

The effect of standardisation on collocations in Colombian and European Spanish translations of the work *Rootless*

María Victoria Valencia Giraldo
Universidad de Salamanca
victoriavalencia@usal.es

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Abstract. The empirical study of syntactic, stylistic, and lexical patterns through corpora has frequently revealed a tendency towards standardisation, as Toury (1995/2012) defines it, in translated texts. In this vein, some studies have found that diatopy tends to become blurred in translations, particularly into transnational languages. In the case of Spanish, it has been stated that the enormous geographical richness of the language is not really reflected in translated Spanish. This paper argues that the translation of the work *Rootless* by Chris Howard into Colombian Spanish exhibits traits more typical of the European Spanish than of the Colombian Spanish variety. For this purpose, diatopic distribution of verb + noun (object) collocations extracted from a parallel corpus and a monolingual corpus of *Rootless* and its translations published in Colombian and European Spanish, is examined in a reference Spanish corpus.

Keywords: parallel corpus; translated Spanish; Colombian Spanish; standardisation in translation; diatopic variation

La estandarización de las colocaciones en las traducciones al español de Colombia y de España de la obra *Rootless*

Resumen. El estudio empírico de patrones sintácticos, estilísticos y léxicos a través de corpus ha revelado con frecuencia una tendencia a la estandarización (Toury 1995/2012) en los textos traducidos. En esta línea, algunos estudios han constatado que la diatopía tiende a difuminarse en las traducciones, sobre todo hacia lenguas transnacionales. En el caso del español, se afirma que la enorme riqueza geográfica de la lengua no se refleja realmente en el español traducido. En este trabajo se argumenta que la traducción de la obra *Rootless* de Chris Howard al español de Colombia presenta rasgos más propios del español europeo que de la variedad del español de Colombia. Para ello, se examina la distribución diatópica, por medio de

un corpus de referencia, de las colocaciones verbo-nominales con función de objeto directo extraídas de un corpus paralelo y un corpus monolingüe de *Rootless* y sus traducciones publicadas en Colombia y España.

Palabras clave: corpus paralelo; español traducido; español de Colombia; estandarización en la traducción; variación diatópica.

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1. Introduction

The features or regularities that distinguish translated language from non-translated language have been extensively investigated since the 1990s within the framework of Corpus-Based Translation Studies. These features were initially put forward by Baker (1993, 1995, 1996), under the umbrella term of translation universals, and by Toury (1995/2012), who explains them by means of translation laws. Among these recurrent features, it is claimed that translated language exhibits a more conservative use of language and textual conventions. Translated language tends to show a preference for the use of constructions, orthography, and textual aspects that are more frequent, and idiosyncratic of target language, and even more typical of the formal register, and less creative, and experimental than non-translated texts. Baker (1996: 183) considers this feature a translation universal and terms it normalisation/conservatism, and defines it as “a tendency to exaggerate features of the target language and to conform to its typical patterns”; while Toury (1995/2012: 303) develops it into his law of growing standardisation, and explains it as follows: “in translation, source-text textemes tend to be converted into target-language (or target-culture) repertoires.”¹

Standardisation of geographical or diatopic variation has been investigated as part of this general trend of translation in different languages and cultures (e.g., Englund-Dimitrova 1997; Leppihalme 2000; Ramos Pinto 2009, 2016; Zamora Muñoz 2018; Díaz Martínez 2020). In the specific case of translated Spanish compared to texts originally written in Spanish, some corpus-based studies (e.g., Corpas Pastor 2015a, 2015b, 2018; Valencia

¹ In addition to standardization, Baker (1996) also proposes simplification, explicitation and levelling-out. Toury (1995/2012) adds the law of interference to his proposal.

Giraldo & Corpas Pastor 2019) have shown that the richness of transnational varieties of Spanish is not reflected in translated texts nor in existing bilingual dictionaries, and that, on the contrary, there is a tendency to favour the variety of European Spanish (Corpas Pastor 2017), as opposed to other varieties of Spanish. The standardisation of diatopy, that will be discussed in this paper, is investigated from the perspective of the target language (T-standardisation) (Chesterman, 2010:40), that is, from the comparison of the translated texts with texts originally written in Spanish language.

Some studies have dealt with standardisation in the translation of concrete constructions such as collocations (e.g., Bernardini 2007; Corpas Pastor 2015b; Kenny 2001; Øverås 1998; Valencia Giraldo & Corpas Pastor 2019; Valencia Giraldo 2020). To the best of our knowledge, this is one of the first corpus-based studies that focuses on the analysis of collocation to determine whether the translation of collocations in a contemporary literary work reflects a specific Spanish variety or whether it is closer to European Spanish.

The present study analyses the translation of verb + noun (object) collocations from the work *Rootless* (Howard 2012) into Colombian Spanish (Howard 2012/2016) and European Spanish (Howard 2012/2013). The starting hypothesis is that the translation of *Rootless* by the Colombian publisher reflects European Spanish to a greater extent than the Spanish variety used in Colombia. In order to verify this hypothesis, the diatopic distribution of the translated collocations, extracted from a parallel corpus and a monolingual corpus of *Rootless*, is examined by means of a reference corpus of synchronic Spanish for establishing whether or not there are features of standardisation in the translated texts compared to non-translated texts. Since this study analyses only two translated texts, it is not intended to provide claims and conclusions concerning translated Spanish in general.

2. On the concept of collocation

According to Corpas Pastor (1996:66), collocations are phraseological units consisting of two lexical units in syntactic relation, which do not constitute, by themselves, speech acts or utterances. Due to their institutionalization in language, collocations present combinatory restrictions established by usage (Corpas Pastor 1996:66). Since a detailed discussion on the concept of collocation is beyond the scope of this paper, only the main features that were considered to carry out this study will be presented.

