MOTIVATING FILM TITLE TRANSLATION: A COGNITIVE ANALYSIS

Mª Sandra Peña-Cervel

Universidad de la Rioja

sandra pena *at* unirioja es

Abstract

This proposal is a non-quantitative study based on a corpus of real data which offers a principled account of the translation strategies employed in the translation of English film titles into Spanish in terms of cognitive modeling. More specifically, we draw on Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera's (2014) work on what they term content (or low-level) cognitive operations, based on either 'stands for' or 'identity' relations, in order to investigate possible motivating factors for translations which abide by oblique procedures, i.e. for non-literal renderings of source titles. The present proposal is made in consonance with recent findings within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics (Samaniego 2007), which evidence that this linguistic approach can fruitfully address some relevant issues in Translation Studies, the most outstanding for our purposes being the exploration of the cognitive operations which account for the use of translation

strategies (Rojo and Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013: 10), mainly expansion and reduction operations, parameterization, echoing, mitigation and comparison by contrast. This fits in nicely with a descriptive approach to translation and particularly with skopos theory, whose main aim consists in achieving functionally adequate renderings of source texts.

Key words: Film title translation, cognitive modeling, 'stands for' relations, 'identity' relations

Contents

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades the study of film title translation has become a burgeoning field of research (Díaz 1997, González 1997, Navarro 1997, Calvo 2000, Santaemilia 2000, Mendiluce and Hernández 2005, Luján 2010ab, Leonardi 2011, Mei 2010, Chang 2012, Baicchi 2013, Šidiškytė and Tamulaitienė 2013)[1]. One of the main tenets of descriptive translation studies is that the translation process should be target-oriented (Munday 2001). It is also broadly acknowledged that pragmatic (and not only linguistic) factors should be taken into account since they play a prominent role in this process. A good translation of a film title persuades the potential audience into watching the film. In this connection, Vermeer's (1989) *skopos* theory argues for a shift from the prescriptive notion of linguistic equivalence to the descriptive conception of functional appropriateness. In spite of the current reluctance to prescribe norms, scholars theorizing about the practice of translation have put forward some strategies that describe what happens in the translation process. For instance, Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) translation technical procedures exerted considerable influence on later writings on translation. These pioneering scholars claimed that these strategies fall into two main groups: *direct* (or literal) and *oblique* (non-literal) methods. Literal translation takes place in cases of exact structural, lexical, or even morphological equivalence between the source and target texts. Three main procedures of literal translation can be distinguished: *borrowing* (keeping the original title), *calque* (a foreign word or phrase is literally translated and incorporated into the target language), and *literal* (word-for-word) translation. In contrast, oblique translation occurs when literal translation procedures cannot be applied. Oblique translation strategies can be further classified into *transposition* (a shift of word class), *modulation* (a shift in cognitive categories or point of view), *equivalence* (the translation of the same situation by means of a different phrase; this strategy usually holds for the translation of idioms or proverbs), and *adaptation* (a shift in cultural environment). Other influential accounts of translation techniques are Vázquez Ayora (1977) and Newmark (1988), among many others. The

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translation of English film titles into Spanish has awakened great interest among scholars (Martí and Zapater 1993, Díaz 1997, González 1997, Navarro 1997, Calvo 2000, Santaemilia 2000, Mendiluce and Hernández 2005, Luján 2010ab). These studies report interesting results concerning the functions of the translated titles and the identification of the most common translation methods. The strategies employed in film title translation are found to be the following ones: keeping the original English title (borrowing), translating the source title literally, departing from the original title to meet commercial requirements or to be faithful to the grammar of the target language (either by modifying the title slightly or by providing a new title – this is what is known as free translation), using additional information (glosses) in the translation, and omitting some elements of the original text. This is a factual description of translation strategies. In this paper, following Peña (2013, 2014), we go beyond the descriptive into the explanatory level by offering a principled account of translation strategies in terms of cognitive modeling. More specifically, we make use of previous work by Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014) on what they term *content (or low-level) cognitive operations*, which they argue can be attested across levels and domains of linguistic enquiry. Our aim is to use part of this preliminary work in order to determine relevant motivating factors underlying the translation strategies of film titles when these are not literal renderings or when the English title is not preserved at all (Peña 2013, 2014). Similarly, Baicchi (2013) also felt the need to offer a principled account of translation strategies but she did it from a different perspective, from a semiotic point of view. Moreover, her corpus of analysis was a set of films produced in English-speaking countries and the corresponding film titles in Italian.

Our study is very much in line with the claim made in Rojo and Ibarretxe-Antuñano (2013: 10-11) that Cognitive Linguistics can contribute to the development of Translation Studies because meaning (rather than form) plays a prominent role and language is naturally linked to cognitive processes. In keeping with this assumption, our proposal seeks to provide a link between the linguistic material involved in film title translations and cognition. In this regard, Rojo and Ibarretxe-Antuñano (2013: 13) define the process of translation as the perfect integration of linguistic and conceptual aspects. Moreover, according to these scholars, one of the future challenges which should be addressed in the field of Translation Studies is "to uncover the conceptual

operations which guide the use of translation strategies in the process of recreating meaning" (Rojo and Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013: 10). Thus, our study contributes to filling this gap.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: section 2 offers a brief discussion on the science of titles and of the research into the translation of film titles; section 3 provides an outline of methodological underpinnings; section 4 is devoted to the definition of two key notions within Cognitive Linguistics which are central to our analysis: Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs) and cognitive operations. Section 5 presents a fine-grained analysis of the content cognitive operations which mediate and motivate the translation of English film titles into Spanish. Finally, section 5 summarizes the main findings of this study and sketches new lines for future research.

2. Title translation research

Titles play a prominent communicative role since they are attention grabbers for prospective readers or viewers. An eye-catching title can persuade a potential audience into reading a book/newspaper or watching a film.

The study of the translation of film titles raises some substantial questions. First of all, what do we mean by translation when the object of translation is a film? Second, who is the translator? Third, what is the main aim of film title translation? Does it show any particular characteristics?

Much in line with descriptive approaches to translation, we argue for a notion of translation which takes into account communicative and functional aspects rather than merely the linguistic form of both source and target texts. Translation involves the retextualization or recodification from a source text to a target text (Samaniego and Campos 2003: 189, Samaniego 2007: 122). In fact, as Baicchi (2003: 9) observes, "the translator shapes his own representation of the meaning of the text". Additionally, translation takes into account the specific communicative circumstances of both texts. In this connection, Vermeer and Reiss (1984), the pioneering scholars of *skopos* theory, focus on the purpose of translation, which guides the translation techniques and methods that are to be used in order to render a functionally adequate product. Moreover, any text will be regarded as a translation if it is accepted as such within a

given cultural system (or polysystem) at a given point in time leaving aside its quality and faithfulness to the original (Rabadán 1991, Toury 1995).

Regarding research into title translation, Nord (1995, 2009) has distinguished six functions of titles that are to be taken into consideration in the process of translation. They can be grouped into two sets: *essential* and *optional* functions. The former comprise the following types of function: *distinctive* (each title should be different from other titles which belong to the same corpus and culture), *metatextual* (each title should obey the genre conventions of the culture it pertains to), and *phatic* (each title must engage its culture-specific audience and, if required, should be remembered for some time). Among the optional functions we find the additional ones: *referential* (the information which is conveyed by means of the title must be easily understood by the addressees by resorting to their culture-specific world-knowledge), *expressive* (if there are any emotions or evaluations involved in the original title, they should be carried over to the target text), and *appellative* (any appellative intention must take into consideration the audience's susceptibility and expectactions). Newmark (1988) also shed some light on the functions and classification of titles, although this scholar pays considerable attention to literature titles. According to Newmark, titles can be either *descriptive* (if they express the topic of the text) or *allusive* (if they relate referentially or figuratively to the topic of the text).

On the basis of these observations, we might wonder about the purpose of film title translation. The main goal of a film title is a persuasive one which seeks to seduce the potential viewers into watching the film. Accordingly, the translation of a film title also aims to arouse interest in the audience. As pointed out by Samaniego, Velasco and Fuertes (2005: 63-64) with respect to the translation of headings in newspapers (which closely resemble film title translations in terms of aims), sometimes such translations are even recreations of the original texts. In the context of the film industry, these translations do not always keep the original title but are deviations from such source titles. This responds mainly to marketing strategies. Film titles are bound to the original author's cultural setting. If the translation of a film title has to be accepted and valued as such, sometimes an adaptation or recreation of the original film title or even a new title is required at the cost of linguistic faithfulness. Furthermore, another crucial issue which emerges when discussing film title translation is the status of the translator. Translations

of film titles are accomplished by the marketing department of the distribution houses and not by professional translators trained in linguistic issues. Thus their translations of film titles usually meet marketing requirements instead of paying heed to prescriptive norms.

