Thresholds and Ways Forward in English Studies

**Lourdes López Ropero,
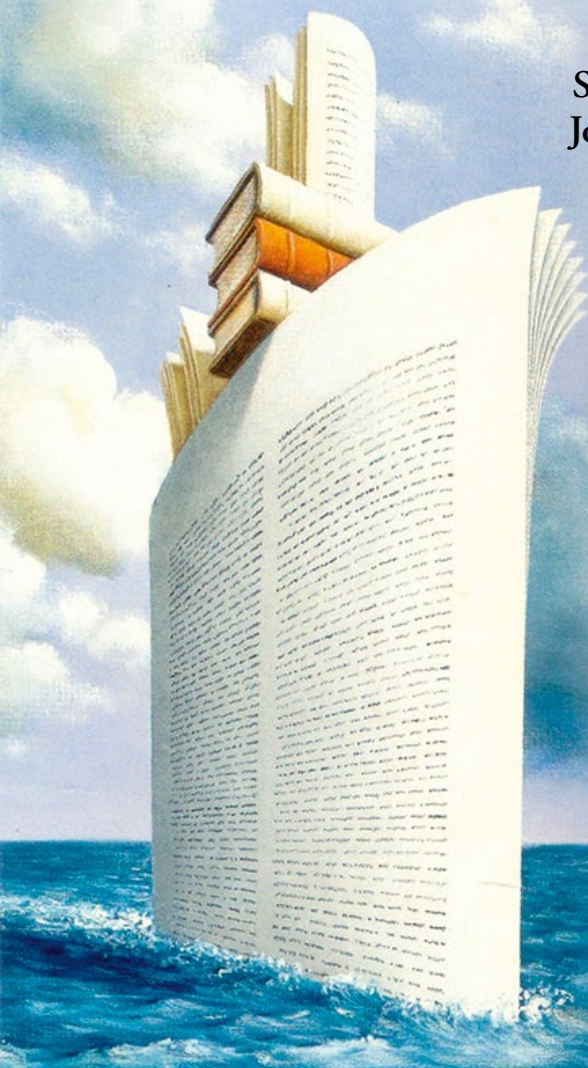Sara Prieto García-Cañedo &
José Antonio Sánchez Fajardo
(Editors)**

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Composición: Marten Kwinkelenberg

CONTENTS

PART III: LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

PART IV: ROUNDTABLES

PREFACE

And this is my country says the fisherwoman from Jura.
Mine too says the child from Canna and Iona.

Mine too say the Brain family.
And mine! says the man from the Polish deli

And mine said the brave and beautiful Asid Shah.
Me too said the Black Scots and the red Scots

Said William Wallace and Mary Queen of Scots.
Said both the Roberts and Muriel Spark…

Our strength is our difference.
Dinny fear it. Dinny caw canny.

From "Threshold" by Jackie Kay

Thresholds and Ways Forward in English Studies brings together a selection of the papers presented in the 43rd edition of our association's annual conference, which welcomed more than 270 delegates. The English Department of the University of Alicante had the honour and pleasure to renew its commitment to the association by hosting the conference for a second time. Over thirty years have elapsed since the department first hosted the conference in 1988. It is very rewarding to look back and realize that this has been a time of continued growth, diversification and consolidation not only for our department but for the field of English Studies in Spain, and for the association that unites us across the varied interests we profess as scholars and teachers.

The poem "Threshold" by our invited writer Jackie Kay provides the inspiration for the title of this book. She recited it for the first time on the occasion of her nomination as Scots Makar or Scotland's poet laureate. An extract from this poem was used as the epigraph to the conference programme because we think that lines like "Our strength is our difference" encapsulate the spirit with which we conduct our academic work as members of departments, teaching teams, associations, or research groups. As a concept, the 'threshold' is highly evocative of transitions and openness to evolution. Understood as a passage into the unfamiliar, the threshold propels our lives, as we cross one every time we enter a new phase, launch a new project, participate in another conference, visit a new place, or find ourselves in the midst of an unprecedented situation, like the pandemic that took us all by surprise just a few months after our mid-November date in Alicante. We cross thresholds because our lives are an endless apprenticeship and an endless becoming.

Now we invite you to traverse this threshold of a Preface and dive into the wealth of the contributions featured in the book, which articulate many of the trends that currently move the discipline of English Studies forward.

The volume is structured in four sections, "Plenary Lectures," "Literature and Cultural Studies," "Language and Linguistics," and "Roundtables." The two plenary lectures gathered here relate to the notion of the threshold in interesting ways. In his lecture, Professor Juan Antonio Prieto-Pablos, from the University of Seville, takes us to the 1660s, a transitional time in English history where the changes taking place in the urban built environment and the distribution of domestic space found a reflection on the stage of Restoration theatre during the second half of the century. The lecture of Professor John McLeod, from the University of Leeds, deals with the figure of the trespasser of national boundaries. He discusses how the recent Windrush scandal in the UK or the life and death of David Oluwale in Leeds evince the instability surrounding even the most 'legitimate' of claims to national belonging.

The "Literature and Cultural Studies" section includes thirteen papers that give evidence of the interdisciplinary and transversal approach that literary and cultural studies in the English-speaking world have taken in the last decade. The selected papers navigate different aspects from a wide range of methodologies and topics such as identity and gender representation, social justice and hospitality, trauma theory, mental health, transmodernity, metafiction, intertextuality, film adaptation, or project-oriented leaning in the literature classroom,

and meet at the intersection between tradition and innovation. The section "Language and Linguistics" includes eight articles that delve into specific case studies of linguistic variation, language teaching and cross-linguistic expression. These studies show myriad methodological procedures that have been successfully applied in the examination of lexical, syntactic and semantic processes and constructions in English. Hence, readers are expected to come to grips with accounts of dia-synchronic analysis that are overtly devoted to answering the question of "why X and not Y?." The "Roundtables" are representative of the solid networks that exist among AEDEAN members who every year build bridges to assemble panels that showcase their latest research projects.

We take this opportunity to thank the AEDEAN Executive Board for the trust they placed on us to organize the conference and the precious help they provided throughout the process. We would also like to express our gratitude to the panel coordinators for their work in the design of the different panels and the peer review process that made possible the compilation of this book, as well as to all the contributors to the volume. We are also indebted to the several institutions that, with their funding and sponsorship, made this conference possible: Generalitat Valenciana, Universidad de Alicante (Vicerrectorado de Investigación y Transferencia del Conocimiento, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Instituto Interuniversitario de Lenguas Modernas Aplicadas, Instituto Universitario de Investigación de Estudios de Género, Departamento de Filología Inglesa, Departamento de Traducción e Interpretación, and the research groups THALiS and LexEsp), Concejalía de Cultura from the Ayuntamiento de Alicante, and Carmencita. Needless to say, we acknowledge the generous work of our undergraduate and graduate student volunteers who made us very proud with their unbroken commitment, their tireless effort and their good cheer both before and during the conference. And it is mandatory that we also thank each other as members of the organizing committee because the work that we did together and the challenges we faced helped us to know each other even better, and, very importantly, reminded us of the tremendous power of teamwork.

The editors

PART I:
PLENARY LECTURES

WRITING THE TRESPASSER: DAVID OLUWALE AND THE CITY OF LEEDS

JOHN MCLEOD

University of Leeds, UK
J.M.McLeod@leeds.ac.uk

Abstract

This keynote address explores the disciplined dynamics of mobility and constraint that impact upon human motility at large, with particular reference to the disruptive figure of the trespasser. It proceeds by reflecting upon the UK's recent "hostile environment" policy and its engendering of the "Windrush Betrayal," as a means of foregrounding the precarious condition of all migrants, permitted and prohibited. This hostile environment has a long history, reaching back decades, as evidenced in the racist hounding by the Leeds City Police of the Nigerian migrant David Oluwale that resulted in his death in 1969. By exploring recent representations of Oluwale's uncommissioned urban mobility, I argue that Oluwale's truculent trespassing, always in defiance of authority's racist prohibitions, has been prized by writers keen to contest both Leeds's and the UK's ongoing racism, and mobilised to recognise the undimmed agency of brigandly spatial motion.

Keywords: Windrush, hostile environment, racism, trespasser, David Oluwale, Caryl Phillips

The human race has always been on the move. Yet the pressures that drive mobility impact divisively on how and why we move, and usually situate us at a remove from each other. As Zygmunt Bauman famously distinguished,

tourists and vagabonds may traverse similar terrain, but rarely in the same manner or for the same reasons. Each acts as the *alter ego* of the other. "The tourists," he writes, "have a horror of the vagabonds for much the same reason that the vagabonds look up to the tourists as their gurus and idols" (1998, 96). In our own age, in the first decades of the twenty-first century, the distinction between the wealthy traveller, replete with leisure time and visa waivers, and the precarious undocumented migrant, declared illegal and condemned to harmful vagabondage, has grown ever more capacious. It is a distinction increasingly central to fierce political wrangles over national borders, transnational migration, and human rights. But as Bauman also importantly reminds us, the difference between proper and precarious prospectors is always capricious and unsteady: "The line which divides them is tenuous and not always clearly drawn. One can easily cross it without noticing […]" (96). Between these two poles, he continues, "there is a large part, arguably a substantial majority of the society of consumers/travellers, who cannot be quite sure where do they stand at the moment and even less can be sure that their present standing will see the light of the next day" (97). One's legitimacy, it seems, is forever a matter of debate and dispute, regardless of the length of our 'present standing' on solid ground. Even if we have been granted leave to remain, it is impossible forever to rest easy, no matter for how long one has stood.

In the United Kingdom, a particularly hideous example of the protean and porous nature of this distinction has been recently brought to public attention. As Amelia Gentleman describes in her sobering book *The Windrush Betrayal* (2019), in recent years the country's Immigrant Enforcement agency began to identify, detail, and at times forcibly remove a constituency of British subjects of middle- or old age who had been living in the UK for decades, having entered the country legally as citizens of the United Kingdom and the colonies (thanks to the British Nationality Act of 1948). Many of these arrived as children from the Caribbean, often documented as part of their parents' or a sibling's passport. In 1971 the UK's new Immigration Act restricted immigration by Commonwealth migrants to those born in the UK or who had at least one parent or grandparent born there, and it placed the burden of proof on immigrants in any consequent disputes over citizenship. Decades later, and as a consequence of the Government's 'hostile environment' policy that culminated in the 2014 Immigration Act, many such pre-1971 migrants, now elderly citizens and often grandparents, found themselves suddenly excluded

from welfare and social support, sacked by their employers, evicted by their landlords, and in some cases detained and deported as illegal immigrants.[1] Many of these British subjects no longer possessed the necessary documentation that 'proved' their citizenship: some had never applied for UK passports, while others had lost long-forgotten documents bearing the crucial stamp, issued on entry, that said 'indefinite leave to remain.' The British Home Office was steadfast: no paperwork meant no citizenship. Attempts to appeal against their treatment were often a costly business and nearly always fruitless, despite the fact that these people had legally entered and lived for decades in the UK, had raised families, paid taxes and national insurance contributions, and earned an honest, ordinary living. For these elderly figures, solid ground was replaced by precarious vagabondage. And while some (but not all) avoided deportation, sometimes at the last moment, the lives of others were cut short no doubt by the anxiety and deprivation created by being criminalised as an illegal immigrant. The British Government subsequently acknowledged the error of its ways, yet few of the Windrush migrants have yet to receive the compensation they were subsequently promised.

The 'Windrush betrayal' is only the latest example of the UK's disquieting treatment of its citizens that turns on its capacity to grant or withhold legitimacy to newcomers—not only in terms of their legal status, but also as regards their social perception at large as undesirable vagabonds or border-crossing trespassers. Let us remember, too, that the *parents* of those whom Gentleman powerfully writes had to face plenty of hostilities and expulsions on arrival in the 1950s and 1960s, regardless of their unquestionable legal status as British citizens. As Clair Wills reminds us in her immigrant history of post-war Britain, *Lovers and Strangers* (2017), in the immediate post-war years "both employers and trade unions attempted to treat 'coloured workers' on a par with foreign labour, despite the fact that they enjoyed British citizenship" (2017, 116). And there is, too, the example of David Oluwale, a Nigerian migrant who in 1949 arrived legally in the UK from Lagos (although by illegal means: his stowing away on the *Temple Bar* earned him twenty-eight days in Armley Prison, Leeds, when the ship docked in Hull). Oluwale settled in Leeds and soon found work,

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1. These Britons became known collectively as 'Windrush migrants' as a way of associating them with post-war migration to the UK epitomised by the docking of the SS *Empire Windrush* in June 1948, although in truth they were often the children of these migrants.

but came to the racist attention of officers from the Leeds City Police force. After a series of incarcerations, he was sentenced to a long spell in Menston Asylum (later High Royds Hospital) where he was given damaging doses of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). As Kester Aspden summarises, "the testimonies of those who experienced it tell of severe headaches, feelings of confusion and restlessness, short- and long-term memory loss" (2007, 59). Impaired and abused, Oluwale resurfaced on the streets of Leeds in the 1960s, living as a vagrant and sleeping rough. He was last seen alive in April 1969 running from two police officers, Inspector Ellerker and Sergeant Kitching, in the direction of the River Aire in the city's centre. His body was recovered from the river a few weeks later. Ellerker and Kitching would eventually be successfully prosecuted for their part in hounding Oluwale to death—the first time in the UK that serving police officers were successfully prosecuted for a racial hate crime.

In recent years Oluwale's story has been retold on several occasions by those determined *not* to forget this episode in Britain's long history of state-sponsored and institutional racism; to question the extent to which the city of Leeds (and the UK more widely) may be radically distinct from its racist recent past; and to challenge illiberal ways of imagining community—epitomised by the rhetoric of Brexit—that forever render the newcomer as vagabond, foreigner, trespasser. It is to a brief engagement with these retellings that I now turn—not least because each, in their own ways, reconceive of Oluwale's vagabondage as a *purposeful* trespassing, a means by which the police's racist spatial command of the city of Leeds was permanently, determinedly refused.

The novelist Caryl Phillips has dwelt in depth on Oluwale's fortunes in his long essay-cum-fiction titled "Northern Lights," the third and final section of his book *Foreigners* (2007). In it he shapes a polyphonic, multidimensional imagining of Oluwale's fortunes and fate, and intertwines it with a wider account of Leeds's history as a quintessentially migrant-built city. At one point in the narrative, we hear the voice of a Leeds City Police officer who remembers Oluwale's final weeks hounded by Ellerker and Kitching who would not tolerate the sight of him sleeping rough in Leeds:

> [Oluwale] would always hide in doorways so he was easy to find. I mean, as a young policeman, I knew the little back alleyways and ginnels that he could have gone up. But he didn't do that. He just went in the doorways, which left him vulnerable. […] Inspector Ellerker and Sergeant Kitching had

a fascination for David. He would always run away from them, and yet he would sleep in those doorways on their patch. (2007, 227)

This memory of Oluwale running and resting chimes with the climax of Oladipo Agboluaje's play *The Hounding of David Oluwale*, first performed in Leeds at the West Yorkshire Playhouse in January 2009 – itself an adaptation of the historian Kester Aspden's 2007 book of the same title. The play ends with David sitting on a park bench in Leeds City Centre, conducting an imagined conversation with his mother Alice who remained in Lagos:

ALICE: You wandered off again.
DAVID: I didn't wander. You left.
ALICE: I did not go anywhere, David.
DAVID: I waited for you.
ALICE: You cannot just wander anywhere you like. (2009, 110-11)

Running and resting; wandering and waiting. After his release from Menston, back on the streets of Leeds, Oluwale turned trespassing into a significant and incalcitrant practice: no less than a declaration of urban tenure. As Caryl Phillips notes in his essay "The City by the Water," "Oluwale was regularly removed from the city centre, beaten, and left on the outskirts of Leeds, sometimes in woods, sometimes in neighbouring towns, but he always made his way back, on foot, into the city centre" (2015, 882). In several such recent imaginings, Oluwale's itinerant wandering and insistent waiting, always returning to the city to reclaim and rehearse his residence, refuse the spatial regulation of urban space by racist law enforcement. In heading to where he was not wanted, at risk of prosecution and abuse for his stubborn trespassing, Oluwale refuses Leeds's hostile environment through his conspicuous, dangerous uncommissioned dwelling. "David," writes Phillips in "Northern Lights," "if only you had turned and gone up the Headrow and away from the city centre they might not have discovered you. But you came to where you *knew* they would find you at the Bridal House, and you squatted on your little stone step on the Headrow. The most open place in town. Fully illuminated" (2007, 255). In rendering Leeds an open city that accommodates postcolonial migrants in contempt of the prohibitions of command, under northern lights, Oluwale's presence calls attention to—as well as refuses—the racist codes which, in the behaviours of Ellerker and Kitching, propel the checkpointing of personhood, the drawing of lines that divide the permitted from the prohibited.

Such imaginings of Oluwale's life expose the racializing authoritarianism driving urban renewal in post-war Leeds—a matter that appears in Agboluaje's play in terms of images of abundant light. As the figure of the Alderman stands before the city's demolition sites, he decries the city's association with 'soot and grime:'

> The blackness of our buildings saved us from Hitler's bombs but the time has come for the sparrows from Pudsey to stop flying backwards. Imagine if you will a citadel of the new economy, its beacon guiding all and sundry to a land of opportunity, a paradise of shops and high rises and leading to that citadel a ring road more laden with promise than the Silk Road. (2009, 52)

Racialised as a "darkie" (53) just moments after this scene, Oluwale is perceived as a troubling stain upon the white-rose-tinted vision of the city as consumer citadel, where the spatial schedule of this futuristic Yorkshire concept-city admits no errant walkers. In tracking Oluwale's peregrinations as well as his unquiet slumbers in their work, both Phillips and Agboluaje expose the lines of connection which bind post-war futuristic urban planning with the prohibitions and perniciousness of racism—as well as ponder the precarious agency of uncommissioned action, the yield as well as the terrible cost of daring to trespass.

The ethical implications of writing about Oluwale are not lost on those who have sought to retrieve from his fortunes something other than a sorry tale of victimhood. Instrumentalising the precarious lives of the past for present ends brings its own threat of autocracy. It is important, then, to note the extent to which recent writing on Oluwale thinks responsibly about the ethical challenges of making him a matter of literary representation. This important ethical regard, one which seeks to prize rather than appropriate Oluwale's trespassing, is frequently manifest at the level of aesthetic form, and not least in the deliberately incomplete and partial rendition of his life we are offered, as if to acknowledge the unbridgeable gap that must exist between Oluwale's unimaginable fate and any narrative that seeks to capture it. For example, in recent years the David Oluwale Memorial Society (DOMA) published *Remembering Oluwale: An Anthology* (2016), edited by S. J. Bradley, which features 26 new works of creative writing (as well as extracts from previously published material by Ian Duhig, Caryl Phillips, Kesper Aspden, and others). In refusing to forget Oluwale as part of its ongoing vigilant engagement with the city's urban politics, the anthology performed an act of significant memorialization as well as sought, by its very

presence, to protect the uncommissioned agency which Oluwale's trespassing illuminated. The anthology's heteroglot contents, consisting of fiction, poetry, history, drama and pencil drawing, brings together established and emerging writers (Linton Kwesi Johnson and Rachel Bower, Ian Duhig and Chérie Taylor Battiste). Its patchworked condition, while is entirely in keeping with the nature of anthologies, seems strategically appropriate to the act of 'remembering Oluwale.' Agboluaje's play, too, is shaped with recourse to a proximate attention to the heteroglot and manifold. The play criss-crosses different moments in David's fortunes: beginning with the retrieval of his corpse from the River Aire, it takes us back to 1949 and into the hold of the ship that brought him to England, to the Mecca Dance Hall where he used to relax, to Millgarth Police Station and Woodhouse Moor, and also to the Lagos of Oluwale's imagined adolescence. The play's design, especially its rhizomic wanderings across space as we move between scenes, prompts us to ask the question which the play itself constitutes an answer: is there an *aesthetics* of trespass appropriate to the task of engaging ethically and politically with Oluwale's fate?

In this regard, the shape of the most substantial literary engagement with Oluwale to date—Phillips's "Northern Lights"—takes on particular significance. Through the craft of the text, Phillips seeks to accommodate and admit Oluwale to a metropolitan milieu *re-visioned* in terms of trespass. Just as Oluwale brings the experience of other times and places into the urban space of Leeds, so too does Phillips narrate the city's long history in terms of its tourists and vagabonds. As the narrator points out, the city owes its fortunes to a river crossing: namely, the bridge built by the Romans across the River Aire to enable a road link between Manchester and York. Leeds begins at, and as, a conjunction, where movement and passage are facilitated across water. From this originary moment of the Romans crossing the river, the narrator traces the many other peoples who have arrived in the region, sometimes settling there and altering its fortunes: the conquering Normans; Jews from nineteenth-century Germany, Russia and Poland; Catholic Irish migrants; post-war settlers from Africa and the Caribbean. This migratory history of Leeds is offered not as marginal to but *definitive* of the city's fortunes and perpetual re-creation. This means that those seeking to defend Leeds from perceived foreign trespassers, such as the 1960s Leeds City Police, effectively subscribe to a phyletic understanding of spatial evolution which the history of the region, in *this* literary retelling, thoroughly undermines. In his complex and compelling interweaving of voices, narrators

and perspectives, Phillips pursues a discursive reckoning with the North which admits so many of the different migrant-descended citizens of Leeds into a shared aesthetic space. His text moves 'anthologically,' if you will, curating the words of those who remember Oluwale with affection, along with accounts of court proceedings, recollections of police officers, documents from mortuary and welfare services, and more besides.

On a handful of occasions Phillips, too, appears in his own text as a silent witness to the landscapes of Oluwale's life and death: visiting Oluwale's lodgings near the University of Leeds and at one point standing outside the current home of former Inspector Ellerker in the comfortable suburb of Horsforth. This interpolation of the writer within the writing indexes Phillips's consciousness of the ethical responsibility of imagining Oluwale. Indeed, in the text's final sentences, Phillips assumes the mantle of narrator and movingly declares Oluwale's rights of tenure while contemplating the site of his grave in Killingbeck Cemetery:

> In death you have fulfilled a promise made at birth. Here at Killingbeck Cemetery there is no more land for graves. Soon there will be no more burials in this place. Everybody can rest peacefully. You have achieved a summit, David. Climbed to the top of a hill, and from here you can look down. You are still in Leeds. Forever in Leeds. (2007, 260)

In this rendition of Leeds, Oluwale defies once and for all the police's crass attempts to banish him from the city forever. He appears as *the* definitive, not defiled, citizen of Leeds. Phillips situates Oluwale's story just like the city's founding bridge, at the heart of Leeds's history. In so doing, he clinches creatively that which Oluwale had sought spatially: the trespasser's stubborn occupation of the central areas of the city, under northern lights, running and resting, wandering and waiting. From the *literary* rendition of the obscene, shameful fortunes of Oluwale's life, we might requisition something of his perceived transgressive truculence, his intemperate and defiant retort to urban regulation, and reconceive his cruel vagabondage as a militant mobility forever at odds with Britain's hostile environments, past and present.

Had he lived, Oluwale would have been in his eighties when the Windrush scandal broke in Britain, and one wonders how he would have fared had he ever been compelled to prove his legitimate citizenship in today's hostile environment. His example, and contemporary retellings of it, remind us of a number of matters still at large today: the longstanding prohibitive environments (not

just British ones) which insist upon certain forms of compliance if one wants leave to remain; the capricious, unsteady line between citizen and trespasser that can change at will, or on a whim; the precarious dwelling which circumscribes all migrant and minoritised peoples; the creative enquiry into the figure of the trespasser as an imagined vehicle of dissent; the literary requisitioning of trespass as an unobliging postcolonial contestation of those constraints that secure subjugation by fashioning tempting pathways to legitimate personhood; and especially at a conference such as ours, *the critical agency of the cultural, of literary representation*, in continuing to speak its particular truth to power in a world ever more mobile, ever more migrant, ever more prohibitive.

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FROM THE PARLOUR TO THE DRESSING CHAMBER: THE SHAPING OF DOMESTIC SPACE IN RESTORATION LONDON

Juan A. Prieto-Pablos

Universidad de Sevilla

ppablos@us.es

Abstract

With the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the Great Fire of 1666, domestic architecture underwent radical changes in England, particularly in London. The gentry were a leading force in the definition of the concepts on which this new architecture should be based. They found inspiration in architects such as Vitruvius and Palladio, who recommended symmetry and order in the distribution of domestic spaces and defined them as places suitable for social interaction rather than work. Restoration theatres were instrumental in the promotion of these new models of domestic space, not only through the dramatic situations performed on stage but also by means of the theatrical resources available at the time, particularly of scenery and combined usage of forestage and inner stage.

Keywords: Restoration theatre, staging practice, domestic space

1. Introduction

The topic of my keynote address springs from work I have been engaged in for the last few years, trying to ascertain the correspondence between scenery and place in Restoration drama. At first I was confident that I had a solid working hypothesis, namely, that although scenery was a factor in the pursuit of a realistic

representation of place, the weight of tradition, plus practical and economic conditions, limited that pursuit to the use of a very limited set of stock scenes, representing non-specific locations. I worked on a corpus of over two hundred plays, comprising over three thousand scenes, and about two-thirds of them had no heading indicating the place of events, which strongly suggests a general lack of concern with the specificity of locale, or with its visual representation. Among the remaining third of scenes, only a very tiny minority were located in very specific places, such as Covent Garden or St James's Park; the rest were set in generic places, identified merely as "a street," "a garden" or someone's "house." When it came to analysing those scenes set in private homes, however, I found an unexpected number of references to different room types: halls, parlours, drawing rooms, dining rooms, bedchambers, antechambers, dressing rooms, cabinets, gaming rooms, smoking rooms, and last but not least, closets. They are not very many (several hundred in all), yet they were a steadily growing presence in Restoration drama. These references suggest, first, that despite the lack of specificity in references to place in a great many playscripts, playwrights did not contain their representation of interior space to a generic setting; and secondly, that they had a mental image of that interior space. But, if so, where did these playwrights draw their mental images from?

The answer I am willing to offer is that the kind of domestic space shown on stage was based on real houses yet these were mostly reimagined as ideal ones. In this regard, I am drawing from the definitions of space provided by Henri Lefebvre, particularly on the relationship between what he called "lived space" (*space veçu*) and "conceived space" (*space conçu*). My thesis is based on three points: a) that both the plays and the theatres featured private homes as places that *could be* lived in under certain conditions, and that those conditions expressed a way of life endorsed by the aristocracy and emulated by its closer associate group, the urban gentry; b) that these places were also *conceived as desirable spaces*, being promoted as ideal ones for those who lived in other house types or were looking for better homes.; and c) that these spaces were finally shaped in a manner that fit both their ideal format and yet another space, this one a real or physical one: the stage on which plays were acted.

To prove this, I need to first offer the larger picture, concerning the various models of domestic space in Restoration London and their representation in both real and imagined houses; then I shall move on to the smaller one, the theatres, to describe the manner in which private space was visually expressed on

stage. With this I hope I shall be able to show the extent of correspondence (or lack thereof) between both, and to explain the reasons of that correspondence.

2. Models of domestic space in Restoration London

The study of domestic spaces in Restoration London is far from being a straight-forward matter. The Restoration was a transitional period—in this, as it was in many other aspects—and the very notion of the domestic and of the functions it must serve were in a state of flux. Architectural historians have identified three general trends or styles in the development of domestic design during the early modern period, each one associated to a different way of life. The first is the vernacular style. It is essentially found in rural houses and its roots date back to Anglo-Saxon times. Its central, originally its only living space, was the open hall. The centrality of the open hall had a symbolic significance: as Matthew Johnson states, it "expressed a common social ordering, based on the values of patriarchy and corporate community" and on the lead of the "husbandman," the lord and master of the household (2010, 119). This house type was adopted by both the poorer and the wealthier classes throughout most of the Middle Ages, the differences lying in the size and decor of the hall and in the number of additional chambers annexed to it. An increase in population and in the wealth of families in the early modern period did however call for a general expansion of domestic space in vernacular houses, a movement identified by W.G. Hoskins as the "Great Rebuilding" (1953). His choice of the term "rebuilding" was most appropriate, for he claimed that vernacular houses were renovated but seldom newly built. Innovation was accommodated within, and subordinated to, a very resilient tradition that maintained the hall as the most important meeting place, even if it was no longer the only room in the house.

The need to expand was perceived also in urban areas. London, in particular, underwent a process of change at about that same time, owing to the steady growth of its population. But the change was unlike the one in rural houses, and was not as homogeneous. What could be defined as *the urban vernacular* was found in houses within the City, inhabited by merchants and artisans. Their houses were shaped primarily by their use as workspace, in concord with their assumption that life should be defined by business. The shop was the main and the largest room in the house, and nonworking life was displaced to private chambers. Both vernacular types, the rural and the urban, did however have one thing in common: expansion was done through the addition of afterthought

annexes, and with no preconceived notion of order or regularity. In country houses, it could be done by taking over adjacent land and the spread often led to an irregular distribution of rooms. In the City, due to its overpopulation, the expansion was mostly done by building on top of already-existing stories. The surveys done by Ralph Treswell in the early seventeenth century offer a very clear picture of this state of things: his map of Fleet Lane shows a heavy concentration of tenements, most of them on ground plots measuring no more than 4 by 6 metres (16 by 20 feet).[1]

Figure 1: Ralph Treswell's map of Fleet Lane
Source: *People Property and Charity: The Clothworkers' Company*

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1. For further analysis of this map, see also Orlin (2008, 220) and Brown (1986, 571-72). For a detailed study of Treswll's surveys, Schofield (1987).

The map shows that the ground floor of most tenements was wholly taken up as a shop and the occasional kitchen. All other rooms were on upper floors. So, for example, in his survey of Richard Tyrry's home (in the map, an irregular quasi-triangular shape in the lower end of the street) Treswell reports that, besides the "first story" or ground floor, with a shop and kitchen, the house had a basement cellar and five upper floors, occupied by five "chambers" (two on the second and the third floor, one on the fourth) and one garret. [2]

The exception in Treswell's map was the space leased to Lady Wood, which extends over most of the area on the left of the picture (highlighted in yellow and green) and includes no fewer than eleven ground-floor rooms—one of them a fairly large hall—three courtyards and a garden. The size and shape of Lady Wood's lease is representative of about 11% of the City houses, according to Frank Brown (1986, 575-76).[3] What must be remarked, nonetheless, is that the distribution of the ground-floor space has no discernible order and must have made the passage to inner rooms quite a challenge.

The third type of domestic houses in London differed significantly from the vernacular ones. They were built almost exclusively on the West End, for the gentry and the aristocracy. What makes most of them exceptional is that they were new buildings, whose construction was based on ideas imported from the continent, particularly from Italy. These houses promoted what I dare to call a Mediterranean way of life, based on social interaction rather than on business-work. Their design, therefore, preceded and ultimately conditioned their use as living space. This is the model that was conceived as ideal in contemporary representations of domestic space, and is the one I shall try to describe in detail.

3. The Great Fire and the rebuilding of London

Throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, these three models evolved on parallel lines, never actually connecting. The Restoration of the

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2. Treswell's survey of the Fleet Lane tenements is kept by the Clothworkers' Company. Some information on the tenements can be found on the website *People, Property and Charity: The Clothworkers'Company,1500-1688*(https://www.clothworkersproperty.org/properties/fleet-lane).

3. This percentage is comprised by both domestic residences and inns, according to Brown.

monarchy in 1660, and most particularly the Great Fire of 1666, altered this situation. The Fire was perceived as an opportunity for the rebuilding of the City according to new, more modern criteria, and modernity was a concept that the new gentry had successfully appropriated; and their houses were offered as ideal models not only for West-End residents but for the population of London as a whole.

The Great Fire raged on for four days and consumed over 70% of the city of London, which was populated at the time by about one hundred thousand citizens. It was undoubtedly a traumatic event, even though the traumatic overtones are rather missing from historical accounts, both right after the fire and later on, even to our day. This may be in part owed to the fact that the fire caused a great loss of property but very few casualties; and mainly to what can be called a propagandistic campaign to highlight the speedy success of the reconstruction. The maps commissioned to John Ogilby and William Morgan at the end of the 1670s and in the early 1680s are evidence of this campaign, as they were meant to show a City with virtually no trace of the fire, as densely populated as before, and maintaining its most defining thoroughfares and landmarks.

Figure 2: Ogilby and Morgan's *Large Scale Map of the City as Rebuilt by 1676*

Figure 3: John Evelyn's proposal for the rebuilding of the City of London (1666)
Source: Harrison 1775, 286-87

In our day, too, historians have provided a positive view of the measures taken at the time to ensure that the City would be properly rebuilt. The more idealistic or utopian proposals, such as those by Christopher Wren or John Evelyn (see Figure 3), who saw the fire as an opportunity to erect a new city, were waived aside; instead, a more pragmatic and economical policy was adopted. City tenants were permitted to rebuild their residences as long as they complied with regulations specifying aspects such the materials they could use in their houses and tenements (brick, not wood) or the minimal width of streets and alleys. The result was a City that was very much like the old one, yet somewhat more orderly arranged. Thomas Reddaway could thus state that the rebuilt City was still recognizable after the "purge […] made to reduce shortcoming and abolish evils" (1940, 284).

The reconstruction was not as fast and as effective, however. Because of their heavy concentration and because most of them were built with wood, the fire had consumed the houses down to the ground; and those that withstood the fire were razed down in order to prevent new fires and, then, to facilitate the work of surveyors entrusted with the task of mapping the width and depth of every single plot within the City. No rebuilding was permitted until the beginning of

the new decade. The landscape viewed by anyone who set foot within the City during that period of time would have resembled what they called a desert, a vast plain, marked only by piles of rubble and the remains of a few buildings.[4]

This delay in the reconstruction of the City had a major impact in the need to find long-term accommodation for nearly one hundred thousand people. Many of them, mainly the poorer sort, moved to suburbs north of the Wall between Moorfields and Bishopsgate, or south of the river in Southwark, where they found affordable lodgings or simply erected their own, temporary sheds. Others did however take lodgings in the West End: according to Reddaway, they did so most particularly in the fashionable areas around Covent Garden piazza (1940, 302), which had plenty of houses or rooms for seasonal rent.[5]

What the exiled citizens would have witnessed outside the City was a range of buildings whose construction was based on new architectural styles. The trend had been introduced in the early decades of the seventeenth century by Inigo Jones, who found his main inspiration in Vitruvius and Palladio. They provided the conceptual foundations for new neighbourhoods, among them Covent Garden.[6] The Restoration witnessed a renewal of this trend, under the guidance of architects such as Roger Pratt, the designer of contemporary architectural landmarks such as Clarendon House in Piccadilly; Robert Hooke, the man behind several private residences in the country and in St James's Square; and last but not at all least, Christopher Wren, who also was, with Hooke, one of the surveyors appointed to oversee the reconstruction of the City.

The initiative in the promotion of this new style lay mainly in the gentry and, to a lesser extent, the aristocracy. As Robbie Blakemore points out,

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4. Such was the view to John Evelyn, who commented that he was barely able to trace his path along the area in his diary entries for 7 and 10 September 1666 and summed up his experience in the sentence "I went againe to the ruines, for it was noe longer a Citty" (1995, 156-157). Moreover, despite what is shown in Ogilby's picture, the reconstruction had not concluded by the time the maps were drawn: some plots were still empty by the end of the century, and nearly 25% of the people who lived in the city before the fire never returned afterwards.

5. For further information on the relocation of citizens after the Fire, see also Field (2017), Harding (2001) and Spence (2000).

6. Covent Garden was designed by Inigo Jones. It would then serve as model for piazzas such as Soho Square and, later on in the eighteenth century, Bedford Square and Leicester Square (Platt 1994, 133-134 and 144-145).

the transmission of fashion ideas within the country was the responsibility of gentlemen and the nobility [...] Although the group was very small [they] had the education, cultural awareness, and wealth essential to keep abreast of the latest changes in architecture and design [...] The gentleman was the key person and the conduit for the spread of style to those lower on the social scale. (1997, 171-72)

Johnson concurs with Blakemore when he comments that "the Renaissance 'rediscovery' of Classical texts led to a new consciousness of architecture and meanings of buildings [...] Those of aristocratic and gentry status reflected overtly rather than implicitly on the form and appearance of a building." As a result of this, "sixteenth [and seventeenth] social identities were constructed around the way buildings are viewed rather than simply changing architectural styles" (2010, 123). Houses must therefore be both visually attractive and representative of the cultural values endorsed by these social groups. Johnson lists civility, politeness and learning as the most outstanding values; I would add socialization as well, even define it as one of the most preeminent markers of social status in Restoration house design. In my understanding of this word, socialisation, it is expressive of what Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson call "spatial solidarity," the principle that seeks the establishment and maintenance of social encounter throughout architectural designs that eliminate or limit spatial boundaries (1984, 145-46). Spatial solidarity did not, however, dispel the need of order and control: this was secured by an orderly distribution of domestic rooms according to their range of accessibility, from full openness to full privacy. As Hiller and Hanson state,

A building is [...] a domain of knowledge, in the sense that it is a certain spatial ordering of categories, and a domain of control, in the sense that it is a certain ordering of boundaries [...], the two conjointly constructing an interface between the inhabitants of the social knowledge embedded in the categories and the visitors whose relations with them are controlled by the building. (1984, 146-47)

The new model house was conceived on the basis of three central concepts: symmetry, width and depth. Symmetry was regarded as the best expression of order, and was to be displayed externally, in the arrangement of the façade, with a central door and an equal number of windows on either side; and internally, in the distribution of rooms along a vertical axis that crossed the main door.

This is the principle underlined by Brown, who describes the "house of quality" as "a compact unit, outward- rather than inward-looking, with all the main rooms symmetrically disposed around a central entrance hall" (1986, 576). Roger Pratt's Coleshill House is a very apt illustration, with its central vertical axis crossing the hall and the main room (the Great Parlour), and the horizontal doing so along a central corridor.
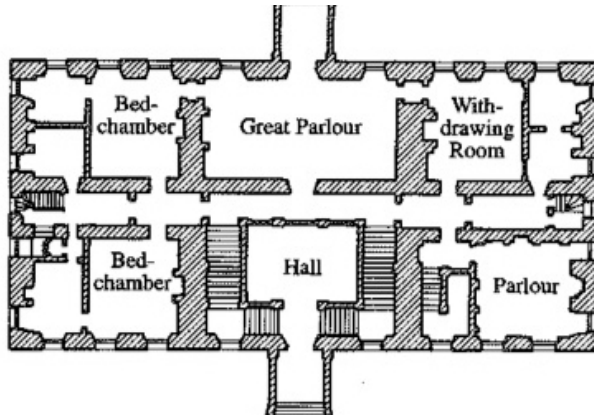
Figure 4: Ground plan of Coleshill House, Oxfordshire (1650-1660)
Source: Platt 1994, 38[7]

The Coleshill house plan shows also that width did not exclude depth. Houses like this were typically double-piled, that is, had rooms facing the front and other rooms facing the back of the house. This arrangement had strong implications, but two are possibly the main ones: the first was a remarkable increase in the number of rooms per house; the second, the need to assign them specific functions and specific denominations describing those functions. Giving a name to these rooms was not an easy, nor an automatic task: the descriptions of domestic residences in surveys and inventories show that it took quite a long time for new denominations to be fixed, and how generic ones were used when no other alternative was at hand. Ultimately, what was done was

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7. It should be noted that the room types indicated in the plan did not exactly correspond to the functions originally assigned to them. Platt comments that the ones featuring as bedchambers were being used as "sitting rooms" in the 1690s (1994, 38).

to appropriate names already used by the aristocracy in their own homes—an effect of what Johnson has defined as social emulation (2010, 118). The owners of new houses could still have a "hall" but they would still need to give a name to their other ground-floor rooms. "Parlour" was the most fashionable name at the time, yet its usage was not as widespread as it would become later on in Georgian times; nor were other more specialized terms such as "withdrawing room" or "dining room." The same conditions applied to upper-floor rooms. The generic and most widely used denominations were "chamber" and "bed-chamber," and both were used interchangeably: in his study of inventories of City of London houses, Brown found that "the upper-floor chamber was, without exception, a bedroom" (1986, 586), even when a resident was assigned more than one (bed)chamber. Only gradually were the extra chambers identified by their more specific function and singled out as antechambers, dressing chambers, closets or cabinets. The houses and rooms need not be as magnificent as those of the aristocracy, yet their names alone provided the prestige that they were associated with.

That the Restoration was a transitional period in this regard can be perceived in the variable definition of the function of parlours and, most especially, of halls. According to Overton, Whittle, Dean and Hann, the function of medieval parlours coincided with their etymology: they were rooms where people met to chat; then, in the fifteenth century they were used as guest bedchambers, and by the early sixteenth century they "became eating and reception rooms only" (2004, 131-32). By the late seventeenth century, however, the word "parlour" gradually recovered its original function and became the denomination for a reception room, where residents met and entertained guests. This function resolved a demand in Restoration society, particularly among the gentry, to spatially accommodate what can be defined as open-house policy: relatives, friends, and other acquaintances were granted free admission to their homes and could therefore come in uninvited; and residents were expected to provide them with entertainment, be it in the shape of mere conversation or of conversation topped up with collations, music, or game-playing. This freedom of ingress may have been applicable to most if not all ground-floor rooms in the Restoration. This would partially explain why most ground-floor rooms were identified as parlours, distinguished only by their seasonal usage (with houses having a summer and a winter parlour), or on the basis of different degrees of privacy (with a common and a private parlour) or simply of size (with a great

and a little parlour). But it is very likely also that the word "parlour" was just a generic denomination, owing to the lack of alternative ones. The functional specialization of ground-floor rooms was, in any case, a slow process, and even more so was the adoption of names expressing that specialization. As parlours were used for small collations only, a room had to be specifically reserved for supper and dinner, and was more and more often identified as the dining room or dining hall; and when a certain measure of privacy was adopted beyond the physical boundaries of the open parlour, so houses began to have drawing or withdrawing rooms, where guests could find admission by invitation only.

