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Semantics in Song Translation

Exploring semantic similarities in the song lyrics of Encanto's 'Waiting on a Miracle' and its Spanish and Portuguese dubbing translations

Bachelor's thesis

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Abstract

This thesis examines semantic similarities in song translation. It will explore the dubbed Spanish and Portuguese versions of the song 'Waiting on a Miracle' from Disney's *Encanto* from a descriptive-explanatory point of view, using Fillmore's scenes-and-frames semantics. Charles Fillmore (1975) believed that when someone listens to a word or expression, to understand the meaning behind that said word or expression, scenes in their mind will automatically be created. In song translation, translators might have to choose to modify the lyrics to maintain 'singability' and the 'rhythmical framework' of the original song. By looking at specific lexical or linguistic items one can find higher and lower-level scenes that might be evoked in the minds of listeners. The analysis provided can show how the translators go about re-creating the semantic content of the English source text in the Spanish and Portuguese dubbing translations.

Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven undersøker semantiske likheter i sangoversettelse. Den vil utforske de spanske og portugisiske *dubbing* av sangen 'Waiting on a Miracle' fra *Encanto* fra Disney, fra et beskrivende-forklarende synspunkt, ved å bruke Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames semantics*. Charles Fillmore (1975) mente at når noen lytter til et ord eller uttrykk, for å forstå meningen bak det nevnte ordet eller uttrykket, vil scener i tankene deres automatisk bli opprettet. I sangoversettelse kan oversettere måtte velge å modifisere teksten for å opprettholde 'sangbarhet' og det 'rytmiske rammeverket' til den originale sangen. Ved å se på spesifikke leksikalske og språklige elementer kan man finne scener på høyere og lavere nivå som kan fremkalles i hodet til lytterne. Analysen som gis kan vise hvordan oversetterne går fram for å gjenskape det semantiske innholdet i den engelske kildeteksten i de spanske og portugisiske *dubbing* oversettelsene.

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1. Introduction

The Walt Disney Company is one of the largest entertainment companies in the world. The company has, for decades, enchanted and captivated people, all around the globe, with entertaining animated films and their respective soundtracks. To reach a wide audience, these films and their corresponding soundtracks were translated into different languages, such as Spanish and Portuguese. [1]

Songs in musical films are often important for the general development of the plot and therefore must have some sort of purpose within the musical film (Drevvatne, 2018, p. 1). Song translators need to consider the semantic content, meaning or purpose. This is especially important in musical films and television. A translated song in a musical film must also be singable since it is performed vocally. Franzon emphasises the importance of 'singability' in song translation because, in this case, a "target text is intended for singing" (Franzon, 2008, p. 334). Song translators might want to prioritise the purpose and semantic sense, but they need to follow the general rhythm and 'singability' of the source text. This thesis aims at studying the European Portuguese and Spanish dubbing translations of the song 'Waiting on a Miracle' from the Disney's musical animated film *Encanto* (2021). I want to show different ways of handling the challenge of reproducing the semantics of the lyrics while also having to ensure 'singability'. I will focus on the dubbing translations instead of the subtitling translations, since in subtitling, 'singability' is not entirely necessary, even though it is sometimes nevertheless done.

Encanto (2021) is a musical animated film produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and was released in November 2021. The film won several awards including an Oscar for best-animated feature (Oscars, 2022). Its songs were also atop the Billboard 100 songs and Billboard 200 albums in the United States in 2021 (Knox & Leshen, 2022, p. 2). There was also a great attempt at dubbing this film into different languages, such as Spanish and Portuguese. In addition, there was a great effort at making sure that the film could resonate with target audiences. For example, it was crucial for this film to be dubbed into Colombian Spanish as the film is set in Colombia. Furthermore, all songs in the film were also dubbed by Colombian

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[1] I will be utilising Portuguese when referring to European Portuguese as the TT (target text) translators are in fact European Portuguese in this version. I will also be utilising Spanish referring to Latin American Spanish as the TT (target text) translator is Mexican.

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voice actors and Colombian artists, such as Olga Lucía Vives, that voice acted as Mirabel Madrigal, the main protagonist of the film (Walt Disney Company, 2021).[2]

The aim of this thesis is to find out how Spanish and Portuguese dubbing translations go about re-creating the semantic content of the song "Waiting on a Miracle" while keeping up, or ensuring, its 'singability'. I intend to fulfil that aim by using Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames semantics* (1975; 1977; 1982; 1985). This approach focuses on the interpretation of words, sentences, and linguistic items. It suggests that linguistic items within a text evoke certain images, or scenes, in the mind. These scenes involve anything from location, participants, time, objects, and actions, along with others (Greenall, 2021, p. 200). These scenes are also divided into higher-level scenes and lower-level scenes (ibid.). Higher-level scenes are the main themes evoked by certain linguistic items while lower-level scenes are more detailed and precise scenes within the higher-level scenes (ibid.). I find myself curious to know if the same scenes have been recreated in the two target texts (TTs) or if they are in any way semantically similar to the English source text (ST). To help at identifying the deeper meaning "between the lines", in other words, what is not openly stated, I will be identifying the higher-level scenes and analysing the lower-level scenes evoked by certain linguistic items in both target texts from a descriptive-explanatory point of view. I aim at figuring out if the lower-level scenes matter for the overall image and semantic context of the song. In addition, I will be looking at certain lexical items in the lyric lines of the two TTs to theorise what subsequently was done to both maintain semantic similarity as well as 'singability' to the ST.

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[2] There are usually two Spanish dub versions (*versión latina* for Latin America and *versión castellana* for Spain), however the Latin American version was the only one produced for the film.

