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A CORPUS-BASED TRANSLATION STUDY ON ITALIAN VERB-PARTICLE CONSTRUCTIONS TRANSLATED INTO SPANISH. THE CASE OF *LESSICO FAMIGLIARE*¹

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Abstract

Verb-particle constructions (VPCs) are considered to be a very productive linguistic phenomenon within the Italian language, especially in spontaneous and informal dialogues. On the contrary, in the Spanish language the productivity of such constructions appears to be low. In order to figure out what linguistic patterns seem to be most frequent while translating Italian verb-particle constructions into Spanish, a parallel corpus will be analysed. The corpus consists of the Italian novel *Lessico familiare* (by Natalia Ginzburg 1963) and its translation into Spanish. First, a list of the VPCs contained in the source text will be provided. Secondly, we will show what linguistic patterns are used in the translation and elucidate the reasons why they tend to appear, by means of a cognitive approach. Finally, some translation errors will be highlighted. The possible causes of such errors will lead us to allege that VPCs should be considered as translation problems.

Keywords: Orality. Translation. Verb-Particle Constructions. Translation Techniques. Translation Problem.

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1. Introduction

Up until fairly recently, within the researches of Italian Linguistics, verb-particle constructions (from now on VPCs) were surprisingly ignored by scholars. However, within the community of native Italian speakers these constructions show a very high productivity and frequency of use both in written texts and in oral interactions. Nowadays, as a direct consequence of being ignored by scholars, the main grammars of the Italian language do not provide any exhaustive analysis of these linguistic structures (Simone 1997: 157). Also, neither monolingual nor bilingual dictionaries seem to treat them in a systematic, coherent and homogeneous way (Calvo 2010: 375).

On the other hand, in Spanish, VPCs have a very low productivity. In this language, unlike in Italian, VPCs cannot be considered to be a verbal category that can be distinguished from other categories. In fact, they do not show any particular syntactic, semantic or phonetic behaviour that could lead us to recognize them (Calvo 2008: 60-63).

Since there is no correspondence between Italian and Spanish as for these linguistic structures, the analysis of parallel corpora could be a good starting point to observe in what way, when translating Italian VPCs, the Spanish linguistic system tackles such syntactic ‘void’.

First, we will shortly remember some semantic and syntactic characteristics of VPCs. Secondly, we will analyse the translation (from Italian into Spanish) of the VPCs included in our corpus: the novel *Lessico familiare*, by Natalia Ginzburg (1963).

As will be pointed out below, VPCs are usually marked from the point of view of the diaphasic and the diamesic² axes. Thus, according to our initial hypothesis, the corpus that we have selected is an ideal source to find examples of VPCs, since the novel has a strong connection with orality.

2. This term is not very commonly used in Spanish Linguistics, whereas it is very frequent in Italian studies. It was coined by Alberto Mioni (1983: 508-510), and it refers to variation according to the communication channel. In our case, it refers to the oral channel, that is, to all the aspects that are related to orality.

Firstly, we will confirm such a hypothesis by showing a long list of VPCs that have been used in the novel. Secondly, we will highlight the way the Spanish language behaves in the presence of a specific linguistic stimulus (i.e. the Italian VPCs). Then, we will follow a cognitivist approach in order to underline some typological differences between the Italian and the Spanish linguistic systems.

Also, different kinds of translation mistakes will be analysed, following a functional approach. In this way we will point out the possible causes underlying such mistakes, as well as their repercussion and influence. All the above will lead us to postulate that, at least in the case of the translator of the novel, VPCs constitute by all means a translation problem.

The observations that we will set forth in this article are not meant to provide any general conclusions about the translation of Italian VPCs into Spanish. It is obvious that our conclusions only refer to the corpus that we have analysed.

1.1. Definition and characteristics of Italian VPCs

Even though the existence of VPCs had already been observed (Carrera 1984: 277; Schwarze 1985: 355-371), the first research that, in our opinion, shed light on this matter, and at the same time led other scholars to study it, is Simone's, who defines Italian VPCs as:

sintagmi formati da una testa verbale e da un complemento costituito da una 'particella' (originariamente un avverbio), uniti da una coesione sintattica di grado elevato al punto che non si può commutare il VS intero con una sola delle sue parti. Si tratta quindi di costruzioni del tipo di *fare fuori*, *venire meno*, *buttare giù*. (Simone 1997: 156-157)

From the syntactic point of view, many scholars have observed a series of characteristics of VPCs, which help us differentiate these constructions from the simple association of V+Adv. and V+PP. In fact, in such associations the adverb and the prepositional phrase seem to be autonomous, having no links to the verb. On the other hand, in Italian VPCs there is a strong cohesion between the verb (V) and the particle (P). Masini (2012: 196-200) sums up a few observations that she and other scholars have set forth on this matter:³

- In the sequences V+PP and V+AdvP the order of the constituents might vary and it is possible to insert arguments between the elements of such sequences (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d); on the other hand, in transitive VPCs, V

3. The examples that we use here are Masini's.

and P, most of the time,⁴ can only be separated by means of non-argumental elements (2c), otherwise the construction would give rise to ungrammatical sentences (2b).

- (1) a. *Luca ha lavato la macchia con il sapone*
 b. *Luca ha lavato con il sapone la macchia*
 c. *Luca ha lavato con accanimento la macchia*
 d. *Luca ha lavato la macchia con accanimento*
- (2) a. *Luca ha lavato via la macchia*
 b. **Luca ha lavato la macchia via*
 c. *Luca ha lavato subito via la macchia*

- In the presence of V+PP or V+ AdvP it is possible to carry out dislocations (3b) or topicalizations (3c); nevertheless, VPCs (specially the most lexicalized ones) do not allow left dislocation of P (4b), nor topicalization (4c).

