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Comprender los factores culturales que afectan a la traducción a través de un episodio de Los Simpson

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Understanding the cultural factors affecting translation through an episode of *The Simpsons*

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ABSTRACT

The cultural competence within English language learning is an aspect that must be addressed in order to understand the messages in the source language as well as all the nuances that surround it.

Although some authors reject the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), its use in the EFL classroom can benefit the foreign language and culture learning process. This is because, in the translation process, it is important to take into account not only grammatical structures, for example, but also all aspects of each culture in order to produce a accurate translation, which leads to appropriate language learning. All in all, this paper proposes the translation of an episode of *The Simpsons* with the aim of making students aware of the value of culture and the aspects that surround it in language learning, such as idioms and other fixed expressions.

Keywords: cultural competence, GTM, *The Simpsons*, translation, idioms

RESUMEN

Dentro del aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa, la competencia cultural es un aspecto que debe ser tratado con el fin de comprender los mensajes en la lengua de origen, así como todos los matices que la rodean.

A pesar de que algunos autores rechazan el Grammar-Translation Method GTM), su uso dentro del aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) puede traer grandes beneficios en el aprendizaje de la lengua y la cultura extranjera. Esto es así porque, dentro del proceso de traducción es importante tener en cuenta, no solo las estructuras gramaticales, por ejemplo, sino también todos los aspectos propios de cada cultura para producir una traducción rigurosa, lo que se traduce en un apropiado aprendizaje de la lengua. Con todo, este trabajo propone la traducción de un episodio de *Los Simpsons* con el objetivo de hacer a los estudiantes conscientes del valor de la cultura y de los aspectos que la rodean en el aprendizaje de lenguas, como son los idioms y otras expresiones fijas.

Palabras clave**:** competencia cultural, GTM, Los Simpsons, traducción, idioms

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is a language that is globally used for communication, whether or not it is the mother tongue of a country. Thanks to it, people can travel and discover the different cultures of the world, communicate with people, and thus learn a bit more about the world around us. In short, English opens many doors, not only for work but also on a cultural level.

Due to this globalisation of the language, there are many materials such as films, series, sitcoms, etc. in this language that are available to everyone. However, despite the fact that English is a lingua franca, in Spain we continue to translate everything from English as not everyone speaks the language, especially older people. In order to carry out these translations, it is essential to understand the culture of the English-speaking countries in order to achieve a complete understanding of what comes to us in that language.

Although these translations are generally done by professional translators, some methodologies advocate the use of translation in the Foreign Language (FL) classroom as a means of language learning. This methodology is known as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) which advocates that foreign language learners, in this case English, learn the rules of grammar deductively and memorise the equivalents in their native language through translation. Although some authors disagree with this methodology, introducing foreign materials into the classroom and having students translate them into their native language makes them aware of the cultural differences between countries, which helps them to develop one of the competences of the curriculum, namely cultural competence.

Given this background, this innovative proposal suggests that by translating into Spanish the subtitles of an episode of *The Simpsons* entitled "Balenciaga", students will be able to see all the cultural elements surrounding the language (idioms, slangs, proverbs, stereotypes, traditions, etc.) that have to be taken into account when making a rigorous translation. Moreover, through the use of *The Simpsons,* they will be provided with a cultural context which, although it is not a real one, shows the cultural aspects of the American people. This will also improve motivation in the classroom as they will be working with material they are used to seeing on TV, and not with typical materials designed for educational purposes such as the British Council videos.

This paper is divided into six sections. The first part presents the main objectives of this innovation proposal. In the next section, the literature review is presented explaining translation as a cross-cultural activity, the benefits of implementing GTM with other methodologies and, finally, the use of a sitcom like *The Simpsons* in the English classroom. The third part consists of reviewing some studies related to the topic and how this proposal is innovative compared with them. The next part presents the innovation proposal giving special attention to the activities designed to achieve the expected results. Finally, the next two sections expose the different advantages or disadvantages of the proposal and the main conclusions obtained from it.

2. OBJECTIVES

This master thesis presents an innovation proposal whose main aim is improve students' cultural competence by making students aware of the cultural aspects that surround the English language as well as the translation process.

With this aim, students are expected to reflect and learn about some cultural aspects of the English language (stereotypes, celebrations, idioms, fixed expressions, etc.) in order to make their own translation of the script of one of *The Simpson* episodes. This proposal would be carried out by means of different individual and group activities that will make use of different ICT tools. The final translation task is designed to by completed by means of *MemoQ*.

Apart from this, this proposal is designed to fulfil the following specific objectives during and after the sessions held in the project:

- To respect the different cultures that coexist in the world and to learn new facts about them.
- To learn the use of idioms and other structures in order to be able to use them correctly in their future life.
- To work on the different skills in order to foster foreign language acquisition by means of the different activities proposed in the project.
- To improve the comprehension of the foreign language by translating the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video into Spanish.
- To increase students' motivation by working with a series they are familiar to by means of engaging activities.
- To improve students' digital competence by using different ICT tools during the proposal.
- To encourage cooperation and group work and to improve students' relations fostering some values such as tolerance and respect.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Translation as a cross-cultural activity

First and foremost, if we are going to talk about translation, we must give a proper definition to better know what consists of. The Oxford Dictionary (2022) defines the term translation as "the process of changing something that is written or spoken into another language", that means to transfer a concept or a sentence from one language to another. However, Bassnett (2002) establishes that translation is not only a linguistic activity, but also an intracultural and intercultural communication. In other words, translation is not just a language transfer, but a cross-cultural activity.

It is also worth remembering that when talking about translation many people are unfamiliar with some concepts related to the topic. As Munday (2016, p. 8) states, when translating, there is always a source language (SL or L1) and a target language (TL or L2). The first is the original language from which the translation will be made, and the second is the target language for the translation itself. Other related terms that Munday (2016, p. 8) explains are the source text (ST) which is the original text to be translated, and the target text (TT) which is the text resulting from translating the source text into another language.

Figure 1. Translation process (Munday, 2016, p.8).

As a result, translation deals with two languages that interact and are related to one another, because there is always an undeniable connection with prior knowledge when learning a new language.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that when talking about translation, we normally refer to professional translation carried out by professional translators when they are asked for an assignment. Likewise, this professional translation aims to maintain the feeling that the original text creates in the source reader in order to transmit it to the reader of the target text. To do this, it is necessary to take into account the context in which the text takes place as well as the readers of the target text (Bassnet, 2002).

Nonetheless, it should be noted that there are several types of translation and that this paper will focus on pedagogical translation, which is the translation used to teach the foreign language.

3.1.1. Pedagogical translation

In an educational context, students are expected to learn a variety of skills that allow them to transmit and understand messages, that is to communicate.

The fact that the use of translation in language teaching is nowadays rejected by most teachers is due to the fact that it is not linked to communication. However, a student when learning a language always tries to translate everything into his or her mother tongue in his or her head in order to understand what is being said to him or her. Thus, the fact that translation has no link to communication does not mean that it is not an effective method of language learning (Lee, 2013, p. 3).

