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Grado en Estudios Ingleses

## TRABAJO DE FIN DE GRADO

Active tourism: a linguistic-textual contrastive  
analysis of trail guides in Spanish and English

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2017/2018



## ABSTRACT

This undergraduate dissertation aims to provide a linguistic and textual contrastive analysis of Spanish and English online trail guides within the active tourism genre considering the scarcity of literature from the point of view of translation studies and contrastive analysis in this specific field. Trail guides are a touristic subgenre that includes a description of the itinerary and the surroundings of a trail or walk. In order to carry out my analysis, I have focused on the linguistic and textual features of the texts -selected from five websites-, and then I have analyzed and compared the results obtained. After having analyzed and compared the results, I have presented my complementary purpose, which is to provide a translation proposal of a text belonging to a Spanish website that has not been translated so far.

Keywords: active tourism, online, trail, linguistic analysis, textual analysis, translation.

## RESUMEN

El objetivo de este trabajo de fin de grado es proporcionar un análisis lingüístico y textual de las guías en formato online sobre rutas correspondientes al género del turismo activo teniendo en cuenta la escasez de estudios de traducción y análisis contrastivo relativo a este campo. Las guías sobre rutas son un subgénero del turismo que incluyen una descripción del recorrido y los alrededores de la ruta o senda. Para llevar a cabo mi análisis, me he centrado en los aspectos lingüísticos y textuales de los textos -obtenidos de cinco páginas web-, y, a continuación, he analizado y comparado los resultados. Después de haber analizado y comparado los resultados, he presentado mi objetivo complementario, el cual consiste en ofrecer una propuesta de traducción de un texto perteneciente a una página web en español, la cual no se ha traducido hasta ahora.

Palabras clave: turismo activo, online, ruta, análisis lingüístico, análisis textual, traducción.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism discourse can be categorized as a language for specific purposes (LSP) due to a sort of specific characteristics, one of which is the use of a specialized lexis that distinguishes it from the general language. This specialized discourse “presents its own features and terminology is the most visible feature” (Durán, “Tourist translations” 33).

In this work, the specialized language found in the selected corpus is categorized as a specific type of tourism -active tourism- and a specific subgenre, which is that of trail guides in an online format. Regarding contrastive studies, even though there is literature comparing the English discourse of tourism to other languages and covering its diverse fields, there is a gap when it comes to Spanish-English contrastive studies dealing with the linguistic and non-linguistic content of online trail guides, which have not been studied enough and represent a very specific area of investigation.

The purpose of this undergraduate dissertation is to carry out a linguistic and textual contrastive analysis (Spanish-English) of active tourism websites dealing with descriptions of tourism routes, which should be helpful for future translations and assist professional writing for various purposes. To achieve that, my study focuses on two main aspects and compares the results obtained from the Spanish and the English texts. On the one hand, the linguistic analysis includes the use of specialized language, positive adjectives, lexical choices, and verbal constructions; and, on the other hand, the textual analysis consists of how the information is arranged within the webpage (the sections) and the visual content included in the websites.

A complementary objective of my paper is the presentation of a translation proposal into English of one text from a Spanish website, as well as to highlight its importance within the field of online trail guides translation. My aim is that this contrastive analysis serves for future translations of this type of touristic texts, as well as for my own translation process, which is based on the information obtained from various parallel texts (three English websites) with a similar structure. With this translation I will be contributing with a text that has not been translated so far, and from which the extensive English speaking community can benefit from.

Translating tourism websites into other languages is supported by Gabor when he claims that “destinations and operators should invest in understanding keywords and optimizing their sites for searches in the key engines. Ensuring that a website is findable in all languages that travellers may be searching in is an important consideration.” Consequently, this translation proposal will help to promote a specific region and incite visitors to participate in active tourism activities in the area.

As I have stated, this undergraduate dissertation focuses on the linguistic and the textual contrastive analysis of online trail guides. Regarding the linguistic aspect, my initial hypothesis is that both English and Spanish corpora will be mainly informative since their aim is to provide objective guidance about a route or path. However, I do not exclude their connection to the persuasive function, and if it is present, I intend to find out to which extent. I also anticipate that there will be a great amount of specialized vocabulary dealing with active tourism, more concretely about nature. As for the textual features, my theory about the way information is arranged in the webpage is that even though it could vary depending on the language we are dealing with (Spanish or English) and the information could be under different sections, I expect to find the basic information in all the websites concerning trails, which includes the description of the walk and some factual information (length, ascent, grade of difficulty, etc.). Moreover, I expect to find a similar amount of visual content -such as photographs and images- in both the Spanish and English websites.

The reason why the topic of active tourism -and more concretely online trail guides- was chosen for this study is because, in spite of being texts of interest for national and international tourists, they have not been paid enough attention from the point of view of translation studies and contrastive analysis, and even less from a Spanish-English contrastive approach. According to Laraña, active tourism does not emerge in Spain until the mid 80’s and the beginning of the 90’s, as opposed to the 60’s and 70’s in the United States (qtd. in Jiménez and Gómez 77). The fact that this type of tourism is very recent, especially in Spain, may be a factor in the scarcity of studies on active tourism.

Despite the fact that there are few contrastive studies on online trail guides, tourists’ interest in discovering the natural landscape of the destinations has increased nowadays since visitors often seek a connection with nature and, therefore, with their

inner self. And it is often the case that these destinations are visited both by local travelers (domestic tourism) and international ones (international tourism). In words of Gabor, “there are new forms of travellers such as eco-travellers who seek connection with authenticity of people and nature”, who coincide with the image of the active tourism traveler.

## **1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In this section I present relevant terminology that will be useful for the understanding of the touristic texts. Firstly, I have defined the genre of active tourism and described the categorizations worth applying to my analysis. And then I have included the aspect of the online format surrounding the field of active tourism. This section should help to give a very broad perspective on active tourism in an online format since, as I have pointed out, the literature regarding this field is very limited, and even more when narrowing the subject to trail guides within active tourism websites.

### **1.1. Active tourism**

As I already mentioned, tourism is an activity that is constantly changing and including new types of activities. According to Durán, it “involves the direct contact between cultures and all that this includes (folklore, customs, gastronomy, etc.)”. What she observes is that the touristic discourse functions as a link between the travelers “and the place they are visiting and their cultures” (“Tourist translations 31). In my analysis, the activities included in the texts are located in a natural environment, which is known as *active tourism*.

