



UNIVERSIDAD  
**DE ATACAMA**

FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES Y EDUCACIÓN  
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REVERSE TRANSLATION FROM  
SPANISH TO ENGLISH OF SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN  
THE FILM “THE MOLE AGENT”.**

Trabajo de titulación presentado en conformidad a los requisitos para obtener el grado de  
Licenciado en Idioma Inglés y Título de Traductor Inglés-Español

Profesor Guía: Mg. Didier Aguilar

Constanza Teresa Fuentes Díaz

Florencia Belén O'Brien Araya

Copiapó, Chile 2021



UNIVERSIDAD  
**DE ATACAMA**

FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES Y EDUCACIÓN  
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REVERSE TRANSLATION FROM  
SPANISH TO ENGLISH OF SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN  
THE FILM “THE MOLE AGENT”.**

Undergraduate thesis presented for the Bachelor of Arts in English and English and  
Spanish Translator

Thesis advisor: MA Didier Aguilar Muñoz

Thesis students:

Constanza Teresa Fuentes Díaz

Florencia Belén O’Brien Araya

## LOMO SEMINARIO DE TITULACIÓN

UDA

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REVERSE TRANSLATION FROM  
SPANISH TO ENGLISH OF SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN THE

FILM “ THE MOLE AGENT” .

2021

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to acknowledge everyone who played a role in my academic accomplishments. To my parents, who supported me with love and understanding. And finally, my team members, each of whom has provided patient advice and guidance throughout the research process. Thank you all for your unwavering support.

Constanza Fuentes

Dedicated to my family and loved ones, thanks to you since I was a child I have heard only words of encouragement, that I am capable, I am strong, I am intelligent, and that is what I think I am. I thank life for putting me on difficult tests, from which I have been able to come out on top with more strength.

I'm thankful for all these years of study, in which my growth has been immense and today, I can say that I am a totally different person to the one who started this career. Once again, I have shown myself that I can and I feel proud of myself to complete this stage of my life successfully, and now, it is time to start a new one.

Florencia O'Brien Araya

| <b>Contents</b>  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Contents   | 4           |
| Abstract   | 7           |
| 1. - Chapter I Introductory Framework                  | 8           |
| 1.1. Introduction                                      | 8           |
| 1.2. Statement of the Problem                          | 11          |
| 1.3. Main Objective                                    | 14          |
| 1.4. Specific Objectives                               | 14          |
| 1.5. Hypothesis  | 15          |
| 2. - Chapter II Theoretical Framework                  | 16          |
| 2.1. Importance of Translation                         | 16          |
| 2.2. The aim of Translation                            | 16          |
| 2.3. Translation Theories                              | 16          |
| 2.3.1 Linguistic Theories Classification               | 17          |
| 2.4 Audiovisual Translation                            | 18          |
| 2.4.1. Audiovisual Translation Channels                | 18          |
| 2.4.2. Channels used for the Corpus Analysis           | 19          |
| 2.4.3. Netflix Platform                                | 19          |
| 2.5. Subtitling  | 20          |
| 2.5.1. Cross-Culturality                               | 21          |
| 2.6. Subtitle Guidelines                               | 22          |
| 2.7. Transcription                                     | 22          |
| 2.8. Parallel Corpus                                   | 22          |
| 2.9. Translation Techniques                            | 23          |
| 3. - Chapter III Methodology                           | 27          |
| 4. - Chapter IV Analysis                               | 30          |
| 4.1. Analysis Procedure                                | 30          |
| 4.2. Analysis Measurement Description                  | 30          |
| 4.2.1 Example Table for the Corpus Analysis            | 31          |
| 4.3. Frequency of Occurrence of Translation Techniques | 32          |
| 4.4. Semantic Analysis                                 | 33          |
| 4.4.1. Semantic Elements Analysis                      | 33          |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 4.4.2. Translation techniques semantic section graphic | 34 |
| 4.5. Cultural Analysis                                 | 42 |
| 4.5.1. Cultural Segments Graphic                       | 43 |
| 4.5.2. Translation Techniques Cultural Section Graphic | 43 |
| 5. - Chapter V Conclusions                             | 50 |
| References   | 52 |

#### List of abbreviations and acronyms used

COVID-19                                      Coronavirus    Disease    2019

#### List of tables and figures

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Table 1.  | Linguistic Theories Classification                          |
| Table 2.  | Audiovisual Translation Channels                            |
| Table 3.  | Channels used for the Analysis                              |
| Table 4.  | Cross-Culturality Elements Categorization                   |
| Table 5.  | Translation Techniques used for Audiovisual Translation     |
| Figure 1. | Methodology Approach  |
| Figure 2. | Analysis Procedure  |
| Table 6.  | Example Table for the Corpus Analysis                       |
| Figure 3. | Common Translation Techniques used throughout the text      |
| Figure 4. | Quantity of Translation Techniques used in Semantic Section |
| Figure 5. | Common Translation Techniques used in the Semantic Section  |
| Table 7.  | Chart Number 01: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 8.  | Chart Number 02: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 9.  | Chart Number 03: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 10. | Chart Number 04: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 11. | Chart Number 05: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 12. | Chart Number 06: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 13. | Chart Number 07: Semantic Analysis                          |
| Table 14. | Chart Number 08: Semantic Analysis                          |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Table 15. | Chart Number 09: Semantic Analysis                              |
| Table 16. | Chart Number 10: Semantic Analysis                              |
| Figure 6. | Quantity of Translation Techniques used in the Cultural Section |
| Figure 7. | Common Translation Techniques used in the Cultural Section      |
| Table 17. | Chart Number 01: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 18. | Chart Number 02: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 19. | Chart Number 03: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 20. | Chart Number 04: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 21. | Chart Number 05: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 22. | Chart Number 06: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 23. | Chart Number 07: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 24. | Chart Number 08: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 25. | Chart Number 09: Cultural Analysis                              |
| Table 26. | Chart Number 10: Cultural Analysis                              |

## **Resumen**

Esta tesis es un estudio descriptivo-cualitativo en el cual se realizó un análisis comparativo de los elementos semánticos y culturales de la traducción inversa de la película “El Agente Topo” publicada el 19 de noviembre de 2019 en Chile.

Se analizó el script completo de la película y en el informe se muestran veinte segmentos considerados los más significativos para el análisis, también se identificaron las técnicas de traducción utilizadas para traducir y subtitar la película en idioma inglés basadas en las técnicas de traducción de Lucía Molina y Amparo Hurtado (2001). Finalmente se presentan las conclusiones donde se muestran los resultados del análisis, donde las técnicas más utilizadas fueron elisión y adaptación debido a la naturaleza de ambos idiomas y a la aparición constante de chilenismos.

## **Abstract**

This research is a descriptive-qualitative study in which a comparative analysis of the semantic and cultural elements of the reverse translation of the movie "El Agente Topo" released on November 19th, 2019, in Chile was carried out. The complete script of the film was analyzed and the report shows twenty segments considered the most significant for the analysis, also the translation techniques used to translate and subtitle the film in the English language were identified based on the translation techniques of Lucía Molina and Amparo Hurtado (2001). Finally, the conclusions show as a result that the most used techniques were elision and adaptation, due to the nature of both languages and the constant appearance of Chilean idioms”.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This work analyzes the semantic and cultural remarkable elements of the reverse translation of the Chilean movie “El Agente Topo” translated into English as *The Mole Agent*. This documentary was directed by Maite Alberdi, produced by Micromundo Producciones, and filmed in Chile. In the production process, people from different countries participated: Germany, Chile, Spain, the United States, and the Netherlands. This 84-minute documentary was released during the Sundance Film Festival in the World Cinema Documentary Competition, on January 25th of 2020 in Utah, United States. It was released online in Chile on November 19th of 2020.

“The Mole Agent” has been recognized in the Sundance Film Festival, which is the ultimate gathering of original storytellers and audiences seeking new voices and fresh perspectives. Each winter this passionate community gathers in Utah. In 2021, in the face of COVID-19, the gathering took place online and across the country. It also received a nomination as ‘Mejor Película Iberoamericana’ (*Best Iberoamerican Film*) by ‘Premios Goya’ awards are given by the Spanish Academy of Film Arts and Science for exceptional creative and technical skills of Spanish but also foreign professionals of cinema specialties. (Premios Goya, n. d.)

The film has also been recognized and nominated by the Oscar Awards as Best Documentary. Considering this, it is essential to remark that Maite Alberdi is the first Chilean woman nominated for an Oscar.

This documentary was recorded in a natural context with the observational filming method, which aims to show all the aspects of the life of the people who live in the San Francisco nursing home, located in El Monte, Santiago, Metropolitan Region. It tells the story of Sergio, an older man hired by Rómulo, a private detective’s agency awner, to infiltrate a nursing home. The objective of Sergio is to find out if one of the old women living inside the house is being mistreated, but inside the nursing home, Sergio ends up becoming more of a friend to the rest elderly there. The entire movie was recorded in an

actual situation (without scripts involved), making the final script (that is analyzed in this work) spontaneous. It was decided to do this investigation about this Chilean documentary for these reasons: it has been recognized on an international level, and it shows the Chilean culture in different spontaneous situations, which involves elements from the Chilean slang, emotional situations which involves language and cultural aspects that are necessary to understand well to maintain the same elements in the target language. Also, to show the importance of translating these kinds of works professionally especially in these new movies made for a significant audience to different countries, and how the difficulties can do a poor translation.

