

**USING SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS
AS AN AID TO TRANSLATION BETWEEN SPANISH
AND ENGLISH: MAINTAINING THE THEMATIC
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ST**

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ABSTRACT

As is well known, the typical non-marked choice of theme varies between Spanish and English; in Spanish, the verb is often in thematic position, whereas English typically thematises a subject noun or pronoun. The present paper discusses some of the main issues that arise from this systemic difference between the two languages. Using an electronic corpus of mainly journalistic texts, the paper looks at the different thematic development of similar passages and looks at how far the translator can maintain the ST thematic development in the TT and, indeed, how desirable a goal that is.

INTRODUCTION

In research carried out over recent years (Munday 1997, 1998, 1998a), I have attempted to put together an objective apparatus for descriptive translation studies, using a systemic-functional grammar approach to compare the realisation of the metafunctions in Spanish-English source and target text pairs. An important addition has been the incorporation of tools from corpus linguistics, which enable accurate and rapid access to many surface features and permit the analyst to identify trends that might otherwise have passed unnoticed or that might only have come to light after considerable digging. In this way, small changes in translation at the level of the metafunctions can be identified and hypotheses formed as to why these have occurred. This interdisciplinary model has brought together aspects from systemic func-

tional linguistics (SFL), translation studies (TS) and corpus linguistics (CL). However, the most problematic component of the analysis has proved to be the comparative analysis of the thematic structure of Spanish and English, for reasons that will be discussed below.

In addition, as I propose to discuss in this paper, published work on thematic structure by SFL and TS theorists reveals a somewhat uneasy relationship between the two subject areas. Systemic linguists such as Fries working in English are nevertheless aware of inherent problems of interlingual thematic analysis:

Systemic theory predicts that every language will have some grammatical function which serves to mark the point of departure for the clause (or other grammatical unit) as message. There is no claim, however, that the means of realising this function will necessarily take any particular form.

Fries (1995: 15)

From the other angle, scholars working across languages such as Baker (1992), Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997) and Taylor (1990, 1993) have begun to explore theme in translated texts. However, there remains a considerable amount of work to do.

The present paper will attempt to point a way forward. It will first concentrate on the different surface realisations of theme in English and Spanish. It will describe a method for the rapid, computer-assisted analysis of comparative texts that hopefully will facilitate future studies. This method will be applied to a small selection of different text types in both languages. The analysis, however, will be illustrative because the major aim of the paper is to outline possible ways of bringing together the SFL and TS approaches and to begin to broach the thorny subject of the value of English-language dominated SFL thematic analysis for Spanish-English translation. Importantly, it will also call for more collaboration between SFL and TS scholars in general.

The paper is organised as follows: section 1 will consist of a brief description of SFL thematic analysis in English and will be followed, in section 2, by a discussion of work on theme by TS scholars and its relation to SFL work. In section 3, issues of thematic analysis in Spanish will be outlined. In section 4, a computer-assisted methodology for the analysis of ST-TT pairs will be set out, and in section 5 will be applied to text pairs. Results will then be discussed and specific suggestions made for future studies.

1. ANALYSIS OF THEMATIC STRUCTURE IN ENGLISH

In Halliday's approach, "theme is the element which serves as the point of departure for the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned" (1994: 37). It is *always* the first element in the clause, continuing up to and including the first ideational element (i.e. the first element that is a participant, process or circumstance), which is the *topical or ideational theme* (Halliday 1994: 52). There are two other kinds of possible thematic constituents which may precede the topical theme: these are *textual theme* (a conjunction or conjunctive adjunct), and *interpersonal theme* (a modal adjunct). Rheme is then the remainder of the clause. Typically, in English the

Theme will coincide with the grammatical subject of a clause, as in the following example:

<i>A new agenda for development</i>		<i>is in the making.</i>
theme		rheme.

A new agenda for development is both the grammatical subject and the theme. In this typical, unstressed, pattern, *A new agenda for development* is what would be referred to by Halliday (p. 43) as *unmarked theme*. If an element other than the grammatical subject is placed in theme position, it is classed as *marked theme* (p. 44) and is a result of a meaningful choice on the part of the writer:

Today, | *a new agenda for development is in the making.*

Here, the temporal circumstance *today* is a marked theme, with the whole of the rest of the clause being rheme. Halliday (44) gives the most frequent marked themes as being an adverbial group or a prepositional phrase.

The following example shows an example of a textual theme:

<i>However,</i>		<i>a new agenda for development</i>		<i>is in the making.</i>
textual theme		ideational theme		rheme.

However, a conjunctive, is a textual theme, preceding the topical theme constituted by the ideational element *a new agenda for development*. An example of an interpersonal theme would be:

<i>Fortunately,</i>		<i>a new agenda for development</i>		<i>is in the making.</i>
interpersonal theme		ideational theme		rheme.

Analysis is not always so straightforward, however. For example, in her study of academic texts, Whittaker (1995: 109-10), following Halliday, notes that many textual and interpersonal themes are metaphorical in construct, sometimes being a whole clause in length. Thus, the sentence-initial clauses “it is, moreover, clear that” and the adjunct “in my opinion” are each analysed as a single interpersonal theme.

Linked to the thematic structure of a clause or sentence is the information structure of that unit. Information is either “given” (i.e. already known) or “new.” In the SFL approach, theme is typically, but not necessarily, given information and rheme is typically, but not necessarily, new information. Fries (1995) labels this the “splitting” approach, contrasted to the functional sentence perspective (FSP) model, which he calls “combining.” This is because the FSP school (e.g. Firbas 1986, 1992) equates theme with given and rheme with new, but determines rheme not just by word order (“linear modification”) but by that element that contributes most “communicative dynamism,” a relative measurement that to a large extent depends on that element’s independentness of the surrounding context.