Apart from Nord's and Newmark's work on the functions of titles, theoretical research into methods of title translation has been scant. By contrast, the last twenty years have witnessed an upsurge of interest in the translation techniques that are employed in the art of title translation to the detriment of new theoretical findings as regards such methods. In fact, such practical analyses are usually based on models (like Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) model of translation procedures) which are general inasmuch as they can be applied to any kind of translation and not exclusively to title translation. Concerning film title translation, these practical analyses can be grouped into two broad categories: those carried out by European scholars (Martí and Zapater 1993, Calvo 2000, Santaemilia 2000, Luján 2010ab, Mendiluce and Hernández 2005, Leonardi 2011, Baicchi 2013) and those conducted by non-European scholars, mainly Asian writers (Kelan and Wei 2006, Yin 2009, Mei 2010, Chang 2012, Šidiškytė and Tamulaitienė 2013). All of them share the language of the source film titles, English, and differ as to the language of the target film titles. While acknowledging the arduous task translation always involves, when the source and target languages do not belong to the same family this task becomes a daunting one owing to the linguistic and cultural differences. In spite of addressing different issues and needs, these studies are descriptive. Our proposal is explanatory in the sense that it is mainly concerned with the motivating factors which underlie the translation strategies employed in the translation of English film titles into English.

3. Idealized Cognitive Models and cognitive operations: definition and typology

The notion of Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM) is crucial within Cognitive Linguistics. It was first put forward by Lakoff (1987: 68) and defined as the way in which we organize our knowledge. ICMs are cognitive structures which represent reality from a certain perspective, in such a way that they result in a process of idealization of reality. Each ICM uses four kinds of structuring principles: propositional structure (an ICM which does not make use of imaginative devices – metaphor, metonymy, or mental

imagery; e.g. the notion of party), image-schemas (a recurring pattern of experience which is abstract and topological in nature; e.g. the notion of container), metaphor (a mapping or set of correspondences between two conceptual domains; e.g. LOVE IS A JOURNEY in expressions like *Our relationship is going nowhere*), and metonymy (a domain-internal mapping; e.g. WHOLE FOR PART in examples such as *Tie your shoes*). Cognitive models can be classified into high-level and low-level models (see Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera 2014: 63-66 for details). The latter are non-generic semantic configurations emerging from the principled interconnection of items which partake in our encyclopedic knowledge store. Some examples of this kind of cognitive model are scenarios like going to a party or object-related notions like father. Metaphors like LOVE IS MADNESS (*She's crazy about him*) or metonymies like HAND FOR PERSON (*We are in need of new hands in the farm*), which exploit non-generic domains, are based on low-level cognitive models. In contrast, high-level cognitive models result from abstracting away structure shared by low-level cognitive models. For instance, the high-level notion of action originates in the perception of events which share common structure (they involve an actor that instigates a dynamic and controlled state of affairs) like reading, eating, writing, etc. Metonymies like ACTION FOR PROCESS (in examples such as *The door opened*, which is an action linguistically disguised as a process, we know that some agent opened the door) make use of generic domains and can thus be categorized as high-level metonymies (Ruiz de Mendoza 2007).

Apart from being the result of the structuring principles discussed above, cognitive models can also provide the conceptual blueprint for a number of cognitive operations to work upon (Ruiz de Mendoza and Peña 2005). A cognitive operation is a mental mechanism aimed at constructing a semantic representation from linguistic input in order to make it meaningful in context. Cognitive operations fall into two main groups: formal and content operations. The former, which involve the structural manipulation of concepts, are necessary for the latter to construct meaning. Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 86-92) identify five formal cognitive operations, namely cueing, selection, integration, abstraction, and substitution. These mental mechanisms, which have been studied in the cognitive-linguistic literature on blending (Fauconnier and Turner 2002), allow speakers to access, select, abstract, integrate and substitute conceptual material.

For example, in the sentence *He stood up on his hind legs to defend his views*, 'his hind legs' integrates the image of a horse's rear with the image of a person's buttocks as a point of access for two complex scenes: one in which a person stands to his feet to argue his position emphatically (probably shaking his fists) and another in which a horse rises up on its hind quarters in order to use its forelegs to hit another animal. The selected conceptual material directly invoked by the linguistic expression thus substitutes for these two more complex scenarios that contain all the necessary elements for a meaningful metaphorical match (aggressive animal posture and likewise aggressive human posture). The match is only possible because we can abstract away from each scenario common structure in terms of posture and behavior. These formal operations of access, selection, abstraction, integration, and substitution are pre-requisites for the metaphorical match, which is a lower-level operation directly giving rise to meaning implications like the idea that the protagonist was emphatic, energetic, and probably aggressive while making his point.

Content cognitive operations, which, in contrast to formal operations, are low-level mechanisms, play an essential role in making inferences in the process of meaning construction. Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 92) put forward two basic relations into which the different content cognitive operations can be classified: 'identity' (A IS B) and 'stands for' (A FOR B) relations. Let us briefly discuss each of these groups.

'Identity relations', or A IS B operations, are cross-domain mappings. The following cases are distinguished:

(i)   *Correlation*. The notion of correlation is best understood in connection to metaphors that do not exploit *resemblance* between entities, situations or events (Grady 1999). According to Grady, besides correlation metaphors, we make metaphors based on our association of experiences which co-occur in our daily lives. For example, quantity and height occur together in experience when we pile up objects or when we pour liquids into containers. The frequent co-occurrence of these two categories leads the mind to treating them as if they were the same category. This phenomenon, called mental *conflation*, underlies the existence of *correlation* metaphors like MORE IS UP (e.g. *His popularity keeps going up*, where growing popularity is seen as an ascending object).

(ii) *Comparison.* This is a content operation whereby either similarities or differences across concepts are captured. It is further subcategorized into resemblance and contrasting operations. The mapping of resemblance metaphors like *Achilles is a lion* involves shared features of two different domains (in this case, bravery). Contrasting operations, on the other hand, single out discrepancies between two domains and license the interpretation of figurative uses of language like paradox and oxymoron. In *War is peace*, two concepts which are apparently contradictory can be reconciled within the specific context of a country which can only restore peace through war.

(iii) *Strengthening* and *mitigation*. These are two sides of the same coin, inasmuch as they work in opposite ways if considered from the speaker's or the hearer's perspective. They apply to cases of overstatement, understatement, irony, euphemism and dysphemism. Through strengthening and mitigation, the scalar magnitude of a concept is respectively maximized or minimized. For instance, the hyperbolic occurrence *This car goes faster than the speed of light* works on the scalar concept of speed. It conveys a blatant lie in which the impossible scenario of a car running at the speed of light is mapped onto a real scenario in which the purported vehicle goes extremely fast through a process of mitigation. The hearer needs to adjust the meaning of the expression in such a way that it complies with real standards of speed. The purpose of the hyperbolic scenario is to convey to the hearer, in an impacting way, the speaker's emotional reaction of surprise and admiration.

(iv) *Echoing*. This notion was put forward by Sperber and Wilson (1995) to account for irony from a cognitive-pragmatic point of view within the framework of Relevance Theory. Echoing is highly dependent on context. By way of illustration, take the utterance *John is a conscientious student* in a situation in which John skips class and does nothing all day long. This utterance is an echo of a state of affairs that ostentatiously contradicts John's father's previous opinion about John (that he makes great efforts to get the highest marks at university). However, echoing is not always ironic. As observed by Sperber and Wilson (1995), direct and indirect speech reports are straightforward cases of non-ironic echoes.