The aim of this work is to identify how cultural differences affect the comprehension of the plot in the “The Mole Agent” and analyze the solutions that the first translator used to translate the whole script.

This research is a descriptive-qualitative investigation. It will collect the information by observing life experiences that happens in the movie and qualitative because it explains and analyzes some of the different factors that are involved in translation

It is performed through the analysis of a parallel corpus of the spontaneous Spanish script of the movie and the English translation that was transcribed by the researchers. The corpus was analyzed based on the translation techniques of Lucía Molina and Amparo Hurtado (2001).

The study is structured in chapters. The first chapter addresses the contextualization of the problem and proposes the fundamental questions of the research. Then the general and specific objectives help to respond satisfactorily to them.

In the second chapter, the concepts discussed are made known, such as explaining the importance of translation and the main objective of the translator as a messenger between cultures. Then, the translation techniques of Molina and Hurtado (2001) could be found, and it works as a guide in the process of the analysis of the parallel corpus.

Subsequently, the theoretical framework is presented. In it, the most important concepts are mentioned, such as culture according to Samovar and Porter (1997), translation and its importance as explained by Bernack (2012), the translation process according to Igareda (2011), the objectives of the translator (Vilcu, 2010).

Following is the methodology chapter corresponding to the implemented method employed in the study. It is a descriptive-qualitative due to the nature of the script where observation and life experiences were analyzed and based on the Bassnett- Mcguire (1980) methodology whose objective is to describe and reach an understanding of the process in the act of translation. This descriptive-qualitative investigation follows the following stages: watching, documenting, analyzing, comparing, and identifying the different aspects of the script.

Then the analysis chapter is presented, where could be found the analysis of the corpus, in which the twenty segments of the expressions or phrases of the analysis that were more significant are shown to readers. That segments are presented in a table, the left side shows the original language script, which is Spanish, and on the right side the target language, English; these segments are classified in semantic or cultural aspects, each one of them is explained with their respective translation techniques used in each one and the analysis of its use.

Finally, the conclusions and the bibliography are presented, followed by the original parallel corpus as an annex.

**\*Goya Awards:** Awards that are given annually to those who represent the best of the Spanish cinema. The award is granted by the Spanish Academy of Film Arts and Sciences, rewarding the best professionals in each of the Spanish film specialties.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an inverse or reverse translation of cultural elements, achieving 100% accuracy in the target language is not an easy task (Pokorn, 2005). The constant evolution of the language, caused by different social relations and necessities of the people to express with the language all the information as possible, but also with fewer words. In simple terms, people all the time compromise the use of words, and they start to create, use and misuse words, as the different situations or contexts where they live require it. In consequence, sometimes there exist elements in translation that are lost in the process, so that does not allow an accurate translation.

The fundamental objective of translators, and one of the most important things they learn from the beginning of their degrees, is not to translate meanings but translate senses or designatum (Vîlcu, 2010). The translation is more than just looking at words in the dictionary, and that is why sometimes is challenging to find an exact equivalent in the target language; here is where the pragmatic level of a linguistic element appears when culture and social particularities determine the different senses the same word or phrase can have.

Another thing translators should have in mind when finding an accurate translation for complex elements of language is they should still respect the structure of the text, and particularly respect the four conversational maxims intended to achieve the best way to communicate, due to translation is a form of communication between one culture. Mayhua (2019) indicates that the four maxims of Grice's theory are the most important one related to translation. Translators have to research and apply all their cultural and topic knowledge. They choose a genuinely adequate translation that can fit in the concept they are translating, try not to add too many words, not to lose elements that are part of the whole meaning. Furthermore, they keep the linguistic function, in other words, what the speaker wants to achieve with the message, in which just one specific word or phrase can play a very important or the most important role.

Out of the discussion, inverse translation represents a bigger challenge than direct

translation, even to language professionals. If direct translation involves the difficulty of understanding the source text, inverse translation involves the greater problem of finding an accurate way of reorganizing the text in the target language. Some authors say translators should not even try to do this kind of translation because it is something unnatural, some sort of deviation from the norm (De la Cruz, 2004). However, many other professionals of translation uphold it but say that these works always must be done carefully and ethically.

The main reason why authors reject reverse translation (Kelly, 1997; Pastor, 2001; María, 2004; González & Scott-Tennent 2005) seems pretty obvious and logical: translators lack proficiency in another language that is not their mother tongue. Nobody could refuse it, but nobody can deny reality either. Reality speaks for itself, and in practice, reverse translation is much more common and, indeed, a necessity (Masseau, 2013).

Where there are not enough translators of one language, other translators have to do reverse translations, even though some information that can be lost or misunderstood in the process. There are some cases in where there is no need to be perfectly accurate in the translation because it only needs to deliver the general idea. In other words, the people who will read these texts, will not scandalize if there are some stylistic or linguistic errors and the message will still be understood. This can be verified with pragmatic texts.

There are many other kinds of texts where the reverse translation is probably not a good idea and where the perfect candidate to make this kind of job will always be the native translator. However, the problem of the demand for translations in languages that are not widely spoken will remain the same. So, what if translators had more hours of reverse translation practice while they are studying? It is essential for the training of translators to have appropriate models and programs to describe the translation skills required for reverse translation (De la Cruz, 2004). Maybe if this kind of practice has a more critical space into careers, students would be more prepared when they graduate, therefore, there would be a bigger chance to delete the linguistic mistakes commonly made in reverse translations.

Nowadays, a few studies involve converting Chilean Spanish to neutral English. Therefore, it is crucial to execute this kind of work, so that makes this investigation meaningful. Two main concepts will be analyzed: Culture and semantics. Samovar and Porter (1997) define culture as “the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving (1997:12- 13).”

Semantics refers to the branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of the language units, from morphemes and lexemes to higher units of meaning such as sentences and discourses.

According to Igareda (2011), the process of translation compares not only two languages but also cultures and societies. That position leads to many different possibilities of meaning that a word can have. That is why the translator’s knowledge has to cover not only the grammar, lexicology, and semantics, but also the translator has to have deep knowledge about the culture of the source and target language. Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) defines the movie as a product created and involved in a culture, so it has an intention into.

Although these two elements already mentioned could constitute a problem for translators in every situation when translating, translators are capable of using different strategies and techniques in order to be able to solve them.

### Research questions

Having said that, and with the information of the different elements, the investigation focuses on resolving the following questions:

1. Do cultural differences affect the understanding of the plot of *The Mole Agent*?
2. If so, do translated cultural elements influence this understanding in the subtitling process??
3. Is it possible to transfer all the cultural and semantic elements from a Chilean movie to

American culture without losing any element in the English subtitles?

### 1.3. Main objective.

In order to answer the questions mentioned, the main objective of this research is to compare the translation into English of the subtitles script of *The Mole Agent*. The text will be analyzed comparatively based on the translation techniques of Hurtado y Molina (2001), in a parallel corpus, to identify the strategies used and assess its fidelity concerning the content of the source text and its equivalence in the target language.

### 1.4. Specific objectives

The following objectives constitute a series of stages that culminate in the main objective of this work. In this research, the following activities will be done sequentially to accomplish the main objective.

1. Describe the elements involved in the process of translation in the subtitles of *The Mole Agent*.
2. Transcribe the Spanish script and the English Subtitles in a comparison chart.
3. Analyze and compare the Spanish script and the English Subtitles.
4. Identify the Chilean Spanish semantic elements that script has and indicate their translation in the final English subtitles.
5. Identify the translation techniques used in the translation of the English subtitles script.

## 1.5. Hypothesis

In this investigation, a comparative analysis of the English version of the Spanish script of *The Mole Agent* will be made, working and investigating the different factors that can affect the process of translation and subtitling, and its influence on the comprehension of the movie in the target language.

The question raised is: Is it possible to transfer all the cultural and semantic elements from a Chilean movie to American culture without losing any element along the way?

Since all the information learned through the career, the hypothesis is that it is difficult to transfer the very same significance, especially in subtitling, because it operates under specific rules, so is an adaptation of the original script. However, there exist different translation techniques that can help to solve any problem that is submitted.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Importance of Translation

Bernack (2012), points out that translation is a process that enables effective communication between people around the world. It is a courier for the transmission of knowledge, a protector of cultural heritage, and essential to the development of a global economy. Highly skilled translators are key. Translation Studies helps practitioners develop the different skills to do it properly.

Only when translation is viewed as a part of the total picture of interlingual communication can one adequately appreciate its significance or how it is developing within itself, contributing to other communication studies.

### 2.2. The Aim of Translation.

Translation aims to transfer specific intellectual and aesthetic values from one language to another (Popovič, 2011). This transfer is not performed directly and is not without its difficulties. The losses incurred in the process are sometimes such as to shake our faith in the very possibility of translating a work of art. Nevertheless, translating may also produce the opposite result, that is, bringing actual gain. This range of possibilities provides a clear indication that translation by its very nature entails certain shifts of intellectual and aesthetic values.

### 2.3. Translation Theories

Translation theories have to be used by translators to make a translation process right. As Safi (2011) quotes Newmark, translation theory is connected mainly with establishing the right translation methods for the widest range of texts or text categories. It also provides a framework of principles, restricted rules and hints for translating texts and criticizing translations, a background for problem-solving. Any theory should also be concerned with

translation strategies adopted to address difficulties and problems in specific complicated texts (As Safi, 2011). On the other hand, a thorough translation theory would also include a practical evaluation procedure with specific criteria. One of the most used and maybe the most asserted theories would be by E. Nida, who states that therefore translation is an activity involving language there is a sense that any theories of translation are linguistic (ibid).