Despite the different approaches to theme, Fries (1995: 5), in an assessment of non SFL studies, identifies certain findings that seem to be general no matter which

approach is used. Among these is the fact that known or topic-like information does tend to occur in initial position. More importantly, Fries notes the role of theme as performing an “orienting function” to a text. Thus, in descriptions of flats, space adjuncts and phrases not unsurprisingly tend to be thematised (Fries 1983). Furthermore, Fries notes (1992: 124) that theme tends to be organised differently according to the genre of a text. Similar supporting evidence is offered by Ghadessy (1995), whose analysis shows theme in British football reports to be dominated by time elements (for example, *In the 69th minute*).

Despite these variables, and despite the three different possible kinds of theme (textual, interpersonal and topical), Eggins (1994: 284) considers the choice of position of the topical elements to be “the most significant choice in terms of the clause’s thematic potential” and in ensuring the internal cohesion of the text. She gives (300-3) four important areas to examine when analysing theme:

- what elements get to be theme (textual, interpersonal, topical)
- the choice of topical theme (pronouns, nominal groups, adjuncts, etc.)
- the markedness of theme choices
- the thematic progression of the text.

These areas will be important in the analysis in section 5 below.

2. THEMATIC ANALYSIS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

The inherent problem in using such a model in TS is, of course, that thematic structure seems to be realised somewhat differently in different languages. This is emphasised by TS scholars such as Nord (1991), who applies a text linguistic approach, and Baker (1992), who adopts a Hallidayan approach in her coursebook on translation. Among her data, Nord (1991: 213-4), analysing the English and German translations of a passage from Unamuno’s *Niebla*, finds that, in both cases, the complicated rheme structure of the original is simplified and, in the German translation, the theme-rheme order (and thus the order of presentation of detail) is rearranged. There has been a series of other studies on thematic structure in translation, from both the FSP and Hallidayan approach, but they are often published as short papers in diverse publications (e.g. Gerzymisch-Arbogast 1986, Prozorova 1992). The findings do, however, tend to concur, namely that many translators seem more prepared to shift syntactic structure than lexical structure, with potentially distorting results for the thematic structure of the target text.

For this reason, Baker (1992) makes observations about the importance for the translator of being aware of the theory behind thematic and information structures. She points out (129) that understanding these structures and recognising what is a marked or unmarked structure “can help to heighten our awareness of meaningful choices made by speakers and writers in the course of communication” and, therefore, help decide whether it is appropriate to translate using a marked form. This is a useful approach, but nevertheless still begs the question of how to identify what is or is not marked. Baker does not answer this, but does (151) explicitly warn of the dan-

gers of concentrating on the analysis of textual structures in English and extrapolating from this to other languages.

Taylor (1993: 98), in an article stressing the value of systemic linguistics for translation, notes some of the inevitable differences in the analysis of theme and rheme between Italian and English, including, amongst others, the fact that Italian often thematises the verb. While noting such differences between the languages, Taylor (97) makes the potentially controversial point:

Analysing the functions of the various parts of the sentence in a syntactically flexible language such as Italian and identifying noun phrases and verb phrases as actors, goals, beneficiaries, processes, etc. provides us with the pieces to fit into the syntactically rigid confines of English.

On the one hand, yes, it is advantageous to have a linguistic tool such as SFL that can allow comparison of two different languages, yet the theme-rheme structure is the area where the most obvious problems lie, one being how to deal with the thematised verb forms. The fact that Taylor brings in the FSP concept of communicative dynamism in his analysis of English-Italian sentence pairs may well reveal that SFL has difficulty coping alone with thematic patterns in non-rigid word order languages. Communicative dynamism is what Taylor uses to explain the difference between:

E' arrivato Zampanò. (Here he is - Zampanò!)

and

Zampanò è arrivato. (Zampanò is here).

in a scene from Fellini's "La Strada." The first has Zampanò as the focus of new information, the latter has his arrival. English, as Taylor points out, has to resort to intonation or rewording to make up for its lack of flexibility.

Ventola (1995), in a paper entitled "Thematic development and translation," looks at ST-TT pairs in English and German in an attempt to see why different choices are sometimes made by the ST author and the translator. In particular she concentrates on German academic texts translated into English and the effect she considers the translations to have. Summarising her findings from one ST-TT pairs comparison she says (p. 102, highlighting is her own):

The translator has managed to translate the relatively complex German clauses into English, but they are still monstrous in the English reader's eyes. What is needed is a more thorough investigation of the Theme-Rheme issues and the role they play in *creating "textuality" and "cohesion"* in translations of texts.

While I agree with the conclusion of the second sentence concerning textuality and cohesion, the word "monstrous" in the first sentence indicates the prescriptive and highly evaluative nature of Ventola's analysis.

In the very short final section of her paper, Ventola then goes on to look at what few translation theorists say about theme and rheme. She cites Taylor, Newmark, Hatim and Mason and Koller, and laments the scarcity of discussion in translation

theory about the area. It is here, ironically, that I feel the gap between SFL and TS manifests itself. Work on crosslingual thematic patterns in SFL and TS inevitably look at similar phenomena. However, there seems to be a great lack of crossover between the theorists themselves. Ventola's paper, which does look at actual ST-TT pairs rather than merely effecting a contrastive linguistic analysis of texts in the two languages, approaches the problem from SFL, which is reflected in the works she cites. A TS approach would now probably feed in her analysis to descriptive translation studies (following Toury 1995), which prefers a more descriptive, less prescriptive analysis in an effort to find out what actually goes on in the translation process.

The divorce of SFL and TS also shows itself in the tendency of many SFL theorists to concentrate almost exclusively on English. There is a danger that English-language analytical patterns are being forced on to other languages. Just such a danger can be seen in the thematic analysis of Spanish.

3. PROBLEMS OF APPLYING THEMATIC STRUCTURE ANALYSIS TO SPANISH

Since English is a language which can be analysed easily by the SFL approach, in my earlier studies of Spanish ST-English TT pairs, this was the model adopted for the analysis of the TT. The crucial question was how far the same model could be used to compare the markedness of the TT structure with that of the Spanish ST, with, like Italian, its more flexible syntax.

