Translating the imaginary world in the *Harry Potter* series or how *Muggles, Quaffles, Snitches,* and *Nickles* travel to other cultures

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Resumen

El éxito reciente de la serie de Harry Potter (HP) con más de110 millones de libros impresos, publicado en 200 países y 47 lenguas en menos de cinco años, y ya llevado al cine, convierte a la serie en un objeto inexcusable de estudio. En las páginas que siguen es mi intención servirme de la comparación del texto inglés y las traducciones a seis lenguas diferentes —español, catalán, portugués, italiano, francés y alemán— para explorar la transferencia del humor a través de lenguas y culturas. Para ello, en primer lugar, llevaré a cabo un análisis comparativo de la traducción de nombres propios y construcciones léxicas utilizadas para designar a algunos de esos personajes llenos de humor y magia creados por J.K. Rowling. En segundo lugar, extenderé el análisis comparativo en las seis lenguas con el texto original a la traducción de nombres de lugares, y en tercer lugar, compararé la traducción de nombres de determinados objetos y cosas que poseen un tono humorístico. A partir de ahí extraeré algunas conclusiones sobre las estrategias utilizadas por los diferentes traductores en las diferentes lenguas. El modelo de funcionalismo aplicado a la traducción literaria que presenta Nord (1997) nos servirá de marco teórico.

Palabras clave: comunicación intercultural, literatura infantil y juvenil, traducción de nombres propios, traducción del humor, teoría del *skopos.*

Abstract

This paper deals with the transfer of humour across languages and cultures. I will take as a case in point the well-known *Harry Potter* children's books by J.K. Rowling. Written originally in English, the first four *Harry Potter* (HP) books have been widely translated into different languages by a number of translators. I will approach the problem of translating humour in cross-cultural communication by examining language specifics in the HP series. Taking into account the space available, I will concentrate on certain humorous lexical and stylistic choices of the translators in six different languages: Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Italian, German, and French. These choices include: names of people, places, and things as well as lexical constructions used to describe the characters.

Key words: cross-cultural communication, children's literature, translating proper names, translation of humour, «skopos» theory.

I. Introduction

Some of the questions that immediately arise when referring to cross-cultural communication are: How can Harry Potter's imaginary world be translated into another language and culture? How is it possible for works containing specific cultural references to cross boundaries and still dominate the sales charts? What becomes of all the humorous English names and new words found in the original texts? Is any information lost? Or gained? Do readers in other languages still laugh? Do they share the same sense of humor with English-language readers? Do they have the same perceptions when reading HP translated? Have the various translators for different languages followed the same policy for handling proper names and invented words?

In order to provide answers to these questions, I will catalogue the linguistic/cultural allusions of selected humorous names in English, and compare how the names themselves, their etymological roots, and their cultural associations have been transferred to the different languages mentioned before. The HP books are full of wonderful, spontaneous humor. Paraphrasing a reviewer's words «the characters are impressively three-dimensional (occasionally, four dimensional!) and move along seamlessly through the narrative» *(The New York Times Book Review).* These effects are partly achieved thanks to the semantic code that most names in HP have for the English readers (see C. Valero *et al.* 2001, and C. Valero 2002). For example, the name Malfoy means, literally, «bad faith.» Even if children do not know this gloss exactly, they surely make connections between this name and such everyday words as *malice*, *malfunction*, *maladjusted*, and *malfeasance.* The first name of Mr. Malfoy, Lucius, shows a clear tie to Lucifer —the Devil. Malfoy's son, Draco, bears the Latin name for a traditional symbol of vicious evil —the dragon. The Malfoys' cronies also have names that make English speakers think of creatures who creep and crawl: Professor Snape (cf. *snake),* the school chums Crabbe (pronounced in English the same as *crab),* and Goyle (cf. *coil, boil).* The house with which they are all associated, Slytherin, immediately calls to mind the verb *slither* (to move in a serpentine manner). The same happens with Ravenclaw, Peeves, Lockhart, or many other names of people, places, and things that made up the huge cast of characters created by J.K. Rowling.

