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# Manner salience and translation: A case study based on a multilingual corpus of graphic novels

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the salience of Manner-of-motion and its translation in a multilingual corpus of graphic novels, with the dual aim of further investigating the role of visual language in Slobin’s Thinking-for-translating hypothesis and identifying the relevant translation techniques. Many studies that draw on the hypothesis have shown, for instance, that, in the translation process from a satellite-framed language (e.g. German, English) into a verb-framed language (e.g. Spanish, French), Manner-of-motion is usually omitted, whereas in the translation process between languages belonging to the same typological group, it is generally transferred, although some intratypological variation has also been identified in the literature. The corpus studied allows both inter- and intratypological analyses: it is composed of two graphic novels by the Austrian cartoonist Ulli Lust and their corresponding translations into Spanish, French and English. The resulting data were compared with previous research in the field. The paper concludes that, although visual language minimizes the consequences of Thinking-for-translating, the conventions and restrictions of graphic novels deserve greater attention within this framework.

**Keywords:** visual language, Thinking-for-translating, Manner-of-motion, translation techniques

## 1 Introduction

Comics are multimodal texts: texts in which information is conveyed in both verbal (e.g. linguistic elements) and visual language (e.g. typographic and pictographic elements, pictorial representations). The interplay between text and picture is a key aspect of comic translation, since it allows the translator to

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translate verbatim or divert from the text by exploiting visuals, a resource which may have a compensatory effect (Borodo 2015; Celotti 1997, 2008) and which can represent phenomena such as music, noise, motion, etc. (Zanettin 2018). Even though there have recently been an increasing number of academic studies on the translation of comics, this genre has not yet received sufficient attention in Descriptive Translation Studies (Zanettin 2018, Schmitt 1997)<sup>1</sup>, not only because it was considered marginal for years (Curran 2016; Valero Garcés 1997), but because it involves image-text constraints (Mayoral et al. 1988), which present technical difficulties when processing comic strips using corpus analysis tools: “while it is true that, following the ‘cultural turn’ in the 1980s, Translation Studies is no longer focused exclusively on language, there is still a lack of translation-relevant analytical methods for non-verbal elements such as pictures, music, graphics etc.” (Kaindl 1999:285) (cf. Guérin et al. 2017 on the automatic extraction of the visual elements of comic books).

The study of illustrated narratives is even less developed within the cognitivist approach of the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis (Slobin 1996b). Numerous contributions inspired by this hypothesis have confirmed that cross-linguistic differences have an impact on the translation of narrative texts: for instance, through loss or gain of information. To illustrate this, the results of a series of intertypological studies will be briefly referred to next: in an English>Spanish corpus of narrative texts, Slobin (1996b, 1997) finds that Manner-of-motion is translated on only around half of the occasions; similarly, in a corpus comparable to the one previously examined by Slobin, Cifuentes-Férez (2006) observes that this component is only translated around 30 % of the time; in Molés-Cases (2016), Manner omission is confirmed in around 30 % of cases in a German>Spanish corpus including children’s and young adult novels. On the other hand, although fewer intratypological studies are to be found in the literature, Filipović (1999, 2008) and Lewandowski/Mateu’s (2016) results are also noteworthy in this context: Filipović (1999, 2008) observes variation<sup>2</sup> (as to Manner-of-motion) in a bidirectional English-Serbo-Croatian study, and ascribes this variation to the limited combinability of Serbo-Croatian perfective manner-verbs with directional prepositions. Similarly, Lewandowski and Mateu (2016) identify intratypological

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1 Although, in the literature, the terms *comic* and *graphic novel* are often used indiscriminately, graphic novels “are usually associated with longer, more refined, non-serialised graphic stories in book form aimed at an educated adult readership rather than at children or adolescents” (Zanettin 2018:447). In this paper, these terms will be treated as synonymous.