As the parlour became the main reception room, it took over the function of the traditional hall. With the placement of the main entrance door at the centre of the façade and the distribution of rooms at either side, the hall maintained a central position within the house but gradually lost its functional centrality as the room in which most daily communal activities were held; it could be a luxurious space still, but it steadily degraded to an entrance hall or a vestibule, a distributional space leading to other reception rooms on the ground floor or, via a staircase, to the more private rooms on the upper floors.

4. Domestic spaces on the Restoration stage

Nowhere is this social usage of domestic space as evident as it is in Restoration drama. It can be perceived in the contents of the plays, particularly the comedies: most of them were set in contemporary London, and nearly all of these featured people living in the gentrified areas west of the City.[8] This was an idealized world, with plenty of wealthy, attractive heiresses and witty gallants; and their homes were conveniently idealized, both in their ostentation of wealth and in their most preeminent function, as venues for courting purposes. All rooms in the plays are, by default, places in which residents interact with visitors, with the purpose of pursuing (or preventing) some form of engagement. Social engagement must be recognized as a form of business, but the kind in which citizens would ordinarily engage is conspicuous by its absence in Restoration

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8. There is no such thing as Restoration City comedy. This is understandable: for a while there simply was no City to portray; moreover, the patent companies were not interested in representing the City or its citizens under any perspective other than as the objects of contempt and ridicule. Whenever citizens appeared, they did so as intruders in a world dominated by the gentry.

drama. The capacity of these houses to accommodate social visits was essential, therefore. Very likely, situations such as the ones mentioned by Lady Fanciful in John Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife,* when she claimed that she had "eighteen visits to return" in a single afternoon (1697, 33), were meant as exaggerations; but they nonetheless refer to a regular practice, based on what I have defined as open-house policy: Lady Fanciful could visit as many acquaintances as she liked, and was sure that she would find easy admission into all these houses. The plays show that the range of freedom of passage was not absolute, nor equal for each of the rooms, however. Access to upper-floor chambers was strictly barred without prior invitation, and even among the ground-floor rooms there were differences in this regard: visitors could freely enter halls and parlours (Lady Fanciful in *The Provoked Wife* needs no permission to come and visit Lady Brute: her entrance is merely announced by a servant) but could not proceed to other rooms unless invited to do so.

What the plays written in the Restoration show too is that the houses in which gentlemen and gentlewomen live agreed with the pattern of the model house I have described. Their houses feature multiple rooms, distributed on both ground- and upper-floors, fulfilling specific functions. It is quite possibly an effect of this period's transitional condition that these rooms are not identified specifically in most plays. Sadly, the terms "house," "room" and "chamber" are the ones most used, whereas more particular ones such as "parlour" or "dressing chamber" are comparatively rare.[9] However, there is a clear distinction between open-house rooms, consistently supposed to be on the ground-floor, and upper-floor chambers, which are always supposed to be private rooms. This distinctiveness is supported by the absence in the scripts of immediate transitions from one room type to the other in the same house, by regular references to characters "coming up" to a chamber and, most importantly, by the kind of activity undergone in each of these locations.

But as I said all this is quite evident to anyone who has read or seen a Restoration play. What may not be so evident is how the performance space—the stage—was used to complement this ideal picture of homes. This was

9. In what remains of this essay I use the term "parlour" generically for ground-floor rooms, rather than "hall." In the first decade of the Restoration the hall was the most common choice for this type of room among theatre prompters; but playwrights seldom did and, whenever they wished to signal a specific indoor locale for social encounters, they often selected "parlour" instead.

facilitated by the introduction of scenery, a technical innovation, never until then used in public theatres.

The relevance of scenery is duly acknowledged in critical studies of Restoration drama yet its usage has been the subject of some misconception. There is a general assumption that, in my opinion, needs to be dispelled, namely that scenery was a mere replacement of the back wall of pre-Restoration theatres and that it naturally occupied the same position on stage. Because of the addition of scenery, the stage underwent an enlargement upstage-wards which, for the first time in English theatre history, made it much deeper than it was wide. The misconception I have just referred to may be provoked in part by the resilience in our collective imaginary of the architectural designs of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatres and in another part by the lack of hard-proof evidence on the architectural design of Restoration theatres. What little is known about them comes from very general verbal descriptions and from very few and not quite reliable visual records. The most recurrent source has been a draft of a "play house" by Christopher Wren, supposedly his proposal for the rebuilding of Drury Lane after the fire in 1671, which is nevertheless neither a complete nor a reliable illustration of the demands of Restoration stages.[10] Despite this state of general uncertainty, there is some consensus in supposing that the Restoration stage featured three different sections (see Figure 5).

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10. The draft was discovered by Hamilton Bell among others drawn by Wren and kept in All Souls College (Oxford) in 1913. Edward Langhans remarks that although "Mr Bell was most cautious" in his suggestion that the drawing represented Drury Lane, "his modest proposal has since turned into a statement of fact" (1955, 157). This situation has continued to our date, so that for most Restoration scholars Wren's draft is the one used for the construction of Drury Lane Theatre. One of the most popular reconstructions based on Wren's draft, extensively reproduced in critical essays and online, is Richard Leacroft's popular picture of Drury Lane (1973, 95), but even this one is an inaccurate reconstruction of the space on the Drury Lane stage.
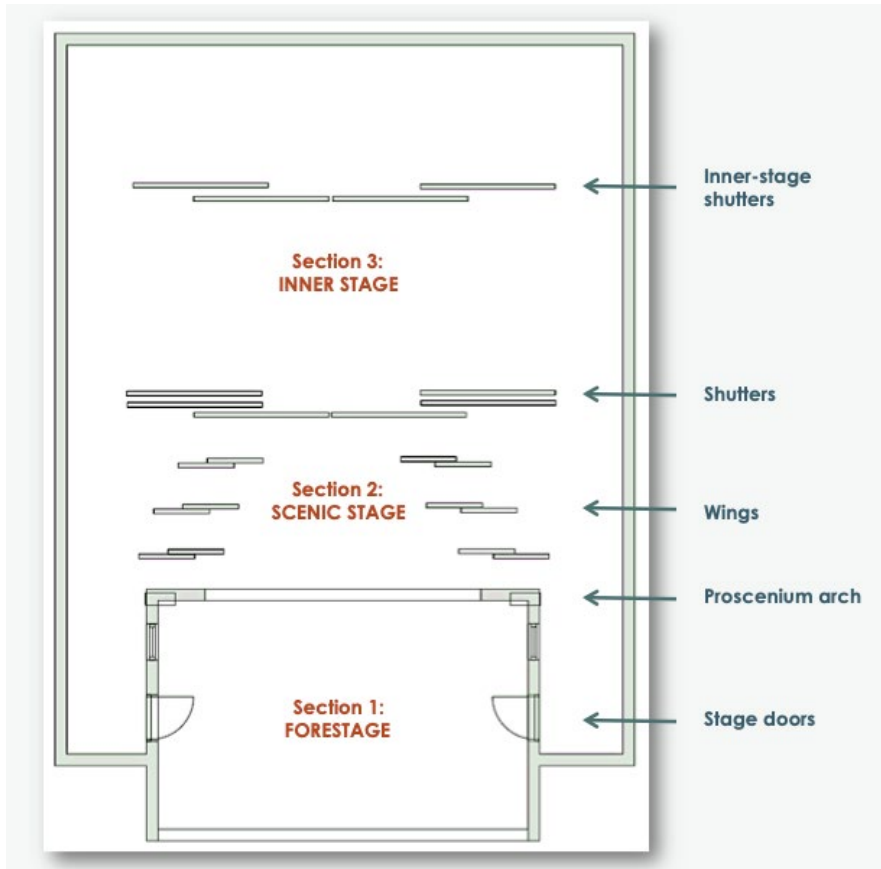
Figure 5: Restoration theatres: Schematic stage plan

The section closest to the audience—the proscenium or forestage—was a direct inheritance of pre-Restoration theatre, an oblong surface with approximately the same proportions as those in earlier theatres. It was wider than deeper but its depth was not inconsiderable: because of the addition of scenery, the side walls had to accommodate the stage doors (one on each side in Figure 5, although some theatre scholars argue that there were two on each side), and the front of the stage extended into the auditorium. The precise dimensions of this section of the stage in any of the theatres are also a matter

of conjecture but, to cite just one yet a most representative instance, the forestage at Drury Lane may have measured 9,5 by 7 metres, according to Edward Langhans (2001).[11]

At the far end of the forestage stood the proscenium arch. It was closed only when the stage curtain was dropped, that is, only before the performance started and at the end of the show; during performance, the proscenium arch remained open, permitting the view of the scenic area, or rather the two scenic areas. The first one (the "scenic stage" in Figure 5) featured several pairs of changeable wings, adding at least four more metres to the depth of the stage. At the back of this first scenic area were the shutters, closely arranged in three, possibly four pairs. They are called shutters because they could be slid into the stage to "shut" or cover the whole end of the stage, although they could also be slid off to "open" the scene and grant the view of another pair of shutters. They were instrumental in the representation of locale, as any new place in dramatic action was announced by a change of shutters with a painted image of the scene location.[12]

The third and last section lay behind the shutters. When necessary, they could be slid offstage and grant a view of the discovery or inner stage. This was the area reserved for the most spectacular effects, involving the use of machinery for flights, descents and vanishing acts. But it was also used for the display of further locations, including indoor ones.

The inner stage added no fewer than three more metres to the depth of the Restoration stage, which thus could come to a total of about fourteen metres. It is quite evident that depth was a substantive feature of this stage. The perception of depth was, moreover, enhanced by the images painted on wings and shutters, supposedly designed so as to provide views of a given location in perspective. This was a very useful arrangement for scenes set in outdoor locations such as streets, parks or fields, even of large indoor spaces, like palace halls. It would, on the contrary, seem unsuitable for domestic

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11. Drury Lane was not the largest Restoration playhouse. Dorset Garden was, and its forestage measured 15,5 by 9 metres. The Drury Lane stage was equal in size to that at the second Blackfriars and slightly smaller than the one at the Elizabethan Globe (13 by 9).
12. Although back in the 1950s, Richard Southern claimed that shutters could be placed alongside wings, hence closer to the forestage, his claim was quickly refuted and it is generally agreed that back shutters were always where you saw them in the image I have shown.

interiors. Nevertheless, Restoration playwrights and acting companies managed to employ the whole acting space to their advantage in the representation of indoor locale, too. At first, they may have regarded the inner stage as a most convenient area for the display of large or heavy props such as banquets or beds, in scenes set in dining rooms or bedrooms. Eventually, however, they managed to contrive a clear contraposition between private and public spaces. In this manner, the forestage was by default the area for parlour scenes, whereas those set in more private rooms such as dining halls and drawing rooms were placed on the inner stage. The same principle applied also for upper-floor chambers: by default bedroom scenes were discovered, while those set in relatively less private chambers (e.g. in antechambers) could be staged on the forestage. This was done at the cost of dispensing with the illusion of perspective, since perspective was inconsistent with the appearance of characters on the inner stage; but depth remained an essential element. The distance separating the scene from the spectators was a symbolic representation of the degree of privacy demanded by each room.

For parlour scenes, the combined display of forestage and scenic areas was a most fitting space. This was so for at least two reasons. The first has to do with room size: together, both sections measured about one hundred square metres, therefore provided the illusion of theatrical parlours as being very large, luxurious rooms. The décor of forestage walls and proscenium arch, plus the images painted on wings and shutters, must have contributed to the illusion of wealth too. The second reason concerns the manner in which the allocation of the forestage doors evoked a topical distribution of rooms in model houses. Restoration parlours are defined by Brown—following Hillier and Hanson—as bi- or multi-permeable, that is, as having two or more doors; therefore as rooms having an important distributional function in the passage through domestic space. Permeability draws attention to the way in which "certain spaces become impregnated with social meaning by virtue of their position within the house" (Brown 1986, 577). The placement of more than one door therefore defines parlours as places that one can enter, more or less freely, in hopes of gaining some form of privileged access to more private, uni-permeable rooms. In this manner, the door on one side of the forestage would stand for the entrance from the hall—now converted into a hallway or vestibule—and the one on the

opposite side would represent the passage to yet another parlour or even to a relatively more private room such as the withdrawing room.[13]

The permeability of the parlour could further justify one more passage, and a more spectacular one, involving the transition from forestage to inner stage, thus adding the illusion of double-pile depth to the illusion of width. In its relationship with the forestage, the inner stage worked in two ways. The most common form of relationship was *alternation or contraposition*: it operates when forestage action ends and the next scene opens on the inner stage. This is the kind of arrangement found in act 5 of Thomas Otway's *The Soldier's Fortune*, when a scene set in a parlour is followed by the discovery of a room in another house, in which new characters appear at a banquet (1681, 65-67). The perception of double-pile depth was however enhanced much more clearly when both parts of the stage were operated *in combination*. This happened when the shutters were drawn aside and the inner stage became either an extension of the room represented by the forestage or another, adjacent room. A parlour could thus open into, or rather become, a huge masque hall, measuring nearly two hundred square metres, as in act 4 of Thomas Betterton's *The Counterfeit Bridegroom*: the characters, entering the forestage as from a wedding, are invited to sit (that would still be on the forestage), and then there is a show that involves "soft music" and special effects, performed on the inner stage (1677, 39-40). A passage from forestage to inner stage representing the transition to an adjacent, more private room can be found in Aphra Behn's *The Roundheads*, when Lady Desbrough and Lady Fleetwood move up from the parlour to a council chamber after the "Scene draws off" and shows a table and chairs (1682, 48).

The combined effect of width and depth can be perceived as well when upper-floor chambers were selected as setting. An extrapolation of the dimensions of the imaged ground floor gives an upper floor that could be divided into a rather large number of chambers.[14] Their number was not necessarily due to a demand from large families, however; quite on the contrary, the average ratio of persons per house in Restoration London was 4.6, according to Craig Spence (2000, 90). The typical family had no more than two children: the extra rate

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13. I have found no textual evidence in the drama suggesting that stage entrances were meant to be done directly from the street: the hallway was, like the closet, an invisible yet ever implied space in the houses imagined by playwrights, on the other side of the stage door.

14. At Coleshill House there were no fewer than thirteen upper-floor rooms.

in Spence's average was given by the servants, whose number was also fairly low—usually no more than two per house (Spence 2000, 95). This is the situation in most Restoration comedies, too. The consequence both in the drama and outside the theatres, in terms of the assignment of upper-floor space, was that each family member could have more than one room.

In Restoration drama, the bed was the focal point of each chamber—or set of chambers. By default, and as befit the most private of rooms in a house, it was displayed on the inner stage. If in some "bedchamber" scenes the bed is actually not visible, it is nonetheless supposed to be farther upstage and may eventually be discovered, and the characters may then move up to the inner stage. The distance to the forestage made the inner stage unsuitable for lengthy scenes, however, so very often the actors in a bedroom scene were prompted to move forward to the forestage. Stage directions occasionally indicate that the illusion of transition from inner-stage bedroom to forestage chamber was effected by closing the shutters once the characters moved forward; in most other cases there is no such reference, so possibly the effect was achieved by keeping the shutters open, as if the doors from one room to the next remained open. Whatever the choice, the usage of forestage was justified: it was more convenient for acting purposes and it served to express the spatial gradation from public to private space, even if it was in relative terms only. The movement from inner stage to forestage, or vice versa, was not to another part of the same room but to another room, which was supposed to stand between the bedroom and the passage inwards from the corridor outside the chambers. The placement of this chamber on the forestage was also a very convenient resource, for it permitted a realistic usage of the stage doors: the one on one side would lead to the corridor, and the other would open into one of the most typical of rooms in Restoration comedies, the closet.[15] In this manner, the set-up of private chambers would parallel the horizontal and vertical distribution I described in the arrangement of ground-floor rooms.

The chamber represented by the forestage is occasionally identified as a dressing room or a woman's cabinet; rather more often, as an antechamber. Their degree of privacy was lower than that of the bedroom and therefore they

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15. Besides being the place in which lovers could be hidden on the sudden arrival of a woman's husband or father, the closet served as storeroom, study, or even library. Valuable objects were kept there, and therefore used to have a lock.

were fitting for forestage action. The antechamber was the one specifically reserved for daytime activities, functioning as either a private retreat or a "private reception room" (Overton et al. 2004, 133), whereas the "bedchamber" was the one reserved for night-time activities only, and its access was barred to all visitors as a matter of principle. In more sophisticated arrangements, represented by the *enfilade* of palatial houses, the bedroom would be at the farthest end of a row of private chambers and the antechamber would stand on the opposite side; in between there would be other private rooms with more specific functions, such as the dressing chamber. The *enfilade* was most effective when contemplated in perspective, as it provided a view of the depth of the house at the same time as it symbolically framed the progress from the most accessible to the most private rooms in the house.[16] In Restoration theatres, the full length of the stage, as perceived from the auditorium, would have contributed to this same effect, and would have made it a distinctive feature of the luxury houses of wealthy characters.

5. Conclusions

A vast majority of Restoration plays set in contemporary London were consistent in their representation of a type of domestic house that was very much in consonance with those specifically designed for wealthy West-End families. This was not just the result of a general pursuit of realism: the fact is that not many West-End houses were actually built according to Palladian criteria. These theatrical houses were imagined spaces, illustrating the spaciousness and comfort that a great many Londoners lacked in their own homes and would desire to live in; they were also houses whose design facilitated their usage as spaces for socialization rather than work or business, and therefore promoted a way of life that resembled that of the upper classes and differed quite radically from that of the typical citizens.

The promotion of these ideal houses and of the way of life attached to them was quite successful. This was so even among those who returned to their rebuilt homes within the bounds of the City after the Great Fire. Some

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16. See Blakemore (1997, 178-80) for a description of the function of the *enfilade* and an analysis of the arrangement of the chambers *en enfilade* at Blenheim Palace and other, less luxurious houses.

resumed their traditional ways of life in houses that reproduced their original design. As late as the mid-eighteenth century it was still possible to come across houses that looked very much like those before the Great Fire. But quite a few citizens did embrace the new architectural ideas, as did many other families in the whole country, eventually. The design of the houses featured in Restoration drama would be reproduced extensively in the houses of the gentry, both rural and urban, of Georgian Britain, and had their literary representation in houses like those inhabited by characters in Jane Austen's fiction. Most had a more compact shape and had not as many rooms as those in the drama, and hence lacked much of their original glamour; and as society moved into the nineteenth century symmetry was sacrificed for the sake of practical usefulness, in designs that are recognizable in the typical terraced houses of so many urban areas in Britain even to our day.[17] What was widely assimilated, nonetheless, was the manner in which socialization became a defining feature in the distribution of domestic space, with a clear separation between ground-floor public areas and upper-floor private rooms.

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PART II:

LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

A SCREEN IN BETWEEN: INTERTEXTUALITY, CONSCIOUSNESS AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN DON DELILLO

Laura Álvarez Trigo
Instituto Franklin de la Universidad de Alcalá
alvarez.trigo.laura@gmail.com

Abstract

In Don DeLillo's *Americana* (1971) and *Point Omega* (2010) the ubiquity of mass media manifests in the characters' desire to represent their lives and consciousness on screen, with the hope of faithfully communicating it. In both these novels, film is not only present in the form of references to directors such as Jean-Luc Godard and Alfred Hitchcock, but also through protagonists who embark on the production of films focused on representing someone's self. This paper explores how, in such processes, characters' consciousness borrows from audiovisual media, as well as how said medium helps in communicating someone's subjectivity. For this purpose, it will analyze how the style through which the characters understand their own stories reflects mass media language and logic, and thus presents consciousness through the lenses of a media-saturated society.

Keywords: Don DeLillo, consciousness in the novel, interpersonal communication, intertextuality, mass media

1. Introduction

Don DeLillo is a novelist considered to be one of the key American writers of the post-war era. His role as a postmodern author can be sustained in the themes that are continuously found in his works, such as media, terrorism, complexities of language, politics, the operating power structures, and the economic situation. I argue that he does not simply introduce these elements in his narrative but engages with them in a diagnostic manner, suggesting a deliberate and informed critique of an overly mediated society. I suggest that, with such purpose, he utilizes mass media presence in his fiction as an intertextual resource that is reflected in the literary devices employed. In this article, I will focus on *Americana* (1971) and *Point Omega* (2010). I examine the appearance of media codes in the first-person discourse, as well as on the resulting diegetic levels the narrative establishes.

The presence of the cinematic is key in DeLillo's fiction in three ways. First, in the use of televisual and cinematic language. Second, in the use of a camera-eye point of view, characteristic of the postmodern narrative. And third, in the imitation of montage, expressed both through the juxtaposition of verbal fragments—as identified by David Foster Wallace—, and the influence of Jean-Luc Godard on DeLillo that the author has pointed out in an interview with Thomas LeClair (Salván 2009). I am most interested here in this third way of including the cinematic in his fiction through literary devices. While DeLillo himself cites Godard and cinema as a whole as influences in his narrative, the presence of media goes far beyond that. The imitation of montage is reflected in different aspects in DeLillo's fiction previously explored by critics, such as the subversion of linearity in the narrative (Thomas LeClair 1983), and the generation of meaning through juxtapositions reminiscent of montage (Mark Osteen 1996). The object of this work is to explore how the introduction of cinematic creations in the narrative operates as more than a plot devise. It will serve here to explicate the narrative through the lenses of intertextuality, rather than the more traditional notion of influence.

2. The autobiographical movie in *Americana*

Americana's protagonist David Bell is the first of many filmmakers that populate DeLillo's work. This middle-class white heterosexual male is the author's most common archetype in his protagonists. These characters are used to showcase

what Tim Engles defines as the "dependence of postmodern white American male identity on media-generated role models" (2019, 63), and through them, expose their "clichéd ways of living, consuming, and relating to others" (65). David Bell is a successful television executive who embarks on a journey across the country to film a documentary on Navajos. He never engages with such an enterprise. Instead, he sets off to record a chaotic autobiographical film, convincing locals and aspiring actors to reenact several scenes from his own past. Years later, we find David studies the film he has created. After this short scene written in the present tense, the novel closes with a flashback of David traveling west with an unknown Texan man in his Cadillac. Finally, he books a flight to New York, completing what David Cowart has identified as the circularity of the structure, signaling David's failure in his quest (134-38).

The narrative presents an exploration of the self through David's inability to know himself. This translates in a disorientated and unstable idea of individual consciousness presented as nostalgia for the modern subjectivity. In David's film, an actor argues that in America "there is a universal third person" who everyone aspires to be and that advertising "is the suggestion that the dream of entering the third person singular might possibly be fulfilled" (270). Media, particularly the fictions found in advertising and movies, have always had significance in David's life and thus, as if it were a mirror, he turns to the screen in an attempt at finding his selfhood. Hence, the mirror translates into the screen.

David's life is full of filmic references. We find in the narrative explicit mentions of Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas who speak of the American ideal male figure that David aspires to. David conceives the movie he is creating as a form of accessing the third person by entering the screen through an actor. He argues that a commercial moves the audience member "from first person consciousness to third person. In this country there is a universal third person, the man we all want to be. [...] Advertising is the suggestion that the dream of entering the third person singular might possibly be fulfilled" (270). Thus, he sees in the recording of his documentary the possibility of accessing the screen in an akin way to advertising. He reasons that the film he is recording is "a sort of first-person thing but without me in it in any physical sense, except fleetingly, [...] An attempt to explore parts of my consciousness" (263). Moreover, David appears in the movie himself in a brief shot reflected in a mirror toward the very end of the film, holding his camera. We encounter again this game of mirror

and reflections of the self in the way David keeps attempting to materialize his own selfhood.

We are presented in later chapters with David Bell watching the film where Austin Wakely, the actor, is pretending to be young David; while at the same time, the real younger David speaks directly at himself off-camera, prompting the older David to ask questions. Amusingly, through the juxtaposition of the two artistic creations and the two *Davids* at different points in history, the novel offers a subjectivity beyond its typical articulations. When writing the story of his adventures while filming the autobiographical movie, old-David is thinking about himself in the past. At the same time, young-David is filming the movie with this future person in mind. Both these creations can be looked at as historically aware explorations of the self. David asks actor-David if there is something else he would like to "tell the camera", Austin responds: "Hello to myself in the remote future, watching this in fear and darkness" (286). In these terms, David's journey in search of a possible real self is more enlightening for the reader than it is for him.

The narration adds layers of simulacra through continuously intertwining diegetic levels in a non-linear narrative. A third into the novel, David, the narrator, comments on his manuscript, which turns out to be the work we are reading. As such, we learn that not only has he created the autobiographical documentary he starts pursuing at the beginning of the narrative, but also has written a novel mixing in an apparent disorderly manner retelling his actions, ekphrastic descriptions of his movie, and flashbacks of his past. Hence, he attempts the creation of a second material object to represent his selfhood. Interestingly, in McLuhan's theory of the extensions of man (sic.) language is also considered to be a technology or medium, however, it is one that does not require a physical object outside of ourselves and as such, it cannot serve David's purpose. Through the enactment of this artificial conversation with himself, he does not get any closer to a revelation about his own self. Nonetheless, he gets the material objects that embody his consciousness: on the one hand the movie, and on the other hand the novel itself which operates through the mediation and intertextuality that the movie provides.

3. The biographical documentary in *Point Omega*

DeLillo replays the idea of a character's biographical movie with *Point Omega,* a short novel published in 2010. The protagonist Jim Finley is a filmmaker who decides to investigate reclusive Richard Elster, a retired scholar and a former military advisor during the War on Terror who is now living in a cabin somewhere in the desert. The interest for this study in connection to the previously discussed novel lies in the reprise of the use of the screen to communicate an identity, a self. And how, in the case of *Point Omega*, the narrative adds a diverging element by having to communicate someone else's self instead of one's own. Central to the critical dynamic of DeLillo's writings, the recurrent element of the ever-present screen is not lost in *Point Omega*. It appears here framing the novel in two short passages entitled *Anonimity,* in which an unknown man attends an exhibit at a museum where *24-Hour-Psycho* by Douglas Gordon is shown. This piece is a slowed-down version of Alfred Hitchcock's well-known *Psycho*, to the point where it lasts 24 hours.

Complications of interpersonal communication are embodied in Elster's character, whom Jim needs to talk to in order to create a biographical documentary about him. Communication between them turns out to be complicated by the particularities of the passage of time in the desert, and the process itself of recording and planning a documentary when negotiation with the subject is needed. Jim explains the difference between recording the documentary on Elster while living with him in his cabin in the desert and a previous one he has made on the comedian Jerry Lewis. As Jim begins recording, Elster insists on having Jim explain how the recording is going to work, by asking "what else" numerous times. On the other hand, Jim reminiscences about the documentary he did on Jerry Lewis, and explains: "I edited out all the guest appearances, the lounge acts, movie stars, dancers, […] The film was all Jerry, pure performance, Jerry talking, singing, weeping" (26). In this case, Jim had to do all the work of cutting out the moments in which Jerry was not speaking to the camera and alone. Throughout the novel, Elster becomes a version of Jerry Lewis that Jim can communicate with, and most importantly, record facing and speaking to the camera.

The use of the screen to express someone else's subjectivity is constructed in *Point Omega* based on three axes: a comparison to a written biography, a description of the inception of the documentary, and a process of representation

of the self. The first chapter opens with the sentence: "True life is not reducible to words spoken or written, not by anyone, ever" (17), explained in the narrative to be something that Elster repeated several times during Jim's stay in his cabin. The sentence is mirrored a bit later in the novel, with Elster maintaining that "[w]ords were not necessary to one's experience of true life" (34). This second statement underlines the belief that the impossibility of reducing the subjective experience to words is not limited only to the option of creating a verbal account per se, but also to the actual experience of life from the subjective perspective. Elster speaks of having been asked on several occasions to write a book about his life and experiences as a military advisor, however, he pointedly rejects the offer. These propositions once again are reminiscent of McLuhan's idea about language as a medium that doesn't require a physical object outside ourselves, contrary to the documentary that Jim is recording or the book that Elster never wrote. Following this logic, Elster argues that "true life takes place when we're alone, thinking, feeling, lost in memory, dreamingly self-aware" (17). Moreover, during the beginning of the recording process, how Jim describes his idea of the documentary mirrors Elster's idea of how consciousness and the true self can be represented. He aims to record a movie in which "[t]he man stands there and relates the complete experience, everything that comes to mind, personalities, theories, details, feelings. You're the man. There's no off-screen voice asking questions" (21).

In *Point Omega* we find something akin to simulacra and the hyperreal, most clearly, in the appearance of *24-Hour Psycho*, which also adds different layers to the narration as we realized that Elster's daughter is the woman in the museum appearing both in the prologue and the epilogue; and through the ekphrasis in the description of the project on the screen in this passage. Elster's attempt at opposing the materialism and speed of time dictated by city life also frames the milieu of the narrative in common thematic concerns in DeLillo's work previously pointed out through the analysis of *Americana*. Notwithstanding, the power of objects and technology is here questioned, but, ironically, the documentary is still being recorded and subverts the perception of time that the desert grants Elster.

4. Conclusions

The audiovisual medium in Don DeLillo offers a greater possibility of representing—or rather accessing—the self. This is achieved through the personification of the studied self in the actions and by directly speaking to the represented self, be it through an actor or with the person themself. Controlling what is contained in the film, as Benjamin Bird argues, allows the possibility of entering the third person, as well as a subversion of the relationship of linearity and temporality on the screen (Bird 2005). The creation of the physical object is particularly relevant. These material objects help the characters tread the line of the plausible deniability of the immanence of consciousness. What originally seems to be a relocation of consciousness into audiovisual media becomes a dislocation of consciousness into the physical object that is presented through an entanglement of movie references, descriptions and ekphrasis. All these add up to a non-linear narrative and specific style that crystalize Kristeva's idea of intertextuality as "a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee—or the character—and the contemporary or earlier cultural context" (35-36). And finally, McLuhan's theoretical framework of media as extensions of man supports the proposition that "all technologies are extensions of our own physical and nervous systems to increase power and speed" (90) and thus might operate, as they do in DeLillo's works, as a catalyst for the expression and materialization of the self.

   Toward the end of both novels, we begin to see clearly how DeLillo presents the practical impossibility of escaping the commodified self as long as one keeps on utilizing the same terms for understanding the world and the same system of representation that the market has provided. The protagonists have not been able to truly challenge the system of commodification and the market logic, which, in DeLillo's terms, means that they have not escaped the market sphere of artistic production. Hence, they stay trapped in this facsimile, without being able to access a truer self. The key message of the narratives resides in the displacement of perception from subject to the media since both Jim and David appear quite obsessed with screens through the novels, as well as in the reminder that media has a central influence on postmodern subjectivity. I would argue, however, that this displacement of perception from subject to the—presumably—powerful media is not merely passive, nor done with lack of resistance; it is rather a willing choice. David, inspired by his father's teachings

about the possibilities that media offer, attempts to inhabit a form of posthumanism located beyond the subject he is unable to know, which McLuhan, David's father and Elster in his original rejection to appear on film conveniently situate in media technologies.

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"AND YOU JUST HAPPENED TO FIND ME": THE TURN TOWARDS THE RELATIONAL IN TIM WINTON'S *THE SHEPHERD'S HUT*[1]

Bárbara Arizti
Universidad de Zaragoza
barizti@unizar.es

Abstract

This paper reads Tim Winton's *The Shepherd's Hut* in the context of transmodernity, defined by Rodríguez Magda as "the paradigm that allows us to think our present" (21). Drawing on Moraru, Luyckx, Rifkin and Held, the analysis of the novel proves that transmodernity, a dialectical synthesis between the modern and the postmodern, is slowly but surely contributing to a relational turn encompassing the personal and the transpersonal.

Keywords: transmodernity, empathy, cosmodernism, spirituality, ethics of care

This paper reads Tim Winton's *The Shepherd's Hut* (2018) as an instance of the turn towards the relational that characterises the contemporary moment. The theoretical framework draws on Jeremy Rifkin, for a broader, across disciplines perspective; on Christian Moraru, within the field of literature, and on Rosa

Mª Rodríguez Magda and transmodernity to provide a solid period perspective. Complementarily, in the course of the analysis two other theorists will be introduced: Virginia Held and her ethics of care and Marc Luykx's distinct version of transmodernity.

In the case of Winton it is not exactly a turn, as he has been engaged in the exploration of relationality for almost four decades: couples and parent-child relationships in *The Riders* and a whole array of short stories; relations among neighbours in his break-through 1991 novel *Cloudstreet* and more recently in *Eyrie*; and, beyond the terrain of the strictly human, a powerful emotional bond with the landscape of his native Western Australia, primarily in his memoirs *Land's Edge* and *Island Home*, as well as a strong commitment to the numinous throughout his fiction.

This paper analyses *The Shepherd's Hut* as the author's latest investigation into the relational, one that revisits and revives his previous concerns within a more favourable context. The novel is set in contemporary Western Australia, the part of the country Winton—himself a Westerner—almost always writes about. It opens with Jaxie Clackton, a buttered teenager, driving north to meet Lee, the girl he loves, who happens to be his cousin. But for a few pages, the novel is a huge flashback, recounted in the first person by a now happier, freer and more mature Jaxie. *The Shepherd's Hut* is a coming-of-age novel that follows the main character in his journey away from his hometown, which is also a psychological spiritual journey, providing Jaxie with a degree of confidence and self-knowledge as well as a fuller empathic awareness. Fintan MacGillis, an old Irish priest he bumps into in the desert plains of Western Australia, turns out to be instrumental in shaping his identity, honing his relational skills and awakening an interest in the spiritual. Jaxie has fled Monktown and taken to the bush because he fears he can be charged with murdering his father, a drunkard who brutally mistreats him and his now-dead mother and who is instantly struck dead by a falling bonnet while fixing his pickup. Although Jaxie hates his father, he is kind of grateful to him for having taught him the necessary abilities to survive in the bush (25) on his way to Magnet, where his aunt and cousins reside. Jaxie needs salt to preserve the animals he kills for food and Fintan lives as a hermit in a shepherd's hut next to a salt lake. He was sent to Australia from Ireland some years before and forced to live in exile. Fintan hides his secret, like Jaxie, who never tells the priest about his life as an abused child. In the months Jaxie spends in the surroundings of the shepherd's hut Fintan emerges as a very

different kind of father figure, a caring male much in line with Winton's well-known revisions of masculinity.

This paper analyses the relationship between this unlikely pair, who live as neighbours for a while, in the context of transmodernity, defined by Rodríguez Magda as "the paradigm that allows us to think our present" (2019, 21). Along with critics like Moraru, Luyckx, Rifkin and, to a certain extent, Held, I believe that transmodernity—a dialectical synthesis between the modern and the postmodern—is contributing to a relational turn encompassing the personal and the transpersonal, as Winton's new novel proves.

According to Rifkin, in our hyper-connected world, "we are increasingly exposed to each other in ways that are without precedent" (2009, 425). He argues that "while the backlash of globalization—the xenophobia, political populism, and terrorist activity—is widely reported, far less attention has been paid to the growing empathic extension, as hundreds of millions of people come in contact with diverse others" (425). In Rifkin's opinion, "a radical new view of human nature is emerging in the biological and cognitive sciences," challenging the widely held belief that "human beings are, by nature, aggressive, materialistic, utilitarian, and self-interested." Instead, the new view defends that "we are a fundamentally empathic species" (1) and that the drives traditionally considered primary "flow from repression or denial of our most basic instinct" (18). Rifkin adopts a wide-ranging approach that includes literature and the arts, theology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, political science, psychology, and communications theory (2) with the aim of proving that "human nature is, rather, at a more basic level, predisposed to affection, companionship, sociability, and empathic extension" (42).

Rifkin's thesis blends well with Christian Moraru's reflections on contemporary US letters. Moraru defends that "more than at any point in our past, being-in-relation, with an other, makes for the cornerstone of America and its self-perception in literature, art, and the humanities" (2011, 2). Moraru speaks of the emergence of a new cultural imagery since the late 1980s he terms "cosmodernism," promoting a relational ethics in today's interconnected world, "an imaginary of worlded aesthetic relations as much as […] one of ethical relatedness" (313). Cosmodernism is born out of a revision of modernity in an attempt to break away from "the logic of indifference," "the self-ascertaining self" (45), "the self-centred and self-centering relationality" broadly defining modernity along with "its postmodern afterglow" (48). Instead, cosmodernism

promotes "an *ecology* of relations, that is, another way of thinking about being in the world and, more broadly, about being: with oneself, with others both like and unlike oneself, with one's country and with the world beyond" (48; italics in the original).

Rodríguez Magda's period term transmodernity also revisits the tenets of modernity. Despite the fact that the Enlightenment's grand narratives, allegedly emancipatory but basically authoritarian and totalising, were debunked by postmodern thought, we cannot do without some of the contributions of modernity, still functional, she states, as regulative ideals (2011, 7). In Rodríguez Magda's words, transmodernity entails a "fluid return of a new configuration of the previous stages" (2011, 8; my translation) since it "prolongs, continues and transcends Modernity" (6; my translation). Although she does not advocate a return to absolute beliefs, in "The Crossroads of Transmodernity" she affirms "we are forced to create a habitable fiction and make it real" (2019, 28).

"Supportive or caring individualism" (2011, 9; my translation) is one of the traits of transmodernity Magda lists in her comparative table, which, following Ihab Hassan's oft-quoted two-column comparison, juxtaposes the modern, the postmodern and the new transmodern. In her three-column table, she opposes supportive individualism to both postmodern hedonism and modern effort, thus implying that transmodern individuals have learnt to avoid the dangers of combative commitment to one's ideas while preserving the possibility of engaging with others. In *The Shepherd's Hut*, Fintan MacGillis has learned to live in a world deprived of absolutes but where caring for one's own needs and —when he's given the chance—those of others, is all that matters. Jaxie asks the old priest whether he still believes in God. Fintan says he's not sure, "not if God was the peevish schoolmaster he was raised on" (177). He also feels estranged from the Catholic Church, whom he used to regard as family (229). "How can you be a priest and not believe in God?," Jaxie wonders. "I suspect," replies Fintan, "God is what you do, not what or who you believe in" (233). "When someone does me a kindness, it enlarges me, adds to my life, […] to all life," he explains (233).

Virginia Held's feminist ethics of care, hinging on the "moral claims of particular others" rather than on universal religious or philosophical principles (2006, 9), can help throw light on Fintan. According to Held, caring and being cared for are "truly universal" practices (3). She radically corrects dominant moral theories, with their emphasis on the self-sufficient individual, and

highlights, in contrast, the relational nature of human beings (9). The ethics of care, which balances reason with emotion, "sympathy, empathy, sensitivity, and responsiveness" (9), thrives in the space between "selfish individual" and "humanity" at large. "Persons in caring relations are acting for self-and-other together" (12), asserts Held. Fintan has been living on his own for eight years and, despite some initial misgivings, he is truly happy when Jaxie comes across him: "And you just happened to find me. In all this forsaken wilderness" (130). The Irish priest has managed to build a home away from home in the shepherd's hut. Significantly, much of Fintan and Jaxie's relationship develops around food. The old man nourishes the teenager back to strength, comforts him with cups of tea (124), gives him his spare clothes, offers soap and a towel (123), and cures his puffy eye, a reminder of his father's abuse (181). Winton relishes describing the smell of cooking (126, 216) and often portrays the pair sitting by the fire (175, 216). Like Lee, Jaxie's cousin, Fintan is very talkative, loves reading and makes you feel warm (234-235). Little by little, they settle into a routine of household chores (181) and walks by the lake (151, 223). The warm, welcoming feel of the shepherd's hut, in all its simplicity, contrasts with Jaxie's family home, described as chill and dark (11), and where his parents very rarely talked (234). Fintan's cares not only ensure physical survival but also provide the teenager with company.

Lyn McCredden presents Winton as "a self-identifying Christian in a largely secular nation; an earthly regionalist who also offers glimpses of the sacred to readers in Australia, and globally" (2016, 1). In her opinion, "Winton's fiction is both loved and derided; his religious and political views a little embarrassing or annoying, for some" (1). *The Shepherd's Hut* has been labelled a Christian parable and a metaphysical thriller (Niall 2018), with reviewers repeatedly drawing attention to the novel's exploration of spirituality (Hegarty 2018, Hunter-Tilney 2018, Seiffert 2018). Unlike previous fiction, especially *Cloudstreet*—Winton's most popular novel—in which he often deals with the numinous by resorting to magic realism, in his latest novel religious and spiritual concerns are dealt with straightforwardly. Jaxie shows a curiosity about religious affairs already before he meets Fintan (23) and his closeness to nature can also be read as a more elemental form of spirituality (24). He also experiences a growing concern for animals, even though he still hunts them to provide himself and Fintan with food (184). Fintan, a priest, often quotes from the Bible—the New Testament in particular—and shares Jaxie's communion with the landscape. He admits he

used to scoff at the worshiping of the sun and the moon as being primitive but living in close contact with nature has changed him (224). Fintan is perceived by Jaxie to be very intuitive, as the old priest senses the boy even before he sees him and, besides, he seems to be able to see right into him (169).