2. Thesis structure

This thesis will contain multiple chapters that I consider important to provide structure to my answer and results. I will start by providing a theoretical background that will assist the reader in reaching a better understanding of the concept of dubbing, audiovisual translation, and song translation, as well as a better understanding of the approach that I have chosen to use in my analysis. After providing a general theoretical background, I will introduce the data, more specifically a little bit about the film, the song and why I have chosen 10 lyric lines. In the method section, I will be explaining how I aim at answering my research question. In the next chapter, I will provide a qualitative analysis in the form of a table that will show some of the higher-level scenes found in the two TTs as well as the English ST.[3] I will also be providing explanations to what we can notice on the table with specific examples. Lastly, the results will be discussed in the next chapter, and I will use these to best answer my research question.

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[3] I will base my analysis on Greenall's sample analysis in the 2021 article "Mapping semantic (and other) similarities between source and target texts in singable song translation".

3. Theoretical Background

3.1. Audiovisual translation

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is a branch of translation studies that deals with the transfer of multimodal and multimedia texts into another language (Chiaro, 2012, n.p.). AVT allows people to understand the messages, dialogue, and information of different types of media, such as television shows, films, documentaries, and video games (ibid.). The information then gets transferred and translated from one language to another (ibid.). The two most common methods of AVT are dubbing and subtitling (ibid.). Song translation and the translation of musical production can also be considered a type of AVT as song production can be also considered a type of multimedia translation (Franzon J., Greenall, Kvam, & Parianou, 2021, pp. 20-21).

3.2. Dubbing

Dubbing is a vast area within audiovisual translation (AVT), specifically, it is part of the area that is concerned with *revoicing* (Chaume, 2020, p. 105). Dubbing is a process of translation that is *isosemiotic*, that is, the target text uses the same channel as the source text (Bosseaux, 2021, p. 1). Some countries, such as Spain or Germany, utilise dubbing as their main audiovisual translation practice (Chaume, 2020, p. 104). Dubbing is also heavily utilised widespread in media such as television shows, films, and video games.

The dubbing process consists in removing the original actor's voice and replacing it with a target language voice actor (Chaume, 2020, p. 104). There must be a team effort at adapting and translating the original script as it is important to synchronise the new voice and script with the lip movements of the original actor (ibid.). The text is then inserted into loops and performed by voice actors (ibid.). The dubbing voice actor's voice must match up to both the character's mouth movements, rhythm, and duration on screen (Chaume, 2020, p. 104).

3.3. Song translation

Song translation is a rather complex area within translation studies as it deals with both verbal and musical components. Susam-Sarajeva (2008) believes that its complexities and challenges from being a rigorous multidiscipline with rigorous parameters might contribute to its neglect. This is because musical characteristics, as well as the interpretation of the lyrics, must all be taken into consideration (Jiménez, 2017, pp. 205, 206). In addition, song translation is also an artistic task (Jiménez, 2017, p. 205). Song translators must tackle poetry, music, and performance (ibid.). Since this area of study is partly outside the boundaries of translation studies, it becomes somewhat less favourable and desirable (Susam-Sarajeva, 2008, p. 189). However, song translation is an essential aspect of the translation industry as aids people to understand the messages of the songs that are being translated (Jiménez, 2017).

There is a growing interest in song translation and a great number of studies have been made recently (Franzon, Greenall, Kvam, & Parianou, 2021, p. 23). Most of the studies in song translation and recent song translation analyses can be characterised as descriptive-explanatory or non-evaluative (Saldana & O'Brien, 2014, p. 50). Toury (1995) states that the main goal of a descriptive branch, such as translation, is to describe, explain and predict phenomena. According to Toury (1995), a descriptive approach investigates how context influences translation strategies and patterns (Franzon et al., 2021, p. 28).

Songs have a strong commercial component as they have a strong influence on people on a psychological and sentimental level (Jiménez, 2017, pp. 200-201). Music works as a way of enhancing experiences and giving a sense of nostalgia and comfort, and song translation can help with enhancing the overall experience as target audiences are going to understand the messages behind the music (ibid.). Gorlée (2005, p. 8) states that there are two ways of approaching song translation: logocentrism and musicocentrism. If the translator approaches the song through logocentrism, they will focus mainly on the lyrics and not so much on the music (Jiménez, 2017, p. 208). If the translator chooses the musicocentrism approach, on the other hand, they will focus on the music (melody) more than the lyrics (ibid.). The translator must evaluate the best way to approach the song that they are attempting to translate (Jiménez, 2017, p. 208). The translator needs to consider both the music and the lyrics when adapting a song as it is difficult to separate them, however (Gorlée, 1996, p. 9). Henceforth, the translators should study their musical text in depth, to translate a song according to all these different factors maintaining the *skopos*, or purpose, of the source text.

The constraints that are involved when translating in order to conform with 'singability', could also broaden the semantic distance between the source text and the target text (Greenall, 2021, p. 199). So that these songs can become 'singable' and maintain 'rhythmical equivalence', the translators/musicians will have to decide what kind of semantic changes must be done in the translation of the source material (ibid.). Greenall (2021, p. 199) suggests that, even though it may it as if the songs are not as close semantically, songs are, more often than not, similarly translated.

3.4. Singability in song translation

For a song to be performable, there must be some level of 'singability'. Even though this term might remain a bit ambiguous, Franzon claims that 'singability' does not only mean "easy to sing" but also that it must be "suitable in every relevant way for the particular purpose" (Franzon, 2008, p. 375). Franzon (2008, p. 397) also declares that it can be defined more broadly as a verbal fit to the music or song. As 'singability' is an aim, or a possible purpose for a song translation, 'singability' can then result in several constraints. For example, the translator must be aware of what makes the words fit together inside a song such as syllabic stress, structure, and rhythm (Franzon, 2008, p. 392).