2 As defined by Ibarretxe-Antuñano (2003:166), intratypological variation refers to “the differences found in languages from the same typological group with respect to the degree of description and elaboration of certain typological features”.

variation as to Manner in an English-German/Polish study: the Manner information expressed in the original English text is far more frequently translated into German than into Polish, and the authors relate this to the fact that the German language is more flexible than Polish as to the compatibility of manner-verbs with path-components (cf. Slobin's 2004 Manner salience cline, which arranges languages on a continuum from high-manner-salient to low-manner-salient). For a detailed overview of the confirmation of the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis in narrative texts, see, for instance, Alonso Alonso (2018), Ibarretxe-Antuñano/Filipović (2013) and Molés-Cases (2016). As noted above, despite the wealth of research on the translation of motion in narrative texts, both in inter- (e.g. Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2003; Slobin 1996b) and intratypological scenarios (e.g. Filipović 1999, 2008; Lewandowski/Mateu 2016), the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis remains virtually unexplored for illustrated narratives. This paper therefore aims to continue the line of research initiated by Molés-Cases (2020) and further explore this issue. In particular, the paper aims to analyse the translation of Manner-of-motion in two intertypological (German>Spanish/French) and one intratypological (German>English) translation scenarios and identify the translation techniques used to tackle the translation problem. The study addresses the following research questions: What consequences has visual language for the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis? In addition to visual language, are there any other factors which should be considered when studying the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis in the context of the genre of comics?

The paper is structured as follows. The first section outlines those comic-based studies that focus on the encoding of motion within the Thinking-for-speaking and the Thinking-for-translating frameworks. The second section details the materials and methods used. The third section presents the analysis and resulting data. The fourth and final section offers conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## 2 Thinking-for-speaking and Thinking-for-translating motion in comics

Motion is a universal concept, which can be expressed both linguistically (Figures 1 and 3) and graphically (Figures 2 and 3): “drawn visual narratives (other than animation) do not use [dynamic] movement, and by contrast must produce inferences of motion while also organizing sequences, not in time, but spatially across a layout” (Cohn 2019:13). Here are some examples:



Figure 1: Motion expressed linguistically (*Wir fahren heute nach Italien*), but not graphically © 2009 Ulli Lust



Figure 2: Motion expressed graphically, but not linguistically © 2017 Ulli Lust/Suhrkamp



**Figure 3:** Motion expressed both linguistically (*Etwa alle 30 Minuten brummte ein Auto an uns vorbei*) and graphically © 2009 Ulli Lust

As regards linguistic expression of motion, Talmy (1985, 2000) classifies the world's languages based on how they encode the semantic component of Path: satellite-framed languages (SFL), such as English and German, typically encode Path in a satellite and Manner in the verb (e.g. *Daniel humpelte ins Haus*); verb-framed languages (VFL), such as Spanish and French, usually encode Path in the verb and Manner in adjuncts if necessary (e.g. *Daniel entró en la casa cojeando* 'Daniel entered the house limping'). Inspired by this classification, Slobin (1987, 1996a) presented the Thinking-for-speaking hypothesis, "a special kind of thinking that is intimately tied to language – namely, the thinking that is carried out, online, in the process of speaking" (Slobin 1991:11). According to this hypothesis, speakers of different languages conceptualize reality differently, since they pay different amounts of attention to the characteristics of objects and events (for example: native speakers of SFL devote more attention to Manner, while speakers of VFL focus mostly on Path). The application of Thinking-for-speaking to the study of the translation process gave rise to the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis (Slobin 1997, 2000), according to which translators tend to distance themselves from the source text in order to conform to the rhetorical style of the target

language. As mentioned above, the literature confirms that Thinking-for-translating has consequences for the translation of narrative texts (for instance: omission, addition or modulation of Manner in motion events): both in intertypological scenarios (see Alonso Alonso 2018; Cifuentes-Férez 2006, 2013; Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2003; Molés-Cases 2016; Slobin 1996b; Sugiyama 2005) and between languages belonging to the same typology (e.g. Filipović 1999, 2008; Lewandowski/Mateu, 2016).

The study of motion in the genre of comics still remains largely unexplored within both the Thinking-for-speaking and the Thinking-for-translating approaches. Exceptions include Tversky/Chow (2017), Cohn et al. (2017), Cohn (2016) and Molés-Cases (2020). These contributions will now be reviewed.