Both Winton's explicit approach to the numinous and Fintan's more open-minded attitude towards pre-modern beliefs can be understood in the light of Marc Luyckx's ideas on transmodernity. Like Rifkin, Moraru and Rodríguez Magda, Luyckx—former member of the Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission under Jacques Delors—believes we are witnessing the first light of a new consciousness, a transmodern worldview, even though it is "still a minority mindset" (Luyckx 1999, 974). Transmodernity keeps "the best of modernity" while "going beyond it" (972). Luyckx lists some values that are currently gaining ground and that he considers an "extremely powerful motor of transformation:" "respect for Mother Nature, care for communities, for family relations, for internal growth, for other cultures, desire for another economic logic, etc." (2010, 40). In his view, the more tolerant transmodern way of thinking "combines intuition and spirituality with rational brainwork" (1999, 971) and welcomes the numinous back in the public arena (972).

Michele A. Connolly analyses *The Shepherd's Hut* as proof that, in the first quarter of the twenty-first century, post-secular Australia "has a capacity, even an appetite, for spiritual consciousness" (2019, 2). Connolly does not argue the author "is making an explicitly […] Christian or even religious case in this novel" (2). Actually, religious hypocrisy and child abuse by Catholic clergy are openly addressed. For Connolly *The Shepherd's Hut* "is saturated with religious sensibility […] provoking the reader to thought" and expressing "a desire for or awareness of such spiritual values as mercy, gratitude and tenderness" (3). Whereas, institutional religious practice is in decline, post-secularity is "not hostile to or uninformed about Christianity, often interested in spiritual questions and prepared to face the difficult issues of mortality and meaning" (Tomlin in Connolly, 4). Being "spiritual but not religious" (4) is, for Connolly, a characteristic expression of this new stance.

The specifically Christian topics of sacrifice, martyrdom and atonement, bear great relevance at the end of the novel, when Fintan is tortured to death by drug producers growing pot in the area. The priest is on his own at the shepherd's hut but they refuse to believe there is nobody else around. Jaxie watches in hiding, too afraid to act. Coincidentally, the questions the gangsters

keep asking are the same he has been asking himself for a while: "Where was I? Who was I? What was I?" (264). When Fintan, aware that Jaxie is close, starts singing, the teenager undergoes an epiphany:

> something cracked and all in one moment it was like everything landed. All the birds landed. The sunlight landed. The song landed. All the decent things in him landed. On me. On my head. And I knew where I was, and who I was, and what I was. Yes, what I am. And it was just like he said. What I laughed at him for. It was like the sun and the moon going through me. I was charged. (265)

He now fully understands and takes on what the priest told him the day they met as well as just the previous night: "I wanted to thank you. For coming here. […] Don't you understand me, boy? Can't you see it? Jaxie Clackton, you are an instrument of God" (233). Prompted by the revelation, Jaxie springs to action and shoots the two crooks, just in time to comfort Fintan before he dies. "In the rupture the criminal world makes," believes Connolly, "the fate of both Jaxie and Fintan is resolved, the former to freedom in a new life and the latter to his final rest" (2). The boy perceives a transformation in the priest as he was being tortured: "The more they went at him panicky and savage, the fuller, and firmer and prouder he got. Fuck me dead, it was like he was grateful" (263). *The Shepherd's Hut* is a circular novel, featuring Jaxie on the final page driving the criminals' Jeep, now fully confident on his deeper identity: "I know what I am now. And peace is on its way" (267). The closing scene links up with the novel's opening in which Jaxie experiences "this angel feeling. Like you're just one arrow of light" (3).

Winton's latest novel fits well in the Australian tradition. It revolves around the story of two outlaws, a rough teenager whom his teachers regard as a juvenile delinquent (43) and a priest transported from Ireland to Australia, like the convicts of old, to pay for a crime never fully revealed. Read against the historical context of colonialism, the novel is not without controversy as the land that nourishes the two main characters was brutally taken away from its native inhabitants. However, although previous works by Winton easily yield to an analysis in terms of settler envy and appropriation, what *The Shepherd's Hut* brings to the fore is the current concern with relatedness, a kind of back-to-basics movement that emphasises our interdependent nature and that literature, often a little ahead of its time, is helping to document.

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"THIS BUGGER THINKS HE IS A SAINT NOW": FLANN O'BRIEN AND SAMUEL BECKETT

Germán Asensio Peral

University of Almería

german.asensio@ual.es

Abstract

Irish writer Edna O'Brien once wrote that "along with Joyce and Beckett, Flann O'Brien constitutes our trinity of great Irish writers." Questions of influence of James Joyce (1882-1941) over either Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) and Flann O'Brien (1911-1966) have been exhaustively investigated. However, Beckett and O'Brien's personal and literary relationship has been, save for a few exceptions, largely neglected by scholars. This paper aims at detecting the points of convergence and contention between both Irish writers from both a biographical and artistic standpoint. The final purpose is to demonstrate that O'Brien and Beckett's commonalities go beyond merely being Joyce's heirs and pivotal figures in the (post)modernist arena. Special attention will be devoted to Beckett's *Molloy* (1951) and O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939), as it is my contention that O'Brien and Beckett's similar artistic temperament emerges to the fore when these novels are studied in conjunction.

Keywords: Flann O'Brien, Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Irish Literature, Modernism, Postmodernism

1. Introduction

That the twentieth century hosted much of the best of all-time Irish writing is an uncontested fact. Names like George Bernard Shaw, Kate O'Brien, W. B. Yeats, Seán O'Faolain, Frank O'Connor or Edna O'Brien—among countless others—figure prominently in the canon of twentieth century Irish and world literature. There are, however, three figures which indisputably dominate the modern Irish context in particular: James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and Flann O'Brien (whose real name was Brian O'Nolan). For Edna O'Brien, "along with Joyce and Beckett, Flann O'Brien constitutes our trinity of great Irish writers" (in O'Connell 2011). Indeed, as Mark O'Connell has suggested, "it's tempting to picture Joyce as the inscrutable and dominant Father of Irish authors, Beckett as the suffering, ascetic, visionary Son, and Flann O'Brien as the shape-shifting Holy Comic Spirit" (2011).

Since Joyce spearheads the triangle as the main apex, it is only fitting that his individual relationships—in both personal and literary terms—with Beckett and O'Brien have been extensively explored. The plethora of academic contributions on Joyce and Beckett is largely mirrored by the Joyce-O'Brien nexus; in fact, the connections between their works were pinpointed as early as 1939, when O'Brien's first novel *At Swim-Two-Birds* was published. Critics were rapidly unhesitant to recognize Joyce's shadow in the pages of O'Brien's novel— O'Faolain himself famously claimed that there was "a general odour of split Joyce all over it" (in Hopper 1995, 46). Consequently, my aim with this paper is to humbly contribute to the currently scarce literature on O'Brien and Beckett by offering a complete overview on the connection of both writers. I will do so by first exploring their early biographical circumstances and noting the similarities and differences in their upbringing and social context; and, secondly, by examining O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* and Beckett's 1951 novel *Molloy* as a case study of the converging structural elements that both writers shared in their fiction.

2. Two Irish modernists

O'Brien and Beckett were contemporaries in the strictest sense of the word: born in 1911 and 1906, respectively, both were shaped by the drabness and apathy of pre- and post-independence Ireland. Both their families were well-to-do, Beckett's even more so: his Protestant background and his parental family's

success in the building industry largely guaranteed a stable place in the Irish Free State of the 1920s. O'Brien's family background was Catholic (and speakers of Irish for the most part) and were certainly less prominent, but his father's knowledge of Irish secured him a safe position at the top of the Civil Service, which resulted in a comfortable upbringing. Both had industrious fathers who took them on day-long walks on the mountains and devoutly religious and to some extent strict mothers. Both were Dubliners as well, Beckett having lived there until 1937 while O'Brien from 1923 onwards.

Despite being geographically close and having all these aspects in common, their paths in early life and their future careers could not have been more divergent: in accordance with his Protestant background, Beckett went to Trinity College Dublin, whereas O'Brien attended the predominantly Catholic University College Dublin. While in college, Beckett was the ideal student: he was awarded a Foundation Scholarship in 1926 and excelled at academic pursuits. His social skills, however, were not that notable: at parties he appeared as "a tall, thin, silent, rather morose figure, who leaned against the wall, head forward, silently observing the goings-on through steel-rimmed spectacles" (Cronin 1997, 61). O'Brien, on the other hand, seemed to have mastered the more social aspect of college rather quickly, as Cronin recounts how "he and his friends spent a lot of time in Grogan's and he was becoming, even by UCD standards, quite a heavy drinker" (Cronin 1990, 60). Unlike Beckett, his marks were rather average but his MA thesis, entitled "Nature in Irish Poetry" was initially rejected by his supervisor. The degree to which their early habits in college affected their future is self-explanatory, with Beckett, Nobel Prize in 1969 and internationally famous, dying at 83, while O'Nolan, whose early death at 54 was largely caused by excessive drinking, remained mostly known in Ireland. In fact, Beckett seems to have detested the pub-going habits of the Dublin intellectual coterie to which O'Brien proudly belonged. When asked the reasons for his move to Paris instead of staying in Ireland, he answered "Well, you know, if I were in Dublin I would just be sitting around in a pub" (in Cronin 1997, 265). It was also during their university years that they became acquainted and fascinated by James Joyce's work—particularly *Ulysses* (1922). Beckett's interest in *Finnegans Wake,* much evidenced by his editorial part in *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (1929), was the opposite of O'Brien's outright rejection of what he felt was deliberate obscurity and pretentiousness.

To all accounts, O'Brien and Beckett met only once, and it went far from well. They had a number of Dublin acquaintances in common: Niall Sheridan, Niall Montgomery and Con Leventhal, who replaced Beckett as lecturer at Trinity College and later became Beckett's secretary. In May 1939, Sheridan went to Paris and, at O'Brien's request, handed Joyce a copy of *At Swim-Two-Birds.* Joyce told Sheridan that "Samuel Beckett had already praised *At Swim-Two-Birds* very highly and that he looked forward to reading it" (Cronin 1990, 97). This, if Sheridan is to be trusted, demonstrates that Beckett was at least acquainted with O'Brien's book. It is also believed that *At Swim-Two-Birds* was the last book that Joyce read; his opinion on it was positive and has made the covers of most editions of O'Brien's prose-writing: "That's a real writer, with a true comic spirit." That same year, Beckett met O'Brien at Montgomery's house and told him of Joyce's appreciation for the book. O'Brien, tired of the Joycean tag being constantly attached to his work, disdainfully replied: "Joyce, that refurbisher of skivvies' stories" (Clissman 1975, 310). Apparently, Beckett took offense. There are no further accounts of O'Brien and Beckett having made contact at any point in their lives. O'Brien was almost certainly aware of Beckett's growing success since a detailed *Irish Times* article on Beckett, photograph included, loomed ominously over his daily *Cruiskeen Lawn* column on March 20, 1963.

There are no references to O'Brien, his work or any of his pseudonyms throughout the extensive collection of Beckett's letters; however, after going through the official Flann O'Brien archival collection held in the John J. Burns Library at Boston College I found out that O'Brien had Beckett's address (MS.1997.027, box 1, folder 59). Additionally, *The Collected Letters of Flann O'Brien* were also published earlier this year and indeed include crucial references to Beckett in O'Brien's correspondence. In a July 29, 1964 letter that discussed the publication of the French translation of *At Swim-Two-Birds,* O'Brien wrote of his intention to "get in touch with Sam Beckett, who is a friend of mine, to see about an injection of artificial publicity" (2018, 417). Stating their friendship, however, proves nothing, as O'Brien is known to have lied often in letters. The second reference, which is perhaps more revelatory of his sentiments, occurred on a letter to Con Leventhal, Beckett's former secretary and lifelong pen pal, of March 22, 1965. It concerned the publication of *The Dalkey Archive* (1964)*,* O'Brien's penultimate novel. He told Leventhal that he

had "sent Beckett a copy but heard nothing from him. This bugger thinks he is a saint now, or something" (2018, 466).

Another 1963 letter from Niall Montgomery says of *The Dalkey Archive* that "it is as good as anything Mr Beckett has done" (2018, 365). This ingenuous comparison, certainly intended as praise but unlikely to have been taken as such, brings me to the second part of my paper, which is an actual comparison in literary terms between both writers. To do so, I have selected *At Swim-Two-Birds,* O'Brien's first novel, and *Molloy,* one of Beckett's most popular novels and the first entry in his trilogy.

3. Two metafictions

I believe that *At Swim-Two-Birds* and *Molloy* are clear examples of postmodernist metafiction. Metafiction "consistently displays its conventionality, which explicitly and overtly lays bare its condition of artifice, and which thereby explores the problematic relationship between life and fiction" (Waugh 1984, 4). I will argue that both novels deliberately expose their fictional status through the narrators' composition of a *mise en abyme* structure over which they exert control and influence.

Molloy opens with the narrator's account of his present situation: he has taken the place of his dead mother and lives in her house and sleeps in her bed, the place from which he presumably writes. We are told that "there's this man who comes every week. Perhaps I got here thanks to him. He says not. He gives me money and takes away the pages. So many pages, so much money" (Beckett 2009, 3). Despite his obviously deranged status, he is a professional writer who gets paid for his writing. He further adds that "when he comes for the fresh pages he brings back the previous week's. They are marked with signs I don't understand. Anyway I don't read them" (Beckett 2009, 3). In a similar fashion, the unnamed protagonist of *At Swim-Two-Birds* is also a writer who reflects in bed "on the subject of my spare-time literary activities" (O'Brien 2003, 1). Both are—voluntarily or otherwise— bedridden writers, but what they are writing about is perhaps slightly more different. On the one hand, Molloy declares that "what I'd like now is to speak of the things that are left, say my goodbyes, finish dying" (Beckett 2009, 3). His story, which extends through a single paragraph over eighty pages, is an account of his erratic and eventful ramblings in search of his mother across a variety of unspecified urban

and natural locations. The book also includes a second chapter telling the story of Jacques Moran, a private detective who is given the task to find a certain Molloy but loses his mind in the process. On the other hand, the unnamed narrator in *At Swim-Two-Birds* is writing a book about another writer, Trellis, who spends his days in bed, occupied with "writing a book on sin and the wages attaching thereto" (O'Brien 2003, 29). He has compelled his characters to live with him so as to keep unyielding control over them; he has even raped one of them, Sheila, who as a result gives birth to Orlick, a writer. Discontented with Trellis's authoritarianism, his characters stage a rebellion against their author and prompt Orlick to write yet another story where all of Trellis's characters judge and subsequently beat their creator.

Both authors—Molloy and the unnamed narrator—are notably preoccupied with narratorial conventions. In reference to the collector of pages, Molloy claims that "it was he told me I'd begun all wrong, that I should have begun differently. He must be right. I began at the beginning, like an old ballocks, can you imagine that?" (Beckett 2009, 4). In *At Swim-Two-Birds,* the narrator states that "one beginning and one ending for a book was a thing I could not agree with" (O'Brien 2003, 1); and yet again, "one book, one opening, was a principle with which I did not find it possible to concur" (O'Brien 2003, 6). Despite their preoccupation with beginnings, both of them fail to secure a point of logical departure in their narratives: the narrator's story in *At Swim-Two-Birds* has no apparent opening, the excerpts being presented in a fragmentary fashion throughout the story; conversely, Molloy does manage to offer some progression but seems to ignore the real sequencing of events, for at the end of the novel it is suggested that Moran is indeed Molloy and that the second chapter is a prelude of the first and the real cause of Molloy/Moran's madness. The unnamed narrator and Molloy's struggle to achieve narrative closure is also indicative of the ontological and temporal disturbance at work in their novels. In *At Swim-Two-Birds,* the narrator has to resort to unconventional and artificial "signposts," such as "Conclusion of the Book, penultimate" and "Conclusion of the Book, ultimate" (O'Brien 2003, 226-7), similar to Molloy's "End of the recall" (Beckett 2009, 61) to warn the reader that the novel is about to come to an abrupt and entirely unrelated end: "Well known, alas, is the case of the poor German who was very fond of three and [...] cut his jugular with a razor three times and scrawled with a dying hand on a picture of his wife good-bye,

good-bye, good-bye" (O'Brien 2003, 228). Similarly, Molloy/Moran anticipates that "Now I may make an end" (Beckett 2009, 168) only to realize that "it is a great thing to own a plot in perpetuity, a very great thing indeed. If only that were the only perpetuity" (Beckett 2009, 168). He is referring to the mysterious voice and its command to write a report on the Molloy mission, which begins in the exact same way as the chapter starts, thus suggesting a sense of continuous circularity.

All this seems to indicate that, as Patrick Bixby has claimed, "Beckett and O'Brien draw attention to the compromised status of the author as unified origin or authoritative source of meaning, and to a related opening up of the text to other voices and other writings" (2015, 467). The importance, and at the same time the subversion, of the figure of the author in *Molloy* is evidenced in how he lacks control over what he creates: "The truth is I haven't much will left […] The truth is I don't know much" (Beckett 2009, 3) and, as Moran, in being forced by the mysterious voice—which in this case can be interpreted to belong to the more authorial Molloy from the first paragraph of the novel—to write himself to eternity: "It told me to write the report […] then I went back into the house and wrote, It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows. It was not midnight. It was not raining" (Beckett 2009, 170). This occurs in a similar way in *At Swim-Two-Birds,* with Trellis' inability to wake up from the drug-induced slumber caused by his characters or to prevent their physical assault on him after an unfair trial. Another minor aspect of convergence is also how *Molloy,* who repeatedly references other characters in Beckett's fiction such as Murphy, Watt or Mercier, reflects the theory of character recycling enunciated in *At Swim-Two-Birds*: "The entire corpus of existing literature should be regarded as a limbo from which discerning authors could draw their characters as required" (O'Brien 2003, 19). Even though said Beckett's characters have no discernible part in the story, the fact that Molloy transcends his own ontological plane to summon to his imagination characters from other narratives is telling about Beckett's own metafictional interests in *Molloy.*

These considerations on the authorial aspect of both novels naturally bring forth the issue of the Chinese-box structure, or *myse-en-abyme,* which as Rolf Breuer points out, exists both in *At Swim-Two-Birds* "in a playful way with quirky humor and absurd contents" and *Molloy,* where it suits Beckett's "more existentialist concerns" (2007, 350). *At Swim-Two-Birds* encompasses at least

four narrative layers, with direct interaction between the second, third and fourth: the student-narrator (first level) who is writing a novel about Trellis (second level), who is at the same time writing a novel about an assortment of characters (third level) who, at the end, beckon Orlick to write another story (fourth level) where they are free to outdo their author. For Terence Brown, "O'Brien […] out-Becketts Beckett in giving his book a vertiginous textuality" (2006, 217). In *Molloy,* the Chinese-box structure is simpler yet at the same time more problematic, for it progresses both vertically and circularly. The first narrative level is dominated by Molloy, whose weekly page exchange composes, according to Brown, the novel. The second narrative level takes the rest of the novel and features both Molloy and Moran, with Moran's narrative progressing in a circular rather than vertical direction. In this way, both novels become what Stephen G. Kellman (1976) termed as "fictions of self-begetting;" that is, fictions which in turn generate other fictions, taking the form of novels in *At Swim-Two-Birds* and of a report in *Molloy.*

4. Conclusions

In view of this, there are different ways of evaluating the relationship between *At Swim-Two-Birds* and *Molloy.* One, suggested by Breuer (2007), is the belief that O'Brien's novel exerted a direct influence over Beckett. If Sheridan is to be believed, Beckett did actually read and enjoy *At Swim-Two-Birds* shortly after its publication. In fact, Breuer extends the field of influence of O'Brien's novel to most of Beckett's fiction up to *The Unnamable* (1953). Whether or not this was the case is difficult to prove, particularly given the fact that both are late modernist/postmodernist novels and thus share an interest for structural experimentation and narrative fragmentation and incohesiveness. Another is to view them, as Bixby (2015) does, as both being "in the wake of Joyce" and pursuant of an experimental literary project reflecting their social and political circumstance which, as seen during the first part of this paper, was largely similar during their early years.

These considerations are only strengthened by the fact that there exist further links between different works by both authors. For instance, even though it must have been impossible for Beckett to have read O'Brien's second novel *The Third Policeman* (written in 1940 but published posthumously in 1967) before writing *Molloy,* or any of his pre-Trilogy novels for that matter, there

also exists a surprising amount of echoes and leitmotifs in common, such as the personification of the bicycle, the figure of the sergeant and the circularity of the plot; or, conversely, the description of the mother in O'Brien's fourth novel *The Hard Life* (1961) and Molloy's mother: "What did I see of her? A head always, the hands sometimes, the arms rarely" (Beckett 2009, 15) and "It is not that I half knew my mother. I knew half of her: the lower half—her lap, leg, feet, her hands and wrists" (O'Brien 2003, 11). Be that as it may, I would like to argue that there exist enough echoes between the work of both writers to merit further examination. These echoes, I believe, rest in their fascination for Joyce, their penchant for literary innovation in the shape of metafictional narratives, their interest in the use of comic devices mixed with macabre imagery and, above all, in their contemporariness as Irish modernist and postmodernist writers.

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THE PARADOX OF HOSPITALITY IN SHARON BALA'S *THE BOAT PEOPLE*[1]

Eva Darias Beautell

Universidad de La Laguna

edariasb@ull.edu.es

Abstract

Hospitality is a paradox. Often defined as the act of being friendly and welcoming to guests or strangers, the very notion also marks the existence of a threshold between oneself and the other, the host and the guest, the national and the foreign. In the past two decades, there has been significant research that looks at how these issues are addressed and negotiated in Canadian literature. However, further critical work is needed that articulates the relationships that take place at the hospitality threshold and probes the potential of Canadian literature to engage with both the contradictory and the utopian dimensions of hospitality. This paper will examine Sharon Bala's *The Boat People* (2018) within that complex context.

Keywords: Canadian literature, justice, hospitality, refugee, security, Sharon Bala

1. Introduction

This paper will look into the notion of hospitality in Sharon Bala's *The Boat People* (2018), a novel based on the real events in 2010 that surrounded the arrival on the Canadian West Coast of a cargo ship (the MV *Sun Sea*) carrying almost five hundred Sri Lankan asylum seekers. The Tamil refugees were escaping persecution by the Sinhalese government after the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka. But when they arrived in Canada, they were detained and placed into prison facilities by the conservative government, which suspected that some of them might belong to the listed terrorist group the Tamil Tigers. Some of the refugees were kept in detention for over a year, while Amnesty International and other humanitarian organizations accused the Canadian government of violating fundamental human rights by keeping these people in detention, "demanding more proofs of identity than usual, [and] investing significant energy and resources in a search for adverse information about the passengers" (Amnesty International Canada 2011, n.p.).

Inspired by these events, *The Boat People* provides a fictionalized account of the inside story, successfully critiquing the bureaucratic obstacles to gaining refugee status in Canada, and denouncing, in doing so, the hostility implicit in the very structure of detention reviews and admissibility hearings. But perhaps the most interesting aspect, on which I want to focus in this paper, is how the novel approaches the paradox implicit in the notion of hospitality.

2. Hospitality in Canadian literature

One of the most inspiring theoretical approaches to hospitality is found in the work of Jacques Derrida, who focuses precisely on its paradoxical nature. Often defined as the act of being friendly and welcoming to guests or strangers, the very notion also marks the existence of a threshold between oneself and the other, the host and the guest, the national and the foreign. On the one hand, Derrida argues, an *unconditional* form of hospitality must have no borders; for it to be unconditional, it requires the suspension of the threshold between inside and outside. On the other, hospitality implicitly relies on the notions of property and self-identity since "in order to constitute the space of a habitable house and a home, you also need an opening, a door and windows, you have to give up a passage to the outside world [*l'étranger*]. There is no house or interior without a door or windows" (Derrida 2000, 61). This is the paradox of hospitality.

Following this line of thinking and moving to the field of postcolonial studies, we come across an important contradiction: while many thinkers coincide in defining hospitality as an ethical response to the other, the fact is that it has also been used to legitimize the colonial project and the construction of the modern nation-state by means of precisely the exclusion of the other. A similar related paradox imbues the notion of human rights. According to Pheng Cheah, while human rights discourses assert that the human being "is free and possesses dignity, and therefore is the bearer of inviolable rights," the protection of those rights is usually framed within the nation-state, which guarantees the rights of its citizens only inasmuch as it denies the rights of those who are not (2006, 5).

This conundrum is of utmost importance for Canada, where indigenous, colonial, postcolonial and decolonial histories intersect in complex ways. Whereas settler Canada, for instance, depended for its formation on depriving the original inhabitants of the land of their rights as legitimate hosts, the present development of Canada as a multicultural nation is necessarily tied to migration processes and thus to the practice of hospitality, at least in theory. These complexities bring to the fore the oxymoronic nature, or even the impossibility, of hospitality as such. As Alia Somani states: "Beneath Canada's traditions of tolerance, peace, and good governance and its image of multicultural goodness are the hidden […] histories of racial oppression and violence" (2015, 76).

In the past two decades, there has been significant research that looks at how these issues are addressed and negotiated in Canadian literature. However, further critical work is needed that articulates the relationship between hospitality and Canadian literature, probing the potential of the literary to engage with both the contradictory and the utopian dimensions of hospitality. In her analysis of humanitarian narratives, Smaro Kamboureli argues for "the capacity of literature to instruct, to destabilize given assumptions, to inspire us to imagine alternative ways of engaging with the suffering other" (2013, 122). But what are the specific literary tools of that capacity? Can Canadian literature propose new forms of engagement with the other? How do particular texts produce or foreclose hospitality?

I believe Sharon Bala's *The Boat People* offers an unusual and powerful approach to these questions through four main narrative strategies. In the first place, the storyline advances a critical reflection of the hostility involved in admissibility procedures for citizens of certain countries applying for refugee status in Canada. Secondly, at the level of the narrative structure, while the

story moves back and forth between Sri Lankan and Canadian lives, creating a ground for comparison and shocking contrasts between the two, this dual mode does not deliver the expected dichotomous conclusion. Thirdly, the telling is broken into a swift sequence of short and sharp chapters that convey a sense of fragmentation and inevitability affecting all characters, and not only the refugees. And, finally, the narrative point of view shifts among three different characters whose lives touch by contact with the hospitality threshold (the division between those who are in and those who are out the space of national belonging). In what follows, I will briefly develop each of these strategies.

3. Beginning

The first chapter, aptly called *Beginning*, already contains key examples of the narrative strategies that build the novel's approach to hospitality. It starts abruptly with the following words:

> BEGINNING
> Mahindan was flat on his back when the screaming began […]. He heard the whistle
> and thud of falling artillery, the cries of the dying. Mortar shells and rockets, the whole world on fire. (Bala 2018a, 1)[2]

This opening transports the reader, with no introduction, to the horrors of the Sri Lankan civil war. But what stands out in the first place is a name, Mahindan, the very first word of the novel, a big capital M. This is no coincidence. As Bala explains, as she was researching the actual events to write the novel, she found out that no names of any of the asylum seekers were ever revealed in the press because of a publication ban. While this ban was designed to protect their identities, "it also had the perverse side-effect of stripping people of their identities and life stories. In doing the research," Bala says, "I kept coming up against this: that I couldn't get at any of the real individuals, that it was always outsiders (reporters, politicians, internet trolls) who were defining them and framing their narratives" (2018b, n.p.). In that context, Bala's decision to begin her narrative with the name of her main character does not seem casual and has a reversing humanizing and upholding effect. Moreover, I would further argue, denying the refuges a name may have the perverse effect of liberating the host

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2. Subsequent references are to this edition.

from the ethical obligation of offering hospitality, since, according to Derrida (2000, 27), hospitality is not offered to an anonymous arrival, to someone who has no name. The act of hospitality starts with a question: *What is your name?* It follows that failure to ask that question, to even acknowledge the refugee has a name, keeps the control of the host in place (whose power to host remains untouched) while relinquishing any obligations.

4. Happy to be here

As I have previously mentioned, the narrative structure supports the novel's discussion of hospitality, moving back and forth between Sri Lanka and Canada and deliberately shocking the Western reader with its brutal descriptions of the war, "the roll call of the dead" in Mahindan's mind (3), his precarious existence and his miraculous survival (1), and "the sourness of his skin, the raw animal stink of the bodies all around" on the ship (1). Initially, this strategy might be seen as creating a ground for comparison between his past in Sri Lanka and his future in Canada, hell and heaven, the narrative time being a purgatory present in-between.

And, in fact, that interpretation seems congenial in the first few pages of the book. For instance, as the human cargo is intercepted by the Canadian border police, the passengers crowd on the deck and cheer at the sight of the flag, "red and white, majestic in the flaming sky" (4), rejoicing at the expectations of their new life just beginning (4). It will be later revealed that the cause of this joy is not only their arrival at some port after months of precarious travelling onboard a rusty vessel. The refugees are also happy to have reached Canada (and not the United States) because of Canada's "reputation for being a soft touch" (40). This idea is upheld for a moment, together with an image of Canada as multicultural haven. As the refugees disembark, the text reads:

> HAPPY TO BE HERE
> Mahindan had always thought of Canada as a country of whites, but now he saw dark eyes too, Chinese and Japanese and blacks and others who might have come from India or Bangladesh. Here was a place for all people. (12)

However, this initial relief is soon problematized by the series of events that follow. As they disembark, the refugees are put in handcuffs and shackles by masked officials, taken to a prison while they await their admissibility hearing, and, in the case of Mahindan, who is a widower travelling with a small child,

they separate him from his son, who is taken away in a highly emotional scene. The constant repetition of the words *safe* and *safety* in this chapter runs counter to the actual brutal story, undermining the suggested dichotomous pattern between Canada and Sri Lanka. The result is an equal measure of expectation and anticipation that disturbs the reading, foreshadowing the failure of hospitality and the darkness ahead.

As we can see, the title of this third chapter, "HAPPY TO BE HERE," opens the highly ironic and antithetical logics underlying the story and, by extension, I think, the text's discussion of hospitality. Other titles, standing out in their capital letters, are

GO HOME TERORIST! [misspelling intended]
A GOOD PLACE
NEGOTIATIONS
NEW WORLD
LAW AND ORDER
HOMELAND
BACK TO HELL
WHAT TO DO?
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
ENEMY ALLIENS
MODEL MIGRANT
TRUE OR FALSE
JUDGE, JURY, AND EXECUTIONER
FREE COUNTRY
ONE DAY

5. What to do?

The events unfurl through the fast sequence of short and sharp sections, creating a sense of urgency, fragmentation and inevitability, and often depriving the characters of any control of the situation. And this often seems the case not only of the Tamil refugees but also of the Canadians who try to help them. When Mahindan is accused of hiding personal connections with the Tamil Tigers, he wonders if the adjudicator does not know "what it was like to have so little agency?" (166). As is also the case of the Sri Lankan Canadian law student, Priya, the Japanese Canadian adjudicator Grace shares with the refugee Mahindan more than she might expect. Her actions are constrained by what

Gayatri Spivak calls "the double bind," defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "a situation in which a person is confronted with two irreconcilable demands or a choice between two undesirable courses of action." Identifying the implicit links between the discourse of terror and racism, Spivak calls for the power of the literary to imagine otherwise, to go beyond the binary and undertake an exercise of the aesthetic imagination (2012, 383). Without this exercise, Bala's novel implies, the world is black and white.

6. Enemy aliens

But, if there is a powerful way in which the novel discusses the paradox of hospitality, that is through the interaction among its three narrative points of view: the refugee Mahindan, the second-generation Sri Lankan Canadian law student, Priya, and the third-generation Japanese Canadian adjudicator, Grace. The story shifts among these three different characters whose lives touch by contact with the hospitality threshold. For some reviewers, the result of this narrative choice is a veering away from bureaucratic abstraction and into the personal lives of these three people (Wiersema 2018, n.p.). Interestingly, the reverse is also true, because as Bala herself states in an interview, the only way "to not just look at individuals, but at the whole system," is through a multiplicity of perspectives: "the person on trial, their lawyer who understands the system, and the person who has to make the decision" (Sue Carter 2018, n.p.).

I agree with Rudrapriya Rathore when she argues that the multidimensional view succeeds in unmooring any simple interpretations. "Before the reader is told what horrors Mahindan endured, in what context, and how he survived, the novel's other voices are already speaking, their interpretations and apprehensions of the refugee ship overlapping his experience" (2018, n.p.). Priya, whose family has migrated from Sri Lanka just before her birth, fights her initial reluctance to help the immigration lawyer at the same time that she discovers a family secret that unexpectedly connects her story to Mahindan's. Most interestingly, for the text's articulation of hospitality as paradox, Grace is caught between two conflicting views of human rights: her own family's traumatic experience of the internment and dispersal of Canadian citizens of Japanese origin during and after World War II, which she is reluctant to talk about, and her present role as adjudicator of justice to decide on the fate of a group of Tamil refugees whom she fears.

The two narratives, highly disruptive of the temporality of the multicultural nation, break their own internal temporal logics when Grace's mother, Kumi, who is in her initial Alzheimer stages, puts one against the other, comparing them. And, no matter how often Grace repeats that "It's not the same thing" (199), that "Without good government, there is anarchy," and that "Everyone is doing their best" (200), Kumi's judgement that those who forget past wrongs perpetuate them on others (201) stays with us:

> ENEMY ALIENS
>
> Nothing is different […] Not…distrust…of the…fear…fear…emotions are man…man…twisted up. She wound her fingers round and round, over each other, and mutely opened and closed her mouth. (201)

The helpless effect is further supported by the lack of quotation marks for direct speech. Kumi's fractured sentences mark the fractures of the supposedly cohesive discourse on national safety. Her struggle to remember the words increases Grace's sense of vulnerability because it acts as a powerful counter-narrative to the official linear account of progress in safety and sovereignty. But the multiplicity and complexity of viewpoints in the novel prevent the reading from just settling there in that kind of dichotomy. In fact, as Rathore argues, "The most striking aspect of *The Boat People* lies in its quietly confident understanding that everyone is complicit in systems of racial and ethnic violence. By varying degrees, and with varying consequences, each character has to find ways to grapple with different kinds of conflict" (2018, n.p.).

7. The missing 'r'

In the end, as the story moves forward, the extreme vulnerability of the stranger is increasingly projected onto the host's sense of safety, setting limits to, or altogether preventing, the action of hospitality. A puzzle foreshadowed by the missing ´r´ in GO HOME TERORIST, perhaps suggesting that the writer of the banner is also an immigrant for whom English is not a first language. That missing 'r' marks the paradox of hospitality.

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"THEY GAVE THEM A LANGUAGE": PERFORMING SEX MANUALS THROUGH LITERATURE

Cristina Díaz Pérez
Universidad de Oviedo
diazcristina@uniovi.es

Abstract

This workshop aims at fostering the knowledge of the history of sexuality and its impact on literature while promoting active methodologies. For this purpose, we will delve into the success of sex manuals, which codified the sexual, contraceptive and abortive discourses of the Interwar period, through the works of Marie Stopes, Stella Browne and Helena Wright. Thus, we will offer a brief discussion of their main ideas to further assess its relevance in the novels of the 1930s written by women. *The Corn King and the Spring Queen* (Mitchison 1930), *Voyage in the Dark* (Rhys 1934) and *The Weather in the Streets* (Lehmann 1936) will be the chosen titles to briefly perform a reassessment of topics such as abortion, contraception and sexual freedom. Hence, we attempt to reassess the history of sexuality, its repercussion in literature and its current vitality.

Keywords: sexuality, sex manuals, modernism, performance

1. Introduction

The aim of this workshop has been to foster the knowledge of the history of sexuality during the interwar period considering the manuals that enacted sexual, contraceptive and abortive discourses, influenced by sexology and the

changes that took place after the Great War. With this purpose in mind, we have attempted to bring this period alive by reassessing it through some modernist works as well as promoting active methodologies: discussion and performance.

2018 was the hundredth anniversary of the release of *Married Love* (1918). This was the first English sex manual aimed at the general public addressing sexual practices, physiological processes and contraceptive methods. *Married Love* became an immediate success making sexology available. Marie Stopes, its author, received thousands of letters from readers that needed further answers about sexuality, contraception and relationships. This event highlighted the thrill for sex knowledge as well as the capability of science to determine ways of thinking and acting.

The Wellcome Centre commissioned the chamber opera *Dear Marie Stopes* to commemorate this event in 2018. Using extracts of the letters, they brought back to life the state of sex a century ago while questioning sexuality today. Along the same lines, in 2017, *You, Dear Doctor, Are My Only Rescue!* was first released as an epistolary performance based on the letters written to Polish sexologists in order to examine the evolution of sexuality. Thus, bearing in mind these initiatives, we have intended to consider sex manuals in relation to the literature of the 1930s to reassess sexuality while questioning and performing extracts of novels that enacted sex discourses.

2. The modern currents of sexuality

A fundamental beginning to our workshop entailed showing a short clip of *Dear Marie Stopes* in order to frame the manuals and the questions that introduced. The English society of the interwar period suffered sexual and bodily ignorance, social acceptability of married heterosexuality at the expense of other forms of enjoying sexuality as well as gender dichotomies, shame of using birth control and eugenics. Furthermore, modernity entailed that some modern women were associated with the urban, economic independence and sexual freedom from 1918 onwards as well as with uncertain perspectives and anxieties about the future (Bland 2013, 3). In turn, the traditional idea of marriage is revisited to adapt it to modern times (Simmons 2009, 104) and the social and economic changes. As a result, manuals are channelled as the means to reform marriage and promote heterosexuality and family planning and encourage a pretence of

equality in couples. Nonetheless, some authors, such as Stella Browne, decided to use manuals and pamphlets to enforce abortion and promote birth control.

In consequence, manuals can be understood both as prescriptive texts since they regulate social and sexual behaviour as well as pedagogic texts which adapt to the social, educative and economic needs and circumstances. They have been understood as liberal or repressive depending on their analysis and their authors. Despite their divergence and their contested impact, manuals certainly promoted the (open) discussion of sexuality and its key issues.

In view of this framework, we decided to hand out plastic-coated cards where different quotations from some of the manuals written by Marie Stopes, Stella Browne and Helena Wright were exposed, so participants could approach the reality of the manuals. They were intended to discuss in groups some of the following extracts. Among the most debated topics, we find family planning and eugenics which was a prevalent topic as Marie Stopes denoted: "They think any birth control immoral. They encourage the production of babies in rapid succession which are weakened by their proximity while they might have been sturdy and healthy had they been conceived further apart" (1918, 88). In an attempt to control the sexual patterns of people, the need to space pregnancies was promoted as well as the timing of sexual encounters was stated. In turn, abortion, which was illegal at that time, was enhanced primarily by Stella Browne, as a feminist issue: "Why, then, should abortion not be freely available for all, if and when contraceptives fail?" (1935, 4).

The discussion of the different extracts promoted the revision of how sexuality has been coded while pinpointing how the bodies of women have been at the forefront of the debate. The pedagogy and choices over reproduction and the availability of contraceptive methods have been the most discussed topics, which have been reflected in the literature since modernist female authors reflected abortion in their novels from Rose Macaulay to Mary Borden and Vera Brittain, apart from the authors that we included in this workshop.

3. Performing modernity

Lesley Hall, historian of sexuality, has discussed how marriage manuals authors, in particular Marie Stopes, provided people with a language to articulate their bodies, their ideas and their sexualities (2011), as we have exposed in the title of this workshop: "They gave them a language." This codification of sexual

discourses trespassed the scientific and ideological texts into literature. Celia Marshik and Allison Pease have examined how "overt interest in sexuality is one of the defining features of the modernist period" (2019, 51), especially by female authors who understood the fact that sexuality was inherently linked with the status of women and the modern times.

Thus, the second part of the workshop entailed considering extracts of novels by women during the 1930s which were influenced by the works of sex manuals authors. *The Corn King and the Spring Queen*, written by Naomi Mitchison in 1930; *Voyage in the Dark* published in 1934 by Jean Rhys; and *The Weather in the Streets,* a novel of Rosamond Lehmann in 1936 were the chosen titles. Participants read different extracts of the texts that deal with sexual freedom and back-street abortions and performed them freely.

By regarding these modernist stories from a contemporary perspective, they considered how sexual, contraceptive and abortive discourses have changed over time depending on different geographical locations, but they also signalled the influence that medical discourse and sexual manuals have had over our understandings of sexuality. Nonetheless, the most striking feature of the performances was seeing the vitality of the issues that modernist authors dealt with.

4. Conclusions

This workshop has attempted to make visible the interstice between the history of sexuality and modernism to promote further insights into the study of literature. Employing a didactic use of dramatizations, we intended to encourage the reflection and discussion over how literature is taught in Higher Education as well as the potentialities of bodies and performances.