3.5. Charles Fillmore's Scenes-and-Frames Semantics [4]

If a translator wishes to retain the semantic content, 'singability' might make it difficult as some translated lyrics may seem very different from their source material. Nevertheless, the lyrics may be more similar semantically than they seem at first sight. Greenall (2021) in the article "Mapping semantic (and other) similarities between source and target texts in singable song translation" uses Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames semantics* to find out whether there was similarity between songs on a more underlying level.

Fillmore's s*cenes-and-frames semantics* is based on prototype theory created in the 1970s by Eleanor Rosch (Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 3). The prototype theory bases itself on the idea that people do not keep a checklist of semantic features in their minds when

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[4] As it was difficult to gather access to Charles Fillmore's writings, I have therefore researched the scenes-and-frames approach through studies done by scholars with experience in translation studies. I reference scholar Mary Snell-Hornby and her work on Charles Fillmore's scenes-and-frames semantics.

comprehending a specific word or expression (ibid.). It is through experience with representative features of categories of textually or verbally conveyed words or expressions that people can determine the semantic meaning of a word (Kussmaul, 2010, cited by Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 3).[5] The semantic meaning behind those words or expressions are also, to some extent, influenced by people's culture and background (Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 3).

Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames semantics* is a theory created by Charles Fillmore in the 1970s. The meaning of language is determined by the knowledge and context that listeners and speakers bring to a conversation, not just by grammar alone (Snell-Hornby, 1995). It relies heavily on people's experiences of the world and their experience of the text or information they hear or read (Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 3). It is involved in:

> "comparing present experiences to past experiences and judging if they are similar enough to call for the same linguistic coding" (Filmore, 1977, as cited in Snell-Horny, 1988, p. 79).

This linguistic coding constitutes a *Frame* (Snell-Hornby, 1995, p. 79). *Frames* consist of a set of frame elements or lexical items that organise our understanding of a specific *scene* (Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 4). According to Fillmore (1977), a *scene* includes:

> "not only visual scenes but familiar kinds of interpersonal transactions, standard scenarios, familiar layouts, institutional structures, enactive experiences, body image and in general any kind of coherent segment, large or small, of human beliefs, actions, experiences, or imaginings." (Fillmore, 1977, cited by Snell-Hornby, 1995, p. 79)

In other words, these *scenes* are the images that are evoked to make sense of a specific word (item) or sentence. For example, these *scenes* can involve people and objects, the relationships that go on in a certain expression, and the emotions attached behind the words expressed (Snell-Hornby, 1995, p. 79). Furthermore, these *scenes* and *frames* complement and activate each other (Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 4). According to Birjandi and Parham (2015, p. 4), words, expressions, or events (linguistic forms) evoke associations that activate other linguistic forms that evoke further associations. Every linguistic expression in a text is shaped by another linguistic expression and all of these are combined to form 'a scene behind the text' (Snell-Hornby, 1995, p. 80; Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 4).

One of the most actual remnants of Charles Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames* approach is the digital database called FrameNet (Fillmore & Baker, 2015). The FrameNet project is a large

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[5] I had trouble getting access to the articles referenced in Birjandi and Parham's article, therefore, I choose to refer to their article instead.

database containing a great number of *frames*, as well as accompanied sentence annotations used for semantic analysis and research (Fillmore & Baker, 2015, pp. 8-9). A lexical item input into the database will belong as part of a particular *frame*, which will contain different 'core' and 'non-core' *frame elements*, as well as a set of examples of sentences that convey similarity to the lexical item (ibid.).

3.6.   Song Translation and Scenes-and-Frames Semantics

According to Snell-Hornby (1995, p. 81), connecting Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames* and translation is not a difficult process. Snell-Hornby (1995, p. 81) claims that the processes that Fillmore identifies in his approach are already essential to translation: the process of understanding and the relation between the sociocultural background situation and one's own experiences. Snell-Hornby (1995, p. 81) goes on to explain that this already differs vastly from the 'equivalence' translation strategies. Fillmore's theory also works in a more holistic and general way of unifying textual elements with experience and background which can work as a promising starting point for song translation (ibid.).

Greenall (2021, p. 200) states that "scenes-and-frames semantics has the potential to unveil complex relationships of similarity between STs and TTs in general and singable song translations in particular". Greenall declares that the *scenes-and-frames semantics* theory will help us to identify "a deeper level of correspondences between and beyond textual borders", like the lines in a song (Greenall, 2021, p. 200). It will also aid the translator to make sense of the meaning in a more generalised manner (ibid).

To make sense of the meaning behind the text, it is important to utilise the translation procedure of *compensation* (ibid.). *Compensation*, according to Greenall, "is most commonly understood as representing a ST item in a different place in the TT than where it appeared in the ST (compensation of place), and/or using a correspondent that is not the closest existing correspondent to the given ST item (compensation of kind)" (Greenall, 2021, p. 201). Therefore, *compensation* occurs whenever an ST item is not the closest similar item to a TT item nor is found in the same area as a TT item (ibid.). The procedure of *compensation* is also particularly useful to ensure 'singability' in a song, as well as maintaining the overall context of the song. The *compensation* procedure will also be source-oriented, in other words, its main goal is to make the scenes evoked in the TT as similar as possible to the scenes evoked in the ST (ibid.).

Although scenes-and-frames semantics can be used in translation and has the potential to uncover complex relationships of similarity between STs and TTs, according to Snell-Hornby (2005, cited by Birjandi & Parham, 2015, p. 5), it will be difficult to perfectly match the scenes evoked in the translator's mind with the scenes evoked in the mind of the ST author. This is because the author of the ST draws upon his own repertoire of scenes that transforms the ST into an interlocked chain of *frames* (ibid.). These *frames* will evoke scenes in the translator's mind which are then going to be shaped by the translator's personal experience and worldview (ibid.). However, if the translator has thoroughly understood the source text and culture, the translator will be less likely to commit errors in the translation (ibid.).