Collocations can be considered bipartite structures in which both collocates have a different semantic status (Hausmann 1989). For instance, in *to pay homage*, and its Spanish equivalent *rendir homenaje*, nouns are the autosemantic bases, whereas the verbs *to pay* and *rendir* are collocates (Corpas Pastor 2015b). While bases retain their meaning, the collocates acquire a special meaning, usually of an abstract or figurative nature, in the company of the base (Alonso Ramos 1994:24; Corpas Pastor 1996:66). That is, the meanings of collocates depend entirely on their respective bases. The collocates that compose a collocation may appear adjacent or non-adjacent: one or more lexical items may appear between the base and the collocate. Jones and Sinclair (1974) proposed the concept of 'collocational span', which they set at four words before and after the node (base).

The frequency of co-occurrence of a collocation is of great relevance because it can be indicative of conventionalization and institutionalization in the language through reiterative use. This demonstrates the fact that collocation is a psycholinguistic phenomenon, as Hoey (2005:5) and Corpas Pastor (2001) point out. In this sense, it is possible to determine whether a certain string of words is sufficiently frequent or salient to be considered conventionalized, habitual or typical, by counting its occurrences in a corpus, as suggested by Manning and Schütze (1999), and Corpas Pastor (2015b). However, a collocation can be considered typical and cognitively salient (entrenched), even if it is not very frequent (Corpas Pastor 2015:6).

Verb + noun (object) collocations constitute the most common type of collocations in language. According to Corpas Pastor (1996:68), verbs comprising this type of collocations have collocational extensions of variable proportions, which is why the author places them in a continuum formed by two opposite categories: the practically unlimited and the practically fixed, with intermediate categories. Among the nearly unlimited verbs, collocations that share a collocate and a base of the same semantic field are included; examples of these are *desempeñar un cargo*, *una función* or *un papel* ("to perform a job position/a function/a role"). Following Corpas Pastor (1996:69), intermediate cases are represented by a very homogenous group of collocations consisting of a delexical verb, almost grammaticalised, and a (generally) deverbal noun which provides the main semantic load, for example: *asumir una responsabilidad* ("assume responsibility"), *entablar una amistad* ("form a friendship"). Specifically, reference is made to verbs such as *dar*, *tomar*, *hacer* or *poner* ("to give, to take, to do, or to put"), whose semantic load only adds certain verbal aspects. At the other extreme of the continuum, among the practically fixed collocates, restricted collocations are found (Aisenstadt 1979). The bases of restricted collocations exhibit a high

degree of combinatorial restrictions, such as *conciliar el sueño* (not **atraer el sueño*) (“to fall asleep”, not *“to attract sleep”), and *acariciar una idea* (not **tocar una idea*) (“to nurture an idea”, not *“to touch an idea”).

Due to usage restrictions and preferences of collocations, inherent to each language, the translation of collocations into target language is often affected by the anisomorphism of languages when it comes to selecting collocates, as Corpas Pastor (2015b:230) points out. The base is usually translated literally, but the translation equivalent of the semantically dependent element (the collocate) is completely contingent on the target language (Corpas Pastor 2017b:191). Thus, the collocate can vary greatly across languages, for example, *to pay attention*, which should be translated into Spanish as *poner/prestar atención* and into French as *faire attention*. In the three examples above, as can be observed, collocates change in each language, while bases are translated literally.

3. Diatopic variation of Spanish and translation of collocations

Spanish is a transnational language spoken in more than twenty countries. This means that there is a great richness in terms of diasystematic differences (diatopic, diaphasic and diastratic variation). Diatopic or geographic variation in Spanish (as well as all types of variation) can be characterised by collocations through combinatorial restrictions, usage or distribution preferences (Corpas Pastor 2018). Transnational varieties show a clear tendency towards the use of specific collocations: in Mexican Spanish, the act of postponing a decision is more frequently expressed through the collocation *posponer una decisión*, while *postergar una decisión* is more usual in Argentinian Spanish, and *aplazar una decisión* is the preferred option in European Spanish (Corpas Pastor 2015b). The latter is also the most used in Spanish translations (Corpas Pastor 2015b).

Despite the variational richness of Spanish, it has been claimed, and proven in many cases, that translated Spanish exhibits traits of standardisation in relation to idiomaticity (Corpas Pastor 2018), as evidenced in Corpas Pastor’s studies (2015b 2018). In Corpas Pastor’s 2015b study, a tendency towards the use of European Spanish variety, as well as a reluctance to include diatopically restricted collocations, are revealed through the analysis of a series of translation equivalences found in Linguee.² Similar conclusions are drawn from the case study conducted by Valencia Giraldo and Corpas Pastor (2019) regarding the translation of verb + noun (object) collocations in two transnational varieties analysed

² Linguee is available at: <https://www.linguee.com>.

(Colombian and European varieties) of the work *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Wilde 1890) by using a Spanish diachronic corpus. The translation into Colombian Spanish reflects, to a greater extent, European Spanish than the Spanish variety used in Colombia.

Among the multifarious translation pitfalls posed by collocations, diatopy is undoubtedly of great relevance when it comes to choosing collocates in Spanish or in other transnational languages. Unfortunately, English-Spanish bilingual dictionaries are not of great use for translators in this regard, since, as far as we are aware, there is no currently comprehensive English-Spanish bilingual dictionary of collocations, and general bilingual dictionaries that incorporate collocational equivalents have many limitations (Corpas Pastor 2017b; Torner & Bernal 2017; Lorente et al. 2017). In particular, the studies conducted by Corpas Pastor (2015b), and Valencia Giraldo and Corpas Pastor (2019) conclude that some of the most popular and prestigious English-Spanish bilingual dictionaries favour European Spanish and General or Standard Spanish, as opposed to diatopically marked Spanish.

4. Methods

This case study is focused on the translation of collocations into Colombian and European Spanish of the work *Rootless* by Chris Howard (2012). In order to undertake this study, a parallel corpus, two monolingual corpora and a Spanish reference corpus are analysed by means of qualitative and quantitative methods. Unlike the case study by Valencia Giraldo and Corpas Pastor (2019), in which standardisation of the diatopy in two chapters of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Wilde 1890) was analysed using a diachronic corpus of Spanish (due to the nature of the source text), the present study analyses a contemporary novel, and therefore uses a reference corpus of contemporary Spanish. In addition, a parallel corpus is built for greater systematicity and efficiency in the detection of collocations.

