replacement options.

You have been provided with an English translation of a text on a legal loophole in Spanish law. Imagine you have been asked to revise the translation. The source text contains the expressions that follow.

'A diferencia de otros países de la Unión Europea [...]'

In the translated text, the above expression has been rendered as '**Differently from [...]**'

Would you accept this translation?

No, I do not think it would sound natural to a native speaker.

Look up the word 'diferencia' in a bilingual dictionary. Any suggestions as to translation equivalents?

'Unlike' or 'contrary to' would be more acceptable, especially if I want to keep the expression at the beginning of the sentence. However, I need to decide which of the two is more appropriate.

Enter the search:

143.

differently from

at

<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/index.xml>

How many concordances are there?

What can you say about the use of 'differently from'? I can see that the expression exists but is not used at the beginning of a sentence.

'Los estadísticos demuestran que [...]'

Write down various ways of expressing this idea. Statistics show/prove that ... Statisticians have demonstrated that ...

Think of a string that you could use to search for possible translations (especially of the verb) in the BNC (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/index.xml>) One option is 'statistics have', an expression including an auxiliary, which guarantees the presence of a main verb. A second option is 'statistics _ that'.

What solutions have you found?

Option 1: provide with, show, tell. Option 2: show, prove, suggest, indicate, reveal, confirm, demonstrate, claim. Possible solutions found using the string 'statisticians _ that': know, suggest, estimate.

'[...] se ha perdido una **magnífica oportunidad [...]'**

Write down adjectives that may accompany 'opportunity' Great, unique, good, wonderful, huge, etc.

Enter the search: 2 instances.

magnificent opportunity

at

<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/index.xml>.

What can you see?

Now enter the following search:

Including 'a _' limits the search to adjectives.

a – opportunity

How does searching in this way affect the Golden, tremendous, timely, unique, real etc. results? What adjectives can you see?

How could you look for more adjectives using the same syntactical structure as above? Write down your search string. By using 'an _', as the previous search omitted any adjectives beginning with a vowel.

What other adjectives can you see using your suggested search string? Unparalleled, adequate, ideal, equal, irresistible, unrepeatable, excellent.

Dealing with frequency data

These exercises are geared to encourage students to interpret the frequency with which words or expressions appear in different corpora.

'terrorist cell/cells'

Observe the tables below. Focus on the figures in bold. Occurrences of the expressions 'terrorist cell' and 'terrorist cells' in the newspaper *The Guardian*
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/search>

Publication year	Number of occurrences
1999	3
2000	6
2001	69
2002	47
2003	50
2004	46
2005	53

2006	36
2007	44
2008	36
2009	38
2010	26

Concordances from the online *BNC*
(which contains texts from the 1990s only)

Search	Publication year	Number of occurrences
‘terrorist cell’	1990	2
‘terrorist cells’	1990	1

Based on the data shown, what can be said about the frequency of use of ‘terrorist cell(s)’?

Based on the *BNC*, the expression ‘terrorist cell(s)’ was hardly ever used in the late twentieth century. *The Guardian* appears to corroborate this, and it was not until 2001 and the 9/11 attacks that a major surge in the frequency of the use of the expression occurred. As the *BNC* is limited to texts from the 1990s, it is not surprising that the expression only appears there three times. The frequency of use of any term evolves to reflect events in society. Depending on the historical period, the use of words increases or decreases. It is necessary to be aware of such evolution both when translating and when interpreting results from corpora.

It is generally believed that verbs ending in /aɪz/ are spelled ‘-ize’ (e.g. *realize*) in American English and ‘-ise’ (e.g. *realise*) in British English. Read the following and check whether that is always the case.

‘-ise/-ize’

Think about whether every verb ending in /aɪz/ can be spelled with either ‘s’ or ‘z’. Do you feel that the following are correct?

While they would all seem to be correct according to the rule, ‘*exercise*’ and ‘*compromise*’ are always spelled with ‘s’.

British English spelling	American English spelling
– realise	– realize
– analyse	– analyze
– exercise	– exercize
– criticise	– criticize
– compromise	– compromize

You have two corpora of American English. The *Brown Corpus* (http://www.lextutor.ca/concordancers/concord_e.html) is a million-word online corpus that contains 500 original texts belonging to a variety of genres from 1961. The *COPCA* (*Corpus of Contemporary American English*) (<http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>) is a 425-million-word online corpus containing texts belonging to a variety of genres from the 1990–2011 period.

Check the spelling of the verbs listed previously in either of the corpora of American English. Write down the number of instances found in both cases ('s' and 'z').

What conclusions can you draw on the use of '-ise'/'-ize' spelling in American English? There are even some cases in which 's' is used more frequently than 'z'. searches?