4. Data

4.1. About *Encanto*

Encanto (2021) follows the interpersonal and multigenerational family struggles within the family Madrigal. The story begins during the Thousand Days Civil War, in Colombia, with Alma Madrigal, her husband Pedro and their triplets fleeing this war with their community. As they run from a battalion of soldiers that follow them, Alma's husband sacrifices himself for his family. A candle that Alma held in her hands begins to flare up, saving everyone's lives. The miraculous candle, or the *miracle*, possibly triggered by Pedro Madrigal's sacrifice, manifests a sentient home (*casita*), and tall mountains to protect his family and the community. This candle also provides the Columbian family with magical "gifts" or powers. These magical 'gifts' were given to the members of the family for a main purpose: to protect and serve the rural community. We then follow the main character, Mirabel Madrigal, the daughter of one of Alma's triplets, as she struggles with being the only person in her family that does not inherit a magical 'gift'. As Mirabel finds out that her family is losing her magic, she goes on a journey to understand what happened, and to save her family's magical 'gifts', as well as the magical house (*casita*).

4.2. About 'Waiting on a Miracle'

The songs from *Encanto* were written, produced and dubbed into several languages by several composers. Lin-Manuel Miranda, an American songwriter, composer, playwriter and actor, wrote all English songs for the film *Encanto*, including the English ST lyrics of the song "Waiting on a Miracle" (Hall, 2022, n.p.). The Spanish version of 'Waiting on a Miracle' was translated, produced, and directed by Mexican music director and lyricist Luis Gerardo Villegas (Villegas, 2021). The European Portuguese version was translated by Ricardo Mestre and André Silva, directed by João Gil, and co-directed by Manuel Rebelo (Mestre & Silva, 2021).

Since *Encanto* is a musical film, its songs are going to be important for the general progression of the plot. In "Waiting on a Miracle", we finally understand the protagonist's main struggles. It is Mirabel's plea to be seen and be treated equally by her family as she feels like an outsider. Mirabel requests a chance for a magical 'gift' as she believes it is the only way for her to be understood, be on the same level as her family and give her life purpose. Because the song's main themes ('Emotions', 'Limitation', 'Nature', 'Time', 'Place', and 'Expectations') are

evident throughout, I choose to analyse the first 10 lines of the song (the first verse and chorus of the ST and the TTs). I have chosen to do this, to keep the thesis concise and to avoid repetition. This allows the reader to reach a deeper understanding of the scenes found within the song's main themes, as well as, allowing a greater focus on the semantic similarity patterns found.

5. Method

The aim of this thesis is to figure out in what way are the Spanish and Portuguese dubbing translations similar in a semantic sense to the English source text. In order to identify and provide a visual overview of the scenes evoked by items in the ST and TTs, a table will be provided presenting the English ST and the TTs with back-translations side-by-side, as well as the identified higher-level scenes. I will first identify and underline the linguistic or lexical elements. After this, the higher-level scenes that correspond to these items will be presented in different colours. This is so the reader can get a better and easier overview of all texts. Just like Greenall, I will be utilising FrameNet to provide labels to the higher-level scenes identified. These general higher-level scenes evoked by specific linguistic items will be first pointed out, before looking more closely at specific lower-level scenes evoked by these in the ST and the TTs.

Fillmore's *scenes-and-frames* approach and understandings will be utilised to dive in and unveil the complex meaning behind items that trigger scenes (images) in the minds of listeners, in both the English ST and the Spanish and Portuguese TTs. Given that these two songs are dubbed versions of the same English ST, they are also comparable. A comparison between them will be provided in order to figure out how closely related the TTs are to the ST. Finally, differences and similarities between them will be discussed. I will be comparing my results to previous research, more specifically Greenall's research results and conclusions.

6. Analysis

The table below presents 10 song lyric lines of the English ST, the Spanish TT and the Portuguese TT, as well as the back-translations for each TT. I have underlined certain linguistic or lexical items and identified the higher-level scenes evoked by items in the English ST, and also in both the Spanish and Portuguese TT. These higher-level scenes convey the main themes of the song lyrics. I have found that some of the higher-level scenes or main themes evoked by linguistic or lexical items are 'Emotions', 'Limitation', 'Nature', 'Time', 'Place' and 'Expectation'. [6]

Table 1. English ST, Spanish TT, Portuguese TT, back-translations, and higher-level scenes:

Line number	English ST: "Waiting on a Miracle"	Spanish TT and back-translations: "Un Regalo Mágico" ('A Magical Gift')	Portuguese TT and back-translations: "À Espera de um Milagre" ('Waiting for a Miracle')
1	Don't be upset or mad at all ['Emotions']	No me lamento ['Emotions'], ¿para qué? ('I am not complaining, what for?)	Não te chateies ou incomodes ['Emotions'] ('Don't be upset or bothered')
2	Don't feel regret or sad at all ['Emotions']	No me hace daño['Emotions'], seguiré ('It doesn't hurt me, I will go on)	Não tenhas penas, nem te inquietes ['Emotions'] ('Don't be sorry or worried')
3	Hey, I'm still ['Time'] a part of the family Madrigal	Hey, no importa ['Emotions'] pues todos somos Madrigal ('Hey, it doesn't matter because we are all Madrigal')	Ainda ['Time'] sou da família Madrigal ('I'm still from the family Madrigal')

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[6] I have listed these in order of dominance and how prominent they appear in the song lyrics.