When it comes to the rejection of using the L1 in class by some teachers, Cook (2001) asserts that "[…] one argument for avoiding the first language is that children learn their first language because they do not have a second language, another argument is students also need to separate L1 from L2 […]". With this, the author means that both languages need to be separate and learnt independently. In addition, in the same line as Cook, Ellis (1985) points out that "the role of L1 in classroom is a negative one because L1 gets in the way or interferes with the learning of L2, such as the features of the L1 are transferred into L2". He explains that this interference is caused by "proactive inhibition", which occurs when prior language learning prevents or inhibits the learning of a new language. Moreover, Krashen (1981) states that "people who learn a foreign language do not basically follow the same route as they acquire their mother tongue. Therefore, the use of L1 in learning process should be minimized", meaning that L1 is not always required as a medium for learning L2. This can also happen when a child learns an L1 and realizes that he or she does not require the use of another language.

Opposed to the arguments above mentioned, there are some authors that consider the use of the L1 and translation useful for the acquisition of a foreign language. Nunan and Lamb (1996) affirms that "EFL teachers working with monolingual students at lower levels of English proficiency find prohibition of the mother tongue to be practically impossible". That is to say, it is difficult for a

teacher in an EFL setting to promote learning without interfering with or using the students' native language. Ross (2000) explains that "translation is a useful language learning tool in the ordinary classroom; the real usefulness of translation in the EFL classroom lies in exploiting it in order to compare grammar, vocabulary, word order, and other language points in English and the student's mother tongue"; in other words, the interference between both languages will most likely be reduced if the students become aware of the differences between them.

To conclude with all these ideas, Atkinson (1993) points out that in a monolingual teaching class "a careful, limited use of L1 to help students get the maximum benefit from activities which in other respects will be carried out in the target language". Overall, despite the arguments against its use, L1 is seen as useful if used correctly in the context of successful foreign language learning.

Regarding the concept of professional translation and based on the ideas presented by De Arriba (1996) in an article about the differences between Pedagogical Translation and Professional Translation published in the journal "Lenguaje y textos", it can be said that when we talk about translation in language teaching, we are referring to pedagogical translation and not to professional translation.

According to De Arriba (1996), pedagogical translation has certain characteristics that distinguish it from professional translation. Its main objective is didactic, and its audience is more restricted: the teacher and the students. In this type of translation, it is not the message that is important, but rather the acquisition and improvement of the language. More specifically, the control of comprehension and the acquisition of grammatical structures.

In order to better understand the differences between the two translations, the following table is shown below:

	Pedagogical translation	Professional translation
Objectives	It can be a simple way of learning the language, by monitoring comprehension or explaining difficult words or structures to students.	It is an end in itself, since its purpose is to convey a message to readers who might not otherwise understand it.
Communicative situation	The translation is for the teacher. It is also possible to translate a "neutralized" produced text without context.	The translation can be done when the parameters of the communicative situation are known: where does the text should appear? For which type of readers?
Nature of the translated text	It is possible to translate without understanding everything, as the aim of the exercise is partly to check understanding.	A translation can only be made if the text is fully understood.
Sense of translation	Version or theme	It can only occur if the sense is language 2 language 1.

Table 1. Pedagogical vs. Professional Translation (Grellet, 1991, p. 13, in De Arriba, 1996, p. 276.) Translation by author.

Following the ideas of De Arriba (1996), she states that pedagogical translation has clear objectives in order to be introduced in the ESL classroom:

1. Improving comprehension. Translation is a tool for improving comprehension because it allows teachers and students to determine whether they have understood a written or oral utterance.

2. Linguistic improvement. The foreign language always coexists with the mother tongue (L1), so the learner uses and compares both languages

continuously. Therefore, the teacher can take advantage of the two languages in contact with each other to contribute to their improvement.

3. Dealing with interference between languages. Translation can be used to overcome problems of interference between languages, as it allows learners to learn different strategies to help them with structures or expressions that do not work the same way in the foreign language as in the L1.

4. Mother tongue improvement. As mentioned above, the L1 and the foreign language are always in contact. This makes learners reflect on grammar, vocabulary, idioms, etc. in their own language when trying to translate them. So, they learn not only about the FL but also about their L1.

5. Learning to translate. introducing translation into the classroom offers students the opportunity to learn how to translate. Thus, pedagogical translation does not aim to train translators but people who can translate the meaning of any kind of text.

All in all, translation in the classroom is seen as a means whereby learners can control their language. Meanwhile, it does not matter if they cannot translate a text perfectly, what matters is that they can learn from the whole process.

3.1.2. Translation and culture

Culture has a great impact on the translation process. It is considered one of the most serious problems a translator faces, as he or she must be aware of all the cultural elements in the source text in order to convey the message in the target language and make it sound as natural as possible for the speaker of that language to understand it without difficulty.

Newmark (1988, p.94) defines the term of culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression", meaning that each language has its own cultural characteristics. He also states that "I do not regard language as a component or feature of culture" (Newmark, 1988, p. 95) in contrast to Vermeer's opinion who expresses that "language is part of a culture" (1989, p. 222). In short, following Newmark's view, Vermeer's position implies that translation is impossible,

whereas the latter's role in transcultural communication includes translating the source language (L1) into a suitable form of target language (L2).

The most serious problems for translators are those related to the cultural differences, which have resulted in the most widespread misunderstanding among readers. When it comes to converting source text to target text, culture has its own set of limitations. Each society or group of people creates their own culture, which is respected, performed, and accepted along with its limitations, based on their historical background, local situations, and religion with their own language. Limitations in translation are a cultural trait that is not always imposed. The acceptable behaviours will differ from one location to other. Different cultural norms in the source and target languages are undoubtedly influencing the major problem in translation nowadays (Abbasi *et al.,* 2012).

The act of translation, considered as a communicative process, must be seen as part of the nucleus of language, which is an essential element of culture. As Lotman, Uspensky and Mihaychuk (1978, p.212) affirm "no language (in the full sense of the word) can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at is center the structure of natural language". For translation studies, "translating involves not just two languages, but a transfer from one culture to another" (Hervey & Higgins,1992, p.28). For this reason, and as Bara (2014, p.1) points out, every translator must achieve "those cultural competences that complement the linguistic competence component, in the two languages involved in the translation", in order to make the right decisions to reproduce "emotional and psychological responses in the target language similar to those produced in the source text" (Landers,2001, p.49).

Consequently, nowadays, translation is understood as a transfer between cultures in which the translator is an intercultural mediator between the source text and the target text (Cifuentes-Férez, 2015).

It is worth mentioning that one of the most important situations that a teacher face is to teach students how to deal with difficult concepts, structures, or situations that they might come across while translating. As a result, teachers must provide them with a variety of activities to identify some translation problems in order to comprehend the true complexity of the translation itself.

For this purpose, Cook (2012) introduces new type of activities in which translation can be involved: debating the various problems that can arise when translating. Some of those activities may include comparing different translations of the same text, evaluating the various manners that a text can be interpreted, and determining which one is the best. He also proposes that students can also discuss issues with mistranslations and explain why they believe these translations are incorrect. Moreover, students can also reflect on translation quandaries, such as racist or sexist language, and recognize the various strategies used to cope with untranslatable concepts, allowing them to acquire the necessary skills (Cook, 2012).

