



Translating Archival Resources: A Pilot Study

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Research Questions

1

Errors

Differences in frequency and severity of errors across different initial translations (vendor, Office 365, DeepL)

2

Cost

Cost-effectiveness of machine translation with human edits vs. human translation through vendor

3

Time

Time necessary to correct initial translations (vendor, Office 365, DeepL)

Error Codes

Each correction to the initial publication was assigned a specific error code to categorize the edits. The two major categories are fluency and adequacy.

1. **Fluency** measures whether the text is understandable once translated into Spanish (used mainly for grammatical concerns)
2. **Adequacy** measures whether the translation reflects the meaning of the original text (used primarily for vocabulary and phrasing concerns)

A fuller explanation of each error code can be found in the chart below:

Error Code	Description
Fluency Incomprehensible	Translated text is totally beyond understanding
Disfluent	Translated text is barely understandable
Non-native fluency	Translated text is understandable but not consistent with the evaluator's use of native language
Not adequate	Totally different in meaning from the reference
Low adequacy	Important concepts are not correctly translated to a satisfactory level
Mid-level adequacy	Important concepts are understandable but not consistent with the evaluator's use of native language

Fluency Error Codes

1

Fluency Incomprehensible

Original Text: *"Taste of Dallas newspaper clipping"*

Initial Translation: "Sabor del recorte de papel nuevo de Dallas" ("The taste of the clipping of new paper from Dallas")

Problem: Word order does not make sense

Overall Use: Grammar that completely changes the meaning

Frequency: Very rare

2

Disfluent

Original Phrase: "Newspaper clipping about Frank Cuellar Sr. and El Chico opening"

Initial Translation: "Recorte de periódicos sobre la apertura de Frank Cuellar, padre y El Chico" ("Newspaper clipping about the opening of Frank Cuellar, Sr. and El Chico")

Problem: Word order confused the meaning, making it appear that the news story was about the opening of Frank Cuellar himself, rather than his restaurant

Overall Use: Grammar that is awkward, inconsistent, or confusing that obscures the intended meaning

Frequency: Somewhat rare

3

Non-native Fluency

Original phrase: "El Chico no.3 opening festival"

Initial Translation: "El festival de inauguración número 3 de El Chico" ("the third opening festival of El Chico")

Problem: The word order made it sound like they were celebrating the third festival, when in fact they were celebrating the third restaurant. Other common examples include adding words such as "de" (of) for clarity

Overall Use: Grammar that is technically correct but not ideal in terms of understanding or consistency

Frequency: Somewhat common

Adequacy Error Codes

1

Not Adequate

Original Text: "Item"

Initial Translation: "Tema" (meaning "Theme or idea")

Problem: Very different from the original meaning

Overall Use: Translations that do not reflect the original; missing translations (words still in English after initial translation)

Frequency: Somewhat rare

2

Low Adequacy

Original Phrase: "family tree"

Initial Translation: "registros familiares de árboles" ("family registers of trees")

Problem: Does not convey the genealogical aspect necessary for understanding

Overall Use: Translations that do not capture the whole meaning of the original, providing only a partial understanding

Frequency: Somewhat common

3

Mid-level Adequacy

Original phrase: "Gift"

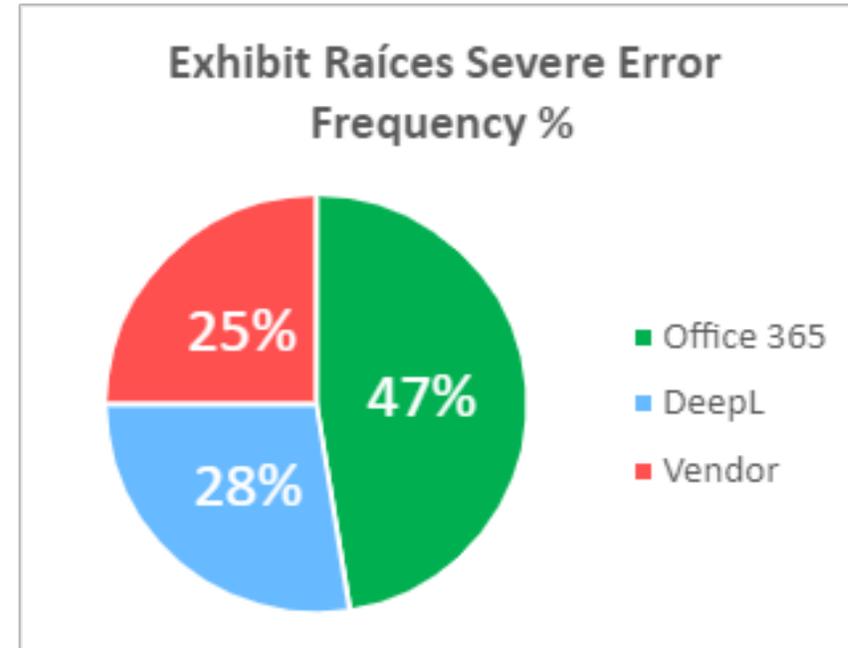
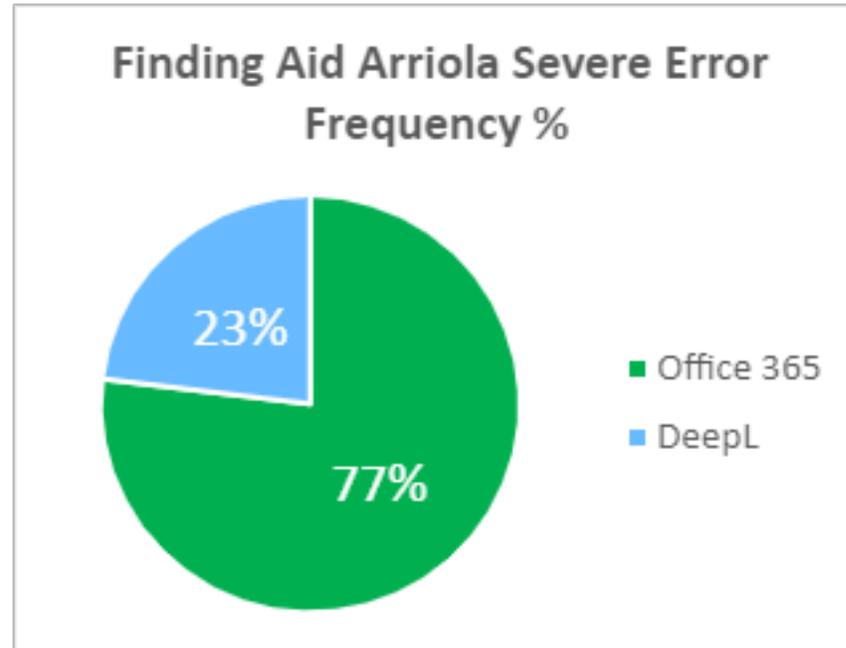
Initial Translation: "Regalo" ("Gift"-informal)

