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**DEPARTAMENT DE FILOLOGIA ANGLESA I DE GERMANÍSTICA**

**Translating the Invisible: Exploring the  
Translation of *Ungenderness* in English and Catalan  
Narratives**

Treball de Fi de Grau/ BA dissertation

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June 2023

## **Statement of Intellectual Honesty**

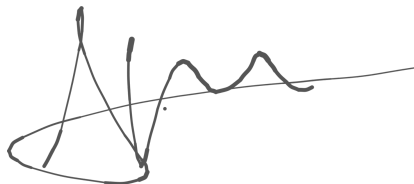
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Agnès Fortin Foz', written over a horizontal line.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to express my enormous gratitude to my supervisor Hortènsia Curell for her utmost help and support during this entire process. Your *I know you can do it*s were my best motivator. Thank you so much.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INDEX OF TABLES</b> .....	ii
Abstract.....	1
1. Introduction .....	2
2. Theoretical Background .....	4
2.1 Gender and Language .....	4
2.1.1 English as a Natural Gender Language .....	4
2.1.2 Grammatical Gender in Catalan and Spanish .....	6
2.1.3 Generic masculine in English, Spanish and Catalan .....	9
2.2 Translation and Gender.....	11
2.2.1 Canadian School of Feminist Translation .....	14
2.2.2 Main Challenges of Translating Gender .....	16
3. Case Studies.....	19
3.1 <i>Written on the Body</i> .....	21
3.2 “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora” .....	23
3.3 Translation Strategies and Analysis.....	24
3.3.1 Equation .....	26
3.3.2 Substitution .....	27
3.3.3 Divergence .....	28
3.3.4 Amplification .....	29
3.3.5 Reduction .....	30
3.3.6 Diffusion.....	31
3.3.7 Condensation.....	32
3.3.8 Reordering.....	33
3.3.9 Transposition and Modulation .....	34
3.4 Generic Masculine .....	36
4. Conclusion.....	37
References .....	38

## **INDEX OF TABLES**

Table 1. English 3rd personal singular pronouns .....	5
Table 2. Gender in English.....	6
Table 3. Gendered Spanish personal pronouns .....	8
Table 4. Different ways to mark gender in Spanish and Catalan .....	9

## **Abstract**

The field of translation studies has just recently started to explore the intersection between translation and gender. Considering that gender is both a linguistic and a social category, any translation inevitably becomes cross-cultural and cross-ideological. For this reason, the present study focuses on the interconnection between translation and gender and aims to analyse and comment on the translation of gender indeterminacy. The narratives I chose in order to do the analysis manage to avoid the use of gender markers throughout the texts, thus, presenting ungendered characters. This paper, then, presents an analysis of the English translation of “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora” (1975) and the Spanish translation of *Written on the Body* (1992) in order to determine how and if gender ambiguity has been maintained in the translated texts. I will also briefly comment on the consequences of the translations to ascertain whether they were able to preserve the original meaning or whether there were any alterations in the meaning of the texts.

**Key words:** translation, gender, translation strategies, ungendered characters, grammatical gender, natural gender, Jeanette Winterson, Carme Riera

## 1. Introduction

The Catalan short story “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora” (1975), written by Majorcan author Carme Riera, displays, through an epistolary narrative, an impossible love story between a student and her teacher throughout the years. Linguistically, it is impressive because of the absence of gender markers when referring to the lover, which seems something inevitable to do in the Catalan language. Similarly, postmodernist writer Jeanette Winterson published the short novel *Written on the Body* (1992), a story about love, loss, and the body, narrated by a character whose gender is never unveiled. Making use of what we will call “gender subversive device”, both Riera and Winterson manage to avoid using gendered language in respect to these characters, thus, exhibiting an excellent control of the language. Additionally, since readers from the sociocultural environment of the West are influenced by a gender binarism that obliges us to categorise ourselves in it, it is thought-provoking to see the consequences of such ground-breaking use of gender in these literary pieces.

Gender as a linguistic category distinguishes between those languages with grammatical gender, i.e. Catalan and Spanish, and those with natural gender, as is the case with English. It is indubitable, then, that a translation between these languages might become problematic as, linguistically, they approach gender in such opposite ways. The translator should not only be aware of how gender works in the original language, but also of the different strategies that could be used in order to maintain a similar meaning in the other. Riera and Winterson’s narratives enable us to analyse this phenomenon to see how a translation from English to Spanish, and vice versa—from Catalan to English—can be accomplished.



My personal interest for the chosen topic grew in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the degree, when faced with translation for the first time, I realised that gender was not a thoroughly discussed topic in the field. With the intention of writing a multidisciplinary TFG, the intersection of translation and gender attracted my attention. Moreover, I became inspired when I found a lack of studies on this particular subject, and even fewer involving Catalan, my native language.

The present dissertation, then, aims to analyse and discuss the translation of gender, or more specifically, the translation of gender indeterminacy, through the analysis of the translations of “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora” (henceforth, TD) and *Written on the Body* (hereafter, WB). My main focus is to examine some of the translation strategies used and to comment on their consequences in order to see if it is possible to maintain gender ambiguity without modifying the Source Text (ST). In order to carry out the analysis, I chose the English translation “I Leave You, My Love, the Sea as a Token” (1988) by translator Alberto Moreiras, as well as Encarna Castejón’s *Escrito en el Cuerpo* (2006).

With regards to the structure of the dissertation, it is organized as follows: the first section presents the key features and differences between two different systems of linguistic gender, i.e. natural and grammatical. The second section focuses on the interconnection between translation and gender, with a brief comment on Canadian Feminist Translation as well as on the main challenges of translating gender. Finally, the third section presents the analysis of the chosen translations, following Malone’s (1988) taxonomy of translation strategies. It is in this final section where I will comment on how

gender has been translated in these specific cases of ambiguity as well as of the consequences of the translations regarding a possible modification of the original texts.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1 Gender and Language**

The question of gender as a linguistic category is a complex topic. In this section, I will focus on the gender system of English as well as that of Catalan and Spanish. Corbett (1991) offers two basic distinctions in gender systems. The first category is called “strict semantic systems” or simply “semantic gender” and it encompasses those languages in which gender is assigned by semantic meaning. Hence, the gender of a noun is determined by the meaning the word holds in the real world. The second category is that of “grammatical gender” or “formal system”, in which gender is assigned on formal criteria, nouns have an inherent gender assigned to them and other categories—determiners and adjectives, mostly—inflect for gender through agreement with the noun. All grammatical gender systems also have a semantic core, that is, that “there often is a correlation between grammatical gender and biological sex for nouns describing human beings” (Curzan 2003, p. 16).

