

Exploring the Uncanny in Translation

Analysis of the Rendering of Crime and Horror Fiction through the Study of *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe

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Abstract

This study was conceived to examine the most important traits that the translation of crime and horror fiction shows from a literary, linguistic and textual perspective. This work features, on the one hand, an exposition of the history, nature and purposes of these kinds of works. Secondly, the contrastive examination of one of the fundamental texts for both genres, *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe, and its target texts in Spanish.

Key Words

Contrastive, Crime fiction, Horror fiction, Literary traslation, Poe.



Introduction

The paramount objective of the following paper is the study of the defining traits of the translation of literary works belonging to crime and horror fiction. These fields are deeply intertwined by their common narrative components and artistic purposes.

This task was tackled by means of an exam of the numerous existing ways to transfer works from this segment of literary activity to other languages. This will be done through the drawing of conclusions after the comparison of the original version and the Spanish translations of *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe.

The translated texts studied in this work correspond to the following editions: the first analyzed text was translated by Julio Cortázar and published by El País in 2009; the second one by Ricardo Summers, Aníbal Froufe and Francisco Álvarez and presented by Edaf in 2010; and the third one was composed by Doris Rolfe and Julio Gómez de la Serna and published by Cátedra in 1997.

1. *Crime and Horror Fiction*

Crime and horror fiction represent relatively reduced fragments of the literature created in recent history, although their power is not depleted by this fact. They possess an immense force because their reflections reach the profoundest part of the human soul and inspect its darkest caves.

One of the essential ambitions of these genres is the creation of doubt regarding the possibility of occurrence of certain events. Their foundations are the fascination with the uncanny and its pursuit, a phenomenon that appears—as Sigmund Freud assured—“when the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced” (Freud, 1953: 244).

Crime fiction awoke in the serial stories presented by newspapers in order to attract the attention of potential readers in the nineteenth century. They were characterized by a concise and direct writing style.

The nexus between both literary worlds, Edgar Allan Poe, codified the canons and the predominant mechanisms of this kind of literature by means of his tale *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. In it, rational explanations represent the only instrument of the investigator, the main character of the vast majority of these narratives (Navas Ruiz, 2010: 2).

Inspired by Poe, the early driving forces of this genre were Émile Gaboriau in France and Wilkie Collins in England. In 1887 crime investigation in a literary context reached an artistic status thanks to Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, created by Arthur Conan Doyle (Priestman, 2003: 2).

During the intermediate space between both World Wars, crime and mystery stories mutated. They adopted the configuration of the novels that we predominantly know nowadays after the publication of the compositions of Agatha Christie and Dashiell Hammet (*Ibid.*: 2-4).

For its part, the first completely literary expressions of horror stories can be traced back to the end of the eighteenth century. This is the time when the

Gothic tale appeared thanks to the contributions of Horace Walpole, Clara Reeve and Ann Radcliffe (Lovecraft, 2002: 125-144).

The dawn of the mature period of those writings began during the first half of the nineteenth century after the publication of the works of Charles Maturin, William Beckford or Mary Shelley. However, the great milestone in horror fiction was the appearance of Edgar Allan Poe, an author that caused the renewal of the genre (*Ibid.*: 144-178).

2. *The Author: Edgar Allan Poe*

On a literary level, the work of Edgar Allan Poe —seasoned by his will to fuse rationality with imaginative activity (Ferrús, 2009: 3-34)— did not enjoy any popular recognition until the publication of his poem *The Raven* in 1845 (Poe, 1982: 1). His reputation subsequently rested on his plentiful production of short stories, a mode of composition that Poe believed to own a superior level of excellence (Castillo, 1992: 2-3). In this segment of his output we can highlight titles such as *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*, *Berenice* or *The Mystery of Marie Roget*.

Additionally he produced an abundant poetic work, within which we can find examples such as *Al Aaraaf*; wrote essays such as *Eureka: a Prose Poem*, linked to cosmology and speculative literature (St. John Stott, 2009: 3); and also works that presaged the appearance of science fiction like *The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall* (Roberts, 2005: 98-104).

The tale studied in this analysis (*The Tell-Tale Heart*) adopts the form of a lengthy soliloquy of the main character in which he shows the readers how he conceived, planned and executed the death of an old man. Its most important literary and linguistic traits —basic for its transfusion to other languages— are its dramatic strength, its musicality, the lyricism of the language used in it and its conceptual power.