4	And I'm <u>fine</u>, I am totally <u>fine</u> [**'Emotions'**]	Y estoy <u>bien</u>, sí, muy <u>bien</u>, claro está [**'Emotion'**] ('And I am <u>fine</u>, yes, very <u>fine</u>, of course')	Estou <u>bem</u>, estou mesmo <u>bem</u> [**'Emotions'**] ('I'm <u>fine</u>, I'm totally <u>fine</u>')
5	I will <u>stand on the side</u> [**'Place'**] as <u>you shine</u> [**'Emotions'**]	<u>Desde aquí</u> [**'Place'**], <u>los contemplo al brillar</u> [**'Emotions'**] ('From <u>here</u>, I <u>contemplate them</u> as they <u>shine</u>')	<u>Aqui</u> [**'Place'**] estarei a <u>observar-te a brilhar</u> [**'Emotions'**] ('<u>Here</u> I will be <u>watching you shine</u>')
6	I'm <u>not fine</u>, I'm <u>not fine</u> [**'Emotions'**]	<u>No es verdad</u>, <u>no es verdad</u> [**'Emotions'**] ('<u>It's not true</u>, <u>it's not true</u>')	<u>Não</u> estou <u>bem</u>, <u>não</u> estou <u>bem</u> [**'Emotions'**] ('I'm <u>not fine</u>, I'm <u>not fine</u>')
7	<u>I can't move</u> [**'Limitation'**] the <u>mountains</u> [**'Nature'**]	Yo <u>no muevo</u> [**'Limitation'**] <u>montes</u> [**'Nature'**] ('<u>I don't move mounts</u>')	<u>Não movo</u> [**'Limitation'**] <u>montanhas</u> [**'Nature'**] ('<u>I don't move mountains</u>')
8	<u>I can't make</u> [**'Limitation'**] the <u>flowers bloom</u> [**'Nature'**]	<u>No hago</u> [**'Limitation'**] <u>palmas florecer</u> [**'Nature'**] ('<u>I can't make palm trees bloom</u>')	<u>Nem sei</u> [**'Limitation'**] <u>florescer as flores</u> [**'Nature'**] ('<u>I don't even know</u> how to make <u>flowers</u> bloom')
9	<u>I can't take</u> [**'Emotion'**] another <u>night</u>, [**'Time'**] up in my <u>room</u> [**'Place'**]	Ni tendré otra <u>noche</u> [**'Emotion'**, **'Time'**] <u>esperando</u> tener [**'Expectation'**] ('<u>Nor will I have</u> another <u>night waiting</u> to have')	<u>Nem mais</u> uma <u>noite</u> [[**'Emotion'**, **'Time'**] eu passo só no meu <u>quarto</u> [**'Place'**] ('<u>Not even</u> a single <u>night</u> I'll spend alone in my <u>bedroom</u>')
10	<u>Waiting</u> on a miracle [**'Expectation'**]	Un regalo mágico ('a magical gift')	<u>à espera</u> de um milagre [**'Expectation'**] ('<u>waiting</u> for a miracle')

6.1. Analysis of higher-level scenes and lower-level scenes found in Table 1

In this analysis, I will be commenting on representatives of each class as well as attempting to show how similar the TTs are to the ST. The items evoked by the higher-level scenes will also evoke lower-level scenes, for example, in line 1, the linguistic items *upset or mad* in the English ST and *No me lamento* ('not complaining') in the Spanish TT will elicit the same higher-level scene ('Emotions'). Nonetheless, the linguistic items might not evoke the same lower-level scenes. Scenes at a lower-level may seem as they affect the overall context, but that might not be the case. Even though the lower-level scenes can differ from each other, this will not affect the overall semantic similarity between the English ST and the Spanish and Portuguese TTs as the same higher-level scenes will still be found in several lines in both texts.

6.1.1. Emotion-related scene: *Upset or mad* (line 1)

In line 1, *No me lamento* ('I am not complaining) in the Spanish TT and the lexical items *upset or mad,* in the English ST, evoke the same higher-level scene 'Emotions'. However, the phrase *No me lamento* induces a lower-level scene in the Spanish speaker's mind of someone not complaining about things due to external factors, regardless of their decisions. At the same time, it implies that that person is also suppressing his or her emotions in this context. Even though the lexical item *lamento* ('lament', line 1) usually calls up an image of pain and affliction, the use of the negation evokes images of someone standing their ground. Conversely, the line in the ST, *don't be upset or mad,* suggests that the speaker is expressing a sense of concern as the speaker shows signs of maintaining composure.

The items in the line 1 of the Portuguese TT, *Não te chateies ou incomodes* ('Don't be upset or bothered') correspond to the items in the English ST line, *don't be upset or mad at all* (line 1)*.* Both items seem to also summon the same higher-level scene 'Emotions'. At the same time, the Portuguese translation is also able to induce reasonably similar lower-level scenes to the English ST, as opposed to the Spanish translation. Even though the lexical items are not entirely the same semantically, they deliver the same message. In other words, both texts deliver the message that negative emotions are being held back. The source and target audiences can also both tell that the main protagonist is trying to maintain her composure.