All in all, the proposal of the activities above mentioned related to translation suggests that students will be more motivated and engaged if those activities about translation problems are introduced in class, because they will learn interesting aspects of the language and will be forced to consider various translation options. They will also be expected to recognize and critique other people's translations, as well as to defend their reasoning for doing so. Besides, this type of activities allows students to consider that translation is a complex process. Furthermore, when translating, we must consider more than just words and grammatical structures; cultural concepts must also be transferred from one language to another. Translators must deal with such challenging situations by employing strategies and skills that teachers can teach students.

3.1.3. Translation and idioms

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2022) defines the term "idiom" as "an expression in the usage of a language that is peculiar to itself either in having a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meanings of its elements (such as up in the air for "undecided") or in its grammatically atypical use of words (such as give way)". In other words, an idiom is a linguistic expression that determines objects, concepts or phenomena of material life given to a certain culture. Therefore, an idiom cannot be translated literally because the meaning will not be predicted from the usual connotation of the constituents.

According to Baker (1992, p. 66), there are two cases that an idiom can be misinterpreted:

1. When an idiom has the same literal interpretation and idiomatic meaning as in the target language and it does make sense.

2. When an idiom in the source language has a similar equivalent in the target language in terms of formation but the meaning is completely different.

Once the idiom has been identified, it is necessary to decide how to translate it into the target language. The difficulties of translating an idiom are completely different from those of interpreting it. As Baker states (1992, p. 68-71), the main difficulties are the following:

1. An idiom may not have an equivalent in the target language.
   While one language can express a meaning by a single word, others need an idiom to express the same thing. Likewise, there are idioms that are culturally marked and cause problems when translating and interpreting them because they do not exist in the target culture, for example. Therefore, the translator must always be aware and always look for a correspondence in the target language so that future readers of the text will be able to understand it.

2. An idiom may have a counterpart in the target language, but its contextual use may be different, i.e., two expressions may have different connotations or may not be transferable pragmatically.

3. An idiom can be used in the source text in both a literal and idiomatic sense at the same time. However, in order to be used in the target text, it must fulfil the same functions as in the source text, otherwise the idiom cannot be reproduced correctly.

4. Language conventions in written discourse, the contexts in which they may be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages. Idioms are not used in the same way in all languages and in all types of texts. For example, in English they tend to be very frequent in texts such as advertisements, promotional material, etc. However, in Spanish we can find idioms in a literary text, which the English see as something very vulgar or colloquial.

Concerning the idioms' translation, they can be translated in different manners depending on the context in which they are used. It should be noted that there are different translation strategies to be able to translate these expressions

correctly. Some of these strategies proposed by Mona Baker (1992, p. 72-78) in her book *In other words (A Coursebook on Translation)* will be explained below. All of them will be exemplified with idiomatic expressions in English and Spanish as the source and target language, respectively.

1. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form

   This strategy can only appear occasionally as the idiom has the same meaning and the same lexical items in the source language than in the target language.

   Ex. Things aren't always what they seem (EN) à *Las cosas no son siempre lo que parecen* (ES).

2. Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form

   We sometimes find an idiom which has a similar meaning in both languages, the source and the target, but they consist of different lexical items.

   Ex. Out of sight, out of mind (EN) à *Ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente*

3. Translation by paraphrase

   This is the most common strategy when translating idioms in the case that the translator cannot find an equivalent in the target language or it is inappropriate to use the idiomatic language in the target text because of the difference between styles of both texts, the source and the target.

   Ex. To shut the stable door after the horse has bolted (EN) à *Tomar medidas demasiado tarde* (ES)

4. Translation by omission

   There are sometimes that an idiom may be omitted because it does not have an equivalent in the target language, it cannot be paraphrased or just for stylistic reasons.

3.2. Translation in the EFL classroom: the Grammar-Translation method and the importance of culture

The use of the mother tongue in English classes has become something that some teachers support, and others do not. Some teachers support that translation should not be used in foreign language classes due to the criticism of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) in foreign language teaching. However,

others think that it can be very useful for students as it facilitates learning by relating concepts to those of their mother tongue.

The Grammar-Translation Method has been used by many teachers for many years. It was first used for teaching classical languages such as Latin and Greek. Early in the 20th century, it was used for the purpose of getting students of these languages to read and appreciate the literature of foreign languages. It was also clear that this method would make it easier for students to speak and write the foreign language by learning the grammar itself. In the GTM, the grammatical structures and vocabulary are taught deductively focusing on the rote memorization of the grammar structures (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Damiani (2003) in his study on the GTM, he claims that it is the most effective method for teaching grammar and vocabulary, and that the teacher believes that his or her students are learning, whereas in any other method, the teacher is unsure that the students are learning.

In recent years, with the emergence of new methodologies such as the Communicative Language Teaching or Task-Based Language Teaching, among others, has left the GTM to one side, considering it outdated for the times we live in.

Several studies have been carried out to verify whether or not GTM is effective for language learning through the use of the mother tongue. As Stern (1992) points out, translation plays a vital role in language learning. Moreover, translation is a great resource for allowing students to recognize challenges in language learning since it allows them to observe the similarities and contrasts between L1 and L2, as well as have a better understanding of the language system. Students will be able to use the target language effectively if they compare it to their own language.

Cook (2001, p. 413) suggests some important factors about the use of L1 in language teaching and learning:

- Efficiency: if using L1 increases the effectiveness of L2 learning, then it should not be avoided.
- Learning: if the usage of L1 significantly aids in the attainment of L2, then it can be used.
- Naturalness: if learners feel more at ease when L1 is utilized sparingly, then L1 should not be disregarded.

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- External relevance: if both L1 and L2 help learners learn more effectively, L1 in the language classroom cannot be prohibited.

As Gultekin (2021, p. 5) remarks, the use of translation can be effective in L2 learning. It saves time when teaching grammar and vocabulary to learners and helps to increase linguistic awareness. When learners are concerned of how the language is used or how it works, their sense of achievement increases. It is therefore argued that the use of L1 in the language classroom has clear advantages for learning. Thus, a total neglect of this technique may hinder learners' development. Moreover, it will also make learners feel comfortable when using L1 in the language classroom, as they will understand the content and topics better.

As mentioned above, the use of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) combined with other methods such as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) might be a good manner to teach English, as students not only learn grammar but also, they practise it in a more communicative way and by doing some tasks. As Mondal (2012) states "In English language learning, grammar teaching isn't intended for studying grammar but help students to grasp language rules and fulfil listening, speaking, reading and writing practice in a better way". The author finishes concluding that teachers should create scenarios for real-life activities to guide students in understanding, grasping, and correctly using grammar in such situations (Mondal, 2012). In other words, teachers should try to teach English as a foreign Language (EFL) by combining the GTM with other methods (CLT or TBLT) in order to help students to learn the proper grammar of the language and the communicative aspects it has, so they can feel more motivated, and they will find the language useful for their future life.

On the other hand, as already mentioned, translation is a cross-cultural activity that requires an accurate use of the language in order to convey a meaningful message in the target language. Therefore, it is the role of the translator to identify all the cultural factors surrounding the source text, so he can reflect on how to translate them to be as faithful as possible to the text and its cultural implications.

These cultural implications are also present in the curriculum of students in different ways. Regarding key competences, within the Order ECD/65/2015 of 21 January, cultural competence asks students to know, understand, appreciate and

reflect on different cultural manifestations as part of the richness of each country. Besides, in Baccalaureate stage, the Royal Decree 243/2022, of 5 April, establishing the organisation and minimum teaching of the Baccalaureate, apart from the cultural competence also includes the plurilingual competence, which focuses on the knowledge and respect of linguistic and cultural diversity in order to promote a democratic coexistence among students.