Inspired by Slobin's (1997) work on the differences between SFL and VFL when lexicalizing motion and spatial scenes, Tversky and Chow (2017) analysed the effects of language typology on descriptions, to see whether these effects also extend to depictions. A corpus of 16 comics popular with teens and pre-teens in the United States, Hong Kong, Italy and Japan (in English, Chinese, Italian and Japanese, respectively) was examined. The experiment consisted in removing all text from a series of pages from these comics and asking 12 native speakers of English (manner-language) and 10 native speakers of Japanese (path-language) to rate the frames on an action (motion) – scene-setting scale. The resulting data suggest that depicted action was rated higher in comics in manner-languages (English and Chinese) than in those in path-languages (Japanese and Italian), which indicated that the dominant ways of expressing action apply equally to both descriptions and depictions. The authors comment that this could, among other things, be the direct result of creating depictions from language, since the cartoonist's native language affects the depictions chosen.

An analogous study was conducted by Cohn et al. (2017), who examined whether the depiction of source, goal and trajectory (the last segment illustrates Manner) varies according to, among other factors, the type of language (SFL or VFL) in which the comic was written. A corpus composed of 35 comics, drawn by a series of speakers of SFL (English, Mandarin and German) and VFL (Japanese, Korean and French) was analysed. The results indicate that panels from comics written in SFL depict trajectories more often than those from comics written in VFL. The authors conclude that linguistic conceptualization could influence depictions. In a previous investigation, Cohn (2016) examined 15 books, featuring three types of visual narratives: mainstream superhero comics from the United States, Japanese *shonen manga* and action-oriented Original English Language *manga*. Panels were compared in search of evidence of differences between SFL and VFL. The results were similar to those of the previous study: panels from visual languages by speakers of SFL depict more paths – and, in particular, more

trajectories — than those by speakers of VFL. In Cohn's (2016) words, the results show that "there is a permeable effect of the spoken language on the structures of the visual languages". Although it is only indirectly related to the Thinking-for-speaking research line, Cohn and Maher's (2015) study provides another interesting contribution to this topic. The researchers focused on the neurocognition of motion lines in visual narratives, which "use a wide range of shapes, not only trailing laterally moving objects, but also showing manner of motion" (Cohn 2016:74). In a series of experiments conducted using comic readers, the authors compared the degree of comprehension of motion lines within the naturalistic context of comic strips by comparing comic strips depicting normal motion lines, no lines or anomalous or reversed lines. The results suggest that the inclusion of motion lines contributes to the comprehension of motion events, and this is triggered by "a conventionalized mapping of conceptual understanding to graphic representation" (2016:79).

Having reviewed these studies that draw on the Thinking-for-speaking hypothesis to examine comics, this paper will now outline a contribution that uses Thinking-for-translating in the context of this genre. The research included in Molés-Cases (2020) examines the translation of Manner-of-motion in a corpus composed of five albums from the Belgian comic series *Les aventures de Tintin* (Hergé, 1930–1986) and its translation into two VFL (Spanish and Catalan) and two SFL (English and German). Special attention is devoted to the role of visual language within the Thinking-for-translating framework, with the aim of identifying translation techniques adapted to the translation problem in both inter- and intratypological scenarios. The translation techniques identified for Manner in this study are as follows<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> Ibarretxe-Antuñano (2003) pioneered the classification of translation techniques in the Thinking-for-translating line of research, by reorganizing Slobin's results (1996b, 1997). Since then, numerous translation techniques have been identified in the literature both for Manner and Path. For a detailed review, see Alonso Alonso (2018), Ibarretxe-Antuñano and Filipović (2013) and Molés-Cases (2016), among others.