#### **2.1.1 English as a Natural Gender Language**

Most commonly categorised as a “natural gender system”, Corbett argues that this is a system “where given the meaning of a noun, its gender can be predicted without reference to its form” (quoted in Curzan 2003, p. 18). In opposition, “the [gender] classification of nouns corresponds for the most part to real-world distinctions” (Curzan 2003, p. 17). That

is to say, gender assignment is only based on the noun's meaning. As a language with mostly covert grammatical categories, or in other words, with no formal marks of the grammatical category a word belongs to, "only pronouns show gender agreement" in English (McConnell-Ginet 2013, p. 4). In fact, 3<sup>rd</sup> personal singular pronouns are the only grammatical form containing gender meaning that remain in English. The act of choosing the correct pronoun depends on the knowledge the addresser of the communicative act has about the referent's gender identity. Hence, English is considered to have a pronominal gender system, "in which the personal pronouns *he/she/it* reflect a triple-gender system" (Curzan 2003, p. 20):

Male referent	He ( <i>him, himself, his</i> )
Female referent	She ( <i>her, herself, hers</i> )
Sexless or inanimate object	It ( <i>itself, its</i> )

Table 1. English 3rd personal singular pronouns

Another way to attribute gender in English is through the lexicon. Common examples are that of *woman/daughter* for female referents in opposition to *man/son* for male ones. Most gender-specific words in the English lexicon take completely different forms and become "asymmetries in male-female word pairs (e.g., *man* and *woman*, *bachelor* and *spinster*)" (Curzan 2003, p. 3). As a relic of the grammatical system of Old English, some inanimate objects are still being referred to as feminine in contemporary times. The most famous example of this occurrence is the understanding of *ship* and *church* as innately feminine words. Most proper names [*Lucy-John*] and some adjectives [*pretty-handsome*] also show gender, even if the meaning of the word per se does not

directly denote the gender of the referent. The associated gender of these words are a consequence of conventional understandings of natural gender and thus, their gendered connotations must be learned (Whorf 1956, mentioned in Curzan, 2003). Tradition and customs, then, also influence the attribution of gender in English. Overall, gender in English can be depicted in the following way (Quirk et al., 1985; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002):

1.	Masculine ( <i>he</i> )	<i>husband, prince, Mr.</i>
2.	Feminine ( <i>she</i> )	<i>wife, princess, Ms.</i>
3.	Common/Epicene <sup>1</sup> ( <i>he/she/they</i> ):	<i>cousin, student, singer.</i>
4.	Neuter ( <i>it</i> )	<i>child, crocodile, rock.</i>

Table 2. Gender in English.

### 2.1.2 Grammatical Gender in Catalan and Spanish

Catalan and Spanish would fall into Corbett’s second classification of gender systems, that of grammatical gender, which is “a widespread feature in many of the world languages” (Beatty-Martínez & Dussias 2020, p.1). Since both are inflectional languages, they function as a system where “verbs, nouns, adjectives, determiners—including articles—and most of the pronouns are variable or inflected” (Massanell 2020, p. 135). Regarding gender, determiners and most adjectives agree in gender and number with their head noun. In some cases, verb inflections also have a gender mark. Thus, “gender agreement (together with number agreement) is a means of reflecting the syntactic relations between certain words within a phrase or sentence” (Massanell, p. 9). Just as

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<sup>1</sup> *Common* and *epicene* are two terms used interchangeably.

importantly, Spanish and Catalan have a clear binary gender (masculine-feminine) with no neuter option. Generally, gender is arbitrarily assigned to most nouns [*el suelo/la mesa* – *el llibre/la revista*], except when the referent is an animate being in which case gender is determined by the gender of the referent [*el amigo/la reina* – *el noi/la neboda*].

As a general rule, in both Spanish and Catalan the final vowels of nouns and adjectives serve as gender markers. Regarding Spanish, -o endings mark the masculine and -a endings the feminine [*chico/chica*]. Endings in -e or consonants (called unmarked), are also generally considered masculine. Similarly, the masculine in Catalan is generally unmarked [*gos*] whereas the feminine shows an -a ending [*poma*].

Nouns and adjectives work similarly, the only difference being that in adjectives “the final vowel (which is surface-identical to the final vowel of nouns) correlates with gender in all cases” (Fábregas 2018, p. 270) [*bonito/bonita* – *cansat/cansada*]. In other words, not all vowel endings correspond to their assigned gender, but a vast majority of adjectives do morphologically change by the addition and/or change of the gender mark, needed to agree with the noun. There are also some invariable adjectives in both languages that “have a singular inflected form which serves for both in masculine and feminine” (Massanell 2020, p. 149), and they do not follow any specific rule. Some examples are *adorable/débil* in Spanish and *feliç/intel·ligent* in Catalan.

Determiners, especially articles—both definite and indefinite—and demonstratives also inflect for gender. Following the same rule mentioned above, articles for the masculine are unmarked or have an -o marker in Spanish [*el/los-un/unos*] and are

unmarked in Catalan [el/els-un/uns] whereas the feminine ones have an *-a* ending in both languages [la/las-la/les and una/unas-una/unes].<sup>2</sup>

In the same way as in English, gender in Spanish and Catalan is also interconnected with its social meaning when faced with animate referents. For instance, it is the gender of the subject that determines what gendered word to use. In all other situations, the associated gender is merely grammatical and has no further significance in the social world. This feat is especially evident when considering personal pronouns. In Catalan, only 3rd person singular and plural reveal gender [*ell/ella – ells/elles*] whereas in Spanish, only 1st and 2nd person singular are genderless:

3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular	él/ella
1 <sup>st</sup> person plural	nosotros/nosotras
2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural	vosotros/vosotras
3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural	ellos/ellas

Table 3. Gendered Spanish personal pronouns.

Focusing now on the lexicon, most nouns that refer to animate beings come as word-pairs that distinguish gender between them. These can either be completely different words or can be created by the addition and/or change of a gender morph. The following are the most common ways in which to mark gender in Spanish and Catalan nouns:

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<sup>2</sup> The definite and indefinite article marking for feminine gender and plural number in Catalan does not have an *-a* ending since the *-s* plural marker forces the *a* to transform into an *e* for orthographic and phonological reasons.