3. *The Translators of the Tale*

The first studied translation was made by the Argentine writer Julio Cortázar. The utmost impact of this author was the composition of *Rayuela*. Among his

most outstanding works we can find the titles *Presencia* (a poetry collection) and the tales *Los reyes*, *Bestiario* and *Lejana* (Cortázar, 2004: IX-XXVIII).

Besides *The Tell-Tale Heart*, he translated other works by Poe, such as *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, *The Fall of the House of Usber*, *The Cask of Amontillado* or *Eureka: a Prose Poem* (Poe, 2003: 135-137; Poe 2009: 7).

Regarding the second translated tale, it was composed by translators Ricardo Summers, Aníbal Froufe and Francisco Álvarez. Ricardo Summers only rendered works by Poe, published by companies such as Edaf or Teide (UNESCO, 2018: online).

Aníbal Froufe has mainly worked for Edaf, translating not only literature (such as works by Gustave Flaubert or Jules Verne), but also non-fiction by Charles Darwin or Friedrich Nietzsche. Francisco Álvarez, except Poe, has also translated works by Michael Walzer for Edaf and Paidós Ibérica (*Ibid.*: online).

In the case of the third text, it was translated by Doris Rolfe and Julio Gómez de la Serna. In the bibliography of Doris Rolfe we can find works such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain or *The Anful Revolution: The Decline of the Roman Empire in the West* by Frank William Walbank. Julio Gómez de la Serna has the widest bibliography in the field of translation and we find in it works by Molière, Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust or Margaret Mitchell (*Ibid.*: online).

4. *The Translation of Crime and Horror Fiction in a Literary Context*

Since this study represents a hybrid in terms of literary genres due to its immersion both in the cosmos of crime and horror, it is convenient to explain briefly the characteristics of these kinds of literature that could have any influence on the translation processes.

This kind of rendering belongs to the sphere of literary translation. Its main goal, according to Lefevere, is to make the reception of a work, an author, or a type of literature in a different society possible (1997: 137).

This view is connected to the main objective of translation presented by Venuti (2008: 14), which is the “reconstitution of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that preexist in the translating language and culture”.

Crime and horror fiction works form exceptional portions within the literary reality: they rely on the maximum specificity of their plots, their powerful expressive and creative purposes and the mechanisms that they use to transmit their contents to the readers.

The fictitious components destined to the construction of literary alternatives to reality and the exposition of powerful feelings are some of its singularities that should be watched constantly by translators.

Their wishes of codifying ineffable and heinous feelings by means of words stand out particularly. This factor requires the use of more than referential proceedings —like pragmatic ones—.

The language used in crime and horror fiction works is notable for its accessibility, for its conciseness, for the swiftness with which readers can assimilate the data.

First of all, from a textual perspective, crime fiction works are based on an enormous amount of descriptive sections and details inserted in various moments of the narrative. These may show a fundamental relevance for the plot. For this reason, this is a component that should be transferred efficiently by translators to make the complete enjoyment of any writing of this kind possible (Bassnett, 2011: 115-116).

Secondly, the great quantity of cultural references, many times linked to the narrative detailism, merge inextricably into the plot. If the cultures involved show a notable distance in their defining characteristics, specific strategies will be required in order to catch the reader's attention without offering information relating to the plot (*Ibid.*: 116-117).

The main purpose of horror works is the expression of fear and the exploration of the remotest abysses of the human soul. This is achieved with a lyrical style (Feu Guijarro, 1997: 2-4).

Appropriate translation strategies require a prominent knowledge of the author's writing style and of the strategies used to produce the desired effects in the target audience. This demands previous and exhaustive research and documentary study.

Those elements relating to the psychological and pragmatic areas should not be neglected. The adequate and effective transmission of every component linked to the birth of mystery or fear depends on this analysis (Llácer Llorca, 1999: 3-6).

The objective of the perception of explicit or implicit content of these works by the audience requires the possibility of deciphering it in the target language. It demands the synchronization of the sensations experimented by the characters with those of the readers (García Agustín, 2003: 1).

Fear and mystery need a clearly defined atmosphere to appear in each specific case, which cannot be codified only by means of lexical or syntactical constructions. It emanates from the connotations of the chosen vocabulary, from the selected or elided information by the author, from the rhythm of the narrative. It also arises from the inferential data and the implicatures designed by the authors (Szymyślik, 2016: 116).