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THE OTHER THROUGH THE MIRROR:
THE SPECULAR DYNAMIC OF FICTIONAL REPRESENTATION

SARA GONZÁLEZ BERNÁRDEZ
University of Santiago de Compostela
sara_padron@hotmail.es

Abstract

If there is one image that can be said to describe the general critical understanding of self-hood and identity, it must be that of the mirror. The mirror has been used as a metaphor to explain the process by which humans begin to conceive of their selves as unique entities; not only that, it has also come to represent the power dynamic inherent to the subject/Other duality. Much in the same way, fiction is also described through the mirror in two ways: firstly to explain its function to reflect (or distort) reality, and secondly to explain the act of representation, by which subjects look for images—reflections—of themselves within fiction.

This paper, therefore, considers this specular dynamic in relation to its effect over the representation of marginal, or otherized, identities within fiction, focusing on the case of women (who are regarded as man's Other) as a prominent example.

Keywords: representations, fiction, subject/Other, mirror

1. Introduction

In this paper, I would like to discuss the specular dynamic—that is, the image of the mirror—in relation to the representation of marginal, or otherized, identities within fiction. The idea of representation itself is difficult to pin down, given the plethora of disciplines that have discussed it. A more extensive work ought, ideally, to encompass and join together some major interrelated currents (phenomenology, identity, empathy…). While this would be ambitious indeed, the coherent relationship among these theories leads me to argue that a discussion of fictional representation and its impact would be lacking without them.

In this paper, a small part of this immense body of work is presented, to serve as an introduction to this fascinating topic. The objective of this is twofold: I would like to revise the construction of identity, and particularly of identities considered Other, through several theorists who focus on the image of the mirror to explain the process. On the other hand, and as complementary to the previous objective, I consider how the mirror dynamic created by these constructions affects the representations of marginal identities within fictional contexts, focusing on the instance of women in order to exemplify the consequences of these dynamics for marginalized subjects. Nonetheless, before beginning, it is worth highlighting that the available space makes it impossible for this paper to be anything but an introduction and a re-examination of existing theory, paving the way for a larger and more detailed examination of how marginal identities are represented within fiction. It is, therefore, conceived as part of a much larger work which I hope to execute in the form of a PhD thesis.

2. The significance of reflection

The image of the mirror has proven essential to the critical understanding and description of selfhood, perhaps due to the ocular-centrism which has generally characterized Western philosophy. Visual metaphors pervade the philosophical descriptions of identity, and identification (of both oneself and others) is widely considered to be a wholly visual process – as in, identification with a given *image*. Jacques Lacan's theory of the mirror stage is a prime example of this. Following Freudian psychoanalysis, Lacan famously theorized that the child's

first grasp of itself as a subject took place the first time it saw itself in a mirror. The child imagines their mirrored self to be "more complete, more perfect than he experiences his own body", thus seeing it as superior (Mulvey 1975, 9). This first identification and consequent fascination with one's perception of an ideal self was, for Lacan, crucial to the formation of subjectivity and to set the process of identification in motion. In the child's case, the identification took place "at a time when children's physical ambitions outstrip his motor capacity" (Mulvey 1975, 9), which explains the child's conception of the mirrored self as an ego-ideal. However, this idea that the mirror suggests a perfect or identical reflection is belied by the fact that the subject is not, in itself, perfect: it is already disjointed, a disjoining which could be prompted in any number of ways—for instance, by the distance between the way the subject perceives his/herself and the way in which others perceive him/her. In spite of its drawbacks, the mirror stage was fundamentally influential for identification theory, especially because of Lacan's consolidation of the notion of *Other*, a placeholder identity created by the subject which may reflect the subject's ideal qualities or their innermost fears, flaws, or lacks. As is well-known, the idea of the Other is consistently employed to describe the relationship established between a subject and those who are not *like* itself, marked by some fundamental difference. Indeed, this relationship is often a power dynamic marked by the dehumanization, exploitation, and objectification of the Other.

What I find interesting about the identification process is that, unlike Lacan assumed, it does not only take place during childhood; identification is, in fact, a continued process repeated throughout human life, taking place into adulthood and not only in front of mirrors. The subject looks for images of itself throughout its life in a variety of ways, not the least of which is fiction—which therefore functions as a mirror in this case. It is worth mentioning that fiction itself is also heavily informed by the idea of specularity and reflection, even down to the basic idea that it is, or should be, a mirror to reality. This position is what Toril Moi calls "extreme reflectionism", which poses that "writing is seen as a more or less faithful *reproduction* of an external reality to which we all have equal and unbiased access" (1985, 45).

This misconception leads to the problematic of considering reality as objective and absolute, a problem which Moi summarizes rather well: "the real is not only something we construct, but a controversial construct at that" (45);

each individual subject's perception of reality is always filtered by their own subjectivity—and even that of other subjects. Of course, this set of perspectives imprints itself, consciously or not, within the process of textual production, which explains why a subject might find their experiences have been misrepresented or represented differently than they know. Importantly, however, the subjectivity of reality does not imply that fictional works can get away with misrepresentations; Moi is adamant that such works should be criticized for "having selected and shaped their fictional universe according to oppressive and objectionable ideological assumptions"; however, this is not the same as "failing to be 'true to life'" or "not presenting 'an authentic expression of real experience'" (45-46).

Going further beyond this idea of reflecting (a) reality, fiction can also function as a mirror to the extent that it shows a reflection of its consumers (readers, viewers, players) through the representations it makes. Much like Lacan's child turned towards the mirror to find its ego-ideal, subjects turn to works of fiction to find a fully functional, reducible identity reflected back. The subject who sees him/herself reflected, or *represented*, in fiction can make up a fantasy of his/her identity as whole, complete, and therefore valid. We can still give the idea a further twist and establish the consumers of fiction as yet another mirror: not only because the subject builds an identity based on the mirroring of societal images and impositions, but also because they project their own expectations regarding the representations they will find *into* the fiction. These include the type of representation expected according to the parameters that define the work (such as medium or genre), but also the subject's conscious or unconscious expectation that they will be able to reconstruct their self-image through this representation—that they will be able to relate to it.

3. The specificity of specula(riza)tion: Woman as Other

The identification process will obviously take place differently for each subject; however, the case of marginalized identities in particular is problematic, because—put simply—they are not regarded to be subjects. This is a consequence of the mechanics of the gaze involved in specularity: the gaze develops a power dynamic by which its *subject*, simply by being the one who looks, turns the one who is looked at into the *object* of the gaze; thus, the object immediately

loses the agency and power which characterize the subject—the act of being looked at comes to be what defines, shapes, and determines their being, as they model themselves according to what the gaze expects. In the particular case of women, this power dynamic translates into the shape of the patriarchal system, whereby men become the subjects, the *lookers*, and women the objects, the *looked-at*; further, women are precluded from looking, and therefore excluded from the benefits the gaze provides. Woman's image is, therefore, "coded for strong visual and erotic impact […], she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire" (Mulvey 1975, 11). In this way, much like the child in the mirror, man turns woman into an ego-ideal, so that her inferiority implies his better qualities in such a way that she acts rather as a magnifying mirror.

This is the idea that Luce Irigaray elaborates in *Speculum of the Other Woman*: if the male ego "is to be valuable, some 'mirror' is needed to reassure it and re-insure it of its value. Woman will be the foundation for this specular duplication, giving man back 'his' image and repeating it as the 'same'" (1985, 54). Interestingly, though, Virginia Woolf had already made a very similar proposition in her 1929 essay *A Room of One's Own*: "Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (2014, 55). Both of these statements summarize what man accomplishes by constructing and defining woman as his Other: he ensures his own superiority and simultaneously makes himself into the universal subject. Woman is thus "defined purely against the man" (Rose 2005, 74), as someone—some*thing*—who strives to be male, but *is not*: she is a negative space, a lack, a simple and inferior reflection. Simultaneously, this ensures that woman is not able to leave this position of inferiority: in order to become this mirror she must reject her difference as contemptible, thus supplying what is needed to complete and maintain this "specula(riza)tion" (Irigaray 1985, 54).

In this manner, woman's own defining qualities, "the feminine *as such* […] is repressed; it returns only in its 'acceptable' form as man's specularized Other" (Moi 1985, 134). It follows therefore that abandoning this specular dynamic would disturb the position of woman as object; to do so, however, it would be necessary to find a way to operate outside of the boundaries of the mirror—to shatter it entirely, or to move to its other side, much like Alice went through the looking glass in Lewis Carroll's story. However, undoing the system might

well take centuries of painstaking work. Perhaps, in that case, the issue needs to be *looked at* differently, or conversely: by tackling the image of woman directly and individually.

4. Re-presenting woman

Teresa de Lauretis has a particularly interesting theory in this regard. She proposes that "[t]he representation of gender *is* its construction" (1987, 3) and that, as such, it "is the product of various social technologies, such as cinema, as well as institutional discourses, epistemologies, and critical practices" (De Lauretis 1987, ix). She proposes that alternative constructions of gender are possible by operating "*in the margins of hegemonic discourse*" (18, emphasis in original). This would mean seizing woman's enforcedly liminal position as Other and subverting it to work in her favour, to create a "view from elsewhere" that counteracts and contradicts patriarchal social discourse (25). De Lauretis also holds that the representations we have produced are "not recognizable, precisely, as a representation" (25), because their effects cannot be perceived on the system as a whole. They affect a smaller scale, at the level of the "micropolitical practices of daily life and daily resistances that afford both agency and sources of power" (25). This author maintains, however, that it is precisely by operating from these margins that a cracking of the mirror may become a real possibility or, at least, a ripple of discomfort.

If we accept the premise that fiction works in the same way as a mirror, it follows that its representations will reflect the position of woman as Other; indeed, fiction is perhaps the clearest evidence of how woman's representation and self-representation have been denied to her. Throughout history, woman's image reflects the typical (and often contradictory) ambivalence attached to the role of Other, so that archetypal opposites are able to coexist within the same image (e.g., the pure virgin and the lustful temptress). This betrays the inability of the patriarchal system to represent woman in a way that is not reductive, objectifying, or imposing of an ideal image (a repetition of the male). Fictional representations are significant for individual subjects because they can trigger an identificatory process and contribute to one's construction of one's own identity, thus serving to validate the subject *as* subject. Taking into account De Lauretis' assumption that individuals fully assume the meanings

assigned to their representation of themselves, it is possible to grasp the full extent of the consequences of the current system of representation: women are denied a positive differentiation from man and prevented from achieving an autonomous identity, unable to recognize their difference as anything other than an undesirable lack indicative of their inferiority, and unable to define their identities outside of man's Other. The problem remains *how* to provide these representations. If there is no such thing as an essence to woman, then the established gender difference is nothing but the result of a complex process of construction and, as such, the idea of woman as a mirror (and consequently gender difference itself) could very well be *de*constructed. Slavoj Žižek has a very interesting theory which could well apply here.

Firstly, Žižek notes that identification is usually understood as "imitating models, ideals, image-makers" (2008, 117), which is misleading, because "the feature, the trait on the basis of which we identify with someone, is usually hidden—it is by no means necessarily a glamorous feature" (117). In fact, most people identify most closely with characters manifesting flaws or hidden fears similar to their own. On the other hand, "imaginary identification is always identification *on behalf of a certain gaze in the Other*" (117), meaning that if the subject is imitating a model or "'playing a role', the question to ask is: *for whom* is the subject enacting this role? Which *gaze* is considered when the subject identifies himself with a certain image?" (Žižek 2008, 117-118). Of course, in the case of women, this would be the male gaze which Laura Mulvey described as "determining" for the woman's role in fiction, which is coded "to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" (1975, 11). The male is thus in control of the gaze, of which the woman becomes the passive object to be tailored after what the gaze seeks in them. Importantly, though, is the fact that "the gaze of the spectator and that of the male characters […] are neatly combined without breaking narrative verisimilitude" (12); this means that whatever the spectator's gender, they are prompted to identify with the male protagonist, to *look through his eyes*, so to speak. Mulvey's theory does not only imply that every fictional representation of woman is at risk of being pervaded by the male gaze, and therefore the result of the hegemonic specular order, but also that woman is "symbolically identified with the gaze for which [she] is playing [her] role" (Žižek 2008, 118).

This symbolic identification with the gaze creates an idealization of *the version of the subject which enacts the wishes of the gaze*, an idealization which serves "to legitimize" the rule of the oppressive system (Žižek 2008, 118)—in this case, of patriarchy. Žižek explains this with the example of Milos Forman's mockery of the working class, and the same principle would apply here: for female representation to escape the patriarchal order, woman must unmask "the spectacle enacted for [her] gaze". The elevation and classification of woman within a series of archetypes that she must fit to embody her feminine identity (the alternative being, at all practical effects, non-existence) works in favour of the patriarchal system. By showing a non-idealized, down-to-earth female experience, by demystifying the image of woman, by showing the crippling flaws and the ugliness and every single difference which are present within her—in short, by showing everything which the patriarchal system attempted to conceal by modelling woman after its own image; therein lies the key to subverting the specular system and avoiding its influence. Therein lies the key to a better representation of woman; perhaps not one that will shake the foundations of the system, but as Teresa de Lauretis said, work must begin "at the 'local' level of resistances, in subjectivity and self-representation" (1987, 18).

5. Conclusion

As mentioned in the beginning, these theories constitute nothing but an initial background, a possible framework to initiate further studies on representation; they do not by any means represent the entirety of the theoretical labour that is available on the subject, and would indeed benefit from further study. Nonetheless, I trust that they serve as a good enough introduction and revision of the importance of the concept and the way it has been understood in canonical theories, as well as of the significance of the idea of the mirror for the ongoing discussion on identity, otherness, and representations of human subjectivity.

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THE HEROINE'S JOURNEY: EPIC FANTASY AND FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN SAMANTHA SHANNON'S *THE PRIORY OF THE ORANGE TREE*

Sara González Bernárdez
University of Santiago de Compostela
sara_padron@hotmail.es

Abstract

From its origins in Greek myth to Tolkien's reinvention of its prototypical features, the genre of epic fantasy has been mostly male-dominated. The objective of this paper is to examine the subversion of these prototypical features as it takes place within Samantha Shannon's *The Priory of the Orange Tree* (2019). To do so, the paper begins by discussing the traditional features of the hero's journey, as well as those of the heroine's journey as outlined by Maureen Murdock and Valerie E. Frankel; it then moves on to discussing two of Shannon's female characters against this context, in terms of the roles they play and whether (and how) they adapt to the expected tradition of epic fantasy. This analysis hopefully serves to exemplify the possibility of renewal within such a canonized genre, especially as regards the fictional representation of identities which have, thus far, been relegated to secondary positions.

Keywords: fantasy, epic, gender studies, heroine

1. Introduction

Traditional epic has always been male-coded: from Ovidian, Virgilian and Homerian traditions to the Tolkien phenomenon of epic fantasy, the genre is consistently and relentlessly defined by the dominance of *man*. Although there

is a plethora of female characters of significance within its worlds, from Helen of Troy to Galadriel, and although their quests are important, the dominant presence driving the tale is unmistakably masculine. There is much epic where the main character is female, of course; but they are often filtered through a male lens, and a rather overwhelming majority of the genre displaces female quests and female characters to the convenient side lines, either glossing over them or giving them a function pertaining exclusively to the hero, the protagonist.[1]

Epic fantasy in the vein of Tolkien's extremely influential works has showed a tendency to maintaining this status quo, remaining prominently euro- and male-centric in spite of the progress inherent to the inclusion of female characters in significant roles.[2] This paper aims to present a much more recent epic that is female-coded, not simply through its characters, but down to the very core of the world that it builds: *The Priory of the Orange Tree*, by Samantha Shannon (2019). Writing an epic fantasy in such a way implies, by necessity, going consciously against a traditionally male tradition. The objective in this paper is therefore to examine two of Shannon's characters against the background of their corresponding archetypes, while noticing the possible variations or subversions that might take place through their presence.

Before beginning the discussion, a short summary of the novel's plot shall make the argument easier to follow. *The Priory of the Orange Tree* articulates around three poles: East and West, represented by Seiiki and Inys respectively; and the South, represented by the Priory of the Orange Tree which gives the book its title. The three main female characters around which the narration develops represent these three axes: Sabran Berethnet, the queen of Inys; Ead Duryan, one of her handmaidens and a spy; and Tané, a dragon rider from the East. Only Ead and Tané are focalized narrators, sharing this responsibility with two male characters, who fill in the rest of the plot. This cast must face off against the one true evil of this world, the Nameless One, a dragon of fearful size and power whose draconic army aims to submit the entire world to a reign of fire. Queen Sabran must conceive an heir to her all-female bloodline,

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1. Penelope, in Homer's *Odyssey*, and Helen of Troy in the *Iliad*, are two of the most obvious and prototypical examples of this tendency. Other canonical examples of male-centric epic are *The Song of the Nibelung* or the *Cantar del Mio Cid,* both from around the 13th century.
2. See, for instance, George R. R. Martin's saga *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1996), or even Ursula K. LeGuin's *Earthsea* series (1968).

which her religion believes to be responsible for keeping the Nameless One imprisoned; Ead, on the other hand, has been sent to her by the Priory to keep an eye on her and protect her from harm, in case this legend is true. Tané, on her part, is training to become a dragon rider and enjoy the companionship of one of the Eastern dragons, which unlike their Western counterparts are benign creatures; she gets involved in the main plot when she harbours a foreigner come by the sea, a naïve man who seeks an alliance for Inys and the East to defeat the Nameless One together.

2. The "Hero's Journey" plot

As is easy to tell from this short summary, Shannon's novel is an example of epic fantasy. This genre is characterised by "detailed historical and geographical images of secondary worlds, within which elaborate hero myths are constructed" (Stableford 2009, 131), being thus much closer to its predecessor of the epic. Tolkien himself, in his essay *On Fairy Stories* (2014), outlines the ancestry of what he calls the fairy-story, linking it to the many oral hero-myths of ancient lore. It is thus no wonder that epic fantasy has found one of its best-known representatives in Tolkien's own work, particularly *The Lord of the Rings* (1954), whose impact made comparison between it and successive works unavoidable. Shannon's novel is no exception; in fact, interestingly, author Laure Eve termed *The Priory* a "feminist successor to *The Lord of the Rings*" for its cover blurb. Why? The main reason would be how Shannon's novel responds to the highly demanding background of epic fantasy: by placing women at the centre of the hero's quest. In order to analyze this response, this paper focuses on the characters of Ead and Sabran, as they stand for two of the most essential archetypes of epic fantasy: the hero, or the knight, and the princess—or queen, in this case.

The epic is based upon the *monomyth*, a term coined by Joseph Campbell (1949), which "argues that all hero myths are fundamentally similar" and anatomizes the structure of the myth around a "hero's journey along a road of trials […]" in "search for a particular objective" (Stableford 2009, 60-337). All plotlines follow basically the same structure, and certain character archetypes are set in stone. Women are, as a rule, placed in positions regarded as secondary—those of healers, wives, or mothers; the roles they play in the plot tend to have everything to do with these positions, which they occupy in relation

to men. Even those women of supposedly great power are often kept from the main action of the quest, a good example being Tolkien's Galadriel.

When the hero is actually a heroine, the entirety of the monomyth and its goal seem to shift in order to accommodate the female gender; indeed, Frankel goes as far as to establish completely different stages to the heroine's journey to express its shift from Campbell's original schema (see Frankel 2010, 5). The focus is now on love or family related matters: recovering what was lost, enduring trials peacefully and chastely, mending what was broken, or seeking justice for a loved one. The heroine's journey is that of Helen of Troy waiting for her husband, of Isis reuniting and restoring the body of her brother/husband, of Psyche overcoming Aphrodite's trials; it is one of silent sacrifice and with a goal that is brought on by the heroine's relationship to others rather than by individual motivations. If we are to believe Maureen Murdock's *The Heroine's Journey* (1990) and its spiritual successor, Frankel's *From Girl to Goddess* (2010), the heroine's final goal is her coming together with the Goddess, the Mother archetype, meaning the ultimate acceptance of her true, feminine essence. Frankel explains this change by recalling that these heroine myths find their sources in folktales, which are essentially female tales, about women's fears, resources, and processes of growth. This, in Frankel's view, makes these female journeys tales of "woman's struggle for autonomy in the world of myth" (2010, 8), which, while praiseworthy, would explain the lack of heroines who deviate from the traditionally expected female sphere.

3. Ead's journey

What is interesting about Ead's character is that she does not actually deviate very strongly from the knight's, or the hero's, expected roles and journey as outlined by Campbell (1949). She merely combines her role as the traditional hero and the steps of his archetypal quest with the simple fact that she is a woman. One example of how prototypically heroic the journey gets is Ead's encounter with the witch Kalyba.

Kalyba figures prominently in this world's lore as a powerful witch who is supposedly immortal. Ead enters her bower to gather information about the two magical jewels which are necessary to imprison the monster, the Nameless One. Kalyba has the answers she seeks, but she demands Ead pay a price for them: a kiss, to start with, and lovemaking, for a second question. In exchange

for lying with her, Kalyba offers Ead more knowledge than she might acquire in a lifetime—a true knowledge of magic. This immediately places Kalyba as the temptress archetype, the beautiful, naked woman who tries to seduce the hero in order to obtain what she wants from him, and/or bring about his downfall; she is an obstacle in the hero's way, and a trial of his moral and emotional strength, as well as of his worth. The fate of the quest depends on the hero's capacity to resist, as seen in many instances throughout the traditional epic, such as Ulysses' sirens. What makes Kalyba even more archetypical in this instance is that she is a sexual temptress, meaning that she tempts the heroine with a seemingly easy and pleasant price to pay, a very simple task for Ead to obtain what she wants. In spite of this, Ead withstands this trial as a true hero would: she resists the temptation by recalling her love for Sabran, her lady.

Because these heroic features have been coded as masculine by the patriarchal system, it is nigh impossible for readers to understand them as anything other than that, even when it is a woman performing them. However, they need not be treated as such. Ead's fighting ability and combat knowledge do not read as a woman's trespassing into a masculine world, somehow breaching a gender barrier. To put it simply, she is not an Arya Stark archetype. Ead was raised within a matriarchal culture, which implies that she sees fighting as natural to herself, not as a gender-coded occupation. This sort of treatment makes her gender lose significance, so what she does is no longer gender-coded, which tends to subvert its generalized perception as masculine and proper only to a male hero.

Nonetheless, this lack of significance may also be problematized. It might be read as though Ead's perceived *masculine* features—her ability for combat, her position as protector, and so on—are what make her fit the position of the hero. Because the very fact that she is a woman does not necessarily *change* the hero's journey, her character does not serve to make any socio-political statement whatsoever. I would argue, though, that this is precisely where Shannon's subversion lies. The journey does not alter to accommodate her gender; her ultimate goal need not be the retrieval of her feminine essence and the communion with the Goddess. This serves to show that a heroine can be both things: a warrior and a mother, a knight and a lover. With Ead's character, this is achieved by weaving the exact pattern of the hero's journey, the stereotypical epic fantasy story where good and evil face off against each other, where the characters are easily coded and the greyness is few and far between, and placing a woman at the very centre

of it. Making a woman the reason why the story exists is Shannon's greatest subversion: avoiding marking women by a fundamental difference and making them not Other, but subject. While it may not make a strong, conscious, overt political statement for inclusivity, Shannon's work achieves normalization, and that is perhaps the most political statement of all.

4. Sabran's journey

To finish, I would like to refer to Sabran specifically because she exemplifies a much more stereotypically female—heroine's—journey. Her quest is for motherhood; however, it is unlike that found in traditional epics. As Frankel exemplifies throughout *From Girl to Goddess*, motherhood is mostly idealized as the ultimate connection between women. The mother is the epitome of love and care, willing to sacrifice anything, including herself, for her children. Their experience of motherhood is necessarily rewarding, fulfilling, as their ultimate goal and purpose. By contrast, Sabran's relationship with motherhood is full of conflict. She knows it is her duty, but is full of natural anxieties about motherhood and childbirth; these are magnified by the responsibility placed on her as queen, as her people rely on her bloodline to keep them safe. In turn, this makes her afraid to not only die in childbed, but also of becoming disposable as soon as the heir is born—making her try to avoid motherhood at all costs, even as far as to seek an elixir of eternal youth, to reign forever and never have to conceive. Nonetheless, she does after all marry and get pregnant.

However, this heroine's journey is truncated when Sabran's pregnancy is suddenly terminated. A white dragon, later revealed to be the shapeshifted witch Kalyba, attacks the castle and stabs her belly with its barbed tail, killing the baby and taking away Sabran's capacity to conceive. As a result, Sabran loses all sense of her own worth: she feels like a failure and blames herself for having avoided marriage and motherhood for so long, which leads her into a spiral of self-hate and even to thoughts of suicide. This vision of infertility as the ultimate tragedy is sadly nothing new, as it is generally equated with failure to *be* a woman at all. With motherhood taken as the ultimate culmination of the female experience, many women who are unable to conceive begin to question their worth and to regard themselves as somehow malfunctioning or incomplete. In this instance it is Ead, the gallant heroine, who steps in to save the lady from herself, refusing to help her into suicide and helping her overcome

her loss, thus giving a new meaning to the role of the knight as supporter and protector and preventing Sabran from drowning in desperation. It is through this experience that Sabran realizes that her infertility, socially perceived as an inherently negative "barrenness", does not render her invalid or less of a woman, less of a queen. In fact, she makes very interesting commentary on the use of the word 'barren' to describe a woman who cannot conceive a child:

> '[…] Will you tell them you are barren?'
> 'Barren.' A thin smile. 'We must think of a different word for it, I think. That one makes me sound like a field stripped of its crop. A waste with nothing left to give.' (Shannon 2019, 650)

Furthermore, Sabran deviates from the expected role of a hero's lady in more ways than this. In spite of her traditionally feminine position as a queen and her most feminine goal of motherhood, Sabran does not remain passive—waiting as a prize to be claimed. Her love story with Ead is painted as the natural consequence of their closeness and mutual honesty and trust, rather than as the fair reward for Ead's heroics. By herself, Sabran proves a competent and efficient ruler, capable of swaying people's wills by her golden tongue alone, and shows no fear when entering the final battle, although she does not do so as an active warrior. Rather, she is the commander of her armies and one of the major strategists behind the battle against the ultimate evil. On top of it all, Sabran shows a willingness to use her position of power to instil true, radical changes in her society:

> 'But in truth, I do not think it well that the future of any country rests on the begetting of children. A woman is more than a womb to be seeded. Perhaps I can go further […]. Perhaps I can shake the very foundations of succession.' (Shannon 2019, 798)

Finally, the careful depiction of Sabran's feelings concerning motherhood offers a point of relatability which serves to decriminalize women's feelings of resentment and fear before and during pregnancy. Her character's journey shows this experience in a more realistic and complex manner which can, perhaps, resonate closer to real experiences.

5. Conclusion

Shannon's epic therefore grinds against its ancestry as a female-centric epic where the female characters are the reason for the story's existence, the drivers of the plot. The emphasis is on sorority, on the importance of female ancestry, on the female experience and female relationships; however, this does not take away from the events which make the story an epic. The grand battle of good against evil still takes place around these women, who participate actively within it. It is thus that Ead fulfils the hero's journey without having to re-shape it in order to accommodate her gender, thus perhaps standing as proof that the traditional hero need not be always male in order to *be* a hero.

The presence and actions of women are not necessarily ever gendered or coded to be specifically female. The reading which an informed reader may extract from this world is not political, although the inclusion of so many women and same-sex relationships may undoubtedly be perceived as such by certain collectives. Even Sabran's quest, which is archetypally female, subverts the prototypical heroine's journey outlined by Murdock or Frankel. It highlights issues related to the position of women, especially towards motherhood, which the epic tends to gloss over or ignore entirely. The presence of characters like these brings a new perspective as to how a genre can change simply by changing its most canonical premise—that of a being male-driven story. Shannon's novel therefore fills a void in the high fantasy genre, which it carried over from the epic tradition that precedes it. This has a significant impact in terms of the positive representation of female identities, as it allows to construe an epic where women can see themselves and think of themselves as active participants—as active heroines.

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DISCOURSES ON THE BORDERLINE: WOMEN, MADNESS, AND IDENTITY

Cristina Hurtado Botella

Universidad de Murcia

cristina.hurtado1@um.es

Abstract

This paper examines two contemporary North-American memoirs that address borderline personality disorder: Rachel Reiland's *Get Me Out of Here: My Recovery from Borderline Personality Disorder* (2004) and Merri Lisa Johnson's *Girl in Need of a Tourniquet: Memoir of a Borderline Personality* (2010). The analysis is framed within the feminist approach to the historical revision of madness and its treatment, which emphasises the gender bias of psychiatry (Ussher 2011). One of the modern diagnoses that pathologise women's distress is borderline personality disorder. In order to understand the meanings given to the borderline experience by these diagnosed women, three discursive features have been studied: narrative linearity, idiosyncratic imagery, and assimilation of external discourses. The analysis shows that the use of linearity and stereotypical tropes accompany the assimilation of the mental illness/recovery model, while non-linearity and innovative tropes are explored to reject master narratives and address different frames of understanding madness.

Keywords: borderline personality disorder, madness, identity, memoir

1. Introduction

Rachel Reiland's *Get Me Out of Here: My Recovery from Borderline Personality Disorder* (2004) and Merri Lisa Johnson's *Girl in Need of a Tourniquet: Memoir of a Borderline Personality* (2010) recount first-hand experiences of mental distress and the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder. The stories of the mentally distressed who have been interpellated as mentally ill offer a unique insight into the self-identification process of the individual: How do Reiland and Johnson make sense of their distress and how do they face the diagnosis? Does the diagnosis change their self-image? Do they understand well-being as recovering sanity? Are stereotypical images on madness and/or the current medical model on mental illness embedded within their discourse?

2. Understanding madness

Throughout the centuries, Western thought has struggled to explain madness, both as an idea and as a material experience. A panoply of aetiologies has been considered only in the three last centuries, each of which meant different assumptions on well-being and different preferences for treating the mad. Modern Western psychiatry understands madness as mental illness, proposing a biomedical model that focuses on the subject's mental dysfunction at a psychological, biological or developmental level (American Psychiatry Association 2013, 20). Even though this model acknowledges the suffering of the mentally ill, it has been widely questioned, especially since madness and its treatment became a popular subject of historical research in the 1960s (Gray 2016, 21).

Greatly influenced by Foucault's work (1961; 1975), scholars that have shown a critical stance have examined the power exerted by psychiatry, usually focusing on the role of asylums, and mental hospitals later, as a force of social control. Nonetheless, some authors have regretted the overlong debate on mental institutions and have proposed alternative approaches. In this sense, Elizabeth Lunbeck (1994) highlights the discursive dimension of psychiatric power, considering that its assumptions on normality, adjustment, or happiness are embedded within our social discourse and have been assimilated by subjects, who now perform an exhaustive self-regulating function in order to be normal. Following this line of thought, autobiographical depictions by the mad can

show the connections between certain assimilated discourses and assumptions on identity and well-being.

2.1. A feminist approach and a feminised diagnosis

Within that revisionist trend, feminist approaches have explored the connections between madness and femininity, examining how psychiatry has legitimated its power over women on the basis of that connection (Ussher 2011). Rejecting the understanding of madness as individual illness, they have shown how the patriarchal roots of society lead women to distressing experiences that receive the name of madness. Among the discourses that pathologise women's distress, Reiland's and Johnson's memoirs depict borderline personality disorder—*BPD*—, which, in its fifth edition, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder—*DSM-V*—defines as "a pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, and affects, and marked impulsivity that begins by early adulthood and is present in a variety of contexts" (2013, 663).[1] This pattern of behaviour is thus classified as pathological, for it causes "significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities" (*DSM–V* 2013, 20).

However, a feminist reading would call attention to the tautological process that operates in the equation: if a woman is considered mentally ill due to her instability and impulsivity, and these behaviours are explained because of her mental illness, the same reality is being posed as the cause and the consequence. Extreme instability and impulsivity may cause a *pathological* distress but, which is the actual origin? According to Dana Becker (1997, 118), "the women who suffer from a spectrum of symptoms we currently call 'borderline' can offer us a unique opportunity to understand our own emotional struggles and the context from which they emerge." The borderline experience may be every woman's distress taken to its utmost extreme. Hence, the analysis of borderline women memoirs helps examine what happens when women identify their emotional struggle as borderline personality disorder.

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1. Jane Ussher (2011) also includes post-traumatic stress disorder, premenstrual dysphoric disorder, anorexia, and depression.

3. Identity assumptions in borderline memoirs

Jennifer Radden (2008) explores how discursive representations of symptoms of madness in mental illness memoirs reflect how subjects understand their own identity and the process of healing. Focusing on narrative strategies, she identifies two models: first, a symptom-alienating model, in which symptoms are rejected through distancing and controlling metaphors, the plot is driven by escape, and the outcome is the recovery of an original sane identity. Second, a symptom-integrating model, which entails the assimilation of the symptoms, mainly through the open acknowledgement of emotional states. Drawing on Radden's exploration of these strategies' implications, I have considered the connections between specific narrative choices in *BPD* memoirs and women's identity assumptions. Do current ideological frames of understanding *BPD* influence how women understand and represent their experience? And, does their self-representation have an impact on their approach to well-being?

First, I examine the use of narrative linearity. Alison Torn (2011) has examined various methodologies to address madness narratives in search of helpful data for psychology professional, concluding that prioritising temporality turns out to be fruitless, for thoughts tend to be presented through fragmentation and dissociation. Hence, she proposes to address both "the temporal and spatial complexities of the narrative structure in order to reveal the meaning of the experience" (2011, 136). Thus, I examine how both the conscious use of a rigid linear temporality and the preference for non-linearity can reveal the authors' ideological assumptions on the nature of madness and, more specifically, the process of recovery. Second, the use of symbolic imagery is analysed. The interest of the texts' imagery seems evident: anyone can identify stereotyped images on madness that perpetuate stigmatizing and prejudiced understandings. Thus, I focus on idiosyncratic images developed by both authors in order to face those stereotypes; personal images that, once again, reflect their understanding of their experience and their identity. Finally, I question the role that external discourses play in the narrations: are they consciously or unconsciously assimilated? Are they subverted?

3.1. The loci of madness

Get Me Out of Here chronologically narrates the succession of meetings that Rachel and her psychoanalyst, Dr. Padgett, have during almost 3 years. This therapeutical process is marked by the exploration of childhood events, but past recollections only appear through controlled flashbacks, always framed within the context of the therapy. Importantly enough, the remembrances signal the adequate progression of the therapy, so that recovery is finally achieved when repressed traumas from the past have been progressively faced in the present. In this way, the plot's linearity reflects a linear conception of the process of recovery, and it is a mandatory condition to assert the possibility of the actual, ultimate healing.

Not coincidentally, the first sentence of the first chapter presents *BPD* as chaos, using the house as symbol: "The house was a disaster" (2004, 9). However, after the ordering therapeutic process, the first sentences of the last chapter state that the house is completely neat: "The last week of August I made sure that the household and our finances were completely organized before I took on the hectic schedule of a full-time career mum" (2004, 417). At the end of the memoir, the author emphasises that the path of recovery has been traversed, *BPD* has been left behind, and the present self has reached the final stop, sanity.

As time can hardly be completely cancelled in autobiographical writing, *Girl in Need of a Tourniquet* also follows the chronology of certain events; specifically, it follows the development of the romantic and toxic relationship between Johnson and her married co-worker Vanessa. Nonetheless, the narration of these episodes is irregularly intermingled with recollections and reflections that cancel complete linearity. This freezing of narrative progression is supported through two strategies. Firstly, the author uses six different typefaces, which help express different perspectives on a same event and also create a parallel symbolic dimension.

Secondly, the text presents abundant quotations from works of different disciplines, offering alternative insights into the private story the author narrates. In this way, the text becomes a sort of postmodern pastiche that prioritizes the reflection on the experiences lived by Johnson, over the necessity of a complete

recovery. In fact, the author expressly rejects the idea of recovery, and opts for an intimate exploration of the borderline experience:

> I wish I could say I WOKE UP / GOT HELP / SAW GOD / MADE AMENDS / DID THE RIGHT THING / BECAME A BETTER PERSON / STARTED A NONPROFIT DEDICATED TO SERVING OTHERS.
>
> BORDERLINE WITHOUT BORDERS. (2010, 211)

3.2. Imaging the borderline

Get Me Out of Here presents two dominant groups of images which succeed one another as the narration progresses. At the beginning, Reiland alienates her symptoms, portraying *BPD* as the "monstrous, metastatic malignancy of psychiatry" (2004, 5). Thus, her descriptions evoke evil possessions or the uncontrollable loss of reason: "I was crying hysterically now, twisting and writhing in the chair, eyes rolling and practically spinning in my head, slapping myself harder, digging my nails in just a little deeper" (2004, 13). However, assisted by Dr. Padget, Reiland reconfigures her understanding of her state, so that these first stigmatizing renditions are replaced by two different tropes, the journey and the stoned path, which structure both the plot and the therapeutic progress in a linear way, and allow her to envision an escape, both from her situation and her mad identity: "One more stone, however, had been cleared away, letting in one more tiny glimmer of light to sustain me and keep me on the journey" (2004, 158). Significantly, all these images have a distancing and controlling effect, for the symptoms are presented as alien to the subject's identity or distanced and therefore under control.

Besides, the image of the abused girl is also significant. This image has raised as a symbol in memoirs about *BPD*, with *Girl, Interrupted* (1993) as the first and most popular instance. Reiland relives her early childhood traumas through the two personae of a split child: Tough Chick, a strong, rough male part extolled to please her father; and Vulno, a sensitive, emotionally dependent female part repressed to avoid the father's rejection. Clearly, her father's gendered associations and misogynistic attitudes triggered her identity disturbance. Besides, attention should be called to the use Reiland makes of both personae as a distancing resource throughout the therapy: she addresses past memories

and present feelings and actions in the third person, splitting herself to avoid identification.

On the other hand, Johnson rejects stereotyped images of madness from the beginning of her memoir; instead, she offers a personal trope that dominates and interweaves all her discourse: fire. The semantic field of fire is used to talk about her toxic attachment style. Thus, her dependence on Vanessa is described as a "pyromaniac's passion" (2010, 89). Besides, she uses fire to articulate her views on people's stigmatizing attitudes and lack of understanding, describing her behaviour as the rational consequence of feeling desperately hurt:

> I have courted insanity, crouching in the gap between what this moment feels like (*the smoldering fire fanned into the most logical flames*) and how it looks to other people (*the psychotic break of spontaneous combustion*). I can feel the sensation (*it burns*) of being called CRAZY when you feel WOUNDED and DESPERATE. (2010, 19)

Johnson also traces the origins of these unhealthy behaviours to her childhood, and therefore the abused girl is again a powerful symbolic device. In the following excerpt, she intermingles the images of fire and the abused girl to trace the origins of her chronic state of anxiety to the lack of emotional stability she suffered during childhood. Her drug addict mother, symbolised by the red miniskirt fire, is the original toxic relationship from which her father took her away. More poetically than narratively, she explores how she has craved for the same type of intense and toxic relationship throughout all her life, reproducing it in her adult romantic relationships:

> We are going to steal the red miniskirt fire from my mother
> […]
> "FIRE?" we'll exclaim like offended women. "We don't even like fire."
> We will say: *my mother is fire / fire is bad / we prefer ice / it's so tidy.*
> […]
> I bury wild memories of fire in an unmarked field and forget to mourn its loss.
> My father teaches me THE TORMENT OF WANTING TO BURN. (2010, 41-42)

Importantly enough, Johnson rejects a linear, causal rendition of her life experiences, opting for the juxtaposition of episodes that use fire as a symbolic linking

thread. In this way, she appropriates the alleged symptoms of the disorder and gives them an idiosyncratic significance.

3.3. Whose voice is this?

By the end of *Get Me Out of Here*, Reiland has managed to re-imagine her madness as the consequence of child abuse. However, her re-conceptualizations are mediated by two male voices, the psychotherapist and the priest. In fact, the stereotyped and stigmatizing discourse on madness shown at the beginning only disappears when the psychoanalytic and Christian discourses replace it. In this way, even though recovery—understood as the facing of child abuse—has been achieved, the memoir does not openly criticise the relevance of Reiland's gender in the development of her personality disturbance. Thus, *BPD* is presented as any other illness that may appear and may be cured, and no connection is drawn between the individual misogynistic attitudes of Reiland's father and the effects that a society with patriarchal underlying structure has on the development of women's madness.

On the other hand, Johnson acknowledges her narration is inspired by other voices through her use of direct quotations. These voices, which come from varied disciplines—critical psychology, sociology, literature—, are not simply assimilated to bear the unknown. They are explored to offer an informed personal opinion on the topics of women's madness; madness presented as a discursive tool to exert power over women, and the *BPD* diagnosis. Recognising that her personal story fits the diagnostic criteria of *BPD*—"I try on the lens of borderline personality disorder and watch my romantic history snap into focus" (2010, 146)—Johnson underlines that coincidence is a consequence and not the cause. Thus, she tries to demystify the disorder, highlighting the discursive nature of all psychiatric labels: "If diagnosis is narrative, the words for borderline personality may be wrong" (2010, 198). Also, she frames the limitations of her parents' upbringing within the general social picture, helping readers to re-imagine attachment disorders as a common social phenomenon, "a widespread social deficit in emotional literacy" (2010, 203).

