



*Comparative Legilinguistics*  
vol. 43/2020

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/cl-2020-0007>

**TESTING OUT TRANSLATION  
UNIVERSALS IN LEGAL TRANSLATION:  
QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS FROM  
A PARALLEL CORPUS OF SPANISH  
CONSTITUTIONAL COURT'S JUDGMENTS  
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH**

**GIANLUCA PONTRANDOLFO, Dr.**

Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation  
Studies (IUSLIT)  
University of Trieste  
Via Fabio Filzi, 14 - 34132 Trieste (Italy)  
[gpontrandolfo@units.it](mailto:gpontrandolfo@units.it)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9128-0321>

**Abstract:** Research into ‘translation universals’ in legal translation is a relatively new field, which still needs to be expanded with further empirical studies. The few studies conducted so far fall into two main categories: a) analyses that explore the typical features of European legalese as translated language against national legal language; b) studies based on corpora of national legal language translated into other national languages.

The present paper is framed within the second category and aims at contributing to the academic debate on translation universals applied to legal language; more specifically, it aims at testing the methodology adopted to study translation universals on a bilingual parallel corpus of judgments delivered by the Spanish Constitutional Court (Tribunal Constitucional, TC) translated for informative purposes into English.

The corpus-based analysis, carried out mainly quantitatively, includes the comparison with a larger corpus of original judgments delivered by the UK Supreme Court (UKSC) with the final objective of testing some indicators of simplification, explicitation, normalisation, levelling out, interference, untypical collocation.

Preliminary results are promising, even though it is not possible to identify robust and homogeneous trends.

**Keywords:** translation universals; legal translation; parallel Spanish-English corpus; judgments; *Tribunal Constitucional*

## **TESTOWANIE UNIWERSALIÓW PRZEKŁADOWYCH W TŁUMACZENIU PRAWNICZYM: BADANIA ILOŚCIOWE PARALELNEGO KORPUSU HISZPAŃSKICH WYROKÓW KONSTYTUCYJNYCH W PRZEKŁADZIE NA JĘZYK ANGIELSKI**

**Abstrakt:** Badania nad „uniwersalnymi tłumaczeniami” prawniczymi to stosunkowo nowa dziedzina, którą należy jeszcze rozszerzyć o dalsze badania empiryczne. Nieliczne przeprowadzone dotychczas badania dzielą się na dwie główne kategorie: a) analizy, które eksplorują typowe cechy europejskiego języka prawa jako języka tłumaczonego na krajowe języki prawa; b) badania oparte na korpusach krajowego języka prawa tłumaczonego na inne języki narodowe.

Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy drugiej kategorii i ma na celu przyczynienie się do debaty akademickiej na temat uniwersaliów przekładowych stosowanych w języku prawa; dokładniej, ma na celu przetestowanie metodologii przyjętej do badania uniwersów tłumaczeniowych na dwujęzycznym paralelnym korpusie orzeczeń wydanych przez hiszpański Trybunał Konstytucyjny (Tribunal Constitucional, TC) przetłumaczony w celach informacyjnych na język angielski.

Analiza oparta na korpusie, przeprowadzona głównie ilościowo, obejmuje porównanie z większym zbiorem oryginalnych wyroków wydanych przez Sąd Najwyższy Zjednoczonego Królestwa (UKSC), którego celem było przetestowania niektórych wskaźników upraszczania, wyjaśniania, normalizacji, równoważenia znaczeń, interfeencji, nietypowych kolokacji.

Wstępne wyniki są obiecujące, chociaż nie jest możliwe określenie wyraźnych i dominujących trendów.

**Słowa klucze:** tłumaczenia uniwersalne; tłumaczenie prawnicze; paralelny korpus hiszpańsko-angielski; wyroki; *Tribunal Constitucional*

## **UNIVERSALES DE TRADUCCIÓN Y TRADUCCIÓN JURÍDICA: UN ANÁLISIS EXPLORATORIO CUANTITATIVO BASADO EN UN CORPUS PARALELO DE SENTENCIAS DEL TRIBUNAL CONSTITUCIONAL TRADUCIDAS AL INGLÉS**

**Resumen:** Las investigaciones sobre los denominados ‘universales de traducción’ en traducción jurídica representan un campo de estudio relativamente nuevo. Los pocos trabajos disponibles a día de hoy se pueden agrupar en dos categorías: a) las investigaciones sobre los rasgos típicos que diferencian la lengua traducida europea de la lengua jurídica nacional; b) los estudios basados en corpus de textos jurídicos nacionales traducidos a otros idiomas.

El presente trabajo se enmarca en la segunda categoría de estudios y pretende contribuir en el debate científico sobre los universales de traducción aplicado al lenguaje jurídico; más específicamente, intenta testar la metodología adoptada en los estudios sobre universales de traducción en un corpus paralelo de sentencias del Tribunal Constitucional de España (TC) traducidas al inglés.

A partir de un análisis sustancialmente cuantitativo y del cotejo con un corpus de sentencias originales dictadas por el Tribunal Supremo del Reino Unido (UKSC), el análisis pretende explorar algunos indicadores de los universales de la simplificación, explicitación, normalización, convergencia (*levelling out*), interferencia, así como de la hipótesis de las colocaciones atípicas.

Los resultados preliminares del estudio apuntan a fenómenos interesantes, aunque no permiten identificar tendencias sólidas y homogéneas.

**Palabras clave:** universales de traducción, traducción jurídica, corpus paralelo español-inglés, sentencias, Tribunal Constitucional

## **1. Introduction**

The present paper<sup>1</sup> is part of an ongoing research project which is being carried out by the author at the University of Trieste, aimed at applying the methods usually used to test translation universals (see Zanettin 2012: 12-13) to the field of legal translation (Pontrandolfo 2019b, 2020). It presents the preliminary results of a small pilot study conducted in the Spanish-English combination (see Franceschini 2020). More specifically, it follows the suggestion made in Pontrandolfo (2019a: 22):

Empirical research on [legal translation universals] is extremely needed both in training and professional settings. The use of legal corpora effectively helps scholars to isolate descriptive features of translations that actually give insights into the complex dynamics of legal translation.

Also referred to as ‘regularities of translations’ (Zanettin 2012: 12), translation universals<sup>2</sup> are patterns of behaviour which supposedly characterise the language of translated texts (see, among others, Baker 1996, Olohan 2002, Toury 2004, Mauranen Kujamäki 2004, Chesterman 2010, Zanettin 2012, Mauranen 2008). Research into these regularities has been conducted through the prism of corpus linguistics, an effective methodology able to uncover the features of the language of translated texts, defined by some scholars as ‘third code’ (Frawley 1984) or ‘hybrid language’ (Schäffner & Adab 2001; Trosborg 1997).

One of the major advantages of adopting a corpus linguistics perspective is that, prior to corpus studies, many of the suggestions regarding translation universals were an often stated but unproved hypothesis (Zanettin 2012: 17). Corpora can effectively demonstrate trends based on empirical findings.

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is partially based on the R&D Project within the framework of the Programa Operativo FEDER Andalucía 2014-2020, code B-HUM177-UGR18.

<sup>2</sup> “[...] universal features of translation, that is features which typically occur in translated texts rather than original utterances and which are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems.” (Baker 1993: 243).

Table 1 lists and defines the universals identified in literature (see Zanettin 2012: 12-25) together with some indicators<sup>3</sup> of how to test these regularities with corpora.