'Stands-for relations' or A FOR B operations make use of an item of conceptual structure to afford access to another item. The following operations are distinguished in this domain:

(i)   *Expansion* and *reduction*. These are converse cognitive operations. On the one hand, expansion makes reference to the process of affording access to a whole cognitive model via a salient part of that cognitive model. In *The 1689 Bill of Rights regulates the relationship between Parliament and the Crown, the Crown grants access to the reference domain, a queen or king. On the other hand, reduction, narrows down the amount of conceptual material activated by a given concept. For instance, in the utterance Tie your shoes, shoes, a subdomain of the matrix domain of shoes, stands for and highlights a prominent (and relevant) subdomain, shoelaces.*

(ii)   *Parameterization* and *generalization* are also converse cognitive operations. Parameterization consists in fleshing out a general configuration with more specific conceptual material in order to adjust the meaning of the utterance to contextual requirements. In this connection, Paradis (2000) argues for the semantic underspecification of adjectives. *Bad*, for example, has to be parametrized differently according to contextual factors. It is only in context that this adjective can display its meaning potential (*bad* in *bad weather* means unpleasant, in *bad diet* it implies likely to harm your health or your body, in *a bad decision* it suggests unsuitable, etc.). In contrast, generalization describes a process whereby a specific configuration grants access to a more general one. For example, the verb do captures any action whose actual value can be discerned from the context (e.g. *I'll do the dishes while you do the ironing*).

(iii)   *Saturation* or *completion* is a phenomenon that has been extensively studied in pragmatics and the philosophy of language (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1995, Carston 2002). It can also be seen as a cognitive operation whereby incomplete versions of linguistic constructional patterns are fully developed into expanded configurations on the basis of contextual information and linguistic clues. While parameterization is a conceptual phenomenon, saturation is constructionally cued, as in the utterance *Are you ready?*, which has to be expanded into a fully processable form like *Are you ready to go out?*

4. Methodology and corpus selection

The corpus for the present study consists of approximately 500 English titles of films collected from *filmsite.org* (an award-winning website devoted to the great films of the last century) and from the *Internet Movie Database* (or IMDb, an online database which features information on films, TV programs, and video games) and their translations into Spanish, mainly Castilian Spanish. The scope of our analysis does not limit itself to a specific film genre. It includes a broad range of films representative of different subgenres (especially action, comedy, crime, drama, and horror).

Our approach is meant to be compatible with empirical evidence stemming from psycholinguistic research and amenable to future empirical validation. Therefore, we concur with Gibbs' (2006) claims that not all cognitive-linguistic analyses necessarily relate to mental representations and that researchers carrying out non-empirical studies should ensure that their hypotheses can withstand a falsifiability test by considering alternative hypotheses which can contradict or verify their findings. This can be done argumentatively by organizing data in such a way that adequate generalizations can be drawn. In this connection, our conclusions have been drawn on the basis of linguistic argumentation based on authentic data.

Following Ruiz and Galera (2014: 18), we have endeavored to motivate linguistic phenomena (more specifically, the translation of film titles) by exploring their cognitive and communicative basis. The rationale behind this aim is that according to these scholars communication and cognition go hand in hand. Moreover, they further argue that cognitive and communicative adequacy are required in order to meet explanatory adequacy (Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera 2014: 18). In contrast to previous studies on the translation of English film titles into Spanish, which only achieved descriptive adequacy, ours seeks explanatory adequacy in the sense that it tries to provide a principled basis for the linguistic data under analysis.

Our study is qualitative but here we would like to make some quantitative remarks. These are the methodological steps that have been taken in our analysis of the data:

- First, we have classified the translations of film titles into two main groups: those which abide by literal techniques (mainly borrowing and literal translation) and those which obey oblique techniques (among them the most numerous being free

translations). Literal translation procedures are the first procedures by frequency of usage overall (54.34%), closely followed by oblique techniques (45.65%; 40% of the titles are what translation theorists call free translations and the rest, 5.65%, correspond to other translations following non-literal translation methods).

- Second, we have discarded those Spanish counterparts which comply with literal translation procedures and, consequently, we have centered our attention on those Spanish renderings which conform to non-literal or oblique translation techniques.

- Third, we have analyzed the different content cognitive operations (both 'stands for' and 'identity' relations) which underlie the translation of English film titles into Spanish as guided by oblique translation techniques with a view to providing an explanatory account of our object of study. Two considerations are in order here: (i) as our analysis will show, several cognitive operations are usually intertwined with one another in the same example and it proves really hard to find examples on which only one cognitive operation is at work; and (ii) we have devoted most of our discussion in section 5 to 'stands for' relations, especially to expansion and reduction operations and to a lesser extent to parameterization because they have been found to play a very prominent role in the relationship which holds between the English film titles and their Spanish counterparts. They are much more frequent than identity relations. Approximately 75% out of our corpus of analysis (the set of film titles whose translation abides by oblique translation techniques) is accounted for by postulating a metonymic relationship (of expansion or reduction) between the English titles and their Spanish renderings. By contrast, identity relations, although representative in our corpus of analysis, are only found to match in nearly 25% of the translations.

5. The role of cognitive operations in the translation of English film titles into Spanish

5.1. 'Stands for' relations

First of all, we will be concerned with the 'stands for' relations which have been found relevant in the analysis of our corpus: expansion and reduction, on the one hand, and parameterization and generalization, on the other.

5.1.1. Expansion and reduction operations

The translation of *Mr. Blandings builds his dream house* into *Los Blandings ya tienen casa* ('The Blandings finally have a house') is guided by the workings of the high-level metonymic operation ACTION FOR RESULT. The metonymic relationship which holds between the original title and its translated counterpart affords schematic access to the whole generic domain of action and then highlights a prominent subdomain, the result brought about by the action. Kövecses and Radden (1998: 49) put forward that ICMs are perceived as parts with wholes. Since metonymic relations of expansion and reduction operate on parts and wholes, ICMs like the notion of action can lie at the basis of such stand-for relationships. Kövecses and Radden (1998: 55) argue that the metonymy ACTION FOR RESULT is a part-for-part operation inasmuch as agents, instruments, objects involved in the action, results, means, manner, the action itself, etc. are conceptual entities or participants within an event ICM which may be related to each other. However, we concur with Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez (2001: 332-333) that metonymies like ACTION FOR RESULT or AGENT FOR ACTION are not part-for-part operations but reduction and expansion operations respectively. For instance, the metonymic process in the case of ACTION FOR RESULT goes beyond a part-for-part correlation. This process does not only involve the action serving as a reference point within an action ICM but the expression of the whole action ICM perspectivizing one of the conceptual entities or subdomains – the result – within such an ICM. This results in a reduction metonymic operation. In the example under analysis, the Spanish translation profiles the result of the action of building a house.

Another interesting aspect in the translation of this film title which deserves special attention is the omission of an echoic element in the original English title which is balanced out by the addition of an adverbial expression in the Spanish translation. The expression 'dream house' stems from an echo of Mr. Blandings' desire to have a dream house in combination with the fact that the echoed belief is cancelled out by the actual state of affairs – a long list of unexpected troubles assail the unfortunate Blandings and postpone their moving-in date. The Spanish version leaves out this echoic element of the dream house by omitting 'dream'. However, the addition of the temporal adverb 'ya' ('finally') activates a scenario of desperation in the context of this film which offsets the ironic element. This adverb is partly deprived of its core temporal meaning in

order to emphasize the result of the action of building Mrs. Blandings' house. By parameterizing a point in time (by means of the temporal fixing provided by 'ya'), our attention is drawn to it as a crucial final point after a series of events. The final point metonymically stands for all the events which lead to it. In fact, both the original English title and its Spanish translated version conjure up a sense of desperation by resorting to different cognitive operations.

A slight deviation from the source title in the translation of *Bullet to the head* as *Una bala en la cabeza* ('A bullet in the head') reveals a metonymic link between them. The metonymic connection underlying this rewording is a reduction operation whereby the action portrayed in the source title is construed as the result brought about by such an action in the target title. While the English title focuses on the whole action of shooting a well-aimed bullet at someone's head in order to kill them, the Spanish counterpart highlights the result of such an action in a euphemistic way. Thus the high-level metonymy ACTION FOR RESULT accounts for the relationship between the source and target titles, as was the case with the previous example. Rather than explicitly addressing the tragic outcome of killing someone, the Spanish title emphasizes the resulting location of the bullet after being shot. In fact, both titles avoid the explicit mention of death by resorting to different means. The source title profiles the action of shooting a bullet that is bound to kill someone and thus opts for a metonymic reduction operation to euphemistically downplay the consequence of shooting at someone's head. A bullet fired at someone's head metonymically evokes a subframe of death, the result, within the whole action frame. The Spanish translation also conveys the same meaning implications of death but does so by means of an intermediate metonymic step whose unavoidable outcome is decease. In figure 1, the metonymic link between the source and target titles is graphically shown.