- (3) a. *È andato là dentro*
 b. *È là dentro che è andato*
 c. *Là dentro è andato*
- (4) a. *Abbiamo messo su il caffè*
 b. **È su che abbiamo messo il caffè*
 c. **Su abbiamo messo il caffè*

- As opposed to what happens with V+PP and V+AdvP (5a, 5b, 5c), the P that gives rise to a VPC does not allow coordination (6a, 6b):

- (5) a. *Marco sta dietro a Giovanni e davanti a Sandra*
 b. *Marco sta dietro a Giovanni e Maria davanti a Sandra*
 c. *Marco ha pulito la casa dentro e fuori*
- (6) a. ?*Sara ha messo dentro la bici e fuori la spazzatura*
 b. ?*Sara ha portato fuori le bici e Luca dentro la spesa*

- The combination V+PP accepts two kinds of nominalisation (nominal infinitive and deverbal noun) (7b, 7c), whereas nominalisation of VPCs is only possible in the form of nominal infinitive (8b, 8c):

4. In a previous work, Masini states that, in some particular VPCs, it is possible to observe the insertion of some argumental material between V and P, due to pragmatic reasons. As for this matter, Masini comes to the following conclusion: “we cannot state that the non continuous constructions are alternating with the continuous constructions as in English. However, we can say that the non continuous construction is excluded in some pragmatic contexts, that is, in the contexts in which the object is into focus” (Masini 2008: 100, the translation is ours).

- (7) a. *La gente corre vicino alla pista*
 b. *Il correre della gente vicino alla pista*
 c. *La corsa della gente vicino alla pista*
 - (8) a. *Gianni è corso via subito dopo la partita*
 b. **La corsa via di Gianni subito dopo la partita*
 c. *Il correre via di Gianni subito dopo la partita*
- Lastly, as noted by Calvo (2008: 51-52), given a VPC, it doesn't seem possible to separate the P from the verb by means of a question (9b):
- (9) a. *Il cliente è stato cacciato via in malo modo*
 b. *Dove è stato cacciato il cliente in malo modo? *Via*

All the above observations have been used as a set of syntactic tests in order to determine which constructions of our corpus belong to the category of VPCs, that is, to select them in a rigorous way.⁵

As for the semantic characteristics of VPCs, within this verbal category we can find different subgroups: the first, in which the P that is associated to the V simply reiterates what is already expressed by the verb (*uscire fuori*); the second, in which the P is normally linked to a verb of unmarked movement, and determines its path (*mettere giù*, *tirare su*, *saltare dentro*);⁶ the third, in which the semantics of the verbal construction is not compositional, since it cannot be inferred by the sum of the meanings of its components (as in *fare fuori*, which, for instance, can mean 'to get rid of' or 'to kill') (Simone 1997: 162).⁷

Lastly, it has been proven that modern Italian VPCs are characterised by high polysemy. In fact, a VPC can be prone to take on multiple meanings, according to the context in which it appears (Ježek & Strik Lievers 2010: 450).

5. In the literature different kinds of P that can contribute to the formation of different classes of VPCs have been pointed out. For instance, P can have a locative, deictic and temporal value, or express either a manner or quantity meaning (Masini 2012: 195-196). In our research only VPCs that contain a locative P have been studied, since they are the most representative subgroup of VPCs.

6. As regards the second subgroup, Venier (1996: 152) sets forth a distinction between, on the one hand, those VPCs in which the P specifies the direction of the movement, even though this is already partially expressed by V (*gettare giù*), and, on the other hand, the VPCs in which the direction of the movement is only expressed by P (*tirare fuori*).

7. As for the third subgroup, some metaphoric meanings of VPCs have been observed. Most of the time they are the result of a lexicalization process of a VPC in which the P has a locative meaning. The semantics of this kind of VPCs can be more or less transparent, depending on the connection that they have with the VPCs they originated from (Masini 2005: 154-156; Masini 2012: 201).

1.2. Italian VPCs in orality

As we have already observed, the research conducted so far has shown that Italian VPCs –taken as a whole– are usually marked from the diaphasic and diamesic point of view.

In fact, in one study (Antelmi 2002: 112) that was based on a corpus of both written texts (newspaper articles about economic and sports news) and spoken texts (transcriptions of television programmes and spontaneous conversations), it became clear that in oral texts the frequency of use of VPCs is higher than in newspaper articles. Moreover, their use is particularly limited in the articles that deal with economic topics. In short, it has been demonstrated that the more spontaneous and informal a text, the higher the number of VPCs used.

Also, thanks to a later study, the results of the analysis on the corpus of Italian oral texts called LIP confirmed that in the most informal texts the use of VPCs is higher, especially within dialogues in which the interlocutor takes his or her turn to speak freely (Iacobini 2008: 117).

Since we intended to compare Italian to Spanish, and more specifically, to study how VPCs are translated, we thought that the most logical way to do so was to analyse their presence in written texts and their corresponding translations.⁸ As we have already seen, since VPCs mostly appear in informal dialogues, a literary text with a high rate of such characteristics was chosen.

2. The object of study: *Lessico familiare*

Even if the novel that is the subject of our study does not need any introduction, as one of the most important works of twentieth-century Italian literature,⁹ it may still be worth mentioning that *Lessico familiare* tells the story – which mainly takes place in Turin between the early 30s and the early 50s of the last century – of a Jewish anti-fascist family. The Levi family is not the result of Natalia Ginzburg's imagination. It is the family in which the

8. As regards methodology, we decided not to rely on the observation of our linguistic skills as an Italian native speaker (L1) and a Spanish speaker as a foreign language (L2). On the contrary, we chose to study external data, contrastively. In our opinion, the use of a parallel text (translation) is the only way we can possibly find equivalents of VPCs. Different authors agree on the validity of translation analysis in order to fulfil contrastive researches (Wandruszka 1969; Wandruszka 1971; Hartmann 1980; Valero 1995; Calvo 2005).

9. In the same year in which the novel was published it was awarded one of the most prestigious literary prizes, the *Premio Strega*. Moreover, it has never stopped being published and it has been translated into many languages.

author¹⁰ was born and raised. Drawing on her memory, Natalia brings back expressions, exclamations and set phrases that in her family were used very often. Such expressions ended up constituting the pillars of the unity and the identity of her family. In addition to dealing with very interesting topics from the historical and sociological point of view,¹¹ the work stands out among the other works of that time thanks to its reflection of the orality of the Levi family offered to the reader.

