

**Preserving Legacy and History: English Translation of Aides-de-camp of  
Museo Casa de Bolívar**

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Undergraduate Thesis to Obtain a Degree in Foreign Languages with an Emphasis in English.

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### Abstract

**Title:** Preserving Legacy and History: English Translation of Aides-de-camp of Museo Casa de Bolívar\*

**Authors:** Andrés Eduardo Collazos Diaz and Andrés Felipe Rodríguez Vargas\*\*

**Key Words:** Documentary research, history translation, Simón Bolívar's aides-de-camp, Republican architecture.

### Description:

This document details the process of a research project for the English translation of the documents and information displayed at the Patio de los Edecanes at Museo Casa de Bolívar in the city Bucaramanga, Colombia. This undergraduate memoir conducts a documentary research regarding Bolívar's aides-de-camp and the historical context surrounding the texts to be translated. It also examines the challenges found throughout the entire translation process, from linguistic errors in the source text to architecture- and other theme-related terminology. Likewise, the document presents some of the translation techniques used in the translation, such as Linguistic Amplification, Compensation and Literal Translation. This project uses a functional approach, aiming to enhance the experience of English speaking visitors of the Museo Casa de Bolívar by providing an English translation of the exhibits and allow the sharing and preservation of historical and cultural aspects of Bucaramanga.

\* Bachelor Thesis

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## Resumen

**Título:** Conservando el legado y la historia: Traducción al inglés de los Edecanes del Museo Casa de Bolívar\*

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**Palabras Clave:** Investigación documental, traducción de historia, edecanes de Simón Bolívar, arquitectura republicana.

### **Descripción:**

Este documento detalla el proceso de un proyecto de investigación para la traducción al inglés de los documentos y la información que se exhiben en el Patio de los Edecanes del Museo Casa de Bolívar en la ciudad de Bucaramanga, Colombia. Esta tesis de licenciatura realiza una investigación documental sobre los edecanes de Bolívar y el contexto histórico que rodea los textos que se van a traducir. También examina los retos que se encuentran a lo largo de todo el proceso de traducción, desde los errores lingüísticos en el texto original hasta la terminología relacionada con la arquitectura y otros temas. Asimismo, el documento presenta algunas de las técnicas de traducción utilizadas en la traducción, como la amplificación lingüística, la compensación y la traducción literal. Este proyecto utiliza un enfoque funcional, con el objetivo de mejorar la experiencia de los visitantes angloparlantes del Museo Casa de Bolívar, proporcionando una traducción al inglés de las exposiciones y permitiendo compartir y preservar los aspectos históricos y culturales de Bucaramanga.

\* Trabajo de Grado

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### Introduction

According to data by Migración Colombia (2024), Bucaramanga receives over 30.000 foreign visitors per year. The United States is the country where most visitors originate from. On top of this, 2024 saw an increase of 14.1% in the number of visitors compared to the previous year. This illustrates why cities like Bucaramanga should display bilingual information in touristic places, such as museums. This would facilitate the consumption of the rich Colombian history displayed.

Museums in this city, in fact, lack available translations for foreign visitors. This is problematic as it hampers the possibility to share the rich history the region of Santander has to offer. To locally address this issue, as part of a project that aims to translate the guided tour of the Museo Casa de Bolívar, we intend to translate a section of the museum dedicated to Bolívar's aides-de-camp. In order to fulfill this goal, our aim is to carry out a research/translation project that will hopefully make this information available for English-speaking visitors from different parts of the world.

## 1. Objectives

### 1.1. General Objective

Translate the Patio de los Edecanes tour route at Museo Casa de Bolívar from Spanish to English using a classical framework.

### 1.2. Specific Objectives

To characterize the translation of Republican history in Colombia and the textual typologies in which the source texts are framed.

To characterize the translation/research of biographies or life histories.

To identify and record the approaches and techniques used to translate Republican history from Spanish to English in the last 20 to 24 years.

To carry out the translation processes, from documentation and terminology extraction to style revision and editing.

## 2. Justification

This research project aims to carry out pre-, during, and post-translation processes in the frame of the translation of the tour route at Museo Casa de Bolívar, located in the city of Bucaramanga, Colombia. Our team is in charge of the documentation and translation processes regarding the part of the museum called *Patio de los Edecanes*.

Currently, the city has been receiving a high flux of foreign visitors, which is one of the reasons why the museum has seen the need to undertake this translation research project. With the information available in the English language, many foreign visitors will be able to get better informed during their visit to the museum and the portion of Republican history it has to offer. So far, the lack of available translations for foreign visitors is limiting their ability to fully grasp the content presented.

For the moment, there is a bilingual guide who provides the tour information in English. However, the different written texts all around the walls of the museum are still missing translation. We consider that this information is crucial for visitors to fully understand the relevant testimonies and historical evidence, and therefore have a better opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Colombia's Republican history. We believe it is our duty as translators to make these informative texts available for as many visitors as possible and that this may help the Museum become a point of interest for all tourists visiting the city.

The aides-de-camp of Bolívar played a fundamental role in the liberation campaigns led by Simón Bolívar. Their effort as ministers and translators made it easier for Bolívar to spread his messages and gain sympathizers. In the outdoor patio, 5 statues have been erected honoring their names, that is how this part of the museum got the name *Patio de los Edecanes*. The statues have been crafted with dexterous craftsmanship and they display a descriptive plaque, but these

plaques are not translated and it is hard for foreign visitors to grasp the roles and relevance of these characters in the Republican history of our country. We intend, therefore, to produce the translations of these plaques, and provide the museum with the necessary documentary and terminological information for future translations similar to this.