Christiane Nord (1997), from a purpose-oriented approach to literary translation, also known as the «skopos» model, claims that the target text receiver should understand the text world of the translation the same way as the source receivers understand the text world of the original. Following this basic rule is a way of

bridging the cultural gap between the original text and the translation. In the following pages I will try to show how this requirement is fulfilled (or not) in the languages mentioned above. First, I will concentrate on the comparison with the original text (OT) of the translations of proper names and lexical constructions used to name people in the previous mentioned languages, that is, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Italian, German, and French. Secondly, I will compare the OT and its translations of place names in the same languages. And thirdly, I will call the reader's attention to the translation of the name of some objects and things in the same languages. Finally, some conclusions will be offered regarding the strategies followed by the different translators of the different languages considered and the effects the six translated texts (TTs) produce in their readers.

II. A comparison of proper names and lexical constructions to name people

The HP books contain a large number of characters. When considering their translations, the first question that arises is: Do the translators call people by their original names, or do they adopt language equivalents or paraphrases?

In HP, as in the fairy-tale realm, names usually have a magical «truthtelling» quality. Thus, Rowling offers a gallery of metaphorical or caricatured names that offer some allusions or even elicit laughter in the English-speaking reader: for example, bumbling schoolmates like *Cornelius Fudge* (which means not only a rich buttery confection, but a slip-up or blundering problem-solving process), and *Fred Pinhead* (the surname is a common putdown meaning «small-brained» or «stupid»). Other comical characters that are made more so by their names are the custodian *Filch* (a slang word for the verb *steal)* and his servant *Peeves* (calling to mind the adjective *peevish* —testy, fussy, resentful). In this last case, we are dealing with a clever cross-over of qualities: Filch is usually peevish, and Peeves has a tendency to steal things! Even an invented name like *Dursley* (that of Harry's adopted family) carries a series of apt descriptive associations —*dull, dour, surly.*

The function of such names in the English text is not only to reinforce characterizations that are already there, but in some cases to anticipate the drawing of a character or even to make it unnecessary: for example, the personalities of Crabbe and Goyle need not be demonstrated by their appearance or their actions —they are already represented (for the English reader!) purely by their names. Or the name of Hogwarts' headmaster, Albus Dumbledore, calls up several associations —Albus (Latin for *white)* may represent the «good» side that this wizard has always upheld. But the surname Dumbledore first recalls the pejorative word *dumb* (stupid or mute) —or, worse yet, *bumbling* (clumsy, inept). The second half of the name perhaps is derived from the French *d'or* (golden), which also appears in the name of Harry's house, Gryffindor.

Some of the questions that immediately arise when crossing cultural and linguistic barriers are the following: Are the translators aware of these associations between the name and its implicit meaning? Have these associations been kept in the TT? How do the translators' choices affect the reader's perceptions of the characters in comparison with the English texts? Is the same sense of humor maintained?

A comparison of the OT and the six selected languages reveals that, basically, the names of the main characters have been kept in all the translations. So we read: *Harry Potter, Malfoy, Hagrid, Mr. and Mrs. Dursely, Dumbledore, Dudley, Hogwarts*, or *Hermione* in most of the languages with some small adaptations. Some of these adaptations are: *Hermione* becomes *Hermine* in German; *Dudley* becomes *Duda* in Portuguese (nickname for *Eduardo), Malfoy* becomes *Malafoy* in French, and *Hogwart School* becomes *collège Poudlard* in French).

As for some other humorous people names considered, I will separate them into two groups according to the translation strategies used. I must say that it is a very rough classification and that there are no clear boundaries between them. The strategies are:

1. Translating by using spelling adaptations
2. Translating by producing meaning adaptations

In the first group I include names whose spelling has been adapted to the TL. Among the languages studied, Portuguese is the language that most frequently adapts the spelling. Thus, *Rubeus* becomes *Rúbeo*, *Albus* becomes *Alvo*, *Hedwig* becomes *Edwiges*, *Justine* becomes *Justino*, or *Argus* becomes *Argo*. The other languages occasionally adapt the spelling of some names as for example, *Lavender* becomes *Lavanda* in Italian, *Dedalus Diggle* becomes *Dädalus Diggle* in German, and *Fluffy* becomes *Fuffi* in Italian. But the tendency is to maintain the same word as in the OT.

As for the second group —meaning adaptations— different levels and percentages of adaptations exist for the different languages. That is to say, not all of the languages adapt the same names and not all of them make the same kind of adaptations. Thus, some of the languages adapt just one or two names paying specific attention to features such as alliteration, or metaphorical meaning, or allusions, while others adapt most of them but trying to keep only one of these aspects.