Table 1. Defining and testing translation universals (based on Zanettin 2012: 14-23)

<b>Translation universal type</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<i>Simplification</i>	“the idea that translators subconsciously simplify the language or message or both” (Baker 1996: 176)	Type-Token Ratio (TTR), lexical density, high frequent vs. low frequent words, mean sentence length
<i>Explicitation</i>	“an overall tendency to spell things out rather than leave them implicit in translation” (Baker 1996: 180-181)	mean sentence length, discourse markers/linking adverbials, punctuation
<i>Normalisation</i>	“in translation, ST relations are often modified in favour of habitual options offered by a target repertoire” (Toury 1995: 268); “the language of translation tends to conform to typical patterns of the TL and translators tend to adhere to conventional expressions at the expense of more creative ones” (Zanettin 2012: 19)	Conservatism/standardisation in the choice of language patterns (e.g. grammar, punctuation, collocations, etc.) (Baker 1996: 183).
<i>Levelling out</i>	“the tendency of TT to gravitate around the centre of any continuum rather than move towards the fringes” (Baker 1996:177); there is some evidence that the individual texts in [a] translation corpus are more like each other in terms of features such as [...] type-token-ratio [...] than the individual texts in	distribution of high frequent words, TTR, lexical density and variety, mean sentence length

<sup>3</sup> Obviously, these indicators are not exhaustive but have been selected on the basis of the studies available in the literature.

	a comparable corpus of original [texts] (Baker 1996: 184)	
<i>Translation of unique items</i>	“TL specific lexical items, i.e. elements which tend to be ‘untranslatable’ because they lack a straightforward lexicalised equivalent in other languages, are proportionally under-represented in translation” (Tirkkonen-Condit 2004, Zanettin 2012: 20)	specific, language-bound elements (such as clitics, see Tirkkonen-Condit (2004)
<i>Untypical collocations</i>	“translations tend to favour word combinations that ‘although possible in the TL system, are rare or absent from actual TL texts” (Mauranen 2008: 44).	phraseology (especially collocations)
<i>Interference</i>	“features of the SL are transferred to the TT in the process of translation” (Toury 1995).	negative interference (deviation from the typical features of the target language: such as syntactic calques); positive interference (overrepresentation of linguistic features which already exist and are acceptable in the TL) Toury (1995: 275)

Following Chesterman (2004: 39), a distinction could be made between S-Universal (where S is for Source) and T-Universal (T for Target): the former are “characteristics of the way in which translators process the source text” whereas the latter are “characteristics of the way translators use the target language”. The former generally require bilingual parallel corpora whereas the latter are usually tested with monolingual comparable corpora (e.g. translated English vs. original English).

It is difficult to operate a clear-cut distinction among these universals due to an inevitable overlapping, as in the case of simplification and explicitation (simplifying a text means explicitating it on certain levels) or simplification and normalisation (where dividing

a long sentence, for example, can be either the result of a simplification process or a normalisation one). This is the reason why they are generally considered together and, for the purposes of this study, they have been used exclusively as an effective method to isolate trends/regular patterns in the corpus under investigation.

As far as legal translation studies (see Prieto Ramos 2014) are concerned, translation universals have not been tested extensively, possibly due to the absence of large legal corpora that could be used as testbeds to confirm or disconfirm such patterns (see Biel 2014: 96-110). A recent overview of the main studies conducted in this area is provided in Pontrandolfo (2019a: 20-22).

The aim of the present study is to contribute to filling this gap by presenting a case study on the application of the methods used to test some translation universals to a parallel corpus of judgments delivered by the Spanish Constitutional Court (*Tribunal Constitucional*, TC) and translated for informative purposes into English.

Indicators of six translation universals have been applied to the TC corpus, mainly from a quantitative perspective: 1) *simplification*, tested by analysing quantitative elements pertaining to textual complexity (lexical variety, medium number and length of period, lexical density); 2) *explicitation*, tested by analysing the frequency and types of discourse markers that clarify the message in the corpus; 3) *normalisation*, tested by using complex prepositions, which are typical features of legal texts (Pontrandolfo 2020) as a testbed, thus establishing whether translated texts adhere to textual conventions and expectancy norms; 4) *levelling out*, tested against the background of lexical variation and medium number and length of period; 5) *untypical collocation hypothesis*, empirically tested by looking at one of the most frequent collocation patterns in the corpus, i.e. Verb + Noun of the ten most common nouns in the corpus; 6) *interference*, tested by replicating a study on antinormative gerunds (Pontrandolfo 2019b) as a source of potential negative interference.

As far as the expected results and the hypotheses guiding the study are concerned, translated texts would display a lower lexical variety, a higher number of (shorter) sentences and a lower lexical density (*simplification*); a higher frequency of explicative discourse markers in translated texts (*explicitation*); similar complex prepositions in the translated corpus (*normalisation*); a higher consistency and uniformity in translated texts (*levelling out*); rare or infrequent collocation patterns (*untypical collocation hypothesis*); negative

interference and therefore instances of anti-normative gerunds also in the target texts (*interference*).

## 2. The Spanish Constitutional Court

The *Tribunal Constitucional* (TC) (see art. 1, Ley Orgánica 2/1979) is the supreme interpreter of the Spanish Constitution; as such, it is an independent body, which does not pertain to the other judicial courts of the country. It is the authority guaranteeing the respect and application of fundamental rights, public freedoms and supremacy of the Constitution.

The TC's case-law affects the whole national territory. The decisions of the TC are not appealable because they are considered as final judgments. Its powers comprise action or question of unconstitutionality, preliminary appeals of unconstitutionality, complains regarding tax issues, *recursos de amparo* for violation of public rights and freedoms, conflicts between constitutional bodies, conflicts in defence of local or foral autonomies, declaration on the constitutionality of international treaties, etc.

Article 5 of LO 2/1979 establishes the composition of the TC: eleven members (called *Magistrados*) appointed by the King of Spain and by the Spanish Parliament, the Government and the General Council of the Judiciary.

The Court exercises its judicial functions through the bodies in which it is composed, that act in several constitutional processes: Plenary, Chambers and Sections (see arts. 6-10 of LO 2/1979).

As the website of the TC clearly states:

The Constitutional Court of Spain offers a selection — that will be progressively increased — of the grounds of its most relevant decisions translated into English. These are not official translations of the Judgments: the texts are provided to allow the consultation of legal grounds and the knowledge of the Court's case law.

It is thanks to these translations that the present pilot study has been carried out. Before delving into the composition of the corpus, some information on the legal translation activities at the TC is needed. These data have been gathered by means of a questionnaire directly



addressed to the body (more specifically to the General Secretary of the body, from which the Translation unit of the TC depends).

The TC established its own small translation unit in 2016. Before that, all the translations were outsourced. It is made of two translators working from Spanish into English and French respectively. Both of them have a double degree in law and translation and are native speakers of the two foreign languages. They have access to some training opportunities in the field of legal translation at the Constitutional Court. In their translation activities, the two translators have recently been trained to use CAT-Tools (Déjà Vu) and the texts they produce are always reviewed by a legal expert working in the TC. The TC library offers them many resources and tools (including databases such as Eur-Lex, Hudoc, etc.), as well as terminological records in the language combinations. They also refer to the TC Style manual, which contributes to guaranteeing internal consistency.

### **3. The TC corpus**

The Tribunal Constitutional corpus (TC corpus) is a bilingual parallel corpus containing both judgments delivered by the Spanish TC (STC\_ES) and their translations in English (STC\_EN). The texts were extracted from the TC website<sup>4</sup>. Each subcorpus contains 31 judgments dealing with different topics such as right to strike, discrimination based on sex, education rights, rights related to religion, access to justice, rights of foreign citizens, freedom of information, same-sex marriage. As far as the textual composition of the judgments is concerned, only two sections of the judgment were included: *fundamentos de derecho* (egal reasoning) and *fallo* (final decision); this is because some of the texts in the TC website were incomplete and therefore, for consistency reasons, only the text parts that were available for the whole dataset were included in the TC corpus.

---

<sup>4</sup> STC\_ES:

<https://www.tribunalconstitucional.es/es/jurisprudencia/Paginas/Sentencias.aspx> (last accessed March 15, 2020).

STC\_EN:

<https://www.tribunalconstitucional.es/es/jurisprudencia/Paginas/resoluciones-traducidas.aspx> (last accessed March 15, 2020).

A larger reference corpus has been built to test some of the translation universals: UKSC. Partially based on COSPenSup (see Pontrandolfo 2016: 84-85), it is a monolingual ad-hoc corpus containing 178 judgments delivered by the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (2009-2019), whose original texts have been extracted from the British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII) database<sup>5</sup>.

Even though the UK does not have a full-blown Constitutional Court, some of the powers of the Spanish TC are similar to the UK Supreme Court; hence the reference corpus was created based on the criterion of thematic similarity. It is worth stressing that the UKSC corpus was mainly used as a linguistic testbed (more than a content-related dataset) and this is the reason why the comparability of the two bodies has not represented a major methodological concern during the analysis.

Table 2 summaries the final composition of the TC corpus.