### 3. Literature review

As mentioned above, we intend to carry out the pre-, during, and post-translation processes in this endeavor. So, in order to follow those steps, it is pertinent to conduct research on both the translation approach that we will adopt as well as on the context of the Republican history of Colombia. Along this line, this literary review is focused on three main aspects: biographic translation, Republican literature translation, and the history of Bolívar's aides-de-camp.<sup>1</sup>

Since we are going to be translating fragments of the life of Bolívar's aides-de-camp it is important to analyze the specificities that this kind of translation requires. For instance, how biographies have been translated throughout history and the best approach and techniques to use at the moment of translating. It is equally important to look into the way texts from the time have been translated as well as the terms that were used back then and whether they have fallen out of use or have become anachronic. Lastly, it would be remiss to attempt to translate the texts found at the museum without having the knowledge of the context in which they appear, as such we will have to do our own review of the lives of these important aids to Simón Bolívar.

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<sup>1</sup> Military officer, whose duty is to carry and communicate in the exercise the orders of the general whose aide-de-camp he is.

### 3.1. Biographic Translation

Every translation is done differently depending on a variety of factors, one of them being the type of text that is being translated, that is why it is necessary to understand what makes a biography different from other texts, and in our case, more specifically, at the moment of translating them.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines “biography” as “the life story of a person written by someone else”. A biography is a retelling of someone’s life but compiled and interpreted by the author, by a third party. As Pijenburg (2018, p.7) says, “When it comes to biography, interpretation, and facts seem inevitably intertwined.” It is easy to say that all things written in a biography are simply facts and events that happened, but it must be kept in mind that these are the 'facts' according to an outside viewer with their own thinking and preconceptions, and in some cases with their own agendas they want to push. As with any form of writing, there is a creative process involved, meaning that the 'facts' presented are shaped by choices the author makes about what to include, what to omit, and how to interpret certain events. Unless it is an autobiography—not to say autobiographies do not have their own biases when being written—, there will always be at the very least two people involved in the writing process, the one whose life story is being written and the author. The translator’s job is then to translate while maintaining both the facts and the interpretations made by the original author of the text, avoiding the inclusion of their personal interpretations of the historical events.

Another factor that has a big effect on the translation process of biographies is the needs of the target audience and how the translator can accomplish the transfer of information from a source language to a target language. As Temple, (2006) argues, “Biographers who translate or interpret other people’s lives across languages have a difficult and often unrecognized balancing

act between denying the importance of the language used and implying that language is tied to meaning in a deterministic way.” This is to say, biographies may often contain specialized terminology, references to historical events, or cultural markers that can have a very specific connotation in the context of the life story being recounted or may very well not have a clear translation in the target language. This is especially the case when the original subject could have lived hundreds of years in the past, in a context that could be very well considered alien to those just learning about their life in the modern day. It is then the task of the translator to make use of their ingenuity and the different techniques and methods available and find a way to bridge the gap and transmit the information to their audience while making sure the meaning remains as accurate to the original as possible.

### **3.2. Republican Literature Translation**

While researching the way republican literature had been translated, it is apparent that a lot of the work that has been done in this field is actually done from other languages to Spanish. According to Nunez, (2019, p.119) “As part of the cultural changes that were taking place at the time, some intellectuals in the Spanish-speaking Americas focused their efforts on bringing about educational reforms”. The idea behind these educational reforms was to rally the masses so they could be of help to the intellectuals’ revolutionary objectives. The way to do it was through the use of written texts as “they were essential in shaping and consolidating the revolutionary mentalities intent on emancipation.” (Bastin, Echeverri & Campo, 2010, p.4)

Some of the most relevant and useful texts during Republican times had to be those that had achieved their goal of encouraging the populace to rebel against their oppressors, namely in the French and American Revolutions. If well, a big majority of the texts used were of French

origin, there exists a good number of translations from North American documents that can be analyzed and used as parallel texts for the purposes of our own translation project. Those by Manuel García de Sena are of special interest as he not only translated revolutionary text from English to Spanish but also included excerpts of his own writing set in a Latin American context.

Another example comes from the texts by Miguel José Sanz, Georges (2011) describes how Sanz was for a long time considered the author of many independentist texts that helped achieve Venezuela's emancipation. Yet, after research done in recent years by Venezuelan scholars, it was discovered that a majority of his remaining texts were not written by Sanz but were instead extracts from Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* that Sanz had translated into Spanish.

In a similar direction, Bastin, Echeverri & Campo (2010) explain that "De Sena's political agenda, as his dedication shows, is clearly not that of a timid, invisible, and transparent translator." This translation approach is contrary to our views and those of faithful translations. One of the biggest issues with these manipulated translations, done with a specific ideological goal in mind, is that they may have to not only adapt to the context of the intended audience but also not contradict the ideas of the groups receiving them; in this case the ones of the Hispano-American revolutionary groups. Garcia de Sena for example, had to modify certain parts related to religion, as in North America at the moment of the revolution, the church was not allowed to have a say in political matters, while in Latin America the church and the political leaders had a closer relationship.

There also exist English translations made in modern times of Spanish documents from the Republican time, in fact, many of Bolívar's diaries, letters, manifestos, and political texts have been translated to English. For instance, in the translator notes of *El Libertador: writings*

of *Simón Bolívar*, the use of previous translations and parallel texts is always encouraged, especially when it comes to Spanish–American administrative and constitutional terminology (Bushnell, 2003). Moreover, translators notes and paratexts may also give details that are crucial to understanding what makes text by Bolívar and other authors from his time so unique. One of the most important details to keep in mind when translating these texts is being aware of the context surrounding the writer at the moment they were writing, as Bushnell, (2003) details:

By following Bolívar’s writing from the turn of the century until his death in 1830, we can follow the shifts in his enthusiasm for his American project. What a difference in tone from *Oath Taken in Rome* to the near-tragic resignation he voices in his last letter, addressed to General J. J. Flores. (p. 24)

As these are texts in which these historical figures showcase their own emotions, it is paramount for the translator to be able to understand and convey the tone and style in them, as sometimes even more than the words being used. This emotion behind the text is the one that truly lets the audience get to know the person behind the pen.