The comparison reveals that there are different degrees of adaptation and that some of the most common strategies used are:

a) Substitution of an equivalent name in the corresponding language, trying to keep some of the implicit meanings.
b) Substitution of names that sound more familiar to the TL readers, although they may not produce specific associations.
c) Use of names maintaining not only the metaphorical meaning or some of the allusions produced, but also looking for reproducing the phonological effects (alliteration) that the name produces in the OT.

a) In the first case, that is, substitution of an equivalent name in the corresponding language, trying to keep some of the implicit meanings, *Cornelius Fudge* serves as an example. This name has been kept in all of the translations except Italian where it becomes *Cornelius Caramell*, thus making some of the already mentioned allusions in the OT explicit for Italian readers. The same happens with *Professor*

Snape, the master of potions, whose name in English refers of a snake and may conjure up of all the biblical associations for malice. *Snape* is maintained in four of the six translations (Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, and German). In Italian, however, it becomes *Professor Piton*, thus producing the same associations (Ita. *Piton* = Eng. *Snake),* and in French *Professor Rogue* (meaning «red», «bad», «blood color»), in this case using different words but keeping some of the allusions in the OT.

Another example is *Professor Lockhart* that can be associated with «locked heart», «cold person». The English name has been maintained in most of the translations except in Catalan where it becomes *Decors*, which might produce associations to someone «without a heart».

b) Examples of the use of names that sound more familiar to the TL readers, although they may not produce specific associations, include the translation of *Bill and Charlie* as *Gui e Carlinhos* in Portuguese; or that of *Colin* translated as *Pau* in Catalan; or *Peeves,* Filch's servant, translated as *Pirraça* in Portuguese, and as *Pix* in Italian.

c) The use of names maintaining not only the metaphorical meaning or some of the allusions produced, but also looking for the phonological effects (alliteration) that the name produces in the OT involves a very complex task which requires skillful translators. The comparison again reveals that some translators as for example, Catalan, Portuguese, and Italian have made a stronger effort to produce humorous, delicious translations while other translators (as for example in Spanish and German) usually reproduce the English words. Some examples follow. A very successful rendering is that of *Moaning Myrtle* as *Gemma Gemec* into Catalan where not only the name but also the appellative with alliteration has been adapted, thus producing a similar effect in Catalan readers as in the English ones. The same strategy is also used in French where we read *Mimi Geignarde* («moaning», «groanning»), although the result seems to be less effective as the alliteration is lost. German and Spanish, however, prefer to translate just the appellative and keep the first name. Besides, alliteration is achieved in German with the use of *Maulande Myrthe*, while in the case of Spanish more attention is given to meaning than to alliteration. Thus we read *Myrthe, la Llorona* («the crying one»).

A similar example is that of the translation of *Mrs. Norris,* Filch's cat, a scrawny, dust-colored creature. The Italian text changes the name but keeps the alliteration translating it as *Mrs. Purr*, thus provoking associations with the sound cats make. Portuguese suggests this same effect by adding some 'r' sound to the English name: *Madame No-r-r-ra*. French changes the name trying to make some of the implicit allusions in the text explicit and uses: *Miss Teigne* («povertry», «meanness», «ringworm»). And the rest of the translations (Spanish, Catalan, and German) maintain the English name *Miss Norris*.

Another example in which meaning and alliteration are kept together is the case of *Madame Pomfrey* which becomes *Madame Pomfresh* in French, adapting the English name to produce clearer associations with «pomme de terre» ('potato')

and «fresh» ('good potatoes'). Italian, however, prefers to use a word which is clearly associated with something kids like, and we read *Madam Chips,* although the word does not have any connection to English in terms of pronunciation. The rest of the TTs maintain the English name.

Adaptations or «domestications» of this kind are also seen in the next two examples in the case of Spanish when translating the names of the famous witches and wizards *Alberic Grunnion* and *Hengist of Woodcroft* as *Rey Salomón* and *Ramon Llull*. In this case, the substitution of the original names for the names of two historical people who are not considered wizards –the biblical King Salomon, and the Catalan medieval writer Ramon Llull— is surprising. It is also interesting to mention the fact that the Spanish version is the one that keeps more names in English, copying directly from the OT. Italian also adapts the second name paraphrasing «woodcraft», and using *Hengist of folleto dei Boschi.*

