

Shaping translation in two Mexican cultural magazines

A case study in the use of quantitative methods for the analysis of translation in periodical publications

 **Marina Popea** | University of Oxford

 <https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.155.05pop>

 Available under a CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

Pages 121–151 of

Literary Translation in Periodicals: Methodological challenges for a transnational approach

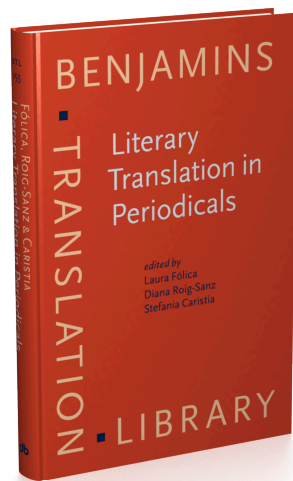
Edited by Laura Fólca, Diana Roig-Sanz and Stefania Caristia

[Benjamins Translation Library, 155] 2020. vii, 401 pp.

© John Benjamins Publishing Company

This electronic file may not be altered in any way. For any reuse of this material, beyond the permissions granted by the Open Access license, written permission should be obtained from the publishers or through the Copyright Clearance Center (for USA: www.copyright.com).

For further information, please contact rights@benjamins.nl or consult our website at benjamins.com/rights



Shaping translation in two Mexican cultural magazines

A case study in the use of quantitative methods for the analysis of translation in periodical publications

Marina Popea

University of Oxford

This article examines various kinds of metadata that allow us to explore the ways in which translation was showcased in two turn-of-the-century Mexican literary periodicals: the *Revista Azul* (1894–1896) and the *Revista Moderna* (1898–1903). It describes the methodological challenges that arise when approaching such uncharted territory, especially those related to the creation of datasets of translated texts, and argues in favour of the integration of qualitative and quantitative analysis in their treatment. More precisely, it demonstrates the importance of implementing descriptive statistics in order to establish distinctions in the uses of translation that would not be evident at first sight due to the size of the corpora. Combined with content analysis, these inform us about the contribution of each magazine to the institutionalisation of literary activity and to cultural renovation. Ultimately, this also reaffirms the importance of data visualisation in this process.

Keywords: translation, cultural periodicals, Mexico, *Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna*, exploratory data analysis, descriptive statistics, data visualisation

Exploratory data analysis is detective work – numerical detective work – or counting detective work – or graphical detective work. John Tukey

The editors of turn-of-the-century Mexican literary magazines such as the *Revista Azul* (1894–1896) and the *Revista Moderna* (1898–1903) established translation as a key component of their activity. In fact, this is one of the main characteristics shared by those publications. Situated at a turning point for Mexican letters, they unsurprisingly included important amounts of foreign texts in their pages. Although those were at times featured in the original language, this cultural import was mostly carried out through translation. This practice was therefore at the core of both *Revistas* and contributed greatly to their respective editorial lines. As

such, it is a crucial yet heavily understudied component of turn-of-the-century cultural periodicals in Mexico.

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and José Juan Tablada, who were among the founders and leading figures of the *Revista Azul* and *Revista Moderna* respectively, were pioneers in the articulation, from the pages of cultural magazines, of aestheticist discourse in Mexico. Both were fierce advocates for the autonomy of literature and art, and both endeavoured to make their respective publications the epitomes of this new way of conceiving literary activity. Of course this also entailed changes in how translation was considered and practised, in a context of growing institutionalisation of culture and increased circulation of texts.

Understanding how translation was used in the magazines edited by those figures is fundamental in order to assess the role it has played in cultural change and in the definition of modern Mexican (and Latin American) letters. More specifically, my initial hypothesis was that in the context of the emergence of the modern literary field, translation became increasingly codified, visible, and acknowledged in the *Revistas*, developing into a practice that was valued in itself. In textual terms, this implied moving away from the playful and rather free modalities in use during the nineteenth century and adopting a more literal approach to translation. Other elements which I expected to contribute to the growing visibility of this practice were more standardised ways to identify and/or sign translations, a progressive lengthening of the texts, and an increasingly prominent location within the issues. From this new vantage position, translations functioned as vectors of cultural capital as well as ideo-aesthetic components of the editorial line, and an actualisation of the *Revistas*' universalist vocation.

However, with 396 and 284 translated texts or fragments respectively, the *Revista Azul* and *Revista Moderna* conform large and wildly heterogeneous corpora, in which trends become difficult to identify at first glance. This is also related to the eclecticism proper to *modernista* poetics, of which both *Revistas* are important – if dissimilar – exponents.¹ In this context, I argue that quantitative approaches may be particularly useful in order to identify patterns and test first-sight impressions and hypotheses. They can help us build a systematic approach to the phenomena mentioned above (increased length, more visible position, clearer identification) and give an accurate account of their evolution in time. The present article will discuss the elaboration of this corpus and the related datasets, as well as the variables retained for quantitative analysis. Most importantly, we shall observe how descriptive statistics can contribute to a more precise characterisation of the

1. For studies tackling this aspect of *modernismo*, see for instance Onís (1988) and Yurkievich (2007) in its section titled “El modernismo: genitor de la vanguardia”. About its relationship with translation, see Costa (2011).

phenomena at hand and how data visualisation functions as a fundamental tool in order to explore and present the data.^{2,3}

The principal aim of this article is to examine some potentialities of data analysis for the study of translation in periodical publications, focusing on what numbers can tell us about how this activity was considered and practised in magazines. This method could be successfully applied to other corpora of periodicals, given that it is suitably adapted, in order to study the same or different aspects of the publication of translations. The possibilities offered by such an approach are very vast, and I merely endeavour to give one example of the benefits that quantitative approaches present for the study of cultural phenomena. This shall be illustrated through the case of two turn-of-the-century Mexican magazines, as they were published at a moment when a shift in the conception of translation occurred. The elements presented hereafter are only a few aspects of this change, whose complexity and all-encompassing nature prevent it from being treated in its totality in an article.

We shall also observe how, while the *Revista Azul*'s and the *Revista Moderna*'s practices surrounding translation may appear, at first, very similar (albeit with different contents), a thorough examination of the place allocated to translated texts, as well as the space occupied by them in each issue and the format of their signature are telling, when put in perspective, of meaningful differences. Interestingly enough, the conclusions that can be drawn from those indicators are not merely quantitative; rather, I argue that they denote deep trends and processes related to the manner in which translation was considered and treated in the periodicals, which in turn inform us of the role of those magazines in the institutionalisation of literature and its evolution.

This article is structured as a case study in order to illustrate what quantitative methods can bring to the study of literary translation in cultural periodicals, especially in relatively large corpora. Thus, I shall demonstrate that data analysis can actually offer valuable insights into cultural processes and that it might be

2. All data analysis and plotting for this article was carried out using R version 3.5.0 (Vienna: R Foundation for Statistical Computing, <https://www.R-project.org/>). The corresponding datasets and source code are available at https://github.com/Mpopea/Shaping_Translation. This also contains complementary information and plots that could not be included in the present publication due to space constraints. This is the reason why figure numbering does not appear to be completely regular throughout the article. It is, however, in the code file, and the logic behind it is explained at the above URL.

3. I am indebted to Thomas Lansdall-Welfare who prompted me to adopt a more rigorous approach to my data, and to Matthieu Wilhelm and Laura González Salmerón, whom I would like to thank in particular, for reviewing my article and code, and offering valuable comments and suggestions.

particularly suited for objects that evolve in time such as periodicals. I will also exemplify why it is important to integrate quantitative and qualitative methods and how it can be done. At this point, it should be noted that, as mentioned above, the design of the variables and the kind of analysis undertaken respond to the particularities of the corpus and of the studied material. Ultimately, they should always be tailored to the needs of the investigation.

The *Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna* and the emergence of the modern Mexican literary field

The cultural context of turn-of-the-century Mexico, in which the two magazines were published, is one of fast-paced changes. Porfirio Díaz's regime, which started almost two decades before the publication of the *Revista Azul* and outlived both periodicals, sought to establish, through strict rule and an ideology derived from positivism called *cientificismo*,⁴ a stability that would propitiate economic development. The influx of foreign investments fostered industrial growth in various sectors. The press is one of the areas that underwent an important transformation at the end of the nineteenth century. After years of state subsidies to multiple newspapers in exchange for their allegiance, the government decided, in 1896, to end this politics and invest in one single brand-new periodical: *El Imparcial*. The first Linotype machines and rotary presses were introduced on this occasion, marking the beginning of the press industry in Mexico.

At the same time, literary and artistic activity was also becoming modern. With transportation improvements came a better and faster access to foreign publications, from which translations could be done. The newly professionalised press allowed some writers to make a living and fostered literary activity, at first through literary supplements. On the other hand, however, art and literature strove to break free from their ties with the press and become fully autonomous, as exogenous factors (e.g. political allegiance, public morality, sales) were perceived as detrimental to true artistic expression. Gutiérrez Nájera referred to journalism as a disease and a form of slavery, although it was also his means of subsistence.⁵

In order for truly autonomous art to exist, it required its own spaces and instances, and modern literary magazines were one of them. The *Revista Azul* was, in this context, the first to profess an exclusively aestheticist principle, although it was the Sunday supplement of a newspaper where Gutiérrez Nájera worked and

4. For more details on the ideological aspects of the late 19th century in Mexico, see Hale (1989).

5. "Vamos remando en las galeras de la prensa", *Revista Azul* 1.7: 1. All subsequent references to the *Revistas* will indicate the volume, issue and page number in the same format.

which was subsidised by the government: *El Partido Liberal*. Nevertheless, the autonomy of the editors in terms of programme was considerable and their main contribution was to open a space within the literary field for later magazines, and to establish the bases of aestheticist discourse in Mexico. By affirming in the first issue that “el arte es nuestro Príncipe y Señor”,⁶ and that this constituted their only programme, the editors of the *Revista Azul* discursively created the autonomous pole of the literary field, although they never came to fully occupy this position.⁷ The *Revista Azul* eventually disappeared along with *El Partido Liberal* when state subventions were cut off.