### 2.3.1. Linguistic Theories Classification

The theories above can be classified into three main categories:

**Table 1**

*Linguistic Theories Classification*

| PHILOLOGICAL THEORIES  | LINGUISTIC THEORIES   | SOCIOLINGUISTIC THEORIES  |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Related to the development of language and classical literary studies, they also are concerned with structure comparison in the native and foreign languages.</p> | <p>They are based on comparing the linguistic structures of the source text and the target text, rather than the philological theories that compare literary genres and stylistic features. Linguistic theories are descriptive rather than prescriptive. They do not focus on how people translate but demonstrate how people translate.</p> | <p>They make particular emphasis on the receptor's role in the translation process. They relate linguistic structures to a higher level in literary and non-literary texts. These structures may involve rhetorical devices, figures of speech.</p> |

## 2.4. Audiovisual translation

Audiovisual translation is generally a translation of the verbal component of the video (Gotlieb, 1998). Its main feature is the synchronization of verbal and nonverbal components. While dealing with an audiovisual product translator do not work only with text but also with other aspects of media art which are of polyphonic nature. Thus, they work with dialogues/comments, sound effects, images, and the atmosphere of the video. (ibid).

### 2.4.1. Audiovisual Translation Channels

There are four main channels of information that are taken into consideration while translating:

**Table 2**

*Audiovisual translation Channels*

| Verbal audio channel                      | Nonverbal audio channel                       | Verbal and visual channel  | Nonverbal visual channel |
|---|---|--|--------------------------|
| Dialogues, off-screen voices, songs, etc. | Music, sound effects, off-screen sounds, etc. | Subtitles, signs, notes, inscriptions that appear on the screen. | Picture on the screen    |

(Gotlieb, 1998).

#### 2.4.2. Channels used for the Corpus Analysis

In this work, the analysis will be focused on two channels.

**Table 3**

*Channels used for the analysis*

|          |               |                     |
|----------|---------------|---------------------|
| Channel  | Verbal audio  | Verbal and visual   |
| Element  | Dialogues     | Subtitles           |
| Language | Spanish       | English             |
| Process  | Transcription | Inverse translation |

The first one is the verbal audio channel. It refers to the dialogues which are the things that are said by the characters in a story, movie, play, etc. (Merriam-Webster, 2021). The second is the verbal and visual channel. It refers to the dialogue appearing as a translation at the bottom of the screen during the scenes of a motion picture or television show in a foreign language (ibid).

The translation of the script allows us to recognize that the Co-existence of many semantic signs that make up meaning, which contain a cultural charge, provides transfer from one semiologic complex into another in the audiovisual translation. Two semiologic complexes are formed: the original and translation (Pisarska, Tomaszewicz, 1998).

#### 2.4.3. Netflix Platform

Audiovisual translation is undergoing a revolution driven by the dramatic increase in demand and supply of audiovisual products (Asensio, 2013).

A great example of globalization in the audiovisual area is the Netflix platform. Netflix is one of the world's leading entertainment services with 214 million paid memberships in over 190 countries enjoying TV series, documentaries and feature films across a wide variety of genres and languages. Members can watch as much as they want, anytime, anywhere, on any internet-connected screen (Netflix, 2021). It is essential to mention that regarding the subtitles. This platform proposes 42 characters per line (ibid) *The Mole Agent* was released on this platform, and it has subtitles in English that is the translation of the original script analyzed in the study.

## 2.5. Subtitling

Subtitling is defined as a presentation of dialogue translation in a film in the form of a title usually at the bottom of an image or shot on the screen (Hurt and Widler, 1998). Subtitles usually appear and disappear in correspondence to the original dialogue and almost always are added to the image on the screen later due to the post-production part. Gotlieb (1998) following R. Jacobson's classification of texts worked out his own classification of subtitles and divided them into the following groups:

- Intralingual that are also called vertical subtitles as they change perceptive modality (spoken text is converted into written without any change of change);
- Interlingual or so-called diagonal type of subtitles change both perceptual modality and language; open or non-optional represented which are an integral physical part of a film or tele program; closed or optional, which are represented in the Teletext where you can view using the correspondent decoder.

Regarding these two elements, it will be analyzed how they are related and if they influence the translation, and the facts that can influence the capacity of the decision of the subtitlers.

Pedersen (2005) establishes seven parameters that can influence the decision-making

capacity of subtitlers, which seem to be most beneficial for actual practice: the first of these parameters, is cross-culturality (2011, p. 106) which explains how cultural elements are interconnected between them and how certain elements can be shared between diverse cultures.

### 2.5.1. Cross-Culturality

According to Leppihalme (2011) the *cross-culturality* explains how the cultural elements are related and how certain elements can be shared in some cultures. That directly influences the translator’s decision at the moment of subtitling. These elements are presented in the table below:

**Table 4**

*Cross-Culturality Elements Categorization*

| <b>Cross-cultural cultural element</b>                       | <b>Monocultural cultural element</b>   | <b>Microcultural cultural element</b>   |
|--|--|---|
| The element is not linked to the culture of the source text. | The referent of the cultural elements cannot be identified by the majority of the audience of the subtitled film, because there are differences in terms of the encyclopedic knowledge shared in each culture. | an element that can escape the encyclopedic knowledge shared by many of the members of the original cultural and term |

## 2.6. Subtitle Guidelines

The Subtitle Guidelines published by BBC in 2021 will be used to show the general specifications that should be followed when intending to subtitle.

Font: Subtitle fonts are determined by the platform, the delivery mechanism, and the client, but the most commonly used ones are Arial, Verdana, and Tiresias.

Characters per line: Netflix proposes 42 characters per line (Netflix, 2021).

Line breaks: Subtitles and lines should be broken at logical points. The ideal line-break will be at a piece of punctuation like a full stop, comma, or dash.

Lines: A maximum subtitle length of two lines is recommended.

Duration: Based on the recommended rate of 160-180 words per minute, subtitles on the screen should last for a minimum period of around 0.3 seconds per word (e.g., 1.2 seconds for a 4-word subtitle).

## 2.7. Transcription

The definition that can be found in the linguistic sense is the systematic representation of language in written form. The transcription source can be utterances or preexisting texts in another writing system (Pierce, 2018). The keyword in this definition is 'written.' It is essential to clarify this point in the case of confusion with the word 'translation,' which in its definition is more related to language and the process of changing a text from one language to another. To be more precise, transcription is only the process of transforming some discourse into a written form, not necessarily changing the language.

## 2.8. Parallel Corpus

A parallel corpus is a text compilation in an electronic format that follows specific criteria; for example: 1) it has an end. 2) It is in electronic format; 3) it has been made under certain criteria. 4) It represents a language or a variety of languages (Hurtado, 2011). A corpus

allows to organize the script in different segments, observed in both languages simultaneously.

## 2.9. Translation Techniques

From Lucía Molina & Amparo Hurtado (2001)

**Table 5**

*Translation Techniques used for Audiovisual Translation*

| N° | Name                 | Definition  | Example   |
|----|----------------------|---|---|
| 1  | Adaptation           | A cultural element is replaced by another typical of the target culture.  | Change "baseball" to "fútbol" in the Spanish translation  |
| 2  | Linguistic Expansion | Linguistic elements are added; is a resource that is usually especially used in interpretation consecutive and dubbing. It is opposed to the technique of linguistic compression. | Translate into Spanish The English expression "No way" by "deninguna manera", instead of using an expression with the same number of words (for example, "En absoluto") |
| 3  | Amplification        | Details not formulated in the original text are added: information, explanatory paraphrases, translator's notes, etc. It opposes the elision technique.                           | Translate from Arabic to Spanish Ramadán by Ramadán, mes del ayuno para los musulmanes  |
| 4  | Calque               | It consists in a literal translation of a foreign word or syntagm. It can be lexical or structural.   | The term in English Normal School from french École Normale   |

|    |                        |  |  |
|----|------------------------|--|--|
| 5  | Compensation           | An element of information or stylistic effect that could not be reflected in the same place where it appears in the original text.                                   | No examples.   |
| 6  | Linguistic Compression | Linguistic elements are synthesized. It is a resource especially used in interpretation simultaneously and in subtitling. It is opposed to linguistic amplification. | Translate the English interrogative phrase Yes, so what? into Spanish as ¿Y?, instead of an expression with the same number of words as: ¿Sí, y qué? |
| 7  | Discursive Creation    | An equivalence is established ephemeral, totally unpredictable out of context.   | The translation of the English film Rumble fish by La ley de la calle  |
| 8  | Description            | A term is replaced or expression by the description of its form and/or function.   | Translate the Italian panetone as el bizcocho tradicional que se toma en Nochevieja en Italia.   |
| 9  | Elision                | No elements of information present in the original text are formulated in the target text. It is opposed to amplification.   | Elude el mes del ayuno as opposed to Ramadán in an Arabic translation.   |
| 10 | Coined Equivalent      | A recognized term or expression (By dictionary, by linguistic use) is used as equivalent in the target language.   | Translate the English expression "They are as like as two peas" as "Se parecen como dos gotas de agua."  |
| 11 | Generalization         | A more general or neutral term is used.  | Translate French terms as guichet, fenêtre or devanture as window in   |

|    |                     |  |   |
|----|---------------------|--|---|
|    |                     |  | English.  |
| 12 | Modulation          | A change of point of view, approach or category of thought is made in relation to the formulation of the original text; it can be lexical and structural.  | Use to translate Golfo arábigo or Golfopérsico (according to ideological affiliation); or the Arabicequivalent of Vas a tener un hijo (literally, vas a convertirte en padre) |
| 13 | Particularization   | A more precise or concrete term is used. It opposes the generalization.  | Translate the English term window by frenchguichet.   |
| 14 | Loan Word           | A word or expression of another language is integrated as is. It can be pure (without any change) or naturalized (transliteration of the foreign language) | Pure: keep the English term in Spanish lobby; Naturalized: Gol, fútbol, líder, mitin.   |
| 15 | Substitution        | Linguistic elements are changed to paralinguistic (intonation, gestures), or vice versa.   | Translate the Arabic gesture of putting your hand to your heart by gracias.   |
| 16 | Literal Translation | It translates word for word a syntagma or expression   | Translate “They are as like as two peas” as “Se parecen como dos guisantes.”  |

|    |               |  |  |
|----|---------------|--|--|
| 17 | Transposition | The grammatical category is changed.   | Translate into Spanish “He will soon be back” as “Notardará en venir” instead of “Estará de vuelta pronto”   |
| 18 | Variation     | Linguistic or paralinguistic elements are changed (intonation, gestures) affecting aspects of the linguistic variation: changes in textual tone, style, social dialect, geographical dialect, etc. | Introduction or changes of dialectal markings for the characterization of characters in theatrical translation, changes of tone in adaptations of novels for children, etc.. |

