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The translation of cultural references.  
An analysis of the Spanish version of Bill Bryson's  
*Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*  
ALBA CABRÉ BELTRAN



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI  
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ALBA CABRÉ BELTRAN

TUTORA: Dra. Nerea Tera Faba

UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This project studies the transference of cultural elements in the Spanish version of *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country* by Bill Bryson. To carry out this analysis, several taxonomies of cultural references and translation techniques have been studied and once a suitable classification has been selected for each of them, the cultural instances in the source text have been isolated and categorized. Then they have been compared with their translations into Spanish to determine which strategies and techniques were used by the translator at a microlinguistic level, as well as their impact in the text as a whole. Finally, the results and conclusions are presented in order to show which translation techniques have been used the most and which translation method prevails in the target text.

**Keywords:** cultural references, translation techniques, source text, target text.

## **RESUMEN**

Este proyecto estudia la transferencia de elementos culturales en la versión española de *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country* de Bill Bryson. Para llevar a cabo este análisis, se han estudiado varias taxonomías de referencias culturales, así como de técnicas de traducción y, una vez encontrada la clasificación adecuada para cada una de ellas, se han aislado y categorizado los culturemas en el texto origen. Después, se han comparado con sus traducciones en español para determinar qué estrategias y técnicas fueron empleadas por el traductor a nivel microlingüístico, así como su impacto en el conjunto del texto. Por último, se presentan los resultados y las conclusiones para mostrar qué técnicas de traducción han sido las más utilizadas y qué método de traducción prevalece en el texto meta.

**Palabras clave:** referencias culturales, técnicas de traducción, texto origen, texto meta.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Objectives**

The main goal of this project is to identify, classify and analyse the Spanish translations of cultural references that appear in a sample of the book *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*. To do so, the cultural instances of the source text will be classified into five types: natural environment, cultural heritage, social conventions, social organisation, and linguistic culture. Afterwards, these cultural occurrences are going to be compared with their corresponding translations in the target text and then analysed in order to determine which techniques have been used in each particular case. Once the analysis is completed, a conclusion will be reached on which method of translation predominates in the text as well as its suitability.

### **1.2. Methodology**

To carry out this project, several steps have been followed in order to obtain the desired results.

First of all, it was really important to decide which part of the book would be analysed given that the corpus of study (Bill Bryson's original novel and its translation into Spanish) exceeded the limits of this project. Since the publication is divided into three main parts, a decision was taken of working on a different chapter of each one (1, 10 and 19), in order to obtain a balanced sample of the source text that accurately represented Bryson's work as a whole.

The next step was to carry out a research so as to understand how the content of the book should be analysed and classified. It was necessary at first to find a way of organising the specific terms related to the Australian culture, that is to say, its cultural references. After having considered different options, it was established that Lucía Molina's taxonomy was

the most adequate for this project since the broad range of categories in which her classification is divided allowed me to easily allocate all the cultural instances found in the corpus.

Once that part was covered, it was time to move on to translation techniques. Since the process of transferring a text from source to target language always involves a number of changes, it was thought that the best classification would be an extensive one because it would provide a wide range of techniques to analyse the translations of cultural references into Spanish. Bearing this in mind, after comparing different taxonomies of translation techniques, it was established that Amparo Hurtado's was the most appropriate given its level of specificity as well as its clarity and comprehensibility.

The next step to follow was starting with the classification and posterior analysis of the different cultural references. To do so, an exhaustive double reading of the selected chapters was carried out in order to extract all the culturemes and classify them according to Molina's taxonomy. Once this part was concluded, the different cultural references were divided into groups conforming to Hurtado's classification. This way, the main part of the project was completed, and it was finally the time to analyse the results and draw the adequate conclusions.

### **1.3. The Book**

The corpus studied in this project is comprised of two books: the original version of *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*, and its translation into Spanish by Esther Roig i Formosa.

Bill Bryson's book is focused on Australia, its people, and their traditions as well as the different geographical and touristic places that one can visit there. The intention of the

book is to present our antipodes in a humorous but interesting way using also a bit of sarcasm, which works pretty well when it comes to attract the readers' attention.

The title has nineteen chapters divided into three main parts: *Into the Outback*, *Civilized Australia (The Boomerang Coast)* and *Around the Edges*. The first part talks about the author's trip from Sydney to Perth and the different experiences and situations that he has to cope with during the route. The second part is more focused on history rather than travelling. Along those pages, Bryson talks about the country's history since its colonization, and he also makes reference to the different ideas or concepts that he considers typical of a "civilized Australia". Finally, in the third part the writer continues with explanations about his journeys to different Australian well-known places such as Uluru or the Great Barrier Reef.

Through the different chapters, the author explains his experiences in the aboriginal country, and at the same time he provides the readers with valuable travelling information. Although at the beginning it may not look like an ordinary travel guide, once one starts reading it, the book itself reveals its original purpose while it amuses the readers and transports them to Down Under through its history, geography and its flora and fauna.

#### **1.4. The Author**

Bill Bryson is a writer from Iowa who has spent more than half his life in Britain. When he was young, he dropped university in order to come to Europe in a back-packing trip. After travelling for several weeks, he found a job in Britain, so he decided to stay in the country where later on he would meet his future wife. After some years in British land, the couple decided to move to the writer's native city, Des Moines, so he could finish his degree on Political Science and after that, they finally moved permanently to Britain.

The American author has always been surrounded by journalism. Both his parents together with his older brother used to work for local newspapers, so he has been living with this vocation since he was a child. Over the years, he has worked as a journalist for some well-known newspapers such as *The Times* or the *Financial Weekly*.

Bryson published *The Lost Continent: Travels in a Small-Town America* in 1989, which was his first travel guide. The book was quite successful, but not as much as some of his following publications such as *Neither Here nor There: Travels in Europe* (1992) or *Made in America: An Informal History of the English Language in the United States* (1994). After having written those books, during several years the author opted for a specific genre: travel guides, with which he achieved great popularity thanks to the humorous tone of his writing, which granted him the favour of the readers. Even though Bill Bryson has written a lot of different books related to travelling, the most important publication regarding to this project is *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*, which was published in 2000.

After writing the Australian travel guide, the American author has been varying his works from Science to History in addition to some biographical publications in which he talks about his life, his experiences, and the different situations that he has had to cope with during his existence.

### **1.5. The Spanish version of the Book**

As already mentioned, the second book included in my corpus is the Spanish translation of Bryson's *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*, which has been named *En las Antípodas*.