Walking in the steps of the *Revista Azul*, the *Revista Moderna* was a project that arose from the impossibility, for the poets labelled as decadents, to publish in the mainstream press due to censorship of what was considered, at the time, as scandalous content. In an 1893 open letter, José Juan Tablada called for the creation of a temple dedicated to the veneration of art, a metaphor for that self-governed literary space, which was to take the form of a periodical.⁸ The creation of the *Revista Moderna*, however, had to wait until 1896, most likely due to the lack of funding, which was eventually privately assumed by Jesús E. Valenzuela and, later, by Jesús Luján. It occupied the autonomous pole of the literary field and conducted numerous experiments with poetics which contributed to the advent of new verse forms and to the aesthetic renaissance of Hispanic letters in those years. The *Revista Moderna* as such stopped existing in September 1903, when it was transformed into a more general magazine titled *Revista Moderna de México* in exchange for public funding.

Various of the collaborators of the two *Revistas* were the same, and although both magazines proclaimed that their quest of beauty was independent from any school or movement, which they substantiated through the inclusion of dissenting voices and diverse trends in their pages, the main poetics represented in them was Latin American *modernismo*. It would exceed the limits of this article to provide an accurate definition of what *modernismo* was and meant for the evolution of Latin American culture. Nonetheless, it can be said, for the purposes of this piece, that

6. *Revista Azul*, I.1: 1.

7. Pierre Bourdieu elaborates at length on the notion of literary field in *Les règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (1998) and defines the concept of autonomous pole in *Raisons Pratiques* (1994: 74).

The *Revista Azul* never actually occupied the autonomous pole of the Mexican literary field due to its ties with the government. Throughout the first half of the 20th century at least, this would often prove a challenge to cultural magazines.

8. “Si la *Revista Moderna* fue antes un proyecto, es hoy un hecho, y [...] su publicación se verá realizada en breve días.” (Tablada 2002: 110)

it was the first essentially modern and international literary movement in Latin America. Its main goal was the renovation of continental letters through the inclusion of literary elements from traditions other than the Spanish. Part of this formal and thematic innovation happened with the help of translation, mostly of French authors, although by no means exclusively. The *fin-de-siècle* period was marked by intense debates in the cultural sphere and the *modernistas* were often accused of being immoral, frivolous and of favouring foreign letters over local culture.

The challenges of creating the datasets

The first issue encountered in my research was the absence of metadata about the translations published in Mexican literary periodicals. Scholars from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) have produced rigorous indexes for some of the magazines (notably the *Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna* and *Revista Moderna de México*).⁹ While those constitute a valuable complement, as they provide factual information on the authors and texts published in the periodicals, they do not contain the granular data that is necessary for a detailed analysis of the kind that occupies us here.

More specifically, they lack some information proper to translations and useful for their analysis (such as the original language when stated, the manner in which the translation is identified and how it is signed). Furthermore, both the *Revista Azul*'s index and the *Revista Moderna*'s omit certain contents that happen to be translations most of the time: the *gacetillas*. In this context, those take the form of short, edifying quotations from well-known writers and intellectuals; they usually appear in small groups, with no title or context, at the bottom of the pages, with no purpose other than filling in blank space. They are nevertheless significant in various ways – as the result of a selection process, they indicate what the core ideological values of the magazines might be, and the choice of authors and original languages can also be telling – and should as such be included in the dataset. However, the particular nature of those fragments causes them to stand out from the rest of the corpus. This matter will be addressed later on. Finally, I also needed to record information that does not appear in the indexes, such as the length of the texts and their position within their respective issue. For these reasons, I had to create my own database of translated texts.

Of course, the process of creating the datasets involved various challenges, the first of which was to define the variables. Unsurprisingly, the input variables were

9. Those are Díaz Alejo and Prado Velázquez (1968), Valdés (1967), and Clark de Lara and Curiel Defossé (2002).

the issue number, date and issue length. Because issue numbering often restarts with each new year or volume of the publication, an “absolute issue number” category had to be created.¹⁰ As output variables, I chose to include the title of the translated text (as it appeared in the magazine), its author, translator, position in the issue (the data recorded here corresponds to the first and last page numbers), its length (to distinguish instances in which translations do not occupy a whole number of pages), original language and language it was translated from (which are not the same in the case of indirect translations – the latter was only recorded when explicitly stated), as well as the author’s nationality.¹¹

The question of the literary genre of the text is thorny: some texts appear to be translated into a different genre than the original’s (the shifts between poetry and prose are more frequent than I expected, responding in part to the exploration of non-traditional poetic forms such as prose poetry and free verse, and one case of drama translated as poetry was also found). Moreover, the porosity of the genres themselves complicates the matters further; for instance, should prose poetry and poetical prose be put in the same category or should they be distinguished? The many nuances of prose writing are problematic as well, especially for publications in which fiction and reality are often intertwined. The genre of the chronicle, popular among *modernistas*, is itself hybrid. So are some fictionalised autobiographic and travel writings. Additionally, it would certainly be reductive to group all the varieties of essay-writing under the same category.

Indeed, even considering this wide variety of possibilities, the genre of the text is not always easy to ascertain when the original is not available. The source is almost never indicated in the magazines studied here, and many texts seem to come from French periodicals of the time. Finding the original and determining its genre therefore involves investigative work which is hardly compatible with a one-person team capacity. To this should also be added the instances in which the original is in an inaccessible language (such as Russian in this case), making identification impossible. It thus becomes difficult to classify the texts in a way that would do them justice and be productive for the analysis. Of course, the decisions regarding such matters are up to each researcher and should ultimately be motivated by the kind of analysis to be conducted and the available means. Because

10. Thus, the first issue of the second volume of the *Revista Azul*, which appeared weekly and whose volumes were six month long, corresponds to issue n. 27 in absolute terms. The numbering goes on until the last issue published, n. 128. The same system was applied to the *Revista Moderna*, which was published fortnightly during its years 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and monthly in year 2.

11. A more recent and complete version of this database also includes information on both author and translator (dates of birth and death, gender, nationality), as well as the date of publication of the original text. Those categories are, however, irrelevant for my argument here.

this is the main focus of my current research, I have for now only recorded the instances in which the translations were poetry (including prose poetry).

Similar issues arise when collecting the data for other variables. The language from which each translation was made is rarely mentioned (two occurrences in the *Revista Azul* and five in the *Revista Moderna*). Most times it can be quite safely deduced. However, this hardly provides reliable data for the study of indirect translations. Since seeking an intermediary text would be, at this stage, a preposterous task, I have opted, for the time being, for recording the language in which the original text was written and published, even if I suspect the translation to be an indirect one, as an indication of the literatures with which the *Revistas* are engaging.

Categorical variables are not the only ones to be problematic, but among numerical variables, the sole difficulty is the length of the translated text, which has to be estimated when a text does not occupy a whole number of pages. Such an estimation can be delicate, especially when working with digitised versions of the periodicals. There is no clear limit between the texts other than blank space, and it would require considerable resources in order to precisely define such limits and individually measure each text on the paper copies of the magazines (which can also be of difficult access). I have therefore endeavoured to calculate the approximate amount of page space occupied by each translated text by comparing and contrasting it with adjacent contributions. In this way, I could determine the percentage of page space occupied by the translation with some accuracy; of course the quality of the digitised images at the National Newspaper Library in Mexico is not good enough to obtain more than an estimate (the degree of cropping is particularly variable in the digital version), but I do not expect the error to exceed 5%. Alternatively, another useful – if painstaking and slow – way to calculate the length of the text would be to count its lines.

Showcasing translation: The increasing visibility of translated texts in the *Revista Azul*

Translation is omnipresent in the *Revista Azul*; as mentioned above, the total number of translated texts or fragments published in it is 396, spread over almost two years and a half and 128 issues. With an average of three translations per issue (or 2.27 if we do not consider the *gacetillas*), this is one of the highest concentrations of translations that I have encountered so far, especially considering that each issue is only 16 pages long. Only 5 of the 128 issues contain no translation at all.¹² In the rest of them, translations appear in different forms, both independently and

12. Those are issues number 27, 41, 59, 92 and 126, almost evenly spread across all volumes.

within essays, reviews and as epigraphs. For practical reasons, and because they are not necessarily significant in themselves, embedded quotations have not been included in the dataset, although they can constitute an interesting complement in the qualitative phase of the analysis. It can, for instance, be helpful to know if a certain author or work appears as a recurrent reference in the periodical, or if they appear at specific moments. French poet and founding figure of aestheticism Théophile Gautier is present throughout the publication span of the *Revista Azul*, for which he functions as a paradigm in terms of poetics. The *Revista Moderna*, in turn, only contains references to him in its first issues, swiftly moving forward to other sources of inspiration related to decadentist aesthetics.