Subject pronoun ellipsis causes the most difficulty when attempting a comparative SFL thematic analysis. A typical example, taken from the García Márquez short story *El verano feliz de la señora Forbes* is:

<i>sentí</i>	<i>un horror tan intenso</i>
topical theme	rheme.

Here, the topical theme is the mental process verb *sentí*, with the inflected ending *-í* indicating the first person singular actor. The English translation of this was:

<i>I</i>	<i>felt a fear so intense</i>
topical theme	rheme.

Here, it is the obligatory English subject pronoun *I* which is the topical theme, the process *felt* being part of the rheme.

Such systemic differences between the two languages inevitably create different thematic patterns in the two languages, as is noted by Silva-Corvalán (1983: 117) and Baker (1992: 127-9). Thus, the initial thematic profiles of the two García Márquez texts (analysed in Munday 1997, 1998a) were also inevitably different: the Spanish ST had 50 subject pronouns and 152 main process verb forms in thematic position (based on SFL analysis), compared to the English target text's 230 subject pronouns and 2 main process verbs. However, this shift in thematic profile is not a shift in markedness. Verb-initial clauses in Spanish and pronoun-initial clauses in English

are both unmarked. Baker (1992: 127) makes the same point in her analysis of the Arabic translation of an extract from the autobiography of the entrepreneur Tiny Rowland, where the cohesive thematic *I* in English has to be rendered by verb forms in Arabic, a language which, like Spanish, prefers inflected verb-forms rather than independent pronouns to indicate person:

It is important to bear in mind that while inflected verbs in languages such as Arabic, Spanish, and Portuguese (to name but a few) do carry the same information as an English pronoun-plus-verb combination, the effect of placing them in theme position is not the same.

Because of the kinds of systemic differences noted above, Baker (128) sounds a warning about the use of SFL thematic analysis:

Attempting to analyse verb-initial languages such as Arabic in terms of Halliday's model highlights the fact that, for some languages, this type of analysis may not be as workable as it is in English.

The method that was used to counter this systemic difference in thematic structure in the analysis of the García Márquez stories involved making adjustments to the raw figures. Namely, this entailed taking account of the elision of the Spanish subject pronoun and analysing as if the pronoun were present. For example,

(yo)		<i>sentí un horror tan intenso.</i>
topical theme		rheme.

A similar adjustment was implemented to take account of those negatives such as “*no oímos*” that begin Spanish clauses. In the latter case, the “raw” SFL analysis would give *no* as an interpersonal theme. Allowing for pronoun elision permits it to be analysed as “(*nosotros*) *no oímos*,” the same kind of structure as the English translation “*We didn't hear*.”

Such adjustments allowed the Spanish clause to be compared in similar terms to the English clause, neither of which is marked. Making similar adjustments throughout the text produced a thematic profile based on similar criteria in the two languages and allowed concentration on those cases where a shift in markedness had occurred. Most notably, those shifts involved circumstantial adjunct displacement, for example:

*Sin embargo, llegó tan puntual como siempre al desayuno **del miércoles**.*
Yet *on Wednesday* she came to breakfast with her customary punctuality.

where the time adjunct *del miércoles* has, as *on Wednesday* in the target text, been shifted to second position in the sentence and has become the topical theme after the textual theme *yet*.

Yet, even though it does permit evaluation of the markedness of the two texts, the question must be how justified is an English-biased SFL analysis of a Spanish text. Because of the unease in imposing this marked framework, I decided to focus more

on examining raw data in other Spanish-English text pairs in an attempt to see how differently Spanish and English organise themselves thematically and to try and judge to what extent Spanish was indeed a verb-thematic language.

4. A COMPUTER-ASSISTED METHODOLOGY FOR THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF ST-TT PAIRS

The comparative analysis of a ST-TT pair can be greatly facilitated by using tools from corpus linguistics. Up until very recently, one of the major problems besetting descriptive translation studies (DTS) has been the time-consuming nature of laboriously analysing the two texts side by side. With the growth of electronically held texts and the more widespread availability of computer research tools, this problem is beginning to be overcome. Both my earlier García Márquez study and the present paper have made extensive use of the *WordSmith* program developed by Mike Scott of Liverpool University (Scott 1996). This user-friendly PC application can generate word frequency lists and other statistics on the texts under investigation. Of especial importance is its ability not only to produce almost instantaneous concordances of a given search term but also to allow the researcher to reorder the concordance lines according to the first or second word to the right of the search term. Instances of any word or word string can be investigated, gathered together, and the linguistic context pursued on screen. This leads to new ways of viewing (literally) the written text, as can be seen in Figure 1 in section 4.1 below. This means that the actual form of the text can be manipulated by the researchers who “will be forced to see what they might otherwise overlook” (Johansson 1995:244).

4.1. PREPARATION OF THE TEXTS IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

With the García Márquez analysis, preparation of the texts in electronic format was rather time-consuming in that copyright permission had to be sought, the printed text had to be scanned in to the computer and carefully checked and tags inserted to mark the sentence-initial and clause-initial items. For the present study, however, the texts that were examined for the present study, from bodies such as Unesco and the European Parliament were readily available in electronic format on the Internet and permission was granted for their reproduction for non-commercial purposes. They are a valuable resource for linguistic analysis.

The texts are best downloaded in the simplest text format to avoid extraneous editing symbols appearing within the main body of the text. For the present study, it was decided to focus attention on the sentence-initial elements and it was a relatively simple operation to tag these markers. This was done by using the Microsoft Word “find and replace” command to replace all instances of “.” by “.#”, and by replacing “.^p” (paragraph mark) by “.#”. A little manual fine-tuning was nonetheless essential—the tag after the final full stop of the text must be deleted and an extra tag inserted before the very first sentence. An example of a resulting tagged sentence-initial element would be:

.# A different note was struck by John CUSHNAHAN...