This version has been translated by Esther Roig i Formosa, who has worked in publications such as the world-famous novel *Inferno* written by the American author Dan Brown.

Once I had obtained some information about these two books, I proceeded to collate the cultural references in both source and target texts. This comparison process resulted in an exhaustive and detailed analysis of the cultural references and the translation techniques that have been used in the translation process. The first thing that called my attention was that *En las Antípodas* maintains most of the original cultural references that can be found in Bill Bryson's book, which means that the translator did her best to respect the contents of the source text in order to provide a more faithful and enjoyable experience to the readers, as it will be shown in the next section.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Culture and Cultural References**

#### **2.1.1. Definition of culture**

One of the most important concepts that has to be defined in order to facilitate the comprehension of the rest of the project is the meaning of “culture”. Even though it is a term commonly used in the everyday language, it is a complex concept that cannot be easily defined. The cultural system of a given community is more than just a bunch of traditions and customs put together. For example, the well-known translator professor at Surrey, Paul Newmark, defined 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” (1988:94). In this case, it can be appreciated that Newmark introduces the word “language” in his definition, which establishes a direct relation between a society and its way of communication.

Taking this into account, together with Hurtado’s opinion about the existence of different cultures sharing the same linguistic features (2001:607), the term “culture” should be understood as a way of life that gathers together different characteristics such as traditions, language, fashion or art; creating as a result a particular identity that some people consider of their own.

#### **2.1.2. Definition and classification of cultural references**

Another important term for this project is cultural reference, also named as *cultureme*<sup>1</sup>. This word makes reference to all the different concepts, beliefs or rules that added together constitute a specific cultural system. That is to say, geographical locations,

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<sup>1</sup> Although some authors differentiate the concepts of *cultureme* and *cultural reference*, due to practical reasons both terms will be used as synonyms throughout this project.

clothes, social rules or some linguistic features amongst many other features that are particular to a certain community.

Even though there are different classifications for the culturemes and many of them have been studied and contrasted in the development of this paper, when it came to the final decision, it was established that the project would be based on Lucía Molina’s taxonomy given that it was the most adequate classification for the type of information extracted from Bryson’s book. Since *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country* is a travel guide, the concepts that appear on its pages are strongly related to the ones that can be found in Molina’s work, such as geographical areas, fauna and flora, or emblematic monuments among others.

Even though there are four main categories for cultural references in Molina’s taxonomy, it is important to highlight that the social field has been subdivided into two different subgroups in order to allow a more detailed classification when it comes to the topics that affect the social environment. In the following table, all the categories described by the Spanish author are classified as stated in her book.

<b>CULTURAL REFERENCES</b>	
<b>TOPIC CATEGORIZATION</b>	<b>SCOPE CATEGORIZATION</b>
<b>Natural world</b>	Ecologic differences between the different geographical areas, fauna and flora, atmospheric phenomena, winds, weather, landscapes and place names.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cultural heritage</b></p>	<p>Physical or ideological references from a culture, religion, objects, products, devices, real or fictional characters, historical events, festivities, popular beliefs, folklore, artistic movements, films, music, emblematic monuments, well-known places, urban planning, utensils, musical instruments, agriculture and fishing techniques, means of transportation, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Society</b></p>	<p><b>Social conventions:</b></p> <p>Courtesy treatments, different ways of eating and speaking, clothing, moral values, gestures, greetings, physical distance, etc.</p>
	<p><b>Social organization:</b></p> <p>Legal, political, and educational systems, organizations, professions, currency, periods, calendars, measurements, weights, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Linguistic and cultural aspects</b></p>	<p>Transliterations, proverbs, fixed expressions, proper names with an additional meaning, metaphors, symbolic associations, insults, interjections, blasphemies, etc.</p>

**Table 1.** Translated version of the classification of the different cultural references based on Molina's work (2006:80-82).

As it can be seen in the table above, cultural references include a very diverse array of elements that are characteristic of a given culture. Even though each society is used to its

own idiosyncratic culturemes and they seem totally logic and obvious to its people, it is always interesting to see how these cultural references are adapted during the translation process in order to enable people from different cultural systems to understand what their exact meaning is. Along the project, this process of adaptation is perfectly reflected in many different examples in which a given cultural element in the target text has been transformed into a completely different concept. As we will see in the next chapters, the objective of this modifications is to facilitate Spanish readers the comprehension of the book.

## **2.2. Translation Techniques**

### **2.2.1 Definition**

The second keyword for this project is the concept “translation technique”. As it has been mentioned above, there are many different ways to turn a source text into a target text. Normally it will depend on several factors such as editorial guidelines, the translator’s own concept of translation, and many other variables including the type of readers the publication is directed to and the target language among others.

According to Hurtado, a translation technique is “A tool used to identify, classify and name the equivalences chosen by the translator for the micro-textual units to obtain specific data as well as to obtain concrete data on the methodological option used” (2001: 257). As it can be deduced from this definition, translation techniques are basically the different resources that professionals have within their grasp to transfer the meaning of a text written originally in a certain language into the language of the target audience.

### **2.2.2. Classification**

Although nowadays there are different taxonomies for translation techniques, this project is based on the one established by Amparo Hurtado, which is a wide classification that

takes into account many different possibilities to translate the same concept. This specific group of resources has nothing but eighteen distinct techniques that professionals can apply during the translation of the source text.

In the following table, these eighteen translation techniques are shown one by one by its original name. Apart from that, the definition of each of them and an example are included in order to provide a clear explanation of how the resource is used and in which situations it should be chosen.

It is important to highlight though, that there is a number of translations of cultural references in the source text that didn't seem to belong to any of the items in Hurtado's taxonomy. Given this difficulty, other classifications of translation techniques were investigated and, after doing a research, a technique was found that perfectly adjusted to the unclassifiable cases that had appeared in the original text.

This way, for pragmatic reasons Hurtado's classification has been complemented with a technique named *standard translation*, found in Marco's taxonomy (Marco 2004:138).

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES	
Adaptation	A cultural element is replaced by another element specific to the receiving culture. E.g.: change baseball for football in a Spanish translation.
Amplification	Information not included in the original text is introduced by the translator in the target text: explanatory paraphrases, translator's notes, etc. E.g.: in a translation from Arabic into English, "the month of fasting for Muslims" is added to <i>Ramadan</i> . This is the opposite technique to elision.