4. Conclusion

Different understandings of women's madness lead to different ways to represent individual distressing experiences and different ways to approach well-being. In the case of Reiland's memoir, even though stigmatizing images about madness are rejected and well-being is ultimately achieved, the emphasis of the narration is on recovering sanity. This overemphasis on individual recovery, inspired by medical discourses, supports the status quo in which women's reasonable, although unhealthy, responses to adverse circumstances are framed as individual illnesses. On the other hand, Johnson's reconstruction of identity is achieved not only through the acknowledgment of her traumatic experiences and dysfunctional behaviours, but also through the understanding of the influence of women's social position on their inner representations of distress. In this way, she adopts a feminist understanding that allows her to embrace and reconstruct certain features of her personality, recognising how certain patriarchal dynamics in family relationships worked to develop these features and define them as madness.

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REPARATORY JUSTICE BEATS RETALIATION IN LOUISE ERDRICH'S *LAROSE*

Aitor Ibarrola-Armendariz

Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao

aitor.ibarrola@deusto.es

Abstract

Louise Erdrich's fifteenth novel, *LaRose* (2016), is the third installment of the "Justice Trilogy" and resumes the author's exploration of prickly themes such as historical and cultural trauma, revenge, atonement, and reparation. The novel opens with a tragic accident on the edge of an Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota that upsets the uneasy balance of the Indian community. While hunting a deer, Landreaux Iron kills his neighbors' five-year-old son, Dusty Ravich. The accident produces a severe psycho-wound not only in the two families involved, but also in the Native community at large, which sees earlier collective ghosts come to revisit them at the turn of the new century. In an attempt to compensate for the pain inflicted and following an ancient tradition among the Ojibwe, the Irons decide to surrender their own five-year-old child, LaRose, to the Raviches. This generous act of atonement and restitution causes positive transformations in the main characters.

Keywords: Reparatory Justice, Louise Erdrich, *LaRose*, intergenerational trauma, revenge plots

1. Introduction

Louise Erdrich's fifteenth novel, *LaRose* (2016), has been acclaimed by both literary critics and the general public alike. As Jessa Crispin remarked in *The Guardian*, "Her books, which remain consistently excellent in the third decade of her career, are reviewed lovingly, and her audience is enormous and loyal" (2016, n.p.). Some of the reasons given for the success of her novel are its "rich but plain prose style" (Gordon 2016, n.p.) and the "blunt, clear-eyed realism" (Athiakis 2016, n.p.) with which she portrays the unbearable grief and suffering of a Native community in the aftermath of a terrible accident. As was the case in her two previous novels, *The Plague of Doves* and *The Round House*, the story takes place near the border town of Pluto in North Dakota, on an Ojibwe reservation. Several critics and reviewers (McGrath 2016; Charles 2016) have stressed the deep knowledge that the author has of both the region and its people. What is particularly interesting about this knowledge is that place and characters are not confined to one particular historical period, but the past and the characters' ancestors keep coming back to blend with the present time. Quite often the reader realizes that places and characters become some sort of palimpsest on which several historical episodes have been inscribed and which carry all kinds of nuances regarding affections and aversions. Notice, for example, the kind of feelings that two of the main characters of the novel have developed toward their dwelling place:

> Landreaux and Emmaline's house contained the original cabin from 1846, built in desperation as snow fell on their ancestors. It satisfied them both to know that if the layers of drywall and plaster were torn away from the walls, they would find the interior pole and mud walls. The entire first family—babies, mothers, uncles, children, aunts, grandparents—had passed around tuberculosis, diphtheria, sorrow, endless tea, hilarious and sacred, dirty, magical stories. They had lived and died in what was now the living room, and there had always been a LaRose. (Erdrich 2016b, 86-87)

Indeed, critics and writers have highlighted Erdrich's power for revealing concisely and in incredibly natural ways the darkest knowledge of her region. In her most recent novels, she has been trying to tackle the difficult question of how anybody should respond (fairly) to such shocking events as racist mob executions (*The Plague of Doves*), rape and murder (*The Round House*), or a child's death by gunfire (*LaRose*), which invariably awaken the ghosts of

inter-generational trauma in the community and for which neither conventional justice nor religion seem to offer easy solutions. Nevertheless, in *LaRose* the author succeeds in bringing some sort of unstable balance back to the community by resorting to some of the old ways (of reparatory justice) that Anishinaabe tradition provides and by the healing presence of the title character, LaRose. As Konnie LeMay rightly concluded in her review of the novel, Erdrich "excels at conveying the painful histories of generations past and present, while weaving in the realities of the spiritual realm and the possibilities of healing and love" (2016, n.p.).

To explore these intricate issues, this paper is divided into three sections dealing with trauma, revenge, and restitution in the novel. The first section focuses on the disastrous hunting accident that opens the book—in which a five-year-old kid is killed—and the profound effects it has not only on the two families involved, but also on the rest of the community. Some of the ideas developed by historical and cultural trauma theory will be very useful to understand why the accident reverberates so much on the reservation. The second section dwells upon the immense resentment, troubling memories, and vengeful attitudes which, despite the characters' best efforts, upsurge in their relationships and which threaten to drive the story toward "blood everlasting" (2016b, 5). In fact, most of the main characters—with the exception of the young hero—are visited by desires of revenge and retaliation as a short cut to recover their emotional balance. The third section looks into the central role played by restitution—and reparation—as part of the Ojibwe cultural heritage and as a resilience strategy in the healing process of the community. Mei Wan has recently identified the tradition of "spiritual reparation" among the Anishinaabe, which in *LaRose* takes the form of child adoption, power acquisition through kinship, and sacred rituals, as essential to "the survivance of a Native culture" (1182). Finally, the paper concludes by considering the possible applicability of certain strategies and ethical principles (related to conflict management and reparatory justice) shown in the novel to combat grief, collective trauma, and retaliatory impulses.

2. Unexpected calamity and resulting trauma

Like the two previous novels in the "Justice Trilogy," *LaRose* begins with an unanticipated and shocking event that will shake the foundations not only of

the families more directly involved, but also of the rest of the Native community in North Dakota. In the fall of 1999, while hunting a deer near the edge of his land, Landreaux Iron accidentally kills his neighbors' five-year-old son, Dusty Ravich. Needless to say, Landreaux is horrified when he realizes what he has done, for not only have the Raviches and the Irons been close friends for a long time, but Dusty was his youngest son's, LaRose's, best friend. As Crispin rightly remarks, despite the reservation's persistent struggles with poverty, ill health, addictions, and despair, "the repercussions of the young boy's death are felt throughout the community" (2016, n.p.). Of course, it is the two families who are most deeply affected by the boy's demise, since the parents' relationships quickly begin to deteriorate as none of them seems to know how they are "going to go on living" (6). Although the four parents show evident signs of mental volatility during the mourning process, it is probably Nola, Dusty's mother, who has the most difficult time coping with the situation:

> The parents didn't want it, but Christmas came for both families. Nola woke a week before the twenty-fifth, picturing her heart as a lump of lead. It lay so heavily in her chest that she could feel it, feebly thumping, reasonlessly going when she wasn't interested in its efforts. But Christmas. She turned over in bed and nudged Peter—she resented that he could sleep at all. (45)

Although Nola Ravich and Emmaline Iron, Landreaux's wife, are half-sisters, intense resentment appears between the two of them as their families are rocked by Dusty's death. Moreover, Nola has an extremely strained relationship with her only remaining child, Maggie, whose rebellious personality does not help much in terms of filling the unbearable void in her mother's life. Not even her kind husband, Peter, seems able to assuage the uncontrollable agony and outrage in her: "He stroked her shoulder. She pulled violently away. The black crack between them seemed to reach down forever now. He had not found the bottom yet" (14).

After seeking guidance from both an Ojibwe tribal tradition by visiting the sweat lodge and the Catholic Church by means of a meeting with the local priest, Landreaux and Emmaline Iron decide to give up their own five-year-old son, LaRose, in an attempt to compensate for the pain inflicted on their neighbors. Father Travis Wozniak tries to comfort the couple by offering them the conventional religious explanations to the tragedy: "*Incomprehensible,*

His judgments. Unsearchable, His ways" (7). However, it is the ceremony they perform at the sweat lodge that becomes revelatory of the way to proceed: "Emmaline had songs for bringing in the medicines, for inviting in the manidoog, aadizookaanag, the spirits. Landreaux had songs for the animals and the winds who sat in each direction" (11). In spite of Emmaline's initial reluctance to admit the meaning of their visions, she finally yields:

> He calmed her, talked to her, praying with her. Reassuring her. They had sundanced together. They talked about what they had heard when they fell into a trance. What they had seen while they fasted on a rock cliff. Their son had come out of the clouds asking why he had to wear another boy's clothing. They had seen LaRose floating above the earth. He had put his hand upon their hearts and whispered, *You will live*. They knew what to make of these images now. (11)

Not being aligned with Native American customs and traditions, the Raviches are quite perplexed by the Irons' intimation of atonement and solidarity: "Our son will be your son now," Landreux tells Peter, "It's the old way" (16). It is Nola, deeply disturbed by suicidal thoughts, who benefits the most from the presence of LaRose, on whom she dotes obsessively. Curiously, fierce Maggie decides to adopt her new brother as a co-conspirator, as she realizes that he is the only one able to keep her mother's dark moods at bay: "After the first weeks, LaRose tried to stop crying, around Nola at least. Maggie told him the facts again, why he was there. His parents had told him, but he still didn't get it. He had to hear it again and again" (33). Although Nola and Peter Ravich come to love LaRose very much, they are never completely comfortable with the arrangement. And then, there are Emmaline and LaRose himself who, as Peter explains to Landreaux, must be going through true hell on account of the unnatural severance:

> I think it does [help]. I know it does. Help. As long as we're with LaRose we're thinking about him, and we love him. He's a decent boy, Landreaux, you've raised him right. Him being with us helps Nola. Helps Maggie. It does help . . . but what's it doing to him? I mean, he's holding Nola together. Big job. Meanwhile this is probably tearing Emmaline apart. (75)

Most readers of *LaRose* would agree that one of the main achievements of the novel is its incredibly rich cast of tormented characters whose fate is linked to

their capacity to overcome various trials, but who also live under the burden of a turbulent history. As Erdrich puts it in the novel, "Loss, dislocation, disease, addiction, and just feeling like the tattered remnants of a people with a complex history. What was in that history? What sort of knowledge? Who had they been? What were they now? Why so much fucked-upness wherever you turned?" (51). Theorists of historical trauma, such as Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (2005), would support this description of the kind of disorientation that invades the collective consciousness of a human group after they have been the object of gross historical abuses. As will become evident in the next section, one of the immediate consequences of the accident at the beginning of the novel is precisely that families are broken and the sense of communal cohesion and a shared heritage is crippled, as personal grudges and bitterness take up most characters' time and energies.

3. Revengeful human impulses

In *LaRose*, the distressing events of the present, such as Dusty's death, the fears of catastrophes with the turn of the century (Y2K), or the run-up to the Iraq war in the news, are represented against extensive memories of the protagonist's grandparents and even earlier generations. As Gordon notes, "With a touch so light as to be almost casual, Erdrich includes details of Indian history that force the reader to acknowledge the damage that has extended through generations" (2016, n.p.). In the chapter "The Passage," for instance, LaRose is told by his grandmother about the awful effects that attending boarding schools had on her mother and her people: "Look at this picture, said Mrs. Peace. Rows and rows of children in stiff clothing glowered before a large brick building" (70). She explains to her grandson that the government was aiming for extermination in those days and tells him to read from a newsprint clipping by Frank Baum—author of *The Wizard of Oz*—published in 1888:

> . . . the nobility of the Redskin is extinguished, and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. The Whites by law of conquest, by justice of civilization, are Masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians. Why not annihilation? Their glory has fled, their spirit

> *is broken, their manhood effaced, better that they die than live as the miserable wretches they are.* (70-71; italics in original)

Clearly, the boarding schools that Native children were forced to attend in the nineteenth century were an oppressive force. Miriam Schacht has analyzed at some length the presence and significance that Indian boarding schools have in Erdrich's fiction and considered the light in which they are presented. Her conclusions coincide broadly with what the reader sees in *LaRose*, where, although we occasionally hear about the first LaRoses receiving food and useful lessons for survival in these institutions, the focus is on brutal physical abuse, deep emotional trauma, and harsh cultural erasure. Again, it is Mrs. Peace who, when half-unconscious because of the drugs she is receiving to relieve her pain, remembers how she and her ancestors inscribed their name in hidden places of the schools in an attempt to conjure away the damage that they were doing:

> Chamberlain. Flandreau. Fort Totten and Fort Totten. We left our name in those schools and others, all the way back to the first school, Carlisle. For the history of LaRose is tied up in those schools. Yes, we wrote our name in places it would never be found until the building itself was torn down or burned so that all the sorrows and strivings those walls held went up in flames and the smoke drifted home. (134)

Despite the elders' best efforts to find antidotes to the poison that the schools regularly doled out among the young Native population, it is evident that the members of the older generation in *LaRose* are still suffering from the psycho-wounds inflicted by the system. This becomes most clear in the kind of resentment and vengeful feelings that they develop toward each other and which disrupt their sense of community and shared future. This is conspicuously seen in the parents in the Ravich and Iron families who, although never mistreated in brutal ways, are still caught in a cycle of vengeful feelings that prevent them from seeing each other and the world in objective ways. Social psychologist Ian McKee (2008) has shown how it is the desperate struggle to retain a sense of dignity, self-esteem, and status that pushes people into the maelstrom of revenge when they feel that they have been wronged. This is further complicated if those individuals have the feeling that the honor and the cultural heritage of their community have been historically desecrated (Alexander 2000, 11). It is Nola

and her half-sister, Emmaline, who see their psycho-social stability most clearly jeopardized by the animosity that Dusty's shooting, and its aftereffects, cause in both of them. Even their husbands, who have kept a long friendship and have created ties of mutual respect, seem deeply affected by the turmoil, although for different reasons. The reader is particularly dismayed by the thoughts and impulses that often encroach upon Peter Ravich—an otherwise good-hearted man—who is also sporadically troubled by temptations of revengeful action that he knows he would later regret:

> Peter looked down on his parted hair, the long tail of it, the loose power of Landreaux's folded arms. A sinuous contempt gripped him and he thought of the rapture he would feel for an hour, maybe two hours, after he brought down his ax on Landreaux's head. Indeed, he'd named his woodpile for his friend, and the mental image was the cause of its growing size. If not for LaRose, he thought, if not for LaRose. Then the picture of the boy's grief covered his thinking. (76)

But the clearest example of a character driven by vengeance in the novel is, obviously, Romeo Puyat, who is described by the Catholic priest as a satanic presence on the reservation. Romeo nurses an almost Shakespearean grudge against Landreaux due to an accident that occurred after they had run away from a boarding school during their childhood, an accident which left Romeo crippled. Not only that, but the handicapped man is convinced that Landreaux stole Emmaline's heart from him. Although most reviewers have claimed that one of Romeo's primary functions in the novel is to provide comic relief in a narrative that is mostly cloaked in grief (Gordon 2016; Charles 2016), his subplot grows in importance in the second half of the book and his perverse intentions are seen to increasingly threaten the gradual recovery process of the two families:

> Landreaux believed he was outside of Romeo's reach and interest. But no, he wasn't. Landreaux was so full of himself, so high on himself that even now he did not remember those old days of theirs. Far back when they were young boys hardly older than LaRose. That's how far back and deep it went, invisible most times like a splinter to the bone. (141)

Romeo keeps stealthily assembling his plan to achieve revenge on Landreaux. In order to do so, he reforms and changes his old habits, so that people in his

workplaces and the community begin to trust him: "He began to like follow-ing the rules! He loved wearing rubber gloves! People began to think he had sobered up, and he let them think that" (214). By taking advantage of this new trust and making others believe that he was one of "the success stories," Romeo uses his jobs at the asylum and the local hospital to gather the information that he thinks will convince Peter Ravich that Dusty's death was not a mere accident. Although he feels more at ease about his role in the community and his relationship with his son, Hollis, who was adopted by the Irons at an early age, his resentment does not seem to recede: "…you, Landreaux Iron have much to answer for, things you never have addressed!" (218). It is Romeo's Iago-like blanket of deception that brings us to the climax of the story, in which Peter Ravich is faced with the tough decision of unleashing his own revengeful feelings—reinforced by Romeo's ill-intentioned revelations—or of seeing "all he has kept himself from seeing [. . .] the sickness rising out of things. The phosphorous of grief consuming those he loves" (342). It is only LaRose's miraculous intervention that prevents both of his fathers from completing Romeo's malevolent plot. In an interview with magazine writer Claire Hoffman, Erdrich declared Romeo Puyat one of the most interesting characters in the novel because he embodies the struggle "between decency and brutality" (Erdrich 2016a, n.p.). Indeed, it is the most deeply traumatized characters in the book: Nola Ravich, Landreaux Iron, Maggie or Romeo, who appear to benefit from the counterplot of redemption and reparation primarily orchestrated by the protagonist of the novel.

4. Can restitution alleviate grievances?

While Erdrich's novel is fraught with references to drug abuse, marital disap-pointments, menial employments, adolescent yearnings, and old-age discontent, it is also true that these negative forces are somehow leavened with the occasional amusements and ordinary joys of family and tribal life (cf. Campbell 2016). In her conversation with Hoffman, the author noted that, despite the unmis-takable presence of tragedy and grief in the novel, she always intended to write about common lives and normal people: "I think that's the way life is. I think we experience the most ordinary circumstances and the heightened realm of experience when huge things happen to us. We also have to tend to what people

are going to eat, where they are going to sleep, all of the small things" (2016a, n.p.). Indeed, much attention is paid in the novel to the food people eat, the hobbies they have, the jokes they make, or the traditional rituals some of them perform. Even an outsider such as Father Travis comes to appreciate and enjoy some of the distinctive habits that the Ojibwe have: "He loved it here. He loved his people. They were his people, weren't they? They drove him nuts, but he was inspired by their generosity. And they laughed so much. He hadn't known funny before" (110). As the priest observes, it is remarkable that, in the face of horrific disruptions, the people seem to find the traditional ways and resilience tactics to bring back peace and harmony.

One interesting point to be made about *LaRose* is that, unlike in the other two novels of the trilogy, the key disruption does not come from outside the boundaries of the community, but is generated from within the ethnic (and family) group. Connie Jacobs has underlined that the (circular) narrative structure of Erdrich's novels is generally motivated by a family's story "and the reverberations of its history upon the life of the community" (2001, 108). This ripple effect is very clearly observed in the case of the Iron and Ravich families, who happen to share a common lineage, but seem to relate to it in very different ways, thus causing the schism that lies at the heart of the novel. This schism finds its deepest roots, as will be seen below, in the degree of assimilation to the Western culture each of the families has experienced and the type of ties they have been able to maintain with their Native heritage (see Broida 2016, n.p.). We see evidence of this when Nola sarcastically remarks to Peter:

> How generous you are, Emmaline, what a big-time traditional person to give your son away to a white man and almost white sister who is just so pitiful, so stark raving. So like her mother that Marn who had the snakes. People never forget around here. And they will never forget this either. It will be Emmaline Iron the good strong whaddyacallit, Ogema-ikwe. (234)

A majority of critics and reviewers have remarked that *LaRose* is primarily a book about the possibility of atonement and reparation, even in cases in which the pain inflicted is totally unmanageable (Crispin 2016; Johnson 2016). In Michael Broida's view, the grief produced by Dusty's death at the outset of the novel leaves the two families debilitated and "is emblematic of a larger tragedy enacted upon the Ojibwe and other Native American families" (2016, n.p.).

There are clear signs both in the perpetrator's and the surviving victims' reactions that earlier ghosts are unleashed by the accident, which initially hinders any form of forgiveness or abatement. Interestingly, however, it is the family more deeply rooted in Native culture that has caused the grievance and that is, therefore, responsible for taking the initiative in terms of restitution. This is an intriguing reversal of the usual situation, since questions of agency and accountability are seen to work here in the opposite direction. Fortunately, the Irons seem to have more resources than the "victims," as the plight of the Raviches confronting their affliction is one of utter powerlessness. The former, though, count on their strong cultural heritage, a happy and loving family that has already adopted and nurtured Hollis Puyat, and, of course, the most important asset of all, the protagonist of the book. Landreaux and Emmaline "had resisted using the name of LaRose until their last child was born. It was a name both innocent and powerful, and had belonged to the family's healers. They had decided not to use it, but it was as though LaRose had come into the world with that name" (11). Although his parents suspect from the beginning that there is something special about their youngest son, they cannot be sure that the invisible cloak of "power and wisdom" that is associated with the name will suffice to get him through the trial of moving into a family deeply aggrieved and fatally crumbling to pieces. Nonetheless, despite some uncertain steps at first, it soon becomes clear that the young hero is completely up to the task of healing the severe wounds in his surrogate family and the community at large. In his review in *The Washington Post*, Ron Charles describes LaRose as follows: "In the vast universe of Erdrich's characters, this boy may be her most graceful creation. LaRose radiates the faint hues of a mystic, the purest distillation of her foremothers' healing abilities, but he remains very much a child, grounded in the everyday world of toys and school and those who love him."

LaRose's special role in the novel spurs the need not just for retribution or punishment as a form of justice, but also for something more significant and restorative, which some critics have described as reparative justice. In this novel, the gesture of compensation and restitution generously enacted by the Irons when they give up their son to the Raviches is not enough by itself to reconstruct the families and community, since the reparatory process can only take place gradually. Although LaRose seems to have an immediate curative impact

on some of the characters—Nola, most clearly—, the majority of them take a while to see themselves transformed by this adorable charmer.

One remarkable advantage that LaRose has over all the other characters in the novel is that, besides the care and teachings he receives from his parents, he also communicates with the elders, especially his maternal grandmother, and with some forebears. In one of the visions he has, we read: "It was a group of people. Half were Indians and half were maybe Indians, some so pale he could see light shining through them. They came and made themselves comfortable, sitting around him—people of all ages" (210). If LaRose is able to become a bridge or an ambassador between the two families (cf. McGrath 2016), it is because he is wary to the particular needs each of his closest kin has and tries to afford them what they most require. In this sense, he does not just offer restitution for the victims, who are partly restored to their original condition before the calamity, but also rehabilitation for those who were not so directly injured by the grievance.

A few reviewers have found the title character a bit unconvincing, since not only is he incredibly talented at reading all the needs of the other characters, but his quasi-supernatural clairvoyance allows him to derail the different dark plots in the second half of the novel (cf. Gordon 2016). Although he could pass for a regular boy in the reservation, neither too bright nor too physically deft, he proves to have great discernment to see beyond what everybody else can manage to see. Peter Ravich does not fully understand LaRose's power until after he has pulled the trigger of his rifle several times against Landreaux and "Nothing happened." Then he sees: "The picture of those small capable boy hands now fills Peter. Those hands curving to accept the bullets. Loading and unloading his gun. And the ropes, the poisons. Those hands taking them from their places and getting rid of them. […] LaRose saving him now, saving both his fathers" (342). Erdrich would resist the idea of her readers interpreting LaRose and his preternatural talents as a sign of magical realism in her novel. In her view, if read correctly, the boy represents an embodiment of one of the key forces in the spiritual life of the Anishinaabe: restitution as a form of atonement to restore tribal cohesion. No doubt, LaRose, being an "old soul" (52), represents this perfect materialization of a tradition that allowed many tribes to survive under the pressure of a government and a culture that did not understand and punished such practices. As the novel shows, the protagonist slowly learns to

make the best out of his bewildering situation suspended between two severely wounded families:

> He had learned from his birth family how to snare rabbits, make a stew, paint fingernails […]. He had learned from the old people how to move between worlds seen and unseen. Peter taught him how to use an ax, a chain saw, safely handle a .22 […]. Nola taught him how to paint walls, keep animals, how to plant and grow thing. […]. Maggie taught him how to hide fear, fake pain, how to punch with a knuckle jutting. (208)

Thanks to his careful attention and care for the people who surround him, LaRose becomes a healing force, ready to use all his competencies as a sensitive child and a conciliator: "In all of these things, LaRose was precise and deliberate. He was becoming an effective human being" (208).

5. Closing remarks: Reparation beats retaliation

LeMay notes that Erdrich's novel tells a story of "life understood and experienced by many in Indian country, where the pain and the triumphs of the past are not forgotten but become part of the foundation on which the present and the future are built" (2016, n.p). Truly, we have seen how buildings, objects, and even people accumulate layer upon layer of history that turn them into much more than what they appear to be at first sight. Even the title name "LaRose" contains many layers of history:

> There are five LaRoses. First the LaRose who poisoned Mackinnon, went to mission school, married Wolfred, taught her children the shape of the world, and traveled the world as a set of stolen bones. Second, her daughter LaRose, who went to Carlisle. This LaRose got tuberculosis like her own mother, and like the first LaRose fought it off again and again. Lived long enough to become the mother of the third LaRose, who went to Fort Totten and bore the fourth LaRose, who eventually became the mother of Emmaline, the teacher of Romeo and Landreaux. The fourth LaRose also became the grandmother of the last LaRose, who was given to the Ravich family by his parents in exchange for a son accidentally killed. (290)

This passage reveals the importance of names in Native traditions, in which they denote identity, status, and heritage. As Wan explains, "giving a newly-born child a spirit name is thus a sacred action for the child and the tribe as well"

(1184). It is for that reason that the Irons at first hesitated to name their fourth child "LaRose," knowing very well the kind of power, but also responsibility, that it bears. Yet, after they have heard from Randall and the elders of the last LaRose's healing powers, it is easy to see why Landreaux and Emmaline decide to surrender their last son for adoption to the Raviches as some form of compensation for the damage they have caused in their family: "LaRose is powerful both in name and in origins and can survive traumas and preserve Ojibwe traditions" (Wan 2018, 1184).

It is important to note that the protagonist's name, which travels through bloodlines and has a mysterious power to help the community recover from their grief, also evokes several references to boarding schools and their injurious influence on the family history. Joseph Gone has described in great detail the "horrific instances of violence and violation perpetrated against [Indian children]" in those institutions and how they yielded "a harrowing legacy of distress and disability for contemporary Native peoples" (2009, 752). In a way, the Irons' beautiful and generous gesture of giving up their youngest son is also an attempt at correcting the deracinating aftermath that those schools had on the older generation, as each of them is marked by that experience in a different way: "low self-esteem, victim identity, anger, self-destructive behavior, and substance abuse" (Brave Heart 2005, 7). It is perhaps Emmaline Iron who is most aware of the pernicious effects of boarding schools on her peoples, so she decides to establish an alternative "on-reservation boarding school for crisis kids" (105):

> The radical part was that, unlike historical boarding schools, this one would be located on the reservation. Pre-K through grade 4. After that, kids could board but go to regular school. This new/old sort of boarding school, equipped to pick up the parenting roles for families that went through cycles of failure and recovery, became Emmaline's mission. (105-106)

As a crisis-intervention project, Emmaline understands that this school's primary aim and mission is "Heartbreak mitigation" (106); that is, to provide calm and stability in the face of collective trauma, to achieve dependable household structures, to combine education with traditional cultural practices, and, above all, to afford coping strategies for those who see their lives disarrayed by unexpected accidents awakening old fears. Of course, she is quick to realize that her own mitigation program at the school could be profitably

transferred to her own home when the Ojibwe tradition of restitution spurs them to hand over their son for the benefit of the whole community. Although painful at first, she understands the need to go through the "trauma process" (Alexander 2000, 22), which involves confronting and understanding the trauma, releasing the pain by resorting to cultural rituals, and transcending the trauma to move beyond. As the ending of the novel demonstrates, even those most deeply hurt may begin to show signs of recovery if these basic principles are pursued. Even if the process may be tortuous at stages and the presence of a powerful "healer" may be imperative at times, there is hope that the community will regain its balance. As his ancestors tell LaRose and Dusty near the end of the book: "*We love you, don't cry. Sorrow eats time. Be patient. Time eats sorrow*" (371).

Frances Washburn notes that one of Erdrich's main strengths as a writer is her ability to portray the violent culture clash between Native American tribes and Euro-American colonizers and to still endorse a cross-cultural view of history: "Erdrich addresses historical injustice, yes, but she complicates and explicates presenting nuanced stories that are closer to truth, if there is such a thing as one single truth" (2013, 124). *LaRose* presents just such a story in which the boundaries between saints and sinners, traditionalists and assimilationists, savages and civilized are constantly problematized. The novel explores the different responses that a diverse set of human beings have about grievances—grievances that can be very immediate or that may throw us back in time into historical traumas that have hardly been properly assimilated. These diverse responses range from vehement revenge plots to those that rely on atonement and reparation to try to bring human relationships back to harmony. In the end, reparative strategies seem to get the upper hand, but one cannot be completely sure that such healing tactics would have worked under any other circumstances, especially without the crucial presence of the last LaRose.

Besides the achievement of driving readers to identify with her characters in an intimate manner, Erdrich's novel also advances ways to address such colossal problems as historical injustice and intergenerational trauma. Legal scholars such as Francesco Francioni (2008) have dwelt upon the complications of applying reparatory or rectificatory justice in our times. Complex issues related to legitimacy, non-retroactivity or redistribution often get in the way when "serious breaches of human rights and humanitarian law [such as slavery

or the Indian genocide]" are shown to clamorously require reparatory action (2008, 43). Although Native legal experts have demonstrated that most of the current demands for reparation and restitution from indigenous peoples are based on the violation of treaties signed by the US during the nineteenth century (see Deloria 1985, 4-5), only minor steps have been taken to correct the situation. In her "Justice Trilogy," Erdrich illustrates in thought-provoking ways how those historical abuses reemerge on Indian reservations in current forms of dysfunction and inequality. David Stirrup notes that, as Erdrich's career has developed, her novels engage "the political-milieu" in significant ways: "her late work revisits […] terrain with a much more pronounced political edge to it, and a keener eye for the devastating and often paradoxical legacy of communities, values, lifeways, and economies clashing, 'cracking apart', merging, and reforming" (2010, 204). If the frequent references to Y2K, 9/11, the Iraq War, and the National Guard were not enough to make us conscious of that political edge in *LaRose*, we always have the wise words of old Ignatia Thunder right before she dies, telling the protagonist of the novel what Native American history has always been all about:

> It is *about* getting chased, said Ignatia, with a long suck on her oxygen. We are chased into this life. The Catholics think we are chased by devils, original sin. We are chased by things done to us in this life.
> That's called trauma, said Malvern.
> Thank *you*, said Ignatia. We are chased by what we do to others and then in turn what they do to us. We're always looking behind us, or worried about what comes next. We only have this teeny moment. Oops, it's gone. (294)

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THE ANTI-EMPATHIC AFTERMATH OF LINGUISTIC DISILLUSIONMENT IN DAVID FOSTER WALLACE'S "THE DEPRESSED PERSON"

Sergio López-Sande

Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

sergio.sande@usc.es

Abstract

David Foster Wallace's "The Depressed Person" (1998) offers a carefully weaved reflection on mental illness. As it does so, it also succeeds in interrogating the difficulties that depressed subjects encounter when they attempt to care about, listen to, or feel for others. The impairment of interpersonal understanding and the much questioned possibility that one may truly convey the self in language are both central concerns of Wallace's work, and their appearance in the story serves, I will contend, not only to speak of human character in the face of mental disorder, as it does on a superficial level, but also to reflect on the very nature of fiction and the insurmountable difficulties that human beings encounter when trying to use language to be understood.

Keywords: empathy, David Foster Wallace, mental health, intersubjectivity

1. Introduction

In her 2013 study of the stagedly horrific photography of Chieh-Jen Chen and Yasumasa Morimura, Kirstin Ringelberg argued that "it may be […] distanced images of *faked* pain, rather than the images we cannot disassociate from reality,

that offer a potential conceptual framework for images of pain and torture[, and a]s such, [they do] what art perhaps should do in dealing with war, murder, torture, pain: make us look more than once, make us think beyond our own feelings" (36-37). Even though Ringelberg's study is concerned with the visual arts exclusively, it does raise an interesting issue with regards to the affective potential of explicit fictionalisation. In inscribing a story into the societally accorded codes of what counts as a fiction—one could surmise from her argument—the reader's emotional apprehension of that which is presented changes. The nature of this change is easily traceable to the emotional experimentalism of fiction reading, an activity where our very societal codes are challenged to their core; where our knowledge and our beliefs come to be tensed and contrasted with those of others whom we would very often never encounter, appreciate, or allow a discursive space in our so-called "real lives."

In "The Depressed Person," readers are provided with a disturbingly raw account of the experience of depression as recounted by a young woman trying to convey the texture of it through reminiscence. "The Depressed Person" is perhaps David Foster Wallace's most famous short story, first published in Harper's Magazine in January 1998, and later featured in his 1999 short story collection *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* with minor changes. Its third-person narration describes the (un-)emotional state of the central character: a clinically depressed woman who recurrently resorts to her therapist and the friends she has managed not to lose—her "Support System"—in search of both an escape from the affective turmoil of her own mind and a way to recount the etiology of her sickness, for of the sickness itself and its horror she finds herself unable to speak. In what follows, I will attempt to dilucidated the nature of such an inability to convey as symbiotic to her condition as depressed; and, most critically, to her "existing" as "literary."

2. The emotional onlooker: Deriving affective compromise from fiction-reading

2.1. "The Depressed Person" and empathy conditions

Upon reading "The Depressed Person," a simulative therapy room is erected, and readers become therapist and judge to the narrativised confession of the pained protagonist. There appears to be plenty to judge, in this respect, as the main character has lost her capacity for empathy, and, incapable of feeling

anything for anyone but herself, is trapped in a story—her own—that "provides no remedy, no resynchronized rhythm, no recovery of the other" (Frantzen 2018, 260). Remarkably, her own therapist kills herself in the narrative, leaving the locus of the informed outsider who will listen for the reader to occupy. Her suicide triggers in the depressed person feelings of self-loathing, as she is consequently forced to acknowledge that "even when she centered and looked deep within herself, she felt she could locate no real feelings for the therapist as an autonomously valid human being [...;] all her agonized pain and despair since the therapist's suicide had in fact been all and only for herself, i.e. for her loss, her abandonment, her grief, her trauma and pain and primal affective survival" (56).

It is left for the reader to ponder whether her blaming herself attests to her very capacity for empathy or not. And yet, irrespective of how much she comes to value that which her therapist had contributed to the prospect of her future well-being, the self-centredness of the protagonist gets direr in response to her death. This reinforces the idea that the urgency to tell, however useless, does not spring from the psychologist-patient relationship and the context of therapy as understood synchronically, but rather from some ulterior need to convey the horror within. This horror, as Wallace explains as early as in the opening sentence, is aggravated by the patient's very inability to do justice to it in language, a claim evocative of Virginia Woolf's own in "On Being Ill," where she lamented that "English, which can express the thoughts of Hamlet and the tragedy of Lear, has no words for the shiver and the headache" (1926, 34). This same frustration, even though here applied to a mental condition specifically, is at the core of the depressed subject's sickness in Wallace's story. As a consequence of her inability to convey, the patient turns to the history of the events that she identifies as having caused the horror to appear, but never to the horror itself, and obsesses with the possibility that she may arrive at a moment of genuine comprehension where the compassionate response of others become truly empathetic towards her.

Our empathetic response to her suffering as readers is only empathetic, I should argue, because of her being received as *fictional* character; as a literary persona that one can put away and not withstand for as long as one wishes. On a superficial level, it is key to our building of an affective bridge towards this person, who has been rendered incapable of feeling in a way that we would collective consider to be "normal," that we should have the knowledge that she

can be put away at any moment by closing the book. This is also most poignantly accomplished thanks to "The Depressed Person" being a short story and not a novel, for the sense of attachment to characters that we might develop when reading is more a matter of interrelational response than a consequence of having shared a significant journey in their fictions. This connection depends on the reader rounding the humanness of the sketched character; projecting more into the story that the story itself can provide due to its quintessential brevity. This change in characterisation was acknowledged by Wallace himself, who, in a conversation with Lorin Stein, maintained that feeling for characters in novels "gets very weird and invisible-friend-from-childhood-ish, then you kill that thing, which was never really alive except in your imagination, and you're supposed to go buy groceries and talk to people at parties and stuff. Characters in stories are different. They come alive in the corners of your eyes. You don't have to live with them" (2012, 93).

The vantage point of the reader would thus not be comparable to those of the depressed person's acquaintances nor her therapist's, but transcend both positions insofar as, to the reader, worry for the depressed person is merely circumstantial and fully interruptible without any manner of expected social punishment. Even upon feeling that we understand what she is incapable of saying; that we sympathise with her suffering on a variety of levels, we are repeatedly delegitimised by the story's very nature as a story. For, in being someone else's story rather than our own, and a someone else for whom we can do nothing, their fiction of the self is readily left behind as we part ways with the depressed person *in the book* and face the "real world" beyond it. A "real world," that is, for whose workings and for whose "others" and their feelings we can be, and often are, made responsible. Our empathy towards the depressed person is thus conditioned by our unaccountability for her suffering; this unaccountability being, precisely, a direct consequence of our collective understanding of "fictional characters" as those to whom we can never give anything but a meaning; an illusory life that depends entirely on us who "really live," and one to whom nothing is owed.

2.2. The narrative nature of psychotherapy

"The Depressed Person" creates a debt, however, between protagonist and reader. The woman's cry for help and answers to her most-feared questions populates

the story, as does her urgency in trying to say something *real* about that which
is happening to her. In relation to this, it is notable how some scholars have
claimed that this tale evidences that the narrativisation of one's experience does
not actually contribute to one's healing process. Ellen Defossez, for instance,
criticises the current urge that psychologists should get their patients to speak,
and understands personal narratives—as in, belonging to the subject herself—as
"vehicles by which patients' voices are reclaimed from the quantitative impulses
of Western biomedicine and placed back into the narrative centers of their own
lived experience" (2017, 17). In so doing, she argues "The Depressed Person"
to provide a counterargument to the championing of depression narratives as
empowering, therapeutic mechanisms via which to cope with the unceasing
emotional pain that depressed subjects withstand. Instead, Defossez draws on
Wallace's story to maintain that "the inducement toward narrative can disem-
power the narrator and can potentially prolong her pain," and much as the story
"highlights, paraphrases, and contextualizes certain elements of the depressed
person's experience for us," it also "ensur[es] that the depressed person herself
is never fully heard" (2017, 18).

Ultimately, her not being heard could be argued to be caused by a mixture
of language's very inability to convey experience faithfully and the protagonist's
incapacity to identify another person's true comprehension should it be pre-
sented before her. Mary K. Holland has suggested this to happen because "the
woman is suffering narcissism: her need obsessively to know her self through its
development in and reflection by the other, to fill her void with that reflected
image" (2013, 116). This narcissism, whether it be read in connection to her
depressive state or as substitutive of it, is precisely what renders representation
impossible. The Self cannot speak truly of the insufferable pain afflicting it
because the very act of speaking of it is a contributing factor to its essential
horror as much *as the inability to do it faithfully is*. In reading the protagonist
as pathologically narcissistic, her necessity to say—rather than her inability to
say accurately—becomes the decisive factor to her looping, excruciating con-
dition and its inescapability. For, in speaking of her condition and eating up
discursive space away from others, her narcissism—and thus her depression,
too—worsens.

This sense of not-being-heard might very well be what Wallace attempted to
achieve by writing in the third person, depriving the depressed subject of a voice
that would be truly her own. Similarly, the fact that the protagonist remains

unnamed throughout the story reinforces the ideas that she is not emotionally significant to anyone—not in the tale nor outside of it—and that she could be anybody absolutely, for her narcissistic behaviours are not ingrained in her identity, but a consequence of her sickness and that consequence only. The feeling of being understood; the knowledge of being understood, even, and the so-called "empathy" that promisingly awaits beneath, do not seem to suffice, though. We see evidence of this at the end of the story, when the protagonist acknowledges that her therapist might have been in a situation comparable to her own, or even more critical, and yet "this shatteringly terrifying set of realizations, instead now of awakening in her any feelings of compassion, empathy, and other-directed grief for the therapist as a person, had […] seemed, terrifyingly, merely to have brought up and created still more and further feelings in the depressed person about *herself*" (Wallace 1999, 56-57).

Not only that, but feelings of which she can speak only imperfectly. The idea of "telling" has become a core component of psychological therapy as it is understood synchronically in today's societies. In this regard, psychology's interest in "telling" could be claimed to be twofold: on the one hand, and provided that we do not as of yet have the tools to properly examine a person's mind, it is required that the patient speaks in order for a clinical picture of their condition to be attainable; on the other, the weaving of a fiction before a specialist gives the patient a narrative to believe in, and one of which she can make sense if properly assisted. Belief in these practices is grounded on the idea that telling cannot possibly become a source of psychological distress in itself, and it is precisely as proof that it can be so that Wallace's story appears to stand.

The complexities inherent to saying how one feels or what has happened are countless, however. Following David Pugmire, it is possible to go so far as to maintain that "[a] person's experience is apt to matter to him [sic] primarily for how it is to *have* it" (2010, 380), rather than for what it is like to share it through language. Language, however, is a thing-in-the-world that can be shared by others in a way in which experience cannot. The problem at which "The Depressed Person" is targeted is whether than translation of experience into language speaks truly of experience, or, further, whether it is possible that it speaks of experience at all. The act of translating experience into language is frequently understood as being deeply transformative, having the potential to bridge the gaps of interpersonal difference. Much as I do not intend to self-destructingly deny language's ability to communicate, any direct correspondence

between experience and the telling of one's experience, as tends to be established in psychological discourse—and, to varying extents, in medical discourse, too—neglects the inescapable fact that telling fictionalises, and presupposes it to contribute to betterment when, as evinced by our protagonist, it needn't do so.