Throughout the work we can observe the recurrent use of direct speech. The immediacy and expressivity of such discursive modality seem to accurately reproduce the dialogues that the author heard when she was a child at her home. However, the representation of the words of the Levi household differs to a great extent from the 'original' ones. In fact, as opposed to what one might think at first sight, the utterances of the protagonists are not independent and autonomous as regards the rest of the characters. Considering the utterances as a whole, we observe that they give rise to a single structure that belongs to a superior level, that is, to the enunciation of the author (Barani 1990: 148). In other words, the author makes use of her memory as an organising principle in order to finally create a work that has to be read as a novel based on remembrance, with its corresponding pieces of information and gaps.

As for the characteristics of the style of the *Lessico*, most of the utterances in direct speech that appear in the novel belong to Natalia's father. Even though the novel is mainly written in Italian, on its pages a large number of dialectal influences can be seen.

Moreover, the language of the novel is marked from the diamesic point of view, since it presents numerous characteristics of orality. On the one hand we can find ungrammatical structures, on the other hand the topics and the dialogues are trivial, typical of everyday conversations. In spite of that, it may be supposed that the characteristics of the language are not due to a low diastatic variety, since the speakers who take part in most of the dialogues are educated (Barani 1990: 150).

Another interesting aspect that should be mentioned is the polyphonic nature of some direct speeches. In fact, in such speeches sometimes the character that is talking quotes the words of another character, for very different reasons, which may vary depending on the purpose of the act of speech (i.e.

10. The real surname of the author is Levi. As an adult woman her surname changed to Ginzburg, after having married Leone Ginzburg, according to the Italian custom of swapping the bride's surname for her husband's.

11. For a detailed analysis of the topics that the work deals with, as well as their origin, structure and literary models, see Magrini (1996: 771-810).

to mock the person who is being quoted, to recognise his/her authority, to be ironic or polemical towards that person, etc.). As for the parts of the novel in which the indirect speech is used, we might say that in these cases we also observe some examples of polyphony, in which the narrator's voice ends up blending with the voice of the character that is being dealt with. In such cases, the narrator acquires the specific traits of the character's idiolect. The polyphony, along with the idiolectal and dialectal expressions of some characters, as well as the diamesic-marked nature of the novel towards orality, often result in true translation problems, that is, objective difficulties that a translator must face while doing his/her job (Hurtado 2001: 286).

For all these reasons it would be very interesting to carry out a translation analysis of the whole novel. However, due to the limitations of the present research and the limited space at our disposal, we confine ourselves to the study of the translation of the VPCs that appear in the source text (ST).

Before proceeding, with regard to the target text (TT) of our translation study, it should be said that the translation into Spanish of *Lessico familiare* was firstly published in 1989 by the Trieste Publishing House. The translation was done by Mercedes Corral, a professional translator with over 40 years of experience in the field of literary translation. Throughout her career, Corral has taken on the translation into Spanish of both Italian and French works. Also, from 2005 up until 2012 she was the Director of the *Casa del Traductor* ('Centro Hispánico de Traducción Literaria') in Tarazona.

3. VPCs found in the corpus

After extracting the VPCs that appear in the original Italian novel, we can confirm that in *Lessico familiare* a large number of phrasal constructions have been found. This demonstrates that such verbal constructions are highly productive, even within a limited corpus, like ours.¹²

We found a total of 124 occurrences of VPCs in terms of *tokens*. In the following table we show the *types* related to the particles (P), to the verbal bases (V) and to the verbal structures (VPCs) that were found in the corpus, as well as their frequency (*tokens*) in brackets.

12. It contains approximately 64000 words.

	<i>Types</i>	<i>Tokens per type</i>
P	14	<i>via</i> (41); <i>giù</i> (16); <i>fuori</i> (12); <i>su</i> (12); <i>dentro</i> , <i>dietro</i> (11); <i>indietro</i> (5); <i>avanti</i> , <i>attorno</i> (4); <i>intorno</i> , <i>davanti</i> , <i>incontro</i> (2); <i>accanto</i> , <i>senza</i> (1).
V	38	<i>andare</i> , <i>buttare</i> (14); <i>mettere</i> (13); <i>tirare</i> (10); <i>essere</i> (7); <i>andarsene</i> , <i>portare</i> (6); <i>mandare</i> , <i>portarsi</i> (5); <i>venire</i> , <i>tirarsi</i> (4); <i>guardarsi</i> (3); <i>stare</i> , <i>cacciare</i> , <i>spazzare</i> , <i>buttarsi</i> , <i>passare</i> (2); <i>rivolere</i> , <i>sgusciare</i> , <i>uscire</i> , <i>schiodare</i> , <i>entrare</i> , <i>riportare</i> , <i>trascinare</i> , <i>fuggire</i> , <i>ritornare</i> , <i>tenere</i> , <i>trovarsi</i> , <i>rimanere</i> , <i>scrutare</i> , <i>circolare</i> , <i>tagliare</i> , <i>venirsene</i> , <i>ricacciare</i> , <i>vedersi</i> , <i>levare</i> , <i>starci</i> , <i>dare</i> (1).
VPCs	64	<i>buttare via</i> (10); <i>mettere su</i> , <i>essere dentro</i> (7); <i>portare via</i> , <i>tirare fuori</i> (5); <i>tirarsi dietro</i> , <i>andare giù</i> , <i>andarsene via</i> , <i>andare dietro</i> (4); <i>mandare via</i> , <i>andare via</i> , <i>portarsi dietro</i> , <i>buttare giù</i> (3); <i>venire giù</i> , <i>cacciare via</i> , <i>guardarsi attorno</i> , <i>tirare su</i> , <i>spazzare via</i> , <i>buttarsi giù</i> , <i>scappare via</i> , <i>mettere fuori</i> , <i>mettere dentro</i> , <i>andarsene giù</i> , <i>portarsi via</i> (2); <i>andare su</i> , <i>tirare avanti</i> , <i>rivolere indietro</i> , <i>sgusciare via</i> , <i>andare avanti</i> , <i>uscire fuori</i> , <i>guardarsi intorno</i> , <i>stare attorno</i> , <i>schiodare fuori</i> , <i>tirare giù</i> , <i>entrare dentro</i> , <i>riportare indietro</i> , <i>trascinare via</i> , <i>fuggire via</i> , <i>ritornare indietro</i> , <i>tenere su</i> , <i>andare fuori</i> , <i>trovarsi davanti</i> , <i>passare accanto</i> , <i>venire incontro</i> , <i>mandare incontro</i> , <i>rimanere dentro</i> , <i>essere senza</i> , <i>venire fuori</i> , <i>scrutare attorno</i> , <i>circolare attorno</i> , <i>passare giù</i> , <i>tagliare fuori</i> , <i>venirsene via</i> , <i>ricacciare indietro</i> , <i>buttare indietro</i> , <i>vedersi davanti</i> , <i>mettere avanti</i> , <i>levare via</i> , <i>tirare via</i> , <i>mandare avanti</i> , <i>starci su</i> , <i>portare giù</i> , <i>mettere via</i> , <i>dare via</i> (1).