**Table 1:** Translation techniques for Manner in the genre of comics (Molés-Cases 2020)<sup>4</sup>

Translation technique	Example
Translation	OT (fr) <sup>5</sup> : <i>Abdullah a sauté</i> de la voiture ‘Abdullah has jumped out of the car’ TT <sup>6</sup> (en): Abdullah’s <u>jumped</u> out
Modulation	OT (fr): <i>Nous avons escaladé</i> des tas de rochers! ‘We climbed over heaps of rocks!’ TT (en): We <u>hauled</u> ourselves up vertical rock-faces!
Addition (of Manner) (M)	OT (fr): <i>J’ai suivi le fond de la crevasse</i> ‘I followed the bottom of the crevasse’ TT (en): I <u>crawled</u> along the bottom of the crevasse
Addition (of motion event) (ME)	OT (fr): – TT (de): <i>Der [ein Tiger] ist sicher aus dem Zoo ausgebrochen</i>
Specification	OT (fr): <i>Venez, vite!</i> ‘Come quickly’ TT (ca): <i>Correu!</i> ‘Run!’
Omission (of Manner) (M)	OT (fr): <i>Vite</i> , au canot! ‘Quickly, to the boat!’ TT (es): <i>Vamos a la lancha</i> ‘Let’s go to the boat’
Omission (of motion event) (ME)	OT (fr): <i>Sautant en auto</i> , nous le suivîmes ‘Jumping into the car, we followed him’ TT (de): <i>Wir folgten ihm also im Auto</i>
Reduction <sup>7</sup>	–
Visual compensation	OT (fr): <i>Voici Milou qui se dirige du même côté</i> ‘Here is Snowy, heading in the same direction’ TT (de): <i>Struppi schwimmt</i> in dieselbe Richtung <sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The classification of translation techniques found in Molés-Cases (2020) is inspired by Molés-Cases (2016): it uses a continuum of lower to higher degrees of translation of Manner, based on both traditional classifications of translation techniques (see, for instance, Molina and Hurtado 2002) and proposals inspired by the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis (see, for instance, Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2003; Cifuentes-Férez 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Fragment of original text, followed by the source language abbreviation: fr (French).

<sup>6</sup> Fragment of target text, followed by the target language abbreviations: en (English), de (German), ca (Catalan), es (Spanish).

<sup>7</sup> Given the typological combinations studied (VFL>SFL and VFL>VFL), no examples of reduction were identified in the study, but this technique should not be disregarded: it is consistent with the continuum of Manner information underlying the classification of translation techniques used (Molés-Cases 2016); and it has been observed in previous studies of narrative texts (Molés-Cases 2016) and might be observed in future examinations of comics.

<sup>8</sup> This text is accompanied by an image of Snowy the dog, executing the action of swimming.



Next, the frequency of each of the translation techniques identified in the study is indicated:

**Table 2:** Frequency (%) of translation techniques for Manner in a comic-based corpus (Molés-Cases 2020)

Technique	fr>es	fr>ca	fr>en	fr>de
Translation	59.05	77.14	66.39	68.47
Modulation	0	0.95	2.46	0
Addition of M	1.90	2.86	9.02	2.70
Addition of ME	1.90	0.95	6.56	2.70
Specification	7.62	1.90	1.64	2.70
Omission of M	10.48	7.62	7.38	6.31
Omission of ME	2.86	1.90	0	5.41
Visual compensation	16.19	6.67	6.56	11.71

Overall, the results of the study highlight the key role of visual language when translating Manner-of-motion in comics: it can compensate for and minimize the consequences of Thinking-for-translating. The study also concludes that cross-linguistic differences do not seem to have as much impact on the translation of comics as on the translation of novels, since the percentages of the translation techniques observed in comics that imply some alteration are generally lower than those found in comparable studies focusing on novels. For instance, Manner information is added/specified in around 17% of cases in the fr>en subcorpus, while previous studies focusing on the same typological combination indicate addition/specification of nearly 30% (see, for instance, the study presented in Molés-Cases 2019, focusing on an es>de corpus of narrative texts). However, according to the results of this study, when examining this phenomenon, further considerations must be addressed: the limited space in the balloons and the respective stylistic conventions of comic books in each language. The amount of space in the balloons, as the paper explains, is mainly important in the case of German, for two reasons: German words are typically longer than words in other languages and most of the translated comic books in German were captioned in capital letters throughout, which take up more space in the balloons than lower case letters (cf. the importance of typography, Schmitt 1997:635–637, Kaindl 2010). As for the stylistic conventions of comics in each language: a high frequency of the French Manner-adverb *vite* ‘quickly’ was observed in the original texts. As the paper argues, this consideration should not be disregarded, not only

because it expresses dynamicity, but also because it is a short word, which usually fits easily into the balloons and could be relevant in terms of orality.

As explained above, the encoding of motion in comics is still largely unexplored from a semantic typological perspective, which draws on the theories of Talmy and Slobin. This gap in the literature is even more evident in the case of the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis: as far as we are aware, the only available study is Molés-Cases (2020). The present paper therefore aims to continue that study and pave the way for the development of a line of research that draws on the Thinking-for-translating framework and applies it to the genre of comics.