Bardají Anna Gil. (2003). *Procedimientos, Técnicas, Estrategias: Operadores del Proceso Traductor*.

### III. METHODOLOGY

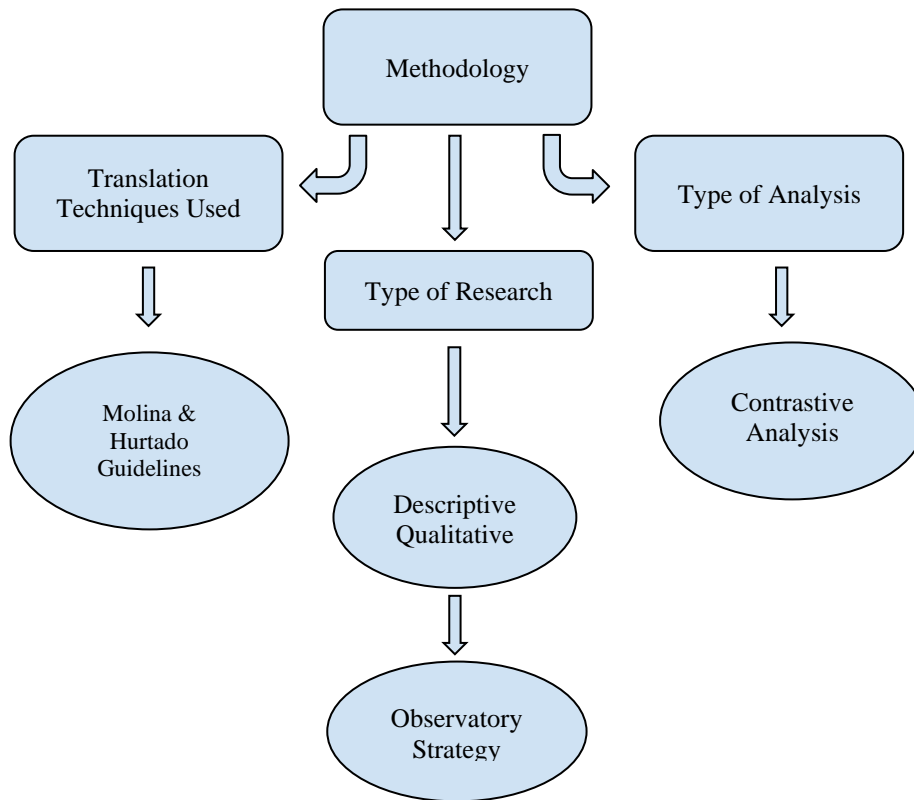
This research is descriptive-qualitative. This is explained since the investigation is based on research, in the observation strategy, whose objective is to describe and reach an understanding of the processes that take place in the act of translation (Bassnett- McGuire, 1980). In addition, this research raises a qualitative position because the information collected through observation and life experiences was analyzed. The information shown in this research is a transcript of many spontaneous conversations, natural behaviors and different situations, with a great cultural load. This leads us to understand how they are related with the way in which it was translated.

According to Holmes (1978), there is a need to explain the nature of all the factors involved in the translation. Our investigation also adopts a qualitative approach because of the different factors described. The influence in obtaining of a faithful audiovisual translation was considered, as they are culture, semantic elements of the source text, the rules of subtitling in audiovisual translation.

Toury (1980), insists on incorporating historical and sociocultural elements analysis and advocates a multidisciplinary approach. According to this, the investigation was guided towards its first steps.

**Figure 1**

*Methodology Approach*



*\*Own work*

First, with the aim of starting the investigation, the film was watched in both Spanish without subtitles and in Spanish with English subtitles. Then, the script was transcribed in its original Spanish version and the English version of the subtitles.

The researchers made that transcription in Spanish, consisting of 1114 segments of dialogue and also its respective translation segment that would be the English subtitles of the movie.

After watching the documentary and documenting about its recording process, the scenes from the film "The Mole Agent" were identified, and it was concluded that they are not under a defined script. It shows the daily life of Chilean older adults, with an approximate age range from 70 to 100 years, who live in a residence under the care of professionals and with obvious abandonment by their families.

After clearing the factors that can influence a translation and the context under which the film is produced, the analysis of both scripts comparatively started, to identify if there exist significant semantic elements present in the script in Spanish that could generate a problem in the understanding of the target audience.

Based on a list of “translation techniques” from Molina and Hurtado (2001) we analyzed and compare the Spanish script and the English Subtitles in a parallel corpus, which allowed it to identify the script in different segments, which were observed in both languages at the same time.

Once the analysis of the corpus in both languages was carried out, it proceeded to identify the semantic and cultural elements that were in the Chilean Spanish script, and the translation in the final English subtitles was indicated.

Identify the translation techniques used in the translation of the English subtitles script. The translation techniques used in each segment were those that were taught from the beginning of the translation career.

## IV. ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the analysis of the semantic and cultural aspects of the ten most relevant segments in each one. Every segment was chosen to be deeply analyzed for an interesting example of the translation procedures during the process of translation.

Culture, which Samovar and Porter define as “the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving (1997:12-13)”

Semantics refers to the branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of the language units, from morphemes and lexemes to higher units of meaning such as sentences and discourses.

### 4.1. Analysis Procedure

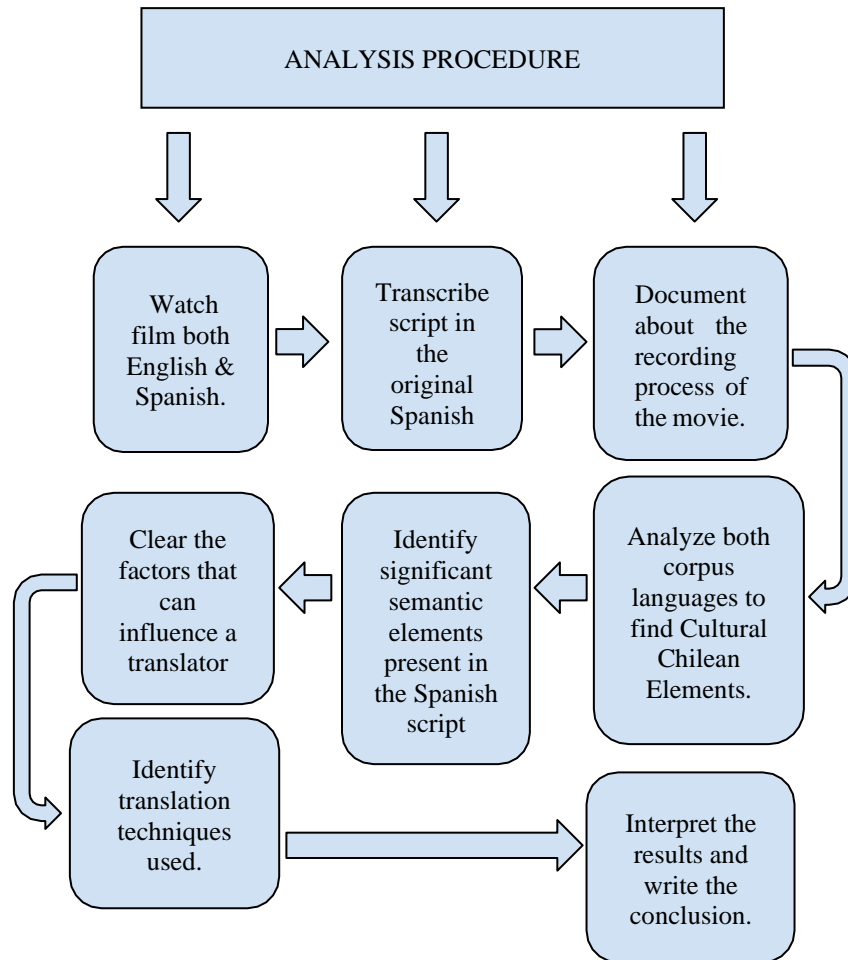
### 4.2. Analysis Measurement Description.

Each analysis chart comprises five divisions, as shown in Table 1. The first division indicates the number of segments. The second division indicates the Spanish text with the original script, then the English text that contains the English subtitles. Next to that, the translation techniques used are based on Molina and Hurtado (2001).