3. Conclusions

There appears to be a positive note to "The Depressed Person," and one that exists only because of its being a literary fiction, by which the difficulties are partly bridged despite all of the objections above presented. In her now most renowned *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), Susan Sontag insightfully discussed photography's capacity to trigger empathetic responses. Empathy, sympathy and compassion being, she maintained, "unstable emotion[s that] need […] to be translated into action, or [they] wither. The question," she goes on, "is what to do with the feelings that have been aroused, the knowledge that has been communicated" (101). Behind Sontag's call for political action in the face of photographically-conveyed war and injustice lie two beliefs: on the one hand, that photography speaks of *real facts*, and does so *truly*, regardless the nuanced meanings of both truth and reality; on the other, that a "real" object is represented in photography, that the link between such a representation and the world becomes apparent through it, and that an action on the part of the beholder can be expected to spring from their affective response to the picture.

It is interesting, however contestable these arguments might be deemed to be, to extrapolate Sontag's discussion on photography specifically to fiction in broader terms. Upon doing so, one may conclude that the action that is initiated by being empathically exposed to the experiences of fictional others—and others that do not intend to speak of any specific "real" particular—is not political in a governmental sense, but inwardly so, insofar as it relates to how we present ourselves before sentient others—and radically political at that. The deed derived from the experience of reading "The Depressed Person" might not quite be a call to protest, but one of profound reflection on the nature of interpersonal experience, instead; one of looking for those ostensibly despicable traits of the depressed person that live in us, too; and one, ultimately, of rediscovering the potentiality of our ability to care for others through care for a person—a fiction of the self, brought to existence between literature's ontological parentheses—inside of whom no manner of care seems to dwell.

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THE FUNHOUSE ARCHITECT DIVESTED: DAVID FOSTER WALLACE'S "THE PLANET TRILLAPHON AS IT STANDS IN RELATION TO THE BAD THING" AND THE APORIA OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SHORT STORY

Sergio López-Sande
Universidade de Santiago de Compostela
sergio.sande@usc.es

Abstract

This paper examines David Foster Wallace's earliest story: "The Planet Trillaphon as It Stands in Relation to the Bad Thing," in search of the deceptively autobiographical elements of it that condition the experience of the reader. It will be argued that the life-narrative of authors inadvertently imposes on their reception an affective response, and one that is deeply conditioned by the knowledge of it that readers may have. Approaching Wallace from a post-authorialist perspective, this piece attempts to dilucidate what manner of significance academia should be expected to attribute to writers in late postmodernism, where the author, now long dead, has become not only a market force, but also a much fabricated, guiding superstructure which might discursively restrain the imaginative possibilities of reconstruction at the reader's disposal.

Keywords: authorship, short story, David Foster Wallace, death of the author, metafiction

1. Introduction

The notion of authorship has been dismantled and rebuilt multiple times over the last decades. Following Roland Barthes' renowned "The Death of the Author" (1967), anti-authorialism became a nearly ever-present trend in literary studies, proscribing that authorial histories—the fictionalised products to which we frequently refer to as "biographies"— as well as the authors' readings and intentions, condition any and everybody's approaches to their stories. In this manner, texts expanded their domain to the point of phagocytising writers altogether, becoming the earthly manifestations of the will of godlike "language."

The present contribution will be discussing David Foster Wallace's "The Planet Trillaphon as It Stands in Relation to the Bad Thing," a tale in which an unnamed first-person narrator discusses his experience with severe clinical depression, suicidal thoughts and medicalization, in the context of Wallace's production and life-narrative. In so doing, it hopes to shed light on how the history of a given author as a biographical fiction can alter the way in which the reader is able to enter a literary story by that very author. The thesis explored in what follows maintains that such a process takes place not necessarily by forcing an interpretation on readers, but rather, by restraining and conditioning the interpretative tools at the reader's disposal, obliging that certain diegetic elements be read with regards to what the biography presents.

2. "Author Here:" Some notes on David Foster Wallace and the problem of self-inscription

2.1. The futility of infinite recursiveness; or, David Foster Wallace and metafiction's dead end

Wallace's anxieties towards authorship and connection can be easily traced back to the death of the author. In his novella "Westward, the Course of Empire Takes Its Way," conceived as a patricidal expansion of Barth's seminal "Lost in the Funhouse," his short stories "Octet" and "Good Old Neon," and his posthumous novel *The Pale King*, to name but a few examples, the author-as-character interrupts the narrative to speak to the reader directly. In these metafictional gaps of emotional assembly, Wallace's attempts to convey

some essential truth by making himself present become the most obvious. His efforts in these sections seem to be doomed to non-fulfilment, however, as he constantly falls prey to the necessary condition that his self becomes fictionalised in language, and, as such, Wallace enters one of his loops in search of connection, failing to give resolution to his fictions. He is thus revealed to be a victim of Barthes' authocide, becoming "the writer [who] can only imitate a gesture forever anterior, never original [..., whose] internal 'thing' he claims to 'translate' is itself only a readymade dictionary whose words can be explained [...] only by other words" ([1967] 1977, 144). Wallace's irresolution could thus be interpreted as a way to point at his inability to reconcile truth, fictionality, emotion, and experience in any transcendental manner. Because of his turning into character upon being written into a literary work, it follows, his desire for authenticity; for personhood rather than mere persona, is immediately truncated.

Wallace's attempt to break away from his postmodern predecessors often took the form of parodies of their own parodic techniques, through which he hoped to arrive at a fundamental truth beyond postmodernism's apparent irreverence. Some of his most famous attempts at doing this take the form of tries at a meta-metafictional narrative, as happens for instance in "Westward" or "Octet:" pieces of literature which declare themselves metafictional as a form of rebellion against metafiction's very incapacities. The success of any such attempts, however, is much questioned. To quote Thomas Winningham in this regard: "'[m]etafictional privilege' is an illusion that metafiction sits in a post-ideological position, that an awareness of the mechanisms by which subjectivity is created and controlled equals freedom from same" (2015, 469). Wallace's attempts to reverse metafiction as a way to write himself into his texts not only wished to remove the ideologically-charged discursive sites that postmodernist fictions inadvertently created for authors, but to reverse postmodernism's very disbelief in authors as subjects, and to do so by voicing his claim to subjectivity in the texts from which the mid-century had theoretically erased him.

2.2. The rebirth of the author: Popularity and tragedy as paratextual creators of interpretative content

Upon writing himself into his fictions, Wallace carries the pessimism of an author who wants to exist in the text and retain his ontology but cannot do so. In a similar note, Foucault ([1966] 2005) diagnosed that the author as the material human being behind textual creation "is in the process of perishing as the being of language continues to shine ever brighter upon our horizon" (386). One may wonder, however—perhaps attacking Wittgenstein quite directly in the process—how much of our being can be merely linguistic whilst remaining as fully-fledged as we might wish to understand it? Or, rather, how much of an author's being in language can escape the linguistic ontology of her characters, these being perhaps the most apparent offspring of the linguistic configuration of her "self"? The poststructuralist expulsion of subjectivity from the realm of language succeeded to remove absolute authority from the hands of the mystified writers, but, in so doing, it also submerged authorial figures in a pool of sheer derision. How irreverent can authors be, not so much to texts but to readers? How much of our humane dialectics can be unfilled of authorial meaning once the semantics of the author as icon has entered it? How much of any such dialectics can be truly left aside upon our accessing a given piece of fiction?

In light of these questions, it seems hardly possible to claim that there exists no connection between author and text. It seems more likely, however, that this bridge be arrived at indirectly, through readers and their attachment to authorial fictions rather than through any manner of authorial—in an authoritative sense—claim to the text. Much as a counterargument to biographical positivism was very direly needed at the time of Barthes' writing, the death of the author soon became the perfect justification for the unfolding of a radical anti-authorialism by which all and every detail concerning authors, their lives, and their outlooks on the world and on fiction had to be promptly invited out of the equation for an interpretative approach to a given work to be deemed satisfactory.

Authorial figures as are construed, presented and marketed shape the way in which we interact with books through reading, changing our horizon of expectations and our affective baggage towards fictions entirely. Nevertheless, and

as Sean Burke (1992) argues, Barthes' essay could be claimed to be supporting this claim; for, to go forth with his assassination, he

> must create a king worthy of the killing. Not only is the author to be compared with a tyrannical deity, but also with bourgeois man himself [...;] the Father to whom the book is the child. [...] That the author can only be conceived as a manifestation of the Absolute Subject, this is the root message of every authocide. One must, at base, be deeply auteurist to call for the Death of the Author. (27)

This auterism on Barthes' part is also extensible to Foucault, Derrida, Spivak, and all other critics who have claimed for language to be self-sufficient and literature to exist as the result of its autonomous expression. Their stance, however, has been greatly misinterpreted by anti-authorialist positions. In their account, the discursive locus of the "dead author" was not empty or non-extant, but rather, as expressed by Nicoline Trimmer (2010), "[d]ead and buried [...] was a particular kind of subject: a self-determining, self-contained subject, occupying a central position – as moral authority, as meaning-maker" (36).

Thus, Burke concludes that authors must be alive and dead at the same time. Authority beyond their reach; interest poured upon them. It is hardly deniable that authors, however dead one may wish to claim them on a reflective turn to language, shape our experience as readers in more ways than just via the writing of the texts to which we attend. Upon reading Wallace's "The Planet Trillaphon" after his death, this cage of necessary preconditioning becomes most apparent. As has happened with other authors through history, suicide's inevitable call to reappraisal becomes a conditioning factor to any interpretative endeavour concerning Wallace—what James Annesley described as "a difficulty not to look for intimations and evidence" of why it happened (2009, 133). This is particularly so, for reasons much evident, whenever Wallace returns to three of his most popular themes: depression, therapy, and solipsism. Further, and much as it is justifiably discouraged, there is a degree of inevitability to our reading into Wallace through his fiction, seeking a better understanding of David Foster Wallace the author; the human being, not only through Dave Wallace the character, but through his every reflection, too, irrespective of which literary persona we may wish to consult to do so.

Wallace frequently expressed his contention that fiction exists as an interstitial space where communication between reader and writer, however remote and however peculiar it might be demonstrated to be in literature's circumstances, is possible. In "Octet," for instance, where his confessional voice enters the narrative to discuss honesty in literature, he speaks of his raw sincerity and authorial exposition as something which will "make [him] look fundamentally lost and confused and frightened and unsure about whether to trust even your most fundamental intuitions about urgency and sameness and whether other people deep inside experience things in anything like the same way you do" (1999, 135-136). Wallace's position in the text, having descended from the authorial heaven of pre-Barthean omnipotence, is "more like a reader['s], in other words, down here quivering in the mud of the trench with the rest of us, instead of a Writer, whom we imagine to be clean and dry and radiant of command presence and unwavering conviction as he coordinates the whole campaign from back at some gleaming abstract Olympian HQ" (1999, 136). This desire to communicate honestly triggers in both Wallace's fiction and Wallace's essays a contradictory amalgam of profound optimism and profound pessimism: on the one hand, Wallace was very keen to argue that "[f]iction is one of the few experiences where loneliness can be both confronted and relieved […] by making me forget my name's Dave and I live in a one-by-one box of bone no other party can penetrate or know" (1996, 58); on the other, his approach to literary language is deeply saddening insofar as it never seems to quite satisfy his expressive needs nor his characters', who recurrently claim to be unable to convey what they truly mean.

Wallace's own non-fictional claims on the nature of fiction, as well as his desire to arrive at some manner of true communicative locus through literature, where reader and writer could share truly, cannot help but suggest to familiar readers proposed referents both to the first-person narrator and to the second-person to which he repeatedly resorts in "Trillaphon," however unconsciously this association might take place. This unconscious turn to Wallace the writer upon our self-inscription into the role of the reader, to whom he is trying to explain what "the Bad Thing" is like, is not to be discouraged, but rather scrutinised with the direst interest. It is, in a certain sense, the most "natural" reading of "Trillaphon," as a text that has lived on to the present moment, when David Foster Wallace is no longer alive.

Such a claim should not be seen as a turn to authors for the interpretative tools that we need to understand their texts, but rather as an attempt to embrace how much they influence our readings inadvertently. As Burke maintains, "faith in the oeuvre is nothing less than faith in the author, or in his signature at least, and the constants and correspondences thereby contracted. In absolutely minimalist terms, the author is that principle which unites the objects — whether collusive or discrete — that gather under his proper name" (1992, 35).

The author is thus made to unite the objects that constitute the cosmology of intelligibility that allows that we access texts. In some cases, as it happens in "Trillaphon," the author not only does that by conditioning the reader's preconceptions, but rather redefines and confines the possibilities of reconstruction at the reader's disposal, and does so as a direct consequence of his post-writing life narrative. This fact almost inevitably demands that we doubt the author's discursive death, interrogating his Barthean demise on the basis that his stories have become partly indissociable from his history. This should not be read as an attempt to speak of "Trillaphon" as an autobiographical short story, regardless previous claims that "[t]here is, indubitably, an element of self-reference […], of autobiography, a genre with which Wallace's fiction constantly […] engages" (Bennett 2017, 166). Neither is it necessary that there exist autobiographical elements to it. The conclusion that follows such a realisation is fundamentally different: that it is essentially impossible not to inscribe some very particular, widely known chapters in Wallace's biography, as is the case with every other writer of whom something is known, into his literary production.

3. Conclusions

The author is a fiction as much as her biography. The authorially produced fictions that she manufactures, however independent from her idea of them they might be, are inseparable from her existence as fiction of fictions. The intertext between author as fiction and literature as fiction is perhaps the most seminal of all intertextual occurrences. Insofar as we are familiar with both such fictions, they inform our reading, for they are both parts of what we read in itself. The return of the author would thusly be not so much a return to authorialism, but rather a postmodern turn to the fabric of texts themselves; a search for a deeper

understanding of how the fiction of life as marketed and sold with regards to any such author is directly responsible for our outlook and our expectations concerning their texts.

In this manner the aporia of the autobiographical short story is arrived at. The paradoxical nature of our reading of texts such as "Trillaphon" is twofold: on the one hand, it is hardly possible that readers access pieces of fiction such as this one without taking into consideration the paratextual, biographical data that we project onto them; on the other, the short story's very shortness makes evident that even the smallest token of truth pertaining to the author's life is rendered necessarily unconveyable in all its complexity due to both the format and language's limitations. This claim is not intended to imply that fiction need encapsulate experience for what it is, as the translation of life into language necessarily alters the content and the accessibility of what is linguistically presented, be it as literature, as is the case, or as something entirely other, but rather, seeks to point at the inescapable fact that something is lost, necessarily, in fiction, and must be so in order that experience be rebuilt as literary. Hence the author, too, comes to inhabit "Trillaphon;" hence, in some manner of Christian extravaganza, he dies "before he can return. In a sense, too, he must continue to be dead though he has returned. The text remains the 'destroyer of all subject' yet, through the twists of a silent dialectic, it also might contain a 'subject to love'" (1992, 30).

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FORMING THE CANON FOR THE SCIENCE-FICTION SHORT STORY: AN EXPERIENCE IN PROJECT-ORIENTED LEARNING

SARA MARTÍN ALEGRE
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Sara.Martin@uab.cat

Abstract

Short fiction is essential in the genre of science fiction, as this grew and is still growing on the basis of periodical publications in which authors published (and publish) countless short pieces. For this reason, I proposed to my students of the elective 'English Prose: Considering Science Fiction' (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, BA in English Studies, 2015-16) that we wrote collectively the guide *Reading SF Short Fiction: 50 Titles*. This has been available since 2016 from UAB's Dipòsit Digital de Documentació and has been downloaded more than 8,000 times (April 2020). This high figure motivates me to present this experience in this chronicle. It is my intention not only to discuss the questions associated with canon formation in the field of the SF short story but also to argue that BA and MA students can also make a significant contribution to the academic study of this genre.

Keywords: short fiction, science fiction, project-oriented teaching, publishing (with students), digital repository (university)

1. Introduction

One of the reasons why the short story is a particularly exciting genre is that its canon is in constant flux. Arguably, some examples of the genre and certain authors have quasi-canonical status, but whenever a literary specialist plans to teach a course or do research, the field is remarkably open to a wide-ranging choice.

This very positive aspect of short fiction has at the same time a downside: it may be absolutely daunting for the novice to navigate this vast genre, which makes some kind of guidance necessary. This is usually provided by anthologies, though other strategies can be used. What I narrate next is the experience of writing a guide which covers specifically the field of the science-fiction short story, with the collaboration of a group of fourth-year BA students.

2. Project-oriented teaching: Learning through practice

Short fiction is essential in the genre of science fiction, as this grew and is still growing on the basis of periodical publications in which authors of all types published (and publish) countless short pieces. The main awards, the Nebula and the Hugo, distinguish between novella, novelette, and short fiction, and provide a good starting point to explore the titles preferred by readers and writers. There is not, however, a formal canon expressed in any centralised list, anthology, handbook, or similar. The 1997 edition by Ursula Le Guin and Brian Attebery of *The Norton Book of Science Fiction*, for instance, raised major disagreements. There have been other attempts which somehow or other are too unmanageable for any ordinary reader.

For this reason, I proposed to my students of the elective 'English Prose: Considering Science Fiction' (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, BA in English Studies: 2015-16) that we wrote collectively a basic guide. This guide, *Reading SF Short Fiction: 50 Titles*, has been available now for about three years from the online repository Dipòsit Digital de Documentació at UAB (https://ddd.uab.cat/record/163528) and, at the time of writing (mid-April 2020) it has been downloaded more than 8,000 times. This quite unexpected figure, precisely, is what motivates me to present this experience here.
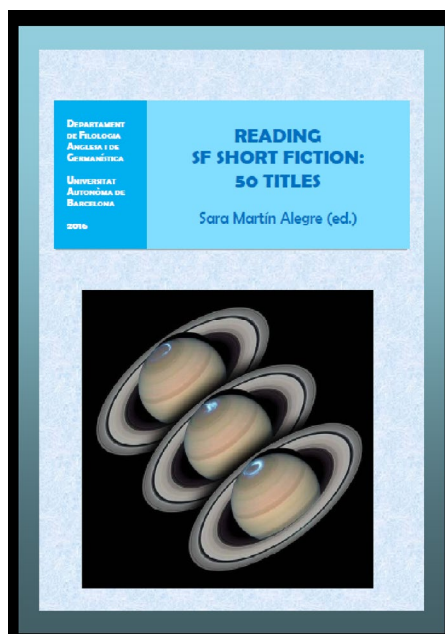
Figure 1: Cover of the e-book

It is my intention, therefore, not only to raise questions associated with canon-formation in the field of the SF short story but also to offer an experience in project-oriented learning. This can be of use in other contexts connected with short fiction but also generally with English Literature. The main argument I wish to defend is that not only literary criticism offered through the habitual academic outlets or from the circles of fandom can have an impact on the SF short story. BA and MA students can also make a significant contribution.

My Department used to offer a monographic fourth-year elective called Short Fiction in the *Licenciatura* which became extinct in 2009, with the introduction of the new *Grado*. In the two academic years when I taught this elective, 2004-5 and 2005-6, I focused it on gothic, fantasy and science fiction short stories. In 2004-5 the experimental side of the course consisted of inviting students to produce their own short fiction instead of a paper, though I lacked the

proper tools to teach creative writing. In 2005-6 I made a point of connecting short fiction to film adaptation, following my own work in the volume *Siete Relatos Góticos*, which I have re-issued this year as *Ocho Cuentos Góticos*. For these volumes I translated a series of copyright-free short stories which had been adapted to the screen, commenting on those adaptations in a brief essay, which can be called a factsheet.

As part of the mandate to make research funded by public money generally available online for free, many universities set up institutional digital repositories at the beginning of the current century. In the university where I work, the repository inaugurated in 2006 (the Dipòsit Digital de Documentació known as DDD), was from the beginning open to suggestions and proposals from its users. It was understood that documents generated by our teaching practice should have a place in it as important as those produced through research, and it was up to us to come up with new ways of using the DDD. In 2013-14 I taught an elective course on *Harry Potter*, under the umbrella label of Cultural Studies. When I collected the short essays (1,000 words) that I had asked the students to write in preparation for their class presentations about their experience of reading Rowling's series, I immediately saw that they deserved being made public, as a unique generational testimony. The UAB's digital repository offered the solution to the problem of how to make them available.

After asking my students for their permission, I put their essays together in an e-book (in pdf format), which I called *Addictive and Wonderful: The Experience of Reading the Harry Potter Series*, borrowing the main title from a phrase in a student's essay. I also invited our guests and other students interested in Rowling's series to participate. Fifty-six authors in total, including myself, contributed texts to a rather thick volume that runs to almost 72,000 words and that has been downloaded since 2014, when I published it, 1,659 times by readers from more than twenty countries (figures for mid-April 2020). The second volume, *Charming and Bewitching: Considering the Harry Potter Series* (also 2014) is even more successful, with more than 3,500 downloads so far, also from a long list of countries. The e-book is 88,000 words long and offers thirty-three academic papers by the students.

Figures 2 and 3: Covers of the e-books on *Harry Potter*

To sum up thus far, the extremely satisfactory experience of teaching *Harry Potter* to undergraduate students in our English Studies BA taught me to make the best of a digital repository established for very different ends. The work of editing the two e-books, which consumed much of my summer back in 2014, was laborious but also very exciting. And, anyway, I told myself that the time consumed in correcting exercises is mostly time wasted, whereas correcting for publication gives this tedious task much more sense and even great satisfaction.

3. Planning a SF course: Challenges and limits

I applied next the lessons learned with *Harry Potter* to the elective course Gender Studies (2014-15), with partially failed results. The short personal essays on gender by the students resulted in a publishable e-book, *Gender and Feminism: The Students' View* (2015). Their papers, however, were not solid enough to be made available online. This changed perceptibly in a more recent edition of

the same course (2017-18), which generated a substantial e-book, combining short essays and papers. The two Gender Studies volumes have jointly generated about 3,500 downloads (mid-April 2020).

Figures 4 and 5: Covers of the e-books for the *Gender and Feminism* series

In 2015-16, I taught the monographic course on science fiction I have already mentioned, using the label English Prose, and adding to it the subtitle 'Considering the Genre of Science Fiction.' A most important challenge I faced in this case is the low popularity of science fiction among our students, who prefer fantasy and, above all, realist, mimetic fiction. Since I could not produce an extensive e-book on their personal experience of reading science fiction, I chose instead to produce a guide for readers, either already interested in science fiction, or even new to it—like my own students.

Andy Sawyer and Peter Wright claim that "Given the contemporary context, the question is not *whether* to teach sf but *what kind of sf to teach*?" (2011, 6; italics added). This is possibly the case for Anglophone universities but not at

all in Spain. With three exceptions, the fifteen students who registered for the course—an unusually low figure for our electives—were neither familiar with science fiction, nor particularly interested. They just needed to add six ECTS to their student record. I expected this situation and had, accordingly, designed the course with the missionary aim of adding more recruits to the cause of science fiction, a genre which I personally enjoy reading much above fantasy, or realist fiction, and on which I do most of my current research.

After using the first two weeks for an introduction to science fiction, then, I focused the rest on an intensive analysis of Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* (1985), Octavia Butler's *Dawn* (1987, the first volume in her Xenogenesis trilogy), and Richard K. Morgan's *Altered Carbon* (2002) —three men, two women (one white, one black), and a list a bit too heavy on the side of 1980s fiction but appealing enough for the students (or so they claimed). I did not want their knowledge of science fiction to be limited to five names and, thus, after reading about one hundred short stories in the summer of 2015, I selected fifty: twenty-five written by men, twenty-five by women, published between 1912 and 2014. This was hard work for me but also a great pleasure. Once I met my fifteen students on the first day of class, I put each one in charge of three stories, leaving five in my hands.

Each of our sessions was split in two parts: in the first one, I led a class discussion focused on the novels. In the second, the students offered a fifteen-minute classroom presentation of the stories they were responsible for. They were also asked to fill in a factsheet for each one, following a model I provided (which is this one).

Figures 6 and 7: Model factsheet, included in the e-book

These fifty factsheets would eventually be gathered in our guide. Incidentally, for the oral presentation they could choose to speak about only one, two, or the three stories in their hands. These presentations and the factsheets were worth 25% of the final mark.

4. Editing the e-book *Reading SF Short Fiction: 50 Titles*: Choosing a canon

Each factsheet contains basic information about the author, publication data concerning the short story in question, a brief plot summary followed by three reasons why it should be read, and excerpts from three reviews. The resulting volume, published in 2016, is not as long as the others I have edited (30,000 words) but it is highly informative, and seems to have been welcomed judging by the thousands of downloads. The only downside is that, despite the care I put into producing a template, the process of editing was time-consuming, with thirty to sixty minutes per factsheet. The students' computer systems often

distorted the template and making the whole text look homogeneous was a slow process. Another problem was that, although undergraduate students are supposedly digital natives, they had many difficulties to find reviews online. I added at least one item to about two thirds of the factsheets.

Here are the fifty short stories, in chronological order, as they appear in the e-book:

- London, Jack. "The Scarlet Plague" (1912)
- Lovecraft, H.P. "The Colour Out of Space" (1927)
- Campbell, John W. as Don Stuart. "Who Goes There?" (1938)
- Del Rey, Lester. "Helen O'Loy" (1938)
- Bates, Harry. "Farewell to the Master" (1940)
- Brackett, Leigh. "No Man's Land in Space" (1941)
- Asimov, Isaac. "Nightfall" (1941)
- Moore, C.L. "Shambleau" (1948)
- Bradbury, Ray. "A Sound of Thunder" (1952)
- Clarke, Arthur C. "The Star" (1955)
- Norton, André. "All Cats Are Grey" (1953)
- Godwin, Tom. "The Cold Equations" (1954)
- Heinlein, Robert. "All You Zombies..." (1958)
- Ballard, J.G. "The Voices of Time" (1960)
- McCaffrey, Anne. "The Ship Who Sang" (1961)
- Vonnegut, Kurt. "2BROTB" (1962)
- Ellison, Harlan. "'Repent, Harlequin!', Said the Ticktockman" (1965)
- Dick, Philip K. "We Can Remember It for You Whosale" (1966)
- Delany, Samuel "Aye, Aye, Gomorrah…" (1966)
- Aldiss, Brian. "Super-Toys Last All Summer" (1969). British author.
- Silverberg, Robert. "Passengers" (1970)
- Russ, Joanna. "When It Changed" (1972)
- Tiptree jr., James. "The Women the Men Don't See" (1972)
- Cherryh, C.J. "Cassandra" (1978)
- Wilhelm, Kate. "Mrs. Bagley Goes to Mars" (1978)
- Willis, Connie. "Daisy in the Sun" (1982)
- Bethke, Bruce. "Cyberpunk" (1983)
- Kress, Nancy. "Out of all them Bright Stars" (1985)
- Banks, Iain M. "A Gift from the Culture" (1987)

- – Bisson, Terry. "Bears Discover Fire" (1990)
- – Egan, Greg. "Learning to be Me" (1990)
- – Goldstein, Lisa. "The Narcissus Plague" (1995)
- – Fowler, Karen Joy. "Standing Room Only" (1997)
- – Ryman, Geoff. "Have not Have" (2001)
- – Miéville, China. "An End to Hunger" (2001)
- – Emshwiller, Carol. "Creature" (2002)
- – Gunn, Eileen. "Coming to Terms" (2004)
- – Cadigan, Pat. "Is There Life After Rehab?" (2005)
- – MacLeod, Ken. "Who's Afraid of Wolf 359?" (2007)
- – Bear, Elizabeth. "Tideline" (2007)
- – Chiang, Ted. "Exhalation" (2008)
- – Johnson, Kij. "26 Monkeys also the Abyss" (2008)
- – Jones, Gwyneth. "The Tomb Wife" (2008)
- – Due, Tananarive. "Patient Zero" (2010)
- – Griffith, Nicola. "It Takes Two" (2010)
- – Hoffman, Nina Kiriki. "Futures in the Memory Market" (2010)
- – Lee, Yoon Ha. "A Vector Alphabet of Interstellar Travel" (2011)
- – Kowal, Mary Robinette. "Evil Robot Monkey" (2012)
- – Hopkinson, Nalo. "The Easthound" (2013)
- – Goonan, Kathleen Ann. "A Short History of the Twentieth Century" (2014)

I chose fifty, and not one hundred, because I wanted this number to be manageable. If my class had been bigger, say thirty students instead of fifteen, I could have raised the selection to seventy-five or one hundred, which is the total number I read, as I have noted, but that would have taken too much edition time.

How did I form this canon, you may wonder? I started by checking the winners of the Nebula and Hugo Awards for short stories. Then I checked the list of outstanding writers available from the website Worlds Without End (http://www.worldswithoutend.com/authors.asp), choosing from it only the science fiction authors, as I did not want to mix genres. I could have gone through Gardner Dozois' truly awesome series *The Year's Best Science Fiction*, but this has been published only since 1984 and, anyway, I didn't have the resources nor the time to read so much. I went, therefore, through the many online lists

of the 'best short science fiction' that fans have offered, as I downloaded all the stories I could locate. I came up eventually with that list of one hundred, fifty men and fifty women, trying to cover, besides, all the decades since the 1910s. If a science-fiction short story collection using the same criteria already exists, I'm not aware of it.

One thing I immediately noticed is that the women ended up placed mainly in the second half of the list, in chronological terms, for they are now producing the most innovative science fiction. It was also a pleasure to read much older work, like the stories by André Norton and C.L. Moore. The other issue I had to process was that the degree of difficulty of some truly first-rate stories would be too much for my students and even for many average readers of science fiction. This means that the selection leans towards the accessible and not only the outstanding. I did not particularly like some of the stories I selected but there seemed to be a general consensus that they are somehow canonical and I felt compelled to including them.

In an ideal world, I would have trained my students into editing an anthology but the prospect of asking for permissions, dealing with copyright, finding a publisher, etc. was simply too daunting. The guide is, if you think about it, a strange artifact since the other guides to science fiction that I know focus on novels, such as David Pringle's indispensable *Science Fiction: The 100 Best Novels* (first published in 1985). I might eventually produce a second volume, with the other fifty short stories I still keep in my computer but that is, somehow, a self-defeating project, since it would suggest that instead of a select canon worth reading to begin with, there is an infinity of good science fiction short stories to read. But, then, maybe that is exactly the case.

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"A STRUGGLE WITH THE UNFAMILIAR": IRISH MIGRATION AND IDENTITY IN COLM TÓIBÍN'S *BROOKLYN*

Antía Román-Sotelo

Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

antiaroman@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper aims at analysing the traumatic consequences of migration depicted in the novel by Colm Tóibín, which entail the main character's alienation and split identity, as well as the disruption of family communication. To illustrate the traumatic impact of the experience, several references to death are used throughout the novel to describe both the way in which Eilis's departure from Ireland to America affects the members of the family, and the detachment of Eilis from her new reality, which leads her to become a ghost figure and to question her own identity. Therefore, this paper is theoretically informed by trauma studies, which prove to be of help to understand the disruption of the subject. In addition to this, this paper will also focus on the stereotypes and expectations that affected Irish immigrants in the 1950s and how they are presented in the novel.

Keywords: Colm Tóibín, Brooklyn, migration, trauma

1. Introduction

Colm Tóibín's *Brooklyn*, published in 2009, has provided a reexamination of a period in Irish history through the character of Eilis Lacey, an Irish young woman who migrates to the US in the 1950s, illustrating both the migratory conditions of the Irish at that time and the personal fears and identity conflicts that such an experience entails. The novel is structured in four parts: the first and fourth parts take place in Enniscorthy, Ireland, and they contrast Eilis's lack of career prospects and forced migration—due to the economic stagnation of Ireland—with the possibilities open to a woman with training and her forced return to America because of marriage bonds; the second and third parts, therefore, take place in America and they entail the process of adaptation to the new country, from homesickness and alienation to the creation of new bonds.

Once in America, Eilis becomes a ghost or detached figure, evincing the traumatic impact of migration, since "the traumatised subject is bound to live as the living death" (Goarzin 2011), and then back in Enniscorthy, by confronting her past, she once again retraces into the figure of the alienated ghost, haunted by the death of her sister and of her former self. Therefore, this paper aims at analysing the traumatic consequences of exile—probably exacerbated by the circumstances of the Irish migrants— which not only provoke Eilis's split identity, but also the disruption of family communication.

2. Irish migration and expectations

The question of migration has become inherent to Irish history and society, the two main destinations always being Britain and the US. Both of them are represented and differentiated in Tóibín's novel, since Eilis's two brothers had migrated to Britain before her and undergone many difficulties without the knowledge of the family. Already in the nineteenth century, Irish immigrants in Britain were usually stigmatised because of religious and national issues. Because of anti-Catholicism, the British people saw the Irish Catholic as a threatening other who was not part of their nation. They were thus considered uncivilised and inferior, to the point that, according to Hickman, "[they] were cited as evidence of the 'missing link' between the gorilla and the Negro" (2005, 128).

In a face-to-face conversation, her brother Jack finally admits to Eilis: "You get shouted at a bit on the street, but that's just Saturday night. You pay no attention to it" (Tóibín 2015a, 34). The main idea seemed to be to avoid confrontation—"the rule is never to shout back, pretend nothing is happening" (Tóibín 2015a, 34)—, and to be content with having their own spaces, for instance, their "own pubs" (Tóibín 2015a, 34), which may imply a sense of isolation and detachment from the British community. Besides, the Irish were usually subjected to underpaid labour and, in fact, the main breadwinner of the family is Eilis's sister, Rose, since their brothers sent money only "sporadically" (Tóibín 2015a, 10) from Britain. Still Eilis is surprised to find out about Jack's first impressions of failure and loneliness, since he mentioned nothing of the kind in his letters home.

Contrasting with the poor image Irish people had of Britain, the idealisation of America as a land of opportunity and freedom still played a fundamental role in the 1950s. For Eilis, America had "an element of romance" that England lacked: "Going to work in a shop in Birmingham or Liverpool or Coventry or even London was sheer dullness compared to this" (Tóibín 2015a, 32). According to Colm Tóibín himself, in Enniscorthy, "emigrants home from England were low-key. Many did not seem to have much money. Returned Yanks, on the other hand, were full of glamour. They had fancy accents, fancy clothes and fancy dollars" (Tóibín 2015b). Thus, Eilis thought of America as a land that not only offered more job opportunities, with possibilities of promotion, but also a promise of happiness and welfare:

> She had a sense too, she did not know from where, that, while the boys and girls from the town who had gone to England did ordinary work for ordinary money, people who went to America could become rich. [...] she had come to believe also that [...] no one who went to America missed home. Instead, they were happy there and proud. (Tóibín 2015a, 24)

To this popular opinion of America might have also contributed the social status of the Irish overseas. According to Hickman, "the Irish immigrants in antebellum America were moved from being a lower race (Irish and Catholic as opposed to English and Protestant) into the lower slot of the upper race (Irish and white as opposed to African and black)" (2005, 123). Nevertheless, in the 1950s, Irish immigrants were also subjected to systematic discrimination; according to

Alzughaibi, "the Irish were ostracized from American society for many reasons, to include their Catholic beliefs" (2015). Thus, they were strongly consolidated as a social group, leading sometimes to racism and violence. They usually lived in closed communities, which, according to Barros-Del Río, perpetuated the same traditional and oppressive values as the homeland, becoming systems of surveillance for Irish girls (2016). The recreation of this Irish atmosphere could alleviate the sense of non-protection, but at the same time deprive the members of a full integration into American society and turn the previous idealisation into disillusionment.

3. Loss and silence

Due to the lack of prospects in Ireland, where most women were not even able to support themselves with their salaries (Alzughaibi 2015), Eilis's sister, Rose, plans her travel to America with Father Flood. Notwithstanding, Eilis had never intended to leave her land, on the contrary, she is deeply terrified of the idea of change and the confrontation with a new reality: "her mind moved towards real fear or dread or, worse, towards the thought that she was going to lose this world forever, that she would never have an ordinary day again in this ordinary place, the rest of her life would be a struggle with the unfamiliar" (Tóibín 2015a, 29-30). She even wishes to switch places with Rose, who would have to take care of their mother, renouncing to have a house and a family of her own: "she would prefer to stay at home, sleep in this room, live in this house" (Tóibín 2015a, 29).

Nevertheless, being aware of the sacrifice that her sister has made, she promises herself "that not for one moment would she give them the smallest hint of how she felt" (Tóibín 2015a, 31). She is thus forced to go, in order to fulfil her family's expectations, and to resort to silence, a natural reaction to a traumatic experience that evinces the inability to cope with the situation, since trauma, being a "wound of the mind [...] is not, like the wound of the body, a simple and healable event, but rather an event that [...] is experienced [...] too unexpectedly, to be fully known" (Caruth 1996, 4). According to Mullan, "the novel's dialogue is full of commands not to speak or not to listen" (2010), and in effect, there is silence not only on her part, but also on the part of her

family and environment. The family had already been consumed with loss and trauma since the death of Eilis's father and the migration of her brothers. Eilis realises they have not laughed at the table since then. Furthermore, whereas one of her brothers is completely absent in the novel, they never speak about Jack at home: "even when a letter came from him it was passed around in silence" (Tóibín 2015a, 15).

The idea of losing Eilis establishes a void within the house as well and thus the days before Eilis's departure are spent either in complete silence or in a pretended and unnatural happiness. As Mullan (2010) notes, it is not until an unnamed neighbour mentions how much her mother is going to miss her, that her mother reacts and expresses her sorrow: "Her face wore a dark strained look that Eilis had not seen since the months after their father died" (Tóibín 2015a, 28). Migration is here put at the same level of death, a connection that persists throughout the novel. In fact, we will see that Freud's characteristics of mourning—"painful mood, the loss of interest in the outside world—except as it recalls the deceased—the loss of ability to choose any new love-object" (Freud 2005, 204)—can be applied to Eilis's behaviour.

Once in America, she soon finds herself writing about banalities and anecdotes, experiencing the same as her brother Jack. As Gabriele M. Schwab remarks, "silenced histories are the product of internal psychic splitting" (2016, 120), produced in this case by the loss of her home and family. Being unable to verbalise her emotional burden, Eilis faces a profound solitude: "None of them could help her. She had lost all of them. They would not find out about this; she would not put it into a letter. And because of this she understood that they would never know her now" (Tóibín 2015a, 70-71). That silence produces "a wrong," according to Katharine Sarikakis, since "to speak and to be heard is a fundamental communication act through which the subject can derive certain benefits that only speech can provide. These are, for one, legitimacy of existence, as a human being" (2012, 802). Therefore, she loses her "legitimacy of existence" and her sense of self, which leads her to alienation and to an identity crisis.

4. Alienation and split identity

Eilis realises that she is losing contact with her entire past—with her family, as well as with her old self from Enniscorthy—to the point of suffering a spiritual death. She starts confronting "her tomb of a bedroom" (Tóibín 2015a, 70) and becomes an isolated figure detached from her surroundings, since she keeps both dreaming and daydreaming about her idyllic memories of Ireland: "Bellow, she could see the cliffs at Cush Gap and the soft sand at Ballyconnigar. The wind was propelling her towards Blackwater, then the Ballagh, then Monageer, then the Vinegar Hill and Enniscorthy" (Tóibín 2015a, 68). Freud considered that mourning could also be a reaction to the loss of "an abstraction taking the place of the person, such as fatherland" (Freud 2005, 203), so we could say that Eilis is mourning her lost love-object, her homeland, and losing interest in the outside world. Contrasting with the profusion of descriptions of Ireland, there are no references about her new environment, about the streets and the buildings of New York. During her first weeks, due to the traumatic impact of her sudden migration, she is unable to make sense of her new reality:

> For each day, she thought, she needed a whole other day to contemplate what she had happened and store it away, get it out of her system so that it did not keep her awake at night or fill her dreams with flashes of what had actually happened and other flashes that had nothing to do with anything familiar, but were full of rushes of colour or crowds of people, everything frenzied and fast. (Tóibín 2015a, 58)

Eilis ends up seeing no meaning in the hurly-burly of the city, nor in her room, contrary to what she felt about her house in Ireland: "Nothing meant nothing. The rooms in the house of Friary Street belonged to her, she thought; when she moved in them she was really there" (Tóibín 2015a, 67). Little by little, she starts to think less about Ireland, and consequently feels a terrible weight, only compared to the emotion of losing her father, because she is finally severing ties with the old love-object, but the lack of attachment to the new place gives her a sense of instability and uncertainty, she needs a new love-object. Therefore, as a sort of defence mechanism, according to Schillinger, "she does what her instinct dictates: puts down roots" (2009).

During the third part of the novel, Eilis begins a process of adaptation and progressively changes her appearance and habits. Suddenly, as the narrator says, "she wanted to be as much a part of everything as she could" (Tóibín 2015a, 166) in order to reconnect with reality. She establishes a relationship with Tony and some career goals as well. However, when her American routine is disrupted by the death of her sister, she is forced to confront her past. The day of Rose's funeral, her mind retraces once again to Ireland while she imagines the coffin being carried to the cathedral with her brothers there dressed up as in their father's funeral.