4.1 Corpora and procedure

As mentioned above, three types of corpora are used in this study. Details on each of these are presented in this Section.

The parallel corpus created for this study contains an English source text, namely, Chris Howard's *Rootless*, and two translations, one into

Colombian Spanish and the other one into European Spanish.³ Furthermore, both translated texts are analysed as separate monolingual corpora.

The Reference Corpus of 21st Century Spanish (CORPES XXI) is a reference corpus created by the Real Academia Española (Spanish Royal Academy). By the time the queries from this case study were made in this corpus, the current version (0.94, published in July, 2021) contained 350 million orthographic forms in its more than 327,000 documents (written and oral) representative of all the geographical varieties of Spanish.⁴ The number of forms produced in texts classified as belonging to the varieties of American Spanish accounts for 70% of the total corpus (more than 250 million forms), while the remaining 30% of the corpus represents the European Spanish variety.

The *CORPES XXI* was chosen because it offers the following functionalities of great importance for the objectives set out in this study: the possibility of filtering the results by geographic variety, medium (oral or written), genre and topic; the fact that it is a lemmatized, annotated corpus, and contains a significant number of forms. Since this study focuses on the translations of a literary work (novel), the queries in the *CORPES XXI* were limited to written works of fiction (novel, short story, theatre, and screenplay) to achieve, to the greatest extent possible, a point of comparison between the literary language translated into Spanish and the literary language originally written in Spanish.

Initially, all syntagms corresponding to the syntactic pattern verb + noun were automatically extracted from the parallel corpus using the CQL function in Sketch Engine. Specifically, the query used was '[ws(".*-v", ".*", ".*-n"))]' from ST, which yielded 9,332 lines of parallel concordances. Each concordance line was examined for selecting those word combinations that corresponded to the type of collocations under study in the ST and both TT. Subsequently, collocations were extracted from the target texts perspective only, that is from the monolingual corpora.

3 The following link provides access to the data retrieved from the CORPES XXI for all the collocations extracted from both target texts:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TXhsGOVzplR8kez3mkSclnw_oNefQzD7/view?usp=share_link.

4 The information presented here was extracted from the CORPES XXI website:
<https://www.rae.es/banco-de-datos/corpes-xxi>.

5. Searching for collocations in the *CORPES XXI*

Collocations extracted from both TT were queried in the *CORPES XXI*. The analysis of diatopic distribution, based on raw and relative frequency measures, of all the collocations retrieved made it possible to determine whether the target texts indeed reflected the transnational variety of the countries where they were published, as will be discussed in the following Sections. It is important to point out that in this paper reference is made to General Spanish (hereafter GEN_SP) as the generic Spanish, without specific diatopic restrictions, that is, the Spanish that encompasses all the diatopic varieties of Spanish (Corpas Pastor 2015b, 2018), as will be verified by means of the reference corpus. Similarly, the transnational varieties of Colombia (hereafter CO_SP) and Spain (hereafter EU_SP) are defined, as far as collocations are concerned, based on usage restrictions and preferences that are found in the *CORPES XXI*. In this paper, the term 'European Spanish' (Spanish variety from Spain) is understood as peninsular and insular Spanish.

5.1 Results and analysis of the Colombian Spanish target text

First, the data retrieved from the *CORPES XXI* regarding the diatopic distribution of collocations in the Colombian Spanish target text (hereafter CO_SP_TT) are presented and analysed. 30 translated collocations were identified in the CO_SP_TT, out of which 16 were also used in the European Spanish target text (hereafter EU_SP_TT) (53.33%). This fact indicates that both TTs share more than half of the collocations, from the source text perspective. After establishing the relative frequency measures, looking closely, and comparing those collocations in the CO_SP and the EU_SP, it quickly becomes clear that 12 out of those shared collocations are used more frequently in Spain than in Colombia.

Interestingly, 16 collocations (53.33%) among those found in the CO_SP_TT are more frequent in EU_SP than in CO_SP, and GEN_SP (see Fig. 1), according to the data obtained in the *CORPES XXI*.

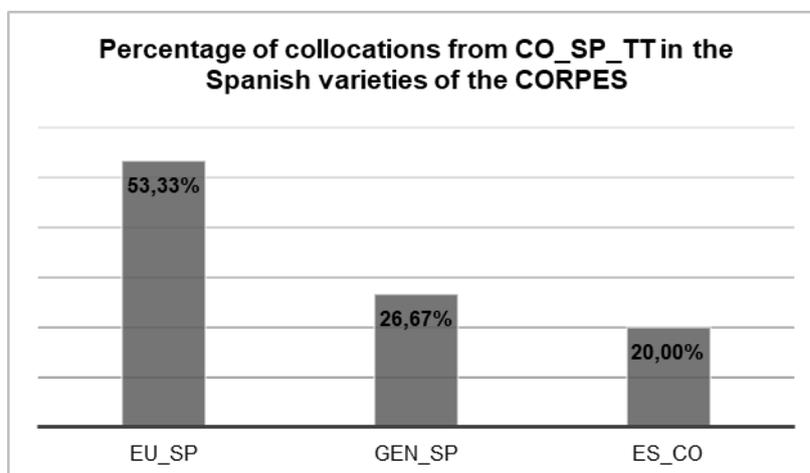


Figure 1: Percentage of collocations of the CO_SP_TT exhibiting a higher frequency of co-occurrence in the Spanish varieties of the CORPES XXI

Some of the collocations of the CO_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP of the *CORPES XXI* are the following (see Table 1):

Table 1: Some collocations from the CO__SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|-----|--|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|--------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (1) | <i>estrechar (una) mano</i> ("to shake someone's hand") | 670 | 12.62 | 90 | 11.83 | 532 | 15.40 |
| (2) | <i>guiñar (un) ojo</i> ("to give (a) wink") | 583 | 10.98 | 55 | 7.23 | 601 | 17.40 |
| (3) | <i>apretar (el) gatillo</i> ("to pull (the) trigger") | 160 | 3.01 | 25 | 3.29 | 172 | 4.98 |

According to the findings in the *CORPES XXI*, the concept conveyed in the CO_SP_TT through the collocation *estrechar (una) mano* (1) is expressed with a higher frequency in Colombian Spanish by the collocation *apretar (una) mano*. The former is used most frequently in Spain and in 12 transnational varieties of Spanish (e.g., Peru, Spain, and Mexico), while

apretar (una) mano is used only in 3 more geographical varieties (Ecuador, Dominican Republic, and Panama), in addition to Colombia.

