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Medical brochures translated into English in Spain

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Abstract

The aim of this conference is to present the results of an analysis of the text genre of medical brochures that have been translated into English and published in Spain. We will contrast the results of this work with those obtained in a previous study of original medical brochures both in English and Spanish. Here, we will try to determine whether the brochures translated into English in Spain are influenced by original Spanish brochures or whether, on the contrary, they comply with the features of the target culture. In order to extract the features of each language, we have worked with a corpus of 250 documents (100 brochures in Spanish, 100 in English and 50 brochures translated into English and published in Spain).

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Key words: contrastive analysis of the genre of medical brochures in English and in Spanish; brochures translated into English; original English brochures; original Spanish brochures; similarities and differences in the genre of medical brochures

1. Introduction

In spite of the high number of publications about medical texts and specialised translation, we have detected an important lack of research regarding medical brochures. These texts are more and more frequently used in health centres to transmit medical information to the general public (Busch Lauer 1995). In addition, the number of foreign tourists and residents in Spain has increased considerably in the last few years, resulting in an increase in the number of medical brochures being translated.

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A genre frequently presents different features in two cultures (Gamero 1998). For that reason, in our opinion, before translating a medical brochure, it is advisable to study in detail the features that this genre presents in the two languages that we are dealing with. In a previous study (Faya Ornia 2015), we used two linguistic corpora (brochures in English and brochures in Spanish) to observe the behaviour of medical brochures in both languages. In the present work, we continue that research line and have thus compiled a third corpus of medical brochures: documents translated into English and published in Spain. With it, we have tried to study the features of translated brochures and determine whether the appropriate changes have been made, or whether they have been influenced by Spanish texts.

In order to perform our analysis, we followed a model of analysis with a top-down approach which we also used in the previous contrastive study of original brochures. It is based on the functional model of Nord (2005) and we have completed it with the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) because of their contributions regarding visual material.

2. Model of analysis

The model of analysis that we have followed in this work is the same that we used to contrast original brochures (English and Spanish) in the previous work. This model is divided into two stages. In the first one we analyse formal aspects, while in the second one, linguistic issues are discussed. In the figure that appears below, exact elements which have been subject of analysis are mentioned.

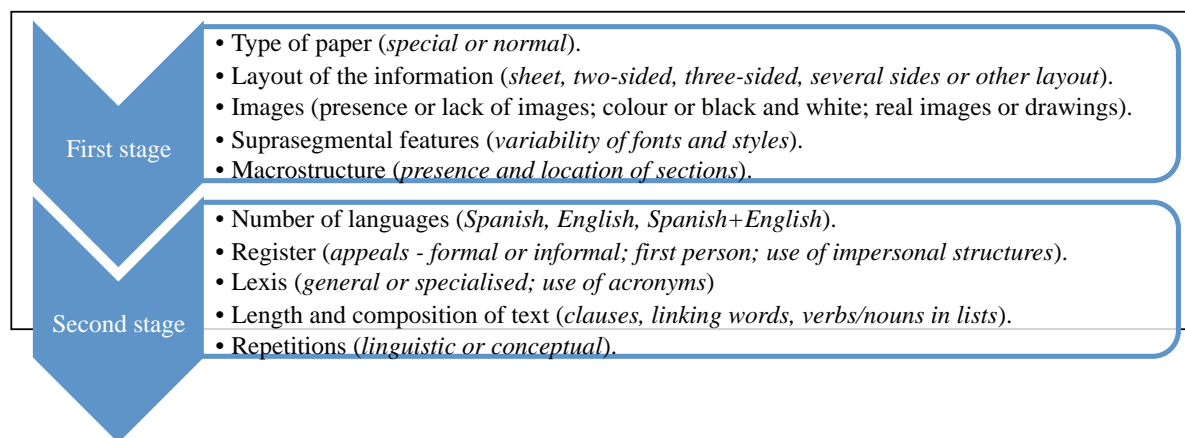


Fig. 1 – Model of analysis

2.1. Features of translated brochures

Like Spanish brochures, translated brochures are usually presented in a three-sided format. However, a number of translated brochures in the format of ‘several sheets stapled’ have also been produced, potentially as a cost-reducing measure. As we observed during the compilation of our corpora, sometimes a brochure (or just a part of it) is translated using a word processor (such as Microsoft Word) and then printed directly, without any special editing process. In other cases, a health centre may translate a brochure after editing the format and then hand photocopies to other centres belonging to the same region as ‘several sheets stapled’.

Regarding the length of the brochures (particularly when they are structured as ‘book mode’) as well as the order of the sections, we can state that the data registered in the translated brochures is similar to that found in the Spanish

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