Another high-level cognitive operation of metonymic reduction accounts for the translated version of *Kiss me deadly* into *El beso mortal* ('Deadly kiss'). In application of the metonymy ACTION FOR OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION (Kövecses and Radden 1998: 55), the action of kissing in the source text is used in the target text to lend prominence to one of the subdomains contained within the matrix domain of actions, the object involved in the action itself. By means of this reduction operation the Spanish translation confers attention to a particularly relevant element within the

generic domain of actions, the object (or goal in Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) terms) which is involved in it. Moreover, the English title might hint at the English resultative construction, more specifically at the expression 'Kiss me dead', whose translation poses some problems in Spanish, where this linguistic pattern does not exist.
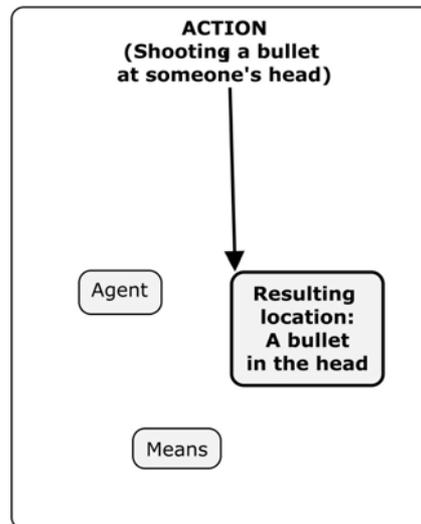

Figure 1. A bullet to the head (Una bala en la cabeza)

The American comedy title *Summer School* was translated into *Juerga tropical* ('Summer/tropical partying'). A summer school is an academic course held during the summer whose aim is mainly educational. However, it usually involves some fun. In the context of this film, a thirty-five year old teacher who does not take his job very seriously, Freddy Shoop, is blackmailed by his school's vice-principal to teach the remedial English class during the summer holidays. Freddy reluctantly accepts the challenge but since he is not willing to spoil his holidays, he opts for having a good time with the group of underachievers that he is supposed to teach. Thus the Spanish version of the American title gives focal prominence to the fun aspect (the non-academic activities) of a summer school. If a summer school is envisaged as a domain made up of two subdomains (academic and non-academic activities), the singling out of one of the subframes within the broader domain of a summer school in the Spanish version of the American title *Summer School* involves a reduction cognitive operation. Therefore the metonymy SUMMER SCHOOL FOR NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES spells out the connection between the American original title and its Spanish counterpart. The underlying negative connotations of boredom brought about by the original title are lost.
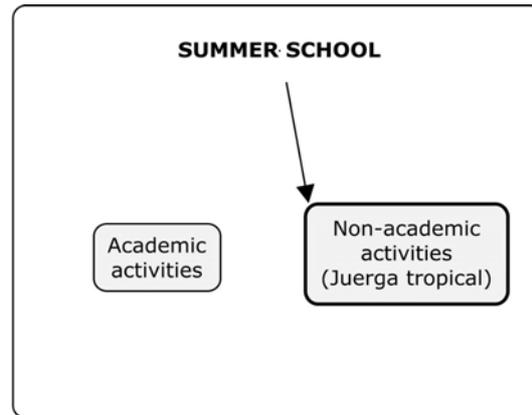
Figure 2. Summer school (Juerga tropical)

The highly suggestive and allusive title *The seven year itch* was transliterated as *La tentación vive arriba* ('The temptation lives upstairs') in Spanish. On the face of it, the two titles are extremely unrelated. On closer inspection, however, a whole-part connection unfolds. The seven year itch can be construed as a domain of experience which is made up of various subframes: the couple who got married seven years ago; the new person that tempts the husband beyond endurance thereby seducing him; the feeling of boredom caused by the passing of time, etc. Thus the seemingly unconnected nature of the source and target titles is blurred if we postulate a whole-for-part relationship, a reduction cognitive operation, whereby the matrix domain of the seven year itch is used in order to zero in on an especially relevant subdomain. In this film, Richard Sherman, a devoted and faithful husband, remains alone at home after his wife and son go to the countryside to spend their holidays. After seven years of increasingly boring marriage, he gets carried away by an irrational and wild sexual desire for a voluptuous blonde who is lodging temporarily in the apartment upstairs and about whom he fantasizes. Therefore, the Spanish title gives special prominence to the subdomain of the new sexual object of desire for the bored husband. Not in vain does the film poster used to promote *The Seven Year Itch* show the two leading characters, Sherman and the sexy blonde, but she is scaled to bigger proportions than him. She is the center of attention. The poster depicts one of the most iconic images in the 20th century, Marilyn Monroe standing on a subway grate and wearing a white dress blown by a passing train. Undoubtedly, the sexy blonde living upstairs is not Marilyn Monroe herself but Sherman is blinded by lust and daydreams she is the famous sensual singer.

He is depicted at a much smaller proportion on the poster and looks at her as if she were on a pedestal far beyond his reach.
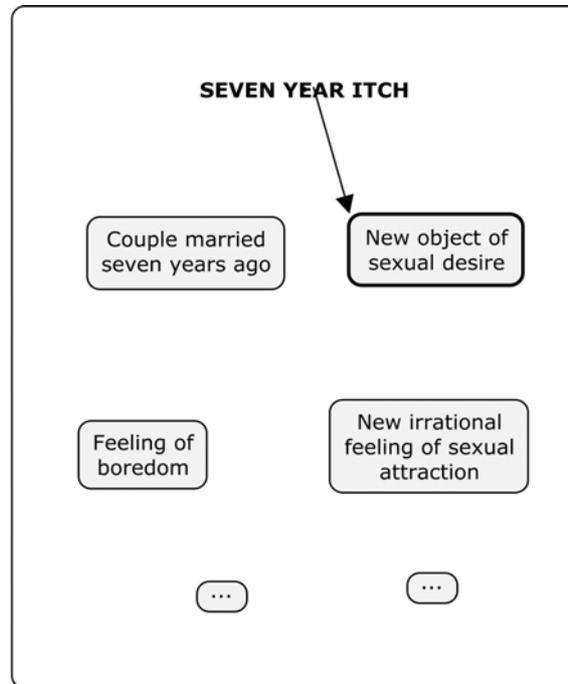

Figure 3. The seven year itch (La tentación vive arriba)

So far we have examined high-level cognitive operations involving domain reduction as mediating devices motivating the specific renderings of some English film titles into Spanish. However, the reverse operation, domain expansion, can also cast light upon the connection between such titles. By way of illustration, take the English film title *Yes man* and its Spanish version *Di que sí* ('Say yes'). The high-level expansion operation PERSON WHO OBEYS AN ORDER FOR THE ORDER allows us to understand the bond between both titles. An order, perceived as a domain of experience, is made up of some subdomains like the person who issues the order, the person who obeys it, the order itself, etc. One subdomain of the matrix domain of orders in English affords conceptual access to the whole domain in Spanish. More conceptual material is invoked by the Spanish translation. Some possible reasons for the Spanish title are to be found in the attempt to minimize the pejorative connotations brought to bear by the English term 'yes man' and to provide an economic (in the sense of shorter) and thus more eye-catching version. Among the various options at our disposal in Spanish, the least dysphemistic ones would be 'El hombre que siempre dice que sí' 'El hombre que siempre obedece' ('The man who always says yes', 'The man who always obeys').

These titles are not likely to respond to marketing needs inasmuch as they are too long to be attention grabbing titles for a film. On the other hand, translations like 'persona sumisa' ('meek person'), 'borrego' ('sheep'), or 'pelota' ('brown-noser') carry negative connotations which the film distributor would probably wish to circumvent.

Furthermore, to capture the full meaning implications of this example, echoing as a cognitive operation has been found to play a crucial role in the Spanish example, which is a non-ironic echo. Repetitions of instructions or orders are actually intrinsically echoic. This echo spreads over the whole clause. Since this echo does not clash with the actual state of affairs, but simply emulates it, there is no irony. It is a straightforward command from a speaker to the yes man, who will be willing to receive and take any order. This title is highly informative in the sense that it illustrates one of the many orders that the addresser will be ready to comply with.