Finally, the last division indicates the category of the expression, which could be Semantic or Cultural that are the two bases in which were analyzed the great spontaneous script of the movie “The mole agent.” Below these charts, the analysis of each segment can be found.

**Figure 2**

*Analysis Procedure*



*\*Own work*

4.2.1 Example Table for the Corpus Analysis

**Table 6**

*Example Table for the Corpus Analysis*

| Nº | Source (ES)            | Target (EN)    | Translation Techniques                     | Category             |
|----|------------------------|----------------|--|----------------------|
| 1  | Chilean Spanish script | English script | A technique from Molina and Hurtado (2001) | semantic or cultural |

*\*Own work*

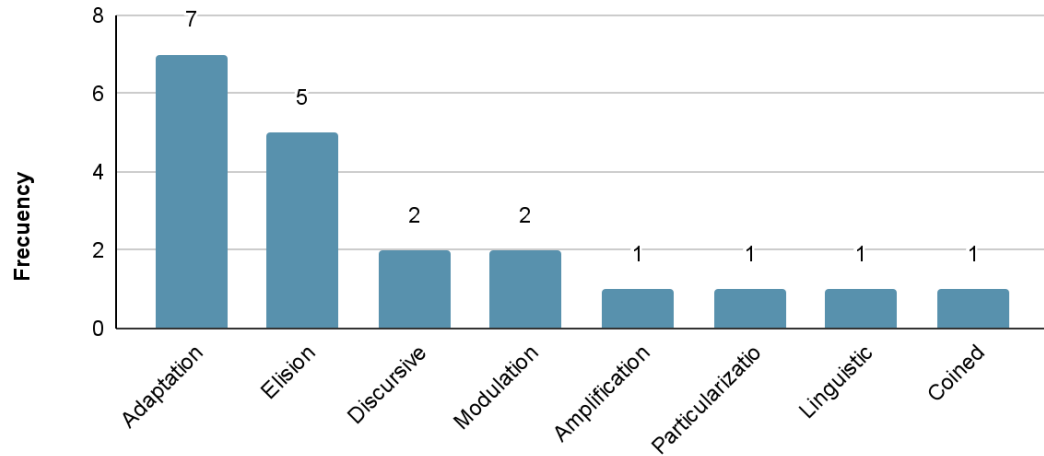
### 4.3 Frequency of Occurrence of Translation Techniques

**Figure 3**

*Most common Translation Techniques used throughout the text*

#### General Graphic

Frequency of occurrence of translation techniques.



**Most commonly used translation techniques.**

*\*Own work*

The graphic above shows the frequency of translation techniques detected in the ten most significant segments, both semantic and cultural.

As shown in graphic number 1, the technique with the highest number of repetitions is an adaptation, with seven (35%) appearances. Then, the elision technique can be appreciated with five (25%) appearances, these two being the ones that represent the majority in each of the cultural and semantic categories, respectively.

With a notorious low, it can be seen that discursive creation and modulation also appear two times each (10% each), and finally, the techniques of amplification, particularization, linguistic expansion, and coined equivalent appear one time represent 5% each.

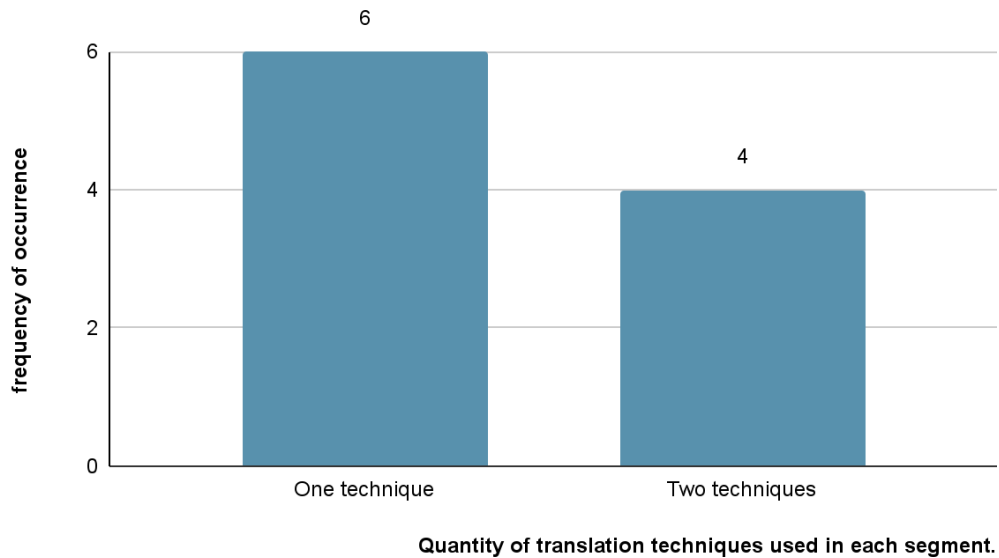
## 4.4. SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

### 4.4.1 Semantic Elements Analysis

**Figure 4**

*Quantity of Translation Techniques used in each segment*

#### Semantic Segments Graphic



*\*Own work*

The graphic above shows the frequency of using of one or two techniques used in the same segment, in the 10 significant segments of the semantic section.

As seen in the graphic number a single technique was mainly used in six segments in this category, corresponding to 60%. On the other hand, two translation techniques were used in 40% of the segments.

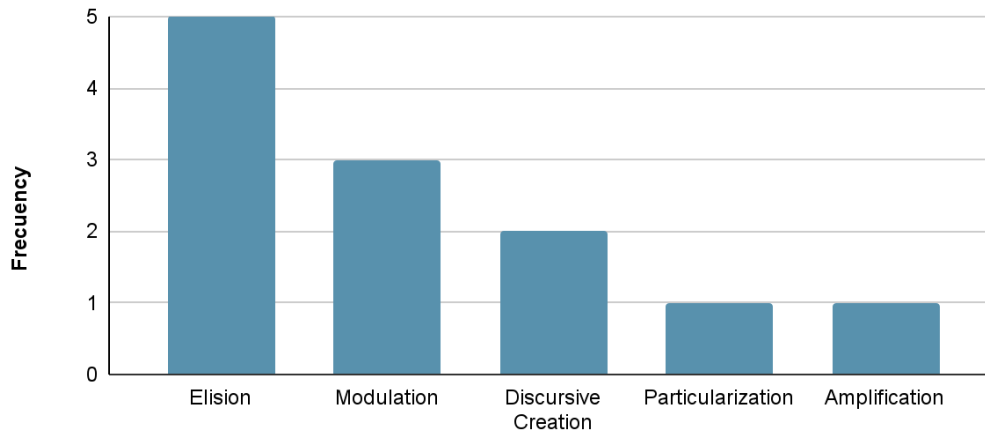
#### 4.4.2 Translation Techniques Semantic Section Graphic

**Figure 5**

*Common Translation Techniques used in the Semantic Section*

### Translation techniques semantic section graphic

Frequency of occurrence of translation techniques.



**Most commonly used translation techniques in the semantic section.**

*\*Own work*

The graphic above shows the frequency of occurrences of translation techniques detected in the segments of the semantic section.

As shown in graph number 1, the technique with the highest number of repetitions is the elision, with five appearances, corresponding to 41.6% of the total. It is followed by the modulation technique, with three appearances and 25% of the total. Then it can appreciate the discursive creation, with two appearances and 16.6% of the total. Finally, particularization and amplification are used with one appearance and a percentage of appearance of 8.3% each.

#### 1) ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

**Table 7**

*Chart Number 01: Semantic Analysis*

|     |  |                      |         |          |
|-----|--|----------------------|---------|----------|
| 119 | <i>Ahí se supone que te<br/>estoy...se supone que te<br/>estoy grabando.</i> | I'm filming you now. | Elision | Semantic |
|-----|--|----------------------|---------|----------|

In this sentence, redundant linguistic elements which do not provide more information to the text were synthesized using the elision technique. For example, the sentence “Ahí se supone que te estoy...se supone que...” was replaced by “I’m filming you now.” which means “Ahora te estoy grabando,” the word "supposed," which indicates insecurity on the part of the speaker, was completely omitted by a statement such as "I am recording you now." It did not change the purpose of the sentence, but the point of view did. Also, the omission of the first sentence was made to maintain the number of characters of the subtitling.

2) MODULATION:

A change of point of view, approach, or category of thought is made to formulate the original text; it can be lexical and/or structural.

ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

**Table 8**

*Chart Number 02: Semantic Analysis*

|     |  |   |                        |          |
|-----|--|---|------------------------|----------|
| 204 | Que se acostumbre a saber que en las paredes están los pasamanos que son para apoyarnos<br><i>ante cualquier eventualidad.</i> | So remember that you have the railings to hold onto if you need it. | Modulation/<br>Elision | Semantic |
|-----|--|---|------------------------|----------|

In this sentence, there is a change in the point of view, so they use the modulation technique. This is because in the source text, “que se acostumbre a saber” is translated as “Remember.” The important thing about that sentence is to convey the idea of knowing something, in this case, the existence of handrails. That is why the translator chose to change the point of view to convey the same idea, and at the same time, this modulation omits certain words in the source text, to maintain the number of characters in the subtitling.