A more successful rendering where both alliteration and meaning are kept is that of the following writers' names and their books in Italian and Catalan. The other languages copy from the OT:

English	Italian	Catalan
The Standard Book of Spells by Miranda Goshawk	*Manuale degli Incatesimi, Volume primo,* di Miranda Gadula	*Llibre d'encanteris (nivell I)*, de Marina Fetillera
Magical Theory by Adalbert Waffling	*Teoria della Magia,* di Adalbert Incant	*Teoria de la màgia,* de Albert Xarramecu
A Beginners' Guide to Transfiguration by Emeric Switch	*Guida pratica alla trasfigurazione per principianti,* di Emeric Zott	*Introducció a la transfiguració*, de Xavier Mudancer
One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi by Phyllida Spore	*Mille erbe e funghi magici*, di Phyllida Spore	*Mil i una herbes i bolets màgics,* de Rosa Rosae
The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection by Quentin Trimble	*Le Forze Oscure: guida all'autoprotezione*, di Dante Tremante	*Les forces del mal. Guia per a l'autodefensa*, de Pere de Tramolar

A close look reveals that in English the author's names have been carefully chosen by J.K. Rowling in such a way that the title of the book and its author creates a series of associations that help guess at the content of the book. For example the author of *The Standard Book of Spells,* Miranda Goshawk, is made up of two words: «ghost» + «hawk», thus joining characteristics of both components. When translating, both translators use words that suggest the same meaning *(Gadula* in Italian and *Fetillera* in Catalan).

In *A Beginners' Guide to Transfiguration* by Emeric Switch, both words «transfiguration» and «switch» share some connections. In Catalan the same effect is achieved with «transfiguració» and Xavier Mudancer («changeable»).

In *One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi* by Phyllida Spore we find «spore» as in Italian, and in Catalan *Rosa Rosae,* a successful rendering which uses the Latin name of a plant and even creates alliteration.

In *The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection* by Quentin Trimble, the book title has been literally translated but the author's name has been adapted into a more common name in the TT, thus reading *Dante* in Italian and *Pere* in Catalan.

In HP we also find lexical constructions used to describe or mention some characters such as *Lord Voldemort* and *Nearly-Headless-Nick.*

In the case of *Lord Voldemort,* who is called *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,* or *You-Know-Who,* most of the translators produce a literal translation, as for example, *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named* becomes *El-que-no-debe-ser-nombrado* in Spanish; *Aquell a qui no hem d'anomenar* in Catalan; *Colui-Che-non-Deve-Essere-Nominato* in Italian; and *Celui-Dont-le-Nom-Ne-Doit-Pas-Être-Prononcé* in French. A literal translation is also used for *You-Know-Who*: *Lo-que-usted-sabe* in Spanish*; Você-Sabe-O-Quê* in Portuguese; *Tu-Sai-Chi* in Italian, and *Du-weisst-schon-wer* in German.

In the case of *Nearly Headless-Nick*, as we can see in the following chart, in all the languages except in Spanish we find a literal translation. The Spanish name, however, reads «decapitado» («beheaded», «decapitated») producing certain implicit associations or allusions to «fight», «revenge», and «strength», that are not in the OT. The Spanish translator, Alicia Dellepiane, may have made such a choice influenced by another character, *Sir Properly Decapitated Podmore*, translated as *Sir Bien Decapitado Podmore* and similarly in the other languages studied, e.g. *Sir Ordentlich Geköptterpodmore* in German, and *Ce monsieur Coupé-Court-Podmore* in French.

English	Spanish	Catalan	Portuguese	Italian	German	French
Nearly Headless-Nick	Nick-Casi-Decapitado	Nick-de-poc-sense-cap	Nick Quase Sem Cabeça	Nick-Quasi-Senza-testa	Auf päpel-trank die Jagd der Kopflossen	Nick Quasi-Sans-Tête