The two kinds of translations published as self-contained units in the *Revista Azul* are proper translated texts and *gacetillas*. Defined above, the latter present a particular kind of challenge for quantitative analysis, since they appear in high numbers but are extremely short and endowed with next to no symbolic capital. Thus, including them alongside other kinds of translations in statistics tends to give too much weight to materials that could otherwise be defined as marginal. Moreover, both *Revistas* use them at the beginning of their publication span before abandoning this practice altogether (the *Revista Azul* at the end of its third volume and the *Moderna* after only the first), creating an internal imbalance. For these reasons, all the statistics have been run twice: the first time, with the complete dataset, and the second, with the *gacetillas* filtered out, in order to contrast the results.¹³

Average length of the translated texts: A variable to be used warily

As a measure of the amount of physical space occupied by translations in a magazine, the average length of the translated texts might be an indicator of their importance – or at least their visibility – in said periodical and of its evolution in time. As I increasingly observed comparatively longer translations when collecting the data for the *Revista Azul*, I formulated the hypothesis that, in this magazine, translations became longer (and therefore more noticeable) as time passed. Rigorous statistics, however, reveal the complexity of the phenomenon.

I have calculated the average length of translations in each volume of the *Revista Azul* and the results show that translations are on average longer in the last two volumes of the magazine (that is, from November 1895 onwards). While it does make

13. The R files (analysisRA and analysisRM) therefore contain all the statistics and plots in two versions (with and without *gacetillas*). This is in order to provide accurate chart labels - the figure numbers are the same, but "-w/o" is appended to distinguish the plots with filtered data. The corresponding CSV files are dataRA and dataRM respectively.

sense to include the *gacetillas* when calculating the average length of translations over time (their disuse does imply a re-centring on longer, more meaningful pieces), it is worth ascertaining that the corresponding results were not obtained only as a consequence of their inclusion. When *gacetillas* are taken into account, the average length goes from 0.88 pages in volume 1, to 1.05, 0.98, and finally 1.68 and 1.69 (see Figure c1b).¹⁴ When regular translated texts are considered exclusively, it appears that this increase is less marked, and that there is actually a drop in average length in volumes 2 and 3, although translated texts are indeed longer in the last two volumes of the *Revista Azul*.¹⁵ This indicates that there is a higher concentration of *gacetillas* in volume 1,¹⁶ in which other translations are already 1.56 pages long on average. It also points to an increased presence of translation at the very beginning of the publication of the magazine, compared to its “middle” volumes. This phenomenon appears to occur sometimes in literary periodicals, due to either the need to fill in the space when the number of established collaborators is limited and/or the magazine’s notoriety is incipient, or to the use of translations as a source of cultural capital and tool to formulate a recognisable aesthetic programme.

The genre of the translated texts is also a factor to examine when delving into the length of such contributions. Indeed, poetry is often inherently shorter than short stories and essays (which are the other genres to be widely represented in both *Revistas*) and even more so compared to pieces of drama or novel sections, which appear more rarely. As a consequence, it has to be taken into account when assessing the length of the translations. In the present context, poetry represents 30.4% of all the regular translated texts in volume 1, 27.1% in volume 2, 20.3% in volume 3, and 15.8 and 16.7% respectively in the last two volumes.¹⁷ It is therefore far more pervasive at the beginning of the publication, and there seems to be a steadily

14. Figure c1b is part of the complements that can be found in the analysisRA file on GitHub (https://github.com/Mpopea/Shaping_Translation). This is where you will retrieve all the plots that have not been reproduced in this article due to space constraints and which are indicated with a “c” (for “complement”) added before the figure number. An index of all figures, explaining their numbering, is also included online.

15. The average lengths without *gacetillas* are as follows: 1.56, 1.39, 1.37, 1.68 and 1.69. See Figure c1b–w/o.

16. This is of course confirmed when calculating the proportion of *gacetillas* in the total of translations in the respective volume.

17. Because the issue of the genre of the texts has not been solved altogether, I have opted for a temporary solution allowing me to tackle the question of poetry translation. Since poetry is one of the genres that are easier to detect and identify, and because it is at the core of my doctoral research, I have classified the texts as either poetry, *gacetillas*, drama or simply “prose”, for the time being. I have thus been able to obtain quite definitive numbers for poetry translation (which includes prose poetry but not poetic prose). In the cases in which the genre of the

growing interest for prose translation. While this factor might account for part of the rise in average length in the last two volumes, it does not appear to be directly correlated to it, as the proportion of poetry is in constant decline while the average length of the translations does not increase consistently. This would even suggest the presence of some rather long drama and prose translations in volume 1 in order to compensate the relatively high proportion of poetry.¹⁸ A chart of the evolution of the average length per genre would be helpful in order to clarify those processes.

At any rate, the average length of translations is at its highest at the end of the lifespan of the magazine, at which stage those occupy a greater proportion of the available space. In order to be more precise, I also calculated the average length of the translations in each issue of the *Revista Azul*. The corresponding plot confirms the results obtained with the calculation of the average per volume, namely a slight tendency towards longer texts published in translation as time passed (Figure 1). When the *gacetillas* are not taken into account, this tendency is merely visible in the second half of the publication (see Figure c1–w/o).

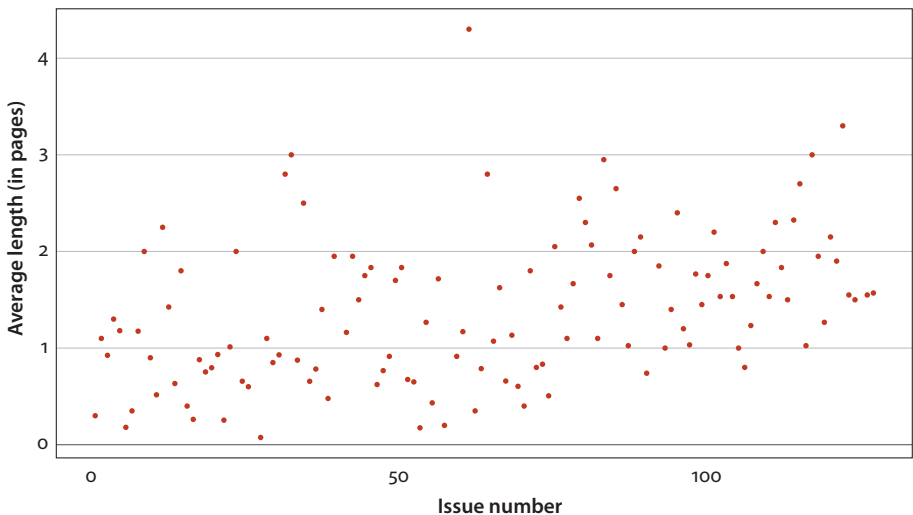


Figure 1. Average length of translations in each issue of the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)

translation is different from that of the original (only two occurrences), I chose to take that of the original into account.

18. This can also be perceived in a chart representing the sum of the lengths of all translations in each issue (see Figure c1c). Most of the peaks in total length appear to happen either at the beginning or at the end of the *Revista Azul*. Apart from this, this chart is not too telling, and while the sum of the lengths can be a useful complement, I have found it too vague to be used as a primary indicator (as it does not take into account the actual amount of single translations.)

In summary, careful examination shows that the increase in average length does depend in some measure on the *gacetillas*, although not exclusively. While they play a considerable role in lowering the average length in the volumes in which they are in use (and particularly so in the first one), the rise observed in the last two volumes seems to be independent of them. Additionally, the abolition of the *gacetillas* marks an important turning point in terms of how translation is used, and it should not be considered as a mere detail or technicality. Indeed it means that translation stops being used in its most instrumental modality (that is, as an invisible practice with a purely practical goal). As mentioned above, literary genre is another factor to be taken into consideration. Thus, length is a relevant variable but it cannot be used alone as a measure of importance. It can, however, yield interesting insights, in combination with other variables such as the genre, position, or signature type, discussed below.

A more straightforward complement: The position of translated texts

Another numeric variable that, I argue, reflects the visibility given to translation is the position of the translated texts within each issue. When the first or second contribution is a translation, the attention is inevitably drawn to this practice. Because of the differences in length of each translation, I chose to rely on the starting page of each text in order to measure this, and, as for the length, to calculate the average both per volume and per issue. Here, although the inclusion of the *gacetillas* might seem misleading (the fact that they were often published in group but inventoried separately might give the false impression that some positions in the magazine were far more favoured than they actually were), the results are almost identical with and without the *gacetillas*, as figures c2a and c2a-w/o show. In both cases, after a slight augmentation between the first and second volume, the average starting page decreases until reaching its lowest level in the last volume.¹⁹ This means that the translations appeared more towards the front of each issue as time passed, with the exception, once again, of the first volume, thus corroborating the idea that translation was rather visible at the beginning of the magazine's publication span. Just like the average length, the evolution of the position does indicate that there is a more marked change in the last two volumes, in which translations appear on average one page to one page and a half earlier than in volume 1. The scatter plot representing the average position per issue illustrates the same tendency (Figure 2).

19. Considering the *gacetillas*, the average starting pages are: 8.51 in vol. 1, 9.01 in vol. 2, 8.69 in vol. 3, 7.67 in vol. 4, and 7.15 in vol. 5. Without them, they are 8.64, 9.37, 7.75, 7.67, and 7.15 respectively.