The translation of crime and horror works, thus, requires advanced writing abilities and a very powerful linguistic command to be able to mold the whole of their multidimensional realities. These aspects are essential in order to provide the readers with all the information (both explicit and inferential) in a beautiful and suggestive way.

Diferent researchers have scientifically studied the translation of the works of Edgar Allan Poe into Spanish. Bedoya Sánchez analyzed the rendering of the poem *The Raven* by the Colombian writer Carlos Arturo Torres Peña, paying heed to the necessary adaptations required to functionally transfer this poetic work into the new sociolinguistic context (2012: 4).

Moreover, Llácer Llorca studied the translation into Spanish of different tales by Poe, such as *The Masque of the Red Death* or *The Pit and the Pendulum* in his PhD thesis (1995) and has written papers about *The Cask of Amontillado* (1999), among others, where he observed the transference of the lexical, cultural and pragmatic traits of Poe's works.

5. Methodology

The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe has been studied by means of the contrastive analysis of translations.

This mechanism enables researchers to obtain very useful information for the practice of translation: not only to learn the various characteristics of each language in specific contexts, but also to discover new ways to face different translation difficulties. Translators can thus design strategies to transfer the peculiarities of any language using this method.

This translation study was guided by the functionalist approach and by the theories of Nord and Bassnett.

Nord explained, applying the conclusions of functionalism to literary translation, that the main objective of the professionals working in this field is to reach a “balance of function and effect” (2018: 81).

This vision is shared by Bassnett, who stated that the decisions of an author in this creative sphere are not arbitrary and that they were made to transmit information and, above all, inspire feelings. Because of it, the non-functional modification of lexical elements or syntactical structures (for example) can alter the reader's perspective and diminish their artistic perception of any literary work, the main reason of the existence of this kind of texts (2002: 110-115).

Taking into account these conclusions, this analysis focuses on the functionality of the rendering strategies and solutions and on the degree of transference of the original literary effect designed by Poe in the studied Target Texts.

In order to complete this contrastive research successfully, certain authors within Translation Studies have expressed their conclusions about the proper way to carry out this kind of analysis.

Toury, for example, studied the basic traits of a contrastive study. He asserted that, to increase its effectiveness, it is necessary to select reduced sections of the researched texts. Then, through its detailed observation, professionals are able to gather theoretical foundations to draw conclusions about the translation singularities of the studied original and target texts (1980: 112-113).

Another theoretician that insisted on the necessity of limited extracts of the source and target texts to obtain valuable data is Valero Garcés (2007: 129), who said that the intellectual processing of translations required limited content to be productive.

The ideal extension of a segment, according to Toury (2004: 122), is relative, but the extracts from the target text should include the complete solution given by a translator to a problem.

Munday declared that “[...] there is no set model for the analysis of [...] translations” (2016: 157). Because of this fact, an original model to study *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe has been designed in this paper.

In order to obtain the greatest amount of valuable information through this original model of translation analysis, the conclusions of Venuti have been followed. According to Munday, he stated in various papers that in this kind of

works the main goal should be the “[...] analysis of extracts of ST-TT pairs in order to assess the translation strategy prevalent in a given context [...]” (*Ibid.*: 155-156).

The studied pairs are divided into three categories (lexical and semantical, morphological and syntactical and stylistic levels). This classification aims at increasing the thoroughness of the analysis and of the conclusions derived from it.

After the extraction of the most interesting pairs for each category, the translation strategies applied in every target text are observed to determine their functionality in this specific context.

The fragments of the tale in its original and translated forms are included in independent paragraphs from the study and are classified according to their origin by means of a code: ST for the original text, TT1 for the translation made by Julio Cortázar, TT2 for the translation composed by Ricardo Summers, Aníbal Froufe and Francisco Álvarez; and TT3 for the text made by Doris Rolfe and Julio Gómez de la Serna.

Moreover, the code will include the pages where the extracts can be found in the source or in the target texts: TT2/56, for example.

6. Contrastive Analysis of the Translation of The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe

In this paper, the aim is the analysis of the solutions adopted in especially interesting cases from a translative perspective, the rendering channels through which this tale went and the final configuration of its target appearance. This components will determine the way in which this writing is perceived by the Spanish-speaking audience.

6.1. Lexical and Semantical Level

In order to create the correct atmosphere to develop his stories, Poe employed a vocabulary related frequently to disturbing aspects of life.

The first analyzed example in this section reads as follows:

ST/303: “I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye!”