When it deals to the Foreign Language subject, these competences are essential in the mastery of the foreign language. Taking the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR, 2022) as a basis, the curriculum of Baccalaureate for the Foreign Language subject emphasises both plurilingual and intercultural competences as inherent to the communicative nature of the subject. On the one hand, students are expected to communicate effectively and to be able to know, value and respect linguistic and cultural diversity. Furthermore, they are also expected to manage intercultural situations and to adapt to linguistic and cultural diversity in order to foster mutual comprehension and contribute to the development of a shared culture. For these reasons, translation can be seen as a beneficial activity to make students improve these competences.

3.3.   New technologies in the EFL classroom

Nowadays, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have meant a great evolution in education. Due to the needs demanded by students, more and more educational institutions are including technological devices (tablets, computers, digital whiteboards, etc.) in their classrooms. However, there are also many teachers who are reluctant to use these media in their classes either for fear of not knowing how to use them properly or simply because they have not received prior training in their use in the classroom. As Bitner and Bitner (2002, p. 96) state:

> Helping teachers overcome their fears, concerns, and anxiety is crucial to the success of the program. [...] Training must provide teachers with knowledge of the very basics of computer use. Teachers need to have a rudimentary understanding of how to operate a

computer. A working knowledge of standard input and output devices such as a mouse, disk drives, printers, speakers, and so forth, is important.

Regarding the four skills when learning English (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), ICT tools can be linked to their improvement, as well as other linguistic components. It develops the effectiveness of interactive teaching and learning methods. It also increases students' capacity to work independently and connect their English and other subjects' work (Haswani, 2014, p. 110).

Some studies regarding the effectiveness of the ICT tools in the EFL classroom have been done during these years. Hennessy (2005) assumes that when students and teachers use ICT tools to learn and teach English, they feel more motivated, learners become more autonomous, and they are capable to work and act independently. According to Rodinadze and Zarbazoia (2012), because of its quick accessibility, technology aids both students and teachers in studying course materials. Technology advancements play an important role in preparing students to apply what they've learned in any subject to find a job in the global labour market. Therefore, technology aids learners' learning and acts as a true educational tool that allows the learning process.

However, there are some studies that explain the disadvantages and limitations of the ICT tools when using them in the EFL classroom. According to Singhal (2006), the Internet's nature can sometimes be a disadvantage. It may take longer to access information when lines are busy due to a large number of users. Another issue raised by this author is a lack of teacher training in using the Internet in the language classroom. Corrêa (2001) also mentions some other considerations that teachers should keep in mind when planning a computer-assisted lesson. According to this author, there are frequently insufficient computers in the classroom for all students. As a result, the teacher will need to decide what to do to satisfy the students' desire to use the computer. The same author also mentions that surfing the internet can be entertaining as well as time consuming.

In short, despite the disadvantages of the use of new technologies in EFL classroom, ICT tools may foster knowledge selection and creation, cooperation, and reflection, which is good to both EFL learners and teachers. They may also

be utilized to make classes more engaging, entertaining, varied, motivating, and supportive (Nazara, 2019, p. 133).

3.3.1. Translating with ICT tools: using 'MemoQ'

The use of ICT has become very important nowadays. Moreover, it has been of great importance in the world of translation, as it has facilitated the translation process by making it possible to directly consult an online dictionary or to use different tools that speed up the translation process (Gogić, 2020).

That is the case of an ICT tool that professional translations use called *MemoQ*. It is a Computer Aided Translation (CAT) tool developed by Kilgray Fordítástechnológiai Kft. (Kilgray Translation Technologies) for Microsoft Windows. Using this tool, translators can create translation memories to assist in the translation process for future assignments. Translation memory means, according to Doherty (2016, p. 950), "a software program that stores a translator's translated text alongside its original source text, so that these pairs can later be reused in full or in part when the translator is tasked with translating texts of a similar linguistic composition". In other words, the programme itself can find structures and words from other translations made with the current translation, which makes the translation process much easier since it is often not necessary to search for those terms or structures again. In addition, it allows the original format of the file being translated to be preserved, which facilitates the translation work by avoiding the need to manually modify the file format.

In order to use it, all you have to do is load the text to be translated in the source language. The screen will be divided into several sections: in the first part, at the top of the computer screen, you will see a line with the sentences in the source language and in the right, the spaces to include the translation in the target language; in the second part, on the right part of the screen, you will see the matches found with other translation memories, the spelling of the sentence and whether the tags to be used for the text format are correctly set; finally, in the third part, at the bottom of the screen, you will see the translation of the text with the correct format.
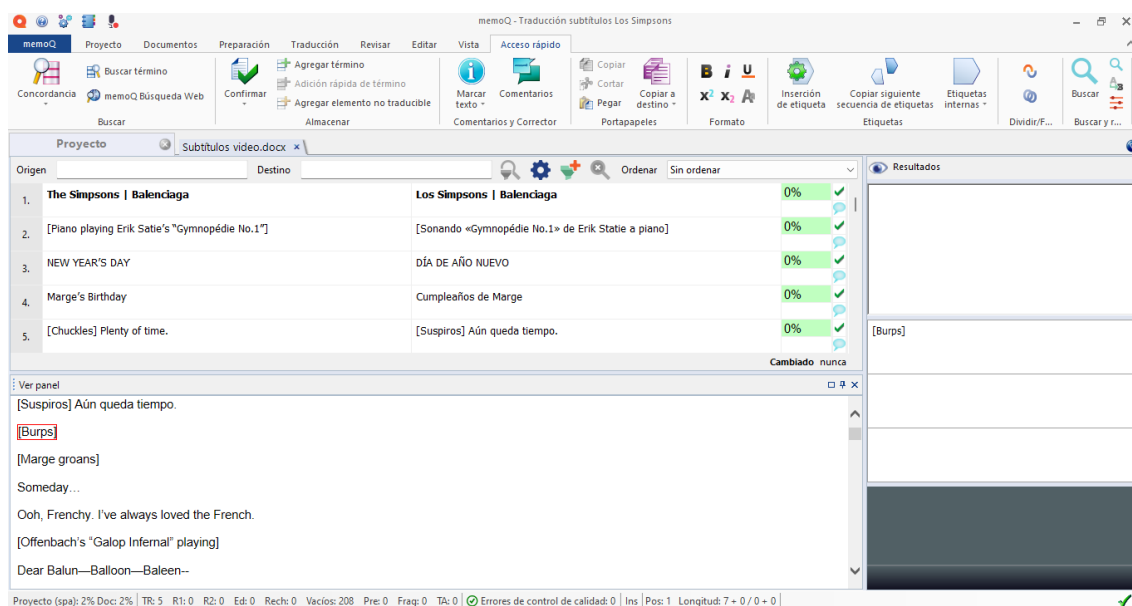
Figure 2. Example of a MemoQ translation.

Although it is a professional tool for translators, it is very intuitive and can be introduced in the classroom for students to learn how to use it. Moreover, its implementation makes the GTM application more innovative by using a translation tool that goes beyond the traditional pen-and-paper translation.