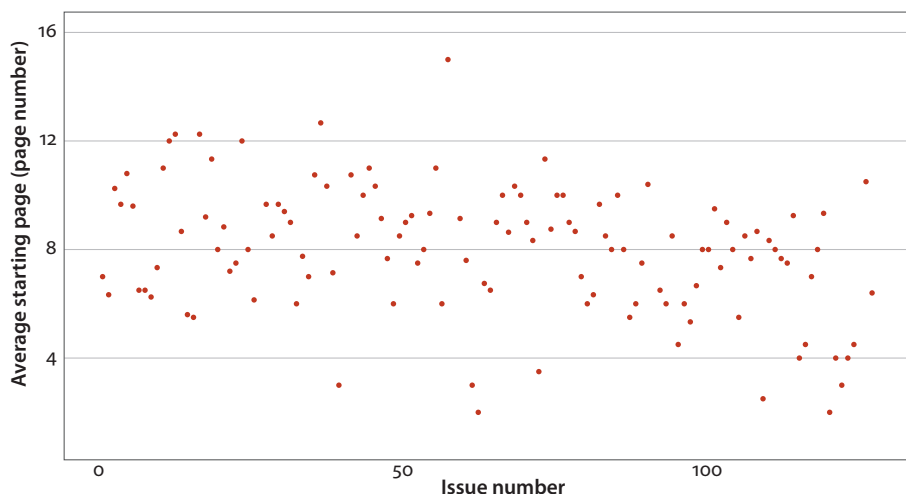


Figure 2. Average position of translations in each issue of the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)

A comprehensive visual outline of the situation: The bubble chart

In order to have a general view of the phenomena discussed so far, I have designed a bubble chart representing all the translations published in a determined magazine. In Figure 3, the trends mentioned above are observable, this time without the intermediary of the average. This kind of chart is very helpful in order to get an overview of what happens in a periodical over time, since it combines an array of variables; each point corresponds to one translation, its size being proportional to the length of the text, and its vertical situation replicating its position in the magazine. The chart can therefore be seen as representing the space of the periodical on the y-axis, with the front pages at the bottom and end pages at the top, each issue being a vertical “slice” of the whole. The x-axis functions as a timeline, as it corresponds to the issues in chronological order. As such, the bubble chart forms a unique pattern representing the “general character” (Tukey 1970: 5–10) of the publication of translations in a determined magazine. In other words, it is like its specific footprint, which is distinguishable from that of any other periodical. It constitutes what John Tukey calls a “distant-view graph”, which he likens to a picture of a crime scene, offering a general view of the situation and pointing to aspects worthy of further inquiry (1970: 5–10).

The bubbles can be coloured based on various variables; in Figure 3, I have chosen to distinguish the different volumes, but other options such as position, translator or genre are also possible.

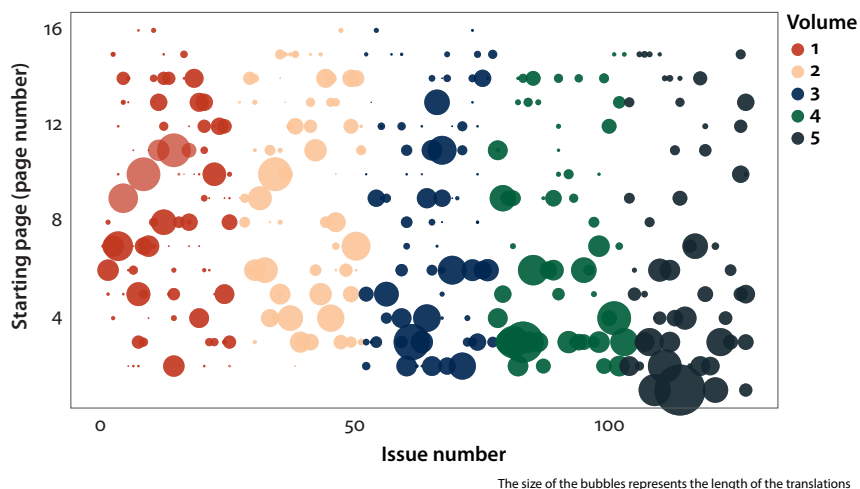


Figure 3. Length and position of translations in the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)

As a visual representation of the translations themselves and of their evolution throughout the periodical's whole publication span, this kind of chart can provide more precise information about the phenomena under scrutiny. In the case of the *Revista Azul*, we observe, for instance, that translations start being published on the first page only in the last volume, in which four translated texts open their respective issues. Of course, this should be complemented by an analysis of the actual contents of the magazine, through which it can be determined that the reason for the previous absence of translations on the first page was that, for most of the first year, an article by Gutiérrez Nájera would occupy the first position in the magazine, while Carlos Díaz Dufóo, the other editor, closed it. This tradition was even maintained for some time after Gutiérrez Nájera's death in February 1895, after which the first place was usually occupied by Díaz Dufóo himself or some close collaborator (often Ángel de Campo). For this reason, the opening contribution was, in the *Revista Azul* even more so than in other periodicals, endowed with a particular solemnity. The fact that a translation would be deemed worthy of such a highly symbolic position is telling of the importance that it is given in the last volume of the *Revista Azul*.

The bubble chart also shows that those opening translations tend to be rather long texts (the data confirms that three of them are three pages or more in length, with one culminating at 6.1 pages, over one third of the issue), and that there is, in general, a greater concentration of longer translations at the beginning of the last three volumes. It would even seem that those longer translations have progressively moved from the second half of the magazine to its first half, especially in the last two volumes, in which the concentration of translations on pages 8–16 has considerably decreased. The colouring based on position can help visualise this

kind of trend (as in Figure c3b)²⁰. When the translations published in the first 25% of the magazine (pages 1–4) and in the next-to-last 25% (pages 9–12) are viewed separately, this becomes even clearer (Figure 3c).

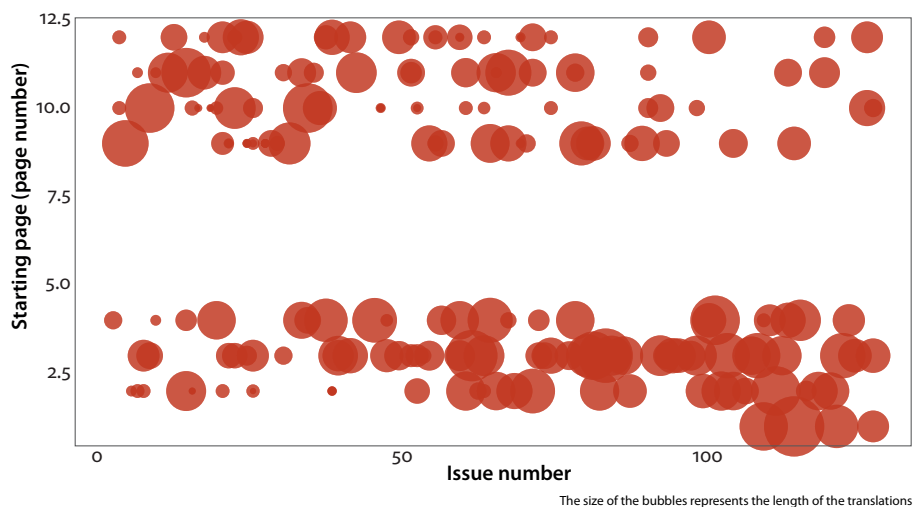


Figure 3c. Length and position of translations in the *Revista Azul*, pages 1–4 and 8–12 only (including *gacetillas*)²¹

Unsurprisingly then, when examining the percentage of translations that appear on the first 4 pages in each volume, we observe a steady increase, from 17.6% to 38.9%. The proportion of translations located within the first four pages of the *Revista Azul* doubled in the two years of its publication, with more than a third of the translations appearing at the beginning of their issues in the last volume.²² The proportion of translations published between pages 9 and 12, in turn, drops from 31.5% to 14.8% over the same period, although this reduction only concerns the last two volumes. Thus, although the hypotheses formulated on the basis of the visualisation have to be corroborated, this kind of chart is a very useful means to identify general trends and determine which aspects to examine further.

20. Figure c3b can be found among the complementary material at https://github.com/Mpopea/Shaping_Translation.

21. See footnote 2, p. 123.

22. When considering only regular translated texts, the process appears to be similar, except for the fact that the proportion of translations within the first four pages does not grow in vol. 2.

The average length of the translations published in this page range of the *Revista Azul* also increases, in accordance to what can be observed in the bubble chart. It goes from 0.69 pages in vol. 1, to 1.22, 1.58, 2.48, and 2.35 in subsequent volumes.

Categorical variables: The importance of the signature type

Numeric variables are not the only tools at our disposal in order to assess the visibility of translation in a determined periodical. The manner in which translations are presented and identified does of course play an important role in showcasing this practice. Indeed this last point is rather specific to the kind of publications studied here, as they often tend to omit the credits to the translator and/or even the mention that the text is a translation at all. There can be various reasons for this, the most common of which is probably that the translated text was either plagiarised as a translation from another (usually foreign) Spanish-speaking periodical, or quickly translated from a francophone or anglophone magazine as a way to create contents more effortlessly. Repeatedly accused of plagiarism himself, Gutiérrez Nájera, who edited the *Revista Azul*, mentioned the pressure to produce abundant content for the periodical press as an explanation for plagiarism, often through translation.²³ The recourse to other periodicals and to translation makes plagiarism more difficult to detect for the readers; it is also the case for researchers, and an in-depth study on this topic would be required in order to affirm to what extent the *Revistas* engaged in this practice. It can be said, nevertheless, that they maintain at least an ambivalent treatment of their translations; even when the translation is identified as such, credit is seldom given to the translator. Actually, 84.5% of the translations remain anonymous in the *Revista Azul* and 69.01% in the *Revista Moderna*. Ultimately, this is related to the fact that translation, just like literature in general, is a practice that was just being institutionalised at the time of the publication of the *Revistas*. Its boundaries, conventions and usages were not well-defined and important variations can be observed in the way translations were presented in periodicals and how much liberty could be taken with them. In this, it is significant that the proportion of anonymous translations is lower in the *Revista Moderna*. Data from other periodicals would be needed in order to affirm that this is a general trend of the period.