Once Eilis returns to Ireland, she starts feeling strange despite the familiarity of her room. Moreover, she notices her mother avoids asking her about America or her trip home and becomes irritated by that deliberate rejection of painful conversations, but she is neither able to talk. Later on, even though Eilis begins to see the time she spent in America as a dream, her life in Ireland does not seem real: she feels like Rose's ghost, occupying a place that was left empty. Therefore, according to Raghinaru, "both places become *unheimlich*, or unfamiliar, to her [...]. 'Home' becomes a place of alienation, no matter on which side of the Atlantic it is found" (2018, 52). Migration has changed Eilis to the point of becoming detached from her place of origin as well. Thus, without a sense of belonging, she no longer knows who she is: "It made her feel strangely as though she were two people, one who had battled against two cold winters and many hard days in Brooklyn and fallen in love there, and the other who was her mother's daughter, the Eilis whom everyone knew, or thought they knew" (Tóibín 2015a, 218). That split identity is the result of the migration experience and the traumatic consequences it entails.

5. Conclusion

In sum, it is possible to associate migration, an experience that suddenly disrupts your everyday life, with trauma, a mental wound produced by an unexpected event that disrupts your usual perceptions of reality. In *Brooklyn*, Tóibín represents the traumatic impact of migration establishing connections with death and mourning. Moreover, it depicts Eilis's inability to make sense of reality and to communicate with her family, due to the overwhelming nature of the situation.

In addition to this, Eilis, being a woman in a conservative society, has never been given the possibility to speak her mind. Her forced migration and return, firstly for not becoming a burden for her family, and secondly by her duty as a wife, seem to aggravate the trauma, which has not yet been assimilated. The open ending leaves a sense of uncertainty regarding the future of the protagonist, and thus the novel follows Eilis's continuous struggle with the unfamiliar, firstly represented by a new reality and ultimately by herself. After her return to Brooklyn, only time and reflection would eventually allow her to come to terms with her fragmented self.

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PART III:

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

'WHY NOT' AND OTHER PATTERNS OF NEGATIVE *WHY*-STRIPPING

MARIAN ALVES-CASTRO
UPV/EHU
marian.alves@ehu.eus

Abstract

This paper deals with a construction, *why-not*-stripping, which is to a large extent absent from the ellipsis literature. Two aspects of the construction constitute the focus of the discussion: (i) the feasibility of an analysis in terms of focus fronting of the remnant to the C-domain, followed by TP-ellipsis (Merchant 2001), and (ii) the status of negation. It will be shown that a variety of constituents may survive ellipsis and that, in some cases, movement should be banned, either because it takes place out of island contexts or because it affects sub-constituents. Despite this, the movement and ellipsis account will be shown to still be viable. Concerning negation, the discussion focuses on the nature of the negative marker, specifically on whether it instantiates constituent or sentence negation. The data, in this case, suggest that the negative marker is sentential, related to focus and base-generated in the C-domain.

Keywords: *why*-stripping, negation, focus, ellipsis, C-domain

1. Introduction

Why-stripping constructions, like that in (1B), appear with relative frequency in the literature on elliptical structures (see the various articles by Yoshida, Nakao

and Ortega-Santos and the references there). The discussion of negative strings of *why*-stripping as those in (2) is, however, rare.

(1) A: John bought a tablet. B: Why a tablet?

(2) a. A: John didn't buy a tablet.   B: Why not?
    b. A: John bought a tablet.   B: Why not a laptop?
    c. Why not a tablet for an 11-year-old?

The interpretation of all the questions headed by the adverbial interrogative *why* in (1) and (2), which is basically the same as that of the fully formed questions in (3), points at the fragment-like nature of these sentences.

(3) a. Why did John buy a tablet? (1B)
    b. Why didn't John buy a tablet? (2aB)
    c. Why didn't John buy a laptop? (2bB)
    d. Why shouldn't we buy a tablet for an 11-year-old? (2c)

In (1), with antecedent clause and fragment question sharing polarity, the remnant DP repeats information provided in the antecedent clause with some emphasis added to it. In (2b), where the polarity of the fragment question is different from the polarity of the antecedent clause, the remnant DP must express an alternative that contrasts with a DP in the antecedent clause; otherwise a contradiction arises (cf. A: John bought a tablet. B: #Why not a tablet?). (2aB) displays the same polarity as the antecedent clause. The fact that the negative particle *not* appears in the fragment question may be interpreted as somehow emphatic, given that 'Why?' is acceptable in this context with basically the same meaning. Finally, (2c) represents a completely different type of construction, as it functions as a free-standing question without antecedent clause. Although sentences like this have also been analyzed in terms of ellipsis, they will not be considered here due to space constraints. The interested reader is referred to Zaitsu (2018) for a plausible analysis and further references.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. In section 2, a brief analysis of *why*-stripping in terms of TP-ellipsis will be presented as the starting point of the discussion on the negative counterpart of this construction. Section 3 deals with potential problems for this type of account raised in part by the different types of remnants allowed in the structure. Section 4 turns to the status of the negative marker, a key aspect of the discussion, presenting some patterns of negation not considered in the literature. Section 5 presents

a plausible analysis of *why-not*-stripping based on the focus sensitivity of *why* and *not*. Section 6 draws the conclusions.

2. *Why*-stripping as TP ellipsis

Nakao, Yoshida and Ortega-Santos argue, in a number of papers, for an analysis of *why*-stripping in terms of TP-ellipsis (Merchant 2001), applied once the remnant has undergone focus fronting, thus landing outside the deleted constituent. This is basically the analysis standardly proposed for bare argument ellipsis constructions (aka. *stripping*). The account is completed by the assumption that the interrogative adverbial *why* is base generated in SpecCP (Nakao, Yoshida and Ortega-Santos 2012; Yoshida, Nakao and Ortega-Santos 2015). A schematic representation appears in (4).

(4) $[_{CP}$ Why $[_{FocusP}$ a tablet$_i$ $[_{TP}$ ~~John bought t_i~~]?

The question now in whether it is possible to apply the same type of analysis to why-*not*-stripping. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to devote some consideration to the status of *not*. More specifically, it is necessary to know whether or not the negative marker and the DP form a constituent. If the former is the case, the structure of the fragment question in (5) would be as in (5a); in the latter case, the analysis of (5) would be as in (5b).

(5)   Why not a laptop?
       a. $[_{CP}$ Why $[_{FocusP}$ [not a laptop]$_i$ $[_{Focus'}$ Focus[E] $[_{TP}$ ~~…t$_i$…~~]?
       b. $[_{CP}$ Why $[_{?P}$ not $[_{FocusP}$ [a laptop]$_i$ $[_{Focus'}$ Focus[E] $[_{TP}$ ~~… t$_i$…~~]?

In (5b), it is assumed that the negative particle *not* is base-generated in a dedicated functional projection in the C-domain, labeled '?P' at this point. A more specific proposal appears in section 5 below. In (5a), the assumption is that *not* is an instance of constituent negation. In both structures, the ellipsis feature responsible for the deletion operation is represented, following Merchant (2001), as a clitic-like element associated with the Focus head (Focus[E]).

Deciding between (5a) and (5b) turns out to be quite a difficult task, but this is not the only potential problem for the analyses outlined in (5). The very assumption that the remnant undergoes movement deserves some consideration. This problem is tackled in section 3, while the status of *not* will be taken up in section 4.

3. Potential problems for a 'movement & ellipsis' (M&E) analysis

The data in (6) to (8) are taken to prove the existence of a fully-fledged syntactic structure in the ellipsis site. Otherwise the form or the interpretation of the remnant DP could not be explained.

(6) Anaphor binding
Hell, we want to blame someone for the mess we're in, why not each other? (Google)

(7) Bound pronouns
A: According to the survey, every Englishman admires his mother.
B: And why not his father?

(8) P-stranding
If he lies to everyone else, why not himself? (Google)

Thus, in order to license the anaphor in (6) and to obtain the bound reading of the pronoun in (7), the presence of a c-commanding antecedent in a local domain (TP) has to be assumed. The required configuration will arise if a deleted (i.e. non-pronounced) TP is posed in the fragment question. Similarly, the absence of a preposition in (8) can be explained if the anaphor moves from inside TP stranding the preposition, which disappears as a result of ellipsis.

In spite of the evidence in (6) to (8), the M&E account faces some conceptual and empirical problems. In what follows, it will be shown that these problems are shared by other ellipsis phenomena (e.g. fragments, stripping and sluicing).

In *why-not*-stripping, ellipsis must obligatorily apply once the remnant is displaced to the left periphery of the sentence, (9b). A mechanism has to be found to explain the correlation between the two operations. This potential problem may, however, be circumvented by analyses à la Merchant, where the E-feature is associated with the focus head, which would make one operation dependent on the other.

(9) a. Why not a tablet?
b. *Why not a tablet Peter bought?

The empirical problems presented below involve data that seem to be derived by an illicit movement operation.

(10) Extraction from a complex DP
  A: They hired [a CEO [who speaks Russian]].
  B: And why not Chinese?

Complex DPs are well-known islands for extraction. They have been a matter of debate in the discussion on sluicing, where examples like those in (11) have been explained in terms of what has been called 'island-repair', i.e. roughly, ellipsis repairs the island effect by deleting the offending trace (Lasnik 2001).

(11) They hired a CEO who speaks a Balkan language, but I can't remember which.

Similar is the case of extraction from an adjunct island, (12).

(12) A: Peter left [before talking to his mother].
  B: ?And why not to his father?

Another case in point is left branch extraction, (13).

(13) A: Peter took [Anna's car].
  B: And why not John's?

It has to be noted that LBE is also attested in fragment answers, (14), also analyzed in terms of M&E by Merchant (2004).

(14) A: Whose car did Anna take in the end?
  B: John's

Similarly, in (15) the head preposition would have to move alone in a non-standard case of displacement.

(15) A: Peter argued [for the therapeutic use of cannabis].
  B: And why not against?

Again, a preposition may be the only remnant in other ellipsis phenomena, as the fragment answer in (16B).

(16) A: Did he vote for the therapeutic use of cannabis?
  B: No, against!

Although problematic at first sight, movement in this case could be of the type head-to-head of P to Focus[0]. Notice also that this example might be evidence

against constituent negation in *why-not*-stripping, as the negative marker and P cannot form a constituent to the exclusion of the complement of P.

Finally, multiple remnants may raise problems for the M&E analysis due to the uniqueness of focus. They are possible in other ellipsis phenomena, like sluicing, (18).

(17) A: It is a tradition to give a book to men and a rose to women.
B: And why not [a book to women] and [a rose to men]?

(18) I know they give something different to men and to women, but I can't remember what to whom.

In the case of (17)/(18) the possibility may be explored that VP-raising takes place, in which case the problem for the M&E account would be neutralized.

(19) [$_{vP}$ give [$_{VP}$ [a book] [$_{V'}$ ~~give~~ [to women]]]]

In this section, some data have been shown that might seem problematic at first sight, but that may also find an explanation similar to that given to parallel cases in other ellipsis phenomena.

4. Status of *not*

As mentioned above, probably the most important question that arises in *why-not*-stripping is the status of the negative particle. This is also a matter of debate in *not*-stripping constructions which is far from settled.

At a rather intuitive level, the sequence in (20B) can be interpreted as (21), involving sentence negation. The speaker appears to be interested in knowing the reason why it was not a laptop that John bought.

(20) A: John bought a tablet.
B: Why not a laptop?

(21) Why didn't John buy a laptop?

The sentence in (22) seems to point in a similar direction, although the complex interactions between negation and quantifiers would deserve closer consideration, a matter that is left for future research.

(22) A: I destroyed some of the files.
B: Why not all (of them)?

(23) Why didn't you destroy all the files?

Notice also that under the assumption that *not* instantiates constituent nega-
tion in these constructions, an analysis in terms of M&E would start from a
derivation which is ungrammatical, (24a). Although, in declarative sentences,
constituent negation seems to require the presence of the element that expresses
the alternative to the negated constituent, as in (24b), this is impossible in
the case of *why-not*-stripping, (24c). Moreover, even though (24b) could be
assumed to be the derivation on which focus-fronting applies, it would have
to be assumed that *not a tablet* (a conjunct) undergoes movement stranding
the second conjunct (*but a laptop*) in violation of the Coordinate Structure
Constraint.[1]

> (24) a. *Peter bought [not a tablet].
> b. Peter bought not a tablet but a laptop.
> c. #Why not a tablet, but a laptop?

Another set of examples worth exploring are those shown in (25), both from
Google. The fragment question in (25a), which involves constituent negation,
seems to lack the contrastive character of the sequence in (25b), with the use
of the negative particle *not*.

> (25) a. Why no cash? How come you cannot buy an iPhone at an Apple store
> with cash?
> b. Cash not food – giving poor people choices. So why not cash? It's our
> attitudes to poverty that shape how we expect aim to be given.

Finally, consider the data in (26), drawn from Google. Although not very
common, it is possible to find sequences of two negative particles and they can
be separated by an adverbial, which seems to indicate that the two particles
cannot have the same status, and more interestingly, that the first particle is
not constituent negation.

> (26) a. Why run? Instead, why not not run?

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1. An anonymous reviewer expresses his/her skepticism that the same mechanisms responsible for
repairing the violation of other island constraints (see the data in section 3) cannot be invoked
in this case to neutralize the violation of the CSC. The truth is that island-repair effects do
not appear uniformly across ellipsis constructions (and across speakers), which turns their very
existence into a matter of debate in the literature. If violations of the CSC could be repaired
by ellipsis, the reasoning here would be rendered invalid.

    b. So why not NOT run away from your problems and face them?
    c. Why not simply not own slaves ("Don't like slavery: don't own slaves")
       and educate people about the evils of slavery […]

In the preceding lines, it has been pointed at data that suggest that the negative particle cannot be analyzed as a marker of constituent negation. It has to be conceded, however, that the data offered here may require more careful consideration. In the final section, a potential analysis is sketched.

5. A proposal

The tentative proposal put forward here adopts the analysis of *why*-stripping in Yoshida, Nakao and Ortega-Santos (2015), with the remnant moving from its base position to SpecFocusP, as represented schematically in (4) above, coupled with the assumption that the negation involved is base-generated in the C-domain and affects the whole sentence, although it is different from the sentence negation in the TP-domain.

    The left-peripheral negative marker introduces a contrast with the antecedent clause that forces the presence of a remnant XP expressing an alternative to a parallel constituent in the antecedent clause. In (27) the functional projection hosting this constituent is labeled PolP (for Polarity Phrase, a label borrowed from Kolokonte 2008). The idea of a high Negation in the left periphery of the sentence is not new (cf. Lasnik 1972; Jackendoff 1972; Klima 1964; and more recently, Kiss 2002 and Kolokonte 2008).

(27) $[_{CP}$ Why $[_{PolP}$ not $[_{FocusP}$ remnant$_i$ $[_{Focus'}$ Focus[E] $[_{TP\ldots t_i\ldots}]]]]]$

The sequence of functional projections in the left periphery of the clause may be explained by the focus association properties of *why* and *not*, illustrated in (28) and (29) with examples from Kawamura (2007), 2-3.

(28) a. We do not cover PRAGMATICS in the lecture this semester.
    b. We do not cover pragmatics IN THE LECTURE this semester.

(29) a. A: Why did JOHN report the accident to the police yesterday?
      B: Because he was the victim of the accident.
    b. A: Why did John report the accident TO THE POLICE yesterday?
      B: Because only the police can issue the proof.

It is well-known that focus shift in negative sentences and *why*-questions brings about a change in interpretation. For the purposes of this analysis, the focus sensitivity of *why* and *not* may be responsible for licensing the chain of focus-related constituents (*why-not*-remnant XP) in the left periphery in a language like English that only allows focus fronting of one constituent, in this case the remnant XP.

Before concluding this section, consider 'Why not?' fragments. Given the emphatic nature of *not* in (30B), it could be assumed that this constituent moves from its base position (under TP) to SpecFocusP, thus becoming the remnant of the construction. [2] In favor of this analysis argues the fact that no contrast is expressed with the antecedent clause, as both share polarity.[3]

(30) A: Peter didn't buy a laptop.
    B: Why not?

(31) [$_{CP}$ Why [$_{FocusP}$ not [$_{TP}$ ~~...~~]?

A similar analysis extends to cases of constituent negation, like (25a), where the negative constituent (*no cash*) undergoes movement to SpecFocusP. These are cases of *why*-stripping in which the remnant happens to be a negative constituent.

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2. In the analysis of *why not* constructions, I adopt the view that *not* is a phrase, a debatable option. In current minimalist terms, a lexical item which is not modified is considered to be minimal and maximal at the same time, which might contribute to diluting the controversy in the present context at least to a certain extent. As in the analysis proposed here the key question is that *not* is focalized, it could also be assumed that it undergoes head movement to Focus[0]. At present, I do not have irrefutable evidence pointing in one direction or the other.

3. Another question that arises in the analysis of '*Why not?*' proposed here is that the focalization of *not* is not allowed in the absence of *why*. I thank an anonymous reviewer for making me aware of this problem. However, the short answers in (iB) show that *not* can appear in combination with sentence-adverbs as well.

(i) A: Won't you buy a laptop? B: Probably not. / Certainly not.

If an analysis in terms of 'M&E' is tenable in the case of fragment answers, as proposed by Merchant, (iB) could be taken to involve a focus projection. It will probably have to be assumed that *why* and the adverbs in (iB) play a role in 'attracting' the negative particle to the left periphery of the sentence. In the absence of this type of 'attractor', the negative particle cannot surface in sentence-initial position.

6. Final remarks

This paper has contributed to the discussion of *why-not*-stripping, a construction that has been neglected in the ellipsis literature. Novel data involving remnants other than the usual DP have been provided and it has been shown that they are derivable by an analysis in terms of focus fronting and ellipsis. Similarly, some patterns of negation have been considered, involving both sentence and constituent negation. Based on these data, the conclusion has been drawn that *not* is hosted in the C-domain. Hopefully, this modest contribution will stimulate further research on the areas that could not be explored in detail in this paper, which are many.

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THE SHAPING OF THE LATE MODERN ENGLISH REACTION OBJECT CONSTRUCTION

Tamara Bouso

Universitat de les Illes Balears

tamara.bouso@uib.es

Abstract

This paper provides a concise overview of my current research project on the characterisation and history of the English Reaction Object Construction (ROC) from the perspective of Diachronic Construction Grammar (Hilpert 2013; Traugott and Trousdale 2013). It shows that the English ROC, as in *Pauline smiled her thanks*, qualifies as a form-meaning pairing whose origins go back to Early Modern English (Bouso 2020). Its development, on the other hand, takes place in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century alongside other transitivising constructions. On the basis of a self-compiled corpus of nineteenth-century novels (Ruano San Segundo and Bouso 2019) and the visualisation tool of 'animated' motion charts (Hilpert 2011; Hilpert and Perek 2015), it is argued here that the sentimental novel and other innovative uses of reporting speech must have played a role in the shaping and modelling of the Late Modern English ROC.

Keywords: Reaction Object Construction, Diachronic Construction Grammar, motion chart, sentimental novel, reporting speech

1. Introduction

The focus of this paper is on the history of the English Reaction Object Construction (henceforth ROC) from the perspective of Construction

Grammar (Goldberg 1995; Hilpert 2013; Traugott and Trousdale 2013), the theoretical framework which has proven the most appropriate to provide a plausible account of the idiosyncratic nature and diachronic development of Reaction Objects (henceforth ROs), such as *her thanks* and *her adoration* in (1) and (2), respectively.[1]

    (1)   Pauline *smiled* <u>her thanks</u>.
    (2)   She *mumbled* <u>her adoration</u>.

<div align="right">(Levin 1993, 98)</div>

This study on the ROC is in line with other diachronic studies on argument structure which have dealt with three main different types of process. The first type concerns processes of argument remapping, where there is a reorganisation of the argument structure of a verb. This has been the case of the *psych*-verb *like*, which evolved from an object experiencer verb in the Middle English (ME) period into a subject experiencer verb in Modern English (ModE, 1500–) (ME *me liketh* '[it] pleases me' > ModE *I like*) (van Gelderen 2018). The second type involves processes of argument reduction (or detransitivisation), which imply the demotion of one of the arguments of the verb, as, for instance, in verbs belonging to the lexical domain of body-care such as *wash*, *dress* and *shave* which in ModE do not take the –*self* reflexive pronoun (Jespersen 1909-1949: III, §16.2). And the third type relates to processes of argument augmentation (or transitivisation), which involve the addition of an extra argument to the verb. As explained by Visser (1963-1973: I, §§130-32), in Old English (OE), amphibious verbs or verbs that could be used with and without an object with no morphological marking (e.g. OE *abrekan* 'To break') were considerably less numerous than verbs that were never construed with either a direct, an indirect, a prepositional or a causative object (e.g. OE *fordwínan* 'to dwindle away, vanish'). This situation, however, changes in Present Day English (PDE), where the former (i.e. amphibious verbs) are far more frequent than the latter (i.e. self-sufficient intransitive verbs). Van Gelderen (2018), for instance, mentions that self-sufficient intransitives have, in fact, been drastically reduced to little

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more than twenty, out of the 223 which Visser (1963-1973) initially mentioned. Clear examples of originally intransitive verbs which serve as evidence of this large-scale process of transitivisation are (i) the verb of motion *leap*, (ii) the unergative verb *work* and (iii) the verb of sound emission *squeal* when involved in structures such as the cognate object construction in (3), where the object is morphologically and semantically related to the verb, the *way*-construction in (4), which entails the movement of the subject referent along a path, and the main focus of this paper, the ROC, as represented in (5).

(3)　The herte *lepte* <u>a grete lepe</u>.
The hart leapt a great leap.

<div align="right">(Visser 1963-1973: I, §424 (b))</div>

(4)　She encouraged him to *work* <u>his way</u> to the top of the railroad business.
<div align="right">(Mondorf 2011, 398)</div>

(5)　Pigs…*squeal* <u>emphatic disapproval</u>.

<div align="right">(*OED*, s.v. *squeal*, v. 4)</div>

In what follows, I will first provide a synopsis of the literature on ROs and introduce some of the research questions and hypotheses addressed by my ongoing research project on this particular phenomenon. Then, I will move on to a brief characterisation of the modern ROC, followed by an outline of its emergence and subsequent development in the English language. I will finish this sketch on the history of the ROC with some concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

2. ROs: state of the art

The term ROC was coined by Levin in 1993. Since then, it has received considerable attention by a number of scholars who have focused on the frequency of the modern ROC in English (Martínez Vázquez 2015) and their possible existence in essentially verb-framed languages such as Bangla, Basque, Modern Greek, Spanish or French (for references, see Bouso 2020). Other linguists have paid attention to the non-prototypical features of ROs in relation to other non-prototypical objects such as true cognate objects and *way*-objects (cf. (3) and (4) above).[2] Like prototypical objects, these object types must be adjacent to

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2. For a summary and specific examples, see Bouso (2014).

the verb and they cannot co-occur with a direct object. Contrary to prototypical objects, however, none of them is compatible with passivisation, topicalisation, pronominalisation or questioning, and they all show some formal marking that distinguishes them from structures featuring typical objects. More specifically, modern *way*-objects require the presence of a directional complement (*She giggled her way <u>up the stairs</u>*) and, crucially, as is the case with ROs, these must be co-referential with the subject, a constraint which is marked by means of a possessive determiner.

From a diachronic point of view, only monumental historical grammars mention ROs and this just in passing (Jespersen 1909-1949; Visser 1963-1973). In this light, my current research project aims to start filling up gaps in the history of the ROC by retrieving authentic data from historical corpora and positing a number of research questions and hypotheses from the perspective of Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995, 2006; Hilpert 2013; Traugott and Trousdale 2013). This is a theory of linguistic knowledge which claims that the totality of our knowledge of a language consists of a large network of constructions, or form-meaning pairings at varying levels of complexity and abstraction (e.g. morphemes, words, idioms and larger phrasal units). One particular research question that my project aims to answer is when the ROC emerges as a new form-meaning pairing with those non-prototypical features previously identified in Bouso (2014). Yet a second major follow-up research question focuses on how and why the ROC develops. In particular, what changes in frequency and distribution can be identified over its history and what factors (intralinguistic and/or extralinguistic) have propelled its development. With regard to these two major research questions concerning the emergence and subsequent development of the ROC, the main hypothesis put forward is that the ROC followed the same path of development as other transitivising constructions (cf. (3) and (4)).

3. ROs as constructions: The modern ROC

Typical examples of modern ROs are those in (1), (2) and (5) above and those in (6)–(8) below.

(6)   Paul *kissed* her <u>goodbye</u>.

(Martínez Vázquez 2010, 559)

(7)   Linda *winked* <u>her agreement</u>.

<div align="right">(Levin 1993, 220)</div>

(8)   The door *jingled* <u>a welcome</u>.

<div align="right">(Martínez Vázquez 2010, 555)</div>

They exemplify three main categories of ROs which differ in terms of their derivational status and their morphosyntactic properties. These are:

- Delocutive nouns (*thanks*, *goodbye* and *welcome* in (1), (6) and (8)), which derive from locutions or "independent utterances associated with specific conventional situations" (Martínez Vázquez 2015, 153).
- Deverbal illocutionary nouns (*disapproval* and *agreement* in (5) and (7)), which derive from speech act verbs.
- Predicative expressive nouns (*adoration* in (2)), which are abstract nouns that describe a "state of mind or feeling of the subject" which "is perceived as a reaction to a contextual element" (Martínez Vázquez 2015, 160).

The examples of ROs provided so far are also characterised by the presence of an original intransitive verb (Bouso 2018, 2020) (e.g. *smile*, *mumble* and *jingle*) which, when accompanied by one of the three categories of ROs just described, undergoes a process of argument augmentation and acquires the extended sense 'express/communicate/signal a reaction or an attitude by V-ing', as in *Pauline expressed her thanks by smiling* in (1), *She communicated her adoration by mumbling* in (2) and *The door signalled a welcome by jingling* in (8). The modern RO therefore qualifies as a construction, or form-function pairing in the traditional sense (Goldberg 1995). It has an unusual syntax and lacks compositionality in that its overall meaning 'express/communicate/signal a reaction or an attitude by V-ing' is not strictly derivable from its component parts (Bouso 2017, 2020).

4. Emergence and development of the ROC

Moving now on to the first of my two key research questions concerning the diachronic development of the ROC (section 2), as a strategy to investigate when the ROC emerges as a form-meaning pairing, a list of 645 transitivised verbs was extracted from several historical data sources. Similarly to other diachronic studies on argument structure, I used the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) to check the earliest attestation of the ROC with these verbs. I only managed to

identify a total of sixty-nine different verb types co-occurring with the three different categories of ROs described in section 3. They start to occur in the construction in the fourteenth century and accumulate most prominently in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. No instances of ROCs, however, were attested for the twentieth century, a finding which is particularly noticeable as this period is not underrepresented in the *OED* (Hilpert 2013, 121). This indicates that the ROC is an essentially Late Modern English (LModE) development, which lends support to the main hypothesis that the ROC developed alongside other valency-increasing constructions which also proliferated in the ModE period (Visser 1963-1973; Israel 1996; Mondorf 2011; Fanego 2019).

5. The shaping of the LModE ROC

In order to further delve into the LModE development of the ROC and provide an answer to the research question of how and why the ROC develops, I first conducted a corpus-based study using a heterogeneous sample of forty verbs attested in the ROC in the *OED* and the largest corpus of LModE available nowadays (*CLMET3.0*, De Smet et al. 2013, 34 million words, 1710-1920). The results only yielded 306 unambiguous ROCs for the forty verbs selected for analysis. As can be inferred from data already published in Bouso (2017), their distribution across time clearly confirms the parallel development of the ROC and the *way*-construction as both constructions became "fairly productive" (Israel 1996, 222) in British English by the early nineteenth century. In the case of the ROC, more than seventy per cent of the overall data stems from narrative fiction, which leads me to hypothesise here that the sentimental novel could have been an important extralinguistic factor in the development of the ROC. Like the ROC, the sentimental novel also proliferates in the middle of the eighteenth century. This novel subtype also shows an emphasis on "emotional response" (Rowland 2008, 193) and makes extensive use of a subtype of Direct Speech (DS) which Visser (1963-1973) suggested to be the source of the ROC. Examples of this DS subtype are here represented below in (9) and (10). They differ from ordinary examples of DS in that they involve manner of action verbs (e.g. *smile* and *grunt*) instead of the more neutral reporting verbs *say* and *tell*.

(9) She *smiled* "I don't believe you."

(10) He *grunted* "I thank you."

<div align="right">(Visser 1963-1973, I: §142)</div>

To test this hypothesis, a corpus of exclusively nineteenth century British novels was compiled. This is the *British Sentimental Novel Corpus* (*BSNC*, Ruano San Segundo and Bouso 2019, 21 million words, 1798-1900), which was used to replicate my previous LModE study based on *CLMET3.0*, but only using the most prototypical verbs of the ROC, i.e. the manner of action verbs *mutter*, *murmur*, *smile*, *nod*, *whisper*, *shout* and *wave* (Bouso 2017). Preliminary results point out that the ROC is closely related to the sentimental novel as more than 400 ROCs were attested, a figure which is clearly in stark contrast with the only 300 ROCs retrieved for the forty verbs analysed in *CLMET3.0*. Quite importantly, the ROC is not only very frequent in the *BSNC* but is also very diverse when it comes to the array of types identified for each of the three main categories of ROs described in section 3. This can be observed in figures 1-6 below: six diachronically ordered scatterplots, supplemented by a line chart which records the total amount of RO types (raw frequencies) for the first six subperiods (out of eight), into which the *BSNC* is subdivided.[3] The blue band in this line chart highlights the time frame under inspection in each corresponding scatterplot to the left.

Created with the R package googleVis (R Core Team 2019), the scatterplots show on the *y*-axis the normalised frequencies per million words (pmw) of the RO types attested for the first six subperiods of the *BSNC*. The *x*-axis, on the other hand, organises alphabetically the types. Some identifying labels have also been included in the scatterplots to give the reader a taste of the rich diversity of the data. The bubbles correspond to the individual ROs, with colour indicating the category to which the RO type belongs. In figure 3 (1837-1850), for instance, blue is used for the delocutives *adieu*, *farewell*, *welcome*; green for the deverbal illocutionary nouns *acquiescence*, *approbation*, *assent*; and yellow for the predicative expressive nouns *Greatness*, *courage* and *satisfaction*. The final result is a motion chart (Hilpert 2011, 2013; Hilpert and Perek 2015; Levshina 2015) which visualises the semantic shifts of the ROC in the course of the nineteenth

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3. Since the last two subperiods are underrepresented (1881-1900), they were excluded from figures 1-6.

century, namely from 1798 to 1880. Once again, as in my previous historical data (Bouso 2017, 2020), the period with the greatest variety of RO types is the early nineteenth century and, more specifically, the period corresponding to the time frame 1837-1850 (figure 3).
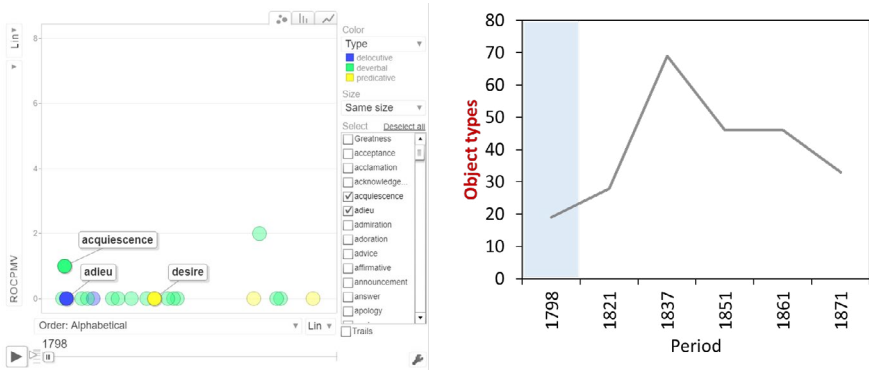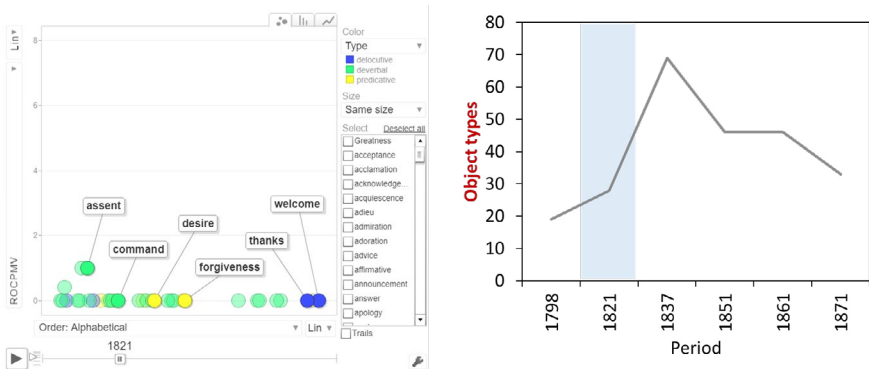

Figure 1: Period 1798-1820
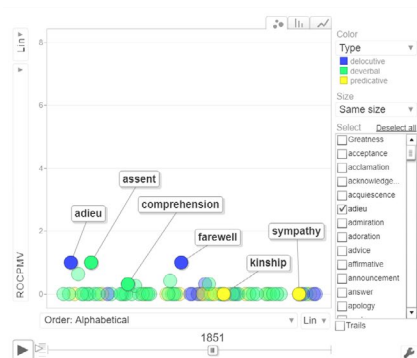

Figure 2: Period 1821-1836

Figure 3: Period 1837-1850
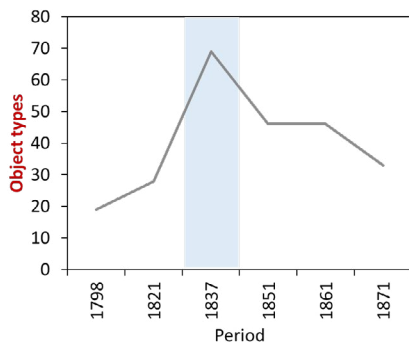
Figure 4: Period 1851-1860
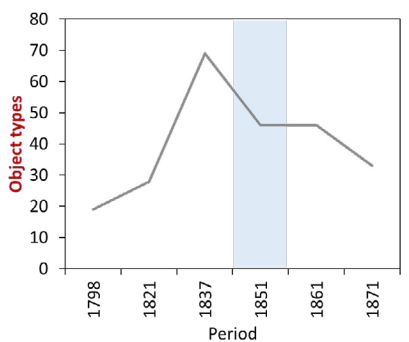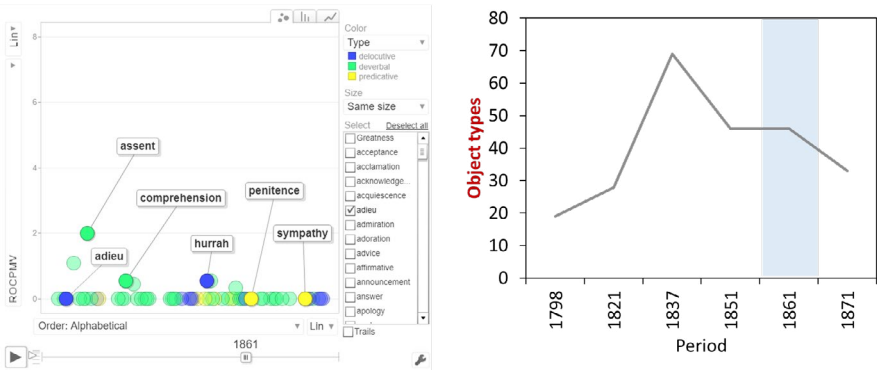
Figure 5: Period 1861-1870
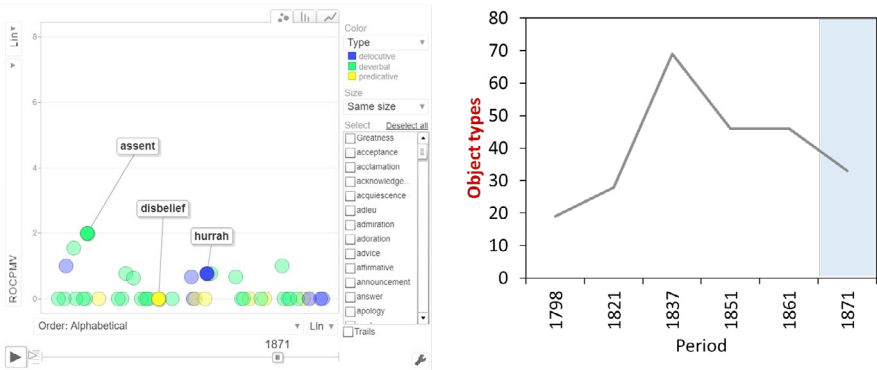
Figure 6: Period 1871-1880

It is worth noting here that additional historical data retrieved from the *BSNC* reveals a significant, strong positive correlation between the development of the ROC and that of DS, i.e. those structures Visser (1963-1973) claimed to be the source of the ROC (cf. (9) and (10)) (Pearson, Kendal's τ and Spearman's ρ, p<.05). This correlation is represented in the line chart included in figure 7 below. To the right of the line chart, the snapshot of the motion chart reinforces this point: on the *x*-axis the normalised frequencies (pmw) of the ROC and on

the *y*-axis the normalised frequencies (pmw) of DS constructions identified in the *BSNC* for the prototypical verbs of the ROC (the labels correspond to the individual verbs). Despite the preliminary nature of the results, these findings open avenues for future research in the exploration of the role of DS in both the growth and subsequent development of the ROC.
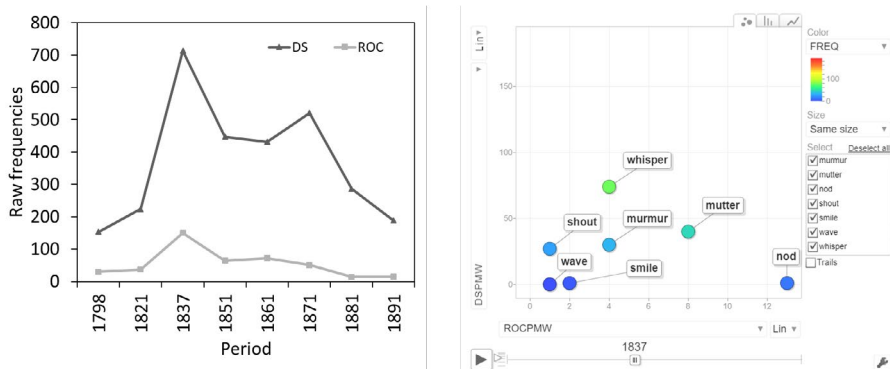
Figure 7: Time-frequency correlation between the ROC and DS constructions (1798-1900)

6. Concluding remarks and future research

This paper aimed to offer a concise overview of my current research project on the characterisation and history of the English ROC, advancing at the same time some new preliminary results. In sum, my historical data so far confirms the main hypothesis that the ROC developed alongside other transitivising constructions whose type frequency also increased in the course of the Modern English period. It also shows that the ROC unveils striking parallels with the history of the *way*-construction. Despite crystallising as new form-meaning pairings at different points in time, the ROC in EModE (Bouso 2020) and the *way*-construction in ME (Fanego 2019), both of them became "fairly productive" (Israel 1996, 222) by the early nineteenth century. Finally, preliminary data, retrieved from a self-compiled corpus and subsequently visualised here in a series of animated scatterplots, suggests that two factors propelled the consolidation of the ROC during the nineteenth century: the sentimental novel and the simultaneous development of those reporting speech constructions that Visser (1963-1973) suggested to be the source of the ROC. Future research should

explore further the tight relationship between the ROC and this particular genre subtype, as well as the precise role of reporting speech. In particular, whether DS constructions of the kind mentioned by Visser (1963-1973) could be treated as the source constructions of the ROC or, alternatively, as neighbouring structures that, like the sentimental novel, contributed to the shaping and modelling of the LModE ROC.

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LA INFLUENCIA DE LAS CHARLAS TED EN EL "SISTEMA MOTIVACIONAL DEL YO" DE ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS. UN ESTUDIO DE METODOLOGÍA MIXTA

Aránzazu García-Pinar
CUD-UPCT
agpinar@hotmail.com

Resumen

El objetivo principal del presente estudio fue investigar si la motivación para hablar inglés en público de 151 estudiantes pudo incrementarse a través de una pedagogía multimodal basada en el uso de charlas TED. El modelo de investigación del estudio es un método mixto. Los análisis de los datos cuantitativos demostraron que la intervención multimodal resultó positiva. Hubo diferencias estadísticas significativas entre el primer y el segundo cuestionario en las dimensiones de la *Confianza Lingüística*, el *Ideal del Yo en L2* y la *Experiencia en el Aprendizaje en L2*. Los datos cualitativos evidenciaron una evolución en los ideales del yo de algunos estudiantes; 6 de los 11 participantes en las fases cualitativas declararon que el uso de gestos deícticos y rítmicos, de visuales, y del contacto visual regular combinado con sonrisas puntuales en sus presentaciones orales contribuyeron a aumentar su propia percepción de eficacia a la hora de hablar en público.