### 3) ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

**Table 9**

*Chart Number 03: Semantic Analysis*

|     |   |                                       |         |          |
|-----|---|---------------------------------------|---------|----------|
| 207 | ...tenemos, <i>como yo le digo</i> , habitaciones compartidas como esa. | We've got shared rooms like this one, | Elision | Semantic |
|-----|---|---------------------------------------|---------|----------|

In this sentence, words such as “como yo le digo” are not written in the target text, because they are words that do not provide relevant content, and that if translated, would significantly increase the number of characters allowed in the subtitling. That is why it is chosen not to translate them.

4) DISCURSIVE CREATION:

An ephemeral equivalence is established, totally unpredictable outside the context.

**Table 10**

*Chart Number 04: Semantic Analysis*

|     |   |  |                     |          |
|-----|---|--|---------------------|----------|
| 320 | <p>Luego conversé con la señora Petronila Me entretuvo con sus versos que ella compone...<br/> <i>"Voy a brindar por la vida, cuando hay comprensión y amor no se siente ni un dolor ni duele ninguna herida.</i></p> | <p>Later I talked to Mrs. Petronila. She entertained me with some of her poems.<br/> <i>I'll toast to life: when there's love and comprehension, there's no pain or injury to be felt.</i></p> | Discursive Creation | Semantic |
|-----|---|--|---------------------|----------|

In this segment, a poetic sentence establishes an ephemeral equivalence to achieve the discursive effect that the author of the poem wants. The stylistic effect of rhymes in the translation could be changed. We propose the following translation:

“I’ll toast to life: when there’s love and understanding, you can overcome the pain and feel what is everlasting.”

5) DISCURSIVE CREATION:

An ephemeral equivalence is established, totally unpredictable outside the context.

**Table 11**

*Chart Number 05: Semantic Analysis*

|     |  |  |                        |          |
|-----|--|--|------------------------|----------|
| 321 | El vivir bien nos convida a una florida vejez, el trabajo y la honradez al hombre dan alegría y se termina la vida con la mayor fluidez. | Living well gives us a flourishing old age, work and honesty bring joy to mankind, and life ends on the smoothest of terms." | Discursive<br>Creation | Semantic |
|-----|--|--|------------------------|----------|

In this segment, a poetic sentence establishes an ephemeral equivalence to achieve the discursive effect that the author of the poem wants. In this case, the author looks for rhymes, which can be translated into the English language with a small creation in terms of meaning, to obtain the desired stylistic effect.

#### 6) ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

**Table 12**

*Chart Number 06: Semantic Analysis*

|     |  |  |                        |          |
|-----|--|--|------------------------|----------|
| 200 | - Claro<br><u>Ahí también tienen para estar</u> en el tiempo del verano, <i>si vienen los hijos, comparten ahí un ratito, una tarde.</i> | -<br><u>Here, you can spend time</u> during summer or <i>share the afternoon with your children.</i> | Elision/<br>Modulation | Semantic |
|-----|--|--|------------------------|----------|

Some words are not written in the target text, aiming to maintain the number of characters of the subtitling. The word “Claro” was omitted in the translation. Also, there is a change in the point of view of the sentence. First the sentence “Ahí también tienen para estar” is general in the source text, but the translation in the target text is specific “Here, you can spend.” Then in the following expression, “share the afternoon with your children.” Some words are omitted to keep the economy of words characteristic of the English language, so the point of view is changed.

7) MODULATION:

There is a change in the POV.

**Table 13**

*Chart Number 07: Semantic Analysis*

|     |   |  |            |          |
|-----|---|--|------------|----------|
| 202 | <i>Que me interesa que, aunque usted me diga: "No los necesito", - de repente los necesita.</i> | <i>Although you might say, "I don't need them," - sometimes we do need them.</i> | Modulation | Semantic |
|-----|---|--|------------|----------|

In this segment, the translation technique used is modulation, there is a change in the point of view, the source text is centered in the sender and what she wants "*Que me interesa que aunque usted me diga*" also in this expression, there is a redundancy, in the word "que." On the other side, in the target text, the message is centered in what the sender said to the receiver "*Although you might say,*" furthermore the last expression in the source text is singular "*de repente los necesita*" and in the translation, it changes to the plural "*sometimes we do need them*" maybe to do the expression closer.

8) ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

PARTICULARIZATION:

A more precise or concrete term is used. It is opposed to generalization.

**Table 14**

*Chart Number 08: Semantic Analysis*

|     |   |   |                               |          |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------------|----------|
| 331 | Una vez nomás se me perdió dinero pero una persona extraña que, no sé, una visita, una cosa así que... pero no la <b>gente</b> de aquí. | Just one time, I lost some money, but it was a stranger, I don't know, maybe a visitor...But not the <b>workers</b> here. | Elision/<br>Particularization | Semantic |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------------|----------|

In this segment, there are two translation techniques, elision and particularization. Some words are not written in the target text because they are unnecessary to maintain the economy of words. The Spanish language usually uses more words that are not always necessary, and in this case, where the elders are talking, they use to talk more because they do not find the words so quickly or they are confused. Also, the source text uses the general word “gente,” which means people, and in the target, the text is used a more specific word, “workers,” so the translation technique particularization is noted clearly.

9) AMPLIFICATION:

Add words that are not in the ST to the TT.

**Table 15**

*Chart Number 09: Semantic Analysis*

|     |  |   |               |          |
|-----|--|---|---------------|----------|
| 929 | Si, porque, ¿quién le va a decir una poesía? | Yes, because <b>who else can recite poetry to us around here?</b> | Amplification | Semantic |
|-----|--|---|---------------|----------|

Amplification is used to add some elements in the translation of the question intending to

provide context and make it more straightforward for the audience. This technique is used because the question in the source text is poor and lacks context. In the sourcetext, it is implied that the sender refers to them (the habitants of the nursing home). However, it was necessary to make it explicit in the target text.

10) LINGUISTIC EXPANSION:

Add Linguistic elements to the same expression.

COINED EQUIVALENT:

Uses a term recognized as an equivalent.

**Table 16**

*Chart Number 10: Semantic Analysis*

|      |                     |   |  |          |
|------|---------------------|---|--|----------|
| 1137 | Todo tiene arreglo. | <i>In this life,</i><br>everything has a<br>solution. | Linguistic expansion/<br>Coined equivalent | Semantic |
|------|---------------------|---|--|----------|

Some elements are added to the target text to make the expression more natural for the audience. “Todo tiene arreglo” is very used in Chilean Spanish and means that everything can be fixed. So, the main verb “arreglar” was translated into English as a noun “solution” because the sentence has a similar meaning. Also, it looks similar to the phrase “everything in life has a solution,” which is common in both languages.

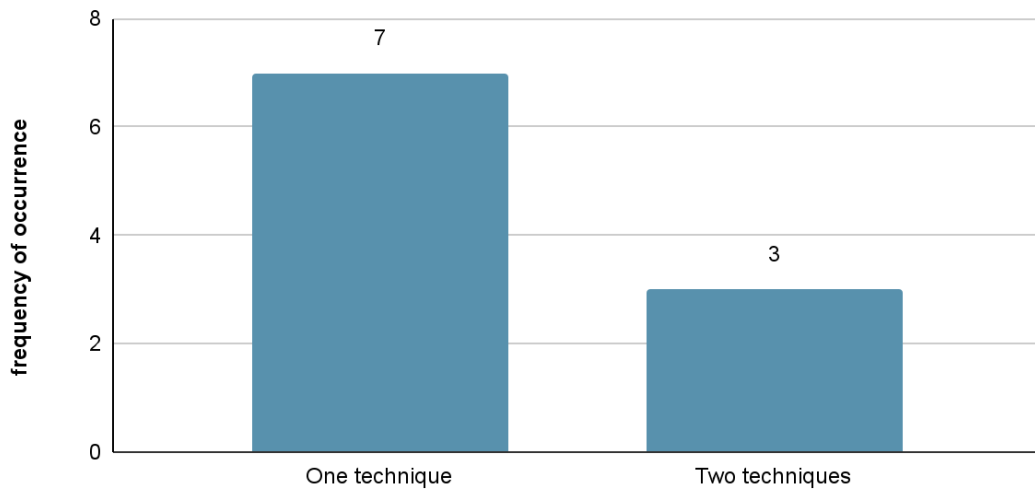
## 4.5 CULTURAL ANALYSIS

### 4.5.1 Cultural Segments Graphics

**Figure 6**

*Quantity of Translation Techniques used in the Cultural Section*

#### Cultural Segments Graphic



Quantity of translation techniques used in each segment of the cultural section.

*\*Own work*

The graphic above shows the frequency of using of one or two techniques used in the same segment, in the ten significant segments of the cultural section. As seen in the graphic's number, a single technique was mostly used in seven segments in this category, which corresponds to 70%. On the other hand, two translation techniques were used in 30% of the segments.