### 3.3. Bolívar’s Aides-de-camp History

Simón José Antonio de la Santísima Trinidad de Bolívar, born on July 24, 1783, was the youngest son of Juan Vicente de Bolívar and Concepción Palacios, hailing from a prominent Venezuelan family. The early loss of both his father, who passed away in 1786 when Bolívar was just three, and his mother in 1792 thrust him into a position of responsibility at a tender age. This tragic turn of events set the stage for a life marked by both personal and political challenges. Bolívar had the privilege of receiving an education from distinguished scholars, such as Andrés Bello, who would later become a crucial figure in Latin American intellectual circles (J. Lynch, 2006).

In his twenties, Bolívar traveled to Europe, where he became acutely aware of the political upheavals and revolutionary ideas that were shaping the continent. This exposure ignited a fierce commitment to liberate South America from colonial rule. In his correspondence, Simón Bolívar once stated “I desire that liberty should spread throughout the world so that everyone should enjoy its blessings.” (as cited in Arana, M. 2013, p. 312). His remarkable contributions to the independence of five nations—Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Peru—are commemorated with statues and honors across the continent, a testament to his status as a continental hero.

However, Bolívar's victorious military campaigns were not solely the result of his strategic genius; they were also made possible through the indispensable support of his *aides-de-camp*— known as "edecanes" in Spanish. As trusted assistants and confidants, these individuals provided critical assistance on the battlefield and beyond. The term *aide-de-camp*, derived from French, designates a military officer tasked with supporting senior officers in various capacities. Their responsibilities included delivering messages, coordinating logistics, attending military gatherings, and executing delegated duties, which were vital in the chaotic war environment. In the Colombian context, the role of the *aides-de-camp* became particularly significant amid political turbulence and power shifts. Bolívar relied on a diverse group of aides, including ambassadors from nations such as Ireland, England, France, and Venezuela, who were instrumental in facilitating communication and cooperation during his campaigns.

Ultimately, Bolívar's successes in the liberation of South America were intricately linked to the dedication and efforts of his *aides-de-camp*. Their contributions not only bolstered Bolívar's military feats but also helped shape the political landscape of the emerging republics, particularly in Colombia. Among Bolívar's most relevant figures in this process, we find Carlos

Soublette, born in December 1789 in Caracas, Venezuela. He was a soldier and a politician of mixed Spanish and Indigenous heritage. He became one of Bolívar's aides-de-camp in 1813; he participated in numerous campaigns, especially during the liberation of Venezuela.

Luis Peru de Lacroix, a Frenchman who came to the South during the wars of independence, his experience would prove useful for Bolívar's campaign by using his expertise in various military campaigns. He became Bolívar's aide-de-camp in 1816. He showed dexterity in advising and planning strategies in important battles, which accumulated victories for the revolutionary force. He is also known for his periodical *Diario de Bucaramanga* which provides insights into Bolívar's stay in the city, and everyday life during these troubled times.

Daniel Florencio O'Leary was named aide-de-camp to Simón Bolívar in April 1820, and he quickly became one of his most trusted officers. He enrolled in various diplomatic missions and was entrusted with the delivery of confidential messages; his role in the liberation of Bolívia was outstanding. He also took part in the pivotal 'Campana Libertadora' in Venezuela, one major feat in the liberation of South America. Known to be a mediator, he was one of the Colombian signatories of the peace treaty (Rodríguez, 2009).

Belford Hinton Wilson, who was an English diplomat in Peru and Venezuela, became captain and aid-de-camp of Bolívar in November 1923. He was heavily relied on by Bolívar, and thus was trusted with important missions; however, by the end of 1926, he considered retiring from his duties due to difficulties performing them and friction with another aide-de-camp, Florencio O'Leary. While staying in Venezuela, from January to July 1927, he kept track of Bolívar's Memories. (Perez, 1996)

Lastly, Guillermo Ferguson. Unlike his counterparts, was not as well-documented. His service as an aide-de-camp started in the late 1810s. He carried out many endeavors in Bolívar's name. He was entrusted with important tasks such as crossing a distance of 1,800 miles on horseback to bring Bolívar's constitution to Bolivia from Venezuela. He was also entrusted to command a battalion to repel rebel armies and take over the West of Venezuela. During this period, he kept a diary called *Journal From Lima to Caracas* where he describes some of these events. His death came at the early age of twenty-eight during the Septembrine Conspiracy of 1828. During this fateful day, he was shot in the back and fatally wounded by the rebels after being confused with Simón Bolívar. ("Irish Migration Studies in Latin America," 2006, p.p 97-98).

#### 4. Theoretical Framework

Seresová and Breveníková (2019) suggest that to translate a text, it is of utmost importance to consider two things: an in-depth analysis of the source text and the function of the target text. These aspects allow a translator to choose the best translation approaches for a particular job.

Concerning the analysis of the source text, a key element to consider is what Munday (2016, p. 136) calls "presuppositions". It refers to the details/meanings that may appear in a text that can seem obvious to a reader of the source text in the original language and culture. However, if translated and shown to a recipient in another language, it may not come across as carrying the original intended meaning due to a difference in the cultural background of the audience.

This is something significant and relevant to our translation project. The project entails a museum tour translation. It is the museum called Casa de Bolívar, in the city center of Bucaramanga, Colombia. The tour recalls Simón Bolívar's daily life while staying in this colonial mansion for a short time. This involves cultural aspects unique to Bucaramanga and Colombia. Nonetheless, when carefully analyzing the section of the project that we will be in charge of, it becomes clear that we would not have to deal with this potential issue, as we will be translating the biographies of Bolívar's aides-de-camp. Given that these figures came from different places of the world and lived in different cultures, their biographies displayed at the museum have already been written in a way that they can be comprehended by any reader, no matter their background.