In short, introducing this tool to students of English will give them a better understanding of the work of a translator and the different tools and platforms they use. Moreover, its implementation in the classroom will take students away from the traditional method of writing the translation on paper and thus make use of a technological tool that they may not be familiar with.

3.4. Audiovisual aid in the EFL classroom

Using videos for instruction is a form of communication that can be accomplished without the aid of language, as we often convey messages through gestures, eye contact, and facial expression. By re-enacting a visual scene through video, a viewer is able to generate background schemata, predict and speculate based on the environment that appears in the video. Using authentic language in videos and speed of speech in different context could assist non-native speakers in learning stress patterns, allowing the learner to connect body movements and speech rhythms in second language discourse. In addition, videos can be used to provide contextual clues and also to promote the student

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interest. In general, video instruction provides learners with the opportunity to predict information, infer ideas and analyse the world outside the classroom (Canning-Wilson & Wallace, 2000).

In a research made by Rosdiana Rusmiati in 2017 about the role of audiovisual aids in the EFL classroom, she concluded that using interesting materials within the classroom can help to create a positive learning environment that encourages students to participate in learning the language. Moreover, media are also an excellent way to engage students in understanding the materials, so they can comprehend the lesson more quickly, thus reducing the amount of time needed for the teacher to deliver speech to bring up the comprehension of students (Rusmiati, 2017). She also states that "[…] applying audio visual aids in teaching learning process benefits both teachers and students. The class becomes more effective and active." (2017, p. 184)

In a similar way, Arthur (1999), as cited in Rathod (2017, p. 5) declares that:

Video can give students realistic models to imitate for role-play; can increase awareness of other cultures by teaching appropriateness and suitability; can strengthen audio/visual linguistic perceptions simultaneously; can widen the classroom repertoire and range of activities; can help utilize the latest technology to facilitate language learning; can teach direct observation of the paralinguistic features found in association with the target language; can be used to help when training students in related scenarios and language; can offer a visual reinforcement of the target language and can lower anxiety when practicing the skill of listening.

That is to say, in a classroom setting, video should be interpretive and to the point. The visual should demonstrate reasonable judgment, improve comprehension, increase sensory acuity, and depict the target language being used. To focus on a lexical item being provided, a visual cue may be combined with a written cue. Videos can add authenticity to a task, situation, or language. More importantly, video can be adapted, edited, or changed to meet the needs of a language learner in order to help distinguish items on a listening comprehension test, aid in the role of recall, and help to sequence events (Canning, 1998).

As Canning-Wilson (2020, p. 267) concludes "It is recommended that institutions and practitioners encourage the use of instructional video in the F.SOL classroom as it enables them to monitor and alternate instruction by fostering greater mental effort for active learning instead of passive retrieval of visual and auditory information".

3.4.1. The use of sitcoms in EFL classroom: the Simpsons

Many teachers use different online resources for their classes. There is a large number of educational videos, such as those from the British Council, which have been created specifically for educational purposes, with specific content and very clear pronunciation so that students can understand them. However, many times, teachers prefer to choose more real materials such as films, but as they are very long and it takes several classes to watch them, so they waste a lot of time. Likewise, many prefer to use real but shorter materials such as series or sitcoms, which do not last as much as a film and include real aspects of life and everyday language, which helps students to become familiar with more informal language than purely academic language.

Sitcoms are one of the most popular sources for learning languages and cultures (Kozhevnikova, 2014). They are entertaining, have a brief duration, and can be used effectively as authentic materials for language learning. Additionally, they include real language and expose students to a variety of cultural elements (Konus, 2020).

For many teachers the use of a sitcom for language learning is inappropriate or unnecessary. However, others use them not only for language learning but also to show students cultural aspects they may not be aware of. Therefore, depending on the teacher's perspective, *The Simpsons* are considered a good tool for both language learning and the cultural part of the series itself.

The Simpsons is an American sitcom about the misfortunes of a nuclear power plant worker Homer Simpson, his wife Marge and their three children (the troubled Bart, the intelligent Lisa, and the dummy baby Maggie). The events take place in the mythical American town of Springfield, and it is a humorous parody of the typical American family.

For some teachers, the use of *The Simpsons* in the foreign language classroom may seem inappropriate because of the content itself. However, there

is a great deal to be gained from each episode in terms of linguistic and cultural learning. It is a sitcom that is broadcast at children's time so, although some jokes may be inappropriate, they are fairly thinly veiled, and the pupils are used to seeing them. In addition, each episode features situations in context, with real grammar and vocabulary, with a large presence of idioms, phrasal verbs, slang, etc., which are used on a daily basis and which the students try to avoid when speaking in English. Furthermore, each episode deals with topics from popular culture, not only American but also from other countries, as in many episodes they move around different countries and deal with cultural aspects specific to each one, as the different cultures are intermingled.

In short, the use of *The Simpsons* episodes in the classroom can be a support for language learning and will also help students to see that they can learn a language through this type of sitcom. In addition, it will also take the class out of the traditional textbook method and encourage students' motivation to learn languages.

4. STATE OF THE ART

Numerous studies have shown that the use of translation and the mother tongue (L1) in the EFL classroom is effective. Furthermore, there are other studies that support the use of sitcoms as supplementary material for foreign language learning.

Carreres (2006) carried out a study in the Cambridge University about translation as a language learning method. The participants were students in their second and third year of the Modern Language Degree. The author distributed a series of questionnaires related to the use of translation as a method for language learning in order to find out what their opinion was on the topic. The results of the study concluded that for the majority of these students, although it is a classical teaching method, they believe that it is necessary to include it in the foreign language teaching process as it increases the students' level of linguistic ability by applying their knowledge of grammar in the process of translating a sentence or structure. However, several students find the classes in which GTM is used boring because although they say that it is a good methodology to learn the language, many times the teachers do not make them enjoyable because they only do traditional translation exercises instead of using any tools or going a little bit out of the traditional way.

As a conclusion, Carreres (2006, p. 18) states that "there is enough evidence to suggest that translation has an important role to play in language teaching, but more empirical research is needed. In particular, we need to gain further insight into its effectiveness relative to other language learning activities". In other words, much more research is needed on this methodology to ensure that it is no longer seen as a traditional methodology and that teachers continue to use it.

In other study made by Yakout (2021) about the use of translation as a tool in the EFL classroom, he asserts that the GTM combined with other teaching methods could serve as an important helping tool for teaching foreign languages to EFL learners. He also states that "EFL teachers and learners could benefit the maximum from this pedagogical tool and use it to develop communicative competencies and foreign language use". In addition, translation activities should always be based on the language learning process, with authentic texts and materials which are adapted to the learners' level and abilities. In order for teaching to be more effective, the teacher's role during translation activities needs

to reflect more supervision and guidance, as well as a greater focus on anticipating the challenges faced by EFL learners, focusing on their needs, and evaluating them (Yakout, 2021).

Larrea & Raigón (2019) in a study based on the use of sitcoms as a tool for cultural learning in the EFL classroom, expose that using authentic video material, like films or TV shows, introduces students to real-world interactions and authentic dialogues. In this way, students will work with more extensive vocabulary in terms of the linguistic, paralinguistic, and pragmatic levels.

In another study carried out by Chang (2015, 26) on the use of sitcoms in the English classroom, he clarifies that sitcoms "can be an effective platform for the language learners to be immersed in the culture or way of life of the target community". In other words, foreign language learners can also learn cultural aspects when using sitcoms in the EFL classroom.