An explanation in terms of metonymic complexes helps us to provide a reasoned interpretation of a myriad of seemingly unmotivated translated film titles. In fact, these free translations are but the result of a double metonymic operation. According to Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 96), cognitive operations in general combine fruitfully in language processing and understanding. Some of these possible combinations involve expansion and reduction operations. In this connection, Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002), Ruiz de Mendoza (2007) and Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 117-134) have put forward that expansion and reduction operations often merge to produce cases of what they call double metonymic shifts or metonymic complexes, which are the same as Barcelona's (2005) metonymic chains. Ruiz de Mendoza (2007) and his collaborators (Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002) and Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 117-134)) distinguish for different kinds of metonymic complexes: double metonymic expansion, double metonymic reduction, metonymic reduction plus metonymic expansion, and metonymic expansion plus metonymic reduction. Consider the source title *The flock* and its Spanish version *El caso Wells* ('Wells Case'), which exemplifies the third type of metonymic complex. The first metonymic leap consists in highlighting one of the elements of the conceptual domain of the flock (the group of missing girls) – Harriet Wells, who is the last missing girl. However, the metonymy FLOCK FOR HARRIET WELLS does not fully account for our example. We need a second metonymic mapping whereby Harriet Wells becomes the source domain and is taken to represent the case in

charge of investigating her own disappearance. This second metonymic elaboration is an expansion operation (HARRIET WELLS FOR THE WELLS CASE) whereby a subdomain of the matrix domain of "HARRIET WELLS" provides conceptual access to the whole domain of Wells case. Observe that the domains 'the flock' and 'the Wells case' are not fully independent of one another but related ones. The metonymic complex FLOCK FOR HARRIET WELLS FOR THE WELLS CASE is graphically represented as follows:
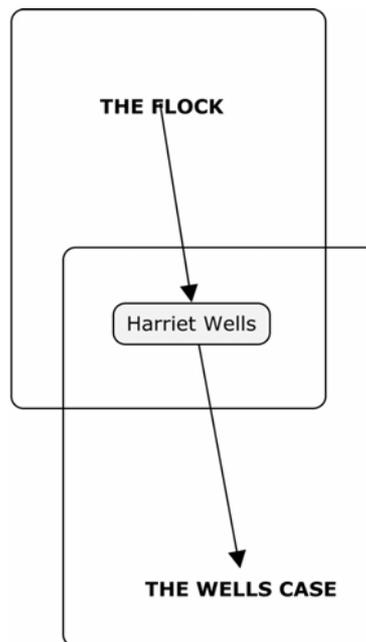

Figure 4. The flock (El caso Wells)

The Spanish counterpart of the film title *Monkey business*, *Me siento rejuvenecer* ('I feel (I'm becoming) younger') also merits attention. The Spanish version is the result of a metonymic complex consisting of metonymic expansion plus metonymic reduction. Monkey business is understood as dishonest behavior. However, the plot of this film requires the reinterpretation of this polysemous expression. Barnaby Fulton is a research chemist who is working on a youth formula. By chance, one of the chimps on which he was testing his experiment, Esther, succeeds in developing the elixir of youth (a stupid fact indeed, not only because Esther is a chimpanzee but also because this chimp discovers the youth formula by accident). In the Spanish title the main focus is on the action, or more specifically on the result, of developing this elixir of youth. First, an expansion operation takes place in which something which is carried out by a monkey (monkey business) provides conceptual access to the matrix domain of the action of

discovering the elixir of youth or developing the youth formula (the matrix domain is made up of subdomains like the agent – the monkey -, the instruments used for the discovery, the place where the experiment is carried out, the business or work involved in the discovery – the monkey business in the context of this film -, etc.). This first expansion operation (MONKEY BUSINESS FOR ACTION OF DEVELOPING THE YOUTH FORMULA) needs a subsequent operation of metonymic domain reduction (ACTION OF DEVELOPING THE YOUTH FORMULA FOR RESULT – MAKING PEOPLE FEEL YOUNGER) by means of which the action of developing the youth formula serves as reference point for accessing one of its subdomains, the result brought about by the action, that is to say, making people feel or become younger. The metonymic shift from the source title (*Monkey business*) to the target version ('I feel younger') is mediated by a double metonymic operation. Moreover, the two subdomains invoked by the English and Spanish titles are part of a common matrix domain. This ascertains the connection between them. This metonymic complex is schematized in the following figure:
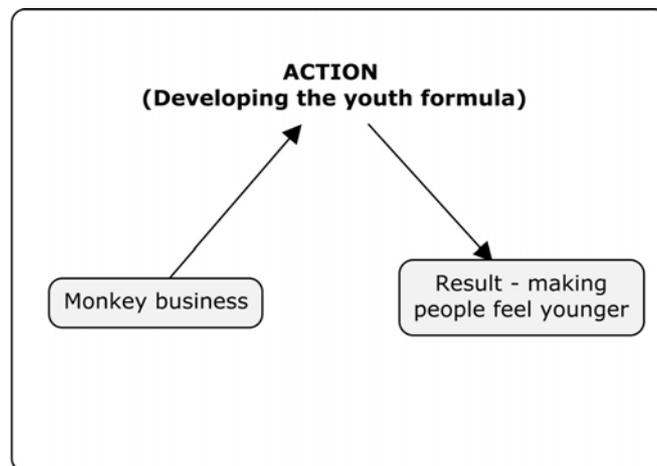

Figure 5. Monkey business (Me siento rejuvenecer)

The Vow and its translation into Spanish *Todos los días de mi vida* ('All the days of my life') exemplify a triple metonymic operation of domain reduction. In the context of this film, the vow is to be understood as marriage vows. A car accident leaves Paige in a comatose state and when she awakes, she does not recognize her husband Leo. He will have to fight against all odds to win her back and to show that he will comply with the marriage vows they took when they got married. A first reduction operation (THE VOW FOR MARRIAGE VOWS) parameterizes the serious promise into marriage

vows. This is an example of a more general metonymic operation of domain reduction labelled GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC. In turn, marriage vows become the source domain for another reduction operation in which these vows invoke the contents of the marriage vow, i.e. 'I will love you and honor you all the days of my life'. In a final metonymic shift, also based on reduction, the contents of the marriage vow stand for its duration element (all the days of the couple's life). This fits in nicely with the plot of this film, where, as we have remarked, Leo, the husband, does not leave his wife unattended when she goes into a coma as a result of an accident. He remains by her side. This analysis reinforces Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera's (2014: 123) argument for the existence of three chained metonymic operations in examples like *She wears cotton*, where the word 'cotton' is interpreted in terms of three metonymic operations: COTTON PLANT FOR COTTON WOOL (reduction), COTTON WOOL FOR COTTON CLOTH (expansion), and COTTON CLOTH FOR COTTON CLOTHING (expansion). Moreover, the Spanish counterpart is a non-ironic echo of the words the members of a couple utter when they make their marriage vows. The following figure captures the complex metonymic process instantiated by the Spanish version of the original title *The vow*:
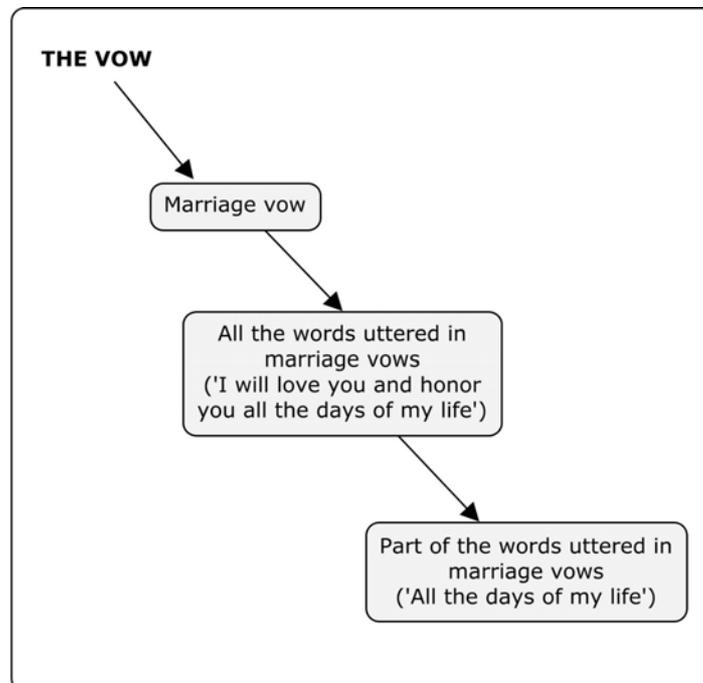