Regarding instance 2, *guiñar (un) ojo*, used in both TTs, it could be verified in the *CORPES* that the variant *picar (un) ojo* expressing the same meaning is diatopically marked, because it pertains exclusively to the Colombian Spanish variety. However, in the CO_SP_TT the variant of General or Standard Spanish, which is closer to EU_SP, is chosen.

It is worth pointing out that the word combination *apretar (el) gatillo* (3) is the only collocation used in EU_SP to convey this concept, while in CO_SP and GEN_SP the variants *halar (el) gatillo* and *jalar (el) gatillo* (much more informal) are commonly used. Although they are not found in the CO_SP_TT.

Among the collocations from the CO_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP (26.67%), according to the *CORPES XXI*, the following are found (see Table 2):

Table 2: Some collocations from the CO_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|-----|--|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (4) | <i>reproducir (un) disco</i> ("to play (a) disc") | 4 | 0.08 | – | – | 1 | 0.03 |
| (5) | <i>tomar (una) fotografía</i> ("to take (a) picture") | 349 | 6.57 | 33 | 4.34 | 116 | 3.36 |
| (6) | <i>romper (una) regla</i> ("to break (a) rule") | 90 | 1.70 | 1 | 0.13 | 20 | 0.58 |

In CO_SP, the collocate *poner* is more frequently used with the noun base *disco*, *poner (un) disco*, instead of the variant *reproducir (un) disco* which was used in the CO_SP_TT.⁵ In addition, it is worth noting that, unlike GEN_SP, Colombian Spanish uses the apocope *foto*, rather than *fotografía*, much more frequently. However, the apocope was not used on any occasion in the CO_SP_TT.

5 The variant *poner (un) disco* is the most usual in GEN_SP and EU_SP of the *CORPES XXI* as well, instead of the variant with the collocate *reproducir*.

Only 20% of the collocations of the CO_SP_TT are indeed used more frequently in CO_SP, according to the *CORPES XXI* data. Some of these are (see Table 3):

Table 3: Some collocations from the CO_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in CO_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|-----|--|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (7) | <i>tomar (un) riesgo</i> ("to take (a) risk") | 79 | 1.49 | 13 | 1.71 | 19 | 0.55 |
| (8) | <i>dar (un) tiro</i> ("to fire (a) shot") | 114 | 2.15 | 19 | 2.50 | 31 | 0.90 |
| (9) | <i>apuntar (un) arma</i> ("to aim (a) gun") | 231 | 4.35 | 35 | 4.60 | 94 | 2.72 |

The collocation *tomar (un) riesgo* (7) is an anglicism that, although it is used more frequently in Colombia and in General Spanish than in Spain, it is not the most frequent variant to express this concept in the transnational variety of Colombian Spanish. In contrast, results from the *CORPES XXI* reveal that *correr (un) riesgo* is the most frequent variant in Colombia, by a wide margin, as in GEN_SP. A closer look at the diatopic distribution of the different transnational varieties in this case shows that *tomar (un) riesgo* has a much higher relative frequency in Panama (7.25), Puerto Rico (4.76) and several other varieties than in Colombia (1.70).

It should be noted that none of the translated collocations identified in the CO_SP_TT is used exclusively in the Colombian Spanish variety, nor are they used more frequently in Colombia, if the relative frequency of use in each country is examined in detail, which supports the hypothesis posited in this article.

In what follows, the results obtained from the search of the diatopic distribution in the *CORPES* of the collocations identified exclusively from the perspective of the CO_SP_TT are reported and analysed. In this target text, 24 collocations were identified. After searching for the diatopic distribution of these collocations in the *CORPES XXI*, it was found that 15 (62.50%) out of these are more frequent in EU_SP than in CO_SP and GEN_SP. Only 5 collocations (20.83%) are used more frequently in CO_SP; and 4 (16.67%) of the 24 collocations have a higher relative frequency in GEN_SP (see Fig. 2) than in CO_SP and EU_SP, in particular.

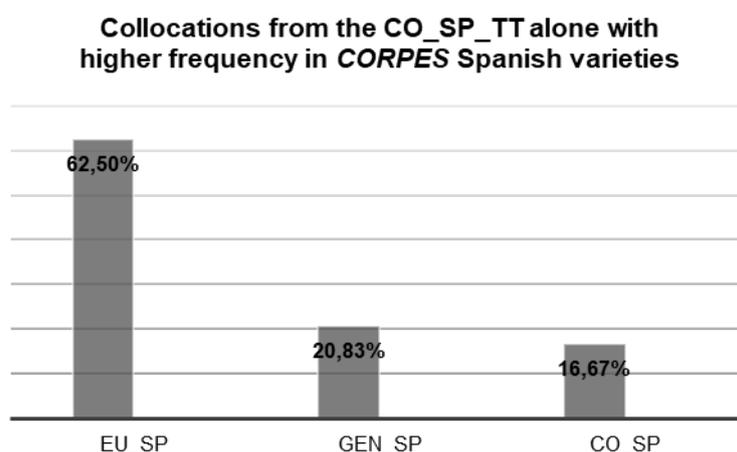


Figure 2: Percentage of collocations from the CO_SP_TT alone with higher frequency in CORPES varieties