On the basis of all these studies, the main purpose of this innovative proposal is to follow this line of research and design an intervention proposal in the EFL classroom that helps students to learn the English language and, more specifically, the importance of cultural aspects surrounding the understanding of this language. In this case, we aim at translating an episode of *The Simpsons* by means of the ICT tool *MemoQ*. With this purpose, preparatory activities will be design in order to make students understand the importance of the target or source culture when translating.

5. EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION INNOVATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1. Justification and contextualization

The aim of this innovation project is to show students all the cultural elements that a language has (idioms, slang, proverbs, stereotypes, traditions, etc.) to take into account when translating in order to be able to make a rigorous translation.

To achieve this aim, the project focuses on *The Simpsons* as it is a series that students watch in their daily life, and it intends students to learn both the English language and some cultural or everyday life aspects that may appear on the episode. As the cultural competence is part of their curriculum, this episode is considered to have lots of cultural aspects that students can learn. The selected episode is entitled 'Balenciaga' and it is about the Simpson family travelling to France to be part of the fashion show of this French clothing brand. In this video some stereotypes about the American and the French culture appear.

With the implementation of this project, students will feel more motivated and eager to learn by using resources they like, and they will realise that by watching series or films in their original version they can learn the language in a more natural way than if they do so by watching the typical videos created for educational purposes.

This project is divided into different sessions that will take place over the three terms during the academic year. Each term will deal with a different topic from those shown in the video (culture, idioms and expressions, stereotypes, etc.). For each topic, different activities have been designed to be carried out individually or in groups to work on the different skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). The final purpose of these activities will be to translate into Spanish the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video. Students will have to consider everything they have worked on throughout the course in order to be able to make a correct translation. In addition, they will have to make use of a Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) tool called 'MemoQ' used by professional translators. Thus, students will also be able to learn about the work of a professional translator.

The reason why I have chosen this project is because I consider GTM to be a forgotten methodology today and it is considered to be outdated. However, I believe that using this methodology together with others (TBLT or CLT) can be very beneficial in the language acquisition as students feel more comfortable when there is minimal use of the L1 in the classroom. Besides, the fact that it is

a translation into Spanish and not into English makes it more of a comprehension exercise rather than a production one, since students are expected to have a clear understanding of English and its cultural background in order to be able to make a good translation into Spanish.

Concerning the contents and the competences that have been taken into account for the implementation of this project are those established in Decree 21/2015, of 26 June, which establishes the Baccalaureate curriculum and regulates certain aspects of its organisation, assessment, promotion and qualification of students in the Autonomous Community of La Rioja, and in Decree ECD/65/2015, of 21 January, respectively. Specifically, this project focuses on the cultural competence which is established in the Order ECD/65/2015 of 21 January and in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). According to this competence, the student must know and value the different cultural and artistic manifestations of one or more territories, in such a way that this heritage must be used for personal enrichment and enjoyment.

5.2. Participants

This proposal is designed for students in the 1st year of Baccalaureate, as they already have a sufficient level of English to be able to watch series or films in the original version with subtitles.

Students in the 1st year of Baccalaureate are between 16 and 17 years old, so they are sufficiently mature to reflect on the importance of culture and the globalized world we live in. Besides, the sitcom chosen is suitable for their age, as some situations or scenes may include inappropriate content for younger students.

Moreover, these students have the ability to solve difficult situations that may arise both individually and in groups. With this degree of maturity, they will also be able to handle tools of a more professional than educational use in order to learn a little more beyond the educational environment.

Moreover, these students already have sufficient knowledge of the language to be able to express themselves and interact with each other and with the teacher. Needless to mention that participation and involvement of the students is necessary in order to effectively carry out this educational innovation proposal.

5.3. Methodology

The present proposal comprises a series of different methodologies combined together in order to effectively carry out the innovation project.

The main methodology used is the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) since the final task is to translate the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video so they can reflect on the necessity to understand their culture in order to make an accurate translation. In addition, there will also be some activities focused on translating idioms and other linguistic expressions in order to familiarise students with the translation process.

The other methodology present in the work is the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as different activities are carried out in terms of simple tasks in order to fulfil a more complex final task that requires the learning of the contents worked in previous activities.

Alongside this methodology, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) will also be applied as the aim is for learners to interact with each other and be able to communicate in the foreign language.

The application of these methodologies plus the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) makes this proposal innovative as not many teachers make use of all three methodologies at the same time (because some reject the use of the GTM) and also use digital tools to foster students' digital skills. Some of the tools that will be used are: *FlipGrid, Canva, Socrative, YouTube*, *MemoQ,* etc.

The materials needed to implement this proposal will be designed mainly by the teacher. All of them can be found in the annexes of this paper. There is some material that has been extracted from the internet and which is correctly referenced so that it can also be used.

As for the students' work, both individual and group activities will be developed in order to encourage individual and autonomous work as well as cooperation between classmates. It should be noted that the groups will be heterogeneous, i.e., they will be made up of both girls and boys, with a balanced level of English in each group.

5.4. Timing

This proposal will be implemented throughout the whole academic year. It consists of 13 sessions that will be divided into different parts or sections that will be developed during the three terms.

The first term will deal with the topic of culture. Students are expected to reflect on this topic by means of different activities that will be carried out in four sessions.

In the second term there will be several activities on the use of idioms and different expressions such as slangs or proverbs which will be carried out in four sessions.

Finally, in the third and last term, the translation of the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video into Spanish will be carried out in five sessions, as the translation will be divided into parts so that the students are not overwhelmed by so much text.

5.5. Activities

5.5.1. 1st Term: Culture facts

During this term, the teacher will explain to students the main points regarding this project. The activities designed for this term will be devoted to learn about what culture means and about some important factors related to this term, such as the diversity of cultures, how language affect culture and some festivities of the American, British or Australian culture. These activities are designed to encourage students to reflect on culture, so almost all the activities are designed to introduce a topic related to culture by working on a particular skill (reading, writing, speaking or listening) and are followed by a discussion which allows students to reflect on the topic.

- **Introduction to the project (session 1)**

To begin with, the teacher will explain to students that the project they are going to work on during the course consists of translating into Spanish the subtitles of a video of *The Simpsons* entitled "Balenciaga". To contextualize the project and improve their motivation, students will watch *The Simpsons* video they will have to work with (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZHESOq-Gkw&t=203s).

The teacher will also hand out to students a chart with the contents of the project (Annex I), in order to make them aware of what are they going to work during the hole course.

In order to work on the topic of stereotypes, the teacher will ask the students what they know about the topic and what is their opinion about it. The teacher will propose several games on the *Bamboozle* platform in which they will have to work in groups as a competition. The group who gets the most points after answering the questions will be the winner. The games could be found here:

- https://www.baamboozle.com/game/737713
- https://www.baamboozle.com/classic/927784/4
- https://www.baamboozle.com/classic/1008109/4

- **What is culture? (session 1)**

Students will be introduced to the concept of 'culture'. They will be asked to work in small groups and create a definition of this term. After that, they will share their definitions with the rest of the groups, and they will make a final one from all the definitions they have.