Borrowing	A word or expression from another language is integrated as it is in the target text. It can be pure (without any change), for example, using the English term <i>lobby</i> in Spanish; or naturalised, for example using <i>fútbol</i> instead of <i>football</i> .
Calque	A foreign word or phrase is translated literally; calques can be lexical or structural. E.g.: the English term Normal School from the French <i>École Normal</i> .
Compensation	An element of information or stylistic effect is introduced elsewhere in the target text, to make up for omission of an element placed in a different position in the source text.
Description	A term or expression is replaced by a description of its form and/or function. E.g.: translate the Italian word <i>Panettone</i> as “The traditional sponge cake eaten on New Year's Eve in Italy”.
Discursive creation	An ephemeral equivalence is established. It is completely unpredictable equivalence used just in a specific context. E.g.: the translation of the American film <i>The Sound of Music</i> as <i>Sonrisas y lágrimas</i> .
Elision	Elements present in the source text do not appear in the target text. E.g.: eliding “The month of fasting” as an apposition to Ramadan in a translation from Arabic to English. This is the opposite technique to amplification.
Established equivalent	Using a term or expression recognised by the dictionary as equivalent in the target language. E.g.: translating the English

	expression “They are as like as two peas” for “Se parecen como dos gotas de agua” in Spanish.
Generalization	A general term is used to translate a more specific one in the source text. E.g.: translating the French terms <i>guichet</i> , <i>fenêtre</i> or <i>devanture</i> , by the English word <i>window</i> . This is opposed to particularisation.
Linguistic amplification	Linguistic elements are added. E.g.: translating the English expression “No way” into Spanish by “De ninguna de las maneras”, instead of using an expression with the same number of words, such as “En absoluto”. It is the opposite technique to linguistic compression.
Linguistic compression	Linguistic elements are synthesised. E.g.: translating the English interrogative phrase “Yes, so what?” into “¿Y?” in Spanish instead of using an expression with the same number of words. It is the opposite technique to linguistic expansion.
Literal translation	Translating an expression word by word. E.g.: “They are as like as two peas” as “Se parecen como dos guisantes”.
Modulation	Changing the point of view, approach or category in relation to the formulation of the original text; it can be lexical and/or structural. E.g.: when translating, using <i>Arabian Gulf</i> or <i>Persian Gulf</i> depending on ideological affiliation.
Particularization	A more precise or concrete term is used. E.g.: translating the English term <i>window</i> by the French term <i>guichet</i> . It is the opposite technique to generalization.

Standard Translation	There is an "official" translation when it comes to cultural elements that first appear in a particular culture. E.g.: translating “New South Wales” as the Spanish concept of “Nueva Gales del Sur”.
Substitution	Linguistic elements are replaced by paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures, or vice versa). E.g.: translate the Arabic gesture of placing one's hand in one's heart as <i>Thank you</i> .
Transposition	The grammatical category is changed. E.g.: translating “He will soon be back” by changing the adverb <i>soon</i> to the verb <i>tardar</i> in Spanish, instead of keeping the adverb and translating the sentence as “Estará de vuelta pronto”.
Variation	Linguistic or paralinguistic elements are changed affecting the linguistic variation. E.g.: introducing changes of dialect to characterise some characters in theatrical translation.

**Table 2.** Translated version of the classification of the different translation techniques based on Hurtado's work (2001:633-635) modified by adding a concept from Marco's classification (Marcos 2004:138).

### **3. CORPUS ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1. *Down Under* by Bill Bryson**

After having carried out an exhaustive analysis of the sample of Bryson's book and its corresponding translation, several specific characteristics of both texts became apparent.

On the first place, when talking about the source text, it is interesting to see that even though the five different types of cultural references from Molina's taxonomy are present in the original work, the percentages of their presence in the text are very varied, being the culture, society and natural categories the most predominant in the analysed fragments.

Despite these three groups of culturemes being the most notorious, the author consciously or unconsciously managed to also introduce cultural references belonging to the other two categories described by Molina.

On the second place, it is also noticeable the variety of translation techniques that have been used in the Spanish version of Bryson's work. However, not all the techniques listed in Hurtado's taxonomy have been used. From her work, only eleven out of eighteen techniques were applied during the translation process, whereas an external one (Marco's standard translation) has been applied in several occasions, which adds up to a total amount of twelve different translation techniques used during the translation of *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country* into Spanish.

#### **3.2. Analysis**

##### **3.2.1. Cultural References**

Once the theoretical framework was properly established, the next step in this project was focusing on identifying all the different cultural references that appeared in the selected

samples (chapters 1, 10 and 19). This way, it would be possible to classify them in order to subsequently recollect all the necessary data for the correct development of the project.

When all the culturemes were properly classified into categories, I proceeded to extract their percentages of use, based on the number of times that each category appeared on the book. This process was very productive because it yields interesting results. It showed that Bryson opted for cultural heritage, social organisation and natural world better than for linguistic and cultural aspects or social conventions to describe the main features of Australia.

Taking into account that the Australian bestseller is a travel guide, it makes sense the fact that cultural heritage is the most used cultureme. It raises up to a 38%, which is quite a lot compared to the others. Since the book describes many of Bryson's experiences lived in *Down Under*, it is not strange that some key elements of its culture appear reflected on the pages of the book.

Another cultural reference that is repeatedly mentioned in the book is social organisation, which adds up to a 30%. This fact reflects how the Australian society and the way in which people organise their lives and their traditions are extremely fascinating for a foreigner as Bill Bryson. Since it is the second most numerous cultureme, it leads the readers to think that the way in which Australia is socially organised is another key aspect in order to understand better the country.

In the third place, with a 27%, the natural world is another cultural reference that is quite recurring. In this case it is completely understandable given that culture is strictly linked to landscapes and the famous geographical elements of a given community. Since the author describes to the readers places that he visited as well as some elements such as

specific mountains or marine winds, the natural world could not be forgotten in a book such as *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*. Otherwise, some important information would have been missing and the travel guide would not be complete.

Once the three main elements have been explained, it is important to highlight that although in a smaller percentage, there are two more types of cultural references that are present in the book.

On the one hand, linguistic and cultural aspects appear in a 9%, which reflects that even though it is not one of the essential types of culturemes in this book, it is still necessary in order to show to the audience some specific characteristics typical of the Australian language.

On the other hand, social conventions are present only in a 1%. This fact could show that regardless its minimal presence, this cultural reference can sometimes be helpful to understand how people is expected to behave, dress or talk because of their Australian culture and traditions.