1.	Same root and inflected gender mark <i>-o/-a</i> for Spanish, and unmarked or <i>-e/-a</i> for Catalan.	<i>hijo/hija</i> <i>professor/professora</i>
2.	Change in root and inflected gender morph.	<i>yerno/nuera</i> <i>porc/truja</i>
3.	Invariable word but precedent article adheres gender mark.	<i>el/la estudiante</i> <i>el/la jove</i>
4.	Change in root and no gender morph.	<i>padre/madre</i> <i>marit/muller</i>
5.	Suffixation and gender morph.	<i>héroe/heroína</i> <i>duc/duquessa</i>

Table 4. Different ways to mark gender in Spanish and Catalan.

(Based on Bosque & Demonte, 1999; Solà, 2002; Real Academia Española y Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española, 2009; Institut d’Estudis Catalans, 2016)

Additionally, both languages have epicene nouns, which consist of one invariable form that semantically encompasses all genders (but do have an assigned grammatical gender disconnected from the semantic gender), clear examples being *personaje/criatura*. There are also common nouns that can be masculine or feminine [*el/la testigo* – *el/la pacient*]. Finally, there are some words that do not change forms but vary in meaning depending on the gender [*el/la pendiente*].

### 2.1.3 Generic masculine in English, Spanish and Catalan

Both Spanish and Catalan, as well as English, have traditionally used the masculine as the default gender, used to refer to “groups of individuals that include at least one male”

(Beatty-Martínez & Dussias 2020, p. 2), as well as when the gender of someone was unknown. In a sense, this use of the language represents the understanding of the masculine as the basis, from which the feminine branches off. Generic masculine not only denotes a hierarchy between the binary genders, but it also excludes all other gender realities. Overall, “the gender constructs in (...) language reflect social constructs of gender in the world of its speakers” (Curzan 2003, p. 5). Due to its social implications, generic or default masculine is a latent “source of controversy in feminist language reform movements” (Curzan, p. 131). The feminist movement has brought into attention this sexist use of the language, but “modern debate on this question has been framed as though it were a grammatical question, and feminists have fought hard to move the debate from the rhetoric of “objective” grammar rules to a discussion of the semantic and social implications of those rules” (Curzan, p. 58).

Alternatives to the sexist use of generic masculine have been found in the three languages. English leans towards the use of *he or she*; the transformation of sentences from singular to plural; or the revision of the entire construction in order to erase the need for a pronoun (Curzan 2003, p. 79). The rising use of the generic/neuter singular *they*, which was used “as early as Old English in written texts” (Curzan, p. 70) is still “relegated to the spoken” (Curzan, p. 80), but has become centre of an ongoing discussion in linguistics and also among the general public. Kolln argues that no distinction is made for the second person pronoun and so, “it’s not unreasonable to do the same in the third person. But such changes come slowly” (1999, quoted in Curzan 2003, p. 80).

Alternatives to the use of the generic masculine have also been found in Spanish and Catalan, but as gender inflected languages, this turns out to be a complex task. An alternative that has sparked up discussion between linguists is the addition of a new



gender morph that would refer to non-binary people and/or be used as the generic. In Spanish, words would be inflected with a final *-e*, and in Catalan an *-i* ending has been chosen. For instance, the sentence “The teacher is funny” would be “*Le profesore es graciose*” (Spanish) and “*Li professori és graciosi*” (Catalan) in this new neuter and gender inclusive use of language.

## 2.2 Translation and Gender

Translation is described by the Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) as “the activity or process of changing words of one language into the words in another language that have the same meaning”. The structuralist-influenced understanding of translation as a mere linguistic copy-paste from one language to another was, generally, the most accepted conception of the discipline until the 1990s, when Bassnett and Lefevere “formally put forward the idea of [a] culture turn” in translation studies (Yan & Huang 2014, p. 488). Jakobson (1959, p. 233), considering that meaning in language lies within the signifier and not the signified, considered translation to be an act that “recodes and retransmits a message received from another source. Thus, translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes”. Mounin (1963) offers us a similar definition in *Les Problèmes Théoriques de la Traduction*, arguing that “la traduction consistè à produire dans la langue d’arrivé l’équivalent naturel le plus proche du message de la langue du depart, d’abord quant à la signification, puis quant au style” [‘translation consists in producing in the target language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and then in style’] (quoted in Godayol 2000, p. 72). Such conception of translation suggests a static and one-to-one equivalence between the source text and the target text (TT), in which the importance of the translator is completely erased, and, at

the same time, understands translations as simple copies of the original text. As Godayol (2000, pp. 72-73) reasons, “concebre la traducció com a equivalència vol dir no tenir en compte la importància de les relacions contextuais i cotextuals, així com desestimar el procés descodificador i (re)productor de la traductora”.

In opposition, Godayol offers Mason’s understanding of the process of translating, in which in order to translate one must perceive the possible meaning of the lexical, syntactic, and textual choices in the sociocultural and linguistic context of the ST author. Then, the translation must convey the same linguistic and cultural possibilities to an audience that reads in another language and is from another culture through different lexical, syntactic, and textual choices (Mason 1994, mentioned in Godayol 2000, p. 35). Mason offers an understanding of the concept of translating not as a mere linguistic transfer, but also as a cultural one by including and emphasising the importance of the sociocultural context of the source text.

Nowadays, the concept of translation already integrates this “awareness of cultural difference” as well as the “linguistic boundaries” (Federici & Leonardi 2013, p. 2). A good translator, then, will always be aware of the cultural references surrounding the text, since “all meaning is culturally conditioned. And the response to a given text is also culturally conditioned” (Larson 1998, p. 470). A thoughtful translation not only translates between languages but also between cultures. On that account, the translator “needs to understand [the beliefs, attitudes, values, and the rules which a group of people share] in order to adequately understand the source text and adequately translate it for people who have a different set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules” (Larson, p. 470).

Additionally, Fowler and Kress (1979 quoted in Godayol 2000, p. 32) argue that “language serves to confirm and consolidate the organizations which shape it, being used

to manipulate people, to establish and maintain them in economically convenient roles and statuses, to maintain the power of state agencies, corporations and other institutions”. In other words, language can serve as a social practice with enough power to promote certain attitudes towards life and even, as a “mitjà de control social” (Godayol 2000, p. 33). Altogether, with the power to perpetuate a dominant system, translation can also be the tool for social change. For this reason, some areas in translation studies claim that translations must be cross-ideological and, thus, used as a political tool for social change. Massardier-Kenney (1994, quoted in Godayol 2000, p. 30) claims that “by translating, one participates in the constitution of culture, and the very gesture of translating can create pockets of resistance in the cultural hegemony”. Therefore, the translator has the power to interpret a text in their own way and so, the opportunity to emphasise or silence ideologies. In Godayol’s words (2000, pp. 30-31), “la clau és veure la traducció com una pràctica d’intercanvi de capital cultural, una pràctica a través de la qual es pot manifestar l’alteritat”. Fundamentally, translations have the power to give voice to those silenced by the hegemonic as well as to fight against the imposition of a white-male literary canon.