The teacher will hand to students a photocopy with some definitions about culture and, after reading it carefully all together and comment the questions that appear on it, students will share their opinions about the importance of culture when learning a language (Annex II).

- **Cultures of the world (session 2)**

By means of a reading activity, students will learn about different cultures of the world (Annex III). They will read the text once all together and then they will reread it individually so they can underline the words or expressions they do not know to be, later on, solved by the teacher. After that, students will be grouped again, so they can complete some comprehension activities on the text about cultures they have just read (Annex IV).

In order to make them reflect on this topic and learn to respect the different cultures, each group will prepare a speech talking about some facts of other culture different from their own culture. They will have to find some information about the culture they have chosen. They have to submit a video on *Flipgrid* (of

about 4-5 minutes) mentioning why they have chosen that culture, what are the main facts of the culture and which countries compose it.

- **Living in a new culture (session 3)**

By means of a listening activity, students will work on the need to adapt ourselves to the native customs when travelling to different countries. To this aim, students will watch a video about some people talking about their experiences living abroad and adapting themselves to the culture of the country they are living in (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiJ8-2hAqm4). Then, they will do some comprehension exercises related to the information of the video in groups and they will be corrected altogether (Annex V).

To conclude and as a reflection on the topic of cultures and language, the teacher will randomly ask several students some questions to express their opinion or tell their own experiences on the topic. Some of the questions could be the following:

- What did you find most interesting in the video?
- Have you ever travelled to a foreign country? How was your experience of the culture of that country? Was it very different from your own culture?
- How do you think foreigners feel when they come to your country and have to adapt to your culture?

- **Cultural festivities (sessions 3 and 4)**

Students will be asked to prepare an oral presentation (of about 5 to 7 minutes) about different festivities of some English-speaking countries that are considered an important part of their culture. Students will have to find out as much information as possible about their assigned festivity and create an infographic on *Canva*. The information they can search for is: history of the festivity, date, type of celebration, food consumed during the festivity, how it is celebrated, etc.

They will work in groups of five people and each group will be assigned a festivity from the list below:

- Anzac Day (Australia)
- Thanksgiving (USA)

- St. Patrick's Day (Ireland)
- Guy Fawkes Night (United Kingdom)
- Memorial Day (USA)

After the presentations, students will be asked to discuss about the different festivities and talk about how these festivities are celebrated in their own country.

5.5.2. 2nd Term: Working with idioms

During this term, the teacher will explain students the importance of understand the meaning of idioms and other fixed expressions such as slangs or proverbs, when translating them. The activities designed for this term will be devoted to learn about idioms and other fixed expressions and how to recognize them in order to translate them properly in the target culture. These activities are designed mainly to prepare students for the future translation of the subtitles of the video, so they can easily recognize all the expressions they can appear in it.

- **Introduction to idioms (session 5)**

To begin with, the teacher will introduce students to the world of idioms by explaining them what they are, what types of idioms can be found and some tips to recognize them. This information will be presented on a worksheet, so students will read it carefully all together in order to make them understand the content as it is one of the most important parts of the project (Annex VI).

After reading the information, a quiz related to the explanation of idioms will be given to students in order to verify if they have understood the content. They will do it in the *Socrative* platform individually like a competition (https://b.socrative.com/teacher/#import-quiz/67038598).

Then, in groups, they will have to complete a worksheet by linking two columns, one with the idiom and the other one with the meaning (Annex VIII). When finishing, they will comment all the idioms and the meanings together in case there is any doubt.

- **Idioms and other fixed expressions (session 6-7)**

To continue learning about expressions and idioms, the teacher will give a brief explanation of slang words and sayings. To check that they have understood this

information, different activities will be developed to work on these types of expressions. In the first activity, students be given some sentences containing slangs. They will have to rewrite these sentences by substituting slang words with more formal expressions (Annex IX). In the second activity, students will work with different proverbs, and they will have to link them with their meaning (Annex X).

The teacher will also explain students that they will be working in their groups in an activity about idioms classifying them by topic. The teacher will give some topics and students will choose one from the following list:

- Food
- Animals
- Body parts
- Colours
- Sports

Each group must find at least 10 examples of idioms related to the topic they have chosen and find the meaning and the translation into Spanish. To do so, the teacher will create a *Google Site* in order to make students write there all the information they have. They can edit the *Site* as they want. Students will also make a presentation in front of their mates from 5 to 6 minutes about the different idioms they have selected.

- **Identifying idioms and other expressions in *The Simpsons* (session 8)**

The teacher will explain students that they will be working in groups with *The Simpsons'* video by trying to identify all the idioms and fixed expressions that may appear on it.

First, students will be grouped so they can help each other in this activity. Then, the teacher will play the video once and students have to identify all the idioms and expressions that appear in the video and write them down on a paper. The video will be played once again so they can complete their lists. After that, students will be asked to find the meaning of those expressions as well as their Spanish translation. When finishing, all students will share their answers with the

rest of the class and discuss about the information they have found to check if they share the same meanings.

5.5.3. *3ʳᵈ Term: Translation*

During this term, students will be working on translating the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video into Spanish. With all they have learnt about the importance of culture and expressions when translating, they will have to demonstrate their mastering of the comprehension skills and their ability to translate correctly.

- **Introduction to *MemoQ* (session 9)**

The teacher will explain students that they will start translating the subtitles of *The Simpsons* video. They will be using a translating programme called *MemoQ* in order to facilitate them the translation process. They will work with their groups.

They will be given the transcript of the episode divided into colours in order to make the translation process easier for the students and not to overwhelm them with so much text. This is only a guideline; it is not necessary to follow the colour division. Each group can divide it up as they wish.

- **Translating with *MemoQ* (sessions 9-12)**

The teacher will tell students that they have to download the tool *MemoQ* in their computers or laptops.

After that, the teacher will show students a tutorial on how to use the tool (https://helpcenter.memoq.com/hc/en-us/articles/6015071075217-1-Introduction). Students will be given this link in case they need to rewatch it to solve any doubt while using the tool.

To start the translation, students will be given the transcript both in a sheet of paper and in a PDF file, so they can attach the text in the *MemoQ* tool. Before starting the translation, they teacher will warn students to be very careful with some cultural expressions so that they have to choose the better translation in the target language in other to make the target recipients understand what is being said.

After finishing the translation process, each group will submit to *Moodle* platform their translation so the teacher can correct it and assign a final mark.

- **Making their own video (session 13)**

To complete the translation process, students will be asked to embed their subtitles in the video. They will do so by using *Movie Maker* programme. The video created by each group will be then uploaded to *Flipgrid*, so students can see each other's videos.

First, they will take notes on some remarkable differences they have found between their own translation and the translation of other groups and will discuss about it.

After that, in order to check all students' translations, they will watch *The Simpson*'s video with Spanish subtitles in order to compare their translation with the official one. They will write down all the differences found between the official translation and their own and they will discuss on the reasons for those divergences.

To clarify the division of the sessions and their content, the following table has been created:

TERM	TOPIC	SESSION	CONTENT
1st term	CULTURE FACTS	Session 1	What is culture?
		Session 2	Cultures of the world
		Session 3	Living in a new culture
		Session 4	Cultural festivities
2nd term	IDIOMS & OTHER EXPRESSIONS	Session 5	Introduction to idioms
		Session 6	Idioms and other fixed expressions
		Session 7	
		Session 8	Identifying idioms/fixed expressions in *The Simpsons* video
3rd term	TRANSLATION	Session 9	Introduction to *MemoQ*
		Session 10	Translating with *MemoQ*
		Session 11	
		Session 12	
		Session 13	Making their own video

Table 2. Organization of the sessions and their content.