6.1.2. Limitation-related scenes: *I can't move* (line 7) / *I can't make* (line 8)

In lines 7 and 8, we find in the ST the lexical items *I can't move* (line 7), and *I can't make* (line 8), and the correspondent Spanish TT items *no muevo* ('I don't move', line 7) and *no hago* ('I don't make', line 8). These evoke the same higher-level scene 'Limitation' as well as vastly similar lower-level scenes. The English ST lexical items induce scenes of physical impossibility due to the limitation of the magical 'gifts', or powers, given to the protagonist. Even though the protagonist wishes she could be able to do those actions, she cannot. Similarly, to the English ST items, the Spanish TT items also conjure scenes of impossibility. The same can be said for the Portuguese TT lexical items, *Não movo* ('I can't move', line 7) and *Nem sei* ('I don't even know', line 8). The English ST and Portuguese TT correspondent lexical items call up similar lower-level scenes of impossibility, inability, and restriction, in addition to the desire to be able to accomplish those actions. In both the Spanish and Portuguese TTs as well as the English ST, we can find that the protagonist is sharing her physical inability and incapacity to 'move mountains' or 'make flowers bloom' as it is beyond her control. In these lines, we can understand the protagonist's struggles and desires, as she tries to be on the same level as her family.

6.1.3. Nature-related scenes: *Mountains* (line 7) and *Flowers* (line 8)

In line 7, the lexical items *mountains* and *montes* ('mounts')[7] evoke the higher-level scene 'Nature'. Nevertheless, the two items elicit some different lower-level scenes. When we think of *mountains*, we might build an image in our minds of tall geological formations. Additionally, we will also think of its appearance and location. However, the image will be created depending on the person's culture and background. The Mexican translator, in this case, choose to compensate this item (line 7). *Montes* ('mounts', line 7), is not the closest item semantically to *mountains*. *Montes* ('mounts', line 7) is a mountainous elevation but not as high as a mountain, it is also referred to as geological elevations covered with vegetation like trees, bushes, and grass. Some Spanish speakers might even think about forests in general. [8] An image will be created in the minds of Spanish speakers that will be different semantically from the images in the English speaker's minds. The semantic meaning of this linguistic item will also vary depending on the listener's background and region. In this instance, we find that the underlined

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[7] As *montes* is commonly translated into a "mountainous elevation, but not as high as a mountain" I have decided to back-translate this word into *mounts*.

[8] In the book "El Monte" (1954) by Lydia Cabrera, *monte* is also defined as forests in general.

lexical item *mountains* is being compensated, because *Montes* ('mounts', line 7) does not seem to be the closest semantically related item to *mountains*. One can assume that the translator attempted at finding a way to compensate the word *mountains* to fit into the "rhythmical framework" of the song, as well as enhance the lower-level scenes evoked in the minds of listeners. As the English ST contains 6 syllables, there must have been an attempt at searching for a lyric line that contains 6 syllables in the TT.

In the Portuguese TT, we determine that the translator chose not to compensate the nature-related item, maintaining the directly translated word for *mountains* in the TT. The reason for that may be because the sentence would still fit in the 'rhythmical framework' of the song. Having said that, the image created in the minds of Portuguese speakers might still not be quite the same as the image created in the minds of the English-speaking audience. The image of *mountains* could differentiate in shape, size, and geological features, along with others. Just as previously stated, the scenes and images created will vary depending on a person's background and culture. In this case, as Portugal is divided between continental Portugal and the islands of Azores and Madeira, the image of mountains might differentiate. For example, someone from Continental Portugal might think of mountains as tall as *Serra da Estrela* while someone from Azores might think of mountains as tall as Mount Pico. Each interpretation (scene) is unique in each individual interpretational situation.

In line 8 of the Spanish TT, just as in the example shown previously, we can find another compensation of kind. The lexical item in the ST, *flowers* (line 8), was chosen to be compensated by the item *palmas* ('palm trees', line 8) instead. *Palmas* ('palm trees'), however, is not the closest semantically related item to *flowers*. These two lexical items are likely to evoke nature-related scenes on a higher-level, but they might somewhat differentiate on a deeper level. *Flowers* (line 8) could induce scenes such as smell, colour, appearance, or beauty. Since the lexical item *flowers* does not fit into any specific category of flower, the listener might think of a specific type of flower, or an image of one, depending on their cultural background. On the other hand, the lexical item *palmas* ('palm trees', line 8) could elicit images of specific locations as this is a specific type of tree usually found in tropical or Mediterranean areas with warmer weather and beaches. This is also a type of plant found in many Spanish-speaking countries. We can presume that the translator attempted at domesticating the TT to evoke relatability and to make sure the song resonated with the target audiences.

In line 8 of the Portuguese TT, one can determine that the translator chose not to compensate the nature-related item *flowers* (line 8) in the ST. Just like in the previous example,

one can speculate that the translator's choice was to maintain both the significance, and context as well as the "rhythmical framework". However, the images evoked by the lexical item *flores* ('flowers', line 8), might not be the same in every person's mind. This may happen because each interpretation of the word is unique and it will be affected depending on a person's background and culture, once again. It could be argued that someone from Madeira might not get the same images of flowers as someone from Continental Portugal as the vegetation in these places can differ.

6.1.4. Time-related scene: *Still* (line 3)

In line 3, we can find that the higher-level scenes triggered by, *I'm still* in the English ST and *no importa* ('it doesn't matter') in the Spanish TT are different. Since the higher-level scenes seem to differentiate, the message delivered in the two texts might also be different. In the English ST, the item *still* (line 3) could imply that the protagonist *still* believes to be part of the family that is neglecting her. This item will possibly also suggest that the protagonist is trying to convince herself that she is *still* being included in her family circle. Conversely, the image induced by the correspondent Spanish TT is different from the source text. To clarify, the lexical items *no importa* ('it doesn't matter', line 3) could evoke a sense that the disagreement will not affect the protagonist.

The Portuguese TT, on the other hand, seems to stay true to the ST, as there are very little to no shifts semantically, going as far as utilising the same type of lexical items such *ainda* ('still', line 3). Because of this, there are very little to no differences in the scenes summoned by these two texts. Both texts evoke the higher-level scene 'Time' and similar lower-level scenes. In both texts, the audience can create an image in their minds that the protagonist *still* believes to be part of the family. In conclusion, both the ST and Portuguese TT utilise the items *still* and *ainda* ('still', line 3), to heavily emphasise that persuasion at a deeper level.