### 3 Materials and methods

As explained above, the main aim of this paper is to further explore the role of visual language within the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis by analysing a multilingual corpus based on graphic novels. The study therefore addresses the following research questions: What consequences does visual language have for the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis? In addition to visual language, are there any other factors worth considering when adapting the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis to the genre of comics? As has been pointed out, this contribution is a continuation of Molés-Cases (2020), with the following differences. First, the present paper examined the inverse translation scenarios: the intratypological combination SFL>VFL (German>Spanish/French) and the intertypological combination SFL>SFL (German>English). Second, the source language of the corpus studied was German: this is interesting, since it has been observed that some features of the German language (long words, captions in capital letters) have an impact on the translation, due to spatial restrictions (e.g. omissions when German is the target language). Third, since French is one of the target languages examined, it will be necessary to examine whether the presence of *vite* is significant in the translations. And, fourth, the graphic novels examined here are addressed to an adult readership.

Ulli Lust's graphic novels *Heute ist der letzte Tag vom Rest deines Lebens* (2009) and *Wie ich versuchte, ein guter Mensch zu sein* (2017) and their Spanish, French and English translations were chosen for this study<sup>9</sup>. These two graphic

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<sup>9</sup> The following translations were analysed: *Hoy es el último día del resto de tu vida* (María Dolores Pérez Pablos, 2011) and *Cómo traté de ser buena persona* (Lola Pérez Pablos, 2019) in Spanish; *Trop n'est pas assez* (Jörg Stickan, 2012) and *Alors que j'essayais d'être quelqu'un de bien* (Paul

novels are the only works by the Austrian cartoonist translated into these three target languages. Furthermore, they are long novels (464 and 367 pages respectively) and include a high number of manner-of-motion events.

The unit of analysis was motion events including Manner, and specifically self-agentive motion events (e.g. *Sie schwimmt zur Insel*), with the exception of those motion events that include the manner-verb *gehen*, which were excluded from the analysis given the general character of this verb in German. According to Talmy (2000:28), self-agentive motion is motion in which the Figure moves under its own steam and controls its own motion, and which results in a change of place<sup>10</sup>. Faced with the impossibility of using corpus analysis tools in graphic novels, the search for motion events was conducted manually, by reading both the original and target texts and registering every occurrence found in either source or target or both. Whenever the Manner information differed between the source and target texts, image captions were also registered and the information decoded in them was examined<sup>11</sup>. The pairs of fragments (OT – TT) (including visual language, if necessary) were compared and analysed in terms of Manner-of-motion and were assigned a translation technique (Molés-Cases 2020).

## 4 Analysis and results

This section will present the results of this data. First, it will list and exemplify the translation techniques observed in the corpus, drawing on Molés-Cases (2020). Then quantitative matters will be outlined and discussed.

### 4.1 Qualitative data: Translation techniques

#### a) Translation of Manner (=)

This technique indicates that the Manner information in the original has been retained in the translation.

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Derouet, 2017) in French; *Today is the Last Day of the Rest of Your Life* (Kim Thompson, 2013) and *How I Tried to Be a Good Person* (Nika Knight, 2019) in English.

<sup>10</sup> Motion using a vehicle (e.g. *radeln, fahren*) was also included in the analysis, and treated as a subtype of Manner-of-motion.

<sup>11</sup> I am grateful to the publishers Avant-Verlag and Suhrkamp for granting me permission to use captions from Ulli Lust's graphic novels.

- (1) [de] Aber nicht, wenn du *auf mich springst wie eine Affe*.  
 [es] ¡Pero no si me *saltas encima como un mono!*  
 [fr] Mais pas si tu me *sautes dessus comme un singe!*  
 [en] But not if you're gonna *jump on me like an ape*.

In Example (1), the Manner information is the same in the linguistic codes of originals and translations. The manner-verb *springen* and its Spanish, French and English equivalents (*saltar*, *sauter* and *to jump*) were included. The expression *wie eine Affe* was also transferred literally into the three target languages.

### b) Modulation of Manner (≠)

The technique of modulation implies that the Manner information in the translated text differs from that of the source text.

- (2) [de] In einem anderen Film *radeln* Mädchen durch den bayrischen Wald.  
 [en] In another movie girls were *hiking* through the Bavarian forest.