At the same time as translations become longer and appear earlier on in the pages of the *Revista Azul*, they also become identified as such more often. Within the format of this magazine, this can be done either implicitly, through the joint presence of the author's and the translator's names, or, more frequently, explicitly, by indicating that the text is a translation (or even both). The explicit mention

23. In a satirical letter written to himself and mocking his accusers, Gutiérrez Nájera affirmed: "Sé de buena tinta que escribes trescientos sesenta y cinco artículos al año, cuando no es bisiesto. Pues bien, suponiendo, y ya es mucho suponer, que hayas robado sesenta y cinco al año, siempre te quedarán trescientos más o menos malos, pero tuyos". Later on, he added: "Tú plagias con descaro porque quieres escribir más de lo que humanamente puedes" (2002: 78 and 80).

allows the translator to remain anonymous, while the magazine still benefits from the symbolic capital of the translation itself. It can take various forms, the most common of which are “Traducido para la « Revista Azul »” and “Traducción para la « Revista Azul »”, often printed in capital letters, in parenthesis or square brackets under the title of the text. The first such mention is to be found in issue n. 34 (vol. 2), with three previous occurrences of mentions formulated in short prefatory notes. This introduces the idea that the translation was made *especially* for the magazine, thus creating a certain sense of exclusivity, albeit rudimentary. It can also be quickly noted that the parenthesis were not used for this mention past the middle of the third volume, at which point square brackets became the norm and translation stopped, symbolically, being a parenthesis.

As a result, translations can be categorised in three broad groups: signed translations, anonymous translations that are identified as such, and anonymous translations with no mention whatsoever (which I label as “anonymous unidentified”). Overall, the most represented group is by far the latter. However, their evolution in time is, once again, significant. One option to explore this aspect is to plot the frequency of each signature type in each volume (Figure 4).

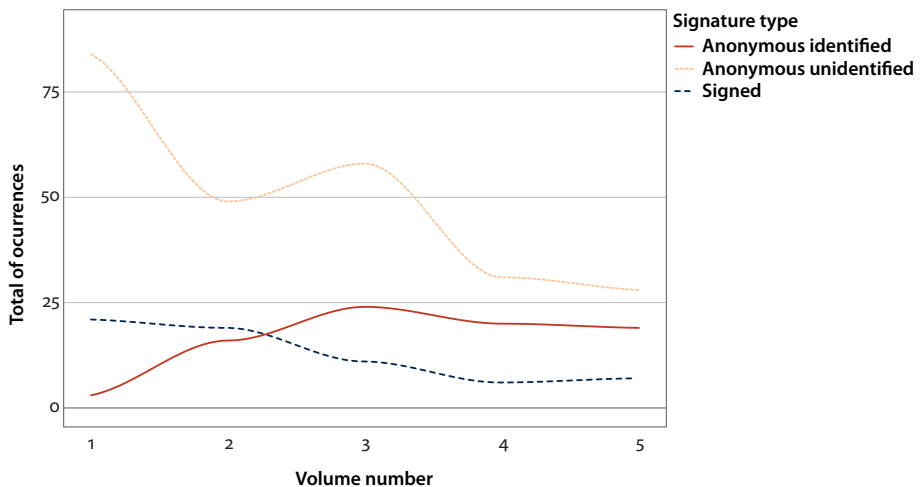


Figure 4. Frequency of each signature type over time in the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)

The spectacular drop in anonymous unidentified translations is probably the most visible feature of this chart, confirming the hypothesis that translation was progressively given more visibility in the *Revista Azul*. However, it should be noted that this phenomenon is due mainly to the progressive disuse of the *gacetillas*, without which the anonymous unidentified translations maintain a rather stable level (see Figure c4–w/o). The other two signature types are not impacted by

gacetillas, which are by definition anonymous and unidentified. We can notice in both charts the – less dramatic – decrease in signed translations and the rise of anonymous translations that are identified as such, whose proportion of the total therefore increases.

This illustrates the fact that translations in the *Revista Azul* remain overwhelmingly anonymous (see figure c4g, contrasting anonymous translations – either identified or not – and signed translations) but are increasingly identified as translations, although in most cases not through the translator's signature. Figure c4h shows that identified translations (either through signature or mention of the translation process) and unidentified translations almost come to a tie in the last volume. Moreover, when only regular translated texts are considered (as in Figure c4h–w/o), identified translations are actually more numerous in volumes 2 and 3.²⁴

Identified translations are not only becoming more visible as they augment in number. They are also published earlier in their respective issues than the other translations. Figure 5, in which the anonymous identified translations are highlighted in red, illustrates this tendency particularly well. Contrary to my expectations, the anonymous identified translations appear, on average, before the signed ones.²⁵

Explicit mention thus seems to be emphasised more than implicit indications of a translation. The calculation of the average starting page for each signature type over time shows that while anonymous identified translations appear earlier in each volume (until reaching their lowest average just before page 4 in the last two volumes) and anonymous unidentified translations remain constant in the second half of the issues, signed translations actually recede slightly (Figure 5e).

However, this was not so at the beginning of the *Revista Azul*, as in the first volume, signed translations were the ones to appear first, on average. In fact, of the 9 regular translated texts to appear on pages 1–4 throughout vol. 1, 8 were signed by their translator. This initial interest for showcasing signed translations reverts completely from volume 2 onwards, as they become both less numerous and located further away from the front pages.

24. Another way of visualising those processes is to rank all the single translators/signature types for each volume, which I did in figures c4b to c4f. This also allows us to track the evolution of the work of single translators, and appreciate their diversity, which appears to be much greater at the beginning of the publication and to decrease steadily.

25. While the anonymous unidentified translations appear last, on average on page 9.47, and the signed translations are close by (with an average starting page of 8.08), the anonymous identified translations are far in front, on page 5.24. Although those numbers correspond to the averages for all translations, the only difference when omitting *gacetillas* is that the starting page for anonymous unidentified goes back by a few tenths of a page.

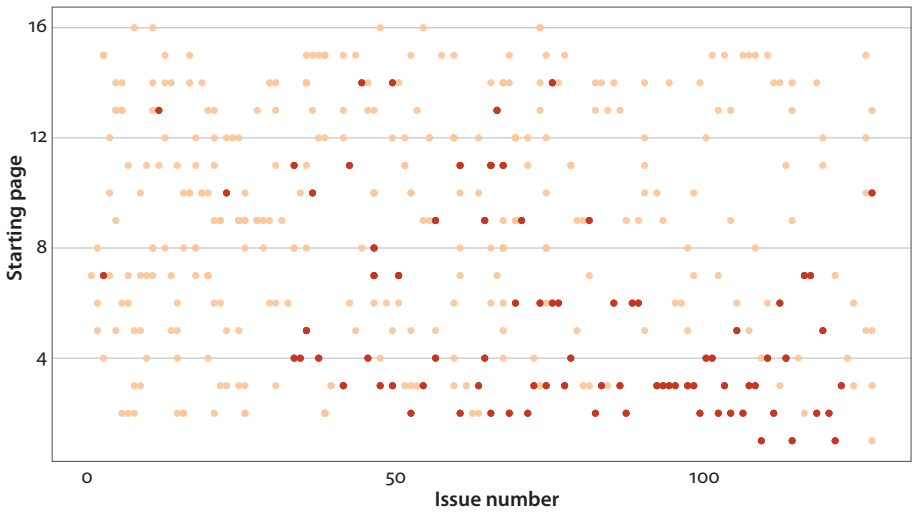


Figure 5. Position of anonymous identified translations in the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)

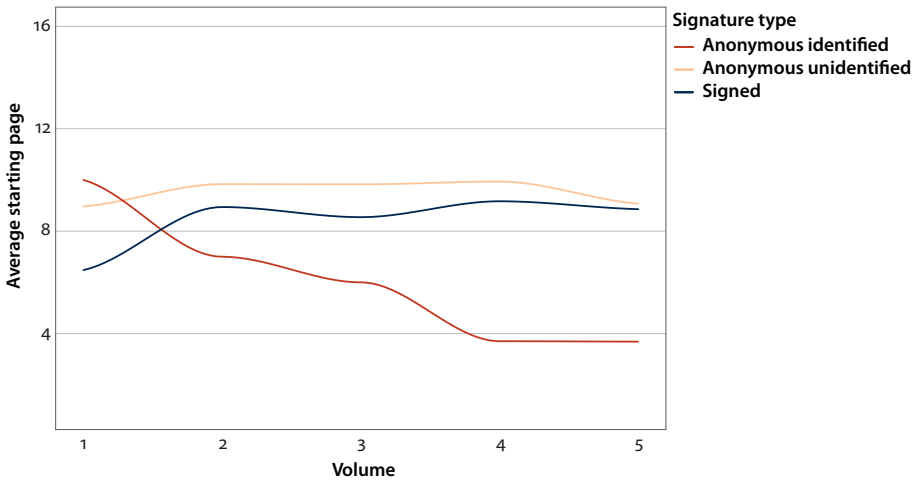


Figure 5e. Evolution of average starting page of translated texts per signature type in the *Revista Azul* (including *gacetillas*)²⁶

Conjointly, anonymous identified translations are also considerably longer than the other kinds of translations, with an average length of 2.26 pages, versus 1.45 for anonymous unidentified translations (or 0.9 if we include the *gacetillas* here), and 0.77 for signed translations (see also Figure c5d). This confirms the hypothesis that translation was progressively given more visibility in the *Revista*

²⁶. See footnote 2, p. 123.