Table 2. Composition of the TC corpus and the reference corpus (UKSC)<sup>6</sup>

	STC_ES	STC_EN	UKSC
<b>Texts</b>	31	31	178
<b>Tokens</b>	268.193	257.657	2,710.291
<b>Types</b>	11,606	7,599	11,922
<b>STTR<sup>7</sup></b>	36.50	34.34	34.31

The building of the corpus has relied on *LF Aligner v. 4.2* to automatically align source and target texts and therefore creating translation memories and on Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al. 2004) which has automatically recognised the languages, separated the subcorpora, aligned the TMX files and POS-tagged<sup>8</sup> them. In order to

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bailii.org/databases.html#uk> (last accessed March 15, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Statistics automatically extracted from WordSmith Tools 5.0 (Scott 2008)

<sup>7</sup> “The standardised type/token ratio (STTR) is computed every n words as Wordlist goes through each text file. By default, n = 1,000. In other words, the ratio is calculated for the first 1,000 running words, then calculated afresh for the next 1,000, and so on to the end of your text or corpus. A running average is computed, which means that you get an average type/token ratio based on consecutive 1,000-word chunks of text. (Texts with less than 1,000 words (or whatever n is set to) will get a standardised type/token ratio of 0.)”.

[https://lexically.net/downloads/version5/HTML/index.html?type\\_token\\_ratio\\_proc.htm](https://lexically.net/downloads/version5/HTML/index.html?type_token_ratio_proc.htm) (last accessed March 15, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> The tagset for English is *English 3.3* (TreeTagger) whereas the Spanish one is *Freeling tagset*.

extract the data for the quantitative analysis, the queries on Sketch Engine have been complemented by using WordSmith Tools v. 5.0 (Scott 2008).

The following analysis is therefore based on this bilingual parallel corpus and the reference corpus. The main focus is the translated language in the framework of translation universals, conceived, according to the specific cases, as both S-Universals and/or T-Universals.

## **4. Analysis**

The following section summarises the results of the tests applied to six translation universals: simplification (4.1), explicitation (4.2), normalisation (4.3), levelling out (4.4), untypical collocation (4.5) and interference (4.6)<sup>9</sup>.

### **4.1 Simplification**

Three elements related to textual complexity have been investigated to test the simplification universal, namely lexical variety, average sentence length and lexical density (see Zanettin 2012: 14-16).

As far as *lexical variety* is concerned, it indicates how rich the vocabulary of a text is and therefore it can be a measure of linguistic complexity. The STTR can therefore become an indicator of the complexity of a text: the higher the number of types (non-repeated words in a subcorpus), the more varied the language variety represented by it; therefore, a lower STTR in translated texts would point to a lower variety of language resulting from a process of simplification (see Zanettin 2012: 14-15).

The statistics obtained from WordSmith Tools are available in Table 2: the STTR of STC\_ES (36.50) is higher than STC\_EN (34.34), pointing to a higher lexical variety in original (ES) vs. translated (EN)

---

<sup>9</sup> The ‘translation of unique items’ universal has not been tested in this study because it would have required a much more detailed analysis, which is something that will be carried out in the near future.

texts, which seems to confirm the simplification hypothesis. UKSC's SSTR is almost equivalent to that of STC\_EN (34.31 vs. 34.34).

Another potential indicator of lexical simplification is the comparison of the *average sentence length*: according to the simplification universal, the lexicon of translated texts would be less dense compared to original/non-translations. Table 3 shows the number of sentences with their mean length in each subcorpus.

Table 3. Number of sentences and average sentence length (WST Tools)

	<b>N. of sentences</b>	<b>Average sentence length</b>
<b>STC_ES</b>	6,081	42.03
<b>STC_EN</b>	5,585	43.85
<b>UKSC</b>	85,739	30.35

STC\_ES has a higher number of sentences but a lower average sentence length compared to STC\_EN. This seems to go against the simplification hypothesis since a lower number of sentences could point to the condensation of two or more sentences in one. Such quantitative data are counterintuitive considering that English syntax is simpler than Spanish syntax where subordinated sentences, especially in legal discourse, are a common feature (see Hernando Cuadrado 2003: 32-33). This is possibly due to some negative interference with the complex, baroque legal Spanish.

As far as the average sentence length is concerned, the sentences of STC\_EN contain 181 more words than STC\_ES which goes, again, against the simplification hypothesis. Compared with the reference corpus (UKSC) the number is even more striking (43.85 vs. 30.35): original texts use shorter sentences than translated text.

Finally, *lexical density* is measured by computing information load as a function of the ratio of lexical (content) words to grammatical (function) words (Stubbs 1996: 172 in Zanettin 2012: 15). Translated texts are hypothesised to have a higher ratio of grammatical words and more repetition, and thus a simplified lexicon. In other words, higher lexical density is expected to be found in non-translated texts (Zanettin 2012: 15).

Table 4 shows the number of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) with their raw and relative frequency. Lexical density has been calculated by means of the following proportion:

$$x : (\text{lexical words}) = 100 : (\text{total words})$$

Table 4 shows the results related to lexical density in the corpora under exam.

Table 4. Lexical density in the TC corpus and UKSC

Lexical words	STC_ES		STC_EN		UKSC	
	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
Nouns	68,882	26.94	70,203	28.66	758,477	29.14
Verbs	33,521	13.11	35,093	14.32	412,650	15.85
Adjectives	22,084	8.63	20,667	8.43	175,036	6.72
Adverbs	9,029	3.53	10,677	4.35	110,393	4.24
Total	133,516	52.23	136,640	55.78	1,456,556	70.61
LEXICAL DENSITY	49.78%		53.03%		53.74%	

The lexical density of original texts (UKSC: 53.74%) is slightly higher than that of translated text (STC\_EN: 53.03%). This partially confirms the simplification hypothesis, even though there is no significant difference between the two datasets.

The tests conducted for the simplification universal do not seem to confirm robustly the translation universal: if lexical variety confirms it, average sentence length does not seem to go in this direction; moreover, lexical density partially (slightly) confirms the potential existence of the simplification hypothesis. As stated by Mauranen (2008), the simplification of some traits could result in the increase of complexity of other traits.

## 4.2 Explication

Explication has been investigated as both a S- and T-Universal (Zanettin 2012: 16-17). As a T-universal, it requires the use of monolingual comparable corpora (original vs. translated texts) used as testbeds to see whether translators tend to “spell out things in translation” (Baker 1996: 176). As a S-Universal, it requires the use of bilingual parallel corpora (source vs. target texts) to see if, for example, translators resort to more words in their texts to explain culturally or linguistically distant features of the source texts.

In order to test the explicitation hypothesis in the TC corpus, a linguistic category has been chosen: discourse markers and, more specifically, the so-called *marcadores reformuladores* (Portolés 2001: 141-143) / *linking adverbials* (Biber et al. 1999: 875-879). To guarantee a consistent analysis, only adverbials having the same function have been selected thus establishing a functional comparison between Spanish and English (other irrelevant discourse markers have not been included in the analysis): 1) *reformuladores explicativos* / *apposition linking adverbials*; 2) *reformuladores de rectificación* / *concession linking adverbials*; 3) *reformuladores de distanciamiento* / *contrast linking adverbials*; 4) *reformuladores recapitulativos* / *summation linking adverbs*.

If explicitation takes place in the corpus, then translated texts (STC\_EN) will present a higher percentage of linking adverbials than their source texts (STC\_ES) and original texts (UKSC).

Table 5 presents an overview of the data extracted from the TC corpus.

Table 5. Reformuladores vs. Linking adverbials in STC\_ES vs. STC\_EN (based on Sketch Engine's Concordance tool)

Reformuladores	STC_ES		STC_EN		Linking adverbials
	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	
explicativos	173	0.67	191	0.77	Apposition
de rectificación	13	0.05	366	1.49	Contrast
de distanciamiento	79	0.30	104	0.42	Concession
recapitulativos	81	0.31	21	0.08	Summation
TOTAL	346	1.35	682	2.78	TOTAL

Table 5 confirms that STC\_EN contains a higher percentage of linking adverbials compared to STC\_ES, which would point to translated texts being more explicit than their source texts. This frequency is always higher except from the last category (*recapitulativos/summation*).

Table 6 and 7 present all the occurrences of the discourse markers in each subcorpus with a view to establish the frequency of the types of adverbials.