A simple *WordSmith* search for “#” in a text would immediately bring up on screen all the sentence beginnings. By ordering them in sequence according to the first and then second word to the right of the tag, the sentence-initial elements would then be placed in alphabetical order. An example, taken from the English Solana text (Text B2) can be seen in Figure 1:

3 ant to take part in such a development. # A different note was struck by John CUSHNAHAN (EPP
 4 e construction of a multi-ethnic Kosovo.# A similar line was followed by Ole KRARUP (EDD, DK) w
 5 een reality and aspirations in this area.# Although the Petersberg tasks offered a wide range of o
 6 s of intent.# “We need to be able to act.# And that means having military capabilities.” It would be
 7 ding law enforcement and trade policy. # Another .500m was today being pledged to Kosovo.# T
 8 f what the West had set out to achieve. # Another sceptical note was struck by Charles de GAUL
 9 should not be at the expense of NATO.# Any “Europeanisation” of defence was, he felt, part of a
 10 is was absent then Europe should act. # At present, as he pointed out, military wise, Europe was
 11 made economic action very significant.# Both military and non-military responses might be neede
 12 ources and multi-national task-sharing.# Clear procedures for decision-taking were also essentia
 13 p the OSCE to European civil society. # Dominique SOUCHET (UEN, F) referred to the “disastrou
 14 esentative Wednesday 17 November - # Dr Javier SOLANA, Secretary-General —EU High Repr
 15 non-EU allies were taken into account.# Dr Solana stressed the need for credibility in the eyes o
 16 of the Charter on European Security. # Dr Solana then turned to the issue of security and defen
 17 uropean Security and Defence Policy. # Dr Solana underlined the importance of a European Sec
 18 onsibilities to the detriment of NATO.# Emphasis, he said, should be made upon improving the m
 19 with the US and consolidating NATO.# Enrique BARÓN CRESPO (PES, E) argued that the Foreign
 20 ad tackled in his first month in office.# Firstly, he noted that this week’s General Affairs Council
 21 be “mangled by diplomatic lawyers.” # For the EPP, Hans-Gert POETTERING (D) stressed the im
 22 this to be considered in any decisions.# Francis WURTZ (EUL/NGL, F) wanted the EU to be bette
 23 roles between the two organisations. # Gary TITLEY (PES, North West) on the other hand, felt t
 24 under the political control of the EU. # Geoffrey VAN ORDEN (EPP/ED, Eastern) felt there was
 25 utedated ideas relating to the Cold War.# He also sought clarification for the role of non-EU NATO
 26 ached by the February 2000 deadline.# He also spoke of the EU-Algeria talks to progress an ass
 27 re coherence in aid and foreign policy.# He also considered that the UN Security Council needed
 28 on the agenda of the Helsinki Summit.# He applauded the “positive approach of a traditionally n
 29 spond to help these civilian casualties.# He argued that the increasing sophistication of society a
 30 etermine how this should be achieved.# He believed that the discussion of European defence w
 31 irs Council had been an historic event.# He believed that a coherent security and defence policy
 32 lism had simply given way to another.”# He considered that the current strategy was obsessed
 33 fective than action by individual states.# He considered that security went beyond merely military
 34 he event and taking appropriate action.# He emphasised that this was not just a question of milita
 35 oversight by Parliament of the process.# He expressed his support for a democratic Russia but c
 36 uld complement traditional diplomacy.# He noted that in the First World War 85% of casualties w
 37 the common strategy towards Russia.# He saw the priority as being able to anticipate events of
 38 ry session of the European Parliament.# He stressed that his mandate as High Representative w
 39 Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat.# He stressed that the EU was actively supporting a comp
 40 d by the “powerful and arrogant USA.”# He wanted an end to the “intolerable inertia of the EU on
 41 iscriminate use of force in Chechnya.”# He was urging the Russian government to respect its int
 42 country which Europe cannot ignore.”# He was leaving for the OSCE Summit in Istanbul and

43 s, he stressed, could be a political one.# He was also working to facilitate the reconstruction of
 44 he EU must speak out on this, he said.# He welcomed the development of a European defence id
 45 olve building something for humanity.# He, too, stressed the need for close inter- institutional co
 46 curity Council needed to be reformed. # Heidi Anneli HAUTALA (Greens/EFA, FIN) argued that in
 47 d been exposed by the Kosovo crisis.# His group was strongly committed to the development of
 48 include humanitarian and civil crises.# If these issues were adequately addressed, he said, th
 49 or decision-taking were also essential.# In addition, there should be arrangements to ensure that
 50 War 85% of casualties were military.# In current conflicts, the same proportion of civilians wer
 51 ection of the EU's internal strength.# It should not be just a question of crisis prevention but s
 52 ces to finance this would come from.# It should not be at the expense of NATO.# Any "Europea
 53 greater cooperation from its partners. # It was then the turn of Commissioner Chris PATTEN wh
 54 the form of civil and police facilities.# It was also necessary to look closely at the role of the O
 55 ATO allies, and at international level.# Joint action, he believed, would be far more effective th
 56 le everyone to "pack a bigger punch."# More was expected of Europe today, particularly in view
 57 pacity for autonomous military action.# Mr Cox stressed that, although the EU provided a half of
 58 human rights anywhere in the world. # Mr Solana first updated the House on the main issues th
 59 l countries were being taken on board.# Mrs McKenna was concerned that the mutual defence c

Figure 1. Partial concordance of sentence initial items in English Solana text (B2)

Immediately striking is the visual pattern produced by the vertical line of sentence-initial subject pronouns *He*. This is the kind of pattern that comes across so clearly with this type of analysis.

It is also possible for the computer to give a readout of the frequency of different sentence beginnings. However, manual analysis is currently the only sure way of conducting a full SFL thematic analysis. Up till now, even research which purports to provide computer-generated analysis (e.g. Webster 1995), very often involves considerable human input and is merely a disguised form of data retrieval and manipulation. Nevertheless, there is no reason why more sophisticated SFL parsers combined with currently available part-of-speech taggers should not become increasingly available.