Among those 15 collocations from the CO_SP_TT (62.50%) which exhibit a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP than in CO_SP and GEN_SP, the following are included (see Table 4):

Table 4: Some collocations from the CO__SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (10) | <i>llevar gafas</i> ("to wear glasses") | 73 | 1.37 | 18 | 2.37 | 302 | 8.74 |
| (11) | <i>esbozar (una) sonrisa</i> ("to flash (a) grin") | 430 | 8,1 | 55 | 7,23 | 488 | 14,13 |
| (12) | <i>prestar atención</i> ("to pay attention") | 1693 | 31.89 | 157 | 20.64 | 1246 | 36.07 |

In the transnational Spanish variety of Colombia, the collocate *usar* ("to wear") is preferred in combination with the noun *gafas* ("glasses") to convey the concept expressed by the collocation *llevar gafas* (10) in the CO_SP_TT. *Usar gafas* is more frequently used only in the USA than in the Colombian Spanish variety with a raw frequency of only 1 and a relative

frequency of 9.19 in the USA, compared to 20 and 2.62, respectively, in Colombia. Therefore, the variant *usar gafas* can be considered quite representative of Colombian Spanish. However, in the CO_SP_TT, the most common variant in European Spanish is chosen: *llevar gafas*.

As indicated above, only 5 collocations (20.83%) out of those found in the CO_SP_TT are more frequent in CO_SP than in EU_SP and GEN_SP, according to the *CORPES* (see Table 5):

Table 5: Some collocations from the CO_SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in CO_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|--|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (13) | <i>soltar (la) risa</i> ("to burst out laughing") | 276 | 5.19 | 54 | 7.10 | 150 | 4.34 |
| (14) | <i>tomar impulso</i> ("to take (a) leap") | 106 | 1.99 | 25 | 3.29 | 67 | 1.94 |
| (15) | <i>sacar provecho</i> ("to take advantage") | 186 | 3.5 | 36 | 4.73 | 107 | 3.10 |

However, none of these collocations is diatopically restricted to Colombian Spanish. In fact, if one compares the frequency of co-occurrence of these collocations with each of the diatopic varieties of GEN_SP of the *CORPES*, one can verify that the vast majority of the collocations found in the CO_SP_TT co-occur more frequently in several different transnational varieties than in the Spanish variety of Colombia.

The four collocations (16.67%) that exhibit a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP than in CO_SP and EU_SP are the following (see Table 6):

Table 6: Some collocations from the CO_SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|--|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (16) | <i>dar (una) golpiza</i> ("to beat someone up") | 29 | 0.54 | 4 | 0.53 | – | – |
| (17) | <i>dar (un) vistazo</i> ("to take (a) look") | 106 | 1.99 | 15 | 1.97 | 45 | 1.30 |
| (18) | <i>hacer (un) ruido</i> ("to make (a) noise") | 1606 | 30.25 | 226 | 29.71 | 1017 | 29.44 |
| (19) | <i>montar guardia</i> ("to stand guard") | 158 | 2.97 | 14 | 1.84 | 67 | 1.94 |

After studying the geographical distribution of the collocations retrieved from the CO_SP_TT, first from the ST perspective and then from that of the TT, it is worth summarising all the data in single figures (see Fig. 3). A total of 54 collocations were found in the CO_SP_TT, out of which 31, the majority (57.41%), are most frequently used in European Spanish; 12 (22.22%) collocations appear more frequently in GEN_SP; and 11 collocations (20.37%) are used most used in Colombian Spanish. Clearly, the CO_SP_TT is not consistent with Colombian Spanish; on the contrary, it reflects European Spanish to a greater extent.

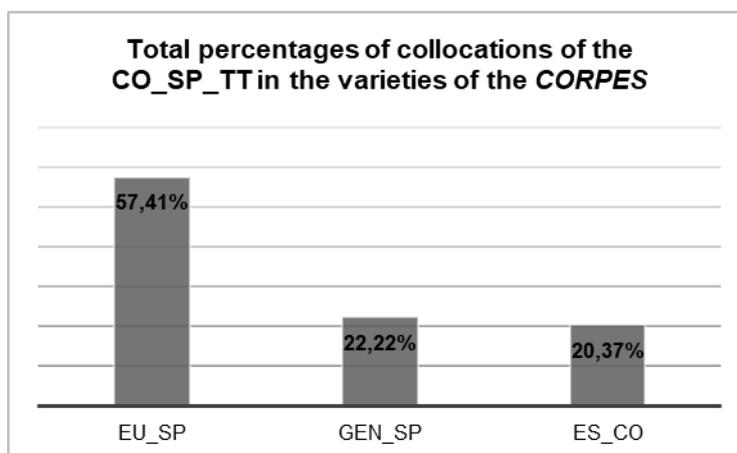


Figure 3: Total percentages of collocations of the CO_SP_TT with higher frequency in the varieties of the CORPES

5.2. Results and analysis of the European Spanish target text

Regarding the collocations extracted from the EU_SP_TT, 31 translated collocations were identified out of which 16 (51.61%) were also used in the CO_SP_TT, as noted in the previous Section. It is worth noting that 68.75% of these shared collocations are most frequently used in the EU_SP of CORPES and the rest of them in the GEN_SP. When examining and comparing the diatopic distribution of each of the collocations of the EU_SP_TT, it was found that most of the collocations, namely 17 (54.84%), co-occur most frequently in EU_SP of the CORPES XXI (see Fig. 4). For instance (see Table 7):

Table 7: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (20) | <i>pasar (la) vida</i> ("to spend one's life") | 219 | 4.13 | 38 | 5.00 | 405 | 11.72 |
| (21) | <i>guiñar (un) ojo</i> ("to give (a) wink") | 583 | 10.98 | 55 | 7.23 | 601 | 17.40 |
| (22) | <i>prestar atención</i> ("to pay attention") | 1693 | 31.89 | 157 | 20.64 | 1246 | 36.07 |
| (23) | <i>esbozar (una) sonrisa</i> ("to flash (a) grin") | 430 | 8.10 | 55 | 7.23 | 488 | 14.13 |

In the case of *guiñar (un) ojo* (21), when breaking down the frequencies of co-occurrence in the different diatopic varieties of Spanish, it was found in the statistics of the fiction subcorpus of the CORPES that this collocation has a higher relative frequency of co-occurrence in Guatemala (19.32) followed by Spain (17.39), although the raw frequency is 29 versus 601, respectively. Therefore, this collocation is considered to be idiosyncratic to the diatopic variety of European Spanish.