Table 6. *Reformuladores* in STC\_ES

<i>Reformuladores</i> in STC_ES		Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
explicativos	o sea	1	0.004
	es decir	54	0.21
	esto es	74	0.28
	en otras palabras	21	0.08
	a saber	7	0.02
	dicho de otro modo	11	0.04
	dicho con/en otros términos	5	0.01
	con otras palabras	0	0
	dicho con/en otras palabras	0	0
	dicho de otra manera	0	0
	dicho de otra forma	0	0
	en otros términos	0	0
	de otro modo	0	0
de rectificación	mejor dicho	0	0
	más bien	13	0.05
de distanciamiento	en cualquier caso	9	0.03
	en todo caso	70	0.27
	de todos modos	0	0
	de todas formas	0	0
	de todas maneras	0	0
	de cualquier modo	0	0
	de cualquier forma	0	0
	de cualquier manera	0	0
recapitulativos	en suma	19	0.07
	en conclusión	5	0.01
	en resumen	1	0.003
	en síntesis	6	0.02
	al fin y al cabo	1	0.003
	en definitiva	49	0.19
	en fin de cuentas	0	0
	total	0	0
	vamos	0	0
	en resumidas cuentas	0	0
	después de todo	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1.35</b>	

As Table 6 shows, there are 16 different types of *conectores reformuladores* in the Spanish subcorpus.

Table 7. *Linking adverbials* in STC\_EN

Linking adverbials in STC_EN		Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
<b>Apposition linking adverbials</b>	which is to say	0	0
	in other words	59	0.24
	i.e.	69	0.28
	that is	63	0.25
<b>Contrast linking adverbials</b>	conversely	11	0.04
	instead	10	0.04
	on the contrary	14	0.05
	in contrast	16	0.06
	by comparison	0	0
	however	272	1.11
	on the other hand	43	0.17
<b>Concession linking adverbials</b>	anyhow	0	0
	besides	4	0.01
	nevertheless	44	0.17
	still	5	0.02
	in any case	50	0.20
	at any rate	0	0
	in spite of that	0	0
	anyways	0	0
<b>Summation linking adverbials</b>	after all	1	0.004
	in sum	3	0.01
	to conclude	8	0.03
	all in all	0	0
	in conclusion	1	0.004
	overall	3	0.01
	to summarise	6	0.02
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>682</b>	<b>2.78</b>

As indicated in Table 7, the English translated subcorpus contains 19 different types of linking adverbials, distributed in each subcategory.

The explicitation hypothesis, considered as a T-Universal, would imply a comparison of linking adverbials with original texts (UKSC). Table 8 shows the relative frequency of each category in the comparable corpora.

Table 8. Relative frequency STC\_EN vs UKSC

Linking adverbials	STC_EN	UKSC
<b>Apposition</b>	0.77	0.12



<b>Contrast</b>	1.49	1.22
<b>Concession</b>	0.42	0.21
<b>Summation</b>	0.08	0.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>1.58</b>

Data reveal that translated texts contain a significant higher percentage of linking adverbials (2.78 vs. 1.58%). Table 9 compares the occurrences and relative frequency of each discourse marker in STC\_EN and UKSC. This allows to establish if STC\_EN contains more different adverbials (types) compared to the original corpus UKSC.

Table 9. *Linking adverbials* STC\_EN vs. UKSC

Linking adverbials		STC_EN		UKSC	
		Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
Apposition linking adverbials	which is to say	0	0	1	0.0003
	in other words	59	0.24	199	0.076
	i.e.	69	0.28	54	0.020
	that is	63	0.25	73	0.028
Contrast linking adverbials	conversely	11	0.04	22	0.008
	instead	10	0.04	216	0.082
	on the contrary	14	0.05	154	0.059
	in contrast	16	0.06	24	0.009
	by comparison	0	0	26	0.009
	however	272	1.11	2,597	0.99
	on the other hand	43	0.17	252	0.096
Concession linking adverbials	anyhow	0	0	1	0.0003
	besides	4	0.01	20	0.007
	nevertheless	44	0.17	352	0.135
	still	5	0.02	35	0.013
	in any case	50	0.20	52	0.019
	at any rate	0	0	86	0.033
	in spite of that	0	0	8	0.003
	anyways	0	0	0	0
	after all	1	0.004	45	0.017
Summation linking adverbials	in sum	3	0.01	5	0.001
	to conclude	8	0.03	1	0.0003
	all in all	0	0	1	0.0003
	in conclusion	1	0.004	16	0.006
	overall	3	0.01	2	0.0007
	to summarise	6	0.02	5	0.001
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>682</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>4,247</b>	<b>1.63</b>

Data confirm a higher frequency of linking adverbials in STC\_EN and a more limited range of different adverbials. Translated texts seem to use only some of the linking adverbials whereas original

texts resort to a wider range of discourse markers (see the list in Biber et al. 1999: 875-879).

Table 10 summarises the comparison among STC\_ES, STC\_EN and UKSC.

Table 10. Relative frequency of linking adverbials in the TC corpus and UKSC

Linking adverbials	STC_ES	STC_EN	UKSC
<i>Apposition</i>	0.67	0.77	0.12
<i>Contrast</i>	0.05	1.49	1.2
<i>Concession</i>	0.30	0.42	0.23
<i>Summation</i>	0.31	0.08	0.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.35%</b>	<b>2.78%</b>	<b>1.63%</b>

The results seem to support the claim that translators make syntactic relations more explicit by using linking adverbials more frequently than is typical of non-translated language. Moreover, original texts (UKSC) contain a more varied use of discourse markers which could point to the fact that translators tend to repeat the same linking adverbials, thus simplifying the overall structure of the text.

### 4.3 Normalisation

In order to test if translations show a preference for more habitual options offered by a target repertoire (Toury 1995: 268) and therefore if translators tend to adhere to conventional expressions at the expense of more creative ones (Zanettin 2012: 19), a feature of legal language has been selected, namely legal phraseology and, more specifically, the so-called *locuciones preposicionales / complex prepositions* (see Pontrandolfo 2020). Following Biber et al. (1999: 75), “complex prepositions are multi-word sequences that function semantically and syntactically as single preposition”. These phraseological units play a key role in legal and judicial discourse (see Biel 2015: 141-142). As Biel points out (2015: 141), the distinctiveness of complex prepositions in legal language results from their increased frequency compared to everyday language.

The normalisation universal has been tested as a T-Universal and therefore by means of a comparison between STC\_EN and UKSC

to see if translators tend to get closer to the stylistic conventions of original texts (UKSC).

Complex prepositions have been semi-automatically extracted by using the *Concordance-CQL* function in Sketch Engine and setting the cut-off frequency at 30 occurrences.

The most frequent (and standard) complex prepositions used in UKSC are summarised in Table 11.

Table 11. Most frequent (>30) complex prepositions in UKSC

UKSC					
Complex prepositions	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Complex prepositions	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
in relation to	1,813	0.69	in addition to	89	0.03
in respect of	1,167	0.44	in the event of	83	0.03
for the purpose of	1,106	0.42	in view of	75	0.02
in accordance with	758	0.29	with respect to	74	0.02
in the light of	534	0.20	in light of	74	0.02
on behalf of	529	0.20	for the benefit of	64	0.02
by reference to	470	0.18	in agreement with	63	0.02
in the context of	448	0.17	with a view to	60	0.02
in the course of	422	0.16	in the sense of	56	0.02
on the basis of	401	0.15	in conjunction with	51	0.01
as a result of	384	0.14	by means of	49	0.01
as a matter of	326	0.12	within the ambit of	48	0.01
in favour of	322	0.12	on account of	46	0.01
in breach of	277	0.10	on the question of	46	0.01
by virtue of	275	0.10	without prejudice to	45	0.01
by way of	264	0.10	with the provision of	45	0.01
on the part of	233	0.08	in the nature of	44	0.01
in terms of	231	0.08	in pursuance of	43	0.01
as part of	226	0.08	in consequence of	41	0.01
within the scope of	190	0.07	without regard to	39	0.01
in support of	174	0.06	in return for	38	0.01
by reason of	161	0.06	outside the scope of	38	0.01
in connection with	155	0.05	in line with	36	0.01
on the ground of	148	0.05	with effect from	35	0.01
with regard to	128	0.04	to the principle of	35	0.01
on the balance of	123	0.04	in possession of	34	0.01
in case of	118	0.04	to the purpose of	34	0.01
on ground of	118	0.04	as a means of	32	0.01
in the interest of	107	0.04	to the use of	31	0.01
in the exercise of	101	0.03	TOTAL	13,350	5.12
in response to	99	0.03			
in the form of	94	0.03			

Table 11 shows that the most frequent types (different forms) of complex prepositions are 63; these can be considered as the most common ones in the reference corpus and can be compared with those extracted from STC\_EN, as presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Complex prepositions in STC\_EN

STC_EN		
Complex prepositions	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
<i>with respect to</i>	156	0.63
<i>in respect of</i>	142	0.57
<i>in accordance with</i>	128	0.52
<i>in relation to</i>	127	0.51
<i>with regard to</i>	86	0.35
<i>in term of</i>	46	0.18
<i>by means of</i>	46	0.18
<i>as a result of</i>	41	0.16
<i>without prejudice to</i>	40	0.16
<i>in favour of</i>	39	0.15
<i>on the basis of</i>	36	0.14
<i>for the purpose of</i>	35	0.12
<i>in view of</i>	32	0.13
<i>by virtue of</i>	32	0.13
<i>in the light of</i>	31	0.12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,128</b>	<b>4.40</b>

Data show that there are 15 most frequent complex prepositions in STC\_EN. Due to the differences in size of the two corpora, only relative (normalised) frequencies have been considered for the analysis and only the complex prepositions common to both datasets have been investigated (see Table 13).