Another alternative explanation for the uneven attention paid to some cultural categories can be found in the fact that Bryson's original target audience belongs to the Anglophone culture. Therefore, it is possible to explain the scarcity of linguistic and social conventions references by the close relationship and historical links that exist between Australia and other English-speaking countries such as Britain. It seems logical that Bryson has not paid too much attention to some cultural categories that may not be common to Australians and his potential readers.

After presenting the analysis of the different culturemes, it is interesting to see the way in which the American author used language to get closer to the readers and show them how

people live in Down Under and the different ways in which they represent their own culture.

### **3.2.2. Translation Techniques**

Another important part of this project is to analyse the Spanish translations of the cultural references that appear on the book. Even though now it is quite clear which are the most used culturemes and the possible reasons that justify their use, the project would not make any sense without their subsequently categorisation based on the techniques used during the translation.

As it has been previously mentioned in the theoretical framework, according to Hurtado Albir there are eighteen main techniques that can be used when translating a text. Although all of them have been taken into account to carry out this analysis, it is necessary to mention that not all of them appear in *En las Antípodas*.

Only eleven of Hurtado's techniques are reflected in the selected samples of the book, which leads to think that these techniques might be the most commonly used when it comes to translating cultural references. Even so, all the results will be explained in order to offer an explanation as to their frequency of appearance.

First of all, though, it is important to describe the method that was used to calculate the percentages obtained. The process was carried out as follows: once all the culturemes were identified and classified, the next step was comparing the word from the source text with its correspondent translation in the target text so as to see which technique had been used in each case. Once this process was completed, the different cultural references, which were already classified into Molina's divisions, were further divided according to the translation technique that had been used. This way, each cultureme was subclassified

depending on the technique used during its translation into Spanish. The last step consisted on calculating the number of that times each technique appeared inside each group of cultural references, which provided different figures that later on would be transformed into percentages.

Once the percentages were obtained, the next task was to decide in which way the figures would be presented. After considering several options, it was established that pie charts were the best option given that they were the most clear and understandable tool to reflect the results obtained during the analysis.

The first category of culturemes that was analysed was the one related to the natural world. In this case, only five translation techniques were used and not all of them come from Hurtado's taxonomy. With a 48%, standard translation is the most used technique in this category. Taking into account the topic that is being analysed as well as the purpose of the book, these results make perfect sense given that many of the Australian geographical highlights have an official translation into Spanish. For this reason, it is possible to conclude that the translator has tried to ease the understanding of the Spanish readers by using the standard translations of geographical features, whenever possible.

As the second most used technique, borrowing got a 35%. Even though the presence of borrowings in the target text is inferior to that of the source text, it is a high enough figure to conclude that it might be indicative of an attempt from Roig i Formosa to be faithful to the source text.

The use of borrowings seems also logical in the context of the translation of a "humorous travel guide". Since one of the objectives of the source text is to transport readers to Australian lands, Bryson has included a number of vocabulary particular to Australian

culture. It seems safe to assume that the translator has opted for the use of borrowings in order to transmit to her target readers the local colour described in the source text.

With a lower percentage, calque is the following translation technique that appears inside the group of natural world. This technique has been used in the 11% of the cases and that is probably because although there are some words that can be calqued in the target language, it is true that some other techniques are more useful when it comes to obtain a more fluent and idiomatic translation.

Generalization represents the 4% of the translated culturemes. It is a technique used by the translator in order to transfer terms that do not exist in the target culture. Therefore, it is a technique that prevents the loss of content specific to the culture described in the source text.

Finally, elision is the less used technique with only a 2%. Even though it is one of the possibilities presented to translators, Roig i Formosa seems reluctant to omit geographical references in the Spanish version of the book. This is due to the fact that eliding this type of culturemes could affect the original and change its meaning. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the translator shows once again her intention of preserving the essence of the original text.

Cultural heritage was the following category to be analysed. In this case, six different techniques were used, five from Hurtado and one from Marco. It is interesting to see the data obtained given that the most frequent translation technique, which is borrowing, adds up to a 67%. This number represents such a high percentage that it seems to confirm that the translator's intention was to maintain the contents and meaning of the source text as

much as possible. Otherwise, maybe she would have opted for more frequently used Spanish vocabulary in her translation.

Calque was also used when talking about cultural heritage but in a much lower percentage. This technique was used in the 21% of the cases, which represents less than a half of the previously mentioned technique. As in the previous group of cultural references, it can be considered that by using this technique the translator pretended to be faithful to the original content so as the readers did not miss any important information.

Another technique that has been used in this category is standard translation. Even though it represents only a 9% of the translated cultural references, it is the third main category that has been used in this group. Since the Bryson's book belongs to the travel guide genre, it makes sense to think that some of the words in the source text have an official translation in Spanish, which means that the translator does not need to look for a suitable way of transferring certain concepts, because their equivalents already exist in the target language.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the remaining translation techniques used in this category, all share the same percentage of use. Description, linguistic compression, and literal translation, the three of them, have been used in only 1% of the cases. Even though it is not a high percentage, it is curious to see how the translator uses all the available resources in order to generate a smooth and easy to read translation.

The next group of cultural references that has been analysed are social conventions. It has to be highlighted that this case has been particularly interesting due to the percentages obtained. As the data shown, when it comes to the transference of social conventions culturemes, the translator resorts to a single technique, variation, that has been used in the

100% of the studied situations. It has to be specified though, that social conventions represent only the 1% of the different culturemes that appear on the book. The fact that within such a small percentage the same technique has been used in all the studied cases, would show a pattern when it comes to translating these cultural references. Said pattern indicates that the translator may have opted for the use of variation in order to introduce some features of the Australian dialect, so that the target readers can feel even closer to the depicted culture.

Continuing with a social topic, the following group of cultural references that has been presented and analysed is social organisation. Eight different translation techniques have been used in the translation of the book into Spanish, which compared to the previous groups, is quite a lot. In this case, adaptation has been used in 50% of the presented cases. This important percentage clearly shows the translator's desire of facilitating the comprehension of the book to the readers. Most of the culturemes in this section are related to money or units of measurement, so it seems logical that the translator thought it necessary to modify these references for two main reasons. In the first place, the proper understanding of lengths, prices, etc. in a travel book is essential to the target readers. Also, it is notably difficult for most people to correctly interpret unfamiliar units of measurement, whereas they can be easily adapted to the target culture during the translation process.