Check the spelling of the verbs listed previously in the British National Corpus through the BNCWeb interface (<http://bncweb.info/>). Write down the number of instances found in both cases ('s' and 'z').

What conclusions can you draw on the use of '-ise'/'-ize' in British English from the data obtained? Verbs ending in /aɪz/ are not necessarily spelled with 'z' in American English, nor with 's' in British English. There are many cases where 'z' is used in British English. It should be noted that some academic journals now have norms that British spelling is to be followed except for verbs ending in -ize.

Task: 'Looking at co-text'

This exercise emphasises the importance of looking at co-text to extract information on language usage. It also provides students with an opportunity to re-sort context (a standard function of corpus-analysis tools). TL expressions with similar or even equivalent meanings can pose problems for translators translating into a foreign language. The exercise prompts students to look for examples and observe the co-text of certain expressions that have similar meanings but are used differently.

- (1) You have been asked to revise the following sentences:
 - [...] an electronic communication [...], which has been recorded and is consequently capable of being reproduced.
Source: Office of Public Sector Information.
 - Chronic subdural hematoma occurring consequently to the posttraumatic subdural hygroma – on the pathogenesis of the chronic subdural hematoma.
Source: Abstract from Medline.
 - A study published in *The Lancet* estimates that 655,000 Iraqis have died as a result of the war.
Source: *The Guardian*.
- (2) What information on the use of the expressions 'consequently' and 'as a result of' can you obtain by looking to their right and left? Check using a general English corpus (the British National Corpus, the Bank of English or any general English corpus included in SketchEngine).
- (3) Use the same corpus to identify the differences between the expressions 'in accordance with' and 'according to'.

ANSWERS:

- The expression ‘consequently’ can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, and may or may not be immediately followed by a comma. It is preceded by a cause and followed by a consequence. The expression ‘as a result of’ can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, but is never immediately followed by a comma. It may be preceded by a consequence and followed by a cause. Alternatively, both the consequence and cause may follow it.
- The expression ‘in accordance with’ can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence. The nouns that usually appear immediately after it are related to instructions, norms, guidelines, plans, agreements, criteria or procedures. The expression ‘according to’ can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence. In the majority of cases, it is followed by proper names and used when giving an opinion.

Evaluation

As mentioned earlier, the exercises shown in the section above are part of a larger teaching unit designed to raise awareness of issues relevant to inverse translation (Rodríguez-Inés, 2008). The overall unit has been implemented three times, with groups of 14, six and four students respectively. Each group comprised students who were beginners in translating from their mother tongue into English and in the use of corpora. The evaluation questionnaires issued to the students upon completion of the teaching unit revealed that they felt confident in identifying language’s repetitive and predictable nature and had gained an insight into the relative value of native speakers’ intuition. One of the most interesting results to emerge was that they found that using corpora had unquestionably helped them gain a much firmer grasp of the importance of collocations.

Conclusions

As Stewart (2008) states in relation to translating into a foreign language, ‘all words and expressions are loaded for meaning, register, collocation, style, sound, frequency etc., and trainees who fail to take these on board are playing with fire’. This paper has highlighted the risks that non-professional inverse translation work entails, and looked at various SL features of which trainees need to be made aware to minimise the likelihood of mistakes. It should be reiterated that poor quality translations are by no means the exclusive domain of translators working into a foreign language. Additionally, it is worth noting that translated texts are often of higher quality than the corresponding original texts, as any inconsistency, incongruence, unnecessary repetition, grammatical mistakes and the like present in the latter are likely to have been eliminated in the former, this being just as applicable to inverse translation as to direct translation.

Speaking from experience, it seems to be a good idea to begin training in inverse translation by making students aware of features of their mother tongue through

exercises, with a reduced risk of performing poorly in the foreign language due to a lack of proficiency and/or intuition. Such SL-oriented exercises can also help demonstrate the relative value of native-speaker intuition and make students aware of the importance of using documentary resources such as electronic corpora to back up their decisions, something that, again, applies equally to inverse and direct translation. Be they trainees or fully fledged professionals, translators have to convey messages by using correct terminology and grammar, as well as an appropriate style, register etc., so as to fulfil the target readership's expectations. Electronic corpora can be of great assistance in making translations 'sound natural', especially when translating into a foreign language.

Notes

1. <http://www.aieti.eu/efmcn.htm>.
2. 'Candidates must have a perfect knowledge of the target language (usually their mother tongue) and a thorough knowledge of at least two other official languages. Knowledge of additional languages is an advantage. Except in special, well-defined circumstances, translators work exclusively into the language they regard as their main language, generally their mother tongue. For certain languages, however, an ability to translate out of the main language is regarded as an asset.' (Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission, 2007, p. 9)
3. Inspired by an exercise on the semantic prosody of 'naked eye' from Sinclair (2004).
4. CREA is a nearly 200 million-word general language corpus containing texts from 1975 onwards. It is freely available online.