Finally, there are two invented main words that are basic to the development of the plot and are constantly repeated: *muggles* and *squib.* A muggle is someone «without a drop of magical blood in their veins» *(Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secrets*, ch. 1, 9) and *a squib* is «someone who was born into a wizarding family but hasn't got any magic powers. Kind of the opposite of Muggler-born wizard» *(Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secrets,* ch. 9, p. 110)*. In both cases they are neologisms made up by the following processes of compounding. «Muggle» suggests several associations: with «mug», the slang word for «face» implicitly meaning «ugliness,» with «juggle», and with «bungle» ('to do something badly or clumsily,' 'to spoil a task through lack of skill'). And «squib» is associated with «squab» (baby pigeon) or with «squid», but also with «firecracker». Again, the translation of these two terms is a new challenge for the translator, who has to choose between using the new word in the OT, introduce a neologism by creating a new word, or

simply using an existing word in the TT. As we can see in chart below: Spanish, Catalan and German are the ones that use the English word. Portuguese, Italian and French successfully create new words taking into account the phonological characteristics of the languages. Thus Portuguese uses *Trouxas,* a word that makes readers think of a «silly», «stupid person». Italian uses *Babano,* an invented word that is reminiscent of «babbeo» also meaning «stupid», «silly person». And French uses the meaningless word *Moldus*.

English	Spanish	Catalan	Portuguese	Italian	German	French
Muggles	Muggles	Muggles	Trouxas	Babani	Muggle	Moldus

In the case of *squib*, again Spanish and German use the English word while Catalan *(llufa)* and French (*Cracmol)* prefer to create a word in TL that maintain some of the implicit allusions of the OT. Thus in Catalan, *fer llufa* means «to fail», «not to respond as it was expected».

In short, different translators use different strategies, but it is not easy to establish clear boundaries between these different strategies. The comparison also reveals that the same translator doesn't always use the same strategies nor is the use of specific strategies associated to specific languages. All of the strategies are used in all of the languages. The differences are in how and where they are used. And the translator is the one that must have the ability and the necessary tools to produce adequate texts in TL in order to produce equivalent TTs according to the *skopos* principle: the target receiver should understand the text world of the translation in the same way as the source receivers understand the text world of the original.

III. A comparison of place names through languages

Like people in Harry Potter, some places are also characterized by the semantic associations of their labels. Thus, associated with the names of some of the protagonists get to know the four houses that make up Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry: *Griffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw,* and *Slytherin*. Their names come from their founders and each of them also provokes associations/allusions in English.

If we have a look at the chart below, some of the strategies mentioned before for the translation of proper names are also used in here:

English	Spanish	Catalan	Portuguese	Italian	German	French
Godric Griffindor	Godric Griffindor	Nicanor Griffindor	Grifonória	Grifondoro	Griffindor	Godric Gryffondor
Helga Hufflepuff	Helga Hufflepuff	Hortensia Hufflepuff	Lufa-Lufa	Tassorosso	Hufflepuff	Helga Poufsouffle
Rowena Ravenclaw	Rowena Ravenclaw	Mari Pau Ravenclaw	Corvinal	Corvonero	Ravenclaw	Rowena Serdaigle
Salazar Slytherin	Salazar Slytherin	Sirpentin Slytherin	Sonserina	Serpeverde	Slytherin	Salazar Serpentard

First, it can be seen that some translators even change the first name as in Catalan, which uses names that are easily recognized by its readers without producing the effect of foreignness as they do when they are kept in English. As for the first name, Spanish, Catalan and German maintain the English names. Portuguese, Italian, and French have changed some of them, offering different degrees of ability of the translators when making choices that may affect the readers' perception of the characters, scenery, etc. as is explained in the following paragraphs.

In those languages where the translator has translated (and not copied) the words, sometimes even creating new words, the main strategy followed, independently of the language, is that of adapting the English word by keeping its meaning and following the morphological processes of the language, as, for example by adding the adequate ending and placing the stress as in the case of *Griffindor* translated as *Grifonória* in Portuguese. Or *Grifondoro* in Italian, a word that corresponds phonetically to *grifon d'oro*. Or the case of *Hufflepuff,* which becomes *Lufa-Lufa* in Portuguese (an invented word keeping phonetic considerations), and is translated as *Tassorosso* in Italian ('tasso' = 'badger'; 'rosso' = 'red', the emblem of Hufflepuff being a badger.) In choosing *Tassorosso,* phonetic considerations may have played a role (ff/ff - ss/ss). Along the same lines is *Ravenclaw* ('Raven' + 'claw'): In Portuguese we read *Corvinal* ('corvo' = 'raven'), and in Italian *Corvonero (* 'corvo' = 'raven;' 'nero' = 'black'). Interestingly (and mysteriously) enough in the first book (at least in the early editions) *Ravenclaw* is called *Pecoranera* («black sheep») in the Italian text. Another example: Portuguese uses *Sonserina* as the adaptation for *Slytherin,* a word that can be associated with the verb «to slither» (to move in a serpentine manner). In Italian it is translated as *Serpeverde* ('serpe' = 'snake').