The following technique, standard translation got in this case a 13% of the total amount of used techniques. It is true that this result is not even close to the most frequent one, which is adaptation, but it is interesting to see how the translator continues using the same resources whenever possible in order to transmit Bryson's ideas through words that are commonly used in the Spanish language nowadays.

The third most used technique is linguistic amplification, which adds up to an 11% of the total amount. This is the last out of the eight employed techniques that is above a 10%. When talking about social organisation, it is true that some concepts from the source text can pose difficulties in the target language if the reader has never heard them before. In these cases, the translator has opted for adding an explanation to her text in order to ensure that the audience will receive the necessary information to understand better the target text.

After having mentioned the main techniques used in this field, there are five more that have to be taken into account. From a higher to a lower percentage, the employed techniques are the following: linguistic compression (9%), elision (8%), variation (5%), calque (3%) and generalization (1%).

As it can be seen, compression and elision are the main ones in this subgroup, which could indicate that the translator may have suppressed some contents that she considered in the Spanish version, or at least not necessary and possibly just confusing for the reader.

As for the other three techniques, variation, calque, and generalization, their percentages are really reduced, which could mean that they are not strongly related neither to the social field nor to the translation of its concepts.

Finally, the last group of cultural references that was analysed is the one related to linguistic and cultural aspects. Although this category of culturemes has a minor presence in Bryson's book and it accounts for only 4% of the cultural references, it is linked to the use of four translation techniques whose frequency of use are much more balanced than in some of the previous studied groups.

On the first place, borrowing is the most used technique with a percentage of 43%. Since many of these culturemes are related to language, it is interesting to notice that the translator has aimed at maintaining the features and contents of the source text as much as possible and therefore, she employed this tool.

Another technique with a high percentage of use is discursive creation, which represents a 29% of the total amount of used techniques. This is interesting given that this technique has not appeared before in any other group of culturemes. It could be assumed that the use of this technique proves the difficulty of translating some specific words or set phrases. It is possible that the need to overcome these linguistic obstacles could have led the translator to create new terms and expressions from scratch, with the objective of transferring English concepts that do not count with an exact equivalent in Spanish. Therefore, the intention of the translator when employing a discursive creation technique could be to offer her readers access to the meaning of difficult terms or expressions.

The last two pair of techniques that have been used are elision and variation. In this case, it is curious to see how both of them share the same exact percentage: 14%. This is not such a high number compared with the percentages of the other techniques. This fact could be interpreted as a sign of the translator's will to facilitate the readers comprehension by deleting some unnecessary or useless elements (elision) and, on the other hand, by translating some of the terms from the source text in a characterised way so the Spanish readers can understand the idea much easily.

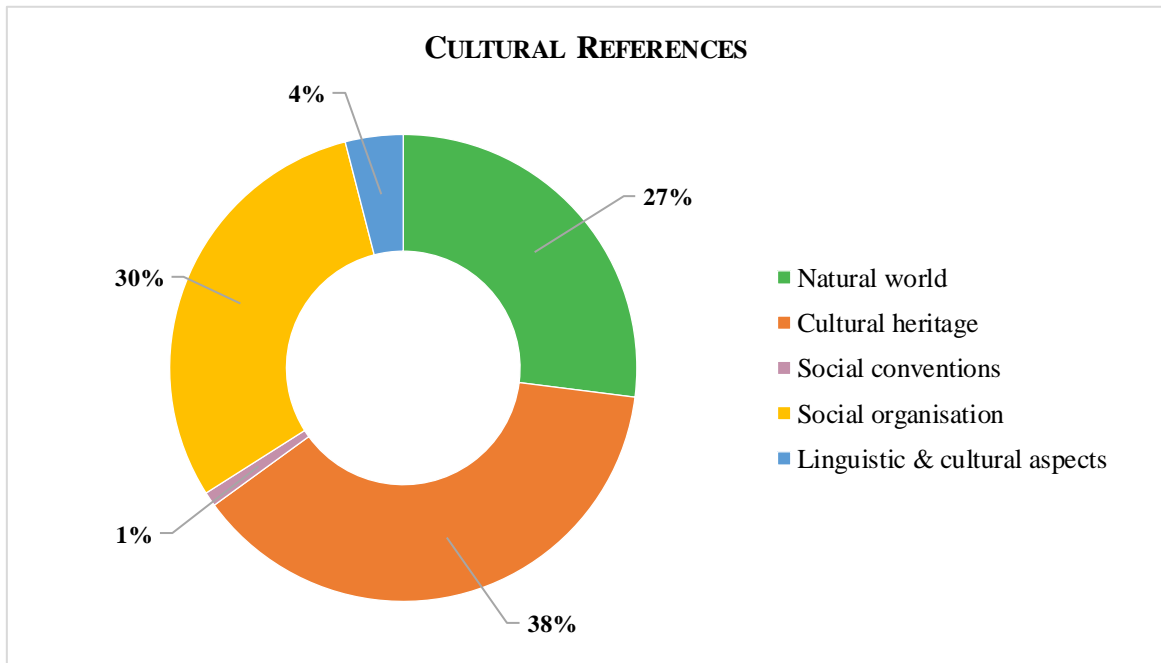
All in all, as it has been presented within the analysis, it can be seen that many different translation techniques have been used in the translation of *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country*. And even though not all the techniques included in Hurtado's

taxonomy have appeared in the Spanish version of the book, a vast majority of them have been used by the translator, albeit in a different degree.

#### 4. RESULTS

In this part of the project, the results of the analysis are presented in order to provide a more visual and clear vision of the analysed data from the previous section.

First of all, the following pie chart represents the percentages of appearance of the different cultural references that are mentioned in Molina's taxonomy. As it can be seen, the main ones are cultural heritage, social organisation, and natural world.