Azul through various mechanisms operating in conjunction (position, length, mention). Signed translations are by far the shortest, which, again, appears to be linked to their genre. In effect, the versions signed by their translator are overwhelmingly poetry throughout the *Revista Azul* (52 of them are poems out of 61, which corresponds to 85.2%).²⁷ We see once again that an indicator such as the average length is only relevant when considered alongside other variables such as the genre, and that caution is required before drawing any conclusions based on it. Finally, this is also indicative of the fact that poetry translation was not particularly emphasised in the *Revista Azul* (with the notable exception of its first volume), since, as I mentioned just above, those texts were also pushed back in the pages of the issues as time went and their average length was reduced.

Based on those statistics and charts, it can be concluded that translation did, in the *Revista Azul*, become more and more visible with time, with longer translated texts appearing earlier in the pages of the magazine and being more clearly identified. This illustrates how the different variables that have been discussed here are linked, and can therefore be considered as indicative of an editorial project. Two important components of this evolution were the discontinuation of *gacetillas* and the diminution of the amount of poetry translation, leading to a progressive focus on anonymous but identified prose translations. This might be related, in part, to the death of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera halfway through the second volume, as this tome seems to constitute a point of inflection from the point of view of the frequency and position of signed poetry translations. Being a poet himself, it is likely that Gutiérrez Nájera would have favoured those contributions at the beginning of the publication, although it is difficult to affirm this with complete certainty, as the documents related to the making of the *Revista Azul* were lost. A second twist can be located at the end of the third volume, when *gacetillas* were abandoned and the emphasis on longer identified anonymous prose translations became more marked.

Thus, the uses of translation indicate that, from being a merely instrumental and invisible practice, it gradually became an abstracted vector of cultural capital in itself. In this, it is telling that the texts that were anonymous but would contain the mention of the translation process were given priority over signed ones with no mention. Poetry translation, signed most of the time, was usually carried out by a poet. As such, it might have been conceived as more of an individual poetic project (which the prevalence of the signature itself would support), bestowing

27. The proportion of poetry among the signed translations even increases steadily in time (except in volume 4), until it attains 100% of the signed translations in the fifth volume. (The percentages are 76.2% in vol. 1, 87.5% in vol. 2, 90.9% in vol. 3, 83.3% in vol. 4, and 100% in vol. 5). The second most represented genre among signed translations is drama.

cultural capital upon the translator rather than the magazine that would publish it. This practice was not new, as poetry translation would often be used as a way, for a poet, to demonstrate technical virtuosity during the 19th century. In contrast to this, the mention of the translation process, rather than the translator's signature, seems to become progressively more meaningful in itself, in the *Revista Azul*. The very notion of translation became a source of added value, as a realisation of the magazine's universalist vocation, a factor of exclusivity, and a worthy component of literary activity in general, as translation grew into an increasingly institutionalised practice.²⁸ In this, an important step was made towards establishing literary translation not as a means to make new content available or to display individual skill, but rather as a source of symbolic capital and an activity valued in itself. After the exploration of the data, my initial hypothesis that translation became more visible in the *Revista Azul* was confirmed. However, many nuances had to be added to it, which proved crucial for a better understanding of the broader processes and a more comprehensive account of their complexity.

Same variables, different results: Translation in the *Revista Moderna*

Created less than two years after the discontinuation of the *Revista Azul*, the *Revista Moderna* came to fill the gap left by its predecessor. It occupied a similar position in the literary field of the time (in this case, its autonomous pole), and shared with it its aestheticist discourse and various of its collaborators. It also presented some resemblance in terms of structure, although the editors implemented strategies to move away from the literary supplement format. In relation to translation, it also displayed an important concentration of translated texts and fragments (although they were slightly less concentrated than in the *Revista Azul*, with an average of 2.6 translations per issue, and 14 issues out of 110 with no translation at all), including *gacetillas* during its first year.²⁹

28. This is not to say, of course, that signed translations played no role in this process. On the contrary, the work of the first specialised literary translators, such as Balbino Dávalos, were fundamental in establishing translation as a codified and valued practice. It came as a surprise that their work, although present, would not be more emphasised in the *Revista Azul*.

29. It should be noted that the *Revista Moderna* was published between July 1898 and August 1903, each calendar year corresponding to one year in the publication's numbering (thus, years 1 and 6 are shorter than the rest). It appeared fortnightly and was composed, like the *Revista Azul*, of 16 pages, except during its second year, when it appeared monthly and comprised 32 pages. For this reason, the position is expressed, in this case, in percentage of issue length, in order to be able to compare and plot year 2 with the others. The total number of translated texts or fragments is 284, of which 49 are *gacetillas*, all published during the first year.

As such, and after a first review of the *Revista Moderna's* production of translations, I expected it to follow some similar trends to those of the *Revista Azul*, continuing its project: lengthening of the translations, reduction of the average starting page, increase in identified translations etc. Now that the definition of those indicators and how they are calculated has been established, the analysis will proceed more swiftly through these aspects of the question. If there are indeed some similarities between the *Revista Moderna's* production of translations and the *Revista Azul's*, they are not as extensive as I first expected, and a detailed analysis soon unveils the differences between both periodicals.

One common point between the two magazines is that translations in the *Revista Moderna* do become longer with time. One example of this is the more frequent publication of poems in bilingual versions, on pages facing each other or in parallel on the same page. Those include the "Sinfonía en blanco mayor" by Théophile Gautier, in Dávalos's version in November 1898, "Medaille antique/Medalla antigua" by José María Heredia (transl. Joaquín D. Casasús), Francisco M. De Olaguibel's version of "Ici-bas... /En el mundo..." by Sully Prudhomme, Baudelaire's "Hymne à la beauté", translated by Tablada as "Himno a la belleza", another Casasús version, this time from Latin ("Seculare Carmen ad Dianam/Himno a la belleza" by Catullus), one case of reversed translation (from Spanish into French, of "La flauta de Pan/La flûte de pan", by Argentine author Leopoldo Díaz), and "Proud Music of the Storm" by Walt Whitman, translated by Amado Nervo in the penultimate issue.³⁰ With one instance only in the *Revista Azul*, we can say that this modality was introduced but not normalised in the first of the two magazines. Beyond the spatial dimension, the publication of bilingual versions is also interesting from the point of view of the underlying conception of translation, since a dialogue between original and translation is created and the reader is invited to go from one to the other, and to appreciate the translation as a process rather than a finished result. The bilingual versions often imply a greater degree of literacy too, since the reader is able to see the original and compare both form and content. This is well illustrated by Dávalos's translation, which he also included in an anthology that he published later, in 1913. In this volume, the translation does not appear alongside the original, and it is considerably freer (Dávalos 1913: 14).

Going back to the increasing length of translations in the *Revista Moderna*, it can be said that they have an initial average length of 0.27 pages in year 1 (or 0.76 without the *gacetillas*), which changes to 1.3, 2.31, 1.56, 2.68, and 2.64 in subsequent years (see Figure c6b). In fact, this is a rather steady increase, except for year 3 in which the values are above what would be expected. While the difference between year 1 and 2 is explained in part by the disuse of *gacetillas*, those do not

30. *Revista Moderna*, I.8: 12–13, II.9: 5, II.10: 16, II.11: 2–3, V.9: 10, VI.12: 11, VI.15: 6–13.

account for the rest of the increase, nor does the proportion of poetry, as in the *Revista Azul*. Here, the proportion of poetry varies, but without any kind of clear pattern.³¹ Therefore, translated texts become significantly longer as time passes, and the chart representing the average length per issue is probably the scatter chart which displays the strongest tendency (Figure 6).

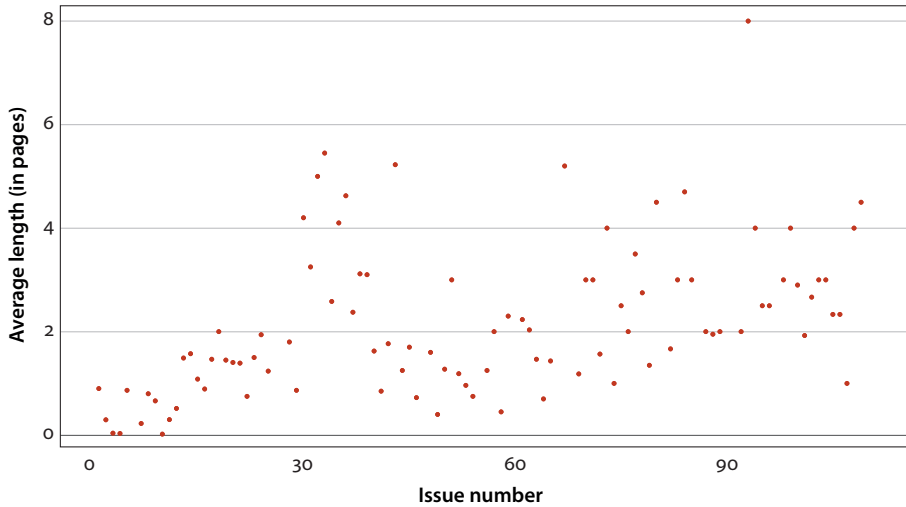


Figure 6. Average length of translations in each issue of the *Revista Moderna* (including *gacetillas*)

However, this is not part of a joint process of visibilisation like in the *Revista Azul*, as translations do not appear earlier on in the pages of the magazine. Both the average position per year and per issue reveal that there is no such tendency here (see Figures c7a and c7b). Moreover, the bubble chart shows that translation is almost completely absent from the very first pages in the second half of the *Revista Moderna*'s publication span (Figure 7). While no translation could have occupied the first page, as it was almost exclusively dedicated to photographs of artworks, it is significant that there would be as little as 2 translations located within the first 4 pages in all of year 5 (compared to 11 and 7 in the previous two years), and that in the last year, the frontmost translation appeared on page 3.