Other examples of place names that include semantic associations are, for example, the name of the bookstore *Flourish and Blotts* which brings to mind the action of an old-fashioned quill pen («flourish» being a long, sweeping stroke and «blots» being inkspots on paper). Spanish and German copy the English name, while Catalan adapts it as *Gargots i Nibres* ('gargots' = «pothook», and 'nibres', an invented word that might be associated with 'llibres' = «books»). Similarly, the names *Gambol and Japes* both recall frivolous play («gambol» = to cavort, leap about; «jape» = teasing action, practical joke) —eminently appropriate for a joke shop! Most translators keep the shop name, except in Catalan that again looks for words with a similar meaning: *El Saltiró i l'Ensurt: Objectes de Broma Màgics.*

The invented name of the wizards' bank, *Gringotts*, can also be unpacked semantically: the English reader can readily picture goblins «grinning» over their vast store of «ingots» (heavy blocks of gold). This, however, does not happen with the translated versions as most of them keep the English word preventing their readers from having a full meaning, so we read *gringotes*, *gringotts*.

Other invented place names that exploit the punning possibilities of the English language are the street *Diagon Alley* that immediately calls to mind the English word «diagonally» (describing a straight line that crosses a square at opposite corners), or *Knockturn Alley* whose Germanic roots conjure up the image of a place so shadowy and mysterious that at every «turn» one is «knocking» into something —while

the sound of the words is entirely Latinate: «nocturnally» (active in the night-time). In Spanish, readers get *El callejón Diagon*, destroying the image of «diagonically crossing», Catalans read *La ronda d'Alla,* which uses a very common word that produces a similar image adapted to the new context and culture. Portuguese reads a*s Beco Diagonal*, maintaining the same image, while the Italian and German versions use the English words.

Some of the places exist purely in a realm of conceptual absurdity, but they add comic effect to the story. This is the case of the celebrated *Platform Nine and Three Quarters* at the King's Cross train station, which is located directly between platforms 9 and 10. To get there, one only has to de-materialize inside the wall adjoining Platform 9 without one's disappearance being noticed by mere mortals *(Muggles)*. All the translations offer a literal rendering of these words except Portuguese which prefers *Plataforma nove e meia* ('Platform Nine and a Half').

IV. A comparison of names of objects and things through languages

As we know, the HP books are full of characters, names of places and of things that are challenges for the translators. The translation of those invented words that add a magical tone to the text also add new difficulties to the translators' task. In English, as we have seen in previous pages, J.K. Rowling uses different resources that must be identified by the translators and also reproduced. This is the case of the plays-on-words with alliteration frequently used to name objects. This phonological device performs different functions, such as identifying the object or its possessor, or describing certain characteristics or simply adding humor. Examples are the titles of the innumerable books by Gilderoy Lockhart. These books describe encounters with practitioners of the «Dark Arts»: *Holidays with Hags* (a synonym for *witches), Voyages with Vampires*, *Wanderings with Werewolves*. When taken into another language, most translators choose to maintain the meaning: a) by literally translating the title, as in *Voyages with Vampires* which becomes *Viaje con los vampiros* in Spanish, or b) by producing new, funny titles, without destroying the alliteration, as in the Catalan translation of the above book: *Vaig ser testimoni del matrimoni d'un dimoni* (literally meaning «I was a witness of the marriage of a devil»).

Other notable alliterated objects include the *Whomping Willow* (which beats on Mr. Weasley's car after Ron and Harry accidentally crash into it) and *Filibuster's Fireworks* (a special treat bought at Gambol and Japes' shop —note the felicitous word association between Fili*buster* and *bursting* pyrotechnical devices). When analyzing the translations we find that alliteration is usually lost and the meaning is rendered literally, as is the case of Spanish where the *whomping willow* becomes *el sauce boxeador* (literally 'boxing willow'), and in Catalan *el pi cabaralla (*'pi' meaning 'pine' and 'picabaralla' being «argument», «quarrel»). *Filibuster's Fireworks* is translated as *bengalas del doctor Filibuster* in Spanish*, Filibuster-Feuerwerskörper* in German, *pétards du Dr. Flibuster* in French, and *Coets del Dr. Bocamoll* in Catalan, where the proper name is substituted for a typical name from this area in Spain, suggesting «a bigmouth».