The function of the target text is a big indicator of the way the text should be translated. Nord (2006) presents two types of translation: 1) *Documentary translation*, which is source-oriented, in which the target reader is aware of the fact that they are reading a translation and are receiving a showcase of the source text or the ideas of the source text. 2) *Instrumental translation* is a type of target-oriented translation that focuses on maintaining the same function as that of the original text, letting the target reader consume the text without the need for them to know it is a translation.

For our specific translation purposes, there are no Colombian cultural elements that need to be translated, likewise, we aim to inform the English-speaking visitors in the same way the museum currently showcases information to Spanish-speaking visitors. In this line, we consider that after taking into account this translation theory, we are guided by a target-oriented approach, using the methods and techniques that would allow for a better adaptation to the text in

the target language. Such as those proposed as Interpretative-communicative methods by Martí Ferriol (2013): modulation, variation, linguistic substitution, and adaptation.

### 5. Methodology

The methodological process for this research/translation project includes three core moments: 1) *The documentation process*: This entails obtaining reliable sources of the historical context of the texts to be translated. Sources in the field of historical translation, specifically biographical translation, are divided into two categories: primary and secondary sources 2) *The translation process*: this includes the translation of the section of the museum assigned to us with the chosen translation approach and techniques. 3) *Revision and analysis process*: this last section consists of the annotation and proofreading of translation, as well as the analysis of the processes, challenges and results. The last two stages take place during the second term in Trabajo de Grado II and its schedule is detailed on the following table.

**Figure 1**

*Schedule of activities*

Schedule of activities (Tentative planning for the second term of TG)														
Stage	Weeks													
	January				February				March				April	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Translation	█	█	█	█	█	█	█							
Data Analysis/ Illustration								█	█	█	█			
Reporting results - Findings											█	█		
Reporting results - Discussion													█	█

*Note.* The table shows the tentative schedule of activities for the 2nd term of the bachelor thesis

### 5.1. Documentation Process

The primary goal of this translation project is to enable English-speaking tourists to engage meaningfully with the artifacts, portraits, and manuscripts exhibited at the Casa de Bolívar Museum. In the Patio de los Edecanes, visitors—both local and foreign—can explore bust plaques commemorating the lives of Bolívar’s aides-de-camp, as well as banners and signs detailing the history of the site and its transformation into a museum.

To ensure a high-quality translation, it is crucial to refer to the source texts being translated and consult historical documents from the same period to capture the slang, nuances, and contextual meanings that might otherwise be lost.

These sources can be categorized as primary (directly related to the subject) or secondary (indirectly related). While both types are valuable, primary sources are generally more reliable but less accessible (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 193).

When selecting materials for this study, two key criteria were considered:

- Validity: The source must be unaltered and original.
- Relevance: The source should significantly contribute to the objectives of the study

The initial steps of this translation project were taken at Museo Casa de Bolívar. We visited the venue and repository intending to conduct some preliminary documentary research. As Cohen et al. (2008) state, when it comes to historical research, “the historian does not use direct observation, instead he or she has to interpret past events by the traces that have been left” (p. 193). Following this line of thought, a museum is a place packed with these traces and artifacts of the past. During this visit, we were able to acquire useful information about Simón

Bolívar and his aides-de-camp from multiple sources, such as artifacts, inscriptions, documents, and the tour speech given by the local historian. All of these are considered secondary sources.

On top of that, we also had the opportunity to listen to some members of the History Academy of Santander in private sessions held with the Semillero SETRA at UIS. They shared with us some insights into Simón Bolívar's stay in Bucaramanga and his relationship with some of his aides-de-camp and Francisco de Paula Santander<sup>[2]</sup>.

George, M. W. (2008 p. 57) suggests, "Secondary sources, in contrast, come exclusively from people, because only the human mind can interpret." This is important to keep in mind, as listening to the historian and the members of the History Academy of Santander, it was clear that they had different interpretations of Bolívar's relationship with some of his closest aides. As such, we need to consider further sources to reach a satisfactory consensus that can help inform our translation process.

When it comes to data validity and trustworthiness, it is important to remember that "we often do not know the quality or robustness of secondary data. Critical methodological investigation is required" (Bradford & Cullen, 2011, p. 149). It is important to note that the chosen sources must not only be accurate but also enhance the overall understanding of the subject. For this, we used a database called Archivo del Libertador<sup>3</sup>, where lots of letters and articles from and to Bolívar in both English and Spanish were found. These are primary sources, closely related to Bolívar himself, and as such, they were prioritized for analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> Francisco de Paula Santander was a Colombian military and political leader who played a crucial role in South America's independence. He served as the vice president of Gran Colombia and later became its president.

<sup>3</sup> <https://archivodelibertador.gob.ve/>

## 5.2. The Translation Process

In order to carry out the translation process, we made use of the parallel texts found through the documentary research. With their help, we were able to create a glossary where we included the technical terms that we found challenging and were repeatedly used in the source text, as well as their English translations and definitions.

Amongst the translation techniques used for this process, we include some of those defined by Molina & Albir (2002, p.p 499-501):

- 1) *Linguistic Amplification*: To add linguistic elements in the TT.
- 2) *Compensation*: An item of information or a stylistic effect from the ST that cannot be reproduced in the same place in the TT is introduced elsewhere in the TT.
- 3) *Transposition*: A shift of word class, i.e., verb for noun, noun for preposition.
- 4) *Literal Translation*: Word for word translation.