TT1/45: *Quería mucho al viejo. Jamás me había hecho nada malo. Jamás me insultó. Su dinero no me interesaba. ¡Me parece que fue su ojo!*

TT2/267: *Yo quería al viejo. Él nunca me había tratado mal. Nunca me había insultado, pues yo no deseaba su oro... Creo que fue su ojo...*

TT3/275: *Yo quería al viejo. Nunca me había hecho daño. Nunca me había insultado. Su oro no me atraía. Creo que fue su ojo.*

The translation possibilities of a noun (“gold”) and the impact of the chosen equivalents on the perception of the tale can be studied here.

In TT1, it can be seen that this noun has been rendered as *dinero* (“money”), an equivalent that is efficient and which brings Poe's writing style closer to the common reader.

On the contrary, in TT2 and TT3 the translators used the noun *oro* to show the content of the original term, an option that coincides with Poe's poetic intentions.

Moreover, it is interesting that only the first translated text has reproduced the exclamation mark found in the segment “I think it was his eye!”. This decreases the suggestive potential of the tale.

The second example of this section appears in this fragment:

ST/304: “I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening;—just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.”

TT1/48: *[...] y en todo ese tiempo no oí que volviera a tenderse en la cama. Seguía sentado, escuchando... tal como yo lo había hecho, noche tras noche, mientras escuchaba en la pared los taladros cuyo sonido anuncia la muerte.*

TT2/269: *[...] y en el intervalo no lo sentí echarse de nuevo. Él continuaba sentado en la cama escuchando; precisamente como yo lo había hecho noche tras noche, escuchando la muerte que acechaba a la pared.*

TT3/277: *[...] y durante ese tiempo no le oí acostarse. Todavía estaba sentado en la cama, escuchando igual que he hecho yo noche tras noche, escuchando en la pared la carcoma de la muerte.*

Different rendering options regarding the term “death watches” can be found in this fragment: this concept refers to a kind of insects that live between walls and that lives on wood, producing a distinct sound (Real Academia Española, 2018: online).

The translator of TT1 offered the option *taladros cuyo sonido anuncia la muerte*. The noun “taladro” transfers effectively the meaning of this term to the Spanish language.

Cortázar has maintained (through the translation technique known as compensation, according to Hurtado, 2004: 258-260) the nuance contained in English in the component “death” of this term by creating the sentence “cuyo sonido anuncia la muerte” (*whose sound announced death*).

In TT2, the translators have not identified the term “death watches” as a species of insects and has directly translated it as “muerte”.

“Death” was transformed into the subject of the second component of the term (“watches”), interpreting it as a verb, thus building the sentence *la muerte que acechaba a la pared* (“death that stalked the wall”).

In TT3, another translation possibility can be detected: the translators used the equivalent *carcoma de la muerte*. *Carcoma* is an adequate equivalent for “death watches”.

These professionals wanted to preserve the nuance of “death” in his text. They included the amplification *de la muerte*, which would not be necessary to understand this passage in the target language.

The next example appears in this segments:

ST/305: “I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly [...]”

TT1/52: *Levanté luego tres planchas del piso de la habitación y escondí los restos en el hueco. Volví a colocar los tablonces con tanta habilidad [...]*.

TT2/271: *Luego, levanté tres planchas del suelo de la habitación y lo deposité entre el entarimado del piso. Volví posteriormente a colocar las maderas con tal cuidado [...]*.

TT3/279: *Luego levanté tres tablas del suelo de la habitación y deposité los restos en el hueco. Volví a colocar las tablas con tanta habilidad [...]*.

The noun “scantlings” means “the size to which a piece of timber or stone is measured and cut” (Oxford Dictionary, 2018: online). This is a specialised term that has been transferred in various ways in these TTs.

TT1 and TT3 show the same option to render this noun: *hueco*. The equivalent in Spanish for “scantling” is *escantillón* or *escuadría* (Real Academia Española, 2018: online). This option may have been rejected by Cortázar and Rolfe and Gómez de la Serna due to the excessive level of specialization for this context.

This translation technique is known as generalization and in this tale it is efficient because it does not decrease the capacity of the readers to decode the information of this fragment.

In the case of TT2, Summers, Froufe and Álvarez decided to reformulate this segment and used the option *entre el entarimado del piso*.

They performed a generalization in the translation of “scantling” as *entarimado*. It extracts the meaning of the sentence and it presents its information in a simplified way that favours readers' understanding.