Clause-initial tags, as opposed to sentence-initial tags, are more complex to add to the electronic text. Some may be inserted by searching for the strings “*que*” in Spanish and “*that*” and “*which*” in English, but they require subsequent manual checking, since, for example, some clauses will have omitted the comma or even, in the case of English, the relative pronoun. The earlier García Márquez analysis was clause-based. Most of the interesting findings on thematic structure, however, tended to occur in sentence initial position. For the present paper, as an illustration of what can be done by combining a simple corpus linguistic approach with a SFL analysis, clauses were not tagged. It was felt that gains in speed and ease of methodology (permitting far more material to be analysed and far more quickly) compensates for the less than delicate analysis of the clause structure, despite the clause being such a key element of SFL analysis.

The method of overcoming such qualms adopted in the present study was to combine quantitative sentence-initial analysis with qualitative analysis of specific findings, followed up by investigation of text samples for clause shifts. The particular features that were examined here, following Eggins (see 1 above), are: what elements get to be

theme, the choice of topical theme, the markedness of theme choices and the thematic progression of the text. This combines a quantitative and qualitative approach.

4.2. TEXTS

The Spanish and English electronic text pairs were analysed separately. The concordancer was used to produce a concordance of all sentence-initial elements in the ST and a similar concordance for the TT. Each concordance could then be ordered alphabetically (by means of the file menu) according to the first and second elements in the sentence and printed out. The two profiles were then compared.

The methodology was applied to a series of Spanish and English texts. In each of the following sections, the source texts analysed were around 2000 words in length:

- in 5.1 the texts in question (Texts A1 and A2) are part of a multilingual UNESCO speech on development and culture given by the then Director-General Federico Mayor. The speech was given partly in Spanish, partly in French and partly in English. The parallel sections analysed are those given in English and in Spanish, with their corresponding translations. It is of course, possible that the whole speech was originally written in a single language and then translated; and it is very possible that there was interaction between the languages in drafting the speech.
- section 5.2 uses European Parliament summaries in Spanish and English of an intervention by Dr Javier Solana (Texts B1 and B2) and on the World Trade Organisation talks (Texts C1 and C2). These summaries are original Spanish and English texts, not translations, although they are based on the original or interpreted speeches of the participants in the debates.
- section 5.3 turns to two Spanish texts from the quality Madrid daily *El País*. These are different genres, one (Text D) an editorial and the other (Text E) a football report. They were written for a purely Spanish audience.

The reasons for the choice of text types were: in 5.1, to look at a translated text pair where the SL and TL interference may well reveal itself in a closer syntactic calquing; in 5.2, to see how parallel, but non-translated, texts on the same subject matter and source material might vary between Spanish and English, with the hypothesis that there was likely to be more divergence than in 5.1; in 5.3, to briefly look at examples of other genres in Spanish which have been written for a monolingual audience without any influence from English. The thematic patterns might be expected to be more indicative of a typical Spanish language (rather than translated language) pattern.

Once again it is to be stressed that this is an illustrative analysis only, indicative of areas where work is proposed for the future and should merely serve to illustrate the potential of the methodology.

5. APPLICATION OF THE METHODOLOGY TO TEXT PAIRS

Analysis of the different kinds of theme (topical, interpersonal, textual) in each text can be seen in the tables in each section below. The breakdown of types of topical themes for all texts can be seen in the table in the appendix.

5.1 MULTILINGUAL UNESCO SPEECH

The results of the analysis of the different types of theme in the two texts are indicated in Table 1:

Type of theme	Spanish text (A1)	English text (A2)
topical	73	74
textual	12	11
interpersonal	5	4

Table 1. Types of theme in UNESCO texts (A1 and A2)

The general thematic profile in the table is very similar. The slight increase in interpersonal themes is sometimes explained once again by the systemic differences between the two languages. Thus, the interpersonal particle *ya* in “*Ya conocen ustedes...*” is translated by the conjunctive *as* “*As you know...*” Yet, on other occasions the interpersonal in Spanish is predicated in English (as with all examples in this section, the theme is underlined to ease analysis and reference):

Example 1

Sólo así se hará realidad el objetivo supremo de este sistema de seguridad y cooperación.

It is the only way of attaining the supreme goal of this system of security and cooperation.

An explanation may well be the V + long subject structure (*se hará...cooperación*) in the Spanish example. This is often problematic to render in English. In A2, *it is* + noun + *gerund* is preferred to the alternative of a marked interpersonal plus textual theme (*only thus*) and right-shifting the process verb (*be attained*) to final theme position:

Only thus will the supreme goal of this system of security and cooperation be attained.

The breakdown of purely topical themes (i.e. not preceded by an interpersonal or textual theme) in the Appendix reveals the expected higher number of subject pronouns in theme position in the English text (21, as against 4 in the Spanish text). There is a correspondingly higher number of main process verbs as topical themes in the Spanish (8 as against 0 in English). Shifts in circumstantial adjuncts (CAs), noted in the García Márquez study, are also in evidence, with 24 CAs in thematic position in Spanish compared to 18 in English. Example 1 (A1 and A2) below is typical of the quite close matching of theme choices in the two texts, yet still reveals a shift in CA position:

Example 1 (A1)

(1) *Actualmente* se está gestando un nuevo programa de desarrollo en el que la cultura cumplirá una función esencial. (2) *Este Foro* puede hacer una extraordinaria aportación al proceso de formulación de nuevos enfoques del desarrollo. (3) *Los participantes reunidos en esta sala* no son únicamente especialistas cuyos debates contribuirán a definir ese nuevo programa, (3a) también hay entre ustedes decisores del más alto nivel que habrán de participar en su aplicación. (4) *A lo largo de los años* el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo ha sido un catalizador que ha acelerado el desarrollo social y económico de la región. (5) *Confío* en que este Foro abra nuevas vías para definir la función de las inversiones en la cultura al servicio del desarrollo.