First, we can categorize the texts of my corpus as active tourism. This type of tourism can be defined as, “a style or philosophy of leisure travel that combines elements of adventure, nature, and cultural tourism, with an emphasis on low-impact and sustainable tourism and the use of local guides” (*travel-industry-dictionary.com*). Two main characteristics can be extracted from this definition: the first one is nature, which is the environment where the touristic activities being analyzed in this work take place. And the second one is the use of local guides, in our corpus these are present in an online format. Durán rightly points out that “tourists come into contact and get to know a country by reading and consulting tourist texts, such as brochures, tourist guides, advertisements,



etc.” (“Tourist translations” 31). This highlights the idea that how the information is presented, and the way a text is translated into another language plays a vital role in the comprehension of a touristic text by the potential tourist.

Active tourism texts can be classified differently depending on the approach. Statev presents a classification in his article "The Added Value Formed by the Alternative in Tourism," in terms of the vehicle used, such as hiking, ski, water, cycle and avio tourism, of which the most appropriate for our corpus is *hiking tourism*. Statev points out that texts can also be categorized in terms of the place occupied -where the active tourism takes place-, such as cave, mountain and plane tourism. Here the most suitable options are *mountain* and *plane tourism* (247). There is another classification proposed by the “Global Report on Adventure Tourism,” by which hiking is included in *adventure tourism* and categorized as *soft adventure*, as opposed to *hard adventure* (12). Even though active tourism and adventure tourism may appear to include the same activities, there is a slight difference between them. According to Estornell Pons -cited in Santamaría’s doctoral thesis-, active tourism is a broader term which includes not only adventure activities but others too, which I have called ‘non-adventure tourism’ (Diagram 1), that are not characterized by their risk and emotion, such as fishing, golf or archery, among others (10). Considering this information, the term ‘active tourism’ will be the one used throughout this work.

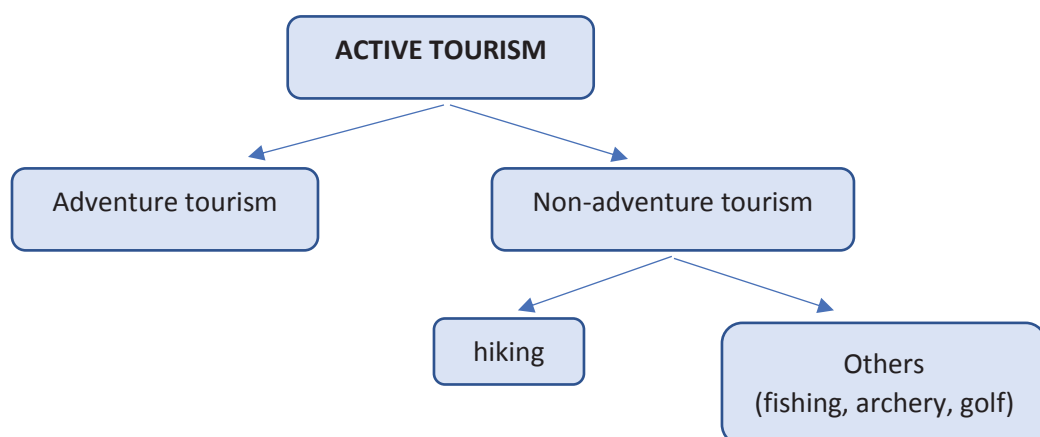


Diagram 1. Active tourism

## 1.2. The genre of online active tourism texts

As Edo observes, being tourism the first world-wide industry makes it a potential main client of the websites, which reinforces the relation between the touristic industry and the Internet (websites in our case). This author compares online touristic information with traditional printed leaflets and describes some advantages of websites over printed leaflets. To begin with, online information has the potential of reaching a higher number of people, and the quality of lasting for a longer period of time. Also, in this type of medium more information can be stored, the content is much more accessible than in other types of media and the cost of creating a website is lower than that of a leaflet. (54-55).

According to Calvi's classification, macro-genres are a combination of genres with the same purpose and dominant communicative function (17). The most suitable example of macro-genres that she describes is the webpages category. Such webpages can be issued by national, autonomous and local institutions and, as previously mentioned, such institutional variety is reflected in my corpus since texts belong to the three categories (national, autonomous and local). Moreover, webpages include guides which are practical and descriptive in nature, and that tend to have a dominant promotional purpose (24).

Regarding the sections where the information on active tourism can be found, when tourists visit a specific section in a website, they have some expectations about the type of information they are going to find there. For example, in the 'events' section, one expects to discover celebrations, festivities or any type of activity taking place on a particular date. In the case we are dealing with in this analysis, active tourism is included in the subsection under the heading 'walking and cycling' in *Visit Ely* and '*sendas y paseos*' (trails and walks) in the Aguilar de Campoo website. Such titles are very self-explanatory, and in these sections the visitor finds descriptions of paths through wilderness with essential information about how to begin the trail as well as a brief description of the natural surroundings.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

As stated in the introduction, the aim of my paper is to carry out a linguistic and textual contrastive analysis of Spanish and English online tourism texts from the subgenre of trails and walks in order to see their similarities and differences. Consequently, my purpose is to compare the Spanish and English touristic discourse in terms of its usage of specialized lexis, positive adjectives and lexical choices, as well as the dominant verbal constructions. Moreover, I have conducted a textual analysis to draw a comparison between both languages, which includes an examination of the sections and the visual content included in the websites. Ultimately, my work may serve to future translations of this subgenre for which I contribute with a translation proposal of one of the Spanish websites.

In order to carry out such contrastive analysis, I have compiled a Spanish and English corpus -composed of touristic texts from websites- and analyzed it. I will now describe the most relevant characteristics of my corpus, such as the languages involved, the field they belong to, the sources they have been retrieved from as well as their sections, the size of the texts and their communicative functions. After that, I have described the process of my analysis including the steps I have followed when conducting it. First, I have clarified the order of preference of the texts selected -i.e. whether the Spanish texts were selected first or the English ones- and why I have chosen them. Then I have carried out an analysis of the corpus including the classifications I have followed, and, ultimately, I have discussed the method of analysis.

### **2.1. Materials**

Both the Spanish and the English corpora that I have selected are comparable in terms of the topic, the extension, the type of source from where the texts have been retrieved (touristic websites) and their communicative functions. Consequently, the reason why I have selected my corpora is due to their balance and to the fact that the results obtained are expected to be coherent and representative.