The next example appears on these pages:

ST/306: “The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search —search *well*. I led them, at length, to *his* chamber [...]”

TT1/53: *Les hice saber que el viejo se había ausentado a la campaña. Llevé a los visitantes a recorrer la casa y los invité a que revisaran, a que revisaran bien. Finalmente, acabé conduciéndolos a la habitación del muerto [...].*

TT2/129: *El viejo, les referí, estaba ausente en el campo. Llevé a mis visitantes por toda la casa. Les invité a buscar, a buscar bien. Finalmente, los conduje a su habitación [...].*

TT3/280: *Les conté que el viejo estaba fuera, en el campo. Acompañé a mis visitantes por toda la casa. Les rogué que registraran, que registraran a fondo. Y acabé llevándolos a su cuarto [...].*

The syntagm “*his* chamber” is analyzed here, which appears in different forms in the studied translated tales:

In TT1, the original information has been subject to an amplification and an explicitation: “*his* chamber” adopts the form *habitación del muerto* in Spanish. This option adds information to that presented in the original tale by means of the replacement of the pronoun “his” by *del muerto* (“of the dead man”).

Notwithstanding, this additional information does not affect the understanding of the meaning of this composition and this option is efficient.

The translators of TT2 and TT3 did not alter the information contained in the studied syntagm, but they used different equivalents to transfer its meaning. In TT2, the translated syntagm *a su habitación* and in TT3 the option *a su cuarto* can be found.

Taking into account that Poe used the noun “chamber” in this fragment and not “room”, for example, it is relevant that in the case of the three TTs the translators chose a common equivalent for it, that is, *habitación* and *cuarto* instead of *aposentos* or *cámara*.

6.2. Morphological and Syntactical Level

In this sector we see that Poe displays a great dominion of the mechanisms destined to the composition and construction of narratives. He is able to show the readers that information that he wants to be perceived in diverse ways, explicitly or inferentially.

The first example of this section is presented below:

ST/303: “TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them.”

TT1/45: ¡ES CIERTO! Siempre he sido nervioso, muy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. ¿Pero por qué afirman ustedes que estoy loco? La enfermedad había agudizado mis sentidos, en vez de destruirlos o embotarlos.

TT2/267: Es cierto; soy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. Lo he sido y continúo siéndolo; pero ¿por qué decir que estoy loco? La enfermedad ha agudizado mis sentidos, pero no lo ha destruido ni embotado.

TT3/275: ¡Es verdad! Nervioso, muy, muy nervioso, lo he sido y lo soy; pero ¿por qué dirán que estoy loco? El mal ha agudizado mis sentidos, no los ha destruido ni los ha entorpecido.

Poe used a sophisticated writing style and he sometimes altered the normal syntactical order of his sentences, as in “TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am”.

The translators of this tale employed different structures to show this information in the Spanish language.

In TT1, Cortázar decided to include the sentence *Siempre he sido nervioso, muy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso*. This translation presents a reverse alteration of the order of the components of the sentence.

That is, he restored its common order, presumably to lighten the original phrasing and to make its understanding easier. He also functionally condensed the meaning of “I had been and am” into *Siempre he sido* (“I have always been”).

In TT2, Summers, Froufe and Álvarez employed the option [...] *soy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. Lo he sido y continúo siéndolo*. They included the whole information of the segment divided into two sentences, what is effective to transfer the meaning to the readers.

In TT3, Rolfe and Gómez de la Serna translated the sentence as *Nervioso, muy, muy nervioso, lo he sido y lo soy*. They replicated the structure of the original segment and they present its complete information maintaining Poe's preferences regarding syntax.

The second example reads as follows:

ST/303: “It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none [...]”

TT1/45: *Me es imposible decir cómo aquella idea me entró en la cabeza por primera vez; pero, una vez concebida, me acosó noche y día. Yo no perseguía ningún propósito. Ni tampoco estaba colérico [...].*

TT2/267: *Sería imposible decir cómo entró primeramente la idea en mi cerebro. Pero una vez concebida me persiguió día y noche. No existía ningún motivo. No había pasión alguna.*

TT3/275: *Me es imposible decir cómo se me metió por primera vez la idea en la cabeza; pero, una vez dentro, me obsesionaba día y noche. ¿Propósito? Ninguno. ¿Pasión? Descartada.*

On the following page the author proposes a symmetrical structure that provides the story with musicality and rhythm: “Object there was none. Passion there was none”.