Table 13. Common complex prepositions in UKSC and STC\_EN

Common complex prepositions	UKSC		STC_EN	
	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq	Raw_Freq	Rel_Freq
in relation to	1,813	0.69	127	0.51
in respect of	1,167	0.44	142	0.57
for the purpose of	1,106	0.42	35	0.14
in accordance with	758	0.29	128	0.52
in the light of	534	0.20	31	0.12
on the basis of	401	0.15	36	0.14
as a result of	384	0.14	41	0.16
in favour of	322	0.12	39	0.15
by virtue of	275	0.10	32	0.13
in terms of	231	0.08	46	0.18
with regard to	128	0.04	86	0.35
in view of	75	0.02	32	0.13
with respect to	74	0.02	156	0.63
by means of	49	0.01	46	0.18
without prejudice to	45	0.01	40	0.16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,362</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>1,017</b>	<b>4.14</b>

The comparison between the two subcorpora shows that all the complex prepositions in STC\_EN are also present in the most frequent patterns in UKSC. This could point to the existence of the normalisation hypothesis. In general, the most frequent complex prepositions common to both subcorpora are also the most frequent in STC\_EN, which could suggest a tendency to adhere to the textual conventions of the target language. However, the most frequent complex prepositions in translation (STC\_EN) are not equally frequent in the original texts (UKSC); in fact, the most frequent ones in STC\_EN tend to be the less frequent ones in UKSC.

#### **4.4 Levelling out**

Levelling out has not been frequently empirically investigated as a translation universal. In order to test if translated texts tend to show more uniform patterns compared to original texts (levelling out as a S-Universal), two indicators have been considered: lexical variety in

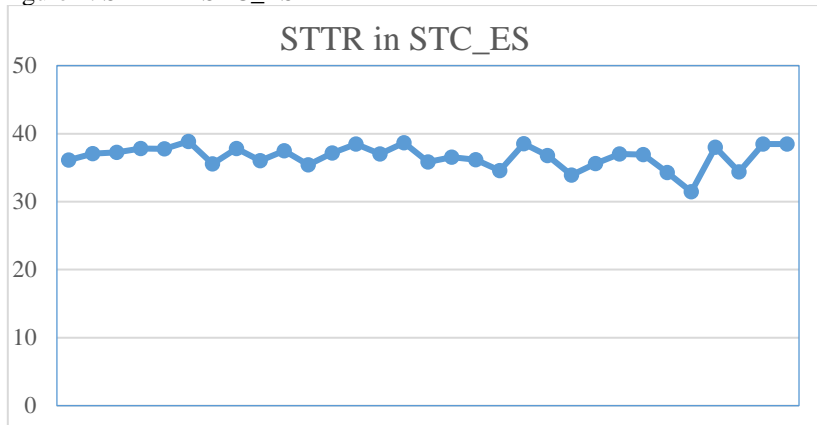
terms of STTR and average sentence length, which were also considered as indicators of simplification, and have been tested in other corpus-based studies (see *Corpas Pastor et al. 2008, Redelinghuys 2016*).

Uniformity is to be understood as the degree of variation of a specific linguistic trait in the corpus. To this aim, each judgment or the corpus has been considered by assigning it a medium value related to the STTR and medium sentence length (data obtained from *WordSmith Tools*). The degree of variation has been calculated by subtracting the maximum and minimum value; the difference is the interval in which all the other values are comprised and it is therefore the maximum degree of variation available in the corpus. By comparing these intervals, it is possible to isolate the minimum intervals that could point to a more uniformity in the corpus (due to the similarities of the values of the judgments composing that specific corpus).

If the levelling-out hypothesis is confirmed, then the STTR and the average sentence length of *STC\_EN* will present more restricted intervals (less variation = more homogeneity) compared with *STC\_ES*.

As far as lexical variety is concerned, *Figure 1* shows the trend in source texts (*STC\_ES*): each point in the graph indicates the STTR of each judgment.

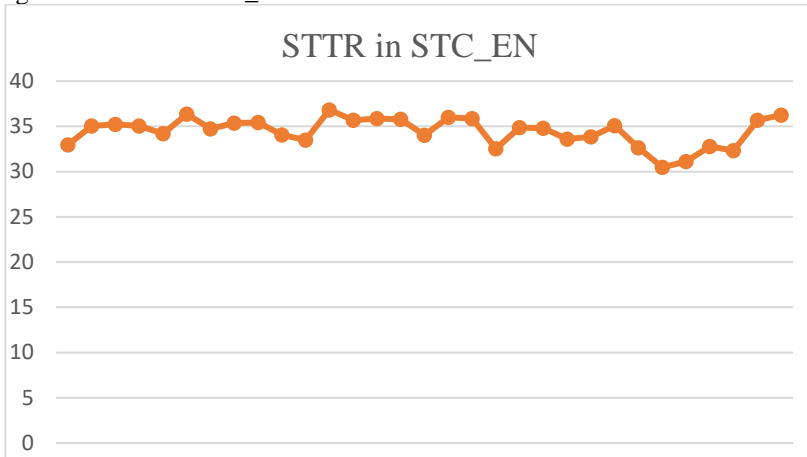
*Figure 1. STTR in STC\_ES*



The maximum value for *STC\_ES* is 38.66 whereas the minimum one is 31.45: the interval is the difference between maximum and minimum values, i.e. 7.41.

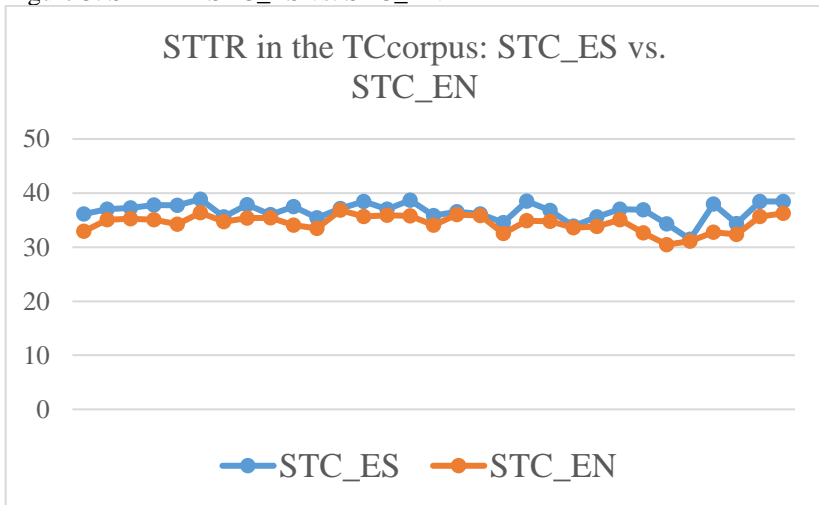
Figure 2 shows the STTR trend in STC\_EN.

Figure 2. STTR in STC\_EN



As far as the English translated texts are concerned, the maximum value is 36.82 and the minimum 30.47 (interval equal to 6.35). The comparison between the two datasets is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. STTR in STC\_ES vs. STC\_EN



It shows that the trend is more homogeneous in STC\_EN, which seems to confirm the levelling out hypothesis applied to STTR:



STC\_EN has the minimum interval of STTR variation and its texts present more uniform STTRs.

Figures 4 and 5 show the graphs related to average sentence length in STC\_ES and STC\_EN respectively.