The corpus I have chosen for the analysis is composed by 20 texts in English and Spanish and are typical examples of the trails and walks subgenre. They fall into the classification of the active tourism category and have been retrieved from five online

sources. The texts have been downloaded from institutional websites -with the exception of *Walking Britain*-, either national (*National Park Service*), autonomous (*Turismo de Cantabria*) and local institutions (Aguilar de Campoo city council website and *Visit Ely*). For the Spanish corpus, I have selected texts from the Aguilar de Campoo official city council website as well as from *Turismo de Cantabria*, the tourism website of the region of Cantabria. With reference to the English one, I have selected two from Great Britain, *Visit Ely* (Ely Tourist Information Centre) and *Walking Britain* (walking information about footpaths provided by travelers), and one from the United States, which is the *National Park Service* website issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Both my corpora are balanced in number as they are formed by twenty texts; ten in Spanish and ten English. This compilation of texts includes a total of 5888 words, 2553 in the Spanish texts and 3335 in the English ones.

With regard to the length of the Spanish and the English texts, they share a similar extension, i.e. they are one page long, in one case the text is even shorter. However, as it can be seen from the number of words, the English ones are characterized by having more linguistic information. All the documents selected, both the Spanish and the English, contain factual information, such as the length -measured in miles and/or kilometers-, the duration, the degree of difficulty or the ascent of the trail (Fig. 1 & 2). They also include a description of the route, visual content (photographs, pictures, maps) and additional information -except from one website- that varies depending on the website as, for example, information on how to access to the route (if you arrive in a vehicle or not) or recommended visits (Fig. 3 & 4).

**Nat Park** - Lake District  
**County/Area** - Cumbria  
**Author** - Lou Johnson  
**Length** - 2.0 miles / 3.3 km  
**Ascent** - 400 feet / 121 metres  
**Grade** - easy  
**Start** - OS grid reference NY435191  
 Lat 54.563958 // Long -2.875295  
 Postcode CA10 2NF (approx. location only)

Distancia	8 kilómetros.
Duración aprox.	2 horas.
Desnivel	60 metros.
Dificultad	Ninguna.

Figure 1. Sample of factual information (EN)

Figure 2. Sample of factual information (SP)

## Access

**With a vehicle:** Drive 15 miles along the Denali Park Road, from the entrance to Savage River. Parking is available for cars and RVs. The trail is a loop, so you'll return to the parking / day-use area when you're done. The road is open in summer, and when conditions allow in spring and fall (so, generally from early April to early October, though closures can occur if snow accumulates in spring or fall).

**Without a car:** In summer (May 20 - mid-September), use the free [Savage River Shuttle](#) to travel from the park entrance to Savage River. Pay close attention to the schedule to ensure you can use the bus to return to the park entrance after you finish hiking.

Figure 3. Sample of additional information (EN)

Visitas recomendadas: En un altozano cercano se encuentra la iglesia de San Martín (de Quintanilla de la Berzosa, otro pueblo anegado por las aguas). Merece la pena subir a él, valorar sus restos románicos y descubrir una pequeña y enigmática necrópolis alto medieval, que además abarca una amplia vista sobre el embalse y los perfiles lejanos del Curavacas.

Figure 4. Sample of additional information (SP)

In order to illustrate how a trail guide information can be accessed within its corresponding webpage, I will now indicate the section in which touristic texts of this corpus are. This way it is possible to identify the possible similarities and differences when accessing the information, and as well as facilitate future searches. The texts included in our corpus are located at the *Turismo > Sendas y Paseos* sections (Tourism > Paths and Walks) in the Aguilar de Campoo website, and in *Disfrútala > Naturaleza > Rutas por Cantabria* (Enjoy it > Nature > Routes in Cantabria) in the Cantabria one. For the *Walking Britain* website, I followed these steps: The Walks > Regional List of Walks > Walk Description. In *Visit Ely*, the texts were found in the section named Things to Do > Leisure Activities > Walking and Cycling. And, finally, the *National Park Service* texts can be found in Plan Your Visit > Find a Park > Hiking > Trail Guides. The last two steps of this webpage can vary depending on the park selected.

Another characteristic of my texts is their function; they all share the same dominant one, the denotative function. This means that they are informative texts that describe a specific trail or walk and give instructions about how to arrive there. In addition, the connotative function has also been part of my contrastive analysis, and to identify both the denotative and the connotative function, I have analyzed the texts from a linguistic and a textual perspective.

## **2.2. Methods**

With regard to the selection of the texts, first, I have searched for the Spanish ones since my analysis is primarily concerned with the Spanish touristic discourse and its comparison with the English one, and also because my translation proposal has Spanish as the source language. Therefore, once I selected the Spanish texts, I have searched for English ones with a similar content and organization, and which dealt with trails and walks' descriptions.

The steps I have taken during the analysis process are as follows. Firstly, I have focused on the linguistic aspect which includes an analysis of the specialized lexis, positive adjectives, lexical choices, dominant verbal tenses and the use of imperative and passive forms. I have analyzed these linguistic aspects since they are the most representative features in the touristic discourse and the most characteristic of my corpus. In addition, I have examined the textual organization, which involves not only how the linguistic information is arranged but also visual elements (images, maps) and their role within the webpage.

In order to carry out the analysis, I have used a manual approach. That is to say, I have analyzed the information manually, and not used any automatic software machine. Furthermore, after such contrastive analysis, which will be a determinant basis to work with the texts at different levels, I will provide my own translation proposal of one of the Spanish touristic texts from the Aguilar de Campoo city council official website. This translation will be the first one available since the web's content has not been translated into any language.

## **3. RESULTS**

In this section I will describe the most relevant results obtained from my contrastive analysis. As I have previously indicated, such analysis is divided in two parts: a linguistic and a textual one. To begin with, I will present my results regarding the linguistic features of both the Spanish and English texts. These linguistic aspects include the use of specialized lexis, positive adjectives, lexical choices and exclamatory phrases, as well as the dominant verbal tenses and the use of imperative and passive forms. Then I will provide the results of the textual analysis of the corpus studied, which also contribute to

the message construction. First, I will present my results on how information is arranged as well as the sections that are included in the websites, and, finally, I will discuss and compare the visual content.

### 3.1. Linguistic analysis

As anticipated, texts dealing with the description of trails and walks include a great variety of specific vocabulary. This is necessary in order to give an accurate description of the itinerary and its surroundings, and both Spanish and English texts provide them. Since these touristic texts offer different types of terminology, I have subcategorized such lexis into different subjects and arranged them in different tables, which are included in the appendix due to the tables' length. Thus, Table 1 includes terms in Spanish referring to nature and geography, and Table 4 the ones in English; Table 2 deals with the flora and fauna vocabulary in Spanish, and Table 5 refers to the English one; and Table 3 includes route related terms in Spanish, and in Table 6 there is the English lexis.