Example 1 (A2)

(1) *Today*, a new agenda for development is in the making —one where culture will play a central role. (2) *This Forum* can provide an invaluable contribution to the process of reformulating approaches to development. (3) *The participants gathered in this room* are not only specialists whose exploratory debates will help define the new agenda, (3a) they include top-level decision-makers who will be involved in its implementation! (4) *The Inter-American Development Bank* has for years been a catalyst, accelerating the region's social and economic development. (5) *It is my hope* that this Forum will break new ground in defining the role of investment in culture for development.

The same thematic choices have been made in the two texts for sentences 1 (a CA of time), 2 (a subject noun) and 3 (a more complex postmodified subject noun). The later sentences show shifts, however: in the Spanish, 3a, analysis at clause level shows an interpersonal theme (*también*) which is a simple subject pronoun topical theme (*they*) in English; in sentence 4, the Spanish time CA (*a lo largo de los años*) is in first position, whereas the English has a subject noun topical theme (*The Inter-American Development Bank*) with *over the years* in third position; finally, sentence 5 thematises a Spanish mental verb (*confío*), while the English uses a predicated form *it is my hope*.

Close examination of the text reveals other occasions where equally surprising shifts take place. Example 2 (A1) below has a very strong cohesive thematic structure in Spanish:

Example 2 (A1)

(1) *Sólo* la educación es capaz de tender los puentes que van de la esclavitud — de la pobreza, de la ignorancia, del dinero, de la droga— a la libertad. (2) *Porque* sólo ella permite la participación cívica, que es la esencia de la democracia. (3) *Porque* aporta los saberes necesarios para el despegue económico. (4) *Porque* permite reducir el crecimiento demográfico y vuelve innecesaria la emigración. (5) *Como tan acertadamente expresó El Libertador*, Simón Bolívar, “la educación es la base de la libertad.”

Cohesion is achieved by the repetition of the interpersonal *sólo* in theme position in sentence 1 and second position in sentence 2, and by the threefold repetition of the textual *porque* in sentences 2, 3 and 4. These three sentences are in fact extended and marked rhemes of sentence 1, giving reasons for education's importance. They were included by the computer in sentence-initial element analysis.

The corresponding passage in the English (A2 below) reveals a slightly different thematic structure:

Example 2 (A2)

(1) *Only* education can build bridges leading from bondage—in the shape of poverty, ignorance, debt or drugs—to freedom. (2) *For* it alone opens the way to civic participation, which is the essence of democracy. (3) *It* alone provides the knowledge needed for economic take-off, (4) makes it possible to reduce population growth and renders emigration unnecessary. (5) *As the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, so rightly put it* “Education is the basis of freedom.”

The interpersonal *only* from sentence 1 is taken up by the near-synonym *alone* in third position in sentence 2 (after the textual *for* and the topical *it*), with a further repetition of *alone* in sentence 3. This extra element of cohesion (*only, alone, alone*) compared to Spanish (*sólo, sólo*) compensates for the loss of cohesion caused by the lack of sentence-initial textual repetition in sentences 2 to 4. Whereas the Spanish has the marked rhematic *porque*, the English has the thematic *For* and *It* and merges sentences 3 and 4. Both Spanish and English are cohesive, but they find different ways of constructing that cohesion thematically.

5.2 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PARALLEL SUMMARIES

Whereas texts A1 and A2 are meant to be corresponding versions of the same text in different languages, texts B1 and B2 are independent summaries of a single source material. The subject is Javier Solana's first appearance before the plenary session of the European Parliament. The results of the thematic analysis in Table 2 seem to show a rather divergent thematic profile:

Type of theme	Spanish text (B1)	English text (B2)
topical	51	79
textual	23	8
interpersonal	9	0

Table 2. Types of theme in Solana texts (B1 and B2)

While the English text B2 is almost uniformly topical-theme structured, there is a far higher number of textual and interpersonal themes in Spanish text B1. Concordance printouts for B1 show a sentence-initial prominence of obvious textual markers such as *pero* (4 instances), *por otro lado* (2), *por último* (3) and *y* (9). Furthermore, even a large number of the thematic CAs in Spanish have a textual orienting function.

The following example summarises the part of Solana's speech concerning Chechnya and Kosovo:

Example 3 (B1)

- (1) *En su intervención*, Solana pasó revista a las actuaciones en su poco menos de un mes de mandato y a sus próximas prioridades. (2) *En cuanto a Chechenia*, aludió a la condena del Consejo al “uso desproporcionado de la fuerza en Chechenia” y a la petición al gobierno ruso para que respete su obligación de evitar víctimas civiles. (3) *Hay* que “seguir poniendo la mayor presión política posible” continuó Solana, sobre las autoridades rusas “que deben buscar un acuerdo negociado a través del diálogo.” (4) *Y subrayó*: “no hay una solución militar en Chechenia; la única solución es una solución política.” (5) *En relación a Kosovo*, aludió al “compromiso de la Unión con la reconstrucción de Kosovo y con la creación de un Kosovo democrático y pluriétnico.” (6) *En su opinión*, es especialmente importante que los líderes políticos moderados locales “se manifiesten y asuman sus responsabilidades” para el éxito de la reconciliación. (7) *También* anticipó que empezará inmediatamente a trabajar en la evaluación de la situación de la oposición democrática serbia, siguiendo el mandato que acaba de recibir de los Estados miembros.