Figure 6. *The vow* (*Todos los días de mi vida*)

The Spanish version of the American title *Bright leaf* is *El rey del tabaco* ('The king of tobacco'). Bright leaf tobacco is also known as Virginia tobacco. In 1839, a slave called

Stephen discovered bright leaf tobacco accidentally. The wood fires in the tobacco barn gave off so much heat that he fell asleep and when he woke up the fire had almost died out. In order to relight the fire, he threw some charred logs onto the fire. This resulted in the brightest yellow tobacco ever produced. This kind of tobacco received this name because of the variety of leaf, a robust one, used to manufacture tobacco products. The construal of the connection between the American and Spanish titles of this drama calls for a triple metonymic operation which involves both reduction and expansion. First, bright leaf is metonymically reduced to one of its subdomains, the product used to make tobacco. Second, the product itself affords conceptual access to the tobacco company (a matrix domain which includes other subdomains like the machines used to manufacture the final product, the setting of the company and the producer, among others). And finally, the company is mentioned to give focal prominence to a salient element, the producer, the king of tobacco. In sum, the metonymic complex BRIGHT LEAF FOR PRODUCT USED TO MAKE TOBACCO FOR COMPANY FOR PRODUCER underlies the relationship between the American and Spanish titles of the drama under analysis. Note also that the metaphorical implication that something bright is good is carried over to its Spanish counterpart, since the producer is said to be a king. This also brings about positive connotations.
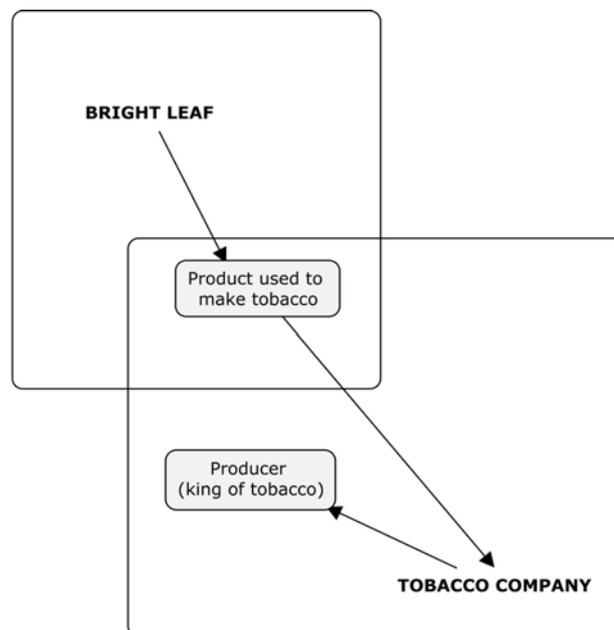

Figure 7. Bright leaf (El rey del tabaco)

5.1.2. Parameterization and generalization

Parameterization and its reverse operation, generalization, can be either metonymic or non-metonymic. Metonymic parameterization and generalization are the result of the metonymic reduction operation GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC and of the metonymic expansion operation SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC respectively. In application of the informative or referential function of language, the Spanish translated versions of original titles in English conform to parameterization more frequently than to generalization. One of the main functions of titles is to provide the targeted audience with as much information as possible, even though, of course, this function might be overridden by marketing. Some original titles in our corpus are transliterated in Spanish by using a tag or gloss which fleshes out some skeletal information. This is the case, for instance, with *Babe* (Spanish *Babe, el cerdito valiente* – 'Babe, the brave piglet'), *Fletch* (Spanish *Fletch, el camaleón* – 'Fletch, the chameleon'), *Alien* (Spanish *Alien, el octavo pasajero* – 'Alien, the eighth passenger'), Mrs. Doubtfire (*Señora Doubtfire, papá de por vida* – 'Mrs. Doubtfire, forever dad'), where a proper name in the source title is taken as a generic domain which is further specified in the target title by adding some more conceptual material which picks out one element from a set of possible items. For instance, out of all people or animals that can be called Babe the film *Babe* is exclusively concerned with one, i.e. the brave piglet.

The generic domain may also designate other entities different from proper names. For example, the Spanish version *Piso de soltero* ('Bachelor apartment') of the source title *The apartment* (Spanish *Piso de soltero* – 'Bachelor apartment') highlights one salient item within the broader domain of apartments in the context of this film, where the action takes places in a bachelor apartment. Apartment, if regarded as a domain, can include several elements like convertible, loft, duplex, triplex, and bachelor or studio apartment but only one of these is relevant for the development of the plot of this film. In this way, the Spanish title adapts itself to contextual requirements. Other examples would be *It's alive* and *The moguls*. In the South-American Spanish version of the title *It's alive*, El monstruo está vivo ('The monster is alive'), the personal pronoun 'it' is parameterized into 'monster' thus offering to the South-American Spanish audience a higher degree of explicitness about the topic of the film than the original title. In fact,

the monster is a baby that has just been born. The baby is a mutant monster that kills indiscriminately. Thus, life means death to others. In contrast, the Castilian Spanish version, *Estoy vivo* ('I'm alive'), is a non-ironic echo of some words uttered in the film by the monster itself. Obviously, one of the unmistakable signs of being alive is being able to speak. The title is in fact the hidden threat of a living creature to everyone it may encounter, especially when it gets scared by the people who want to capture it. Thus while the South-American title is concerned with making the source title more specific in order to offer more information to the prospective audience, the Castilian Spanish version opts for an echo of overt and covert meaning assumptions (life and death respectively). The translated version of the title *The Moguls*, *Los magnates del sexo* ('Powerful men/Moguls in the sex industry'), lends focal prominence to one specific kind of moguls, those who are powerful in the field industry, as a result of a metonymic operation of reduction. Moguls can be influential figures in different fields. In accordance with the story line of the film, moguls should be parameterized into powerful men in the sex industry.

So far we have been concerned with parameterization in metonymic operations which only involve one process of reduction. Nevertheless, parameterization also underlies cases of double or triple metonymy like the first metonymic shift which has been discussed in connection with the title *The vow* and its Spanish counterpart *Todos los días de mi vida*, in which vow is adjusted in the context of the film to marriage vows, a specific kind of vow. An additional example of double metonymy in which a reduction operation of the GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC kind is at work is *Bridesmaids* and its Spanish counterpart *La boda de mi mejor amiga* ('My best friend's wedding'). Bridesmaids, who play a very important role in this film, can be conceived of as one of the subdomains of the broad domain of weddings, to which it affords access. In fact, the film pays particular attention to the open competition between the maid of honor and one of the bridesmaids in order to organize the bridal festivities. In contrast, the Spanish title opts for a version which makes reference to the wedding. The wedding domain becomes the source domain for a reduction operation which selects a specific wedding, the maid of honor's best friend's wedding. This second metonymic leap is an instantiation of the GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy.

Furthermore, the transliterated Spanish versions of some English titles are not guided by metonymic operations of the GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC kind in spite of being the result of parameterization. Let us consider some non-metonymic cases of parameterization. The title *The to do list* was translated into Spanish *Cosas que hacer antes de los 18* ('Things to do before 18'). To disentangle the meaning of this title, both a reduction operation and parameterization are required. First, a list stands for the subdomain of things (*cosas*) or tasks written down on that record. Second, a parameterization cognitive operation at discourse level licenses the set-up of the timing of one event in connection to another. This is what Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 210) call *relating*. In the context of this film, there is a list of sexual tasks that the protagonist, Brandy Clark, should perform before turning 18. The Spanish title fleshes out the original title with more specific conceptual material, with temporal anchoring, and in this way adapts the meaning of the title to the contextual requirements imposed by the plot. Other examples of non-metonymic parameterization are the translations of the film title *Scream* in Mexico (*Scream: grita antes de morir*; 'Scream: scream before dying') and of the film title *Tremors* in Mexico (*Terror en el desierto*; 'Terror in the desert') and in Peru (*Terror bajo la tierra*; 'Terror underground'). The translation of *Scream* into *Scream: grita antes de morir* is similar to the *To do list* Mexican version inasmuch *antes de morir* (before dying) links two events (screaming and dying) by means of a temporal relation of relating. As regards *Tremors*, its transliterations in Mexico and Peru involve a parameterization cognitive operation of location which operates through fixing at the lexical level. *En el desierto* ('in the desert') and *bajo la tierra* ('underground') specify the exact location of the tremors. Moreover, the translation of *tremor* into *terror* ('terror') is guided by the high-level metonymy CAUSE FOR EFFECT. In it, the tremors, the slight shaking movements produced by strange underground creatures in this film, are the cause of –and stand for– one of the possible effects of the tremors, terror. The same holds for the Spanish titles for *The hangover* (*Resacón en Las Vegas*; 'Big hangover in Las Vegas') and *The hangover Part II* (*Resacón II ¡Ahora en Tailandia!*; 'Big hangover II. Now in Thailand'), which result from a parameterization operation of location through *fixing*. The plot of these films is set in different locations (first in Las Vegas and then in Thailand), adding in this way

some more details to the original title, which remains unspecified in terms of the place where the plot unfolds.