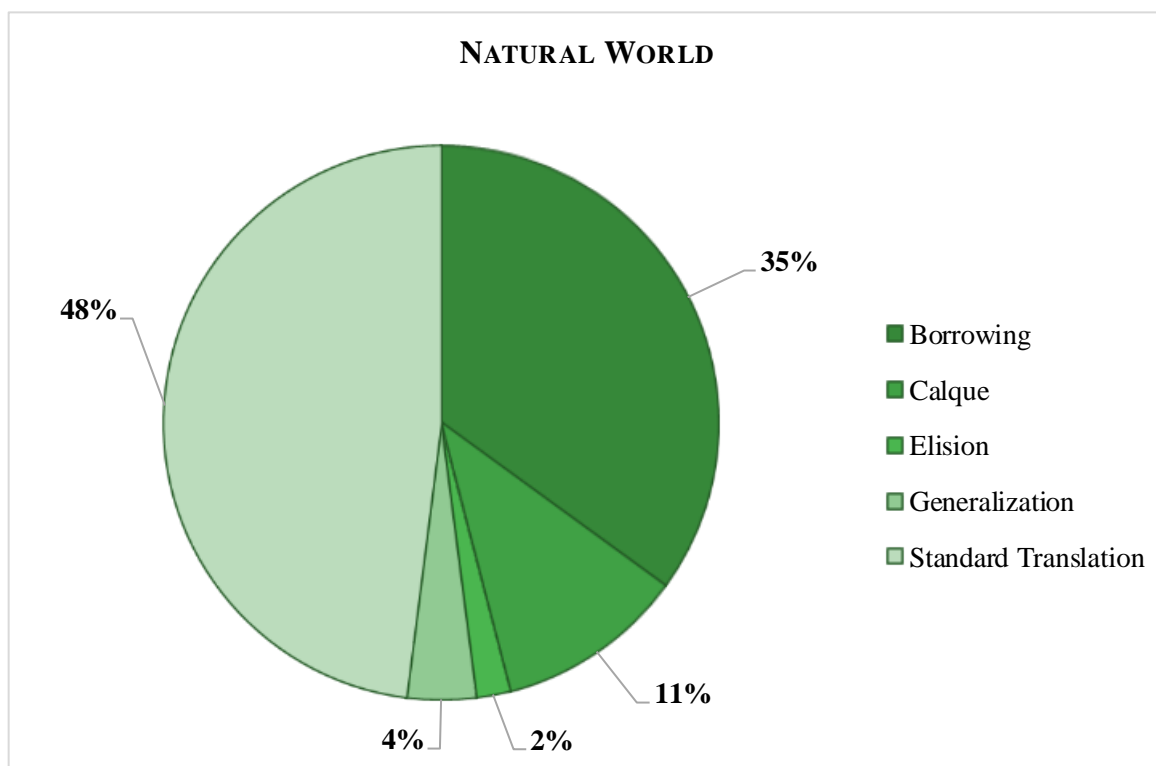


**Figure 1.** *Cultural References*

Some examples of culturemes that can be found in the source text, and therefore, that have been analysed in order to carry out this project are the following:

- Cultural heritage: Milne Bay
- Social organisation: a mile and a quarter
- Natural world: Roaring forties (referring to a specific type of strong winds)
- Linguistic and cultural aspects: Sydneysiders
- Social Convention: Aussie accent

The next chart relates the culturemes linked to the natural world, with the most commonly used translation techniques in this specific field. As it can be seen, five techniques have been used in different percentages, being borrowing the prevalent one.

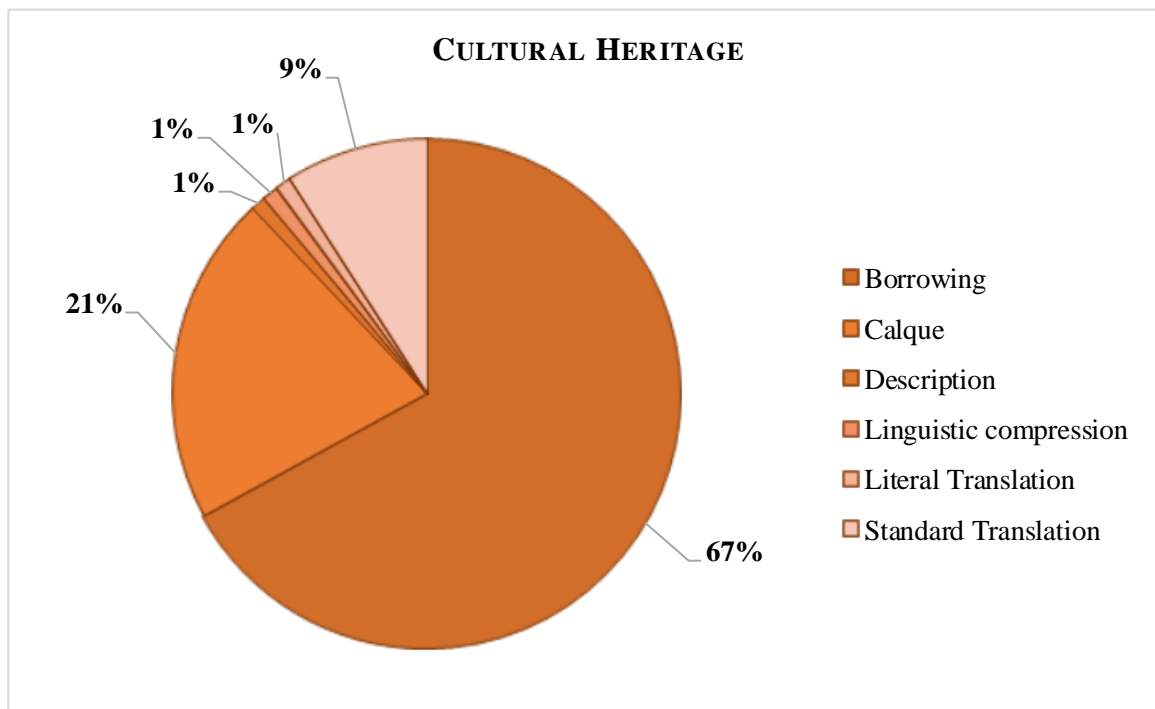


*Figure 2. Natural World*

In order to illustrate the effects produced by these techniques, an example extracted from the original book will now be provided together with the solution adopted in the Spanish translation:

- Borrowing: ST → Outback / TT → Outback
- Calque: ST → Great Victoria Desert / TT → Gran Desierto Victoria
- Elision: ST → Great Barrier Reef / TT → Gran Barrera Australiana
- Generalization (+ borrowing): ST → Strzelecki Desert / TT → Outback
- Standard Translation: ST → Timor Sea / TT → Mar de Timor

As already explained in the corpus analysis, in order to render into Spanish references included in the cultural heritage category, the translator employed an array of six different techniques. Below, a pie chart can be found in which all those techniques are depicted according to their percentages of use during the process carried out by Roig i Formosa.