This extract is lengthy in order to demonstrate how the Spanish develops thematically: themes 1, 2, 5 and 6 are topical CAs with some textual and interpersonal function in that *En relación a Kosovo* in 5 indicates a change of subject to Kosovo, while *En su opinión* in 6 indicates to whom the opinion is attributed. Theme 4 is another textual theme (*y*), while 3 is a verb with a modal force and 7 is the interpersonal *también*, which also still performs a textual orientation by extending the previous sentence. Compared to this thematic structure, the corresponding English text is overwhelmingly topic-theme dominated:

Example 3 (B2)

- (1) *Mr Solana* first updated the House on the main issues that he had tackled in his first month in office. (2) *Firstly*, he noted that this week's General Affairs Council meeting had condemned the “disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force in Chechnya.” (3) *He* was urging the Russian government to respect its international humanitarian obligations to avoid civilian victims and to keep the frontier between Chechnya and Ingushetia open. (4) *The only solution* to the crisis, he stressed, could be a political one. (5) *He* was also working to facilitate the reconstruction of Kosovo and the establishment of a democratic and multi-ethnic society in that region.

Only sentence 2 has a textual theme.

In order to pursue these findings further, partly because it was felt that Solana's delivery of the speech in Spanish may well have influenced the lexical and thematic patterns of summary B1, a second extract of a similar length was taken from the same document. This text (C1 and C2) was the summary of a debate on the upcoming World Trade Organisation talks in Seattle. The initial theme count in Table 3 in fact bears out the findings from the Solana text:

Type of theme	Spanish text (C1)	English text (C2)
topical	48	62
textual	20	8
interpersonal	3	1

Table 3. Types of theme in WTO texts (C1 and C2)

The higher number of textual and interpersonal themes in Spanish is again in evidence. Again noticeable was the higher number of CA themes in Spanish. The following extract from Commissioner Lamy's intervention (originally given in French) brings out the different thematic structure of C1 and C2:

Example 4 (C1)

- (1) *En el fenómeno de la mundialización*, LAMY subrayó que no había “marcha atrás.” (2) *Por eso* hay que garantizar que las normas básicas en materia de derechos humanos se cumplen en un marco geográfico cuanto más amplio mejor. (3) *Por ejemplo*, las normas de trabajo que propugna la Organización Mundial de los Trabajadores “no son suficientemente respetadas.”

Example 4 (C2)

- (1) *Mr Lamy* also stressed the need to ensure that environmental measures were compatible with WTO rules. (2) *The precautionary principle* should allow countries to adopt proportionate rules. (3) *He* agreed that social standards were affected by globalisation and that international labour standards were not being sufficiently accepted in the WTO.

All three sentences in Example 4 (C1) have a textual role, even in the case of the topical theme CA in sentence 1, since it marks out the subject matter of the intervention. On the other hand, the English 4 (C2) is totally oriented around grammatical subject topical themes *Mr Lamy*, *The precautionary principle* and *He*.

5.3 NON-TRANSLATED SPANISH TEXTS

The texts in section 5.2, though not translations, clearly depended on source material from a variety of languages. Some interlingual interference was therefore to be expected. A further avenue to explore are texts written in one language with no reference to another source language. Analysis of such texts may reveal, by comparison and contrast with the kinds of “mixed” texts we have seen in A, B and C, how non-translated language differs from translated and semi-translated language (see Baker 1995 for an overview of this area).

Text D (an editorial from the serious liberal Madrid newspaper *El País*) and Text E (a football report from the same newspaper) were chosen because it was felt that their genre might well reveal typically SL structures, since they would purposely

have been written for a SL audience with no possibility of translation. The breakdown of types of theme in these texts can be seen in Table 4:

Type of theme	Editorial (D)	Football report (E)
topical	23	40
textual	11	9
interpersonal	5	6

Table 4. Types of theme in other-genre non-translated Spanish texts (D and E)

Text D is notable for the high number of non-topical themes in sentence-initial position, 16 out of 41, representing the highest percentage (39%) of all the Spanish texts studied here. It also has more than twice as high a percentage of V + S sentence patterns as topical themes. However, the number is still small, just 3 out of 41 sentence units, representing just over 7 percent. Typical is the following example:

Example 5 (D)

Se han producido algunas evoluciones alarmantes en los diez años transcurridos desde la firma de la Carta de Seguridad de París.

Algunas evoluciones alarmantes is rheme, representing new information, though it would be interesting to speculate why the CAs of time and place are placed in sentence final position. Were this sentence to be translated, the thematic and information structures could probably be rendered by an existential *There have been some alarming changes* in sentence-initial position.

Text E, a football report of Real Madrid's defeat of Español, focused on condemnation of the losing side's defensive tactics and on the welcome reappearance of Real Madrid's troubled French striker Nicolas Anelka. It is noteworthy that a VS thematic structure is used here to signal the arrival of Anelka as a substitute:

Example 6 (E)

Entró Anelka, recibido como Pelé.

The stress of new information is on Anelka, and even more specifically on the unusually rapturous welcome he received. English would be able to mirror this by using a phrasal verb and placing the particle in first position:

On came Anelka, to a Pele-style welcome.

However, the most notable feature of Text E, more even than the high number of topical themes, is the placing of an object pronoun or noun (a "Goal" in Hallidayan if not football terminology) in sentence-initial position. Two of the seven examples are the following:

Example 7 (E)

Al delantero francés, tan proclive a la indolencia, el recibimiento le debió sonar a música.

Example 8 (E)

Del Español sólo puede decirse que jugó con la vista puesta en el frágil sistema nervioso del Madrid

Such structures may be more typical of an informal style in Spanish. It is certainly interesting that they are very rare in the other Spanish texts examined in this paper. It may be that they are also less likely to occur in texts influenced by other languages. The thematic structures they represent are not always easy to render in English. Example 7 (E) could be translated by a marked English CA, as in:

To the French forward, so inclined to indolence, the reception must have sounded like music.

The tendency to “normalise” to a subject-based theme might be strong, however:

The welcome must have sounded like music to the French forward, who is so inclined to indolence.

In example 8, an English translation would have to compromise the thematic pattern with either a CA “*As far as Español are concerned, ...*” or by placing a whole clause as theme “*The only thing that can be said about Español is that....*”

Finally, an echo of the *porque* marked rheme instances from Example 2 (A1) above can be seen in the following:

Example 9 (E)

Y el Español siguió pendiente de los errores de su rival. *Porque juego no hizo*, a pesar de la ventaja que cobró en el primer tiempo.