31. Poetry represents 16.9% of the translated texts in year 1, 46.7% in year 2, 18.8% in year 3, 28.6% in year 4, 29.4% in year 5, and 17.2% in year 6.

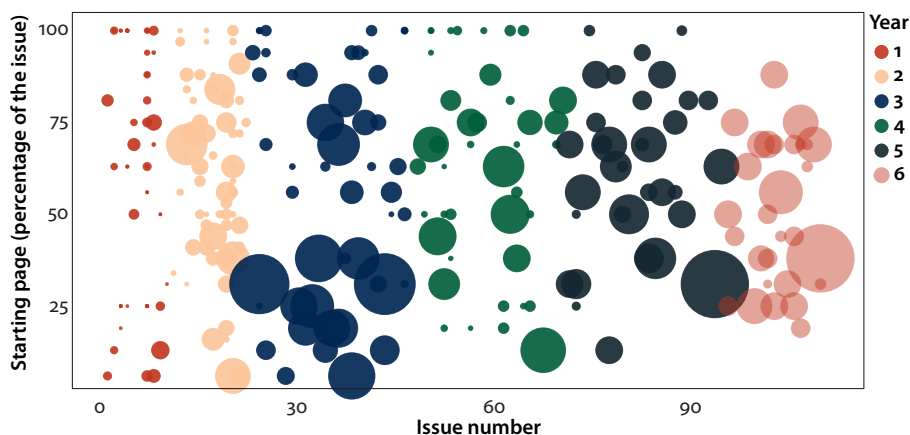


Figure 7. Length and position of translations in the *Revista Moderna* (including *gacetillas*)

Additionally, none of the translations that appear in the first 4 pages in the last year are signed. The signature types are the same in both *Revistas*,³² which also share some basic characteristics on this account: in the *Revista Moderna* too, anonymous unidentified translations are the most common type (based, however, mainly on the *gacetillas*), anonymous identified translations are the longest (2.26 pages on average), and almost two thirds of the signed translations are poetry. Except for this, the situation is contrasted on the front of signature types. The main difference is the visibility given to signed translations; while in the *Revista Azul* they were located far behind anonymous identified translations, they appear, in the *Revista Moderna*, in the first place.³³

Nevertheless, the variation of this indicator in time, shows that the average position of all signature types oscillates a little, with signed translations being always in front of the others *except in year 6*, in which anonymous unidentified translations make a strong comeback (see Figure c9f). Actually, when considering the position of signed translations only (highlighted in red in Figure 8), it appears that they are consistently placed first until the last year of the magazine, in which they are also evidently less numerous.

32. Anonymous identified, anonymous unidentified and signed.

33. 53% into the issues, on average, while anonymous identified and anonymous unidentified appear later, at 63.2% and 63.4% respectively (without considering the *gacetillas*).

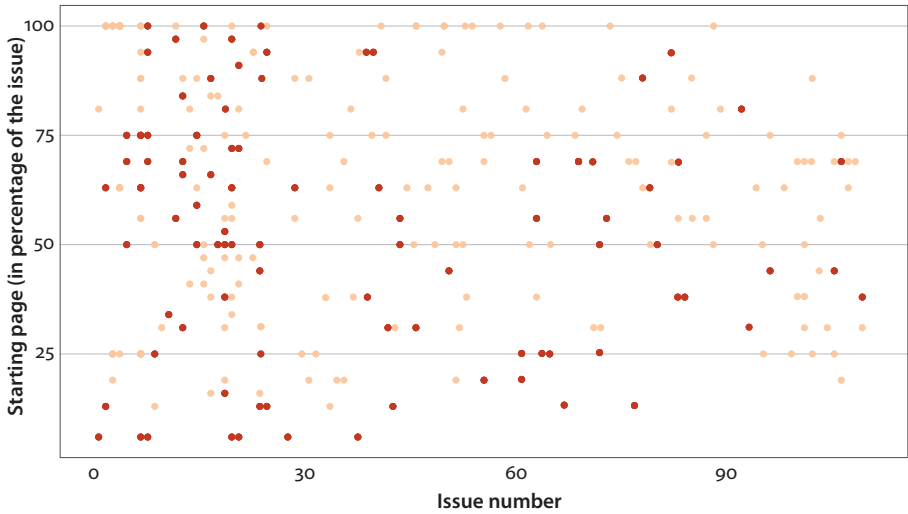


Figure 8. Position of signed translations in the *Revista Moderna* (including *gacetillas*)

Year 6 of the *Revista Moderna* is particular on various accounts. It contains a cluster of anonymous unidentified translations at the forefront (see Figure c9a), has signed translations at their lowest (see Figure c8h), is the only year along with year 1 in which there are more unidentified than identified translations (Figure 8j), and even the two most prolific translators (Balbino Dávalos and José Juan Tablada) are absent from it (see Figures c8k and c8m).

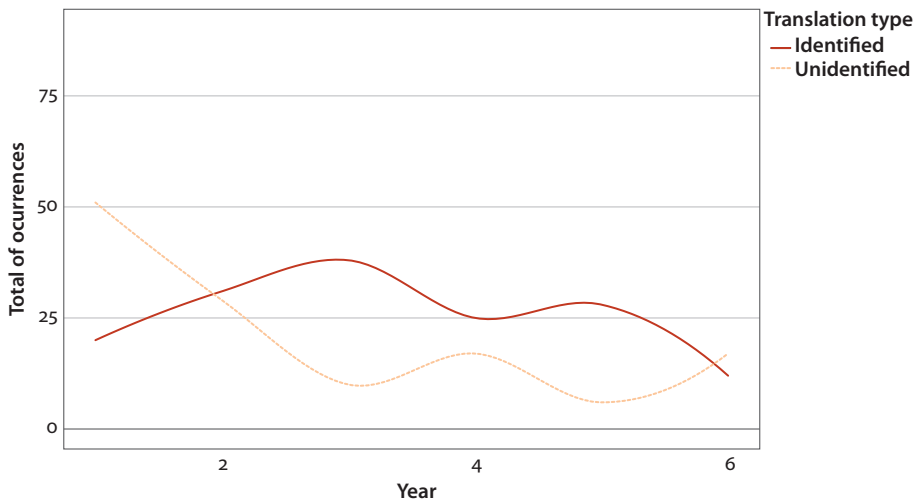


Figure 8j. Identified v/s unidentified translations over time in the *Revista Moderna* (including *gacetillas*)

Indeed, this might be a sign that something unusual is happening. Overall, the plots presented so far for the *Revista Moderna* show an important degree of variation in time, and it can seem arduous to make sense of them. Actually, what they appear to indicate is that there are distinct phases in the publication span of the *Revista Moderna*. The bubble chart illustrates this particularly well, as various of the years are so distinguishable visually. The scattered, tiny translations of year 1 stand apart from the still small but more concentrated versions in year 2. In turn, the cluster of very long translations at the beginning of the issues in year 3 contrasts starkly with the subsequent absence of translations in the same page range (1–4). Translations in the last two years appear to be both longer and more centred in terms of position. The fact that the length and periodicity of the magazine also changed from one year to the next (as well as the discontinuation of the *gacetil-las*, which happened between years 1 and 2) confirms that the *Revista Moderna* rethought its editorial project on a yearly basis.

The question of how to interpret those phases remains, though, and this is another case in which the integration of quantitative and qualitative research is fundamental. In effect, the data as such offers no explanation of what is or is not happening, and only a thorough inspection of the contents of the magazine and a cross-examination of varied sources can give a hint as to the reasons behind those sudden changes. As I mentioned earlier, it is not always possible to make a definitive claim regarding such phenomena in the absence of archival material related to the making of the *Revistas*. However, I believe that there is a rather strong case in favour of an interpretation of those phases as linked to the financial situation of the *Revista Moderna*.

The *Revista Azul* benefited from the stability derived from public funding, as the Sunday literary supplement of an official newspaper, *El Partido Liberal*. The editors did not have to worry about the pecuniary aspects of their enterprise and its format, periodicity and quality were remarkably regular. The *Revista Moderna*, in contrast, was a more precarious venture. Founded by Bernardo Couto Castillo, it would not have outlived its first issue if it was up to him alone, as he did not even pay the whole of this first instalment. The delay between the first and second issues (one month and a half instead of a fortnight) is telling of those difficulties. In this interval, Jesús E. Valenzuela took over the publication and financed it mainly with his own capital (Campos 1996: 39). As a result, 1898 was a year of great financial instability for the magazine. Valenzuela himself affirmed that at that time, “la *Revista Moderna* pasaba por una crisis horrible” (2001: 127). It is likely that the amount of unidentified translations during this period is due to the impossibility to commission new translations and/or pay contributors. As I mentioned earlier, anonymous unidentified translations are sometimes recycled from other periodicals; whether with or without their knowledge and consent remains unclear.

In 1899, a new sponsor, Jesús Luján, started supporting the *Revista Moderna*, bringing considerable improvements. Thanks to him, “¡El periódico tendría oficinas propias, papel superior, más ilustraciones y quienes lo redactábamos seríamos mejor y más puntualmente retribuidos!” (Tablada 1993: 30). Here, Tablada makes a direct allusion to the question of the remuneration of contributors, although it is impossible to say whether this covers translations or not. Nonetheless, this improved situation might well have facilitated the profusion of longer translations that can be witnessed in year 3. This prosperity did not last, however, and in 1902, the editors appear to be in a delicate situation again. They raised the price of the issue and of the subscription, and included, for the first time, advertisements in the pages of the *Revista Moderna*. Despite those measures, the crisis hit the *Revista Moderna* once more, leading the editors to accept reorienting the magazine towards a wider readership in exchange for support from Ramón Corral, then Secretary of the Interior of the Porfirian government (Valenzuela 2001: 134). It was the end of the *Revista Moderna*, which became the *Revista Moderna de México* (1903–1911). Years 1 and 6 of the *Revista Moderna* were therefore years of crisis, during which funding was scarce. Those are also the only two years in which unidentified translations outweigh identified ones (that is, either anonymous identified or signed), if we consider the *gacetillas* in year 1. While the situation in year 1 is debatable (because of the weight of the *gacetillas* and of the reasonable amount of signed translations), year 6 definitely has an end-of-an-era feel to it. We see here how the decisions affecting translations do not depend only on the editors’ choices in terms of poetics, but also respond to external factors that have to be taken into account.