The combination of just 14 particles with 38 verbal bases in terms of types entails the formation of 64 VPCs. This figure is particularly high, especially if we consider the limited dimensions of the corpus. Once again, we can confirm the productivity of this verbal category. As for the components of the VPCs, we can observe that half of the particles show a high level of *tokens*, ranging from 5 up to 41 occurrences (the latter in the case of *via*). Moreover, we should note that, while there is a low number of V and P with a very high frequency in terms of textual occurrences (*tokens*), the majority of particles and verbal bases only give rise to one (or few more) phrasal structure(s). On the other hand, from the quantitative point of view it is also interesting to observe the tendency of each verbal base to be linked to either a higher or lower number of particles. In this regard, we might say that from the data in Table 2 we can deduce that there is a tendency of verbal bases to combine (most of the time) with just one particle, as opposed to the verb *andare*, that in our corpus combines with 6 different particles.

1 V with 6 P	<i>andare</i>
2 V with 5 P	<i>tirare, mettere</i>
3 V with 3 P	<i>mandare, buttare, venire</i>
6 V with 2 P	<i>andarsene, guardarsi, essere, portare, portarsi, passare</i>
27 V with 1 P	<i>rivolere, tirarsi, sguisciare, uscire, dare, starci, levare, vedersi, trovarsi, ricacciare, venirsene, tagliare, circolare, scrutare, rimanere, scappare, tenere, ritornare, fuggire, buttarsi, spazzare, trascinare, riportare, entrare, schiodare, cacciare, stare.</i>

Besides, comparing the data of Table 1 to those in Table 2, we should point out that there is a connection between the frequency of use of the verbal bases and the number of particles with which they combine. In fact, the verbal bases that are most frequently used are, at the same time, the ones that combine to a higher number of particles. These results are in line with what has been observed in previous research (Iacobini 2008: 107-108).

4. Parallel corpus analysis: typological influences and translation techniques

As we already stated before, from the typological point of view, the Spanish language has a low number of VPCs, with a less homogeneous behaviour and less perceptible characteristics as opposed to Italian VPCs (Calvo 2008: 63). Therefore, considering such discrepancy between the Italian and the Spanish systems, we think it is interesting to analyse in what way the Spanish language (as target language of the translation process) is used to respond to the input of this Italian verbal category, that is, to the same syntactic model.¹³

From the analysis of the parallel corpus it becomes clear that in the majority of the parallel segments (61,2%) the Spanish language opts for using a type of verbs that have been defined as 'monorematic' (Simone 1997: 168; Cerruti 2008: 193; from now on MV), that is, verbs that are not combined with any prepositional or adverbial particle:¹⁴

13. To be more exact, the syntactic model is not always the same, since the category of VPCs – considered as a whole – constitutes a cline. The boundaries of such cline correspond with the combinations V+Adv. and V+PP. This is why sometimes the least prototypical cases of VPCs could be considered as an example of the other two categories.

14. Each table consists of a parallel example, that is, a sentence from the ST that contains a VPC, duly aligned with its corresponding translation into Spanish (TT). In both cases, we will include in brackets the page number of the editions that have been used. Then, we will indicate the VPC in its infinitive form, as well as a possible literal translation into Spanish. Finally, we will provide an explanatory gloss.

ST (4): Nelle gite, noi con le nostre scarpe chiodate, grosse, dure e pesanti come il piombo, calzettoni di lana e passamontagna, occhiali da ghiacciaio sulla fronte, col sole che batteva a picco sulla nostra testa in sudore, guardavamo con invidia “i negri” che <i>andavan</i> su leggeri in scarpette da tennis, o sedevano a mangiar la panna ai tavolini degli ch��let.	TT (19): Durante las excursiones, nosotros, con nuestros zapatos de clavos duros y pesados como el plomo, medias de lana, pasamont��as, gafas de nieve sobre la frente, y el sol cayendo de plano sobre nuestras sudorosas cabezas, mir��bamos con envidia a los “palurdos” que <i>sub��an</i> , ligeros, con zapatillas de tenis, o se sentaban a tomar nata en los chiringuitos.
VPC: andare su (literally ‘to go up’), to go up.	

ST (14): “Hai visto che le Immobiliari sono <i>andate gi��</i> ”	TT (30): “Ya has visto que las Inmobiliarias <i>han bajado</i> ”
VPC: andare gi�� (lit. ‘to go down’), to loose value.	

Contrastive analysis allows us to carry out some typological considerations, which underline some interesting differences between Italian and Spanish as for the expression of movement.¹⁵ If we analyse the structure of the event frame following a cognitivist approach (Talmy 1985: 60-61), we note that, similarly to what happens in the examples that we have just mentioned, some VPCs of our Italian corpus (ST) consist of a V of generic movement (*andare*) – which lexicalises the component of *movement* – and a P (*su, gi  *) – which in turn indicates the *Path*. Consequently, the latter determines the movement as a whole. On the other hand, in the case of Spanish we observe that the same verbal base (*subir, bajar*) includes both components: *movement + path*.