In TT1 it has been translated as *Yo no perseguía ningún propósito. Ni tampoco estaba colérico*. The Spanish version opts for totally different syntactical structures to those presented in the original. The writing has been simplified and made more natural, what functionally supports the understanding of the sentence.

The second translated text shows that the translators used a structure that resembles Poe's intentions in the original tale, but functionally adapted to Spanish syntax requirements: *No existía ningún motivo. No había pasión alguna*.

The last translated tale also shows the will to present a similar syntactical structure in this passage: *¿Propósito? Ninguno. ¿Pasión? Descartada*. The translators have used question marks to simplify the writing and also to imitate Poe's style with a high rhetorical effectiveness.

We now present the third example of this section:

ST/303: “[...] a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees —very gradually— I made up my mind to take the life of the old man [...]”

TT1/45-46: *[...] Un ojo celeste, y velado por una tela. Cada vez que lo clavaba en mí se me helaba la sangre. Y así, poco a poco, muy gradualmente, me fui decidiendo a matar al viejo [...].*

TT2/267: *[...] un ojo azul pálido, recubierto por una película. Siempre que se fijaba en mí, sentía correr la sangre helada por mis venas, y así, poco a poco, muy gradualmente, me fui haciendo a la idea de quitarle la vida [...].*

TT3/275: *[...] un ojo azul pálido, velado con una membrana. Cada vez que me echaba la vista encima se me helaba la sangre; y así poco a poco —muy paulatinamente— fui tomando la decisión de matar al viejo [...].*

In this fragment, different ways of expressing the ideas of the original tale can be seen depending upon the punctuation marks. These choices are related to the different uses of dashes in Spanish and in English.

It is possible to take as a reference the fragment “and so by degrees —very gradually— I made up my mind to take the life of the old man [...]”:

In the first and in the second translated text, the dashes are replaced by commas correctly in accordance with Spanish punctuation rules (Martínez de Sousa, 2003: 3-4).

This way, readers are presented with a writing style that expresses the ideas of the original tale in a very natural way for them, because the use of dashes is not common in Spanish.

But in TT3, a different strategy can be detected: the translators decided to maintain the dashes to build their sentence, an option that transfers adequately the information of the passage and imitates Poe's writing choices.

The fourth example is located on the following pages:

ST/304: “His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers), and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door [...]”

TT1/48: *Su cuarto estaba tan negro como la pez, ya que el viejo cerraba completamente las persianas por miedo a los ladrones; yo sabía que le era imposible distinguir la abertura de la puerta [...].*

TT2/269: *Su habitación era tan negra como la pez, y estaba completamente a oscuras (pues los postigos estaban firmemente cerrados por temor a los ladrones). Yo sabía que él no podría ver la abertura de la puerta [...].*

TT3/277: *Su cuarto estaba tan negro como un pozo, con una densa oscuridad (porque las contraventanas estaban bien cerradas por miedo a los ladrones), y por eso yo sabía que no podía ver la abertura de la puerta [...].*

In this case, the different possibilities regarding the use of punctuation marks and connectors to express ideas in the two languages involved in the transference of this work are studied.

In TT1 a variation in sentence connectors in the section “(for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers), and so I knew [...]” can be seen.

It possesses in Spanish the form [...] *ya que el viejo cerraba completamente las persianas por miedo a los ladrones; yo sabía que [...]*, revealing the replacement of the connector “and” by a semicolon. This element adds a reduced pause in the target language between the two sentences.

In addition, the suppression of the brackets employed in the original version of this text divide the explanatory content of the narrative.

In TT2, the translator increased even more the pause between the two sentences by transforming the connector “and” into a full stop: [...] *fírmemente cerrados por temor a los ladrones*). *Yo sabía que él no podría* [...].

This connector has been only reproduced in TT3: [...] *ladrones*), *y por eso yo sabía que no podía ver la abertura de la puerta* [...]. However, the translators also maintained the comma from the original and in Spanish there should no comma before a copulative conjunction.

The last fragment is reproduced below:

ST/306: “It was *a low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton*”.

TT1/54: *Era un resonar apagado y presuroso... un sonido como el que podría hacer un reloj envuelto en algodón.*

TT2/273: *Era un sonido bajo, sordo y rápido, semejante al que produce un reloj envuelto en algodones.*

TT3/280: *Era un sonido bajo, sordo, rápido..., semejante al sonido que hace un reloj que va envuelto en un trapo.*

In this extract unconnected adjectives (divided only by commas) are used. In this case, Poe wanted the readers to perceive the frantic feelings of the main character to reflect his altered mental state.