## 5.3. Revision and Analysis Process

For the purpose of the analysis of the translation, we made use of two different techniques. The first one was the use of a field diary where we wrote down the experiences and challenges we came across during the translation process. This not only helped us at the moment of compiling the results but also helped us deal with certain difficulties when found at later times in the process. The second technique was the use of color coding, a technique that as Vela et al., (2019) suggest, “color coding makes the decision process easier for the user as to which [fragment] to choose and work on”. For us, this meant highlighting parts of both the source and target texts in which we made use of different techniques or found common issues to easily identify and analyze them later on.

## 6. Results and Analysis

### 6.1. Main Challenges in the Translation Process

This section aims to detail the difficulties found throughout the process of translation of the Patio de los Edecanes Station of Museo Casa de Bolívar, as well as the techniques and strategies used to deal with these issues.

#### 6.1.1. Source Text Errors

To begin our translation process, it was necessary to first analyze the source text. We first used a color-coding technique, with different colors to highlight the various types of errors we encountered. For example we highlighted in orange the wrong use of capital letters, in yellow the errors in nominal agreement and in blue the wrong use of punctuation as seen in the following chart:

#### Figure 2.

*Example of the color coding analysis for errors in the source text*

<p>A través del tiempo y su larga historia, la casa se transformó y se adaptó a las funciones para la cual era destinada: casa de familia. Central telefónica, la primera de la ciudad. Cuartel General de tropas. Colegio. Hotel Soto. Fábrica de cigarros.</p>
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*Note.* This chart showcases the way color coding was used for the analysis of errors.

Once these errors were found, it was essential to categorize them. For this purpose, we designed a table based on the information by de la Concha (2018) and Bustos (2011). Next, an example of the table for categorizing errors can be found:

**Table 1***Source text error classification*

Category	Type of error	Number of errors	Example
Grammar	Number agreement	2	Las funciones para la cual
	Gender agreement	1	rótulas de cabra cementados
Orthography	Lack of punctuation	24	Murió en 1870
	Wrong use of punctuation	12	Cuartel General de tropas. Colegio. Hotel Soto. Fábrica de cigarros.
	Wrong use of capital letters	45	la Guaira
	Lack of accentuation	2	ANDRES
Discursive and Stylistic	Lack of structural coherence	10	El Patio de los Edecanes, es parte integral de la actual Casa Museo de Bolívar y que está bajo su administración y manejo.
Information	Wrong information	2	Hijo del General Belford Wilson

*Note.* This table is an example of the categorization used when classifying the different errors found.

- 6.1.1.1. Nominal Agreement.** According to the RAE (2019), nominal agreement in linguistics refers to the relationship between two lexical units that express the same inflectional information due to the grammatical relationship established between them in some restrictive syntactic context. When it comes to gender agreement, the adjective must agree in gender with the noun it is referring to. The source text makes an error when it alludes to “rótulas de cabra” as

“cementados” since the noun, in this case, is feminine, therefore, the adjective ought to be feminine as well.

*Example:*

Error: rótulas de cabra cementados	
Correction: rótulas de cabra cementadas	

The same applies to number agreement. In the source text we can find the following sentence: “la casa se transformó y se adaptó a las funciones para la cual era destinada”. In this case, the pronoun “la cual” is incorrect as it is referring to “las funciones” which is a plural noun, and not to the singular noun “casa”.

*Example:*

Error: las funciones para la cual	
Correction: las funciones para las cuales	

**6.1.1.2. Orthographic Errors.** Most of the errors found in the source text were orthographic. According to the RAE (2010), orthography is a set of rules that regulate the correct writing of a language, including the graphic representation of sounds and the proper application of letters and auxiliary signs. It refers not only to the correct spelling of words but also to the way punctuation, accents, and capitalization are used. Errors of this sort can be found all through the source text. It often omits commas, uses periods when commas should be used, and capitalizes some words when there is no need. One of the examples found

in the text comes when listing some nouns, the text says: “Cuartel General de tropas. Colegio. Hotel Soto. Fábrica de cigarros.”, making use of periods instead of commas, which should be the preferred punctuation.

*Example:*

Error: Cuartel General de tropas. Colegio. Hotel Soto. Fábrica de cigarros.

Correction: Cuartel general de tropas, colegio, hotel Soto y fábrica de cigarros.

The incorrect use of capital and lowercase letters is also widespread across the text. This could be attributed to the influence of the English language which uses capital letters for those types of words or to an incorrect notion that proper nouns should always be capitalized. The text uses the word “Bumanguesa” which is an adjective related to people born in Bucaramanga. This type of word is written with capital letters in English, but in Spanish, they should start with a lowercase letter.

*Example:*

Error: Bumanguesa

Correction: bumanguesa

On the other hand, when it comes to proper nouns naming places or cities, capital letters should always be used. In the following example, the text reads “la Guaira” to refer to the Venezuelan city; it is incorrect as the name includes the article “la” meaning the first letter of this word should also be capitalized.

*Example:*

Error: la Guaira	
Correction: La Guaira	

Lastly, when it comes to orthography in Spanish, the orthographic stress must always be borne in mind. It should always be used, even in cases like the one below. It introduces a proper name that should have an orthographic stress, written fully capitalized and without the diacritic mark. In Spanish, words with orthographic stresses should always mark them, no matter whether the accented syllable is capitalized or not.