5.6. Materials

In order to effectively develop this proposal, the following materials are needed:

- In the classroom: computer, projector, speakers and internet connection.
- For the students: computer, tablet, or mobile device. Preferably a computer, as the tool, *MemoQ*, is only available for computers. They will also need internet connection in order to find the information asked in some of the activities.

If any student does not have an electronic device, they can go to the school computer room so that all students have one.

The ICT tools needed to implement the project are *YouTube, FlipGrid, Baamboozle, Canva, Google Site, Moodle* and *Gmail*.

5.7. Special needs

In case there were some students who need curricular adaptation in the subject, exercises and contents will be adapted in such a manner that the student would not be overwhelmed by so much material. They would not be required to do the same exercises as their classmates, but they would be required to do the essential and most important ones. In addition, as most of the activities are designed to be done in groups, students will be able to help each other so that no one is left behind.

5.8. Assessment

The present project's assessment will be continuous, formative and summative. It is continuous as students will be working with vocabulary, expressions and grammar structures that have been seen during the course. It is formative as the teacher will be correcting the exercises they do in class and giving feedback of their errors in order to help students to correctly do their translation of the subtitles of the video. Finally, it is summative as it is worth 30% of the final mark of the third term.

The following table summarises the percentages of each part of the project that affect the mark of the third term.

Translation of the subtitles of the Simpson's video	30% of the 3rd term mark
1st term → Culture	5%
2nd term → Idioms and fixed expressions	5%
3rd term → Translation of the subtitles of the video	20% (10% linguistic accuracy and 10% cultural adequacy)

Table 3. Division of the percentages of the project in relation to the final mark of the third term.

In other words, 5% of the first and second term will be assessed by teacher observation of the student's participation and involvement in the tasks, while the final 20% will take into account the translation of the script, giving a value of 10 for linguistic accuracy (grammar, vocabulary, expressions, etc.) and another for cultural adequacy (translation and correct understanding of cultural elements).

In addition, as this is a solely group project, each student will be given a rubric (Annex XI) listing the main aspects of the project to be evaluated so that students can assess the work of their group mates. In this way, it will be verified that all students have participated in the project. This rubric will be taken into account when evaluating the project.

6. DISCUSSION

The present proposal has been part of my reflection process during several years both in my experience as an English language learner and as a language teacher during my internship period. Over the years, I have seen how the lack of motivation in the English classroom is increasing and that some students are reluctant to learn this subject. In addition, I have also perceived how students do not relate culture to language, when it is of vital importance in the process of learning a foreign language since not all cultures have the same expressions to say something. Therefore, I thought of a way to motivate students to learn the language and I couldn't think of a better way than using a video from *The Simpsons.*

The Simpsons have always been considered a bad influence on children and/or teenagers. However, thanks to the studies carried out and discussed above, it can be said that they are a good resource for learning the English language. Moreover, they also have a great cultural component as this series is a satire of the American culture and, at the same time, many episodes also focus on other cultural stereotypes.

With the different activities that have been proposed to improve both the cultural competence and the learning of the English language, I believe that the students will feel more motivated to the subject itself, but also to watch the series and/or films in the original version with or without subtitles to continuing their learning on the language and its cultural aspects.

Nevertheless, this project may also have some limitations when implemented in the EFL classroom. The main one is related to the need of electronic devices to carry out the different activities proposed in this project, especially the final task. Although most of the activities are expected to be made in class, some other require students to work at home. If students do not have electronic devices at home because they cannot afford them, I suggest that the school provide them with a device so that they can participate like the rest of their classmates. In the case that the school cannot have devices for everyone, or the internet connection is not working, all activities can be carried out in the traditional way, including the translation, although it would be more tedious for the students.

Other limitation may be, on the one hand, that there can be problems with students when talking about cultures, as conflicts can arise between students of

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different ethnic groups, or that students do not show respect towards certain cultures or classmates. On the other hand, doing group work can bring benefits to the classroom because they help each other and learn reciprocally, but also problems, as some may work harder than others and it would be unfair to those who are more interested. It is the role of the teacher to make students aware of the importance of respect, as it is one the basis of this project. Regarding group work, students must be warned that the teacher will also assess how they relate within the group and thank to the peer-assessment rubric, not all students will have the same mark as they rest of the group.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This innovative proposal combines the use of sitcoms in the English classroom with pedagogical translation, so students learn and reflect on the cultural aspects that surround foreign languages.

The sitcom selected to carry out this project is *The Simpson*, an American satire that emphasizes main aspects of the American culture by means of stereotypes. Basing on this idea, the final task of this project is to translate an episode of this sitcom taking into account not only the correctness of the language, but also those cultural nuances such as idioms or other fixed expressions that may appear on it. For this purpose, this project is divided into three stages. First, it aims students to reflect on the concept of culture; then, students work with some language-dependent expressions; and finally, they use this knowledge to fulfil the final task.

With this background, this project is intended to make students improve their cultural competence, which is part of the curriculum, as well as their comprehension skills on the English language, as they have to apply their knowledge on the English language and culture to create an accurate translation in their own language.

Moreover, this proposal also aims at improving the rest of skills thanks to the introduction of activities that stimulate student learning through videos and audios, discussion activities and the creation of their own presentations and materials.

In addition, the introduction of the Task-based Language Learning (TBLT) allows students to work gradually from simple activities to more complex activities in which they implement what they have learnt.

Furthermore, the GTM methodology can be a great resource in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) since, combined with other methodologies, it makes the L1 present in the English classroom and makes it easier for students to learn the language by relating concepts between them.

Besides, this proposal is also intended to improve students' motivation in the classroom by using a sitcom like *The Simpsons*, which they usually watch in their daily lives, and by using L1, as it gives them greater confidence and security when learning the language.

Likewise, students improve their digital skills by using tools such as *Canva* or *MemoQ* to carry out their different activities, which also takes them away from the traditional pen-and-paper learning process and makes it more technological.

Finally, this proposal also aims to teach students to respect other cultures in order to promote good behaviour as citizens of society. This also improves the atmosphere in the classroom through respect among classmates and group activities.

To conclude and through the development of this project, I have learned several things that I would like to mention. Although it is true that it is always necessary to follow the contents of the law, I think it is good to go a bit beyond the curriculum and implement certain topics of general culture or, as has been done in this case, pedagogical translation. I also believe that it is often necessary to put oneself in the students' shoes and, as a teacher, to look for something that can motivate them to learn the language. Therefore, the creation of new activities that go beyond the traditional method of doing an exercise in a notebook or workbook will help in this process of motivation. Moreover, with the emergence of ICT tools, this motivation can be further enhanced as they will be working with tools that they are used to in their daily lives. Lastly, I would like to remark that despite the appearance of new methodologies, strategies, etc., I consider that those that were used in the past, such as GTM, combined with other more recent ones, can also benefit the development of students' learning. It is not necessarily essential to always use the most ground-breaking methodologies, but often, when combined with more traditional ones, they can work equally well.

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