Focusing on the interconnection between translation and gender, we see that all that is feminine or non-masculine has been marginalised in most cultural discourses. The use of patriarchal language exemplifies this since, as already discussed, it is only the feminine that is in need of explicit gender markers. As the act of translating not only encompasses linguistic but also societal and cultural aspects of life, gender leaves behind its grammatical/pronominal status to become societal. By understanding the process of translation as a “discursive practice” (Federici & Leonardi 2013, p. 2), it can be seen how a meditative translation of gender can “transform gender identities and help reconsider the notion of sexual difference” (Federici & Leonardi, p. 2). Here, I introduce the concept

of “social gender” (Hellinger, 1990) or “notional gender” (McConnell Ginnet, 2014), which refers to the “impact of concepts, ideas and ideologies on speakers’ choices regarding 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns in languages such as English” (Di Sabato & Perri 2020, p. 364). In short, it is the recognition that most times, the use of personal pronouns is determined by stereotypes and assumptions of a certain gender, rather than the actual gender of a subject. For example, in English the use of 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns is supposedly based on the gender of the referent, but with words such as *secretary*, a feminine pronoun would be generally used based on stereotypes. Due to better awareness of such sexist assumptions, the widespread use of “notional gender” has been decreasing over the past decades. For this reason, gender is relevant to both society and speech and thus, it becomes an essential part of any translation process.

### **2.2.1 Canadian School of Feminist Translation**

In the 1980s, a group of Canadian feminist writers and translators gave origin to what now is known in the field as *Translation and Gender*. Based in Quebec and translating mostly from French into English, and vice versa, the feminist group “attempted to subvert the dominant patriarchal language” (Santaemilia 2013, p. 6) through explicit feminist translations.

In brief, their main objectives were to highlight the use of patriarchal language and to raise awareness towards a new form of communication using the feminine voice. Moreover, the focus was on creating a new literary canon parallel to the already established one, which is masculine dominated, as well as on reclaiming their authority as both translators and women, who have historically been secluded to the margins of society (Godayol, 2000). The Canadian School of Feminist Translation was, overall, the

understanding of translation as “(re)creation, manipulation and (woman)handling” (Santaemilia 2013, p. 9). Aligned with poststructuralist conceptions of language, these female translators wanted to dismantle the use of the standard-patriarchal language that “amaga una hegemonia masculina i una marginalitat femenina” (Godayol 2000, p. 98). Subsequently, Godayol (2000, p. 99) asserts that “fer visible el subjecte femení en el text i resistir-se a la representació que els discursos dominants n’han fet al llarg dels segles és la seva manera de construir un discurs traductològic sobre la possibilitat d’articular la veu des d’una subjectivitat diferent, des de la diferencia en femení”.

Different translating strategies are used depending on the text, languages, cultures, and other factors and hence, it is unattainable to try to create a unique classification of what feminist strategies of translation would entail. Having said this, I will briefly comment on the three most common strategies used to translate in a political feminist stance, which are *supplementing*, *hijacking*, and *footnoting* or *prefacing*:

*Supplementing* represents the addition of gender elements in a feminist translation to compensate “differences between languages” (Flotow 1991, p. 75) in the TL, while at the same time providing “the original text with an opportunity of making itself a critique” (Wu 2014, p. 29). Flotow (1991, p. 75) offers an example from the translation of Bersianik’s *L’Eugélonne* (1976). In the ST, a final *e* in the word *puni* was added [*punie*] indicating that the one punished in the context of the ST is a woman. The translator recuperated the feminine marker by translating it as “the guilty one must be punished, whether she is a man or a woman”.

*Hijacking* is the voluntary act of textual manipulation that uses feminisation and/or degenderisation to make visible a political intervention in the text. It involves adding feminine gender markers to the text to make a political stance, as well as the

possible omission of words or metaphors that have negative connotations towards women (Godayol, 2000). If the focus is on degenderisation, then, it means to change and/or add generic language that includes all genders. Lotbinière-Harwood's deliberate choice of using *Québécois-e-s* instead of generic *Québécois* in order to mark the feminine in a not-feminine word is a known example of *hijacking* (Flotow 1991, p.79).

*Footnoting* and/or *prefacing* are explicit explanations and justifications for the translation choices. It is a way for translators to express the author's intentions as well as to express their own feelings regarding the text and the translation itself. Finally, if the ST uses expressions that can help their political cause, this strategy also serves to explain and illustrate them in more clarity (Chen & Chen 2017, p. 181). Flotow (1991, p. 76) exemplifies this strategy with Godard's preface in the translation of Brossard's *These Our Mothers* (1983) in which Godard "explains the wordgames that could not be translated (...) and goes on to interpret their intention", such as the elision of final *e* in *laboratoire* to mark the absence of the feminine in the activities carried out there.

### **2.2.2 Main Challenges of Translating Gender**

The process of translating gender can get complicated when it happens between languages with a similar gender system due to the aforementioned notional/social gender. A conflict can arise if a word with "a specific gender in one language connotes certain properties, while the translated word in the target language belongs to another gender that conveys quite different connotations" (Nissen 2002, p. 28). For instance, the imaginative conception of war between cultures with different languages are diverse since in some languages it is represented as a feminine idea whereas in others it is masculine.

However, it is when translating between languages with different gender systems that the level of difficulty increases and is sometimes considered to show “one instance of the limits of translatability” (Di Sabato & Perri 2020, p. 367). In some cases, it might seem simpler to translate from a natural gender language to a grammatical one as long as the in-text relevant gendered concepts have the same semantic gender [English *daughter* to Spanish *hija* or Catalan *filla*]. Cases in which gender in the ST is irrelevant and thus, not specified, can be more complex. A problem emerges in these occasions since languages with grammatical gender need to state the gender of the subject and thus, the translator is “force[d] to make informed gender selections” (Di Sabato & Perri, p. 366). For instance, in order to translate the English sentence “My cousin lives in Barcelona” into Catalan, a decision on the gender of the *cousin* must be made, it can either be the masculine *cosí* or the feminine *cosina*, but there is no generic option. As Jakobson (1959, p. 235) asserts, it is “difficult to remain faithful to the original when we translate into a language provided with a certain grammatical category from a language devoid of such a category”.