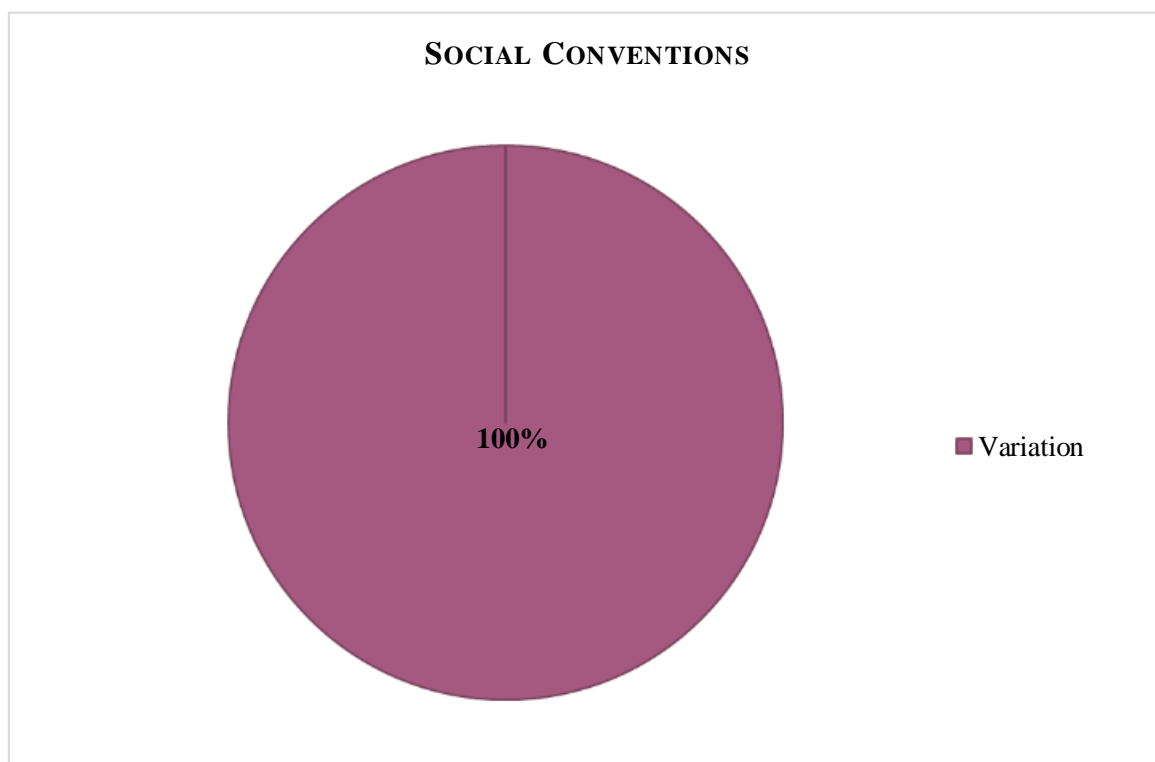
*Figure 3. Cultural Heritage*

Even though some techniques appear only in the 1% of the cases, they are no less important than the main ones, since the sparseness of a certain technique is significant to this study as its overuse. To do so, an example of each of them is listed below.

- Borrowing: ST → Opera House / TT → Opera House
- Calque: ST → National Museum of Victoria / TT → Museo Nacional de Victoria
- Description: ST → Melbourne Cricket Ground / TT → Estadio de cricket
- Linguistic compression: ST → Surfers Paradise Book / TT → Surfers Paradise
- Literal Translation: ST → Things that will kill you horridly in Australia / TT → Cosas que pueden matarte horriblemente en Australia
- Standard Translation: ST → Baywatch / TT → Los vigilantes de la playa

Social conventions is an interesting category given that there are not many cultural references of this type in Bryson's text. Besides, the few references to social conventions found in the source text have all been translated by using the same technique.

Even though this situation is different from the ones previously mentioned in the results section, it is curious to compare its chart with the ones created for the other types of culturemes.

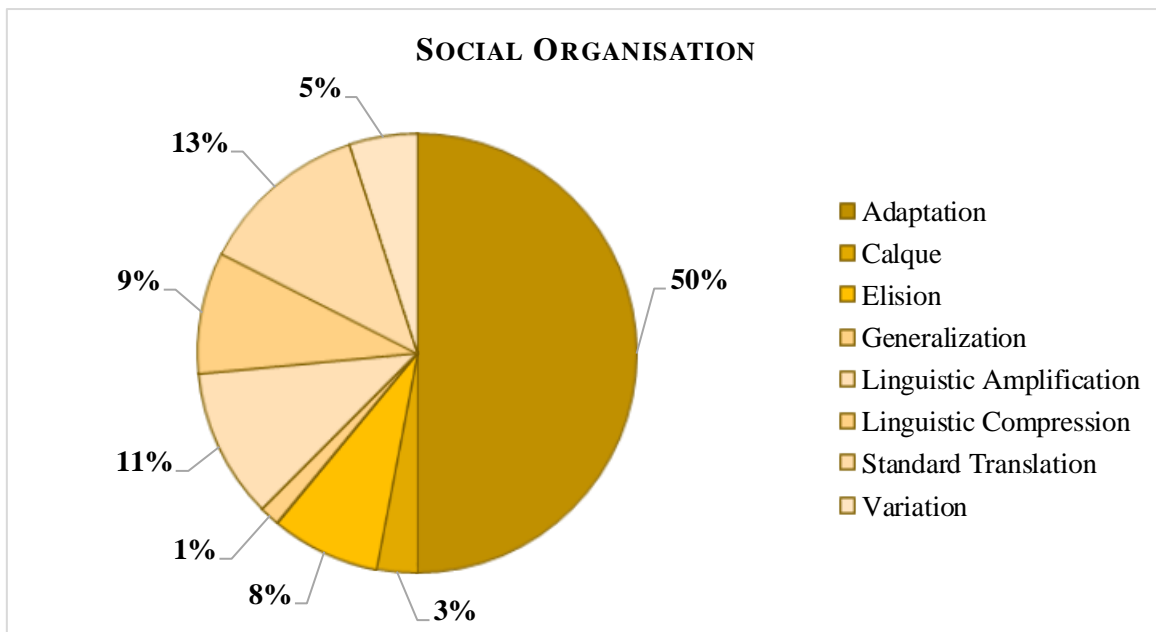


**Figure 4.** *Social Conventions*

As represented in the chart, the translator has employed the same translation technique to transfer all the occurrences of this category. An example of variation is provided in order to clarify the effects produced by this technique when applied to a reference to social conventions, as well as the typical occasions in which this technique was used by the translator.