*Example:*

Error: ANDRES	
Correction: ANDRÉS	

**6.1.1.3. Discursive Errors.** The discursive competence is described by Zoyirova (2022, p.81) as the ability to build and understand logical, coherent, and holistic statements in different functional styles. While reading and analyzing the source text, we found numerous statements that lacked cohesiveness, making the writing difficult to comprehend. Sections such as the one below seemed as if they wanted to introduce extra information, making the ideas difficult to follow:

*El Patio de los Edecanes, es parte integral de la actual Casa Museo de Bolívar y que está bajo su administración y manejo. La casa a la cual ha pertenecido este patio era de Facundo Mutis, un prestante comerciante líder gubernamental de principios del Siglo XIX, ancestro del poeta Aurelio Martínez Mutis, que dadas sus altas características arquitectónicas de confort y dimensiones fue prestada a Simón Bolívar para su estancia en Bucaramanga durante dos meses en el año 1828.*

To solve these issues we consulted with the museum keepers who gave us permission to propose changes to the Spanish text. Once the fragments were rewritten in the source text we were able to properly translate them. Below is an example of the proposed changes to the original text:

*El Patio de los Edecanes es una parte integral de la actual Casa Museo de Bolívar y se encuentra bajo su gestión y administración. La casa a la que pertenece este patio era propiedad de Facundo Mutis, un prestante comerciante y líder gubernamental de principios del siglo XIX, ancestro del poeta Aurelio Martínez Mutis. Debido a sus altas características arquitectónicas de confort y tamaño, la casa fue prestada a Simón Bolívar para su estancia en Bucaramanga por dos meses en el año 1828.*

**6.1.1.4. Information Errors** Given that this is the translation of information showcased in a museum, it is of utmost importance that the facts being presented to the public are accurate. When analyzing the source text, we noticed some information that we considered to be erroneous. Specifically, when talking about the father of the aide-de-camp Belford Hinton Wilson, the

Spanish source text reads: “Hijo del General Belford Wilson”. After a brief search, we identified that this piece of information is not accurate. Upon further investigation, we found letters from Simón Bolívar to General Sir Robert Wilson where it was evident that he was talking to the father of his aide-de-camp, Belfor Hinton Wilson. Furthermore, when checking the book *Life of General Sir Robert Wilson* (1862), a biography based on his memoirs and journals, we could find no instances in which he was called “Belford Wilson”. As such, we are confident this may be a mistake by the author of the biographies displayed at the museum. In order to correct the mistake, we contacted the archive keepers at the museum so that they can have this information fixed.

*Example:*

Error: Hijo del General Belford Wilson
Correction: Hijo del General Sir Robert Wilson

### ***6.1.2. Architecture-related Terminology***

One of the most challenging aspects of the translation process of the source text was the use of specific terms referring to traditional architecture. Construction materials such as cane, as well as building methods like rammed earth, are not part of the language we use on a daily basis. Even outside of the translation context, we were unable to tell what some of these terms meant, and we were also unfamiliar with them in Spanish, our native language. To cope with this issue, we used a terminology database to classify the terms, introduce expert or academic definitions,

English equivalents, and the sources used to define them in both languages. The translation decisions were made after considering different lexemes and researching construction and architecture websites, both in English and Spanish, so as to compare and find the coinciding or parallel equivalents and definitions. The following is an example of the terminology database:

**Figure 3.**

*Extract of terminology database*

Term (SL)	Source (room)	POS (SL)	Definition (SL)	Source (APA format)	Term (TL)	POS (TL)	Definition (TL)	Source (APA format)	Notes	Terminologist
Balaustre	Patio de los edecanos	sustantivo	Cada una de las columnas pequeñas, generalmente con molduras, que con los barandales forman las barandillas o antepechos de balcones, azoteas, corredores y escaleras.	Real Academia Española. (s.f.). Balaustre. En Diccionario de la lengua española <a href="https://dle.rae.es/balaustre">https://dle.rae.es/balaustre</a>	baluster	noun	One of a series of small posts supporting the coping or handrail of a parapet or railing.	The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2016, September 26). Baluster   Columns, pillars & posts. Encyclopedia Britannica. <a href="https://www.britannica.com/technology/baluster">https://www.britannica.com/technology/baluster</a>		Andrés Collazos
Caña	Patio de los edecanos	sustantivo	Tallo de las plantas gramíneas, por lo común hueco y nudoso.	Real Academia Española. (s.f.). Caña. En Diccionario de la lengua española <a href="https://dle.rae.es/ca%C3%B1a">https://dle.rae.es/ca%C3%B1a</a>	cane	noun	The long, hollow stems of particular plants such as bamboo	Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Cane. In Cambridge Dictionary. Retrieved April 3rd, 2025, from <a href="https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cane">https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/cane</a>	Decidimos cambiar el termino reed por cone ya que este ultimo era mas apropiado para el contexto.	Andrés Collazos
Capitel	Patio de los edecanos	Sustantivo	Parte superior de una columna o de una pilastra, que la corona con forma de moldura y ornamentación, según el orden arquitectónico a que corresponde.	Real Academia Española. (s.f.). Capitel. En Diccionario de la lengua española <a href="https://dle.rae.es/capitel">https://dle.rae.es/capitel</a>	capital	noun	The top part of a column	Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Capital. In Cambridge Dictionary. Retrieved April 10th, 2025, from <a href="https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/capital">https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/capital</a>		Andres Collazos
Tapia pisada	Patio de los edecanos	Sustantivo	La tapia pisada se elabora con tierra arcillosa húmeda, que se va depositando en un encofrado de madera a medida que se compacta a golpes mediante un pison de madera.	Tapia Pisada   Saberespatamarillos. (n.d.). Saberespatamarillos. Retrieved April 10th, 2025, from <a href="https://www.saberespatamarillos.com/barichara-tapia-pisada">https://www.saberespatamarillos.com/barichara-tapia-pisada</a>	rammed earth	noun	Rammed earth walls are constructed by ramming a mixture of selected aggregates, including gravel, sand, silt, and a small amount of clay, into place between flat panels called formwork.	Rammed earth   YourHome. (n.d.). Retrieved April 10th, 2025, from <a href="https://www.yourhome.gov.au/materials/rammed-earth">https://www.yourhome.gov.au/materials/rammed-earth</a>		Andres Collazos

*Note.* This figure showcases an extract of the terminological database used by SETRA during the translation process.