Problem: Technically correct but not consistent with the nuance of Spanish expression. "Obsequio," also meaning gift, is more appropriate in more formal contexts such as used above

Overall Use: Translations in which the wording makes technical sense but is not ideal; missing translations of proper nouns (proper nouns still in English after initial translation)

Frequency: Very common

Error Frequency Comparison



Time Spent Comparison

Finding Aid Vela Time Spent Comparison (Hours)

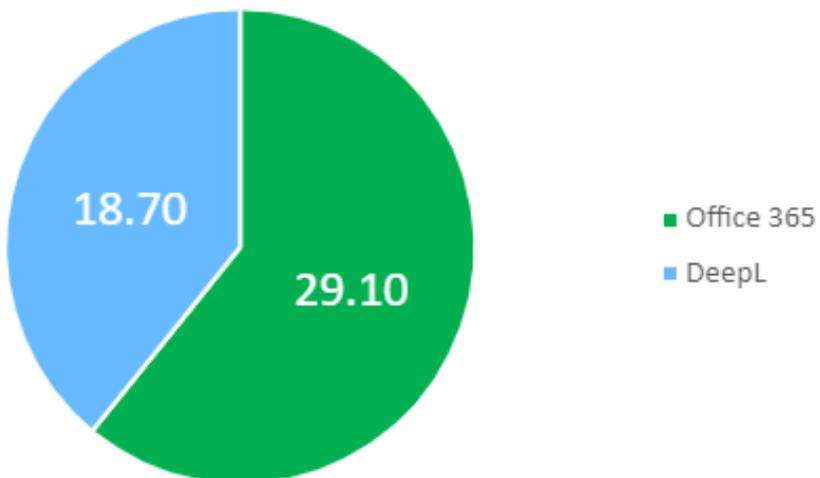
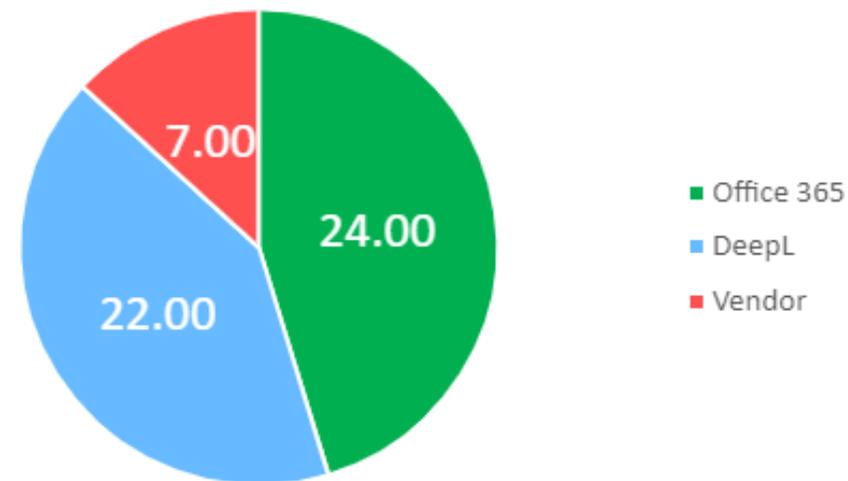


Exhibit Raíces Time Spent Comparison (Hours)



Pageviews May 15 – July 7, 2021

- Cuellar finding aid: 125 unique pageviews
- Vela finding aid: 117 unique pageviews
- Contreras finding aid: 118 unique pageviews
- All 4 exhibits: 496 unique pageviews (9% of traffic to all exhibits)



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