Problems also occur when the translation is from grammatical to natural gender languages. As explained in section 2.1.2, gender is difficult to avoid in Catalan and Spanish as in these languages gender is denoted through a variety of means. Consequently, the translator must find new ways of translating while being aware of not supplying a different meaning than what was intended by the original author, given that “an apparently ‘innocent’ supply of information may distort the text in a way that was not intended” (Nissen 2002, p. 27).

Overall, the translator is faced with the following possibilities:

1. Omitting information relating to gender leading to an omission of important connotations.

**ST (1):** La traductora catalana va aportar molt a la traductologia.

**TT (1):** The Catalan translator contributed a lot to the field of translation studies.

The TT, then, omits the fact that the referent of the ST is a woman, which in the case that it were important in the context of the ST, it would mean that crucial information had been lost in translation.

2. Intensifying and highlighting unintended information of the ST. This can be done by adding semantically gendered words to accentuate the gender of the referent when it does not hold importance in the ST. Thus, the TT is adding extra relevance to the gender of a certain subject.

**ST (2):** L'infermer m'ha recomanat deixar de beure.

**TT (2):** The *male* nurse has advised me to stop drinking.

There is a widespread misconception of the word *nurse* denoting femininity. As a result, there might occasionally be a need of specifying the nurse's gender for the purpose of combating social misconceptions even in cases where this gender distinction is unimportant in the context of the ST.

3. Translating genderless texts into Catalan/Spanish by using the generic masculine. This decision shows the translator's bias which is disconnected from that of the ST author. Taking here an example from the famous short story "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843), Edgar Allan Poe explicitly avoids the use of gender throughout the



text. However, most Spanish/Catalan translations chose to assign the narrator's gender as masculine:

**ST (3):** True – nervous – very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad?

**TT (3):** ¡Es cierto! Siempre he sido nervioso, muy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. ¿Pero por qué afirman ustedes que estoy loco? (translated by Julio Cortázar)

It is clear, then, that translating is neither easy nor simple, but rather “a very complicated process” (Nissen 2002, p. 28) that must take into account all the different possibilities regarding gender. Translators are faced with the task of making conscious and well-thought decisions when it comes to the gender structure of the TL. Any translation is, thus, ideological, since the “effect of a translator's work in identifying gender aspects of a source text and in determining the ideological impact of gender connotations in the source and target text, are all but neutral” (Di Sabato & Perri 2020, p. 369).

### **3. Case Studies**

As mentioned in the previous section, problems emerge in translations where gender is hidden or “foregrounded *in absentia*” (Di Sabato & Perri 2020, p. 368). This section will focus on how gender can be suppressed in narratives and will offer an overview of different translation strategies applicable in such cases, followed by examples. Such (non)use of gender implies that a narration, explicitly and consciously, avoids uses of gender marks throughout the text, usually in order “to create a sense of mystery” (Di

Sabato & Perri, p. 368). These texts put gender to the front as a narrative device to foreground a deconstructive idea of society or “when authors wish to surprise” the audience (Glenn 2007, p. 168). Overall, this device is the understanding of “the scope of ungendered narrators as a textual, narrative phenomenon” (Sântii 2022, p. 21). As a textual phenomenon, I understand the application of such specific uses of gender absence as a subversive narratology device with the purpose of “maintaining the indeterminacy of the narrator’s gender” (Di Sabato & Perri 2020, p. 368).

In *The Genderization of Narrative*, Fludernik (1999, p. 154) asserts different ways in which gender can be constructed in narratives: firstly, it is through graphic physical descriptions of the body of a character,<sup>3</sup> as well as the use of gendered (pro)nominal expressions. Secondly, gender assignment is done implicitly by “the paraphernalia of our heavily gendered culture”. Recovering the concept of social gender, it would represent the impression that a character is female just by the use of the adjective *beautiful* since it is, still, socially gendered. Thirdly, gender is constructed through the “heterosexual default structure” implemented in normative society, meaning that if a character is a woman and has a partner, the assumption is for the other to be a man. Therefore, in order to make a thoughtful use of this narrative device, many aspects have to be taken into consideration.

If the writing of a ST already imposes a level of difficulty when it comes to the subversion of gender, it is no question that a translation would entail similar problems, and thus, “translators will have to cope with obstacles” (Bosch 2015, p. 10). Whereas translating into English might appear to be an easier job, when a language with

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<sup>3</sup> A deconstructed view of sex and gender shows us how the physicality of a body does not equal gender identity, since gender is a sociocultural construct.

grammatical gender is involved, as it is in our case with Spanish and Catalan, the task becomes challenging. The translator must seek out specific and creative translation solutions, the most frequent of which are neutralisation and degenderisation of language, with the main use of epicene and common nouns/adjectives, nominalization, paraphrasing and the passivisation of sentences (Di Sabato & Perri, 2020).

I decided to illustrate the possible translation problems by focusing on two narrations, both which, through different means, use a gender subversive device. From English writer Jeanette Winterson I picked the short novel *Written on the Body* (1992), written originally in English. The second narrative is Carme Riera's "Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora", a Catalan short story from the 1970s. First, I will briefly introduce both narrations and elaborate on how the source texts aim to avoid gender. Subsequently, I will comment on their translations and on the strategies each translator used to translate such an ambiguous way of writing.

### **3.1 *Written on the Body***

Winterson's novel *Written on the Body* explores a story of romance and loss. Its main characteristic is the choice of "underreporting information conventionally provided by [the] character-narrator" (Sântii 2022, p. 20). Contrary to traditional narratives, the text does not offer enough information for the creation of the identity of the character: no name, interests, or age are mentioned in the text. Chiefly, it is the *ungenderness* of the character-narrator that represents the text's primary appeal. The portrayal of an ungendered main character "is so significant [since] it contributes to the narrative dynamics of the novel "at least as much as its surface plot" does" (Lanser 1996, quoted in Sântii 2022, p. 20). Such use of gender confronts the traditional need of readers to

“designate gender to any narrative persona,” which is considered by Lanser “a routine act of interpretation” (Säntii, p. 20).

The choice to have an ungendered narrator does not come without a purpose. As argued in Bosch (2015, p. 6), “the ungendered narrator is Winterson’s deliberate attempt to unsettle and erase gender distinctions”, as well as a device to force the readers into “examine[ing], question[ing] and deconstruct[ing] their impressions, assumptions, clichés and binaries about love, gender, and behaviour”. The incapability of assigning gender to a character provides a space to question and comprehend how stereotypes and hegemonic discourses have been naturalised into society. Hence, it shows how “rather than biologically built, [gender] is socially, historically and culturally constructed” (Bosch, p 7). In brief, Winterson’s objective was to “challenge and deconstruct the gender dichotomy” (Bosch, p. 12) that our hegemonic society is based upon.