Nevertheless in our corpus we can also find some examples that allow us to underline another characteristic of the Italian VPCs from the point of view of verbal aspect. First of all, let us consider the following example.

ST (40): La donna allora <i>tir�� fuori</i> dal suo pastrano una chitarra, e cominci�� a suonare.	TT (61): Entonces la mujer <i>sac��</i> una guitarra de debajo de su abrigo y comenz�� a tocar.
VPC: tirare fuori (lit. ‘to pull out’), to take.	

15. With the exception of three instances (which are not relevant from the quantitative point of view, due to the limitations of the corpus that we have considered), all the occurrences that we have analysed are verbs of movement. The observations provided in the following sections do not refer to the whole group of verbs of movement that exist in the Italian language as opposed to the Spanish ones. On the other hand, we will limit ourselves to underlining some characteristics of the Italian VPCs, considering them as a starting point for our study. In fact, within the Spanish and Italian linguistic systems, many verbs of movement show very similar characteristics as for the structure of the event frame.

According to Iacobini & Masini (2007: 173-74) in this example the particle *fuori* is linked to a generic verb (*tirare*). The particle lexicalises the component of the *Path* and also indicates the *telos* (endpoint of an event of movement). Therefore, we can consider it to be a telic particle.¹⁶ However, our parallel corpus shows that in the translation of VPCs into Spanish this doesn't happen. The Spanish MV that is used in the translation is also telic,¹⁷ even without needing any P in order to indicate the *telos*.

Therefore, in line with what has already been pointed out by Slobin (1997: 438) in a contrastive study of novels written in different source languages and their translations, in which some divergent trends are highlighted as for the way of expressing the movement in Spanish and English (among other languages), we agree with the author that such typological differences end up considerably influencing the process and the result of translations. Thus, as far as our corpus is concerned, in the cases in which an Italian VPC is translated by means of a Spanish MV the translation is constrained by the target language. In fact, as we have already pointed out, some typological characteristics that belong to the target language underlie the translation result. This is why we think that in such cases strictly speaking no translation technique has been used.¹⁸

What's more, the 21,7% of the Italian VPCs that are in the analysed corpus have been translated using the sequence V+PP.

ST (102): "Mentre la sua famiglia <i>era dentro</i> , lui se ne andava con le ragazze a skiare!"	TT (130): "¡Mientras su familia <i>estaba en prisión</i> él se iba con las chicas a esquiar!"
VPC: <i>essere dentro</i> (lit. 'to be inside'), to be imprisoned.	

As we can observe from the example, we are dealing with a translation solution that is usually used when in the ST there is a semantically non-compositional VPC. For instance, in this context, *era dentro* (lit. 'was inside', meaning 'to be imprisoned') is immediately recognisable by any Italian native speaker. However, in Spanish it is necessary to include a sort of explicitation of the place

16. In fact, in this context, if such P were not used, the generic V wouldn't have any telic value.

17. We would like to thank María Enriqueta Pérez Vázquez for this observation.

18. In our translation analysis, as far as the concept of translation technique is concerned, we have adopted the discursive and functional approach proposed by Hurtado (2001: 264-271). According to such an approach, strictly speaking, all the translations that are "compelled" by the target language – since they do not constitute any choice among different translation options – should not be considered to be a translation technique. Moreover, all the translation techniques that will be mentioned in this paper have been taken from Hurtado's classification.

that is being referred to, since a literal translation such as *estaba dentro* would be totally insufficient and opaque. Once more, according to the theoretical approach that we have adopted, in such cases it is not possible to talk about translation technique, as the translation is subject to the constraints of the TT. On the contrary, in other cases, when the sequence V+PP has been used, we can identify the translation technique of amplification. By means of this technique, the translator introduces a piece of information that is not explicitly expressed in the ST, even though it is not strictly necessary to do so:

ST (42): “Ma son maglie buone! –diceva mia madre.– Sono di Neuberg! Non vuoi mica che le <i>butti via</i> !”	TT (63): “¡Pero si son jerséis buenos! –decía mi madre.–. ¡Son de Neuberg! ¡No querrás que los <i>tire a la basura</i> !”
VPC: buttare via (lit. ‘to throw away’), to throw away.	

In fact, here, the direct reference to *la basura* (garbage) is totally optional, since it could perfectly be omitted without modifying the global meaning of the sentence.

When translating an Italian VPC into Spanish, another trend that seems to be particularly frequent (5,6% of the occurrences) is the use of verbal periphrasis. In particular, among them it seems relatively common to use the auxiliary *hacer* followed by an infinitive form.

ST (60): “Mi pare che quel sempio di Terni li <i>ha messi su</i> contro di me.”	TT (83): “Me parece que ese tonto de Terni les <i>ha hecho ponerse</i> contra mí.”
VPC: mettere su (lit. ‘to put up’), to persuade to adopt a contentious behaviour [towards the father].	

ST (88): Quanto a mia madre, lei aveva un’indole ottimista, e aspettava qualche bel colpo di scena. Aspettava che qualcuno un giorno, in qualche modo, “ <i>buttasse giù</i> ” Mussolini.	TT (115): En cuanto a mi madre, era optimista por naturaleza, y esperaba algún buen golpe de mano. Confiaba en que un día alguien “ <i>hiciese</i> ” caer a Mussolini de alguna forma.
VPC: buttare giù (lit. ‘to throw down’), to remove Mussolini from office.	

ST (88): Mia madre usciva, la mattina, dicendo: “Vado a vedere se il fascismo è sempre in piedi. Vado a vedere se <i>hanno buttato giù</i> Mussolini.”	TT (115): Y salía por la mañana diciendo: “Voy a ver si el fascismo está todavía en pie. Voy a ver si <i>han hecho caer</i> a Mussolini.”
VPC: buttare giù (lit. ‘to throw down’), to remove Mussolini from office.	