To reinforce the importance of this passage, Poe also employed italics to attract even more the attention of the readers.

In TT1, the translator concentrated the meaning of the adjectives “*low, dull, quick*” into *apagado y presuroso*.

This option transmits the ideas expressed by the author to the readers. Cortázar used a copulative conjunction to connect the adjectives and reduced them to only two, condensing the original content.

In TT2 and TT3 the same options have been used (*bajo, sordo, rápido*) and they show that the translators of these target tales have reproduced Poe's syntactical design and have presented the readers with a fast paced fragment without conjunctions. In this way, it transfers efficiently the pragmatic content of these segment of the work to the Spanish language.

6.3. Stylistic Level

The works of Edgar Allan Poe possess very particular stylistic characteristics. This contributes to the solidification of those ethereal and immaterial sensations that Poe intended to capture.

In most cases, these stylistic mechanisms are related to the placement of emphasis on words or elements fused with the plot or with the described emotions.

This is the context where the first example of this section is located:

ST/303: “TRUE! —nervous— very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses [...].”

TT1/45: *¡Es cierto! Siempre he sido nervioso, muy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. ¿Pero por qué afirman ustedes que estoy loco? La enfermedad había aguzado mis sentidos [...]*

TT2/267: *Es cierto; soy nervioso, terriblemente nervioso. Lo he sido y continuo siéndolo; pero ¿por qué decir que estoy loco? La enfermedad ha agudizado mis sentidos [...].*

TT3/275: *¡Es verdad! Nervioso, muy, muy nervioso, lo he sido y lo soy; pero ¿por qué dirán que estoy loco? El mal ha agudizado mis sentidos [...].*

The use of exclamation marks is common in literature to transmit very powerful feelings or to attract the reader's attention to one specific element of a work.

In this tale, Poe begins his narrative with a word marked in this way: “TRUE!”. In TT1, the equivalent (produced via a linguistic amplification because of the increase of the amount of words needed to express this idea) adopts the form *¡Es cierto!*, which reflects the dramatic strength that the whole story needs to present in Spanish.

TT2, however, does not show the exclamation mark of the original adjective in the equivalent *Es verdad*, what diminishes the force of the beginning of the translated tale.

In TT3, the translators have used the same option as in the previous text, but they have added the exclamation mark of the original adjective, transporting the intentions of Poe to the Spanish language.

The second example reads as follows:

ST/304: “Never before that night had I *felt* the extent of my own powers—of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph.”

TT1/47: *Jamás, antes de aquella noche, había sentido el alcance de mis facultades, de mi sagacidad. Apenas lograba contener mi impresión de triunfo.*

TT2/268-269: *Nunca, antes de aquella noche, había sentido la extensión de mis propias energías —de mi sagacidad—. Apenas podía contener mis sentimientos de triunfo.*

TT3/276: *Jamás hasta aquella noche llegué a sentir el alcance de mi propio poder, de mi sagacidad. Apenas podía dominar mi sensación de triunfo.*

The use of italics by Poe offers an additional layer of expressiveness to his tale. The word “*felt*” is outlined in this extract to summon the attention of the readers and reinforce the ideas contained in it.

In all TTs, italics have been applied to the equivalents chosen for this verb, leaving aside its configuration in the Spanish language (*sentido*, *sentido* and *sentir*).

This option is completely functional in the three texts due to the importance of italics for maintaining the atmosphere of the tale.

The third example is presented below:

ST/303: “Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded [...].”

TT1/46: *Presten atención ahora. Ustedes me toman por loco. Pero los locos no saben nada. En cambio... ¡si hubieran podido verme! ¡Si hubieran podido ver con qué habilidad procedí!*

TT2/268: *Y ahora viene la dificultad. Me creéis loco. Pero los locos no saben nada de nada; y yo, sin embargo... Deberíais haberme visto. Os habríais dado cuenta con cuánta discreción procedí [...].*

TT3/275-276: *Ahora, fíjense en esto. Ustedes se empeñan en decir que estoy loco. Los locos no saben nada, pero tenían que haberme visto a mí. Tenían que haber visto con qué cordura procedí [...].*

The pronoun “you” has no variations regarding register in English, but in Spanish there are two options to transfer it, depending on the theoretical public you are addressing to through this tale, *tú/vosotros* or *usted/ustedes*.