Here both *radeln* and *to hike* are manner-verbs, but the former expresses motion using a vehicle (a bicycle), and the latter implies the motion of walking through the countryside.

### c) Addition (+)

This technique refers to both c1) the addition of Manner and c2) the addition of a motion event (including Manner) in the translation, when there is no mention of Manner in the original text.

#### c1) Addition of Manner (M)

No instances of this technique were encountered. However, this was to be expected, given the typological combinations studied (SFL>VFL and SFL>SFL).

#### c2) Addition of motion event (including Manner) (ME)

- (3) [de] Wir nehmen den Zug.  
 “We will take the train.”

- [es] *Iremos en tren.*  
 “We’ll go by train.”

Here, a motion event including Manner (*ir en tren* ‘to go by train’) is added to the Spanish translation. Although the information included in both original and translation is roughly the same, the translated version incorporates a motion event. As this paper will explain later, the incidence rate of this technique is low.

#### d) Omission (Ø)

The technique of omission was also identified: not only in the case of d1) Manner, but also in the case of d2) motion events (including Manner) in the translation, by contrast with the original text.

##### d1) Omission of Manner (M)

- (4) [de] Gino sagt, sie *schleichen sich* in Hotels und so...  
 [fr] D’après Gino, ils *s’introduisent* dans les hôtels, ce genre de trucs...  
 “According to Gino, they get into hotels, that kind of thing...”

In this case, the translated fragment is more general than the original, since the manner-verb *sich schleichen* in the source text has been substituted by the path-verb *s’introduire* ‘to get into’ in the target fragment. The semantic subcomponent of discretion/silence is thus missing in the translation.

##### d2) Omission of motion event (including Manner) (ME)

- (5) [de] *Sie stürzen sich auf die Touristinnen.*  
 [en] They hit up the female tourists for a cheap lay.

In Example (5), the motion event *Sie stürzen sich auf die Touristinnen* in the original has been omitted in the English translation.

**e) Reduction (=÷)**

Here, the Manner information in the original is reduced (partly omitted) in the target text.

- (6) [de] Aus den Büschen *springen* Jäger [...]  
 [es] De entre los arbustos salían *de repente* cazadores [...]  
 “From between the bushes, hunters suddenly came out”

In Example (6) the original Manner-information is only partially present in the translation, since the temporal adverb *de repente* ‘suddenly’ in the translation retains the nuance of sudden from the original, but the information about the motor pattern (*springen*) is not included in the translation.

**f) Visual compensation (=\*)**

The technique of visual compensation involves an alteration of Manner in the verbal code of the translation, by comparison with the original, and its compensation through visual code.

- (7) [de] Etwa alle 30 Minuten *brummte* ein Auto an uns vorbei.  
 [es] Nos pasaba un coche aproximadamente cada 30 minutos.  
 “A car passed us approximately every 30 minutes”

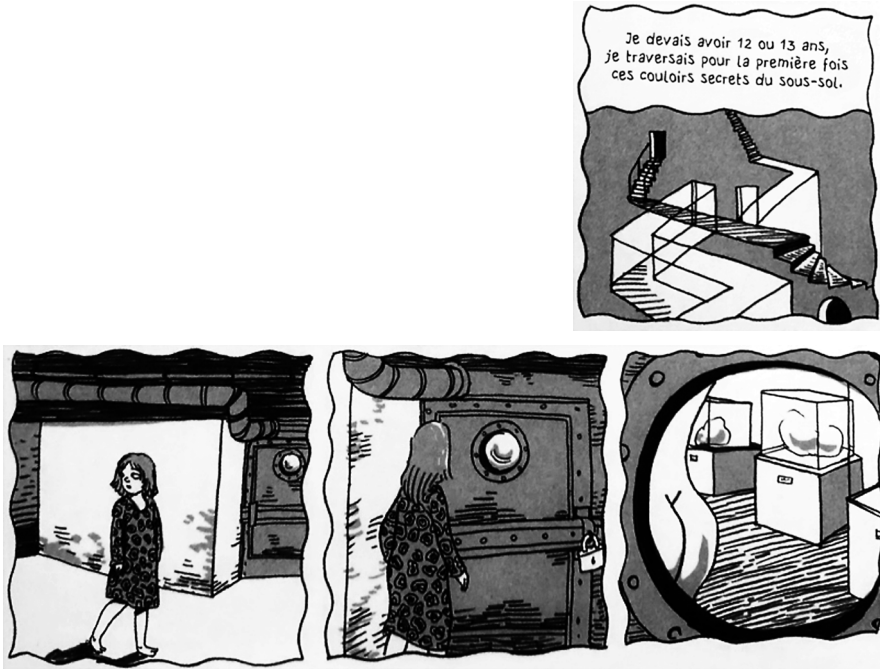
If the textual code alone is considered, the technique displayed in Example (7) is omission of Manner, since the source text includes the manner-verb *brummen*, and the target fragment the path-verb *pasar* ‘to pass’. The nuance of noise expressed in *brummen* would thus be missing in the target text. However, in this case, the Manner information is not lost in the translation (Figure 4), since the panel shows smoke exiting the tailpipe of a fast car and this evokes the noise produced by the car.