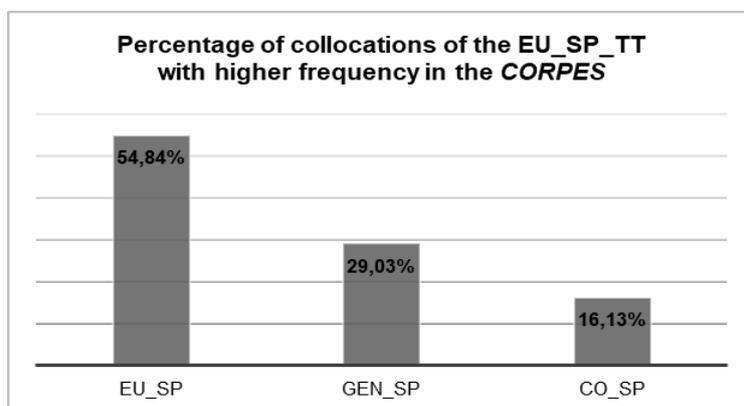


Figure 4: Percentage of collocations of the EU_SP_TT with higher frequency of co-occurrence in the Spanish varieties of CORPES

It is important to highlight the fact that the collocations *pasar (la) vida* (20) and *guiñar (un) ojo* (21), despite being used in both TTs, have a relative frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP that is more than twice as high as in CO_SP. The relative frequency of co-occurrence of the translated collocations *prestar atención* (22) and *esbozar (una) sonrisa* (23) in EU_SP, used exclusively in this TT, almost doubles the respective frequencies in ES_CO, as can be seen in Table 7.

Among the collocations from the EU_SP_TT that appear most frequently in GEN_SP of the CORPES XXI, the following are found (see Table 8):

Table 8: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (24) | <i>aclararse (la) garganta</i> ("to clear one's throat") | 140 | 2.64 | 20 | 2.63 | 66 | 1.91 |
| (25) | <i>pasar tiempo</i> ("to spend time") | 2363 | 44.51 | 166 | 21.83 | 447 | 12.94 |
| (26) | <i>sacar (una) foto</i> ("to take (a) picture") | 623 | 11.74 | 39 | 5.13 | 247 | 7.15 |

The collocation *sacar (una) foto* (26) was used in one instance in the EU_SP_TT. Although its usage in European Spanish is not so common. In contrast, *sacar (una) foto* is the preferred variant to express this concept in the Rio de la Plata area (Argentina and Uruguay) and Chile, according to the CORPES data.

Based on the data extracted from the CORPES XXI, 5 collocations (16.13%) from the EU_SP_TT are used more frequently in CO_SP than in EU_SP and GEN_SP (see Table 9):

Table 9: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in CO_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|--|-----------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (27) | <i>tomar (una) foto</i> ("to take (a) picture") | 995 | 18.74 | 163 | 21.43 | 149 | 4.31 |
| (28) | <i>correr (un) riesgo</i> ("to take (a) risk") | 752 | 14.17 | 147 | 19.33 | 438 | 12.68 |
| (29) | <i>dar muestra</i> ("to show sign") | 285 | 5.37 | 49 | 6.44 | 202 | 5.85 |

The collocation *tomar (una) foto/fotografía* (27) is more common in American Spanish in general, and particularly in Colombian Spanish. In fact, in European Spanish, the verb *hacer* is the preferred collocate to convey this concept, as can be compared through the raw frequencies offered by the CORPES XXI in the fiction subcorpus from Spain:

| | | | |
|------|---|--------------|-----|
| Foto | } | <i>hacer</i> | 865 |
| | | <i>tomar</i> | 151 |

Tomar (una) foto is used three times in the EU_SP_TT due to interference from the English collocation *to take (a) picture*, as was found in the parallel corpus. In the remaining cases where this concept was

conveyed by a collocation in the EU_SP_TT, the variants *hacer (una) foto* and *sacar (una) foto* were chosen.

In what follows, the results obtained from querying the frequency of co-occurrence of collocations identified in the monolingual corpus of the EU_SP_TT are examined. 37 collocations were extracted from the EU_SP_TT, out of which 45.95% exhibit a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP than in CO_SP and GEN_SP of the CORPES, as can be seen in Figure 5.

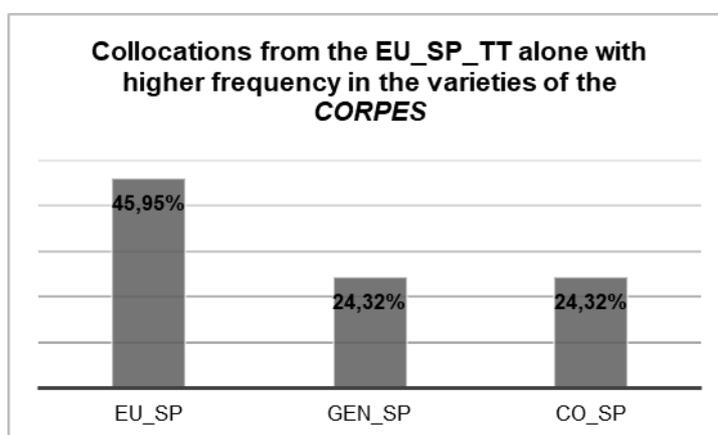


Figure 5: Collocations from the EU_SP_TT alone with higher frequency in the varieties of the CORPES

Among the most frequent collocations in EU_SP are (see Table 10):