Figure 4. Average sentence length in STC\_ES

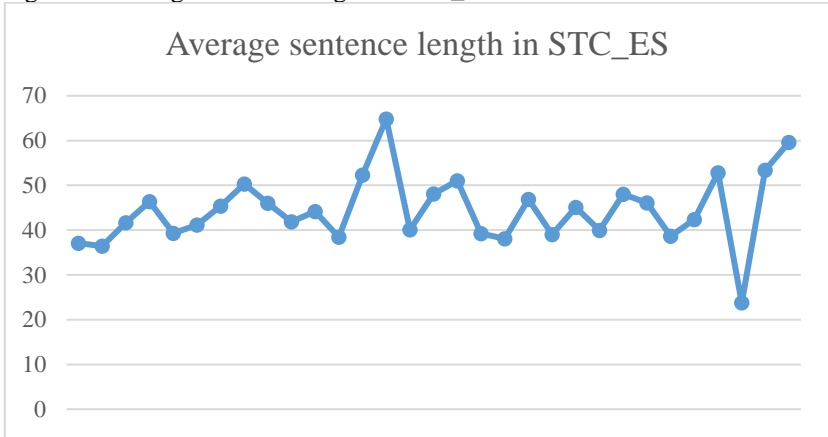
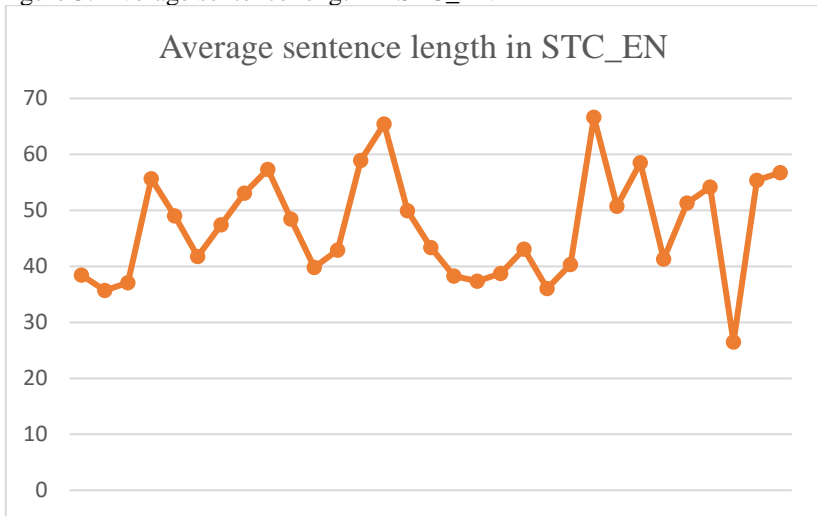


Figure 5. Average sentence length in STC\_EN

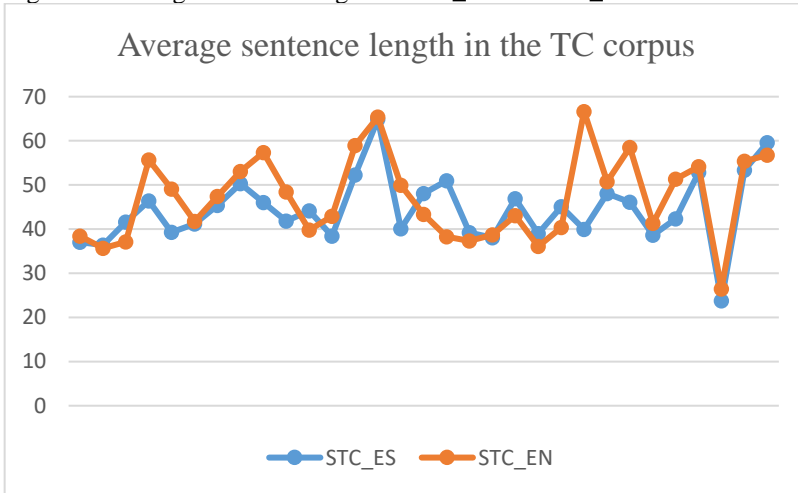


The maximum and minimum values calculated in number of words in STC\_ES are 64.86 and 23.74 respectively (interval: 41.12

words) whereas in STC\_EN the maximum value is 66.65, the minimum 26.74, with an interval of 40.18 words.

The global picture is shown in Figure 6 which compares the two datasets.

Figure 6. Average sentence length in STC\_ES vs. STC\_EN



The comparison between the two subcorpora reveals a slightly more homogenous trend in STC\_EN (translated texts), which is in line with the levelling out hypothesis. It is also interesting to observe that the values of STC\_EN are almost always higher than their source texts, which matches the simplification universal. In this sense, the hypothesis tested in the parallel corpus seems to be confirmed.

## 4.5 Untypical collocations

As a T-Universal, the untypical collocation hypothesis has been tested on the most frequent type of collocation found in the corpus namely *Verb + Noun* (both as subject and object) (based on Corpus Pastor 1996's classification of phraseological units).

No cut-off frequency has been established since one of the aims of the analysis is to spot untypical/infrequent patterns (*hapax legomena* have also been considered for the purpose of the study). The selection

of the nodes – based on Sketch Engine’s Wordlist tool – of the collocations is based on three criteria: a) judicial terms are common to both STC\_EN and UKSC; b) they are close to a verb (span: +/- 3 words on the left and right); c) they meet the two previous criteria and have a raw frequency of at least 100 in order to be tested later on the basis of their syntactic function: V + Subject / V + Object).

The resulting nodes have been used for the quali-quantitative analysis based on the Concordance function of Sketch Engine: *appeal*, *appellant*, *argument*, *case*, *court*, *decision*, *judgment*, *law*, *provision* e *right*. The departing point has been obviously the STC\_EN subcorpus used as a testbed to spot untypical collocations.

Table 14 shows the results of the quantitative analysis.

Table 14. Untypical collocations in STC\_EN

Node	Collocations in STC_EN		Infrequent collocations		Untypical collocations	
	types	Raw_Freq	types	Raw_Freq	types	Raw_Freq
<b>Appeal</b>	26	114	14	33	1	1
<b>Appellant</b>	34	73	7	15	0	0
<b>Argument</b>	31	50	13	15	1	1
<b>Case</b>	26	54	8	9	3	4
<b>Court</b>	119	379	32	53	2	2
<b>Decision</b>	39	93	16	18	1	1
<b>Judgment</b>	34	136	17	24	1	3
<b>Law</b>	73	160	35	65	2	6
<b>Provision</b>	46	76	23	33	0	0
<b>Right</b>	112	537	36	76	4	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	540	<b>1,732</b>	201	<b>341</b>	15	<b>27</b>

A distinction should be made between infrequent and atypical collocations: the former are collocations which tend to be less used in STC\_EN compared to UKSC, while the latter are patterns which are indeed rare or untypical in Mauranen’s (2008: 44) acception (rare or absent from actual target language texts, even though they are possible in the TL system).

The final results show that 201 out of 1,732 collocations are infrequent legal English (UKSC), corresponding to 19.69% of the whole collocational patterns. Untypical collocations – which the qualitative analysis has revealed to be an effect of some interference with the source language (Spanish) – amount to 15 types with a total of

27 occurrences, representing 1.56% of the collocations (see Biel 2014: 113-114).

As the Annex shows, most of the untypical collocations are cases of interference (calques) from Spanish: e.g. provide with arguments (*proporcionar una fundamentación jurídica*), foresee a case (*prever un supuesto*), accredit [the Court] (*acreditación judicial*), assume a decision (*asumir una decisión*), formalise a decision (*formalizar una decisión*), foresee [a law] (*prever una ley*), configure a right (*configurar un derecho*), etc<sup>10</sup>.

Although there are instances of this phenomenon in the translated corpus (STC\_EN), the results are not robust and therefore do not provide a solid picture able to (quantitatively) confirm the universal.

## 4.6 Interference

In order to test the final universal (interference), a typical discursive trait of Spanish judicial language has been analysed, namely antinormative/incorrect gerunds (see Pontrandolfo 2019b). Biber et al. (1999: 198) and Swan (2005: 378) provide specific indications on the correct use of *-ing forms* in English both as gerunds (when the *-ing form* has the function of noun) and present participles (having the function of verbs, adjectives and adverbs); these guidelines have been followed to identify interference cases in the translated corpus (STC\_EN).

If the interference universal takes place in the corpus, then the STC\_EN will contain negative influences from the source language transferred to the target texts in the process of translation (see Zanettin 2012: 21).