Regarding the elements which refer to nature and geography (Tables 1 & 4), I have identified all the nouns and adjectives that appear in the corpora as they represent the lexical diversity of my corpus, which is characteristic of the specialized discourse. The total number of adjectives and nouns is very similar in both corpora, although slightly higher in the English one. On the one hand, the Spanish corpus has 31 nouns and 10 adjectives, and, on the other hand, the English one has 36 nouns and 16 adjectives. The lexis varies from general vocabulary, such as *río* and *cueva* and *river* and *rock*, to specific one, like *cotero* -a cultural term specific of the Cantabria region, and which refers to a low hill with a fast slope- and *tor*, meaning “a prominent rock or heap of rocks, especially on a hill” (*collinsdictionary.com*) characteristic of Southwest England. Furthermore, I have found several instances of semi-technical vocabulary in the English corpus -and none in Spanish- being common words but with a specific meaning in their context. In our English corpus they take the form of compound nouns, as *dike formations* and *shingle beach*, and a noun with a prepositional phrase like *bank of the river*.

With reference to the following subclassification -flora and fauna- (Tables 2 & 5), the number of terms in both languages differs, and are not even as in the ones presented in the previous section ‘nature and geography’. Such distinction is due to the fact that whereas in the Spanish texts there are 17 nouns referring to flora and 11 to fauna, there

are only 5 flora nouns in the English corpus and none referring to the fauna. However, the lack of terms dealing with fauna and the scarcity of flora ones in the English corpus does only mean that the texts I have selected mainly focus on the itinerary description and not so much on mentioning the flora and fauna. Thus, the fact that the English ones do not include this type of lexicon cannot be taken as a generalization for all routes descriptions from English-speaking countries.

The last group corresponds to ‘route related terms’ (Tables 3 & 6) and, since my study also includes verbs, this classification is composed of nouns as well as verbs from both languages. It has to do with the words that guide readers and help them get oriented throughout the walk. Here the function of verbs is to give directions, either with the use of verbs that address the reader directly (*cross*) or indirectly in the passive form (*se atraviesa*). In the case of nouns, they serve as an orientation throughout the trail with terms like *ascenso* and *serpenteo* and *elevation* and *terrain*. Even though some Spanish nouns coincide with a verb in the same language (Table 3) as, for example, *ascenso-ascender* and *giro-girar*, these tables have been arranged alphabetically and terms in one column do not match the other. Again, as it can be observed in the annex tables, the difference between nouns and verbs in both languages is not marked (8 nouns in Spanish and 6 in English; 5 verbs in Spanish and 10 in English).

As expected, I found positive adjectives -in a limited usage- in both Spanish and English corpora (Table 1). They are one of the most noticeable and used features in the discourse of tourism since they enhance the emotional meaning of the text. If we observe the table below, we see how the adjectives, as well as the nouns they are referring to, create appealing combinations typical of the touristic discourse. In fact, as Calvi and Mapelli state, they are general language words with a value function, which is one of the most evident features of the touristic discourse. Nevertheless, the fact that there is not a great number of adjectives (17 in Spanish and 25 in English) reinforces the idea that the dominant function of this subgenre is the denotative one. Therefore, when compared, the English corpora contains more positive adjectives than the Spanish one, but the difference is insignificant.



Spanish adjectives	English adjectives
<i>acogedora para el descanso</i>	<i>ancient and once powerful river</i>
panorama <i>atractivo</i>	<i>ancient waterways</i>
recovecos <i>encantadores</i>	<i>beautiful and often spectacular wild landscapes</i>
<i>enigmática</i> necrópolis	<i>beautiful location</i>
<i>frondosa</i> vegetación	<i>challenging mountain routes</i>
<i>impresionante</i> Pared del Eco	<i>distinctive Fenland landscape</i>
<i>impresionantes</i> hayas	<i>enjoyable 7-mile hike</i>
muesca <i>majestuosa</i>	<i>extensive views</i>
paisaje <i>magnífico e inesperado</i>	<i>fascinating fragment</i>
<i>monumentales</i> edificios	<i>finest area</i>
<i>soberbio</i> palacio	<i>fine white cliffs</i>
<i>sonora</i> cascada	<i>glorious coastline</i>
<i>sorprendente</i> variedad de árboles	<i>views are so good</i>
paisajes de <i>suaves</i> contornos	<i>great views</i>
<i>única y magnífica</i> panorámica	<i>important landmark</i>
	<i>nice overlook</i>
	<i>pleasant place</i>
	<i>pretty villages</i>
	<i>spectacular scenic</i>
	<i>thriving monastic community</i>
	<i>tremendous variety of walks</i>
	<i>wonderful views</i>

Table 1. Spanish and English positive adjectives

It is interesting to note that the “further information” section of *Walking Britain* is where most positive adjectives are concentrated, as it can be seen in Figure 5. This specific part of the webpage contains information dealing with the promotion of the county where that route is located, so it is expected to include more positive adjectives and have a more connotative function. In addition, a higher number of positive adjectives appear in *Walking Britain* than in the other websites. The reason for this probably is that

this website has not been issued by a public institution, unlike the others, but by a private website, which is usually more interested in using a more appealing language.

## Further Information

### Walk Location Map Walking in Dorset



Dorset is a beautiful county for walking with a varied landscape including chalk downs, limestone ridges, low-lying valleys and a glorious coastline. Predominantly rural in character the walking offers wonderful views and pretty villages. Much of the coast is part of the Jurassic Coast Natural World Heritage Site due to its geological significance, including Lulworth Cove, Chesil Beach and Durdle Door.

**Walk grading** - Learn how each walk is assessed and select a walk to suit your ability and experience by going to [Walk Grading Details](#).

Figure 5. Sample of Walking Britain's "further information" section

Another aspect revealing touristic texts' positiveness are the lexical choices, such as *admire*, *rich in both history*, *wildlife*, *historical settlements* and *forgotten village* in English, and *digno de observar*, *esplendor pasado* and *belleza natural* in Spanish. Even though the text's purpose is to be objective when describing a trail, these lexical choices are carefully chosen to evoke positive sensations on the reader and make the walks more attractive. A further type of construction are the two exclamatory phrases *what a beautiful location for worship!* (*Walking Britain*) and *prepare for rain and hope for a sunny day!* (*National Park Service*). This lexical feature is restricted to the English texts and is not present in any of the Spanish ones, but it is another technique that contributes to emphasize the persuasive function and even address the tourist in the second example.

Furthermore, the five webpages include highly related terms, if not the same, in their trail description, such as *paths*, *walks*, *routes*, *hiking* and *trail guides* in the English ones, and *sendas*, *paseos* and *rutas* in the Spanish webpages, which is a demonstration of the variety of terms that are used in the same subgenre and in both languages. In order to reinforce such terminological diversity in both languages, I have created a table (2) of all the terms appearing throughout the texts referring to the path for hikers.