It is important to highlight that this database was created within the framework of the translation project: *Traducción español-inglés Museo Casa de Bolívar*, conducted by Semillero de Traducción (SETRA). It is an extensive project that intends to translate into English all the information from the tour and the information displayed in the different rooms and public areas of the museum. As part of this project, we are in charge of the information provided at the Patio de los Edecanos.

### 6.1.3. Proper Names and Governmental Functions

Translating proper nouns presented a number of challenges, such as understanding which names or titles should be translated and which should remain in their source language. To

address this, we opted to follow the insights presented by Zarei & Norouzi (2014). They showcase analysis of different types of proper nouns and conclude that it is important for the translator to deeply understand each noun to be translated. The translator must be able to ascertain the meaning a proper noun may have, and decide if such meaning can be properly translated such that the target audience is able to comprehend it, or if it is better to leave the proper noun untranslated and instead convey the meaning in another way, for example, via the use of a translation note.

In terms of the names of individuals found in the source text, we considered it best to maintain them in their original languages. Given that some of these names had already been rendered into Spanish versions of themselves, we looked up these people and reverted their names to their originals.

*Examples:*

Source Text	Target Text
LUIS PERÚ DE LA CROIX	LOUIS PERU DE LA CROIX
GUILLERMO FERGUSON	WILLIAM FERGUSON
ANDRES IBARRA	ANDRÉS IBARRA

When it came to the proper nouns denoting governmental or military positions, we considered it necessary to translate them, as they have a meaning that would provide to the readers information such as the authority and the duties of each individual. The main issue found with this category of proper nouns was that some of these roles either no longer exist or, when directly translated, carry a different meaning from Spanish to English. In order to deal with this challenge, we examined the functions associated with each role and identified roles in the target language that involved similar tasks. In certain instances, we also employed *particularization*, a

translation technique that enables us to convert general roles into more specific ones to minimize confusion and provide more intelligible information for readers.

**Table 2**

*Analysis of terms to be translated using the particularization technique*

Source Text	Functions	Source	Target Text	Functions	Source
Ministro de Estado y Secretario General de la República	Coordinar y orientar el desarrollo de las políticas para la defensa de la soberanía, la independencia, la integridad territorial, la seguridad y tranquilidad pública, así como para el mantenimiento del orden constitucional y la garantía de la convivencia democrática.	Ministerio de Defensa. (2021). <a href="https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/ministerio/ministro">Mindefensa.gov.co. https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/ministerio/ministro</a>	Secretary of Defense	Policy development, planning, resource management and program evaluation of civilian defense.	Office of the Secretary of Defense. (n.d.). U.S. Department of Defense. <a href="https://www.defense.gov/About/Office-of-the-Secretary-of-Defense/">https://www.defense.gov/About/Office-of-the-Secretary-of-Defense/</a>
Source Text	Source	Target Text	Source		
Militar culto y ponderado.	N/A	Cultivated and esteemed lieutenant.	Murray, E. (2025). Dictionary of Irish Latin American Biography > "Ferguson, William Owens (1800-1828)." Irlandeses.org. <a href="https://www.irlandeses.org/dilab_fergusonw.htm">https://www.irlandeses.org/dilab_fergusonw.htm</a>		

*Note.* This table shows the process used to find the terms that could be used in the target text when using the particularization translation technique

Lastly, it is essential to mention that despite the fact that some proper nouns had a meaning and could be translated while carrying the necessary information, the museum keepers requested that terms denoting historical events were kept in their original language, for this reason terms such as “CONVENCIÓN DE OCAÑA” remained untranslated.

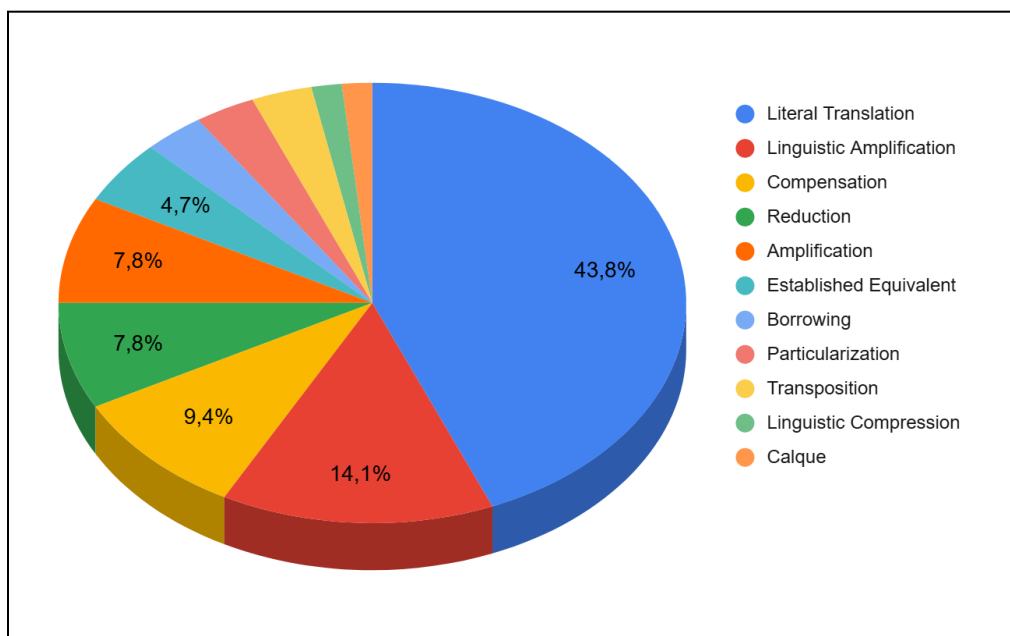
## 6.2. Translation Analysis

### 6.2.1. Translation Techniques

To gain a better perspective on the translation process, the implementation of a color coding technique was used. Once the translation process was finished, we used different colors to highlight the techniques used. The academic reference for translation techniques is Molina & Hurtado-Albir (2002, p. 510). In the following chart, we put forward the techniques used and their percentages:

**Figure 4**

*Distribution of use of translation techniques*



*Note.* This graph shows the percentage of use of each translation technique during the translation process.