There are no “textual evidence or grammatical hints” of gender in *Written on the Body* (Bosch, p. 9), as the text is free of personal pronouns referencing the narrator. Winterson manages to have an ungendered narrator by using a 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative, because it allows more control over the use of language. Nevertheless, the use of a “narrating I” (Säntii 2022, p. 24) in a text where sexuality is essential to it, “points to a physical presence and a sexed body” (Bosch 2015, p. 8). In other words, the reader will substantially understand the narrator as a physical human involved in physical relationships and, thus, gender becomes important for the reader, as the text directly points out to a body that in society’s eyes cannot be ungendered. Hence, as a natural act of human categorisation, the reader is compelled to assign gender to the subject (Säntti, 2022).

The Spanish translation, then, presents as a challenge for the translator. Lanser (1996, p. 257) asserts that “Indo-European languages (...) might, then, require even deeper ellipses for maintenance of the text’s silence about its narrator’s [gender]”. Due to the need for overt gender marks, the translator of WB into Spanish (or any other language with grammatical gender) will need to employ some strategies that depart from literal translation in order to transmit the narrator’s *ungenderness*.

### **3.2 “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora”**

Written as an epistolary narrative, the narrator of “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora” reflects on her relationship with a past lover. It is a story about prohibited love, loss and growing up as well as an ode to Mallorca and the sea.

In contrast with *Written on the Body*, the ungended character is not the narrator but the addressee of the letter, the lover, who at the last paragraph is shown to be a woman, thus proclaiming a lesbian story. Published at the end of the Franco dictatorship in Spain, and at a time when the sociocultural environment was not open to divergences from the hegemonic, Riera’s story aimed to talk about “temes nous o vedats fins al moment, en què són centrals el sexe i les relacions amoroses no canòniques” (Julià 2008, p. 10).

The ambiguous gender of the lover serves to “emphasize the lack of voice of marginal beings and to highlight sexual [...] inequalities” (Glenn 2007, p. 164). Riera “seduces her reader into misreading gender” in purpose (Bieder 2000, p. 53) as she “toy[s] with reader expectations and assumptions to critique cultural institutions” (Bieder, p. 57). Similar to Winterson, her work compels the reader to question one’s own belief of gender and sexuality and to realise how gender assumption—as well as heterosexuality—is inscribed into all of us. Gender silence “stimulates the active participation of readers, who

have to imagine and supply what the author has withheld” (Glenn 2007, p. 165), and at the same time it serves to surprise the reader, which according to Riera herself, “is one of the most important elements in literature” (Glenn, p. 168).

To write in Catalan—a grammatical gender language—while avoiding gender markers is not an easy task. Taking advantage of Catalan, Riera herself emphasises that the ambiguity of the pronoun *nosaltres* helped her write the story. In Catalan, the plural personal pronoun has no gender mark and thus, it allowed her to use it constantly without displaying gender (Epps 1995, p. 334). Additionally, the constant use of epicene and common words, as well as instances of nominalisation, helped to avoid gender in the text. Most importantly, she manages to evade gender by using an epistolary narrative, managing to talk from *I* to *you*. Conversely, there are some gendered references, but the referenced subject is displaced from the addressee (as a person) to a particular body part, thus, adhering to the grammatical gender of *cos*, *mans* or *llavis*. As a result, Riera manages to create a vague image of the lover, as we have some physical descriptions too ambiguous for the reader to create a complete image of the character.

As the story in its source language (SL) already manages to escape gender successfully, most of the challenges the translator is faced with are on implicit gender connotations and social gender. The translator must be aware of this as otherwise they might overlook the aim of Riera’s writing.

### **3.3 Translation Strategies and Analysis**

In order to comprehend how gender has been translated in these works, it is necessary to focus on some of the translation strategies used and to comment on their consequences. Translation strategies, often referred to as “procedures, methods, techniques and even

types” might sometime arise some “confusion over [their] definition” (Leonardi 2013, p. 67) as there are several taxonomies that have been used in the field of translation studies. As Leonardi (p. 67) claims, strategies “play an important role in translation and both scholars and professional translators have proposed different approaches, methods and models to justify their strategies”.

With the aim of seeing how our translators have faced the challenge of translating subversive gender in the literary texts under study, I decided to base my brief analysis on Malone’s (1988, p. 15) taxonomy of strategies, or “trajectories”, as he calls them: “trajectories may be characterized as any of a number of basic plerematic [semantics and syntax] translational patterns into which a given source-target pairing may partially be resolved”, and offers nine primary strategies: equation, substitution, divergence, convergence, amplification, reduction, diffusion, condensation, and reordering.

As I found a lack of convergence examples in the chosen translations, I will briefly explain it and offer Malone’s own example, which does not involve gender issues. As defined in *The Science of Linguistics in the Art of Translation*, convergence is a “trajectory whereby two or more distinct ST elements may be mapped onto one and the same TT element” (Malone 1988, p. 17). Namely, this strategy is used when the target language (TL) lacks the variety that the SL offers. For instance, convergence is applied when the ST uses multiple co-hyponyms and the translator only uses one hypernym to translate them. Malone also exemplifies it with the Spanish *tú/usted* which can only be translated into TL English as *you* (Janiak, 2020).

### 3.3.1 Equation

Equation refers to a one-on-one relation of translation, in which the TT element is “deemed the most straightforward counterpart available” (Malone 1988, p. 16). Malone (p. 19) discusses that this is a “limiting case of translation” as ideal equation rarely happens.

#### (1) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
<u>Her lover</u> <sup>4</sup> runs a finger over the bare lips of the naked woman.	<u>Su amante</u> pasa un dedo por los labios sin pintar de la mujer desnuda.
<u>The lover</u> says nothing.	No dice nada.

In the first sentence, the translator manages to use equation, as the direct equivalent of *lover* is used. By choosing *amante* the TT manages to maintain the gender ambiguity of the character, as it is a common noun which would only be gendered if preceded by a definite article, which is not the case. For this same reason, the translator decided to omit the word *amante* in the second sentence, as to avoid the addition of a gendered article which would have been needed. The translation manages to sound natural as the two sentences are almost sequential and so, the subject can be elided in the Spanish sentence without sounding awkward.

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<sup>4</sup> For context purposes: the narrator withdraws from narrating in the brief paragraph from which these sentences are taken. The narration switches from first to third person and so, the lover represents our ungended character.



(2) “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora”

SL Catalan	TL English
M’adonava d’un pestanyeig, obries lleugerament les <u>parpelles</u> i de cua d’ull em miraves.	I noticed your <u>eyelashes</u> wink, you opened <u>them</u> slightly and gave me sidelong glances.