Table 10: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in EU_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (30) | <i>dar (una) patada</i> ("to kick") | 403 | 7.59 | 92 | 12.10 | 454 | 13.14 |
| (31) | <i>hacer (una) foto</i> ("to take (a) picture") | 146 | 2.75 | 36 | 4.73 | 740 | 21.42 |
| (32) | <i>representar (un) papel</i> ("to play (a) role") | 103 | 1.94 | 15 | 1.97 | 113 | 3.27 |

By examining in detail the frequencies of co-occurrences in the different diatopic varieties, it is found that the collocation *dar (una) patada* (30) is used with higher (relative) frequency of co-occurrence only in one diatopic variety other than European Spanish, according to the *CORPES*. In particular, the use of this collocation is more frequent in Cuba than in Spain (see Table 11). However, this indicates that it is quite typical of EU_SP. Similarly, the collocations *representar (un) papel* (32) and *hacer (una) foto* (31) co-occur to a greater extent in only one transnational variety besides European Spanish, as shown in Table 11:

Table 11: Higher frequency measures in the European Spanish variety

| | Country | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| <i>dar (una) patada</i> | 1 Cuba ⁶ | 17.16 | 55 |
| | 2 Spain⁷ | 13.14 | 454 |
| <i>representar (un) papel</i> | 1..... UINEA E.⁸ | 4.73 | 2 |
| | 2..... PAIN | 3.37 | 113 |
| <i>hacer (una) foto</i> | 1 Cuba | 24.65 | 79 |
| | 2 Spain | 21.42 | 740 |

The collocation *hacer (una) foto* is very typical of European Spanish. To illustrate this, the relative frequency in EU_SP is nearly five times higher than in CO_SP: 21.42 compared to 4.73, respectively. *Hacer (una) foto* was found exclusively in the EU_SP_TT.

On the other hand, 9 collocations (24.32%) of the EU_SP_TT co-occur with a higher frequency in the CO_SP of the *CORPES* (see Table 12). Some of these are:

6 The size of the subcorpus of Cuba (written fiction) is 3,204,001.

7 The size of the subcorpus of Spain (written fiction) is 34,546,559.

8 The size of the subcorpus of Guinea Equatorial (written fiction) is 422,113.

Table 12: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in CO_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (33) | <i>dar (una) tunda</i> ("to give (a) blow") | 18 | 0.34 | 11 | 1.45 | 2 | 0.06 |
| (34) | <i>soltar (una) risotada</i> ("to burst out laughing") | 77 | 1.45 | 14 | 1,84 | 45 | 1.30 |
| (35) | <i>lanzar (un) grito</i> ("to cry out") | 286 | 5.39 | 42 | 5.52 | 87 | 2.52 |

Finally, 24.32% of the collocations from the EU_SP_TT represents GEN_SP to a greater extent in comparison with European Spanish and Colombian Spanish. Some of these collocations are (see Table 13):

Table 13: Some collocations from the EU_SP_TT (monolingual corpus) that show a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP

| No. | Collocation | GEN_SP | | CO_SP | | EU_SP | |
|------|--|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. | Raw freq. | Rel. Freq. |
| (36) | <i>correr peligro</i> ("to be at risk") | 457 | 8.61 | 52 | 6.84 | 286 | 8.28 |
| (37) | <i>tener (la) certeza</i> ("to be certain") | 766 | 14.43 | 83 | 10.91 | 364 | 10.54 |
| (38) | <i>despedir (un) olor</i> ("to give off (a) smell") | 213 | 4.01 | 28 | 3.68 | 56 | 1.62 |

Among the 37 collocations found in the EU_SP_TT, two of them have no occurrences in the fiction subcorpus of the *CORPES XXI*, namely: *descargar (un) rodillazo* ("to hit (a) knee strike") and *echar (un) sueñecito* ("to take (a) little nap"). The noun *rodillazo* appears 122 times in all transnational varieties, with a higher relative frequency in several varieties other than in European Spanish. The collocate *echar* is found in combination with the lexeme *sueño*, although not in its diminutive form *sueñecito*, in the *CORPES*.

To conclude this presentation of results, it is convenient to provide the general figures of the geographical distribution of the collocations found in

the EU_SP_TT, both from the perspective of the ST and the TT (see Fig. 6). In total 68 collocations were identified, out of which 34 (50%) are used more frequently in European Spanish (EU_SP) than in CO_SP and GEN_SP; 18 collocations (26.47%) exhibit a higher frequency of co-occurrence in GEN_SP; while 14 collocations (20.59%) in CO_SP of *CORPES XXI*; and 2 collocations (2.94%) have no occurrences in the subcorpora of the *CORPES* queried.⁹

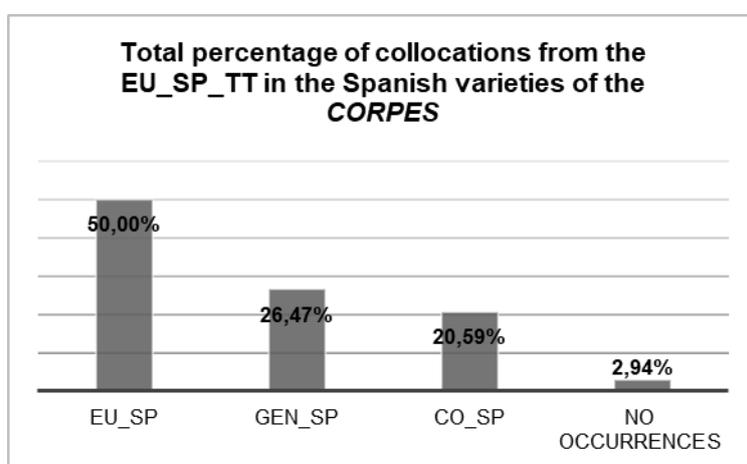


Figure 6: Total percentage of collocations from the CO_SP_TT in the Spanish varieties of the *CORPES XXI*

6. Discussion

In the light of the empirical data presented here, it can be stated that the hypothesis that the translation of *Rootless* by the Colombian publisher reflects European Spanish to a greater extent than the Spanish variety used in Colombia is correct. The most significant findings that support this claim are summarised below:

When analysing the translation of the collocations (source text perspective), it was found that the Colombian Spanish target text and the European Spanish target text share 53.33% of their collocations. If one closely examines and compares the raw and relative frequency measures of

⁹ Both collocations (*descargar un rodillazo* and *echar (un) sueñecito*) were also searched in the subcorpus of the Spanish varieties of Spain and Colombia of the *esTenTen18* corpus (available at <https://www.sketchengine.eu>, accessed on 25.01.23), but no results were obtained either.

those collocations in the transnational varieties of Colombian Spanish and European Spanish, it can be easily inferred that most of those shared collocations are used more frequently in European Spanish than in Colombian Spanish. This indicates that most of the collocations shared by both TTs are more typical and idiosyncratic of European Spanish.