ST (204): Era molto in uso fra noi fare l'autocritica, un tempo, negli anni del dopoguerra: cioè dopo aver commesso errori, analizzarli e sezionarli a voce alta. Intrecciavamo errori su errori; e l'autocritica veniva a sovrapporsi agli errori, si intrecciava e si confondeva con quegli stessi errori, al modo come la musica si confonde con le parole d'un'opera, ne oscura il senso e <i>se le porta via</i> nel suo ritmo di gloria.	TT (248): En una época, en los años de la posguerra, era costumbre entre nosotros hacer la autocritica, que consistía en analizar y en diseccionar en voz alta los errores que habíamos cometido. Entrelazábamos unos errores con otros y la autocritica se superponía, se entrelazaba y se confundía con ellos, del mismo modo que la música se confunde con la letra de una ópera, oscurece su sentido y <i>la hace desaparecer</i> en su ritmo glorioso.
VPC: portarsi via (lit. 'to take away') 'to take something away with oneself.'	

Interestingly, in the first three occurrences, the periphrasis *hacer* + infinitive form has been used to translate idiomatic and semantically non-compositional VPCs. Now, since the translator has chosen these equivalences among other possible options,¹⁹ we should consider such cases as examples of transposition, due to the change of grammatical category implied by this technique (since the Italian VPC is translated by means of the periphrasis *hacer* + infinitive form). On the other hand, the last example of such periphrases concerns a semantically compositional VPC, *portare via*, which here has been translated through the technique of particularisation (instead of opting for a more literal solution such as *se la lleva*).

Another translation trend that is included in the Spanish corpus and is relatively frequent (4,8% of cases) is the association of a verb followed by an adverb (V+Adv.).

ST (192): "Quand'ero in galera," diceva spesso. In galera, diceva, s'era sentita molto a suo agio, finalmente a posto, in pace con se stessa, libera di complessi e d'inibizioni. Aveva fatto amicizia con delle ragazze jugoslave, che <i>erano dentro</i> per motivi politici, e anche con delle detenute comuni [...].	TT (234): "Cuando estaba en la cárcel," decía a menudo. En la cárcel, decía, se había sentido muy a sus anchas, por fin bien y en paz consigo misma, libre de complejos y de inhibiciones. Se había hecho amiga de unas chicas yugoslavas que <i>estaban allí</i> por motivos políticos, y también de unas presas comunes.
VPC: essere dentro (lit. 'to be inside') 'to be in jail'.	

In Spanish, the use of this combination seems to be due to contextual reasons, since it depends on where the construction is inserted. Before the lack of an exact equivalent, in this case the combination V+Adv. allows to avoid the

19. For instance, we can respectively propose the following alternatives: 'les ha puesto en mi contra,' 'tumbara,' 'ha tumbado.'

repetition of the phrase *en la cárcel*, already mentioned within the same paragraph, by means of an anaphoric mechanism.²⁰ The difference between the two languages lies in the fact that in Italian we can observe a metonymic process such as *the part for the whole* by which the VPC (*essere dentro*) has been grammaticalised. As a consequence, the P (*dentro*) that belongs to the construction is linked to the same element (jail). On the other hand, in Spanish the adverb *allí* constitutes a mere anaphoric reference, of a variable and contextual nature.

In other cases, the use of such a combination seems to show different trends as for the expression of spatial deixis:

ST (209): Gabriele, mio marito, mi scriveva da Roma che mi sbrigassi a <i>venir giù</i> coi bambini.	TT (253-254): Gabriele, mi marido, me escribía desde Roma diciéndome que me diese prisa en <i>ir allí</i> con los niños.
VPC: <i>venire giù</i> (lit. 'to come down', 'to go [from a northern city of Italy (Turin) to a city which is in the centre of Italy (Rome)]')	

Here, the VPC *venire giù* (lit. 'come down', go down) is used to describe Natalia's spatial movement from Turin (northern Italy) to Rome (central region of the peninsula), the city in which her husband is currently living. In this case, apart from the well-known discrepancy between the use of *andare/venire* and *ir/venir* in the two languages of our study, in the Italian VPC the *Path* expressed by *giù* (which is expressing a spatial movement from the North heading to the South) is not expressed in the same way in Spanish, since the overt mention of the movement towards the South is somehow implicit, by means of the locative adverb *allí*. In the Spanish language (at least in its European variety) in informal utterances we can find the use of the verbs *bajar*²¹ (go down) or *subir* (go up) to express the physical movement towards either the South or the North with respect to the speaker. However, instead of these verbs, the analysis of our corpus shows that the use of a deictic element such as *allí*, totally similar to the one that we find in the previous example, seems to be more frequent (the adverb is justified by the context, since it links back to the antecedent *Roma*). Since we can think of an alternative option with respect to the solution we find

20. As for this, we underline that this problem does not exist in Italian, precisely thanks to the richness of its linguistic system in this lexical field. In fact, in Italian the VPC *essere dentro* ('to be in jail') is used in order to express the same meaning.

21. This meaning of the verb *bajar* has given rise to colloquial expressions such as *bajar al moro*.

in the TT, the translation is not constrained by the target language, but by the choice made by the translator.²²

Finally, the remaining translation solutions that we find within our corpus (6,7% of the occurrences) can be hardly classified, since they are neither homogeneous nor classifiable under the same group. In fact, they constitute a wide range of different translation equivalences, showing, in the majority of the cases, a single occurrence within the parallel corpus considered as a whole. For this reason, in such cases, because of the limitations of our corpus, it has not been possible for us to highlight any other relevant linguistic patterns from the quantitative point of view.

To sum up, in the following table we point out the translation trends shown by our study in percentages.