In the following subsection, we mention, define, and exemplify the top four translation techniques we found more useful during our translation process:

**6.2.1.1. Literal Translation.** Defined as word-for-word translation, it is usually possible when the source and target languages share a similar structure. Literal translation is one of the most used techniques by translators of all skill levels. Riecher (2019) explains that “Almost all translators show a tendency to use this technique with a significant amount of data compared to the use of other techniques” (p.36). In our case, it was also one of the techniques that saw more use. We can see examples such as in the line “Emigró a América en 1814,” which we translated word by word to “Emigrated to America in 1814.” In this case, the structure and wording of the sentence perfectly match both the source and the target language.

*Examples:*

Source Text	Target Text
están distribuidos en orden de importancia salones, dormitorios, biblioteca y comedor.	are distributed in order of importance living rooms, bedrooms, library, and dining room.
Los muros de esta casa son testigos de confidencias, proyectos e inquietudes que el Libertador compartió con sus edecanes y amigos	The walls of this house are witness to confidences, projects, and concerns that the Liberator shared with his aides-de-camp and friends
El 24 de julio, la casa está acondicionada a su nuevo destino.	On July 24th, the house is conditioned for its new purpose.

**6.2.1.2. Transposition.** Molina & Albir (2002) call transposition “a shift of word class” (p.499), meaning a change in the grammatical category of words used in a sentence, for example, using an adverb in the target language the same way an adjective was being used in the source language. This is more easily seen in fragment 22 of our translation where we translate the sentence “se dan

autorizaciones al Gobernador para la compra de la casa.” to “authorizing the Governor to buy the house.” In this example, we changed the Spanish nouns “autorizaciones” and “compra” to the “English verbs “authorizing” and “buy”. While we didn’t use this translation technique much in the original translation, this is a useful one to increase readability and make the English text feel more natural.

**6.2.1.3. Compensation.** An item of information or a stylistic effect from the ST that cannot be reproduced in the same place in the TT is introduced elsewhere in the TT (Molina & Albir, 2002, p.500). Compensation is a useful technique to make the target text feel more natural when reading. An example of its use in our work can be found when we translated the Spanish sentence “allí se encontraban los espacios reservados a las labores de la casa y otros oficios” to the English “where the spaces reserved for housework and other trades were located.”. Here, we moved the part saying “allí se encontraban” from the beginning of the fragment to the end in “were located.”. While a translation without compensation would have been possible with a sentence like “there one could find the spaces reserved for housework and other trades”, in the context of the paragraph, this would have been more awkward to read, so we opted for using this technique here.

*Examples:*

Source Text	Target Text
En este se cultivaban algunas legumbres y frutas, plantas y hierbas	Some vegetables and fruits, plants and herbs were grown there
Se inicia la remodelación de la casa	The remodeling of the house began
Se inaugura el primer museo de la ciudad.	The first museum of the city is inaugurated.

**6.2.1.4. Linguistic Amplification.** Linguistic amplification is applied by adding linguistic elements not found in the source text to the target text (Molina & Albir, 2002, p.500). This technique was particularly useful to us since we were using a source text that often omitted connector words for no apparent reason. In order to make the text more understandable by the audience we considered necessary to add some of these linking or transition words to better maintain a logical flow in the text. One example of this comes in the following sentence “La arquitectura de altos muros en tapia pisada, tejas de barro, vigas y caña, suelos en tableta de arcilla cocida, dos patios y caballerizas.” In the source text this is all the information in a given sign. If well due to context clues it is possible to know this is referring to the house where Bolívar stayed, this is still a sentence that is awkward to read as it doesn’t follow the expected structure of an average sentence. Because of this when translating it we thought it beneficial to add a subject at the beginning of the fragment: “The house features an architecture of high rammed earth walls and clay tiles, beams and cane, floors in baked clay tablets, two backyards, and stables.”

*Examples:*

Source Text	Target Text
Simón Bolívar tenía 45 años.	Simón Bolívar was 45 years old at the time.
De casa burguesa de notables se transformó en Palacio Presidencial.	Initially a bourgeois house of a distinguished family, it was turned into a Presidential Palace.
fue prestada a Simón Bolívar para su estancia en Bucaramanga durante dos meses	the house was lent to Simón Bolívar for his stay in Bucaramanga for two months

## 7. Conclusion

With this translation research project our main objective was to present the museo Casa de Bolívar with a translation of Patio de los Edecanes so that English-speaking visitors are able to visit and properly experience the museum tour, being able to learn about part of the republican history and architecture of Bucaramanga and Colombia.

While some of the challenges we encountered throughout the process, such as the need to research highly technical and historical terms, were expected, one of the most demanding parts of this process was something we did not expect: the low quality of the source text. This unforeseen obstacle caused us to almost have to start from scratch, researching the subjects of the museum exhibits and editing not only grammatical but also discursive and information mistakes present in the original Spanish texts.

We expect the museum to consider and introduce the proposed corrections to the information displayed. Likewise, we are glad to contribute with the Semillero de Traducción (SETRA) so that they can use our translation and the shared terminology database to be able to deliver an improved experience for both local and foreign visitors to the Museo Casa de Bolívar, increasing the tourist appeal of Santander and keeping alive our culture and history.

To conclude, we believe that this research considers fundamental elements worth bearing in mind when carrying out historic translation. It underscores how important it is to undergo comprehensive documentary research to ascertain accuracy; besides, it also sheds light on the necessity of considering multiple translation techniques when translating complex texts.

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