Spanish terms	English terms
camino	footpath
excursión	hike
paseo	journey
recorrido	path
ruta	route
senda	stroll
sendero/senderín	switchback
tramo	trail
trayecto	trailhead
	trip
	walk
	way

Table 2. Spanish and English terms

Concerning the verbal constructions, the predominant verbal tense used in the Spanish and the English texts is the present simple. This is a typical tense for descriptions; in this case, it is used to describe the route. But in the Spanish texts it also reflects the writer's involvement in the trail description since such verbs are also found in third person plural. For example, in instances such as *'cogemos' el primer cruce* and *'seguimos' caminando*. In the case of the English texts, the use of the pronoun 'we' has been identified in the only private website *-Walking Britain-* and not in a figurative way, but as a way of showing that the writer and more people have undertaken the walk, and this person is sharing his experience in this website description (*'We' could see the snow...*).

However, although not so common as the present simple, there are other verbal tenses in both languages. The other two most frequent verbal tenses in the English texts are the present perfect and the present continuous. In the case of the Spanish texts, I have found some instances of present continuous. In order to illustrate the use of verbal tenses in their context I have created two tables (8 & 9) -one for the Spanish results and the other for the English results- with the most commonly used verbal tenses, organized in order of their usage, and some examples extracted from the touristic texts. The instances of the present simple taken from the Spanish texts are verbs in third person singular -which are

placed first on the table- (*el camino 'sigue' su recorrido*) and in third person plural (*'tomamos' una pista*), that, as I have pointed out, is a way of implicating the reader and making him or her part of the route description. Overall, by looking at Tables 3 & 4 we can observe how the dominant verbal tenses are all present tenses in both languages (present simple, present continuous and present perfect).

Furthermore, as it is typical with instructions, the imperative mood is often used, like in *'gira' a la izquierda* in the case of Spanish. Another similarity is that imperatives are used in the English touristic texts too (*'return' the way you came*), but also in the form of recommendations (*'dress' accordingly, 'prepare' for rain, 'do not cut' the switchbacks, 'be' cautious*). According to Prieto, the author of a touristic text in English addresses the reader in a more direct way than the Spanish one, who tends to use a more formal register (qtd. in Van Beirs 11). Following Van Beirs, this can result in the use of more imperatives and less passive structures in the English texts. When this theory is applied to my results, the Spanish texts do include more passive constructions than the English ones when describing and giving instructions about the trail, as we can see in *'se cruza' el pueblo, 'se siguen' las indicaciones* or *se 'atraviesa' el río*, where the pronoun *'se'* is used to express impersonality.

Spanish verbal tenses	
<b>Present Simple</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Esta ruta, que 'discurre' por el trazado...</i></li> <li>○ <i>La ruta 'parte' del Ayuntamiento de Arredondo...</i></li> <li>○ <i>El camino 'sigue' su recorrido...</i></li> <li>○ <i>Un edificio rehabilitado que 'muestra' el antiguo oficio de la molienda...</i></li> <li>○ <i>El sendero 'hace' un giro de 90...</i></li> <li>○ <i>El camino 'atraviesa' un denso pinar de repoblación.</i></li> <li>○ <i>La senda 'comienza' en el barrio alto de Canduela...</i></li>   <li>○ <i>'Tomamos' una pista hacia la marisma...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Llegamos' a la laguna donde iniciamos la ruta...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Cogemos' el primer cruce a la derecha...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Encontramos' un panel informativo...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Nos adentramos' en el bosque...</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>'Podemos' apreciar su sorprendente variedad de árboles...</i></li> </ul>
<b>Present Continuous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>'Favoreciendo' su adaptación y reproducción.</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Siguiendo' la ruta llegamos hasta un coto...</i></li> <li>○ <i>Va 'bordeando' lagunas de agua dulce...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Atravesando' un bosque de encinas...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Sobresaliendo' la cara Este del Pico San Vicente.</i></li> <li>○ <i>El camino comienza 'saliendo' de la carretera...</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Despertando' la sorpresa de quien se acerca por primera vez.</i></li> <li>○ <i>'Pasando' algún campo de cultivo...</i></li> </ul>

Table 3. Spanish verbs

English verbal tenses	
<b>Present Simple</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>This loop 'travels' along...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The trail 'goes' nearly...</i></li> <li>○ <i>Until you 'reach' a trail...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Fen Rivers Way 'follows' all the way to...</i></li> <li>○ <i>Which 'traces' the course of the rivers...</i></li> <li>○ <i>A walk to the south of Ely 'takes' you along...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The River Cam 'joins' the River Great Ouse...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The trail then more gradually 'rises' in elevation...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The trail 'bends' southeast...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The trail 'descends' eventually...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The trail eventually 'ends'...</i></li> <li>○ <i>This ancient and once powerful river now 'idles' through open fenland...</i></li> <li>○ <i>The return route 'rejoins' this point...</i></li> </ul>
<b>Present Perfect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The chimneys 'have always been' an important landmark...</i></li> <li>○ <i>This distinctive Fenland landscape 'has been heavily influenced' by man.</i></li> <li>○ <i>A river which 'has been' the life blood...</i></li> <li>○ <i>People 'have been injured'...</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The pyramid-like shape of Moel Siabod ‘is seen’.</i></li> <li>○ <i>The path ‘has been reinforced’ with rocks.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Present Continuous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>‘Allowing’ you to get great views...</i></li> <li>○ <i>‘Passing’ by an area known as...</i></li> <li>○ <i>‘Climbing’ in perfect light and visibility was easy...</i></li> <li>○ <i>Eventually ‘becoming’ quite steep...</i></li> <li>○ <i>A small mountain ‘overlooking’ the entrance area...</i></li> <li>○ <i>‘Crossing’ a bridge over the river...</i></li> </ul>

Table 4. English verbs

One similarity between the Spanish and English trail guides that I have found is that when it comes to verbs expressing opinion -such as *think*, *consider* or *believe*- none of the websites include them. *Walking Britain* does include the verb *think* although in a section which is not part of our study (*In fact, we ‘think’ we’ve got the finest selection in some of the UK and Ireland’s most beautiful places.*). Therefore, the lack of such opinion verbs reinforces the informative and objective nature of trail guides and, as Pérez states, the use of these verbs could create a sense of insecurity on the reader and they would be against the guidance purpose (312).