Some other titles which are related to their Spanish versions by means of a metonymic generalization cognitive operation of the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC kind are *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (*La matanza de Texas*; 'The Texas Massacre'), *The Deer Hunter* (*El cazador*; 'The hunter'), *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (*El hombre y el monstruo*; 'The man and the monster'), and *Along came Polly* (*Y entonces llegó ella*; 'And then she came'). The target title captures more generic information than the original one: the Spanish version of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* draws attention to the massacre and not to the kind of massacre (one in which the instrument used to kill indiscriminately is a chainsaw); the Spanish counterpart of *The Deer Hunter* ignores the object of killing and only concentrates on the killing itself; the Spanish transliteration of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* only focuses on the domains to which each of the individuals, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, are to be assigned and not on their specific proper names; finally, the Spanish version of *Along came Polly* also disregards the protagonist's proper names. In the last two examples, the use of 'the man', 'the monster', and 'she' might be an attempt to single out Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde and Polly as unique individuals within the general groups to which they pertain. Observe that the Spanish version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* makes use of the definite article (rather than of the indefinite one) and the Spanish counterpart of *Along came Polly* replaces the proper name with a generic personal pronoun, as if the audience were acquainted with each of these characters or as if there were no more individuals of this kind within their respective domains.

Another interesting example of metonymic generalization which merits special attention is *Manhunter* and its Spanish counterpart *Hunter*. The Spanish title is a borrowing from English but rather than adopting the original title itself, a more generic word is used. This fact reveals the lack of interest in the object of hunting in the Spanish title.

5.2. Identity relations

Now we will focus our attention on those identity relations which underlie the relationship between the English film titles in our corpus and their Spanish counterparts, mainly echoing, strengthening, mitigation, and comparison by contrast.

5.2.1. Echoing

As advanced, echoing can be either ironic or non-ironic. Among the latter, we have already discussed examples like the Spanish counterparts of the source titles *Yes man* (*Di que sí*; 'Say yes'), *The vow* (*Todos los días de mi vida*; 'All the days of my life'), and *It's alive* (*Estoy vivo*; 'I'm alive'). In contrast to their original titles, these titles, especially those which are direct speech reports, endow the translated version with vividness.

While these non-ironic cases of echoing are found to operate at the lexical level, ironic echoing occurs at the non-lexical level (at both the implicational and illocutionary levels). We concur with Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera's (2014: 182) thesis that ironic echoing involves the reconciliation of two linguistic situations that are called upon by the same linguistic expression. Thus, contrasting also plays a fundamental role in ironic echoing. One of these situations is made available by the real referent, while the other, which is provided by the linguistic expression, echoes a previous belief or thought. If we take up the issue of the ironic echo triggered by the expression 'dream house' in the film title *Mr. Blandings builds his dream house*, the echoing expression (dream house) represents the unreal or belief-based situation and the real referent, the fact that the house is not such a dream house. This ironic echo of a desired state of affairs which is lost is the Spanish translation, however, as we have already remarked, activates a scenario of desperation which is also brought to bear by the Spanish adverb 'ya' ('finally', 'after a long letany of impediments'). Another example of ironic echoing at the non-lexical level is involved in the South-American Spanish version of the original film title *Home alone*, *Mi pobre angelito* ('My poor little angel'). A home alone situation describes a scenario in which a child remains alone at home without an adult's watchful eye. This scenario is made up of different elements like the house and the child which is left alone. The Spanish title is the result of a reduction operation whereby the whole 'home alone' scenario is used to highlight a prominent subdomain, the child. This explanation fits in nicely with the story line of the film, whose action unfolds in the context of a house in which a child who has been accidentally left alone is the undisputed protagonist. The Spanish title, which is an echo of a belief, referentially describes the boy as an angel, a boy whose behavior is exemplary. Nonetheless, when understood in the context of the film *Home alone*, we guess that the real referent is a troublemaker. Thus the same expression activates two mental spaces which clash

inasmuch as they trigger opposite scenarios. As Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 183-184) argue, the echoed belief invokes an expected situation. The echo *The boy is an angel* is elaborated into a complex scenario by means of an expansion operation which conveys such meaning implications as the facts that the boy does not cause any problem, that he does not take risks, that he complies with and obeys norms, etc. These meaning implications clash with and cancel out the ones in the expected or desirable situation (e.g. the boy does cause many problems, he does take innumerable risks, he completely disregards norms, etc.). The contrast between the meaning implications of both situations prompts the speaker's emotional reaction which is singled out by means of a reduction operation within the real situation, as shown in the figure below. Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 183) state that ironic utterances exemplify a special pattern of metonymic interaction, which they call cross-domain metonymic chain, in which the expansion operation occurs within the expected situation and the reduction operation meant to highlight an emotional response takes place in the real situation. These authors further argue that the role played by this metonymic chain is to support a meaning derivation process different from implicature derivation. The first step of this process consists in the domain expansion from the subdomain of what is said ('The boy is an angel') to the expected scenario which comprises what is said; the second part of the derivation process involves the singling out – as a result of a reduction operation – of the speaker's emotional reaction to the real scenario in its contrast with the speaker's emotional reaction to the echoed belief or expected scenario.
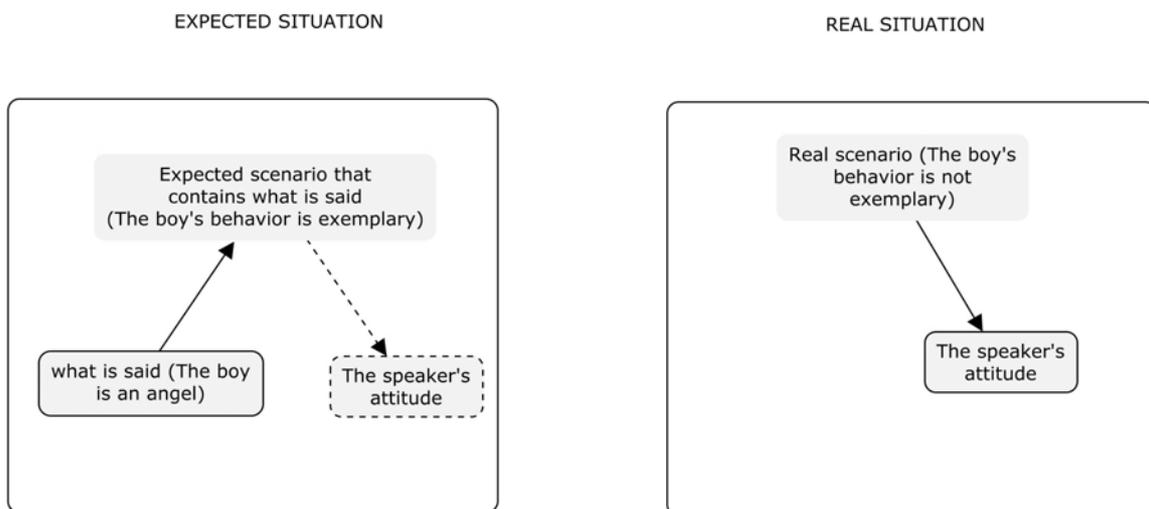

Figure 8. Home alone (Mi pobre angelito)