Conclusions

Despite their similarities, the *Revista Azul* and *Revista Moderna* differ quite significantly in certain aspects of their publication of translations. The process outlined in this article has demonstrated that data analysis was helpful in order to reach this conclusion, illustrating the fact that descriptive statistics and data visualisation are important tools in the study of large corpora of translated texts published in periodicals. This case study has shown that even similar magazines (from the same city, period and literary movement) can present widely different scenarios with regards to translation and the evolution of its uses in time. The differences can be very subtle and reveal complex nuances in the periodicals’ projects and editorial lines. The situation of signed translations in both *Revistas* is a good example of this, as it indicates an increased visibility of the figure of the translator in the *Revista Moderna*, whereas the *Revista Azul* seemed to showcase, instead, the practice in itself. This, in turn, speaks of the respective function of each of

the *Revistas* in the development of modern literature in Mexico; while the *Revista Azul* opened the way and created, discursively, a space for autonomous art to exist, which is consistent with an appraisal of translation as one generic kind of literary activity, the *Revista Moderna*'s contribution was to experiment with poetics and bring formal renovation about. This task was accomplished by *modernista* poets, who, we have seen, usually signed their translations, as those were also part of a personal search for innovation in terms of versification. This explains the steady presence of poetry translation in the *Revista Moderna*, as well as its emphasis on signed (poetry) translations, while the *Revista Azul* privileged anonymous identified prose pieces.

Another good illustration of this discrepancy is the difference between the general evolution of translations in time in both periodicals: while trends seem to be more defined and steady in the *Revista Azul*, indicating deep, progressive processes that might be the result of deliberate editorial decisions, the *Revista Moderna* displays a greater volatility in various aspects, with important changes from one volume to another. This ultimately points at the magazine's financial instability and to the conglomerate of distinct *modernista* voices, each of which contributed with a fragment of their own personal project, resulting in a more uncoordinated kind of formal exploration. While Balbino Dávalos mostly translated French poetry written in verse, Rasch (pseudonym for an unidentified translator) was interested in Stéphane Mallarmé's figure and contribution to the form of the prose poem (including his prose renditions of Edgar Allan Poe's poetry), Tablada endeavoured to adopt formal elements of Japanese poetry, and Amado Nervo translated Whitman's free verse. I would therefore argue that the erratic nature of literary change explains, in part, the lack of very defined trends in the *Revista Moderna*.

Thus, quantitative data analysis not only allows us to visualise how each magazine's project evolves in time, but it can also point to the effects of extraneous factors related to the publication. As we saw in the case of the *Revista Moderna*, this kind of approach can reveal elements external to the deliberate decisions of the editors, such as general circumstances affecting the life of the periodical. As a result, comparable magazines might not only produce different results, but also present problems that are altogether dissimilar.

Consequently, the analysis should be tailored to the needs of the object, and the particular questions that this object poses should be addressed specifically. In this, it follows the principles of exploratory data analysis as defined by Tukey, since successive stages of the exploration focus on increasingly specific aspects of the data. This is crucial in order to be able to make finer distinctions. To this end, the bubble chart of the whole production of translations functions as a particularly effective starting point, indicating different aspects worthy of further exploration while providing a general representation of the periodical. It fulfils remarkably

well Tukey's assertion that "one of the great features of graphical impact – one of the reasons for which arithmetic can never serve ALL the functions of graphs – is the graph's ability to show you what you were not looking for – what you may even have been very reluctant to see" (1970: 5–6). In the present case, it has been of singular utility in detecting the fact that the *Revista Moderna* displayed wild differences between volumes and should rather be approached from the angle of distinct phases. As a result, it allows for the next steps in the exploration to be adapted. This is one of many cases made here for the usefulness of data visualisation, which is, additionally, an excellent tool for communicating the results of such research projects.

Finally, I would like to point out that the two datasets used here were, in broad terms, alike (similar sources, exact same variables, same mode of collection) yet what they tell us about the two *Revistas* is very different. This is where qualitative analysis comes in, as it is indispensable to interpret the results obtained through data analysis, instil meaning to the trends that we observe and orient further data exploration. This is what Tukey defines as detailed understanding: "a detective investigating a crime needs both tools and understanding. If he has no fingerprint powder, he will fail to find fingerprints on most surfaces. If he does not understand where the criminal is likely to have put his fingers, he will not look in the right places. Equally, the analyst of data needs both tools and understanding" (1970: 1–1).

Of course, those two facets of the analysis should always go together, and close-reading, which I have not had space to illustrate here, is yet another layer of the process of analysing the publication of translations in periodicals. Because the corpora are often big, quantitative analysis is a good first step in order to find our way into the data, but it is not sufficient alone. This case study illustrated why this kind of analysis has to be complemented by a close examination of the actual contents of the magazines as well as other sources related to their history, such as diaries, chronicles and archival material when available.

Space constraints did not allow me to develop various aspects which would have deserved more attention; I did not explore all the possibilities offered by the variables chosen for my case study, let alone introducing other variables such as language. The size of the corpus is considerable and the possibilities are almost endless. I hope, however, to have given a good sense of how data analysis can be conducted and of its benefits. This is indeed work in progress; this article has illustrated some of the possibilities offered by descriptive statistics and data visualisation for the study of translation in literary periodicals in a specific context. These methods can (and shall) be expanded upon and applied to bigger corpora, which is an exciting development to which I very much look forward.

References

- Revista Azul*. 5 vols. Mexico City: Tipografía de El Partido Liberal. 1894–1896. (available at <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/consulta/resultados/visualizar/558075be7d1e63c9fea1a40a?resultado=22&tipo=publicacion&intPagina=0>)
- Revista Moderna: arte y ciencia*. Edición facsimilar. 5 vols. Mexico City: UNAM, 1987. (available at <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/consulta/publicacion/visualizar/558075bf7d1e63c9fea1a422?anio=1898&mes=07&dia=01&tipo=publicacion>)
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1994. *Raisons Pratiques. Sur la théorie de l'action*. Paris: Seuil.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1998. *Les règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire*. Paris: Seuil.
- Campos, Rubén M. 1996. *El bar. La vida literaria en México en 1900*. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Clark de Lara, Belem, and Fernando Curiel Defossé. 2002. *Revista Moderna de Mexico 1903–1911. Tomo I. Índices*. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Costa, Analía. 2011. “Tradición y traducción en el modernismo hispanoamericano”. *1611 Revista de historia de la traducción* 5: n.p. Accessed 17.05.17 <http://www.traduccionliteraria.org/1611/art/costa.htm>
- Dávalos, Balbino. 1913. *Musas de Francia*. Lisboa: Typographia da “A Editora Limitada”.
- Díaz Alejo, Ana Elena, and Ernesto Prado Velázquez. 1968. *Índice de la Revista Azul (1894–1896) y estudio preliminar*. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Gutiérrez Nájera, Manuel. 2002. *Obras IX*, edited by Ana Elena Díaz Alejo. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Hale, Charles. 1989. *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Onís, Federico de. 1988. “Sobre el concepto de Modernismo”. In *Historia y crítica de la literatura hispanoamericana. Tomo II*. Cedomil Goic (comp.), Barcelona: Grijalbo.
- R Core Team. 2017. *R: A language and environment for statistical computing*. Vienna: R Foundation for Statistical Computing. URL <https://www.R-project.org/>
- Tablada, José Juan. 1993. *Las sombras largas*. Mexico City: Conaculta.
- Tablada, José Juan. 2002. “Cuestión literaria. Decadentismo”. In *La construcción del modernismo (antología)*, edited by Belem Clark de Lara and Ana Laura Zavala Díaz, 107–110. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Tukey, John W. 1970. *Exploratory Data Analysis. Limited preliminary edition*. 2 vols. Reading, Mass.; Menlo Park, Cal.; London; Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley publishing company.
- Valdés, Héctor. 1967. *Índice de la Revista Moderna, Arte y Ciencia (1898–1903) y estudio preliminar*. Mexico City: UNAM.
- Valenzuela, Jesús E. 2001. *Mis recuerdos, manojo de rimas*, edited by Vicente Quirarte. Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes.
- Wickham, Hadley. 2016. *ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis*. New York: Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-24277-4>
- Wickham, Hadley. 2017. tidyverse: Easily Install and Load the ‘Tidyverse’. R package version 1.2.1. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=tidyverse>
- Wickham, Hadley and Garrett Grolemond. 2016. *R for data science*. Sebastopol, CA: O’Reilly Media.
- Wickham, Hadley, Romain François, Lionel Henry, and Kirill Müller. 2018. dplyr: A Grammar of Data Manipulation. R package version 0.7.8. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=dplyr>

- Yurkievich, Saúl. 2007. *A través de la trama, sobre vanguardias literarias y otras concomitancias*. Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt: Vervuert. <https://doi.org/10.31819/9783954872138>
- Yutani, Hiroaki. 2018. gghighlight: Highlight Lines and Points in 'ggplot2'. R package version 0.1.0. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=gghighlight>