### 3.2. Textual analysis

With respect to the textual features, the way information is arranged is one of the most noteworthy characteristics that I have identified. The part where the description is carried out is arranged in a similar way in both languages. In the English texts, there is a section called “description” in one website and “walk route description” in another. While in one of the Spanish websites (*Turismo de Cantabria*) there are trail guides which include two sections; one is called with the same name as in the English texts, which is “*descripción*” (a very brief overview of the route), and the other one is “*recorrido*” (a more detailed description of the route). Nevertheless, there are two websites, which are the Spanish Aguilar de Campoo official city council website and the English *Visit Ely* - both issued by local institutions-, that lack a subheading like ‘description’ although the information is included.

As I previously mentioned, all texts -Spanish and English ones- include factual information, although only one of the websites, the *National Park Service*, has a specific subheading including such information, which is under the tag 'quick details'. When I compare the websites in both languages, the English ones include more information than the Spanish ones. The items considered factual information in English are the following: distance or length, duration, elevation change, national park, county/area, author, ascent, grade [of difficulty] and grid reference; whereas the Spanish items are length/distance, [grade of] difficulty, elevation change and duration. As we can observe, there is a difference in the number of terms that appear in the factual information section -9 in English compared to 4 in Spanish- which might be due to the fact that there is one more website in English than in Spanish from which to retrieve the items.

The last section that I found in these touristic websites is the "further information" one, which I have previously mentioned when discussing the linguistic analysis. The type of information that is included under this section varies not only from one language to another, but from one website to another. Thus, in the Spanish texts these sections are under the tags "*investigación recomendada*" and "*visitas recomendadas*" (Aguilar de Campoo website), where the information that is included refers to recommendations about the surroundings of the route. As for the English texts, the names by which this section appears are "further information", "other relevant information" and "access". The heading "further information" includes varied information that range from aspects about footwear, maps, and waymarking (*Visit Ely*) to the promotion of the county (*Walking Britain*). The "other information" section (*Visit Ely*) consists on indicating the nearer places for rest and refreshment. Lastly, in the section "access" (*National Park Service*) it is described the entrance of the route depending if the traveler is accessing it with or without a vehicle. When the further information section is compared, we can see that it does not appear in one of the Spanish websites (*Turismo de Cantabria*), but it does in all the English ones although under different headings and type of information.

The visual content is another important aspect for this type of touristic websites since it reinforces the texts' promotional function. As stated by Durán, the persuasive function in touristic texts can be also expressed "by using pictures, photos, symbols, etc., that is, non-linguistic or non-verbal elements", and not only throughout lexical techniques ("Tourist translations" 36). In addition, the "[non-linguistic elements] are often

considered to be the trigger elements to tourists when deciding where to go or what to visit before and during the visit.” This applies to our study as these features can be determinant when a traveler is deciding between choosing one trail or another. Although there are no pictures of the trails or walks in all the webpages, there are other elements like maps, and videos. Moreover, even though the visual elements vary depending on each website, all the texts that we have analyzed in our corpus include at least one of these components in both Spanish and English texts, which is a map (Diagram 2).

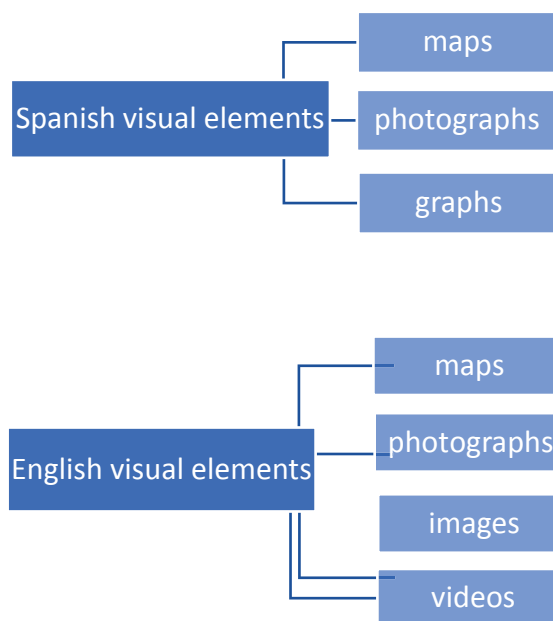


Diagram 2. Spanish and English visual elements

After comparing the webpages, I deduce that the results obtained are not uniform since the websites use varied resources; while the English ones also include drawings of the route (*Visit Ely*), as well as videos (*National Park Service*), the Spanish ones include an altitude-distance graph (*Turismo de Cantabria*) (Fig. 6). When referring to the videos, I do not consider them audiovisual material since they lack a soundtrack. All in all, it is a fact that the differences are not determined by the language used but by the individual nature of each website.



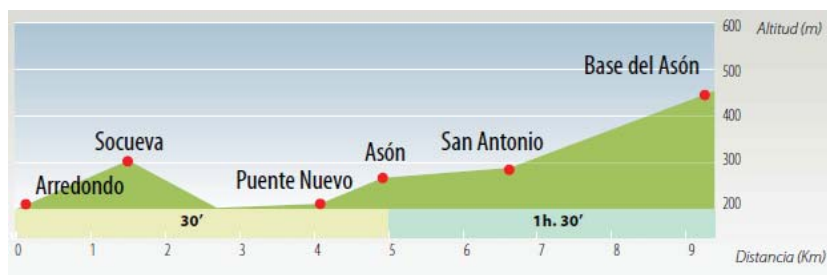


Figure 6. Altitude-distance graph

Overall, the information presented throughout the websites achieves its referential purpose that has to do with describing a route, yet they can be improved by making the visual content and the arrangement of the information more appealing to the tourist. Such improvement could be achieved by adding more photographs of the trail described, as they are an essential part of a walk's identification and a destination's promotion. In other words, the role of the photographs is to provide a real-life image of the route so that hikers can easily recognize the place when they are travelling. Consequently, since the content of these routes is included in an online format, it offers multiple variations as well as flexibility, unlike the case of printed touristic leaflets, as previously mentioned in the theoretical background section.

Moreover, after comparing the corpus from all the websites, I have concluded that *Walking Britain* -the only private website- makes a higher effort on promoting the trails than the other websites which are issued by public institutions (institutional genre). This can be seen in both the linguistic analysis, which includes the use of the pronoun 'we' and an exclamatory phrase, and the textual analysis, where the further information section is dedicated to the county promotion.

Taking this aspect into consideration, it contributes to the idea that linguistic and textual content should be carefully planned in order to attract tourists, and both private websites as well as the ones issued by public institutions should pay special attention on how they promote the trails. In words of Teodorescu, "the language of tourism is meant to create a special world, appealing and marvelous. It provides the potential consumer with a preconceived impressive image of the respective place. Thus, the tourist sees and experiences what he was told to expect in the touristic description" (371). If we examine this quotation from a broader perspective, it does not only involve 'the language of

tourism' but all the previously mentioned content that surrounds the text and contributes to the creation of a positive image of the route and its environment.