ITALIAN	SPANISH	(% OCCURRENCES)
VPC	MV	(61,2%)
VPC	V+PP	(21,7%)
VPC	Verbal periphrasis	(5,6%)
VPC	V+Adv.	(4,8%)
VPC	One-time solutions	(6,7%)

5. VPCs as a translation problem

Firstly, generally speaking, from the translational point of view we should point out that the TT of our parallel corpus is a good quality translation. In fact, in spite of the high complexity of the style and the general tone of the ST, the TT is in line with the interpretative-communicative method²³ adopted during the translation process. However, it is not possible to state the same as for the translation of the verbal constructions, since from the point of view of our analysis we were able to find numerous and diverse translation mistakes.²⁴

22. If we limit ourselves to observing the translation of the VPC, we could consider this case as an example of generalization, a technique by which the movement from the North to the South expressed by *giù* in the ST, by means of *allí* is expressing a simple movement instead.

23. As for the classification of the possible translation methods, we refer to what has been suggested by Hurtado (2001: 252), who defines the interpretative-communicative method as “a translation method that focuses on the comprehension and reexpression of the sense of the original text in which the translation preserves the same aim as the original and has the same effect on the receiver” (the translation of this quote is ours).

24. We adopt the functional conception of translation mistake detailed in Hurtado (2001: 302-308), according to whom a mistake “can only be analysed under a textual, contextual and functional perspective which considers the element in question in relation to

To start with, we observe a relatively frequent trend of mistranslating the meaning of those VPCs that have a non-compositional meaning.

The semantic opacity of some idiomatic VPCs seems to lead to some comprehension problems for the professional translator who faces them. Italian being the L2 language of the translator, it seems quite logical to suppose that her linguistic perception in this language, as for the idiomatic meanings of these constructions, is lower than a native speaker's. Moreover, as we have already stated before, both dictionaries and grammars, which nowadays are available to those who study Italian, do not tackle the matter of VPCs in an exhaustive and precise way. As a consequence, while doubting about their meaning, the translator can hardly gather the information that he/she needs to do his/her job. Lastly, we should not forget that VPCs belong to an open verbal category, which is expanding continuously, and that in this novel there are even some cases of VPCs that seem to belong to some character's idiolect or to the dialectal context. In other words, from this point of view, VPCs would represent a real translation problem, both linguistically and instrumentally speaking.²⁵

For all the reasons we have mentioned, the translator tries to tackle the problem by offering a personal interpretation of the verbal construction. Her interpretation is based on the phrasal context in which it is inserted, sometimes giving rise to, in its turn, two kinds of translation mistakes: the 'false meaning' (FS) and the 'not same meaning' (NMS) (so called according to their Spanish initials) (Agost & Monzó 2001: 18-19). As for the first one, in the occurrences that we are going to explain below, we can see that the translator, because of the semantic opacity of the VPCs, makes a FS since she has not understood the idiomatic meaning of the verbal construction:

ST (8): "Ho una tosse che mi strozzo," diceva dopo un poco a mio padre, che sempre <i>tirava avanti</i> e non si voltava.	TT (23): "Tengo una tos que me ahogo," decía poco después a mi padre, que <i>iba siempre delante</i> y no se volvía.
VPC: tirare avanti (lit. 'to pull forwards,' to keep on walking)	

the whole text, to the context in which the translation is performed [...] and to the aim of the translation and the selected method, to the kind and modality of the translation we are dealing with [...]" (303, the translation of this quote is ours).

25. Here we refer to Hurtado's classification of translation problems (2001: 288).

ST (79): Chiese la mano di mia sorella in un attimo; e poi però rimase ancora un pezzo in poltrona nel nostro salotto, trastullandosi con la sua barba, e raccontando di sé: come aveva tirato su la sua fabbrica, con pochi soldi, e come aveva educato tutti i suoi figli, e come leggeva ogni sera, prima d'addormentarsi, la Bibbia.	TT (105): Pidió la mano de mi hermana en un segundo, pero después se quedó sentado durante bastante rato en un sillón de nuestro salón, jugueteando con su barba y contándonos cosas de él. Nos habló de cómo había sacado adelante su fábrica con muy poco dinero, de cómo había educado a todos sus hijos y de cómo leía la Biblia todas las noches antes de dormirse.
VPC: pull up (lit. 'to pull up,' to start a business)	

ST (212): "Forse non li avevi cercati bene Beppino!" –disse mia madre–. "Forse li dovevi cercare ancora!" - "Macché! Sempia che non sei altro! Non era mica una cosa semplice! Sei subito pronta a buttarmi giù. Ma guarda che asina che sei!"	TT (257): "¡Tal vez no los buscaste bien, Beppino! –dijo mi madre–. ¡Tal vez los deberías haber seguido buscando!" - "¡Tonta, que no eres otra cosa! ¡No era tan sencillo! Estás siempre dispuesta a dejarme mal. ¡Pero mira que eres borrica!"
VPC: buttare giù (lit. 'to throw down', to discourage somebody)	

In particular, in the first example, *tirare avanti* (lit. 'to throw forward') has to be considered idiomatic since, far from having a compositional meaning, it means 'keep on walking', a semantic nuance that the translator has not understood, and that has nothing to do with the fact that Natalia's father when hiking on the mountains was used to walking ahead of his wife, as we deduce from the Spanish translation.

On the other hand, in the second one, another FS was made, since *tirare su* (lit. 'throw up') a factory is not equivalent to 'sacarla adelante' ('to make a business thrive'), given that it implies that fact of starting off a company from scratch.

Finally, in the third one, we observe another idiomatic VPC, *buttare giù* (lit. 'throw down'). Here, starting from the context in which the expression is inserted the translator has understood that the VPC has a negative meaning, since Natalia's parents are arguing as usual, blaming one another for some things they did. Even though the verb used in the translation fits in perfectly with the context of use, again we're dealing with a FS, since the VPC does not mean 'to put somebody down (in public)' but 'to discourage somebody.'

The idiomaticity of the phrasal constructions has led to comprehension problems in another occurrence, in which we can observe a different translation mistake, the NMS.