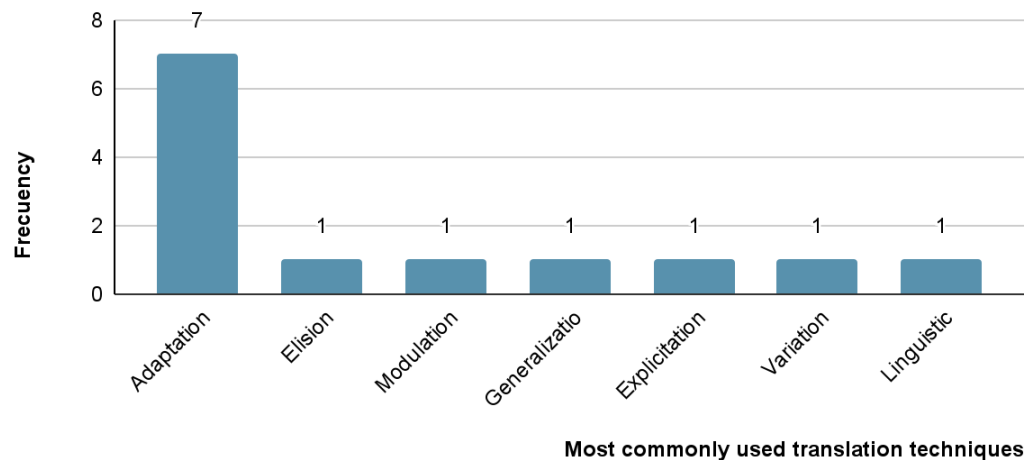
#### 4.5.2. Translation Techniques Cultural Section Graphic

**Figure 7**

*Common Translation Techniques used in the Cultural Section*

### Translation techniques cultural section graphic

Frequency of occurrence of translation techniques.



*\*Own work*

The graphic above shows the frequency of occurrences of translation techniques detected in the segments of the cultural section.

As shown in graphic number 5, the technique with the highest number of repetitions is an adaptation. Due to the tremendous cultural charge of these segments with seven appearances, adaptation corresponds to 53.8% of the total. It is followed equally by elision, modulation, generalization, explication, variation, and linguistic expansion techniques, representing 7,7% of each.

#### 1) GENERALIZATION:

A more general or neutral term is used. This technique is opposed to particularization.

**Table 17**

*Chart Number 01: Cultural Analysis*

|   |  |   |                |          |
|---|--|---|----------------|----------|
| 5 | <i>Compro El Mercurio, y veo un aviso que decía: "Se necesitan personas", varones, parece que decía así, "de 80 a 90 años" Esta cuestión es... Estoy loco o qué diablos?</i> | I bought <i>the newspaper</i> and saw an ad that said, "Man needed. Between 80 and 90 years old." And I thought, am I crazy, or what? | Generalization | Cultural |
|---|--|---|----------------|----------|

The interrogative expression "¿Qué diablos?" contains a cultural charge, which expresses the misunderstanding of something, and in this case, is replaced by a more general expression of incomprehension such as "or what?" Also, the expression "El Mercurio" refers to a newspaper from Chile that was changed to a more general phrase as "the newspaper," which would be correct since it would not have a translation.

2) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 18**

*Chart Number 02: Cultural Analysis*

|    |   |   |                              |          |
|----|---|---|------------------------------|----------|
| 45 | <i>Porque yo soy el que me rayo yo mi cancha.</i> | because I'm the one who makes decisions about myself. | Adaptation/<br>Explicitation | Cultural |
|----|---|---|------------------------------|----------|

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element. Here, the Chilean expression "rayar la cancha" means: make the rules explicit; set limits on some situation or emphasize one's right to do something. In that sense, the expression is replaced by another that literally expresses the sentence's meaning.

### 3) ELISION:

Elements of information in the source text are not formulated in the target text. This technique is opposed to amplification.

### ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 19**

*Chart Number 03: Cultural Analysis*

|    |   |  |                        |          |
|----|---|--|------------------------|----------|
| 56 | Que tú vas al baño, los baños están asquerosos, que no hay confort, o los pobres viejos andan con los pañales todos sucios, que las enfermeras, paf, <b>cachuchazo</b> , paf, y escobazos, qué sé yo. | If you see that the toilets are filthy, or that there isn't any toilet paper, or that the old folks are all walking around in dirty diapers, or that the caretakers are <b>bang! Slap!</b><br>Or God knows what! | Elision/<br>Adaptation | Cultural |
|----|---|--|------------------------|----------|

Some words are not written in the target text, because there is no equivalent of the word in English. “Cachuchazo” is a word used in Chilean Spanish and means: A strike with the palm of the hand (slap), usually on the face. As it does not have an equivalent in English, it is chosen to replace the word with an onomatopoeia that best exemplifies the meaning, so that the target audience can understand.

### 4) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 20**

*Chart Number 04: Cultural Analysis*

|    |  |  |            |          |
|----|--|--|------------|----------|
| 62 | Porque si te descubren, hasta ahí nomás llega la <b>pega</b> . | because if they discover you, that means the <b>job</b> is over. | Adaptation | Cultural |
|----|--|--|------------|----------|

In this segment, the technique used was “Adaptation,” when a word is replaced by a cultural expression of the target language. A culturally charged word like "pega," which in Chile means literally work, is an activity that someone does in exchange for money. "Voy a la pega" is the same as "I'm going to work." In this case, the word is replaced by an equivalent for the meaning in English.

#### 5) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 21**

*Chart Number 05: Cultural Analysis*

|     |   |   |            |          |
|-----|---|---|------------|----------|
| 334 | Después de <b>once</b> , conversé con la señora Juana que, al salir de su pieza, resbaló y se cayó. | After <b>tea time</b> , I talked to Mrs. Juana, who slipped and fell when she walked out of her room. | Adaptation | Cultural |
|-----|---|---|------------|----------|

The word or expression “once” is well adapted to be understood in the target language. The word “once” or the expression “tomar once” is a cultural thing specific to Chile that could be tea time in other countries and is similar to the British tea time. Nevertheless, it is said that the Chilean “once” is more than just eating and drinking tea but spending time with friends and family.

#### 6) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 22**

*Chart Number 06: Cultural Analysis*

|     |                              |   |            |          |
|-----|------------------------------|---|------------|----------|
| 442 | Me ve como si fuera el cuco. | She looks at me as if I were the boogeyman. | Adaptation | Cultural |
|-----|------------------------------|---|------------|----------|

It is necessary to use the adaptation translation technique to translate this cultural term. In this segment, the expression “el cuco” is well adapted to be understood in the target culture; it is translated as its equivalent in English “the boogeyman” with the same cultural charge in the target language. “The boogeyman” or “el cuco” is a being feared by children, it is a kind of monster of masculine gender that is used for adults to frighten misbehaving children.

#### 7) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

**Table 23**

*Chart Number 07: Cultural Analysis*

|     |  |  |            |          |
|-----|--|--|------------|----------|
| 547 | <i>Pololeé, pero besos y abrazos no sacan pedazos.</i> | I've had boyfriends, but hugs and kisses don't mean a thing. | Adaptation | Cultural |
|-----|--|--|------------|----------|

The adaptation technique is used in this segment. The word “pololeé” has an enormous cultural charge from Chile, it does not exist in other countries (other than Chile and Bolivia). The translation makes a change of the expression to be understandable. It is used an equivalent that is accurate since the word “pololeé” is the conjugation of the verb “pololear.” It is defined as: Maintaining love relationships of a certain level of formality. This word is accepted for the RAE but it is a colloquial transitive verb. The following phrase “*besos y abrazos no sacan pedazos*” is a Chilean saying that, in this case, it is translated as the literal meaning, “hugs and kisses don’t mean a thing” that would be correct.

#### 8) VARIATION:

Paralinguistic elements are changed to linguistic elements.

**Table 24**

*Chart Number 08: Cultural Analysis*

|     |         |      |           |          |
|-----|---------|------|-----------|----------|
| 264 | Miiich. | Wow! | Variation | Cultural |
|-----|---------|------|-----------|----------|

The expression “Mich” or “Mish” is used in Chile to show surprise. It is a contraction of the expression “mira tú” that means the same (to emphasize something that surprises). It is used in informal situations because it is an expression of Chilean speech. That expression is classified as a paralinguistic element that was changed for the linguistic element “Wow” that by the Cambridge dictionary is an exclamation that shows surprise, so the translation would be correct in this case because both elements show surprise.

9) ADAPTATION:

Another term/element of the target culture replaces a cultural element.

LINGUISTIC EXPANSION:

Linguistic elements are added. It is a resource that is primarily used in consecutive interpreting and dubbing.

**Table 25**

*Chart Number 09: Cultural Analysis*

|     |  |   |                                     |          |
|-----|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 234 | Todo lo que he conversado... <i>del uno.</i> | Everything I've talked with him about... <i>has been great.</i> | Linguistic expansion/<br>Adaptation | Cultural |
|-----|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------|

In this segment, the translation techniques linguistic expansion and adaptation are used. Some elements are added in the target text to adapt the expression correctly. The Chilean expression “del uno” has been adapted well as “*has been great.*” because the translation

means what “del uno” is. This expression “del uno,” which is colloquial and does not have an official definition, could be classified as an archaism since it was used in the past, but now just older people usually have it in their vocabulary.

10) MODULATION:

There is a change in the POV.

**Table 26**

*Chart Number 10: Cultural Analysis*

|     |  |   |            |          |
|-----|--|---|------------|----------|
| 237 | Este es mi <i>postrecito</i><br>para que se lo coma. | This is my <i>dessert</i> .<br>You can have it. | Modulation | Cultural |
|-----|--|---|------------|----------|

In this segment, the translation technique used is modulation. Here there is a change in the point of view of the expression. The word “postrecito” is adapted correctly due to in other cultures. It is not common in this way of talking. This word is diminutive of “postre” (dessert). Talking with this kind of affix is Chilean typical in almost every substantive. Vivanco (2008) states that the use of diminutives in Chile is a “chilenismo.” It means all grammatical errors that could exist in Chilean Spanish. Also, he indicates an element of affection in the way of speaking of Chilean people. In the entire text in Spanish, these kinds of diminutives are common because it is a spontaneous dialogue and diminutives are part of Chilean culture.