Once I have presented all the results obtained from the contrastive analysis of my Spanish and English corpora, there are some limitations that should be considered. For instance, as I stated in the introduction, due to the innovative perspective of my study, there are no similar researches dealing with the analysis of this specific subgenre, which means that there is a gap from the point of view of translation studies and contrastive analysis; therefore, I cannot compare my results with others in such aspect. However, I can contrast my results at more general terms, as for example when considering touristic texts from the discourse of tourism perspective to see which aspects of the specialized lexis have been identified in my corpus, such as the use of positive adjectives and verbal constructions.

#### **4. TRANSLATION PROPOSAL**

As indicated in the introduction, I have selected a text from the Spanish corpus in order to provide a translation proposal since the section under analysis, and the whole website, from the Aguilar de Campoo city council website has not been translated into English. In relation to the previously mentioned scarcity of Spanish-English contrastive studies of online trail guides, translation studies concerning this specialized subgenre also deserve special attention to be able to improve the translations.

Therefore, this translation is also aimed at encouraging professional translators to give more importance to the field of online trail guides and their analysis. In Durán's words, "in order to achieve a good result in tourist translations and to facilitate communication, it is necessary that the academic institutions on translation studies, that is, universities and postgraduate centres, pay more attention to this kind of specialized translation and stop undervaluing it" ("Tourist translations" 46).

Given the fact that the five trails from the Aguilar de Campoo corpus include the same type of information under the same subheadings -which are factual information, description route, and additional information (recommended visits)-, for my translation I have selected one of these texts, and I have used the English corpus as parallel texts. The results obtained from the linguistic analysis of the parallel texts have been helpful in

reference to the use of verbs. As in such results, the most frequent verbal tense used in my translation is the present simple (*vertical steel signposts 'indicate' you, the track 'descends', Villanueva de Henares 'preserves'*) followed by the present perfect (*The Canduela-Necrópolis stretch 'is signposted', hermitage that 'has been restored', which 'is accessed' by a wooden footbridge*). The third verbal tense in terms of its usage that I have analyzed in the results section is the present continuous, which I have only used once in the TT (*'following' the shady and sunny path*). Thus, these three verbal tenses (present simple, present perfect and present continuous) are the dominant verbal tenses that are common to the ones I have obtained in my results in both Spanish and English.

Another aspect in which the English parallel corpus has been useful when translating is the metric system '4,5 km' and '150 m'. For both cases I have used an adaptation in the way of measuring, as 'miles' and 'feet' appear in the English texts. I also preserved the metric system as it is done in two websites (*Walking Britain* and *Visit Ely*).

Regarding the functions of this text, I have maintained the informative as well as the persuasive function of the ST. The persuasive one has been achieved by preserving the few examples of positive adjectives (*importante, soberbio, magnífica*) into the TT. In order to reinforce the promotional character of the text, I have translated an affirmative sentence into an exclamatory construction -as we have seen in two English websites- (*La panorámica desde su iglesia es magnífica.* > *The panoramic view from the church is outstanding!*). This choice is based on the fact that interjections are more common in English touristic texts, and not so much in the Spanish discourse. Moreover, although the ST does not address the reader directly and uses impersonal constructions, I have decided to use the pronoun 'you', when appropriate, in order to involve the reader, as in '*se siguen' las indicaciones verticales de acero a Necrópolis.* > *where vertical steel signs indicate 'you' the way to Necrópolis.* In fact, Van Beirs's statement that the author of a touristic text must address the reader personally, making him or her part of the communicative process (11) supports such decision.

Once we have seen the linguistic and textual aspects of the online trail guides, below I present a translation proposal of one of the paths described in the Aguilar de Campoo city council website.

Senda de Canduela a Villanueva de Henares	Path from Canduela to Villanueva de Henares
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4,5 km</li> <li>• La única dificultad se presenta en el embarrado de tramos en Fuente Vicario</li> <li>• 150 m de desnivel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.7 miles / 4.5 km</li> <li>• The only difficulty arises in the Fuente Vicario muddy plots</li> <li>• 492 feet / 150 m of drop</li> </ul>
<p>El tramo Canduela-Necrópolis está señalizado. La senda comienza en el barrio alto de Canduela y se siguen las indicaciones verticales de acero a Necrópolis.</p> <p>Saliendo del pueblo se atraviesan linderos y bosquetes de roble entre campos de cultivo y comunales de pasto, hasta llegar a una portilla ganadera anclada en dos grandes machones de piedra. La senda descienda hasta llegar a los humedales previos a Fuente Vicario. Antes de este paraje, a la izquierda, se encuentra una necrópolis altomedieval de los s. IX-X con restos de una ermita posterior recuperada e interpretada.</p> <p>Al volver a la senda conoceremos la fuente-manantial, que cuenta con una pasarela de madera como acceso. Siguiendo la senda entre sombras y claros</p>	<p>The Canduela-Necrópolis stretch is signposted. The path starts on the Canduela upper neighborhood, where vertical steel signposts indicate you the way to Necrópolis.</p> <p>The way out of the village is characterized by boundaries and large oak woods<sup>1</sup> among farm lands and communal pastures, until you reach a cattle gate affixed to two big stone buttresses. The track descends until you get to the wetlands before Fuente Vicario. To your left, there is an early medieval necropolis before this area dating from the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries, which includes remains from a previous hermitage that has been restored and displays interpretative signs.</p> <p>On your return to the path, there is a spring, which is accessed by a wooden footbridge. Following the shady and sunny path, you will arrive to Villanueva</p>

<sup>1</sup> The definition that the RAE dictionary gives for *bosquete* is that of an artificial wood, but since this is not the case here because the text refers to a *small wood* within the silviculture field (*buscapalabra.com*), the semi-technical term *bosquete* has been adapted.