5.2.2. Strengthening and mitigation

The analysis of our corpus reveals that strengthening and mitigation are cognitive operations which underlie the translation of some original titles into Spanish. As observed, strengthening, the same as mitigation, operates on the basis of scalar concepts such as weight, size, frequency, etc. or of concepts that are likely to be graded and it can lie at the basis of hyperbolic uses or non-hyperbolic uses. Some examples of strengthening which account for the relationship between original English titles and their Spanish counterparts are *The hangover* (*Resacón en Las Vegas*; 'Big hangover in Las Vegas'), *The hangover Part II* (*Resacón II ¡Ahora en Tailandia!*; 'Big hangover II. Now in Thailand')*, Sleeper* (*El dormilón*; 'The sleepyhead')*,* and *The great race* (*La carrera del siglo*; 'The race of the century'). Strengthening is achieved by means of a derivational process in the Spanish titles except in the last example, where it is obtained by lexical means. Hangover is scaled up to a bigger size in the Spanish titles *Resacón en Las Vegas* and *Resacón II ¡Ahora en Tailandia!* On the face of it, this is a hyperbolic notion which the hearer has to minimize. However, on closer inspection we think that the Spanish version is a real description of the actual scenario triggered by the film or, at least, the distribution house might believe this is the case. Moreover, the Spanish version, in being more exaggerated, might attract the audience's attention more than its original title. It causes a reinforced sense of enjoyment and fun involved in the revelry prior to the hangover. The Spanish version of the source title *Sleeper*, *Dormilón* ('Sleepyhead') is not hyperbolic either in spite of involving a strengthening operation. It might seem to reflect the plot of the film more faithfully. In fact, a clarinetist is cryogenically frozen by mistake and is unfrozen 200 years later. Even in the fictitious context of the kind described in this film, sleeping 200 years is too much for a human being. However, the source title conveys a range of meaning implications derived from the polysemous nature of the English word *sleeper* (person who sleeps and person who is not brave) which the translation into Spanish cannot capture. What is beyond all doubt is that the Spanish version is not hyperbolic. We cannot argue either that the original title is a mitigation of a state of affairs. This title is richer in meaning implications than the Spanish counterpart at the expense of reflecting less faithfully the story line of the film. In contrast, strengthening is hyperbolic in the case of the Spanish translation of *The great race*. The strengthened version in the Spanish film title

generates a hyperbolic concept that requires mitigation on the part of the hearer. In fact, the race which takes place in the film is not the most important one in the whole century. The emotional reaction that the Spanish distribution house might wish to communicate is one of excitement and thrill as a result of the celebration of the greatest of all races in a century. Hyperbolic uses trigger the metaphor LOWEST IS UPPERMOST. In our example, a great race is a point in a scale and the race of the century is an upper-level point in the same scale. The hearer needs to bring the formulation down the scale to a point which matches his perception of the state of affairs, the fact that the race is to be qualified as great. A contrasting operation is also at work in hyperbolic cases of strengthening like this one. The great race contrasts with the race of the century. Additionally, cases of irony like the Spanish version of *Home alone*, *Mi pobre angelito* ('My poor little angel') also illustrate hyperbolic strengthening to the extent that assigning the model characteristics of an angel to a person is an obvious exaggeration which needs to be adjusted to contextual requirements.

Mitigation also underlies the transliterated Spanish titles of source titles like *Young Frankenstein* (*El jovencito Frankenstein*; 'Little young Frankenstein') and *Do not disturb* (*Por favor, no molesten*; 'Please, do not disturb'). The first example resorts to diminutives and thus mitigation works at the lexical level. By means of this diminutive, the speaker's positive attitude towards Frankenstein is conveyed or at least the negative connotations which the character of Frankenstein generates are downplayed. Moreover, as pointed out by Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014: 198), the adverb *please* is a mitigating device whose scope is an imperative, as in *Por favor, no molesten* ('Please, do not disturb'). This is an example of grammatical mitigation. The mitigating element operates at the illocutionary level. It calls upon a request scenario by minimizing the initial strong directive effect of the imperative by means of the instantiation of specific elements of the request scenario like the addressee's readiness or ability to perform the action.

5.2.3. Contrasting or comparison by contrast

Contrasting operations have been discussed as playing a key role in hyperbole and irony in our analysis, as put forward by Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014). Let us consider some other examples of contrasting operating at the lexical level. The South-American

title corresponding to the source title *Angel Heart* is *Corazón satánico* ('Satanic heart'). The same entity, a heart, is attributed opposite characteristics: it is both angelic and satanic in the source and target domains respectively. This is an antonymic clash which can be solved in the context of this film. As was observed in connection with the film title *Summer school*, two concepts which are juxtaposed in an oxymoron can be reconciled. In *Angel Heart*, the main character, Harry Angel, in spite of being a dark person, shows a little compassion for the people he interviews, who end up dead. Nevertheless, it is likely that the source title performs a double function: on the one hand, it hits at the main character's last name; on the other, it focuses on Angel's good side. Mrs. Doubtfire (*Señora Doubtfire, papá de por vida* – 'Mrs. Doubtfire, forever dad') A non-native speaker of English or even a native speaker of English little acquainted with slang could face serious problems in their attempt to disentangle the full meaning implications of Mrs. Doubtfire. In slang, Mrs. Doubtfire describes a person dressed in drag. The distribution house in charge of the Spanish version of this title has surmounted this difficulty by adding a tag to the original title which picks out one individual from the set of all possible individuals referred to as Mrs. Doubtfire. The words 'Mrs.' and 'papá' ('dad') clash. However, knowing that Mrs. Doubtfire is a man dressed in drag allows us to reconcile these two terms. In fact, in the film Mrs. Doubtfire is a devoted father who disguises himself as a female housekeeper in order to be able to look after his children after getting divorced.

6. Conclusion

This proposal has showcased the potential of Cognitive Linguistics in addressing Translation Studies. Our study is in consonance with descriptive approaches to translation and is also in line with the main tenets of *skopos* theory in the sense that a text is regarded as a translation inasmuch it is accepted and valued as such within a given cultural system at a certain point in time. While acknowledging the great importance of previous treatments of the translation of English film titles into Spanish, we offer a detailed analysis of the motivation underlying the translation of film titles in order to complement such aforementioned works. Film title translation is a discursive mode which is highly motivated and needs a principled explanation in terms of cognitive models or, more specifically, of cognitive operations. The notions of cognitive

model and cognitive operations have been found to play a prominent role in the relationship which is held between some English film titles and their Spanish renderings. A set of almost 500 English film titles extracted from the online databases *filmsite.org* and *IMDb* and their Spanish counterparts have been carefully examined with a view to providing an explanatory account of the cognitive operations which motivate the seemingly random nature of some Spanish film title translations which abide by oblique or non-literal translation procedures. These content cognitive operations fall into two main groups: 'stands for' relations (expansion and reduction operations on the one hand and parameterization and generalization on the other), and to a lesser degree 'identity relations' (echoing, strengthening and mitigation, and contrasting or comparison by contrast). The analysis of our data reveals that on many occasions those translations cannot be qualified as random since there exists an underlying connection between the source and the target film titles which is explained in terms of content cognitive operations (for instance, the Spanish version of *The Seven Year Itch*, *La tentación vive arriba* - 'The temptation lives upstairs'- and the English title itself focus on different parts of the same cognitive model through a metonymic link). Nonetheless, this should not blind us to the fact that besides the different literal and oblique translation procedures, other relevant criteria like awareness and a combination of commercial and aesthetic effects are also observed in the process of translating film titles into other languages. After all, films are products that the distribution houses are interested in selling and this purpose lies solely at the base of some striking Spanish translations of film titles that have no connection whatsoever with the original titles. Some of these titles and their Spanish renderings might select different relevant material within different cognitive domains which are activated in the context of the same film (for instance, *Seconds* and the Spanish version *Plan diabólico* – 'Diabolical plan'). These are called nonce titles by Baicchi (2013: 14).

Finally, let us outline some lines for future research. This study has sketched some quantitative remarks. However, a more in-depth quantitative treatment of the data and a psycholinguistic study which validates or refutes our findings would hopefully enrich this qualitative analysis. Moreover, this proposal is part of a wider project which focuses on particular film genres. Under the assumption that the different techniques applied to the translation process and the cognitive operations underlying them might

vary from genre to genre and yield different results as regards their qualitative and quantative distribution, different analyses focusing on each of the various film genres (e.g. action, adventure, comedy, crime, drama, epics, horror, musicals, science fiction, war, and Westerns) are being conducted. Additionally, we have been mainly concerned with the relationship between English film titles and their Castilian Spanish versions. In this connection, a comparison between the film titles translated into Castilian Spanish and South-American Spanish should be made with a view to checking whether the two varieties use the same strategies for the translation of those titles, whether the same cognitive operations motivate such translations, and whether their quantitative distribution differs.

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