In (2), the translator manages to escape ambiguity but fails to use equation. Moreiras chose to translate *parpelles* into *them* (an object pronoun) which would refer to the object *eyelashes*. *Eyelashes* and *parpelles* do not refer to the same concept, and if we adhere to traditional gender stereotypes, “eyelashes are considered feminine” (Batalova 2020, p. 125). As a result, the English translation may provide an additional hint about the gender of the subject in TD.

### 3.3.2 Substitution

This strategy is used when the TT element is not the “most straightforward counterpart available” (Malone 1988, p. 16) of the ST word. In brief, it is an accepted one-to-one translation, but it is not as direct as equation would be. It is typically used when faced with “grammatical constraints, differences in idiomatic expressions and cultural differences, but is not only limited to that” (Alborghetti 2015, p. 176).

(3) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
I held a little dialogue with <u>myself</u> .	Sostuve un pequeño dialogo con mi <u>ego</u> .

A literal translation of the sentence would compel the translator to choose *conmigo/a mismo/a* as the counterpart of *myself*. Since gender must be avoided, *ego* was chosen. Overall, though, it might alter the meaning of the message as it might convey connotations related to the character's high self-esteem, but that is not relevant to the story at this instance.

(4) “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora”

SL Catalan	TL English
Dits llargs, pell blanca, <u>ungles polides</u> .	Long fingers, white skin, <u>manicured</u> <u>nails</u> .
La flaire del teu <u>perfum</u> .	Your <u>scent</u> .

Both cases show substitution as the translator avoided a word-for-word translation. The outcome is correct as it manages to maintain the meaning of the message. Nonetheless, it can be argued that the first translation infiltrates social gender into the text. Despite having an overall similar meaning, the adjective *manicured* can relate back to the act of getting a manicure, which traditionally is considered a “femininizing technique” (Duke 2008, p. 19). The opposite happens in the second sentence as it is the ST *perfum* the one that can connote a socially gendered act, which is lost in *scent*.

### 3.3.3 Divergence

According to Malone (1988, p. 17), there is divergence when “an element of the ST may be mapped onto any of two or more alternatives in the TT” in cases where there is a “relative paradigmatic richness of the target resources compared with the source”

(Malone, p. 29). Context cues are needed for choosing between the possible potential target renditions of the source element as the translator has to choose “a suitable term from a potential range of alternatives” (Janiak 2020, p. 122).

(5) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
I am a <u>fool</u> .	Soy <u>idiota</u> .

The translator, in this case, used divergence to avoid gender marking, as a more literal equivalent of *fool* would be *tonto/a*. Since insults are quite cultural and the level of harshness attach to them might differ between cultures, I offer both positive and negative consequences regarding the translation. Gender ambiguity was maintained but the Spanish translation seems to add a level of harshness lacking in the ST.

### 3.3.4 Amplification

As “probably the single most important strategic trajectory for bridging anticipated gaps in knowledge” (Malone 1988, p. 41), the translator “explicates content words to make the translation clear and unobstructed by unknown information” (Alborghetti 2015, p. 177). In short, amplification is the addition of information with the aim of offering a better understanding of the text.

(6) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
I can tell by now that you are wondering whether I can be trusted as a <u>narrator</u> .	Adivino que se están preguntando si pueden confiar en <u>la voz protagonista de esta narración</u> .
‘You’re <u>bored</u> ’, my friend said.	—Te <u>mueres de aburrimiento</u> — me dijo un amigo.

The examples in (6) show how extra information has been added into the text to avoid gender markers in the translation. In the first case, most gendered translations would probably have translated *narrator* as *narrador/a*. In order to maintain gender ambiguity, the translator decided to define what a narrator is, thus avoiding gender. In the second example, Moreiras chose to amplify the narrator’s feelings of boredom in order to avoid the adjective *aburrido/o* which would have been a more direct translation of the ST element. Both choices successfully manage to avoid gender markings, but it is undeniable that by doing so, some instances of the ST are modified, such as the level of formality of the narration, as well as the level of intensity of the subject’s feelings.

### 3.3.5 Reduction

Opposite to the previous strategy, reduction offers a total or partial omission of the ST element in the translation. Generally, it is applied in order to “to avoid a cultural gap that may occur from ST to TT” (Alborghetti 2015, p. 178) as well as to “reduce redundant [or] “even misleading” features in the TT” (Leonardi 2013, p. 70).

(7) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
I may as well forget <u>myself</u> .	Serà como olvidarme.

The example evidences a successful use of the technique as the translation encompasses the same meaning as the ST while not excluding any relevant information. A more direct translation would have included *a mi mismo/a*.

### 3.3.6 Diffusion

Diffusion “allows an elaboration of the ST word(s), especially through the use of circumlocutions, without adding extra information” (Leonardi, p. 70), which represents its main difference with amplification.

(8) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
‘Don’t you like your little body stocking? I think you look <u>gorgeous</u> .’	—¿No te gustan esas bonitas mallas? Yo creo que <u>te sientan de maravilla</u> . —
‘You’re <u>wet through</u> ’.	Nunca he visto <u>a nadie tan mojado</u> .

In both examples, the ST employs adjectives which in Spanish would be gendered, i.e. *precioso/a* and *mojado/a*. Consequently, the translator decided to rephrase the sentences to avoid gender marking. The selected gendered adjective *mojado* is not connoting gender as it directly refers to the indefinite pronoun *nadie*, which is grammatically masculine. I consider these to be cases of diffusion since, at its core, the

meaning is not touched upon. In the first sentence, the context allows us to see that they are talking about a “body stocking” the narrator wears at work. The speaker of the sentence is attributing gorgeousness to the character based on how the stocking looks on them, therefore, the Spanish translation is not adding any new information as the overall meaning is the same: that the narrator looks good in the stockings. The case is similar in the second sentence, as to say that “Nunca he visto a nadie tan mojado” has the implied meaning that someone is wet.

### 3.3.7 Condensation

Condensation is the mirror image of diffusion and so, it represents reduction or “a more compact target counterpart” (Malone 1988, p. 59). The purpose of such technique is that of “achiev[ing] a greater economy of language (...) at a syntactic and cohesive level” (Alborghetti 2015, p. 180), typically through the use of pronouns or deictics.

(9) “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora”

SL Catalan	TL English
Sinó que també <u>em fessis classes</u> .	As well as having you for a <u>teacher</u> .
Algú — havies <u>fet classe</u> a molts d'aquells — citava el teu nom.	Often someone would mention your name — you had been a <u>teacher</u> to many of them.