<p>llegaremos a Villanueva de Henares. A la entrada del pueblo está habilitada una gran balconada con un panel interpretativo sobre el paisaje y el entorno.</p>	<p>de Henares. There is a big row of typical local balconies at the village entrance that includes an information board with data about the landscape and surroundings.</p>
<p>Visitas recomendadas: Canduela y Villanueva del Henares son los pueblos de municipio que mejor perfil arquitectónico conservan. Canduela es CHA<sup>2</sup>. La Torrona es un importante ejemplo de casa fuerte barroca. Villanueva de Henares conserva un soberbio palacio barroco con patio porticado y varias casonas blasonadas y torres-fuerte. La panorámica desde su iglesia es magnífica.</p>	<p>Explore the area: Canduela and Villanueva de Henares have the best-preserved architecture in the whole area. La Torrona is an exceptional example of a fortified baroque house. Villanueva de Henares preserves a magnificent baroque palace with a portico courtyard and several large blazed houses and towers. The panoramic view from the church is outstanding!</p>

## 5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this work has been to carry out a linguistic-textual contrastive analysis of trail guides, for which I have selected Spanish and English texts from touristic websites. As I stated in my thesis regarding the linguistic analysis, I have confirmed my expectations that both Spanish and English texts are primarily informative since their aim is to give an accurate description of a specific route and its surroundings. An example of such denotative function relies on the limited use of positive adjectives. Nevertheless, when I presented my thesis I considered the possibility that texts could have a persuasive function as well. This function is expressed by means of using linguistic techniques such as the aforesaid -although limited- positive adjectives, lexical choices and the two exclamatory phrases that are used to enhance the perception of the location. Furthermore, I have also identified the connotative function in the use of non-linguistic elements, which

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<sup>2</sup> This sentence has not been translated into English since it does not contribute any relevant content to the message of the text. Moreover, the research that has been carried out has failed to provide a definition for “CHA”.

are the visual ones (photos, maps, pictures, graphs). This proves that apart from being descriptive and objective, the promotional aspect is still an important feature of this subgenre.

Another theory that I suggested has to do with the lexicon used in my corpus. As expected, the specialized vocabulary on active tourism -trails and walks- is one of the main features of this type of touristic discourse. Given the terminological diversity, I have created three subcategories which illustrate the similarity between both languages. This parallelism relies on the fact that the frequency in which terms from a specific terminological classification appear ('nature and geography', 'flora and fauna' and 'route related terms') is not very different between Spanish and English since it has been possible to gather terms belonging to the three categories in both languages, except for the 'fauna' terminology in the English corpora. Also, being able to distinguish different classifications -reflected on tables- that include the most relevant specialized lexis about trail guides is an indicator that both the Spanish and the English corpora belong to the same subgenre as they share a common specialized language.

As for the textual analysis, I have confirmed my hypothesis that the five websites include the basic information -description and factual information- even though in some cases they appear under different names or they do not include a subheading, but they contain the information. This diversity of possibilities between the Spanish and the English websites is another evidence of how varied they are. Furthermore, apart from the two basic sections that I have confirmed, I have identified the factual information section as well, which is the only one from the three that does not appear in a Spanish website, nor its content.

Finally, my other theory involved the visual content within the textual analysis. In this regard, I have come to the conclusion that even though the Spanish and the English websites vary in their usage of visual elements, there is not much difference between both languages since the English websites do not stand out from the Spanish ones in their visual quality, although the English websites include two more elements than the Spanish ones (images and videos). However, this does not guarantee that the website is more appealing to the reader. What is more, both the Spanish and the English websites could be improved to look more appealing to tourists in terms of content organization or more

photographs of the route that is being described. As Edo correctly argues, the information included in a touristic website must be clear, representative and relevant. She also points out that colors and fonts need to be carefully chosen and unnecessary images should be avoided, despite their importance of visual content (55). However, future research with a larger corpus from different websites would be crucial to draw a more solid conclusion.

Regarding my complementary objective, I have contributed with a translation proposal of one of the trail guides from a Spanish website that has not been translated into English so far. The linguistic analysis that I have carried out in the results section has been related to the translation proposal since I have been able to apply some of the most relevant aspects to my translation, such as the verbal tenses usage and the communicative functions of the touristic texts. This relation between the linguistic analysis of online trail guides and their translation supports the idea that more contrastive studies as well as professional translations are needed in this field.

All things considered, the results of my contrastive analysis imply that although there are differences between Spanish and English websites describing trails, they are not significant enough to deduce a consistent pattern. Moreover, such results are restricted to my corpus, which includes a limited number of texts, and if the study would be carried out with a larger corpus the results could vary. Results also demonstrate that there is a strong relation between the Spanish and English way of describing a route and organizing the information included in a website. Finally, my results are subordinate to the method that I have used for the extraction of terms. Therefore, it might be useful to use an automatic software machine as an alternative in future research, as in the case of a quantitative analysis, yet this will always depend on the work's purpose.

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## APPENDIX

### Specialized Spanish lexis

Nature and geography	
Nouns	Adjectives
altozano	boscoso
caliza	circular
cañón	frondoso
cascada	lacustre
castro	llano
collado	pedregoso
cotero	ribereño
cueva	rocoso
embalse	rupestre
embarrado	sonoro
escalada	
estuario	
farallón	
fuelle-manantial	
humedal	
laguna	
lindero	
macizo	
marisma	
orilla	
pantano	
peña	
pradería	
prado	
presa	

ramaje	
ramal	
río	
risco	
roquedo	
valle	

*Table 1. Nature and geography (SP)*

<b>Flora</b>	<b>Fauna</b>
abedul	alcaraván
acebo	alimoche
avellano	ardeida
bosquete	avifauna
castaño	bisbita campestre
chopera	carruca tomillera
cola de caballo	cernícalo
encina	cigüeña blanca
endrino	collalba gris
espina	fauna
flora	limícola
haya	
pinar	
roble	
roble	
salceda	
vegetación	

*Table 2. Flora and fauna nouns (SP)*

<b>Route related terms</b>	
Nouns	Verbs
ascenso	ascender
cruce	atravesar
desnivel	cruzar
distancia	descender
explanada	girar
giro	
serpenteo	
subida	

Table 3. Route related terms (SP)

### Specialized English lexis

<b>Nature and geography</b>	
Nouns	Adjectives
bank	circular
canyon	dry
chalk	grassy
chimney	limestone
cliff	low-lying
coastline	mountainous
cove	muddy
creek	narrow
dike	riverside
fell	rocky
fenland	round
fen	steep
granite	uneven
inlet	upland
lake	volcanic

meadow	wooden
moorland	
moor	
mountain	
pasture	
ridge	
riverbank	
river	
roadside	
rock	
shingle	
slope	
stonework	
summit	
surface	
tor	
valley	
wash	
waterway	
wilderness	
wildlife	

Table 4. Nature and geography (EN)

Flora
cottonwood tree
forest
hedgerow
willows
woodland

Table 5. Flora nouns (EN)

Route related terms	
Nouns	Verbs
ascent	climb
elevation	cross
grade	descend
height	fall
length	fringe
terrain	lead up
	pass by
	raise
	trace
	walk up

Table 6. Route related terms (EN)