Regarding the style of the studied TTs, the polite pronoun *usted/ustedes* is used in the direct references to the characters or the readers included in the first and third translation.

This clearly proves the preference of the translators for locating the text in a formal register, because Cortázar and Rolfe and Gómez de la Serna probably directed his target story to an audience from different social sectors.

TT2 is the only one in which a non-formal register is used, as in *Me creéis loco* (“You fancy me mad”) or *Deberíais haberme visto* (“You should have see [...]).

The fourth example of this section appears in this fragment:

ST/304: “[...] because Death, in approaching him, had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim.”

TT1/49: [...] *porque la Muerte se había aproximado a él, deslizándose furtiva y envolvía a su víctima.*

TT2/270: [...] *porque la muerte se acercaba a él con paso furtivo, proyectando su negra sombra y envolviendo a su víctima [...].*

TT3/278: [...] *porque la muerte se le acercaba acechándole con su negra sombra y envolvía a su víctima.*

The importance of capital letters is analyzed here, applied to certain elements of the narrative, for the complete understanding of the various content of this tale.

The word “Death” is capitalized in this work to state the relevance of this concept for the content of this passage through a typographic strategy.

In TT1, Cortázar has written the word “Death” with capital letters, what maintains its expressive force in the target tale and replicates Poe's writing style.

Notwithstanding, in TT2 and TT3 this mechanism has not been reproduced and this word shows no capital letters (*muerte*). This diminishes the suggestive power of this fragment and weakens its additional expressive layer.

The analysis of these elements ends with this example:

ST/304: “Yes, he has been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. *All in vain* [...]”

TT1/49: *Sí, había tratado de darse ánimo con esas suposiciones, pero todo era en vano. Todo era en vano [...].*

TT2/270: *Sí; tuvo que tratar de convencerse a sí mismo con aquellas suposiciones; pero todos sus intentos fueron en vano. Todo fue en vano [...].*

TT3/277-278: *Sí, había estado tratando de animarse con estas suposiciones, pero se dio cuenta de que todo era en vano. Todo era en vano [...].*

In works centered on expressiveness, repetitions play a major role in supporting the transference of certain feelings. This is why it is vital to maintain them in the translated texts.

This strategy is conceived to increase the dramatic strength of this passage and the interest of the readers in this fragment: “all in vain. *All in vain*”.

In this case and leaving aside the structure of the equivalents of each translator, the three translated texts have maintained Poe's strategy. Spanish readers can perceive the totality of the expressive nuances of this fragment.

7. Conclusions

The main dissimilarity that crime and horror texts present regarding the great majority of literary writings is the desire to impress readers in diverse ways and make them feel shocking and sometimes abhorrent sensations.

This provokes that each literary creation of this kind and the purposes ascribed to them must be profoundly studied. This is a factor that, moreover, restricts the freedom of maneuver of translators.

Their work aims at constructing a version of the original text in the target language that makes the identification of all the information contained in the source history possible, and at presenting it in a way that will enable to enjoy the sophistication of its writing style and rhythm.

All of it is necessary to provide these works with an attractive but truthful appearance in the target language through the translative and artistic mechanisms at the disposal of each professional.

In TT1, the modifications applied to the original text are mostly related to the personal preferences of the translator. That is, his purpose of tempering the phrasing of certain passages through the simplification of lexical mechanisms or syntactical structures to make the reading fluid and pleasing.

In TT2 the quest for a balance between Poe's expressive decisions and the will to make the writing style more natural in Spanish can be seen. It results in a hybrid target text that enables readers to read fluently the tale and to detect many of the traits of the original style of the author.

TT3, on the other hand, shows that its translators wanted to preserve to the greatest extent possible the style of the author in their target tale. They transferred most of the characteristics of Poe's writing into the Spanish language, efficiently adapted to its linguistic requirements. This text is the one that resembles more accurately the configuration of the original tale.

However, the slight changes realized in all TTs do not represent a decline of the expressive strength of the tale nor of the depth of its wording or its plot.

This paper unveils the fact that, when translators decide to immerse themselves in this area, they must be prepared to face demanding challenges. It is hardly possible to anticipate every difficulty that may arise in a translation and the translative, documentary and writing abilities that will be put to the test in each line of a work, but the professionals obtain in exchange an artistic satisfaction.

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