6.1.5. Place-related scene: *Stand on the side* (line 5)

In line 5, we find that the lexical items *stand on the side* in the English ST and *desde aquí* ('From here') in the Spanish TT evoke the same higher-level scene 'Place'. They both indicate an area or location at first glance, nevertheless, they seem to call up different lower-level scenes. In the ST, in this context, the protagonist is attempting at removing herself to the side, figuratively, so that her family can be in the 'spotlight' instead of her. It conveys selflessness as she is allowing her family to be the focus while she remains herself outside of the focus. In

contrast, in the Spanish TT, perhaps, we find that the protagonist is referring to a particular place where she will stand while she watches her family shine in the 'spotlight'. It could involve a specific location, in this case. The audience, only by listening to the lyrics, might also get images of the protagonist contemplating and observing her family from a given place that they imagine.

Interestingly, even though the English ST, the Portuguese TT and the Spanish TT evoke the same higher-level scenes, on a deeper level, the Portuguese TT seems closer semantically to the Spanish TT. This is because they both convey similar meanings. The lexical item *aqui* ('here', line 5), just like in the Spanish TT, possibly will be speaking about a particular place or location. In this case, the audience could interpret this lyric line in a different way from the English ST. This lexical item might also seem to display visual images of a particular place in the mind of Portuguese listeners. Similar to the Spanish TT, the listeners could also get images of the protagonist contemplating their family from a particular distance.

6.1.6. Expectation-related scene: *Waiting* (line 10)

In line 9 of the Spanish TT, we find that the translator has chosen to make interesting changes. Firstly, we can observe that the item *esperando* ('waiting') that is related to the ST item, *waiting*, has been moved one line above to fit into the "rhythmical framework". Here, we can observe an example of compensation of place. So that the lexical item could appear in the TT, it was crucial to represent it in a different place from the ST. Secondly, we find that the higher-level scene 'Place' has been completely removed from the Spanish TT, possibly so that the song could be singable. Another reason for this might be there was no need to add that specific place as the listeners will eventually get the same message and context, even though there are semantic changes overall.

In the ST lyrics, we find a corresponding item to the lexical item *esperando* ('waiting', line 9) in line 10. The lexical item found in line 10, *waiting*, and the Spanish lexical item *esperando* ('waiting') found in line 9, evoke the same higher-level scene 'Expectation'. In the context of the English ST, *waiting* induces a sense of "expectation" or "anticipation" in the minds of listeners. The audience will get a sense that the protagonist keeps on hoping that one day something extraordinary will happen and that she will finally get her "miracle" (her magical power). In this context, there is a sense of desperation and frustration as the protagonist, to this point, has been longing for a place in the family and has had enough. Similarly, in line 9, we

find that the lexical item *esperando* ('waiting') may draw a similar context and lower-level scenes. The Spanish audience will probably interpret this lyric line similarly to the English audience. The lower-level scene may include images of the protagonist feeling frustrated and desperate as she has been expecting the "miracle" for too long. Overall, the lower-level scenes evoked by these two lexical items may capture the general emotional state of the protagonist.

In the Portuguese TT, we also find a correspondent lexical item that matches the one found in the English ST. Opposed to the Spanish TT, this lexical item is found in the same lyric line as the one seen in the English ST. In the Portuguese TT, as opposed to the Spanish TT, we can also observe very few semantic shifts to the ST. The lexical items *à espera* ('waiting', line 10) and *waiting* (line 10) induce the same higher-level scene 'Expectation', and similar lower-level scenes. Here, the Portuguese audience will also get images of a frustrated protagonist longing for acceptance and a magical "gift", as she keeps anticipating the day that happens. To sum up, in both texts, we can find that the translator has chosen to maintain as much semantical meaning to the ST as possible.

7. Discussion

7.1. Research question revisited

The aim of this thesis has been to find out how the Spanish and the Portuguese dubbing translations go about re-creating the semantic content of the English song, while still being able to be singable. I go about reaching that aim by analysing the higher-level and lower-level scenes evoked by linguistic or lexical items in the English source text and Spanish and Portuguese target texts.

7.2. Discussion of results

Although both TTs seem semantically similar to the English ST, the Portuguese TT appears to be more similar to the ST than the Spanish TT. Even before one begins to look at the level of scenes, the translations seem to be relatively close semantically. For example, in line 9, we find that the lexical items *room* and *quarto* ('bedroom') are practically the same semantically as *quarto* is a direct translation of the word *room*. Both lexical items mean "bedroom", or a room separated by walls that is usually used for sleeping. Furthermore, on top of being relatively close semantically on a higher-level, the Portuguese TT attempts at maintaining similarity in the lower-level scenes to the ST in most of the song. This is previously found in, for example, the place-related scene as well as in the limitation-related scenes.

 We can also notice that the English ST and the Portuguese TT present the same number of higher-level scenes in the same location throughout the text. Furthermore, the Portuguese TT, appears to avoid *compensation* procedure. We find that the translator has chosen to avoid as much *compensation* as possible, attempting to fit the translation to the "rhythmical framework" without making a considerable number of changes. On the other hand, we find that the translator for the Spanish TT has decided to utilise the *compensation* method quite frequently. Nevertheless, the overall semantic content remains the same, despite some of the higher-level scenes being different from the English ST.