Neologisms also abound in the names of objects, especially magical ones. The new words are compound words typically recognizable by the English reader, and as a result the appearance and/or effect of the object in question can readily be guessed. For example, *Polyjuice Potion* (a serum that induces the taker to tell the truth) is, in effect, a *polygraph* (mechanical «lie-detector») in the form of a *juice.* Similarly, *Skele-Gro* is a medicine to make bones grow; the *Pepperup Potion* cures colds instantly; everybody has the magic ball *Remembrall* to help you remember the things you have to do. You can also read *Kwikspell,* the correspondence course in beginners' magic, and you will quickly learn how to be a wizard or a witch.

The immediate questions are: Have the translators followed the same procedures to create new words? Do all the languages facilitate the same word-formation processes of putting together two words and/or shortening them? Do the readers of the translated versions infer the same meaning as their English counterparts?

A closer look at some of them reveals that, for example, in the case of *Polyjuice potion*, Catalan and French are the ones that offer a more TL reader-oriented translation, following different strategies: Catalan makes the hidden meaning of the English term explicit, and French creates a compound word by keeping the classical prefix *poly-* and adding a word whose meaning is easily associated with juices. Thus we read: *Poció de la mutació* and *Polynectar* respectively. *Skele-Gro* is an innovative compound translated into the different languages in the same way, that is, putting two words together. French is the only one that uses an invented single word *(Poussoss)* that can be associated with 'pousser' («to grow») and 'os' («bones»).

In the case of *Pepperup,* Spanish keeps the English word *(Poción Pepperup)*, German translates it literally as *Aufpäpel-Trankwirkte,* suggesting a «hot drink», and French uses a single word *La Pimentine,* a word that produces some similar associations as in the English text but which loses some components (the effect of «up»). Catalan is again the one that follows the same processes and produces a very successful rendering *(Poció Pebretxús)* joining 'pepper' ('pebre') and the sound of sneezing when you smell pepper ('atxús').

In the case of the *Remembrall*, «a glass ball the size of a large marble, which seemed to be full of white smoke [...] and tells you if there's something you've forgotten to do. You hold it tight and if it turns red, you've forgotten something*» (The Sorcerer's Stone,* ch. 9, p. 145), the word-formation processes to create this invented word are the same as we have seen before —joining two words: remember + ball. The strategy followed by most translators is the use of a word with the same meaning plus a suffix, instead of two words together, a process that is favored by Roman languages. Thus, we find in Spanish *Recordadora*, in Catalan *Recordatori,* in Portuguese *Lembrol,* in Italian *Ricordela*, meaning «something/one that makes you remember something». In German*,* a language with different roots, we find *Erinnermich,* meaning «Make me remember», thus using a different device.

Finally I will pay attention to Quidditch, «the most popular sport in the wizarding world (six tall goalposts, four flying balls, and fourteen players on broomsticks», *The Chamber of Secrets*, ch. 1, p. 9). This game features several innovative details that become vividly engaging to the English-speaking reader through well-chosen

invented labels (see C. Valero and L. Bogaslow 2002). The chart below provides some useful information about this game in different languages.

English	Spanish	Catalan	Portuguese	Italian	German	French
Quidditch	Quidditch	Quidditch	Quadribol	Quidditch	Quidditch	Quidditch
Quaffle	Quaffle	Bomba	Goles	Pluffa	Quaffle	Quaffle
Golden snitch	Snitch dorada	Papallona	Balaçco	Boccino d'oro	Goldene Schnatz	Vif d'or
Bludger	Bludger	Bala	Pomo	Bolido	Klatscher	Cognard

A close look reveals that Portuguese is the only one that creates a new word for *Quidditch* –*Quadribol*— and it also translates the different balls used: *Quaffle* becomes *goles*, *snitch* becomes *bolaçco*, and *bludger* becomes *pomo*. The translator has obviously understood the role of each one and uses words which describe the function they have.