The test has been carried out on the TC corpus. The first step has been isolating all the gerunds in STC\_ES by means of the Concordance tool in Sketch Engine. 454 gerunds out of 1,014 have been considered as antinormative (based on a manual/qualitative analysis). The subsequent step was using the *Parallel Concordance* tool in Sketch Engine to exclude the cases in which the gerund had been reformulated

---

<sup>10</sup> “Obviously, contrasts between an SL and a TL have to be compensated for in translations, and this may result in the choice of particular TL pattern that would not be chosen in the original TL texts or at least not chosen to the same extent” (Teich 2003: 22).

in the target text (these are cases of re-elaborative effort on the part of the translator, Toury 1975) and end up with the gerunds which are actually incorrect (because of a negative interference) in English. They have been classified following Pontrandolfo (2019b: 729-730 based on CMLJ 2011: 119 122)'s typologies: 1) BOE's gerunds (gerund with the function of a relative clause); 2) gerund of posteriority (which expresses an action which has developed after the action expressed in the main clause); 3) illative gerund (functioning as a simple coordinated sentence); 4) consequence gerund (expressing an action which is the result of the main sentence).

Table 15 presents an overview of the anti-normative gerunds in STC\_ES and STC\_EN: 166 result from reformulation whereas 287 have been considered as potentially incorrect.

Table 15. Anti-normative gerunds in STC\_ES vs. STC\_EN

	Anti-normative gerunds in STC_ES	Reformulated instances in STC_EN	Anti-normative gerunds in STC_EN
<i>BOE</i>	97	31	66
<i>posterioridad</i>	24	12	12
<i>ilativo</i>	226	102	124
<i>consecuencia</i>	106	21	85
<b>TOTAL</b>	453	166	287

Among the 287 *-ing forms* detected in the corpus, some of them are clearly incorrect and are typical examples of negative interference (e.g. El título II regula la sucesión de ordenamientos y administraciones públicas, *formando parte* de su contenido la integración de [...] > Title II regulates the succession of Regulations and Administrations, *being part* of its content the incorporation of [...] where the illative gerund in the ST is replicated in the TT thus resulting in an incorrect sentence in English). Other are ambiguous constructions or stylistically improvable sentences.

The analysis has confirmed that 50% of the Spanish gerunds (453/1,014) are not antinormative and that 36.6% of them (166/453) had been reformulated in translation. The remaining cases (63.4%) can be classified as literal translations, i.e. examples in which translators opt for repeating the *-ing form* in their translations. However, the full-

blown incorrect cases are generally limited in number and therefore the universal is not robustly confirmed.

## **5. Discussion and final remarks**

The pilot study presented in this paper is not exhaustive in its design and results, and it is only based on a small-scale study conducted in a specific language combination (Spanish-English) and within a specific genre (judgments). However, it has proven the feasibility of the tests which can be replicated in the future with larger corpora, different language combinations as well as different genres.

The results presented in this paper seem to point to the existence of the translation universals identified in the literature, although the quantitative results are not solid enough to confirm the hypotheses.

The TC corpus, and more precisely the English subcorpus (STC\_EN), has been used as testbed to verify S-Universals whereas the UKSC corpus has been used as a reference corpus to compare translated (STC\_EN) and non-translated/original English (UKSC) in T-Universals.

As far as simplification is concerned, lexical variety and density slightly confirm the tendency of translators to simplify source texts, whereas the average sentence length does not seem to follow this direction.

As for explicitation, results show that STC\_EN contain a higher percentage of linking adverbials compared to STC\_ES which would point to translated texts being more explicit than their source texts. Moreover, original texts (UKSC) contain a more varied use of discourse markers which could indicate that translators tend to repeat the same linking adverbials, thus simplifying the overall structure of the text.

As far as normalisation is concerned, the comparison between the two subcorpora on a specific discursive element (complex prepositions) shows that the phraseological patterns in STC\_EN are also present in the most frequent patterns in UKSC. This could confirm the normalisation hypothesis. In general, the most frequent complex prepositions common to both subcorpora are also the most frequent in STC\_EN, which would suggest a tendency to adhere to the textual conventions of the target language.

The levelling out hypothesis has been tested on STTR and average sentence length and the comparison between the two subcorpora reveals a slightly more homogenous trend in STC\_EN (translated texts), which is in line with the levelling out hypothesis.

With regards to untypical collocations, the final results show that 19.69% of the whole collocational patterns are infrequent in original legal English.

The analysis related to interference has confirmed that 63.4% of antinormative gerunds in ST have been translated literally in the target texts but full-blown incorrect cases are limited in the overall picture and therefore the universal has not been confirmed robustly.

The study demonstrates that these regularities in translations tend to be interrelated (see the case of simplification and explicitation) and that more systematic tests should be carried out to confirm or disconfirm these universals in legal translation.

As far as this pilot study is concerned, it has been characterised by a quantitative approach. Future studies can explore the qualitative dimension as well, as an effective way to counterbalance the preliminary results.

The results obtained are useful both for the professional and training perspective, as mentioned in the introduction of this paper.

The untypical collocation hypothesis has confirmed the importance of distinguishing between a variant and an alternative (see Göpferich 1995)<sup>11</sup>: not all the translation solutions adopted by legal translators/trainees, although correct from the viewpoint of grammar (*alternative*), are acceptable and in line with the discursive conventions (*variant*) (see Garzone 2007: 218-219). The same applies to the universal of interference: the risk of being negatively influenced by the structuring of the sentences in the source texts can play a major role in the acceptability of the final result.

Future studies on larger corpora and different language combinations can definitely help taking further steps in this promising area of legal translation studies.

---

<sup>11</sup> An alternative consists of a linguistic form that is not conventional but that can accomplish the communicative goal whereas a variant is the reduced array of variation that is accepted to replace any given convention. According to Göpferich (1995), translators have to be acquainted not only with the most conventional features in any given genre, but also with the possible variants.

## Bibliography

- Alcaraz Varó, Enrique & Hughes, Brian. 2002. *Legal Translation Explained*. Manchester/Northampton: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Baker, Mona. 1993. Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies. Implications and Applications. In *Text and Technology. In Honour of John Sinclair*, eds. M. Baker, G. Francis and E. Tognini-Bonelli, 233–250. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Baker, Mona. 1996. Corpus-based Translation Studies: The challenges that lie ahead. In *Terminology, LSP and Translation: Studies in Language Engineering in Honour of Juan C. Sager*, ed. H. Somers, 175–178. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Biber, Douglas; Johansson, Stig; Leech, Geoffrey; Conrad, Susan; Finegan, Edward. 1999. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Biel, Łucja. 2014. *Lost in the Eurofog: the textual fit of translated law*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Biel, Łucja. 2015. Phraseological profiles of legislative genres: complex prepositions as a special case of legal phrasemes in EU law and national law. In *Fachsprache – International Journal of Specialized Communication*, 37(3-4): 139–160.
- Chesterman, Andrew. 2004. Beyond the particular. In *Translation Universals. Do they exist?* eds. A. Chesterman and P. Kujamäki, 33–49. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- CMLJ (Comisión de Modernización del Lenguaje Jurídico). 2011. *Estudio de campo: lenguaje escrito*.
- Corpas Pastor, Gloria. 1996. *Manual de fraseología española*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Corpas Pastor, Gloria. 2008. *Investigar con corpus en traducción: los retos de un nuevo paradigma*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Corpas Pastor, Gloria; Mitkov, Ruslan; Afzal, Naveed; Pekar, Viktor. 2008. Translation universals: do they exist? A corpus-based and NLP approach to convergence. In *Proceedings of the Workshop on Building and Using Parallel Corpora, Marrakech, Morocco (LREC 2008)*, eds. P. Zweigenbaum; E. Gaussier & P. Fung, 1–6. Paris: ELRA.
- Franceschini, Veronica. 2020. *Universalità traduttive e traduzione giuridica: un'analisi basata su un corpus parallelo di sentenze*