Even though it appears that the Portuguese TT is closer semantically to the English ST than the Spanish TT, it seems to struggle more than the Spanish TT to fit into the "rhythmical framework" of the song. For example, we hear instances of syllables being cut or omitted to still fit into the rhythm of the song. In line 9 of the English ST, *I can't make the flowers bloom*,

seems to have 7 syllables, while the Portuguese TT *Nem sei florescer as flores* ('I don't even know how to make flowers bloom') appears to have 8 syllables. In this case, the singer may have needed to adjust more to the ST's rhythm and naturalness as well as the melody. The singer might have chosen to adapt the translation to the music and eventually sacrifice the verbal fidelity out of necessity (Jiménez, 2017, pp. 207-208).

When it comes to the Spanish TT, we can observe that it does not seem to be as semantically similar to the ST as the Portuguese TT. This is because some of the lower-level scenes evoked by lexical or linguistic items do not seem to be the same scenes evoked in the ST. Although both texts contain some of the same higher-level scenes, the scenes triggered by certain words appear to differ on a lower level. For example, in line 1, all lexical items underlined in the TTs correspond to the same higher-level scene found in the ST, 'Emotion', as they all express negative emotions being held back. Despite this, the scene, that is induced in the minds of listeners in the Spanish TT, is of the protagonist not complaining about the outcome. Meanwhile, the scenes drawn out by the ST and the Portuguese TT are of someone who is worried about the outcome.

Despite the existence of differing lower-level scenes, the Spanish TT is still able to demonstrate the overall context of the song, maintaining its 'singability'. In the Spanish TT, we find several instances of *compensation,* where lexical or linguistic items have either been replaced by other items that are not the closest semantically or have been displaced and dislocated to other lines in the text. As one of the main goals in song translation is to make sure that the song is singable still preserving the content of the original song, one can theorise as the Mexican translator has chosen to *compensate* certain items in the TT has means to achieve just that. *Compensation* is particularly valuable when the main goal is to ensure that the translated song, is both singable, can easily fit into the "rhythmical framework" of the source text, and still preserve the semantic meaning of the original text (Greenall, 2021, p. 210). In consideration of that, one can presume that *compensation* was used by the translator as means to, not only make sure that the song continues to preserve the "rhythmical framework" and 'singability' of the original one, but to preserve the overall context of the original song as well as deepen the scenes evoked in the minds of Spanish listeners. In other words, so that the Spanish speaking audiences can resonate with the protagonist, in this case.

In conclusion, despite some differences between the two TTs, we can still see that the translators were able to preserve the general context of the original song. While the TTs differ

on some levels, depending on a person's contextual understandings and background, they still convey the overall meaning of the original song. Both TTs are able to depict the protagonist's struggles within the framework of the film. In other words, both TTs, as well as the ST, can depict Mirabel's desperation as she requests a magical 'gift' so that she can belong and feel seen by her family.

7.3. Comparison to previous research

Previous research has tried to demonstrate that the lyrics of a certain song translation do not need to be immensely close semantically to the original song if the main goal behind the translation is 'singability'. As Greenall (2021) discussed in her article "Mapping semantic (and other) similarities between source and target texts in singable song translation", there is a certain difficulty in trying to fit certain words into a frame that triggers certain scenes represented in the original song. As it is a challenging act to closely convey the nuances that are found and triggered behind certain words in the source text, it becomes almost an impossible task to fully achieve semantic equivalence. Hence, it is easier to achieve semantic similarity since there is a lesser degree of strictness behind fitting the scenes in the target text to the source text. In Greenall's article, we find that by utilising the procedure of *compensation*, one can still find semantic similarity and, at the same time, still preserve the 'singability' of a song (Greenall, 2021).

Keeping that in mind, we can find that it was possible to achieve a certain level of semantic similarity in both TTs. We can observe that, even though the Spanish translation does seem less semantically similar to the English ST than the Portuguese one, all translators have found ways to achieve a certain level of semantic similarity to the ST. In addition, even though we can find more *compensation* techniques being used in the Spanish TT, semantic similarity was still achieved as the song lyrics still convey the same higher-level scenes and the overall idea or message that the song is trying to deliver.

8. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to figure out how the semantic content of the English ST, 'Waiting on a Miracle' by *Encanto* was re-created in the Spanish and Portuguese dubbing translations. I have found that even though the two TTs can choose different mechanisms, they are still able to remain semantically close to the ST. To figure out how and at what level these translations are semantically similar to the English source text, I have analysed these texts with the knowledge of Fillmore's idea of *scenes* and *frames*. I applied FrameNet, as a way of finding the main themes evoked by certain linguistic items in the ST and TTs. I have found that the Portuguese translation seems to be more semantically similar to the original song than the Spanish translation. The Portuguese translation seems to suggest similar lower-level scenes as well as higher-level scenes to the English ST, due to the frequent use of direct translations. However, there seems to be a higher level of syllabic adjustment so that the song fits into the "rhythmical framework" of the original song. In contrast, the Spanish TT appears to utilise *compensation* in certain lines, to attempt at triggering relatability and resonance among Spanish listeners as well as maintain 'singability'. Despite this, both translations seem to convey the overall sense and context of the original song; thus, both translations are semantically similar to the English ST.

As this is a particularly underexplored procedure of analysing semantics in song translation, I believe my work will be beneficial to further explore the semantics behind the deep-rooted scenes created in our minds. To explore this topic even further, I recommend interviewing the target text translators to better understand the meaning behind the chosen items in the texts. I also recommend interviewing listeners, so it becomes easier to compare research interpretations. In addition, I recommend looking at musical and visual elements. These elements might also affect understandings and interpretations. Nevertheless, I hope my visions, understanding and research will add to this undervalued and unresearched area of song translation studies. Hopefully, the analysis I conducted in this thesis will show a way to use scenes-and-frames in song translation.

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