It was Riera’s initial work to avoid gender markers in order to show the lover’s occupation, since in Catalan this would have been either *professora* or *mestra*. Therefore, and as to make the most of Catalan, she decided on *havies fet classe*, which is a natural

expression in the SL. Seeing how *teacher* conveys the same exact meaning, the translator chose not to translate the ST element word-for-word. Therefore, both examples show the same use of condensation: from *em fessis classes* to simply *teacher*.

### 3.3.8 Reordering

The final strategy is called reordering and it involves a “difference in positioning between” the ST and TT elements (Malone 1988, p. 18). As the translation is between different languages (with different grammatical systems), to reorder some sentences is something natural. Sometimes, though, “the order plays an important role within the ST that cannot be contravened without compensation in the TT” (Malone, p. 65). Four different types of reordering are offered by Malone: reordering to achieve greater comprehensibility, to preserve the narrative flow of the ST, to reproduce stylistic patterns and finally, reordering due to a different language system from the TL (Alborghetti 2015, p. 181).

#### (10) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
In August I felt <u>blank and sick</u> .	En agosto me <u>encontraba mal</u> y sentí un gran <u>vacío</u> .

This example shows how the translator decided to reorganise the sentence in order to avoid a gender that would be seen through the translation of *sick* as *enfermo/a*.

### 3.3.9 Transposition and Modulation

Malone’s definition of reordering does not offer clarity on whether it includes word class changes and/or a full rephrasing of the TT elements. For this reason, I have decided to borrow two strategies—transposition and modulation—from Vinay and Darbalnet’s taxonomy which is “a well-established and often-quoted model” (Janiak 2020, p. 118) in the field of translation studies. The translated examples are the following:

(11) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
<u>I am committed</u> to someone else.	<u>Tengo un compromiso</u> con otra persona.
Brave words and comfort to <u>us both</u> who needed comfort in the small cold room that encompassed <u>our</u> life that night.	Palabras valientes y consuelo para <u>dos personas</u> que necesitaban consuelo en la pequeña y fría habitación que rodeaba <u>sus</u> vidas aquella noche.

The chosen translations show the application of transposition, a method which “involves replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message” (Vinay & Darbelnet 1958, p. 36). This technique is the most commonly used when different languages demand a different syntax. In the first example, the verb is changed from *am* to *tener* in Spanish, which entails changing the adjective *committed* into the noun *compromiso*, in order to avoid the gendered equivalent *comprometido/a*. The practice of nominalisation is a common strategy when translating gender.



In the second example, the object personal pronoun *us* is translated into the noun phrase *dos personas*, which not only changes the grammatical function of the word, i.e. from indirect object to prepositional phrase, but it also alters the grammatical person of the sentence, i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> person plural to 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural. This is also seen in the later possessive pronouns uses, i.e., *our* vs *sus*. Therefore, not only is there a word class change but also a distance is created in the narration. So, it has been through transposition that gender has been avoided as a more direct translation would have been “palabras valientes y consuelo para ambos/as” or “los dos/las dos.”

(12) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
<u>I wasn't drunk</u> but supporting Gail was a staggering sort of business.	<u>Yo estaba bien</u> , pero sostener a Gail haría tambalearse a cualquiera.

Finally, I offer an example of modulation, which is “a variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view” (Vinay & Darbelnet, p. 36). In this case, in order to avoid the gender marker that the Spanish equivalent adjective *borracho/a* would possess, the translator decided to change perspectives and hence, the narrator's potential negative state is not emphasised, but rather their positive state is. Such use of modulation is accentuated when in the rest of the novel, you realise that the adjective *borracho/a* is used with gender markers when referring to other characters, as most of them are gendered [“Gail estaba borracha” and “toda la gracia de un viejo vagabundo borracho”].

### 3.4 Generic Masculine

Additionally, it is interesting to detect how both literary works, when in Catalan or Spanish, make use of the generic masculine, as exemplified by the following sentences:

(13) *Written on the Body*

SL English	TL Spanish
It was Inge's signal to say we had five minutes <u>ready or not</u> .	Era la señal de Inge para decir que quedaban cinco minutos, estuviéramos <u>preparados o no</u> .

(14) “Te deix, amor, la mar com a penyora”

SL Catalan	TL English
Com dos <u>enamorats</u> per la ciutat.	Like two <u>lovers</u> in the city.

In both (13) and (14), the masculine has been used as the default by considering it an unmarked use of gender.<sup>5</sup> Its use can be dangerous as it faces the probability of the reader interiorising the ungended character as a man, and hence, losing the narratology device the texts aim for. Moreover, in the particular case of TD, after the unveiling of the lover's gender, a reader with this misconception might feel deceived. Contrariwise, their English counterparts are not faced with such issue. In brief, the use of the generic masculine in ungended narrations is “yet another proof of the constant presence of [the] gender binary” (Toma 2015, p. 22).

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<sup>5</sup> For context purposes: both Inge in WB and the narrator in TD are women.

#### 4. Conclusion

The objective of this research was to identify the problems that could occur in translations where *ungenderness* is present and to determine some of the translation strategies employed in such circumstances. In the first section, I briefly explained how gender operates in English along with Catalan and Spanish, and their differences as languages with opposite gender systems. In the following section, I introduced the interconnection between translation and gender, and it was discussed how gender becomes an important component of any translation process. The focus of section 3 was translating gender absence. The present analysis of the chosen translations—from Catalan to English and from English to Spanish—allowed us to assess which strategies were used in addition to their level of successfulness.

For the most part, it has been seen that to translate gender in cases where there is a lack of gender markers can be challenging, particularly when translating from natural to grammatical gender. Several translation techniques have been seen to be efficient, particularly substitution, amplification, diffusion and transposition, even though some offer better results than others as sometimes the intention of the authors are altered. Additionally, we have seen how Castejón used generic masculine in the TT, which has the potential of modifying the ST and thus, of providing a hegemonic reading of the narration. In contrast, the English translation of the Catalan source text did not encounter as many problems, since it was the ST author the one confronted with the challenge of avoiding gender in the first place, as seen by her frequent use of epicene and common adjectives. As a result, there are fewer examples of the translation of TD. Nevertheless, the English translation suffers from a slight feminisation that adds additional clues to the mystery of the plot. Although there are no added gender markers in the TT, the

feminisation of the text might undermine the author's initial purpose declared by the use of subversive gender in her story.

From this study, we can conclude that gender constitutes a fundamental part of any translation process. As translation is cross-cultural and cross-ideological, translations can be affected by the personal choices of the translator, and hereby, a text might acquire new and altered meanings.

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