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Appendix 1:

WORKSHEET: ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

Here are some exercises to support and develop the learning you acquired in the first exercise.

Languages are **predictable** in many ways...

Case similar to: 'Está ... prohibido fumar en el avión'
 Complete and translate:
 (SPA) 'El Noreste de Inglaterra tiene el dudoso honor de ser el peor lugar del país si se está en paro y se tienen más de 50 años'

(ENG) 'The North-East has the dubious honour of being the worst place in England to be if you are out of work and over 50'

Questions: Answers:
 What options did you consider before choosing Great (ironic)
 the word you have written down?
 Into what grammatical category does your Adjective
 chosen word fall?

Sounding '**natural**' is not only about choosing the right words...

Case similar to: 'blanco y negro'
 Complete and translate:
 (SPA) 'Les afeitaron de pies a cabeza por razones de higiene'
 (ENG) 'They were shaved from head to toe for hygiene reasons'
 If you are interested in idioms and want to find out their equivalents, see <http://www.ccdmd.qc.ca/ri/expressions/>

Dictionaries do not always help...

Complete and translate:
 (SPA) 'El Primer Ministro había expuesto en muchas ocasiones su oposición a la pena de muerte'
 (ENG) 'The Prime Minister had stated his opposition to the death penalty on many occasions'
 Questions: Answers:

What is the correct preposition in this context? On
Check in the BNC at <http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk>.

If you have performed more than one search to ‘many occasions’ solve the problem, try to think how you could have found an answer with a single search.

Using a word is not only about knowing its meaning...

Case similar to: ‘sinergia’

Read the following sentences:

(SPA) ‘Como regla general, podemos decir que (ENG) ‘Courts so far have mostly upheld en España no es válida la aceptación de una click-wrap agreements, provided that a customer actively agrees to the contract’ siguen determinados requisitos legales’

Questions:

What is the meaning of ‘click-wrap’? Find out using *Cercaterm* at <http://www.termcat.cat/>.

How is ‘click-wrap’ used in Spanish and English? Find out using *KWiCFinder*, a resource that allows you to search the internet as if it were a corpus. Download *KWiCFinder* from <http://www.kwicfinder.com/KWiCFinder.html>.

With what words does ‘click-wrap’ usually appear? What verbs appear around it? Does it have any spelling variants? Does it have a plural form? Is it always used as an adjective or can it also be used as a noun?

Answers:

Contracte electrònic en què el client indica el seu acord amb els termes d'una operació de compra clicant en un quadre de diàleg. Generalment, el quadre de diàleg conté expressions com ara Ho accepto.

(SPA) Collocates: contrato, licencia.

Spelling variants (from most to least frequent): click-wrap, click wrap, clickwrap, clic wrap, clicwrap.

There are no instances of the plural form in Spanish.

It seems that it can be used as both a noun and an adjective.

(ENG) Collocates: agreement, contract.

Spelling variants (from most to least frequent): click-wrap, click wrap, clickwrap.

It has a plural form in English.

It seems that it can be used as both a noun and an adjective.

Learning about **less common** uses of everyday words...

Case similar to: ‘house (as a verb)’

Consider the following sentence:

(ENG) ‘At Buckingham Palace, the Queen was lunching with Mary McAleese, Irish president.’

Questions:

Can ‘lunch’ function as a verb? Find out in the BNC at <http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk>.

Is there any feature common to the contexts in which it is used?

Answers:

Yes

The contexts seem to be formal

Right word, wrong **context**...

Consider the following text found on a notice outside a church in Brazil (translation from Brazilian Portuguese into English):

(PORT) 'Guias despreparados estão prestando informações falsas e deturpadas, saibam escolher um guia competente'

(ENG) 'Unprepared cicerones are giving either false or deformed informations, know how to choose a qualified cicerone'

Questions:

Answers:

Consider the word 'cicerone/s'. Does it exist in English? What does it mean? Find out online.

Is 'cicerone/s' commonly used? Find out *BNC* = 14 cases, although 12 refer to Cicerone in the *BNC* at <http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk>. Press, 1 refers to art, and the other is unclear. No cases of cicerones or ciceroni. *The Guardian* = 21 cases, most of which refer to Cicerone Press.

[Archive/](http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/).

Suggest a more appropriate translation of the entire source sentence.

Beware of hiring incompetent guides; they will give you incorrect information. Please make sure that you choose a competent guide for your visit.