## V. CONCLUSION

In the present report, the semantic and cultural elements of the whole script of *The Mole Agent* were identified and analyzed, and the twenty most significant elements of the reverse translation of the movie were presented in the study. Through the analysis tables, the techniques used in the subtitling of the script were identified.

With the collection and analysis of the segments, it could be concluded that it is not possible to transfer all the semantic or cultural elements from Chilean movies to American culture without losing any element along the way. The rules of subtitling are guiding it. Many characters limit the translation in one way or another. Inevitably, elements are lost (whatever it is, it depends on whether it is semantic or cultural) when performing the translation.

Regarding the semantic part, the results showed that in the reverse translation of the movie, the techniques more used in the semantic elements identified were Elision and Modulation. These techniques are not uncommon in this type of translation since the source text of this analysis is written in Chilean Spanish, and it was a spontaneous unplanned script. Therefore, the elision technique is preferred to be used since the nature of Chilean Spanish is to speak with more words than necessary, and given the nature of the target language; which in this case is English, that it seeks to be as precise as possible, there is an economy of words in comparison to the Spanish script. In addition, the translation into the English language must be formulated under the subtitling guidelines, limiting the written character of the expression.

On the other hand, in the cultural elements identified, it is considered that cultural aspects do condition the understanding of one language to another, since, as mentioned, it requires thorough handling of the culture and context in which both languages develop.

The results showed that the most used technique in the cultural part was adaptation, since in the original text, Chilean idioms were found that needed to be changed to the target

language. The Chilean way of speaking Spanish is particular and the words used have their name "chilenismos." These kinds of words were found in the cultural elements of the text. A cultural element such as "del uno" reviewed in one of the analysis segments is solved with expansion and adaptation. This occurs because these words have a cultural meaning and not a semantic meaning, and they are only understandable by a reader of the source language and not the target language.

It is difficult for translators to translate audiovisual material and a challenge for them the reverse translation since to solve any difficulties, it is necessary to know many aspects of both languages that could affect the translation order. This is complemented by translation techniques whose purpose is facilitate the transference of one language and help the communication to be more efficient. Molina and Hurtado's (2001) translation techniques were used in this research.

This study aimed to compare the translation into English of *The Mole Agent* and identify the techniques used in the subtitles. The objective was completed, since each segment's semantic and cultural aspects were contrasted, choosing the most important aspects to be analyzed in depth.

## References

- Asale, R. (2021). pololear | Diccionario de la lengua española. «Diccionario de la lengua española» - Edición del Tricentenario. <https://dle.rae.es/pololear>
- Asensio, R. M. (2013). Campos de estudio y trabajo en traducción audiovisual. *Universidad de Granada. Disponible em: [http://www.ugr.es/~rasensio/docs/Campos\\_TAV.pdf](http://www.ugr.es/~rasensio/docs/Campos_TAV.pdf). Acessado em, 17.*
- As-Safi, A. B. (2011). Translation theories: Strategies and basic theoretical issues. Al Manhal.
- Bardají Anna Gil. (2003). Procedimientos, Técnicas, Estrategias: Operadores delProceso Traductor.
- BBC. (2021, septiembre). *Subtitle Guidelines BBC © 2021*. BBC. Recuperado 16 de septiembre de 2021, de <https://bbc.github.io/subtitle-guidelines/>
- Bernack A (2012) The Importance of Translation Studies for Development Education.
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2021, octubre 13). definición, qué es wow: 1. used to show surprise and sometimes pleasure: 2. a person or thing that is very successful. .  
.. Aprender más. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles/wow>
- Capdevila, Constanza (11 de abril de 2021). «Con fondos de Chile, Estados Unidos, Alemania, Holanda y España: Cómo se financió El agente topo». [www.litoralpress.cl](http://www.litoralpress.cl).
- Cine Chile. (2021, 29 abril). El agente topo. Cinechile. <https://cinechile.cl/pelicula/el-agente-topo/>

Crystal, D. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/language/Historical-attitudes-toward-language>

Culturizarte. (2021, March 15). “El agente topo” hace historia: competirá en la categoría de Mejor Documental en los Oscar. <https://culturizarte.cl/el-agente-topo-hace-historia-competira-en-la-categoria-de-mejor-documental-en-los-oscar/>

De la Cruz, M. M. (2004). Traducción inversa: una realidad. *Trans*, 8, 53-60.

Eifring, H. & Theil, R. (2005). Linguistics for Students of Asian and African Languages. (Chap. 2). Retrieved from <https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03-AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/>

Espinal, M. T., Macia, J., Mateu, J., & Quer, J. (2020). Semántica. Ediciones AKAL.

Henao, J. C. M. (s. f.). Cambio y evolución en el lenguaje. Scribd. <https://es.scribd.com/document/346771157/Cambio-y-evolucion-en-el-lenguaje>

González Davies, M., & Scott-Tennent, C. (2005). A problem-solving and student-centred approach to the translation of cultural references. *Meta: journal des traducteurs/Meta: Translators' Journal*.

IMDb.com, Inc. (2020). The Mole Agent (2020). IMDb. [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11394298/releaseinfo?ref=tt\\_dt\\_dt](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11394298/releaseinfo?ref=tt_dt_dt)

Igareda, Paula. (2011). Categorización temática del análisis cultural: una propuesta para la traducción. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 16(27), 11-32. Retrieved June 07, 2021, from [http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0123-34322011000100002&lng=en&tlng=es](http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0123-34322011000100002&lng=en&tlng=es).

Kelly, D. (1997). La enseñanza de la traducción inversa de textos 'generales': consideraciones metodológicas. La palabra vertida. Investigaciones en torno a la traducción.

Kohn, E. (2020, 25 enero). 'The Mole Agent' Review: The Most Heartwarming Spy Movie Ever Made. indiewire. <https://www.indiewire.com/2020/01/the-mole-agent-review-sundance-1202205522/>

Leppihalme, R. (1994). Culture bumps. Multilingual Matters.

María, M. (2004). Traducción inversa: una realidad. TRANS. Revista de Traductología, (8), 53-60.

Masseau, P. (2013). La traducción inversa en el grado de traducción: ¿un mal necesario?.

Matkivska, N. (2014). Audiovisual translation: Conception, types, characters' speech and translation strategies applied. Kalbų studijos, (25), 38-44.

Mayhua Guerrero, A. C (2019). Incumplimiento de las máximas conversacionales en una película de género dramático doblada al español, Lima, 2019. [ Título profesional, Universidad César Vallejo]. Repositorio de la Universidad César Vallejo.

[https://repositorio.ucv.edu.pe/bitstream/handle/20.500.12692/58127/Mayhua\\_GAC-SD.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repositorio.ucv.edu.pe/bitstream/handle/20.500.12692/58127/Mayhua_GAC-SD.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Dialogue. Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dialogue>.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Subtitle Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/subtitle>

- Nedergaard-Larsen, B. (1993). Culture-bound problems in subtitling. *Perspectives*, 1(2), 207-242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.1993.9961214>
- Pastor, G. C. (2001). Compilación de un corpus ad hoc para la enseñanza de la traducción inversa especializada. *TRANS. Revista de traductología*, (5), 155- 184.
- Pierce, G. (2018b). *Introducing Translational Studies* [Libro electrónico]. EDTECH.
- Pedersen, J. (2005). How is culture rendered in subtitles? En *Mutra 2005-Challenges of Multidimensional Translation: Conference Proceedings*. [http://www.euroconferences.info/proceedings/2005\\_Proceedings/2005\\_Pedersen\\_Jan.pdf](http://www.euroconferences.info/proceedings/2005_Proceedings/2005_Pedersen_Jan.pdf)
- Popovič, A. (2011). The concept “shift of expression” in translation analysis. In *The nature of translation* (pp. 78-88). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Premios Goya 2021. Qué son los Premios Goya. (n.d.). <https://www.premiosgoya.com/los-goya/que-son/>.
- Pokorn, N. K. (2005). *Challenging the traditional axioms: Translation into a non- mother tongue* (Vol. 62). John Benjamins Publishing.
- Popovič, A. (2011). The concept “shift of expression” in translation analysis. In *The nature of translation* (pp. 78-88). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Rojas, R. V. (2018). La apasionante forma de hablar de los chilenos. El español de Chile: generalidades. Dialnet. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6529357>
- Romero, S. (2019, 29 enero). Curiosidades de los Premios Goya. *MuyInteresante.es*. <https://www.muyinteresante.es/cultura/fotos/curiosidades-de-los-premios-goya/premios-goya>

Samovar, L. A. y Porter, R. E. (Eds.) (1997). *Intercultural Communication*. Nueva York, Estados Unidos: Wadsworth, Peter Lang.

Thumbs up. (n.d.) *McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Slang and Colloquial Expressions*. (2006). Retrieved May 9 2021 from <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/thumbs+up>

Vîlcu, D. (2010). Significatum and Designatum in the Theory and Practice of Translation. *Revue Internationale d'Études en Langues Modernes Appliquées*,(03), 363-371.

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REVERSE TRANSLATION FROM  
SPANISH TO ENGLISH OF SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN THE  
FILM “THE MOLE AGENT”.**

**Written by Constanza**

**Teresa Fuentes Díaz Florencia**

**Belén O'Brien Araya**

**has been approved for the Department of Languages**




---

**(Thesis Advisor: Didier Aguilar Muñoz)**



---

**(Thesis Evaluator: Cristian Guerra Maya)**



---

**(Thesis Evaluator: Daniela Aburto Matheo)**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, who ascertain that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.**