The same strategy has been used in Catalan, in Italian, and French. In Catalan, *quaffle* becomes *bomba*; *snitch* is *papallona* ('butterfly'), and *bludger* is *bala* ('bullet'). In Italian, *quaffle* becomes *pluffa* (an invented word); *golden snitch* becomes *boccino d'oro* ('jack,' the small ball in the game of balls), and *bludger* becomes *bolido* (something /someone really fast). And in French: *golden snitch* becomes *vif d'or,* a word easily associated with something alive, vivid, and *bludger* becomes *cognard,* an invented compound word made up of the verb «cogner» («to take», but also to «hit») + the suffix -*ard*, an ending whose meaning could be easily associated with words producing derogatory connotations. In German, words have been literally translated and in Spanish they have literally been copied, thus the readers miss part of meaning and comic effect the words produce when heard.

The expertise of some translators is also shown in the translation of cultural words or words that refer to elements deeply rooted in the culture as is the case of some brands of candies like *Mars Bars*, reproduced in all the languages and probably recognizable by all of the readers. However, in the case of *Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans*, which is not as famous as *Mars Bars,* different techniques have been used to render their meaning: In Spanish and Catalan the name of the product has been translated but the name of the brand has been kept. Thus, in Spanish we read: *Grageas Bertie Bott de Todos los Sabores,* and in Catalan we read: *Caramels de Tots els Gustos de Bertie Bott*. Italian, on the other hand, prefers to avoid foreign names and successfully creates a new brand of candy: *gelatine Tutti gusti + 1*.

In the case of an ingredient for a magic potion*, fluxweed*, the translator needs to show his/her expertise again. Thus, in Spanish and Catalan, the name of a plant in Latin is used, giving the text a sense of exoticism and magic: *Descurainia sophia* and *herba de Santa Sofia* respectively. German and French adapt the English word, thus using *flussgras* and *sisymbre* respectively. Similar strategies have been followed in the case of the medicinal *knotgrass* that can easily be envisioned as an herb whose strands are tangled up together. Spanish uses *centinodia*; Catalan uses *passacamins;* German uses *Knöterich;* and French uses *polygonum*.

I could continue to analyze other elements in the Harry Potter series that implicitly produce certain associations in the English readers, and which explicitly mean certain difficulties for the translators in their task to render the words into other languages and cultures. Nevertheless, the comparison made in previous pages provides enough information to reach some conclusions about the strategies used by the different translators for translating the meaning and the form of the complex, rich world of Harry Potter (For more information see C. Valero and L. Bogaslow 2001, 2002; C. Valero 2002).

V. Conclusions

The translations of the HP series into Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Portuguese, German, and French reproduce the plot devices, characterizations, and countless descriptive details of J.K. Rowling's books with varying degrees of success. The comparison reveals that one fanciful, expressive, and humorous dimension is not always reproduced and is even left almost completely untranslated in some languages. This dimension is the abundance of invented names of people, places, and things. These names inevitably conjure up associations for English-speaking readers (even those just starting school), but might well be semantically empty —or at least phonologically challenging— for the non-English-speaking audience.

The data from the above comparison shows that different strategies are used by the different translators, but for different purposes and with a different frequency as well, obviously producing a different effect. The comparison also reveals that some translators adopt a more target-oriented point of view and produce a more culturally adapted text as is the case of Catalan, Portuguese and Italian, and at some points French. Other translators, however, prefer to maintain proper and place names in the original languages, thus producing a more literal translation. This is the case of Spanish and German. However, at this point it is worth mentioning that there is a big difference between these two languages as Spanish is a Romance language while German has the same Germanic origin as English, so its readers share many roots and meanings with the English ones that are closed for Romance language readers, and that, unless the translator discloses their meaning, the readers inevitably lose it, as happens with the Spanish translation of the HP series.

Neologisms and invented words are a challenge for the translators who must be familiar not only with both cultures, that of the OT and the TT, but also with the two languages in order to adapt the morphological processes to produce the same effect. This is particularly relevant when dealing with comic material, as often is the case in the HP books. Along these lines we have seen that different strategies have been adopted by the different translators with different degrees of success.

Summarizing, according to the *skopos* principle, the target receiver should understand the text world of the translation in the same ways as the source receivers understand the text world of the original text, Catalan, Portuguese, and Italian are the ones that apply it in a more sucessfull way as they offer a more culturally adapted version of the OT. The French translation successfully adapts some mate-

rial, but it also cuts out some information. German basically follows the English text, and the Spanish version produces a rather literal translation, keeping many English names in the texts, and preventing its readers from enjoying a culturally adapted text that reveals some of the hidden meanings of the OT.

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