**Figure 4:** Example of visual compensation (compensation of omission of Manner in the TT)  
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Example (8) also illustrates this trend. Once again, if only the verbal code was taken into consideration, the technique would be omission of Manner, since the original includes the manner-verb *wandern*. However, a four-strip sequence depicts a girl wandering along a corridor and reaching a porthole, as indicated in Figure 5.

- (8) [de] Ich muss zwischen 12 und 13 gewesen sein, da *wanderte* ich zum ersten Mal durch die geheimen Kellerflure.  
 [fr] Je devais avoir 12 ou 13 ans, je *traversais* pour la première fois ces couloirs secrets du sous-sol.  
 “I must have been between 12 and 13, when I traversed the secret cellar corridors for the first time”



**Figure 5:** Example of visual compensation (compensation of omission of Manner in the TT)  
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Example (9) illustrates a similar phenomenon.

- (9) [de] Sie *fuhr* nur bis zum nächsten Dorf.  
[en] She was only going to the next town.

If we considered the textual code alone, the technique observed in this fragment would also be omission of Manner, since, in the original, we observe a manner-verb (*fahren*), while the translation includes a path-verb (*to go*). However, in this case the Manner information is also made explicit, not only by the context, but by the visual code: a two-strip sequence shows a driving car. See Figure 6.





**Figure 6:** Example of visual compensation (compensation of omission of Manner in the TT)  
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Finally, it should be noted that the translation technique of specification proposed by Molés-Cases (2020) was not found in any of the subcorpora studied. Like the lack of cases of addition, this is unsurprising, given the typological combinations studied (SFL>VFL and SFL>SFL).

## 4.2 Quantitative data

Once the qualitative data have been detailed, this section will present the quantitative data. The study analysed a total of 376 pairs of fragments (OT-TT), in which at least one manner-of-motion event was found (in either the source or target fragment). Table 3 indicates the exact number of pairs of fragments analysed in each subcorpus.

**Table 3:** Pairs of fragments analysed in each subcorpus

Subcorpus	OT-TT fragments
de>es	127
de>fr	126
de>en	123
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>376</b>

Next, this paper will include a quantification of the translation techniques identified. Tables 4 and 5 indicate the frequency of translation techniques observed in the corpus and the phenomena compensated for in the three subcorpora.

**Table 4:** Frequency of translation techniques observed in the corpus

Technique	Frequency in % (raw frequency)		
	de>es	de>fr	de>en
Translation	48.82	49.21	69.92
Modulation	2.36	3.17	1.63
Addition of ME	2.36	0.00	0.00
Omission of M	30.71	34.13	16.26
Omission of ME	3.15	4.76	7.32
Reduction	1.57	0.79	0.00
Visual compensation	11.02	7.94	4.88

**Table 5:** Phenomena compensated for in the three subcorpora (translation technique: visual compensation)

Technique	Frequency in % (raw frequency)		
	de>es	de>fr	de>en
Modulation	7.14	0	0
Omission of M	92.86	90	100
Addition of M	0	10	0

As we can see from Table 4, translation is the most frequent technique found in the three subcorpora, but it is more frequent in the English TT (69.92%) than in the Spanish and French ones (48.82% and 49.21%). Interestingly, the technique of visual compensation was also identified in the three subcorpora, and the technique most frequently compensated for was clearly omission of Manner (Table 5). The techniques of omission (of Manner and of motion event including Manner) also deserve special attention, in both the Spanish and French translations and in the English TT. This paper will now discuss these findings.