A total of 54 collocations were found in the CO_SP_TT, out of which 57.41% are more frequent in European Spanish; 22.22% of the collocations co-occur more frequently in General Spanish, and only 11 (20.37%) collocations are more idiosyncratic to Colombian Spanish.

In the CO_SP_TT, there is a conspicuous preference for the use of collocations that are used more frequently in the European Spanish variety, as opposed to the use of collocations more typical of Colombian Spanish and less widespread in the (pan)Hispanic world: for example, *estrechar (una) mano*, *llevar gafas*, *echar (un) vistazo*.

Some collocations used in the CO_SP_TT are actually more commonly expressed by other variants in Colombian Spanish (see in square brackets), however, the translator chose the most frequent variants in European Spanish or in other transnational varieties: *apretar (el) gatillo* [*halar el gatillo*], *soltar (la) risa* [*soltar una carcajada*], *llevar gafas* [*usar gafas*], *estrechar (una) mano* [*apretar una mano*], *tomar (una) fotografía* [*tomar una foto*].

In the Colombian Spanish target text, the use of diatopically marked collocations was entirely avoided, for example, by using the collocation *guiñar (un) ojo*, instead of the variant *picar (un) ojo*, restricted to Colombian Spanish.

Concerning the European Spanish target text, the data revealed that this translation indeed reflects the Spanish variety used in Spain. It is worth recalling that 50% of the collocations identified in this text are more frequently used in European Spanish; 18 collocations (26.47%) are more frequent in General Spanish, while 14 collocations (20.59%) appear more frequently in Colombian Spanish.

These findings are in line with those presented in Valencia Giraldo (2020), Valencia Giraldo and Corpas Pastor (2019), and in Corpas Pastor's studies (2015a, 2015b, 2018), regarding the underrepresentation of the different Spanish varieties in contrast with European Spanish.

The translation behaviour observed in the findings can be explained by Toury's (1995/2012) law of growing standardisation. Although, due to space limitations, I will not delve deeper into the explanatory factors

underlying standardisation of this kind here, it is important to point out the following two factors. A significant factor in explaining the standardisation of diatopy in relation to the variety of Spanish into which it is translated is related to the commercial interests of the translation industry. This industry promotes the adoption of a Standard Spanish (Corpas Pastor 2018:35), and discourage the use of diatopically marked Spanish in order to market translations on both sides of the Atlantic or throughout the American continent, as would be the case of the translation of the Colombian publisher Panamericana.

Moreover, and related to abovementioned factor, risk aversion (Pym 2008, 2015) may be at play in the standardisation of translated Spanish. Consciously or unconsciously, translators standardise, in part, because they aim to reduce or mitigate the risk involved in using diatopically marked elements that might seem strange, incorrect, and uneducated to the target audience. Therefore, translators may prefer to select more frequent and typical collocations that are recognised and accepted, in the case of Spanish, by most of the Spanish-speaking community as the standard variety.

Conclusions

In this corpus-based study I analysed the diatopic distribution of use of the verb + noun (object) collocations extracted from the Colombian Spanish translation and the European Spanish translation of the work *Rootless* (Howard 2012). The data revealed a tendency to standardise Colombian Spanish in as much as it reflects, to a greater extent, European Spanish, as predicted in the hypothesis. This tendency can be explained by Toury's law of growing standardisation. In this study, standardisation could not have been determined in the Spanish translations if the three types of corpora had not been examined. Each type of corpus provided a different and fundamental perspective on the analysis of the translation behaviour.

However, it should be highlighted that this study has some limitations, which is why the results should be treated with caution. Firstly, the parallel and monolingual corpora are composed of only one source text and two Spanish translations, which undoubtedly prevents us from making generalisations about translated Spanish. Secondly, *CORPES XXI* does not offer the possibility of restricting the query of verb + noun collocations to those in which the noun fulfils the syntactic function of object of the verb. Since this was the specific syntactic function analysed, it was necessary to review each of the results when it was considered necessary. Finally, another drawback of the *CORPES* has to do with the fact that this is a

corpus under construction. The Royal Spanish Academy is constantly releasing new versions of the corpus, therefore the results presented here may vary in the next version of the corpus.

The main significance of this case study lies particularly on the quantitative and qualitative evidence that it offers to support the tendency to standardise the diatopic varieties of Spanish, namely the Colombian Spanish, in the translation of a contemporary literary work. In this way, this study contributes to move forward into the description of translated Spanish by means of corpora, which besides allowing us to understand translation behaviour and product, in the long run it could provide insights to make shifts in translation behaviour, for example, to give more visibility to traditionally underrepresented transnational varieties of Spanish in translation.

This contribution opens several future research avenues. First, the parallel corpus created for this study could be expanded to incorporate more literary works translated into Colombian Spanish or into other diatopic varieties of this language, in order to examine, on the one hand, whether the traits of standardisation of the Colombian Spanish translation are maintained, and on the other hand, whether different types of standardisation, which have been previously identified in research on other languages, are observed. Another future line of study in the area concerns research into the causes or factors that influence the recurrence of the standardisation of translated Spanish, by using other types of empirical methods (surveys, think-aloud protocols, etc.), besides corpora.

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