ST (34): Si stufava però presto; s'imbronciava, si stizziva con me e con Lucio, che le <i>stavamo intorno</i> perché prima ci aveva promesso passeggiare e caramelle [...].	TT (53): Pero enseguida se enfurruñaba y se aburría. Entonces se enfadaba conmigo y con Lucio, que <i>estábamos a su alrededor</i> , porque antes nos había prometido llevarnos de paseo y darnos caramelos [...].
VPC: stare intorno (lit. 'to be around,' to keep constantly close to somebody in order to persuade him/her to act in a certain way)	

In fact, as we can observe in this example, here *stare intorno* (lit. 'to be around') has an idiomatic meaning, since it means 'be all over somebody' with the aim of influencing his/her behaviour and insisting to make him/her act in a specific way (to take out the children for a walk and buy them sweets). Since the idiomaticity of the construction has not been understood, in the TT we observe a literal translation that turns out to be strange in Spanish (seeming quite unnatural) and not appropriate in this context.

In short, even though the mistakes that we have considered so far do not affect the text globally, they do have a linguistic effect, since they do not faithfully reproduce the message expressed in the ST.

Lastly, in some occurrences the translation shows an excessively high and formal register²⁶ compared to the VPC that we find in the ST. As for this, we think that, for the same reasons that we have already analysed while dealing with the semantic mistakes, VPCs can be a linguistic and instrumental translation problem. Both the scant consideration of such linguistic phenomenon in dictionaries and the fact that a non-native Italian speaker has carried out the translation make it more difficult to place VPCs along the diaphasic axis correctly. For this reason, in the translation a wrong use of the variation technique has been made. Below we offer three examples of mistakes that are related to register (REG).

26. In this paper, for the sake of simplicity, we will talk about the register of the book without distinguishing between its three variables (field, tenor and mode). We will mainly be referring to the field and the mode, due to the reasons that we will highlight shortly. On the other hand, we should add that while elaborating this translational study we have taken into consideration that, as Marco observes (2002: 73), 'the relationship between text and register is not univocal, since, in the majority of the cases, a text contains more than one register. This is especially true of literary texts, where there are constant register shifts with one or more variables.' Here, however, when we talk about the register, we will strictly refer to the most informal and colloquial parts of the book, which are mostly expressed either under the form of direct speech, or by means of the narrator's voice, who reuses the Levis' peculiar expressions or describes their habits using a diaphasically and diamesically marked language (as the use of the VPCs itself confirms).

ST (96): Quando s'era buttato nel fiume, una guardia <i>aveva tirato fuori</i> la pistola; ma un'altra guardia aveva gridato di non sparare.	TT (124): Cuando se tiró al río un policía <i>desenfundó</i> la pistola, pero otro le gritó que no disparase.
VPC: tirare fuori (lit. 'to take out,' to take)	
ST (23): Come mai da quella stirpe di banchieri, che erano gli antenati e i parenti di mio padre, siano <i>usciti fuori</i> mio padre e suo fratello Cesare, del tutto destituiti d'ogni senso degli affari, non so.	TT (40): No sé cómo mi padre y su hermano Cesare, que no tenían ningún sentido de los negocios, podían <i>proceder</i> de una estirpe de banqueros como los antepasados y parientes de mi padre.
VPC: uscire fuori (lit. 'to go out,' to come from)	
ST (74): "Non gli <i>va via</i> la febbre. Ho paura che abbia un versamento pleurico."	TT (99): "No le <i>desaparece</i> la fiebre. ¡Temo que tenga un derrame pleural! [...]."
VPC: andare via (lit. 'to go away,' to disappear [the fever])	

As we can observe in the first example, the VPC *tirare fuori* (lit. 'to take out') has been translated as *desenfundar*. Without any doubt the position of such MV along the diaphasic axis turns out to belong to a higher level of formality than that of the Italian VPC. In our opinion, the solution offered by the translator would be appropriate if the ST had used the verb *estrarre*, since the latter, apart from being a MV, also belongs to a higher register. On the contrary, considering the characteristics of *tirare fuori*, as well as the general context in which the utterance is inserted, we believe that *sacar* would be a more appropriate verb.

Similarly, in the following two examples the translator resorts to a MV that belongs to a higher register as compared to the Italian VPC, thus giving rise to an excessive formality in a discourse that, on the contrary, presents itself to the Italian reader as an everyday story, very close to orality and characterised by a general tendency towards informality. In such cases, we suggest as translation alternatives *debían haber salido* and *no se le va*, respectively.

As for this second type of mistake, as a kind of general reflection, we can say that its repercussion should be placed in the pragmatic domain: by means of such translation equivalences, even though the meaning of the VPCs is reproduced, Natalia Ginzburg's intention ends up being altered, since in the TT the tone of informality that characterises the ST is not reproduced.

6. Conclusions

The development of the present research has confirmed our initial hypothesis, that is, that the book *Lessico familiare* (and as a consequence other similar

books to which we are expanding our study) represents an ideal source for finding examples of VPCs, such constructions being particularly productive in texts – as the one we have analysed – which are close to orality.

On the other hand, in the contrastive analysis of the parallel corpus we have pointed out that in the majority of cases, when facing an Italian VPC, the translation into Spanish turns to a MV. As we have observed, such a translational solution seems to depend on typological differences between the two linguistic codes. In other words, in Spanish and Italian we observe a different distribution of the components of the event frame as for the verbs expressing movement. The rest of the translation solutions, less relevant from the quantitative point of view due to the limitations of the corpus we considered, shows a twofold trend: in some cases, the choices are determined by the target language (often due to typological discrepancies); in other cases, on the contrary, strictly speaking they must be considered as translation techniques, since they have been chosen by the translator among various possible options.

Similarly, in the translation we have analysed we pointed out a tendency to make mistakes as for the meaning of the non-compositional VPCs and the identification of the register of some constructions. In this regard, we have tried to note the possible causes of such mistakes, as well as their repercussion and effect.

Given that we are aware of the limitations of the present case study, we are currently expanding our database of parallel texts, with the goal of verifying whether the linguistic and translational patterns that we have underlined here actually constitute a general trend in the translation of verb-particle constructions from Italian into Spanish. In other words, we will observe whether the trends that we have pointed out appear in a systematic way in different texts, belonging to different translators.

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