- del Tribunal Constitucional*. MA unpublished thesis. University of Trieste.
- Frawley, William. 1984. Prolegomenon to a theory of translation. In *Translation. Literary, Linguistic and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. W. Frawley, 159–175. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Gellerstam, Martin. 1986. *Translationese in Swedish novels translated from English. Translation Studies in Scandinavia*. Lund: CWK Gleerup.
- Göpferich, Susan. 1995. *Textsorten in Naturwissenschaften und Technik*. Tübingen: Narr Verlag.
- Hernando Cuadrado, Luis Alberto. 2003. *El lenguaje jurídico*, Madrid: Verbum.
- Kilgariff, Adam; Baisa, Vit; Bušta, Jan; Jakubíček, Miloš.; Kovář, Vojtěch.; Michelfeit, Jan; Rychlý, Pavel; Suchomel, Vit. 2014. The Sketch Engine: ten years on. In *Lexicography*, 1: 7–36.
- Laviosa-Braithwaite, Sara. 1996. *The English Comparable Corpus (ECC): a resource and a methodology for the empirical study of translation*. Ph.D. Thesis. Manchester: Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies, UMIST.
- Mauranen, Anna. 2000. Strange Strings in Translated Language. A Study on Corpora. In *Intercultural Faultlines. Research Models in Translation Studies 1. Textual and Cognitive Aspects*, ed. M. Olohan, 119–141. Manchester/Northampton: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Mauranen, Anna. & Kujamäki, Pekka. (eds.) 2004. *Translation Universals. Do they exist?* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Mauranen, Anna. 2006. Translation Universals. In *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. K. Brown, vol. 13, 93–100. Oxford: Elsevier.
- Mauranen, Anna. 2008. Universal Tendencies in Translation. In *Incorporating Corpora: the Linguist and the Translator*, ed. G. Anderman and M. Rogers, 32–48. Buffalo/Toronto: Clevendon.
- Olohan, Maeve. (ed.) 2000. *Intercultural Faultlines. Research Models in Translation Studies 1. Textual and Cognitive Aspects*, Manchester & Northampton: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Olohan, Maeve. 2004. *Introducing Corpora in Translation Studies*. London: Routledge.

- Pontrandolfo, Gianluca. 2016. *Fraseología y lenguaje judicial. Las sentencias penales desde una perspectiva contrastiva*. Roma: Aracne.
- Pontrandolfo, Gianluca. 2019a. Corpus Methods in Legal Translation Studies. In *Research Methods in Legal Translation and Interpreting: Crossing Methodological Boundaries*, eds. L. Biel; J. Engberg; R. Martín Ruano; V. Sosoni, 13–28. London/New York: Routledge.
- Pontrandolfo, Gianluca. 2019b. Gerundios ‘revelando’ normalización en el lenguaje judicial español: consideraciones a partir del corpus JustClar. In *Orillas* 8/2019: 725–749.
- Pontrandolfo, Gianluca. 2020, in press. National and EU judicial phraseology under the magnifying glass: a corpus-assisted analysis of complex prepositions in Spanish. In *Perspectives, Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*.
- Portolés, José. 2001. *Marcadores del discurso*, Barcelona: Ariel.
- Prieto Ramos, Fernando. 2014. Legal Translation Studies as Interdiscipline: Scope and Evolution. In *Meta*, 59/2: 260–277.
- Redelinghuys, Karien. 2016. Levelling-out and register variation in the translations of experienced and inexperienced translators: a corpus-based study. In *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics*, 45/2016: 189–220.
- Schäffner, Christina. & Adab, Beverly. 2001. The idea of the hybrid text in translation: Contact as conflict. In *In Across Languages and Cultures*, 2(2)/2001: 167–180.
- Scott, Mike. 2008. *WordSmith Tools* v. 5, Liverpool: Lexical Analysis Software.
- Swan, Michael. 2005. *Practical English Usage*. Oxford: OUP.
- Teich, Elke. 2003. *Cross-linguistic Variation in System and Text: A Methodology for the Investigation of Translations and Comparable texts*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Toury, Gideon. 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Trosborg, Anna. 1997. Translating hybrid political texts. In *Analysing Professional Genres*, ed. A. Trosborg, 145–158. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Zanettin, Federico. 2012. *Translation-driven corpora. Corpus resources for descriptive and applied translation studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

**ANNEX: Untypical Collocations V+N with no occurrences in the reference/UKSC corpus**

<b>UNTYPICAL COLLOCATIONS [V+N]</b>			
<b>APPEAL</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>	<b>APPELLANT</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>
accept an appeal	3	appellant considers	6
articulate an appeal	1	appellant admits	4
enter an appeal	1	appellant grants	1
file the appeal	16	appellant mentions	1
formulate an appeal	1	appellant opposes	1
grant an appeal	2	appellant petitions	1
issue an appeal	1	appellant questions	1
process an appeal	1	appellant considers	6
qualify an appeal for	1	appellant admits	4
receive an appeal	1	appellant grants	1
reconstruct an appeal	1	appellant mentions	1
register an appeal	2	appellant opposes	1
restrict an appeal to	1	appellant petitions	1
settle an appeal	1	appellant questions	1
use an appeal	1		
<b>ARGUMENT</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>	<b>CASE</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>
complete an argument	1	constitute a case	1
discard an argument	1	decide on case	1
employ an argument	1	foresee a case	2
express an argument	1	lay a case before sb.	1
give an argument	1	process a case	1
lack arguments	1	rule a case	1
provide with an argument	1	singularise a case	1
put forth an argument	1	submit a case to	1
reiterate arguments	1		1
rest the argument on	1		1
share an argument	1		
sustain an argument	1		

*Gianluca Pontrandolfo: Testing out Translation Universals...*

use an argument	3		
<b>COURT</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>	<b>DECISION</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>
court accredits	1	assume a decision	1
court alleges	1	cancel a decision	2
court argues	1	draft a decision	1
court believes	1	evade a decision	1
court brings	1	formalize a decision	1
court checks	2	formulate a decision	1
court claims	1	fulfil a decision	1
court commences	1	modify a decision	1
court completes	3	perform a decisions	1
court configures	1	preclude a decision	2
court consolidates	1	pronounce a decision	1
court deduces	1	reassess a decision	1
court deliberates	1	reiterate a decision	1
court differentiates	1	revoke a decision	1
court disbands	1	supervise a decision	1
court dissolves	1	warrant a decision	1
court estimates	1		
court formulates	1		
court grounds sth. on	1		
court guarantees	1		
court invalidates	1		
court outlaws	1		
court ponders	2		
court ratifies	1		
court reflects upon	1		
court renders	2		
court replaces	1		
court replies	1		
court requests	15		
court studies	1		

*Comparative Legilinguistics 43/2020*

court summons	2		
court underscores	2		
<b>JUDGMENT</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>	<b>LAW</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>
adopt a judgment	1	law advocates	4
assess a judgment	1	law amends	8
breach a judgment	1	law amounts to	1
commence a judgment with	1	law calls	1
compare a judgment with	1	law claims	3
contest a judgment	3	law clarifies	1
declare a judgment as	1	law coditions	2
defraud a judgment	3	law complements	1
dismiss a judgment	1	law configures	2
elude a judgment	1	law contains	3
flout a judgment	1	law contradicts	1
hear a judgment	1	law contravenes	1
impose a judgment	1	law convenes	1
motivate a judgment	1	law defers	2
offer a judgment	1	law denies	2
overturn a judgment	1	law employs	1
render a judgment	4	law encroach on	1
		law extends	1
		law foresees	5
		law impair	1
		law infringes	1
		law introduces	7
		law invades	2
		law lays down	1
		law opposes	1
		law powers	1
		law presupposes	1
		law repeals	1
		law respects	2

*Gianluca Pontrandolfo: Testing out Translation Universals...*

		law seeks to	1
		law sets forth	1
		law specifies	1
		law submits	1
		law wishes to	1
<b>PROVISION</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>	<b>RIGHT</b>	<i>Raw_Freq</i>
adjudicate a provision	1	agree to the right	1
adjust a provision	1	allude to a right	3
appeal a provision	1	apply a right	1
attack a provision	1	comprise a right	1
cancel a provision	1	compromise a right	2
cite a provision	1	configure a right	4
complete a provision	1	confirm a right	1
contradict a provision	1	confront right	1
declare a provision	1	declare a right	3
deprive a provision of	1	defend a right	2
establish a provision	5	denaturalize a right	1
fulfil a provision	2	denature a right	1
infringe a provision	2	deploy a right	1
issue a provision	2	differentiate a right from	1
maintain a provision	1	encroach on a right	1
prevent a provision	1	foresee a right	3
question a provision	1	fulfil a right	1
quote a provision	1	harm a right	3
respect a provision	1	hinder a right	1
restrict a provision	1	legislate a right	1
suspend a provision	1	modulate a right	1
update a provision	1	obstruct a right	1
uphold a provision	4	ponder a right	1
		proclaim a right	7
		promulgate a right	1

*Comparative Legilinguistics 43/2020*

		pronounce itself on a right	1
		realize a right	1
		reclaim a right	1
		recognize a right	17
		redress a right	1
		re-establish a right	2
		refuse a right	1
		state a right	3
		suspend a right	1
		understand a right	2
		weigh (up) a right	2