First we will take a closer look at the data, starting with the translations into VFL (Spanish and French). If the degrees of translation and visual compensation are examined concurrently, Manner information was translated in around half the occasions, in both the Spanish and French TTs (59.84% and 57.15% respectively).

The techniques of omission and reduction (the techniques consistent with the Thinking-for-Translating hypothesis for the typological combination SFL>VFL), were observed to occur in the translations into both languages (approximately 35 % and 40 %). In general, the results observed in this comic-based corpus were similar to those found in comparable studies focusing on novels (cf. Slobin 1996b, 1997). As for the recurrence of the French adverb *vite* ‘quickly’ (Molés-Cases 2020), no alteration caused by the presence of this adverb was observed: 5 fragments translated into French include the adverb *vite*, but their counterparts in the original fragments in German also contain *schnell* ‘quickly’. The cases of modulation and addition of motion event are considered one offs, given their low incidence rate.

Second, we will focus on the data from SFL>SFL translation (German>English). When we examine both the degrees of translation of Manner and visual compensation, Manner is translated into English to a large extent (in around 75 % of cases). As explained above, the techniques of omission (of Manner and of motion event including Manner) also deserve special attention in the English TT (they are found in around 24 % of cases), since, according to the Thinking-for-Translating hypothesis, this is not a common technique in the aforementioned typological combination and these data indicate intratypological variation as to Manner (cf. Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2003), as well as the higher salience of Manner in German than in English (cf. Slobin 2004). However, in 19 out of the 29 cases of omission, the original text included the general manner-verb *fahren*, which is a very common verb in German when the motion is executed using a vehicle (cf. the recurrence of *vite* in French comics, Molés-Cases 2020), and is comparable to the English equivalent *to drive*. Furthermore, lack of space was disregarded as a possible cause of the other 10 cases of omission in the English TT. The cases of modulation are also considered one offs here, given their low rates.

Finally, we should note that no overall differences in the use of space were identified in the analysis. As for typography, the comic *Heute ist der letzte Tag vom Rest deines Lebens* (and the three corresponding translations) is captioned in small letters, while the comic *Wie ich versuchte, ein guter Mensch zu sein* is captioned in capital letters (the translation into French is in small letters, the English and the Spanish translation are in capital letters). These differences do not seem to have had an impact on the translation, however.

## 5 Concluding remarks

Following a review of the existing research on Thinking-for-speaking and Thinking-for-translating motion in visual narratives, this paper focused on an analysis

of the translation of manner-of-motion events in a corpus composed of two graphic novels originally written in German and their translations into Spanish, French and English. As explained above, the aim was to examine the role of visual language within the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis and identify translation techniques used to tackle the translation problem of Manner-of-motion. The study addressed the questions of whether visual language has implications for the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis and whether other factors should be considered when studying this phenomenon.

It has been shown that visual language has a role to play in the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis in the case of comics, since, in the three subcorpora, it primarily compensated for cases of omission of Manner. This paper argues that these omissions were caused by typological differences in the way of organizing the semantic information in the de>es and de>fr linguistic combinations; and the higher salience of Manner in German as opposed to English.

This also validates Molés-Cases (2020)' proposal regarding translation techniques adapted to the translation of Manner in the genre of comics. Although no instances of the techniques of addition and specification of Manner were encountered, the absence of these techniques (together with the low rates of the technique of addition of motion-event) were to be expected, in accordance with the Thinking-for-translating hypothesis applied to the typological combinations studied.

Finally, although this particular study observed no problems involving space in the balloons, this and other restrictions and conventions of graphic novels deserve greater attention within this framework. Since the corpus examined was limited in size, further analyses are necessary employing cognitive research using the Thinking-for-Translating hypothesis adapted to the genre of comics: focusing, for instance, on other graphic novels and comic books or linguistic combinations. An interesting immediate step would be to analyse comics originally depicted/written in Spanish and/or English and their translations into languages belonging to the same and different typologies, with the aim of identifying stylistic conventions typical of these languages in this genre.

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