- Variation: ST → Aussie accent / TT → Acento australiano

Social organization is the next type of cultural references that has been analysed. It is the group to which the translator applied a more varied range of techniques in order to create a clear, idiomatic and fluent target text. In the chart below the eight different techniques are represented by colours together with their percentage of appearance in the translation process.

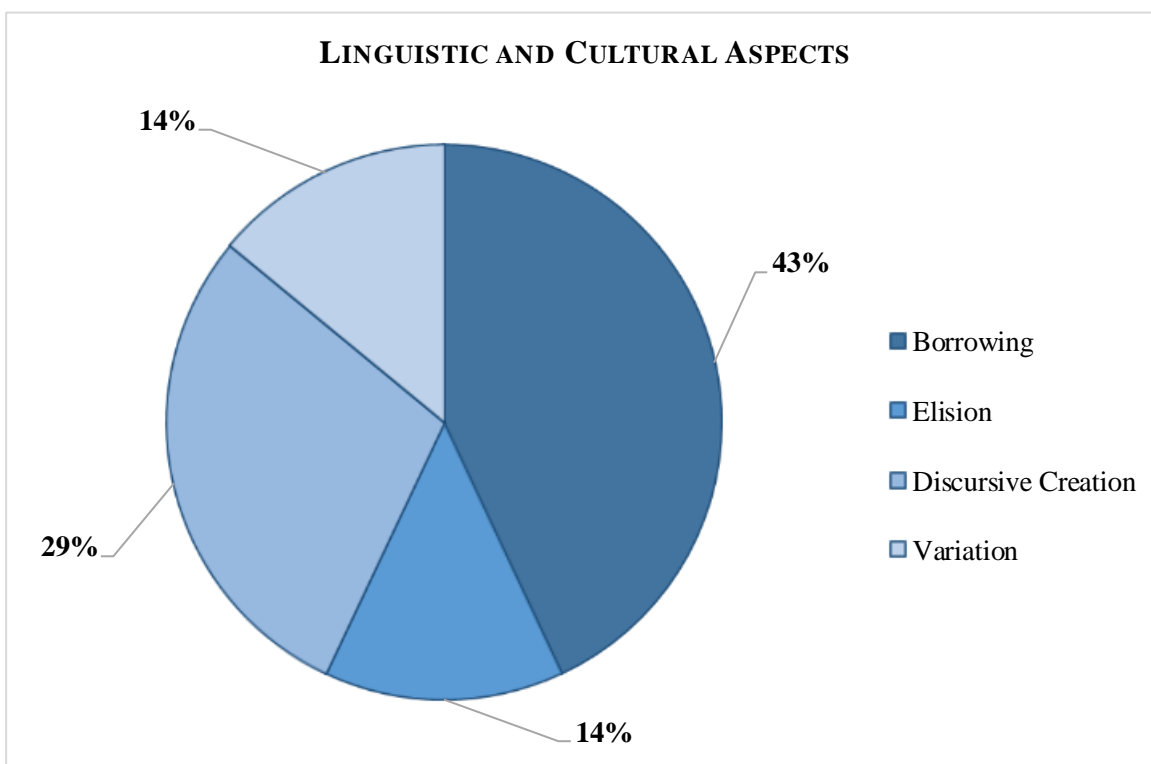


**Figure 5.** *Social Organisation*

Now, an example of said techniques will be provided to illustrate their uses and effects in the Spanish version.

- Adaptation: ST → Deputy Prime Minister / TT → Vicepresidente del Gobierno
- Calque: ST → Prime Minister / TT → Primer ministro
- Elision: ST → 400 pounds / TT → inmensa
- Generalization: ST → ten to fifteen man-years / TT → de diez a quince años
- Linguistic Amplification: ST → Thousands / TT → Miles de dólares
- Linguistic Compression: ST → Sixty kilometres / TT → 60 km
- Standard Translation: ST → A billion dollars / TT → Mil millones de dólares
- Variation: ST → 2.5 million / TT → dos millones y medio

Finally, the last group of culturemes studied in this project were those linked to linguistic and cultural aspects in the source text. In this case, only four translation techniques have been used. The percentages depicted in the chart show that there is a predominant technique when it comes to the transfer of this category into Spanish,



**Figure 6.** *Linguistic and Cultural Aspects*

Below, an example extracted from the book will be presented for each translation technique to clarify each concept.

- Borrowing: ST → Norks / TT → Norks
- Elision: ST → How many steps you take in the Stairmaster / TT → y por mucho ejercicio que hagas
- Discursive Creation: ST → Penis envy / TT → Parar de gastar
- Variation: ST → Ticker / TT → Corazón

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Once the data have been analysed and properly presented, it is safe to state that the translation process is not an easy one. Professional translators have a lot of different tools at their disposal, but they have to be able to discern which is the most adequate in each specific case.

Even though a wide variety of taxonomies exist for both cultural references and translation techniques, the ones employed in this project have been useful to demonstrate a couple things. On the one hand, culturemes reflect the values and the traditions of a culture and its people. Without these references, it would be quite difficult for the readers – both the source and target ones – to understand how a specific cultural system works due to lack of information or misconceptions attached to a foreign culture. On the other hand, translation techniques are a very practical device that allow translators to carry out their work guaranteeing that their target text is fluent and understandable for the target audience.

With regards to which strategy has been used during the translation of Bryson's book, the results obtained in the analysis point to a translator's tendency to foreignizing the cultural references (Venuti 1995:20) whenever it is possible. That is to say that Roig i Formosa deemed necessary to favour the original cultural references present in the source text over the possible alternatives that the Spanish cultural and linguistic system offers. The fact that the Spanish translation leans toward foreignization is not surprising since, as I already mentioned, the main objective of the original text is to bring the readers close to the Australian culture. Therefore, in my opinion, the translator has chosen a suitable strategy considering the genre of the original book and its goals.

Even so, the results obtained in the analysis of the social organization category should not be omitted. In this specific case, there is an exception regarding the strategy selected to translate the terms from the source text. The fact that adaptation is used in half of the culturemes that have been translated, leads to think that even though the translator's intention is to maintain the cultural notes and the essence of the source text, in some cases she has opted for a domesticating strategy (Venuti 1995:20) given that otherwise the meaning of some culturemes would have remained not accessible to the target readers.

Considering all the factors that have been discussed, I think that Roig i Formosa's translation of *Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country* has used all the available devices in a clever and functional way, which has led to a coherent and communicative target text that many Spanish readers can currently enjoy.

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