In this case, the marked rheme introduced by the textual element *porque* is further marked by the placing of the Goal/object *juego* before the process verb *hizo*. Preserving such a feature in English would produce an archaic and perhaps excessively marked structure such as “*Because play they did not.*” Avoiding this in the interests of preserving the informality of the text as a whole would probably mean normalising to “*Because they did not make a game of it*” or “*Because they did not try and play.*” This seems to be a clear example of a conflict between preserving the thematic structure and observing the general dynamics and requirements of the text as a whole.

6. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Although the texts analysed in section 5 were illustrative of the methodology, we shall briefly summarise the findings in order to point to certain areas that are worthy of further investigation.

The translated, or at least multilingual, Unesco speech supported results of the earlier thematic analysis of the García Márquez texts. The numbers of topical, textual and interpersonal themes were very similar in the two texts. The main shifts occurred with circumstantial adjuncts which are more often in first position in the Spanish than the English. This was also found in the other texts, which suggests that Spanish may be a language that is more oriented by such framing devices than is English. Cohesion through textual themes was also generally more common in Spanish than English. Indeed, one of the most interesting findings was the increase in non-topical themes in non-translated Spanish language. Much more work needs to be done on different texts and genres to see if this can be a generalisation.

Text E, the football report, reveals a high number of marked object/goal topical themes. It would be interesting to use the rapidly expanding resources of computer corpora to investigate whether there is a tendency for formal Spanish and translated Spanish to prefer this structure. It does not appear in the other texts. Finally, Texts D and E also show a slightly higher number of VS themes. Again, it is possible that this structure is less likely in Spanish texts influenced by other languages that prefer a SV order (e.g. in translation or summaries of speeches made in other less inflected languages).

7. CONCLUSION

Importantly, the types of questions noted in the previous section can be followed up by adopting the kind of interdisciplinary methodology used in this paper. Access to larger on-line computer corpora of both English and Spanish texts (such as the British National Corpus and the corpus of the Real Academia) will provide researchers with the opportunity to compare patterns across the two languages. The methodology used here is not sophisticated; it is a practically based compromise using the resources of the Internet and of the *WordSmith* program in order to look rapidly and in new ways at a variety of written texts in their entirety. It is for future research to create a more delicate mechanism for analysis, but my assertion is that an interplay of computer and close critical analysis is an essential element of the approach.

As regards the usefulness of SFL analysis for languages such as Spanish, it is clear that some analysis can be carried out with Hallidayan terminology. It is simply, as can be seen in the appendix, that the thematic profiles will be different, with fewer subject pronouns and with more process verbs in thematic position. The problem of deciding markedness remains. It may well be that, in crosslinguistic comparison, as translators would intuitively do, English subject pronoun and verb need to be considered together as equivalents of the Spanish verbal form. On the other hand, it may simply be enough to accept that a translator should aim for a different, though equally coherent, thematic profile in the target language. This also applied to attempts to

preserve the stress of the marked object/goal themes in Text E. It will be interesting to examine whether the growing global influence of the rigid English language will lead to less flexible thematic patterns in Spanish in the future.

In view such fundamental differences between the languages, further research is necessary into whether the less rigid FSP-type approach is in fact more useful for the analysis of Spanish. This is where I would call for a more concerted, unified research approach from SFL, TS and indeed FSP scholars. There needs to be far more crossover and joint projects to use the expertise of these researchers who are, after all, investigating similar phenomena. And the research should focus not just on English and not just on a contrastive linguistic analysis. Translated language, ST-TT pairs and the kind of “mixed” multilingual texts analysed here are valuable sources of information. Toury’s descriptive translation approach seeks generalisations about the underlying concept of translation. Translation, too, can help SFL towards greater understanding of its own concepts.

APPENDIX: THEME TYPE IN ILLUSTRATIVE TEXTS

Type of theme	Text A1 Unesco Spanish	Text A2 Unesco English	Text B1 Solana Spanish	Text B2 Solana English	Text C1 WTO Spanish	Text C2 WTO English	Text D Editorial Spanish	Text E Football Spanish
Interpersonal	5	4	9	0	3	1	5	6
Textual	12	11	23	8	20	8	11	9
Topical	73	74	51	79	48	62	25	40
Subject Pronoun	4	21	7	32	0	15	1	1
Subject Noun	29	27	6	9	10	10	8	8
Subject Proper Name	3	2	21	21	8	15	0	9
Process verb	8	0	13	0	10	0	4	6
VS order	1	0	1	0	2	0	3	2
Goal-passive/pronominal	0	2	0	9	0	11	0	0
Goal-object	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	7
Circumstantial adjuncts	24	18	12	6	17	10	7	7
Cleft structure	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0
Total sentence units	90	89	83	87	71	71	41	55
Length of text (words)	2270	2168	1874	1936	1835	1937	767	1281

Illustrative Text sources

Text A1

Discurso de Federico Mayor en la inauguración del Foro “Desarrollo y Cultura,” París, 11 de marzo de 1999. <http://www.unesco.org/> (DG 99/8)

Text A2

Address by Mr Federico Mayor at the opening of the Forum on “Development and Culture,” Paris 11 March 1999. <http://www.unesco.org/> (DG 99/8)

Texts B1 and C1

European Parliament Summaries. *Ecos de la sesión*. Ed. Paula Hernández Hervás. 15.11.99. <http://www.europarl.eu.int/>

Texts B2 and C2

European Parliament Summaries. *This Week*. Ed. Roy Worsley and Tim Boden. 15.11.99. <http://www.europarl.eu.int/>

Text D

El País, Editorial 21.11.99: 14.

Text E

Santiago Seguro. "Real Madrid - Español," *El País* 19.12.99: 51.

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