Palabras clave: yoes posibles, intervención multimodal, motivación en L2

Abstract

The overriding objective of the present study was to investigate whether motivation for public speaking in the L2 of 151 students could increase with a multimodal pedagogy

that drew mainly on the use of TED Talks. The motivational construct used in this study is the *Motivational Self System* (Dörnyei 2005, 2009). In order to guide students in the development of their *possible selves*, a multimodal pedagogical intervention was designed. Mixed methods research, through a pre-experimental approach, and a pre-test and post-test design of five groups of engineering undergraduates with no control group was conducted. Analysis of the means obtained in two of the cornerstones of the *Motivational Self System* (i.e., the ideal L2 self and the language learning experience) in the pre and post intervention questionnaires intervention indicated a statistically significant difference. Six of the eleven interviewed students experienced a slight development in their levels of linguistic self-confidence from the implementation of modes in their oral performances.

Keywords: possible selves, multimodal intervention, L2 motivation

1. Introducción

La multimodalidad y su interés por investigar la manera en que el modo verbal interactúa con diferentes modos no-verbales ha suscitado gran interés en diferentes ámbitos educativos. Desde hace algo más de una década, hay un interés creciente en conocer cómo los estudiantes de lenguas pueden llegar a beneficiarse de un enfoque multimodal (Jewitt 2006, 2008; Royce 2002; Unsworth 2014; Walsh 2015, entre otros). En particular, muchos de estos estudios se centran en investigar las configuraciones multimodales que las nuevas tecnologías facilitan y la manera en que los estudiantes crean significado y comunican a partir de estas.

Con el fin de poder obtener un entendimiento más completo acerca de cómo los estudiantes de ingeniería puede estar motivados para hablar en público en inglés, el presente estudio explora la motivación en L2 de 151 estudiantes que cursaron la asignatura de inglés técnico en la Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (UPCT) durante el curso académico 2017-2018. El objetivo principal del estudio fue investigar si los futuros *yoes posibles* en L2 (Dörnyei 2005, 2009) de estos estudiantes en relación al aprendizaje de inglés y a su compromiso para hablar en público pudo verse incrementado con una pedagogía multimodal basada principalmente en el uso de charlas TED. La investigación se centró principalmente en estudiar de cerca la influencia que el modo multimodal de comunicar que tienen los hablantes en TED, con un uso combinado del modo verbal y modos no-verbales (gestos, expresión faciales, proxémica, y visuales), pudo tener en dar forma a la motivación de los estudiantes para estudiar inglés mediante la creación y el desarrollo de representaciones vivas de sus futuros yoes

posibles. La investigación también se centró en estudiar si el carácter multimodal de las charlas TED ejerció algún tipo de influencia en la confianza lingüística de los estudiantes para hablar en público.

2. Fundamentos teóricos

2.1. El Sistema Motivacional del Yo L2

La base teórica del *Sistema Motivacional del Yo* se apoya en gran medida en el concepto de *yoes posibles.* La conceptualización de los *yoes posibles* (Markus y Nurius 1986) es fundamental para entender los modos en lo que el yo regula comportamientos. Markus y Nurius (1986, 954) describen la noción de los *yoes posibles* en uno de sus artículos más influyentes:

> Possible selves represent individual's ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation.

La teoría de la discrepancia del yo de Higgins (1997) también ejerce una notable influencia en el sistema motivacional de Dörnyei. Higgins distingue dos tipos de yoes futuros: El *Yo Ideal* y el *Yo Deóntico*. El *Yo Ideal* se refiere a las representaciones de los atributos que alguien desearía tener, el *Yo Deóntico* a las representaciones de los atributos que alguien cree debería tener. Cuando una persona es capaz de ver la diferencia entre su yo actual y sus yoes futuros, puede que quizás perciba lo que es necesario llevar a cabo para reducir esa discrepancia. El constructo de Dörnyei (2009, 29) da lugar a un constructo amplio de aprendizaje de lenguas que incluye tres componentes principales: el *Yo Ideal L2*, el *Yo Deóntico L2*, y la *Experiencia en el Aprendizaje en L2*.

1. *El Yo Ideal L2*, se refiere a facetas específicas en L2 del yo ideal de una persona, en particular, a su visión como usuario eficaz de la L2.
2. *El Yo Deóntico L2*, se refiere a los atributos que uno estima debería poseer (obligaciones y responsabilidades) para evitar futuros resultados negativos.
3. *La Experiencia en el Aprendizaje de la L2,* se refiere a los motivos específicos relacionados con el entorno de aprendizaje (profesor, metodologías y materiales).

2.2 El papel de la visión

El papel desempeñado por la visión en el sistema motivacional de Dörnyei es relevante. Los *yoes posibles* pueden llegar a entenderse como visiones e imágenes de uno mismo en el futuro. Según describen Dörnyei y Kubanyiova (2014, 9), la visión puede llegar a convertirse en uno de los predictores más fiables del esfuerzo por aprender que un estudiante dedicará a largo plazo. La intervención multimodal del presente estudio, con un uso extensivo de las charlas TED que muestran hablantes expertos en una gran variedad de campos, puede desempeñar un papel fundamental en modelar las actitudes y valores de los estudiantes (Bandura, 1977; Muir, Dörnyei y Adolphs 2019) y en desarrollar la visión en los estudiantes como usuarios y hablantes competentes de la L2 en contextos académicos y laborales.

3. Metodología

El presente estudio ha estado guiado por las siguientes cuatro preguntas de investigación:

1. ¿Se da una evolución en los *Ideales del Yo en L2* de los estudiantes a lo largo de un cuatrimestre como resultado de una intervención multimodal?
2. ¿De qué manera influye un enfoque multimodal en la confianza lingüística de los estudiantes para hablar en público?
3. ¿Cuáles son los modos que los estudiantes perciben como aquellos que mejor complementan sus habilidades oratorias?
4. ¿Cómo influye un enfoque multimodal en la motivación de los estudiantes en el trascurso de un semestre?

Con el propósito de responder a estas preguntas de investigación, se llevó a cabo una investigación de metodología mixta, con un enfoque pre-experimental y un diseño de pre-test–post-test de cinco grupos de estudiantes. Los cinco grupos estaban constituidos por clases intactas de alumnos procedentes de distintos grados de Ingeniería de la UPCT (n=151) con ausencia de grupos de control.

3.1. Instrumentos de recogida de datos

La estructura del estudio abarca cinco fases (véase figura 1). En la primera fase (cuantitativa), 151 estudiantes cumplimentaron el primer cuestionario, que incluía 8 dimensiones motivacionales y una dimensión multimodal diseñada por la investigadora. Las dimensiones motivacionales (*Actitud hacia la Comunidad en L2*, *Interés en la Lengua Inglesa*, *Intención por Esforzarse*, *Instrumentalidad*, *Ansiedad*, *el Ideal del Yo en L2*, *Confianza Lingüística*, *Experiencia en el Aprendizaje en L2*) se diseñaron a partir de instrumentos diseñados por Csizér y Dörnyei (2005) y el *Motivation Factor Questionnaire* (MFQ) de Ryan (2008, 2009). La segunda fase corresponde al desarrollo de la intervención multimodal que tuvo lugar justo después de que los estudiantes hubieran completado los primeros cuestionarios. La tercera y la cuarta fase son de naturaleza cualitativa. Durante estas fases se realizaron las entrevistas y se enviaron cuestionarios abiertos a 11 estudiantes voluntarios. El objetivo principal de estas entrevistas fue permitir que los estudiantes pudieran identificar aspectos relevantes de sus motivación, y determinar aspectos más sutiles que no pudieron detectarse en el cuestionario y que tenían que ver con su confianza lingüística a la hora de hablar en público en clase y sus opiniones acerca del uso de distintos modos no verbales en sus presentaciones orales. El objetivo de los cuestionarios abiertos fue el de obtener de manera detallada la impresiones de cada uno de estos estudiantes sobre sus presentaciones orales. Finalmente, en la quinta fase (cuantitativa), se administró el segundo cuestionario a los 151 estudiantes. Este segundo cuestionario incluía las mismas 73 preguntas del primer cuestionario más cuatro preguntas cerradas. La primera preguntaba a los alumnos qué modos no verbales contribuyeron a que pudieran sentirse bien en sus presentaciones orales en clase. La segunda pregunta tenía como objetivo establecer si los estudiantes habían estado o no motivados durante el curso de inglés con un enfoque multimodal basado principalmente en las charlas TED. La tercera y cuarta preguntas tuvieron como objetivo la obtención de una respuesta positiva o negativa en relación a la posibilidad de que pudieran proyectar imágenes de ellos mismos en el futuro como ingenieros capaces de dar una charla al estilo TED, incorporando lo modos que aprendieron durante la intervención multimodal.
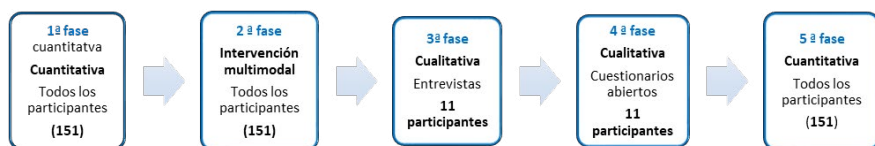
| 1ª fase cuantitativa **Cuantitativa** Todos los participantes **(151)** | 2ª fase **Intervención multimodal** Todos los participantes **(151)** | 3ª fase **Cualitativa** Entrevistas **11 participantes** | 4ª fase **Cualitativa** Cuestionarios abiertos **11 participantes** | 5ª fase **Cuantitativa** Todos los participantes **(151)** |

Figura 1: Estructura del estudio

3.2. Procedimiento

Los cuestionarios se repartieron en dos ocasiones a lo largo del semestre. El primer cuestionario fue cumplimentado al principio del semestre, y el segundo al final del mismo. Los dos cuestionarios fueron administrados por la investigadora. Para asegurarse de que todos los participantes en el primer cuestionario, cumplimentarán también el segundo, los profesores de los cinco grupos acordaron en conceder un 0.25 sobre la nota final de la asignatura. Las entrevistas con los 11 estudiantes voluntarios fueron realizadas por la investigadora después de que éstos hubieran rellenado los primeros cuestionarios. Las entrevistas tuvieron lugar cara a cara y fueron grabadas. Los cuestionarios abiertos se enviaron a los mismos 11 estudiantes voluntarios por email, después de que hubieran hecho sus presentaciones orales en clase.

3.3. La intervención multimodal

La intervención multimodal consistió en dos partes. El objetivo principal de la primera parte de la intervención fue ampliar el conocimiento multimodal de los estudiantes, quienes pudieron observar cómo diferentes modos (los gestos, el uso de elementos visuales, la proxémica o la expresión facial) transmiten significado de forma parcial, siendo algunos modos más "poderosos" que otros. Con el propósito de reforzar el papel de los modos menos visibles en la comunicación, la intervención inició a los estudiantes en la labor fundamental de los gestos, la expresión facial, las imágenes y la proxémica. Se hizo especial énfasis en el papel clave de los gestos deícticos para guiar a la audiencia y en el de los gestos rítmicos, los cuáles ayudan al hablante a enfatizar palabras claves o partes importantes del discurso. Durante la segunda parte de la intervención los estudiantes visualizaron de forma parcial seis de las charlas TED más visualizadas hasta el momento. Durante esta segunda partes los estudiantes participaron activamente anotando todos los modos (gestos, proxémica, visuales, entonación

y énfasis) que el hablante había utilizado, así como la intención que el hablante pudo haber tenido para utilizarlo. La investigadora interactuó con los alumnos, preguntándoles aquellos modos que ellos habían percibido como más relevantes y añadiendo otros que ningún alumno/a había mencionado. Este procedimiento se repitió con las seis charlas.

4. Resultados y discusión

Respecto a los hallazgos significativos del presente estudio cabe destacar lo siguiente. En relación a la evolución de los ideales del yo en L2 de los estudiantes, la intervención multimodal puede considerarse positiva. El análisis de las medias en las dimensiones del *Ideal del Yo en L2* y de la *Experiencia en el Aprendizaje de la L2* en el primer y segundo cuestionario mostró diferencias estadísticas significativas (véase tabla 1). El análisis de los datos cualitativos evidenció una actitud positiva en algunos de los estudiantes entrevistados en relación al efecto que el uso de diferentes modos no-verbales en sus presentaciones orales podía tener en desarrollar sus futuros yoes como hablantes competentes en inglés.

Dimensión	Medida, *mean (Sd)*			Prueba *t*-Student	
	Pre	Post		t(150)	p-valor
Actitud hacia la Comunidad	4,64 (1,05)	4,66 (1,04)		1,672	0,097
Instrumentalidad	5,10 (0,52)	5,13 (0,59)		0,997	0,320
Interés en la L2	4,05 (1,02)	4,09 (1,04)		1,013	0,313
Experiencia en el Aprendizaje	3,10 (0,76)	5,20 (0,72)		16,871	<0,001
Ansiedad	4,05 (1,03)	3,02 (0,99)		-13,686	<0,001
Confianza Lingüística	2,93 (0,80)	4,28 (0,79)		-16,889	<0,001
Idea del Yo L2	3,19 (0,79)	4,60 (0,74)		-13,001	<0,001
Intención por esforzarse	3,94 (0,78)	4,90 (0,77)		-19,873	<0,001
M Multimodalidad	3,81 (0,55)	5,52 (0,50)		21,871	<0,001

Tabla 1: Descriptivo y comparativo puntuaciones de la escala antes y después de la intervención

En relación a la segunda pregunta de investigación, los datos cuantitativos sugieren que los estudiantes tuvieron menos ansiedad y más confianza lingüística (Tabla 1) para llevar a cabo sus presentaciones orales al final del cuatrimestre. Con respecto a los datos cualitativos, éstos dejaron entrever cómo seis de los once estudiantes entrevistados experimentaron un desarrollo moderado en sus niveles de confianza lingüística a partir del uso de modos no-verbales en sus presentaciones orales en clase, en concreto el uso de gestos deícticos y rítmicos, de visuales, y del contacto visual regular combinado con sonrisas puntuales en sus presentaciones orales contribuyeron a aumentar su propia percepción de eficacia a la hora de hablar en público. Con respecto a la tercera pregunta del estudio, en términos cuantitativos (véase Tabla 2), el modo visual fue el modo elegido en primer lugar por los estudiantes como el modo que podía mejor complementar sus presentaciones orales y contribuir a fortalecer su sentimiento de eficacia. Los gestos fueron el modo que obtuvo la mayor puntuación. Los resultados cualitativos son ampliamente consistentes con los cuantitativos, pues los estudiantes eligieron el modo visual y el gestual. En las entrevistas los estudiantes puntualizaron que el uso del gesto rítmico y deíctico logró captar la atención de algunos de sus compañeros de clase. Este hecho les hizo sentir bien.

Pregunta	Respuetas, n (%)	
	Sí	No
P1		
Gesto	112 (74,2)	39 (25,8)
Expresión facial	75 (49,7)	76 (50,3)
Movimiento con la cabeza	63 (41,7)	88 (58,3)
Visuales	142 (94)	9 (6)
Acento-entonación	103 (68,2)	48 (31,8)
Postura	88 (58,3)	63 (41,7)
Uso del espacio (proxémica)	78 (51,7)	73 (48,3)
P2	119 (78,8)	32 (21,2)
P3	99 (65,6)	52 (34,4)
P4	92 (65,6)	59 (34,4)

Tabla 2: Respuestas preguntas adicionales segundo cuestionario

Finalmente, y en relación a la cuarta pregunta de la investigación, los resultados del segundo cuestionario demostraron que cinco de las dimensiones que medían la motivación en L2 experimentaron cambios significativos al final del cuatrimestre (Tabla 1). Las cuatro preguntas adicionales en el segundo cuestionario evidenciaron que los estudiantes habían estado motivados en aprender inglés con el enfoque multimodal apoyado en las charlas TED (véase tabla 2). De los 151 estudiantes, 119 contestaron que sí habían estado motivados frente a 32 estudiantes que contestaron que no. De estos 151 estudiantes, 99 estudiantes (frente a 52) afirmaron poder imaginarse en un futuro dando una charla al estilo TED. Por otra parte, 92 estudiantes (frente a 59) afirmaron que el hecho de poder imaginarse como capaces de dar una charla multimodal TED los mantendría motivados para seguir aprendiendo inglés.

5. Conclusiones

La presente investigación ha evidenciado que, para la muestra de este estudio, el diseño y desarrollo de intervenciones que usen modelos de personas con un dominio de la lengua inglesa y con altas habilidades multimodales pueden traer consigo efectos positivos en el aprendizaje de lenguas. En consecuencia, se alienta al docente de lenguas a desarrollar la competencia multimodal en el aula junto al resto de competencias, para que, como Kress (2005) subraya, los estudiantes puedan llegar a discernir cuál es el modo más apto para comunicar y representar un tema en concreto.

Esta investigación presenta algunas limitaciones, la más obvia tiene que ver con la ausencia de un grupo de control; todos los sujetos que participaron en la parte cuantitativa del estudio recibieron la intervención multimodal. El diseño pre-experimental llevado a cabo puede, sin embargo, ser el punto de partida para futuros estudios cuasi- experimentales que sí que incluyan grupos de control. Teniendo en cuenta los resultados obtenidos, la investigación sobre la importancia de una intervención multimodal para fortalecer la confianza lingüística de los estudiantes a la hora de hablar en público ejerciendo influencia en sus yoes ideales en L2 podría beneficiarse de una ampliación del ámbito de aplicación a fin de examinar etapas educativas más tempranas, como la educación primaria o la secundaria.

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LOST IN THE WILD(E)RNESS.
THE TRANSLATIONS OF *DE PROFUNDIS* INTO SPANISH

Ángeles Jordán Soriano

Universidad de Almería

angiehey7@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper explores how the complex history of Wilde's *De Profundis* can affect its many Spanish translations. Consequently, I will begin with its uncommon publishing history, which would lead to the coexistence of more than one text called Wilde's *De Profundis*, all different in content and length. In this paper, I will examine these different versions displaying a panoramic view of their translation into Spanish and considering which version is being used in each one. This will be useful in examining the way in which this text has been translated into Spanish and in analysing the fact that even more than fifty years after the publication of the full letter, the censored edition is still common in modern anthologies and translations, something which leads to a loss of information as I will exemplify using two different recent translations.

Keywords: Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis*, Spanish translation

1. Introduction

De Profundis is the only literary output produced by Oscar Wilde during his stay in prison. This long text in the style of a letter, which was composed a few

months before the author's departure from Reading Gaol in May 1897, is an important piece in understanding Wilde's psychology after being discredited by society and his own family. In fact, it can be seen how the author depicts his stay in prison as a major turn in his life stating that "the two great turning-points in my life were when my father sent me to Oxford, and when society sent me to prison" (Wilde 1997, 1074). Considering the importance of this text, it is not unusual that it has been translated into more than forty languages, Spanish being the third with regard to the number of editions according to the OCLC's *worldcat.org* (WCO) database. Due to this fact, in this paper I will offer a panoramic view of the translating history of this text into Spanish, which will be followed by the analysis of two Spanish translations.

Nevertheless, before dealing with these translations, it is important to note some vital formal aspects, for instance, its complex textual history which would lead to the existence of several different versions of the text, all of them published under the same name: *De Profundis*. This problem is also present in Spanish translations as the analysed texts will support, since despite being almost coetaneous, each one of them stands as a different version of *De Profundis,* one of them being almost three times shorter than the other.

In order to understand the origin of this issue, I will devote the next sections to the textual history of the manuscript and its translating history into Spanish using as the main source the catalogue of the BNE. After this, I will attempt to reach conclusions about the most common version: the full or the shortened one. Then, I will approach the differences in these versions aiming to illustrate the possible loss that it would be implicit in the use of the abridged version instead of the full one in Spanish translations.

2. The complex textual history of the text: More than one *De Profundis*

Regarding its history of publication*,* we must take into consideration that the text was finished circa January and February 1897, Wilde's final months in prison. Nevertheless, despite the fact that according to his biographer Richard Ellmann, the author was yet allowed to send letters, he was not able to send this manuscript, then called "Epistola in Carcere et Vinculis." For this reason, he had to take the text with him during his departure from Reading Gaol on 19 May of this same year (Ellmann 1988, 451-478).

Since he had been disrepted in his own country, he moved to the continent and joined his literary executor Robert Ross in Dieppe, France. It was there where he would hand him this manuscript, but also a series of instructions where he requested to "have his letter copied, not once but twice" (Small 2003a, 90). Therefore, when Wilde died in 1900 after having lived discredited and bankrupt in France and Italy, Ross began to work on "Epistola in Carcere et Vinculis" publishing it in 1905 as *De Profundis*. Nevertheless, this version edited by Ross is almost three times shorter than the original, having just 17.811 words. In 1909, he would republish it again slightly changing the structure and beginning of the previous shortened version.

After having published *De Profundis*, Ross donated his own full original copy of the text to The British Library (TBL) under the condition of keeping it unseen for the next fifty years (Small 2000, 5). It is very important to take into consideration this action because it would be the reason why the original full text was not accessible until the mid-sixties, when it was published by Rupert Hart-Davis.

Apart from its longer extension, this original manuscript does have the epistolary format used by Wilde which is absent in Ross' versions. Likewise, the existence of further copies published under the same name may also lead to some problems regarding the identification of each text. Needless to say, before approaching this issue, it is important to consider some details about the state and history of the translation of *De Profundis* into Spanish.

3. Compilation of the translations of this text into Spanish

Despite the fact the catalogue of the Biblioteca Nacional de España (CBNE) mentions the existence of a translation of *De Profundis* into Spanish published by José F. Ferreira Martins (1840-1960) in 1925, José Emilio Pacheco first mentions a 1929 translation by Ricardo Baeza (1890-1956) and Julio Gómez de la Serna (1895-1983) published in Madrid by La Nave. In this case, both translators are well-known for translating much of Wilde's output.

The next translation is the one made by Margarita Nelken (1894-1968). It was published in 1931 in Madrid by Biblioteca Nueva and according to the BNE catalogue, it has been republished eight times by several publishers, being one of the most popular translations of this text. In this translation, there is no

note written by the translator and few footnotes. However, in recent re-editions, such as that in 1982, we can find additional editor's notes, and an introduction by Carmelo S. Castro. Besides, it must be noted that in Nelken's translations we can find some typos, especially in proper names, for instance, "Jhon Keats" [sic] (1982, 89). Another important fact about this translation is that it was made from the German version of Max Meyerfeld instead of using the English original as source text. Nelken's work is also highlighted by scholars like Pacheco since her translation was not published as *De Profundis* but as *La tragedia de mi vida* (1931), a title which would be translated into English and used in some North-American editions as if it were the original title (Pacheco 1977, 19).

After Nelken's translation, *De Profundis* was not published again until 1975, with José Emilio Pacheco's (1939-2014) translation. At this stage, we must take into consideration that the original full text had already been published in English. Therefore, from this point forward, we must contemplate the possibility that any translation published after this date could be based on either Ross' shortened editions or the original full version.

In the case of Pacheco's translation published in Barcelona by Muchnik Editores D. L., we are dealing indeed with this full version. In fact, he expresses his will to remain as close as possible to Wilde's original:

> Este libro respeta en lo posible la división irregular de los párrafos, el empleo arbitrario de las mayúsculas y otros rasgos de un original que Oscar Wilde escribió en la cárcel y no tuvo oportunidad de revisar para darlo a la imprenta. Se ha intentado hacer en el español de nuestros días un texto que se aproxime a la prosa de Wilde en 1897 y se halle hasta cierto punto libre de localismos (Pacheco 1977, 8).

Pacheco also provides the reader with explanatory notes at the end of the book which offer more information about the references in the text and the translation and meaning of Wilde's original quotes in foreign languages. As with Nelken's translation, this one has also been re-edited several times and was republished in 1977, 1984 and 1994 by Muchnik Editores D. L.

The next two translators would also follow Pacheco's steps and they would use the original full manuscript as source text. The first one is Marta Pérez (1949-2016), whose version was published in 1986 by Editorial Fontamara in Barcelona, and like the previous translation, it does not provide any footnotes. Pérez decided to keep foreign language quotes untranslated, and nor did she

provide explanatory notes. Therefore, as occurs in Wilde's original text, if the reader does not understand those foreign languages, they cannot access those references. The only comment made by the translator is a brief introductory note of edition at the beginning of the book. The next translation would be that of Enrique Campbell, which was published by Edicomunicación in 1995 and 1999, and by Brontes in 2014, all in Barcelona.

There would be no new translations until the 21st century. Therefore, as a general overview, it can be said that after the publication of the full text, translators used this as source text. Nevertheless, it would be important to observe if this phenomenon is still happening today. Despite the fact that according to the ISBN catalogue the number of editions and translations of this text has increased considerably since 2010, it is surprising to see that even nowadays, Nelken's translation of the shortened version is still being republished and that even some recent anthologies, as in the one used in this paper, continue publishing new translations of this incomplete version. The use of this version does not lead just to the loss of information but also to the absence of other formal aspects of the text, as it will be presented in the following comparison.

3.1. Textual differences between the abridged and full version

With regard to the editions used, I will compare two texts taken from *En prisión* (2014) and *La Narrativa de O. Wilde* (2016), which display the original full letter and the shortened and edited version published by Ross in 1909 respectively. During this comparison, I will focus on those elements seen in the full version which are absent in the short one. Since these translations attempt to be faithful to the source texts in English, they try to preserve the structure of each of these versions, and therefore, the absent elements coincide.

The full text, translated by Andrés Arenas and Enrique Girón, is compiled in *En prisión* (2014) and published by Confluencias. It consists of 160 pages which also display footnotes which would extend the information mentioned by Wilde with more biographical details. However, the shortened version taken from *La Narrativa de O. Wilde* (2016) and published by Edaf consists of 51 pages translated by Alfonso Sastre and José Sastre. In this case, footnotes are just used to translate Wilde's quotes from foreign languages, but they do not offer information about the text or Wilde's life.

Besides this difference in the length of these texts, there is also a restructuration of the information. In the long version, the first page is introduced in an epistolary style, displaying the date and place of writing and Wilde's salutation to Bosie. From this page to page 58, which is the point where the shortened version begins, the author addresses his former lover explaining his current situation. This part is the longest omitted fragment and it provides the introduction of what could be understood as Wilde's main aim in this letter: to chide Bosie and at the same time to teach him "something much more wonderful, the meaning of Sorrow and it's beauty" (Wilde 2000, 780).

Nevertheless, despite this part being omitted, some of its lines can be seen reproduced similarly in the short version, since, as Gagnier mentions, he "has established through repetition the contours of his life before prison" (1984, 345). This can be observed in some almost identical parts, such as the following example: "a ti te veo como el niño Samuel de la Biblia; y a mí sentado entre Gilles de Retz y el marqués de Sade, en el inmundo Malebolge" (Wilde 2014, 38). This idea would also be presented again in the section where the short version starts: "Mi lugar estaría entre Gilles de Retz y el marqués de Sade. Aunque me imagino que esto sería lo mejor" (Wilde 2016, 591).

From this point onwards, the structure of both versions coincides but there are some omissions which would imply that Wilde's lesson is not targeted at Bosie but at society in general or even just at himself, as the following quote illustrates: "lo primero que tengo que hacer es liberarme del posible resentimiento contra ti" (104). In the shortened version this last part is changed as "contra el mundo" (2016, 559). Furthermore, this short version describes of the conditions in which prisoners have to live (85), meanwhile in the full text there are omitted pages relating this situation to Bosie's selfishness and lack of commitment during Wilde's trials. As Ross did in his shortened versions, the translator also adds an ellipsis mark, "...", at the end of each sentence which would introduce an omitted part, for instance: "[it] tells me that it is May..." (Wilde 1909, 28). Besides Ross' reasons mentioned by TBL of avoiding being accused of libel, it is important to consider these omissions with regard to Colm Tóibín's comments about the dislike Ross felt for Bosie and how, "as a former lover of Wilde's himself, he was less than happy about the prospect of Wilde and Douglas being together again" (Tóibín 2017).

Despite the fact that the messages about love, art, individualism and Christ are included in both versions, this time Ross seems to reorganize Wilde's ideas instead of omitting them. This is probably an attempt to make the text cohesive, since, without the parts concerning Bosie, the remaining paragraphs look unrelated to each other, and may have needed editing. For instance, in the original text, Wilde talks about the days before of his sentence, the tragedy it implied to his mother, and the behaviour of Bosie's family. However, in the shortened version, all this information is paraphrased in a way in which the references concerning Bosie are ambiguously presented or even omitted, as in the part in which Wilde expresses his desire to see him again and gives him instructions about how he should answer this letter (182).

4. Conclusions

To conclude, it is important to examine the compilation of translations provided, since it stands as proof of the presence of both versions in modern editions. The fact that the abridged version is found in anthologies may be related to its shorter length.

Nevertheless, it is also vital to note the important loss that the use of the short version would imply. First of all, the author's life seems to be manipulated since it is a censored version of Wilde's original letter and most of the details concerning his tragedy has been omitted; for instance, his relationship with Bosie and the judicial process. Moreover, Ross's edition may lead to a misconception of the author's message, since, despite being true that he also addresses society in the original version, the short one indicates that Wilde's lessons are not targeted at Bosie but just at society alone.

Therefore, I am inclined to consider that it would be advisable that future translations consider using the original version of Wilde's letter, in order to avoid a loss and misconception of the actual information and message provided by the author.

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DYSPHEMISTIC REPRESENTATION OF TORY LEADERS IN EDITORIAL CARTOONS PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PRESS: FROM JOHN MAJOR TO THERESA MAY

Luis Francisco López López

Universidad Complutense de Madrid

lf.lopez@ucm.es

Abstract

Set within the field of British politics, this paper analyses metaphorical and metonymical conceptualisation of leadership in the British Conservative Party used by editorial cartoons in the British conservative press. A corpus of 90 cartoons published in two widely-circulating British newspapers was collected. The analysis offers quantitative and qualitative data thanks to an integrative approach which combines cognitive and discourse approaches departing from Sorm and Steen's (2013), adapting Kövecses' (2010) taxonomy of source domains and the model of metonymy proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (2002); but also applying Charteris-Black's (2014) Critical Metaphor Analysis and Musolff's (2016) scenario-based approach. It reveals that one of the main conceptualisation strategies used by cartoonists is to carry a process of semantic pejoration through mapping of undesirable animal characteristics and habits onto Conservative leaders. Metaphor and metonymy are consistently used by cartoonists with dysphemistic purposes when portraying difficult situations for the main Conservative Party leaders. Thus, conservative leaders are consistently depicted through metaphors activating the source domains of ANIMALS or MOVEMENT AND DIRECTION, mapping negatively evaluated qualities onto their political prospects. Due to the political bias of the newspaper analysed here, further research might be needed in the

form of a synchronic study on how British Conservative Party policies are perceived by newspapers with opposing political allegiances.

Keywords: Verbo-pictorial metaphor, dysphemistic use of metaphor, metaphor-metonymy interplay, political cartooning, leadership in the British Conservative Party

1. Introduction

On 14 July 2016, *the Daily Telegraph* offered an editorial cartoon on the Brexit issue. The artist interpreted the United Kingdom's (hence UK) withdrawal from the European Union as a *Snakes and ladders* game in which the main European politicians were playing a game with the intention of arriving at Brexit. The game features – visually cued through the board – are mapped onto the issue of Brexit, which is hinted by the image of the European politicians and verbally rendered through the word "BREXIT" on the last of the game board. This instantiates the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A GAME. Outside the board, there are dice, which are typical representations of 'luck'. This pictorial detail, together with the fact that *Snakes and Ladders* is one of the simplest board games, yields the interpretation that Brexit was unplanned and happened out of luck. Adams thus criticises management of the issue on the Conservative Party's part (see Figure 1).
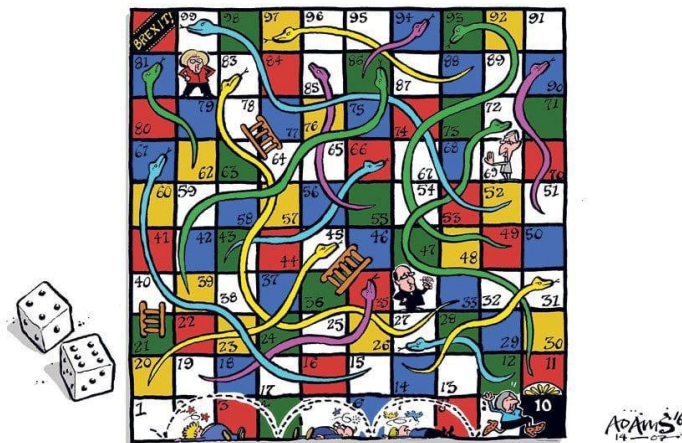

Figure 1: Adams's cartoon about Brexit. *The daily Telegraph*, 14 July 2016

This paper analyses metaphorical and metonymical conceptualisation of leadership in the Conservative Party used by editorial cartoons in the British Conservative press for the general elections held in 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2017. For this purpose, a corpus of 90 cartoons published by either *the daily Telegraph* and *the Times* (or sister publications) in the election years has been collected. The corpus has been divided into five sections, being the 2001 and 2005 general elections studied under the same section, since it is a period characterised by inner political struggles while the Conservative Party was out of power due to the political dominance of Tony Blair's Labour Party.

The present paper is organised as follows. After this introduction, the next section provides the theoretical framework of our research. Section 3 describes the method used to compile the corpora, to identify and interpret the metaphors underlying the corpora and to account for metaphor use and the possible effects on readers. Section 4 presents the research findings. Finally, section 5 summarises the main insights gained from the research and suggests further developments.

2. Theoretical Background

Political metaphor is not only expressed through language, but also through the visual mode, as illustrated by Adam's cartoon above. In the last decades there has been a growing interest in multimodality applied to specific discourses within Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Despite forty years of development of Cognitive Metaphor Theory (Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez 2011), the bulk of research has been focused on metaphor experienced in verbal mode. Therefore, in order to test the validity of the popular claim, further research into multimodal metaphor (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009) is needed.

Indeed, in the last decades much scholarly attention has been paid to the use of metaphor in various discursive genres, including political discourse (Charteris-Black 2014; Lakoff 1996, 2004) and political cartooning (El Refaie 2003, 2009; Negro 2013, 2014), thus approaching metaphor as both a cognitive and a discursive mechanism which manifests itself through a combination of modes.

Within the field of political discourse, editorial cartoons play a role in the political discourse of a society that provides for freedom of speech and of the press. They are, consequently, a primarily opinion-oriented medium and can

generally be found on the editorial pages of newspapers and other journalistic outlets, whether in print or electronic form.

El Refaie (2009, 175) suggests the following definition of a cartoon:

> A cartoon is an illustration, usually in a single panel, published in the editorial or comments pages of a newspaper. Generally, the purpose of a political cartoon is to represent an aspect of social, cultural or political life in a way that condenses reality and transforms it in a striking, original and/or humorous way.

Editorial cartoons are usually related to current and newsworthy political issues, and, in order for them to be understood, they require that readers possess some basic knowledge of the political background.

Negro (2014, 66) summarises the features of political cartoons as follows:

1. They have a descriptive function inasmuch as they are characterised by allusion to a socio-political situation, event or person.
2. Since they are related to recent events, factual knowledge is essential for their correct interpretation.
3. Recent events are combined with an imaginary world in such a way that "cartoons act as a bridge between fact and fiction" (Edwards 1997, 8). The metaphorical process of transferring meaning from the imaginary to the real world is conveyed predominantly in the visual mode (El Refaie 2009, 174).
4. Cartoons have a satirical nature. They are characterised by caricature, which parodies the individual.
5. The last feature stems from the previous one: cartoons exemplify critical perspectives on recent events.
6. Metaphor is a recurrent device used in political cartooning. As Shilperoord and Maes (2009, 214-215) remark, "editorial cartoons are a metaphor-rich communicative area". In this light, these authors highlight the scenario character of newspaper cartoon metaphors, the most frequent scenarios being the hospital-scenario, the cooking-scenario, marriage, funerals and (boxing) games.

From the decade of the 90's, the depiction of relevant political leaders has been object of studies from different fields. For example, Feldman (1995) explores the portrayal of the Japanese Prime Minister in political cartoons. Plumb (2004), analysed the way in which the award-winning cartoonist Bell depicts political leaders in *The Guardian*. The visual representation draws upon pop cultural

icons such as super heroes. Popa (2013) investigated the television genre of animated political cartoons in Rumania. She explored the interpretation of zoomorphs, which render metaphors such as THE PRESIDENT IS A LION.

Negro (2013) has studied metaphor-metonymy interaction in French political cartooning. In her study of visual and verbo-pictorial metaphors in Spanish political cartoons (2014), she found that metaphor and metonymy often occur within conceptual chains in which sources and targets of metonymies are normally visually cued, whilst metaphorical sources and targets are both visually and verbally activated.

Section 3 below offers the main aspects of the methodology used for this study.

3. Method

3.1. The Corpus

For this paper, a corpus of cartoons published by the two most widely spread British centre-right newspapers in terms of circulation (*the Times* and *the daily Telegraph* and sister newspapers) was compiled. In all, 90 editorial cartoons created by award-winning artists such as Garland, Brookes and Morland (*the Times*) or Adams and Bob (*the Daily Telegraph*) were selected. They are all included in the collection of the British Cartoon Archive, a site dedicated to British political cartooning over the last two hundred years. They were selected by entering an advanced search containing the fields 'Conservative Party', and 'leadership' as subjects, the newspapers analysed and year of publication. They were published within the years the general elections from 1997 to 2017 were held and arranged and analysed as shown in the table below.

GENERAL ELECTION	CARTOONS
1997	17
2001-2005	21
2010	12
2015	15
2017	25
TOTAL	90

Table 2: Corpus sections and number of cartoons selected

3.2. The analysis

The analysis is carried out through an integrative approach which combines cognitive and discourse approaches under a three-staged procedure departing from Sorm and Steen's (2013) proposal consisting of: (i) formal description of the cartoon. It comprises a search for patterns in composition and alignment, people depicted, topic, etc.; (ii) identification of metaphors and metonymies. At this stage, we formulated the conceptual metaphors profiled by the cartoons, together with their source domains. We looked at the interplay between metaphors and metonymies. Kövecses' (2010) taxonomy of source domains and the model of metonymy proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (2002) were adopted; and iii) explanation and evaluation of the interaction of metaphor and metonymies, applying Charteris-Black's (2014) Critical Metaphor Analysis and Musolff's (2016) scenario-based approach, in order to account for the main conceptualisation strategies on the press' part. To account for the process of semantic pejoration activated by cartoonists through the identification of Conservative leaders such as Major, Cameron, or May with animals (zoosemy) in order to map undesirable animal characteristics and habits onto people (Crespo-Fernández 2015).

4. Discussion and results

Throughout this section, we will present the main findings of our research. To do so, we will first provide some contextual information. Then we will present the main findings by stating the most pervasive metonymies and metaphors and providing an interpretation by highlighting relevant cartoons which will serve as an example.

The period comprised in this study starts in 1997, when the first GE after events such as the Black Wednesday and the Maastricht Treaty was held. The 17 cartoons of the 1997 section feature John Major, the British Premier at the time, as exercising his characteristic 'wait and see' policy. Therefore, the main domain used here for metaphorical conceptualisation is that of MOVEMENT, often transferring inactivity onto Major's (and thus through the metonymy LEADER FOR INSTITUTION onto the Conservative Party) policies and political prospects, activating conceptual metaphors such as POLITICAL INACTIVITY IS LACK OF PHYSICAL MOVEMENT in all the cartoons analysed in this section.

After the loss of the 1997 GE, the Conservative Party entered a period characterised by successive leadership contests. They lost the 2001 GE (under W. Hague) and the 2005 (under M. Howard). They were both portrayed by editorial cartoonists in contrast to the most relevant leader of the Conservative Party on the one hand, Margaret Thatcher, and Tony Blair, on the other hand.

Out of the 21 cartoons comprising this section, 12 feature metaphors portraying either Hague or Howard depicted as animals. Nine cartoons show situations in which metaphors from the source domain of MOVEMENT are instantiated. When doing so, Hague is metonymically depicted as a clothing accessory for Thatcher, or as a child. In any case, Thatcher controls him, being unable to move.

Howard, on his part, is represented in everyday situations but consistently depicted as Dracula. However, when addressing his political proposals, which are negatively evaluated, the targets of the cartoons are usually verbally cued. In five instances, proposed policies are portrayed as monsters or dangerous animals (a shark in Figure 2), on which Howard is unable to exert control, thus instantiating the conceptual metaphor POLITICAL FAILURE IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER PHYSICAL MOVEMENT.

Figure 2: Morland on Conservative policies. *The Times*, 30 March 2005

The three next sections analysed are devoted to general elections won by the Conservative Party, and therefore there was a perception of robust Conservative leadership. In political terms, the period comprising the 2010 GE up to the 2017 GE is characterised by the management of the financial turmoil and the Brexit referendum held in 2016, which implied David Cameron's substitution for Theresa May, the two leaders analysed here.

In contrast to Howard, Cameron's leadership was perceived as a renewal for the Conservative Party. Again, cartoonists made extensive use of ANIMAL metaphors, often in interplay with MOVEMENT metaphors. For example, Figure 3 shows how Cameron intends to exert control over former party's leaders, which in turn are negatively evaluated by depicting them as dinosaurs, instantiating metaphors such as POLITICAL CONTROL IS CONTROL OVER MOVEMENT.

Figure 3: Morland's cartoon about Cameron's leadership. *The Times*, 5 April 2010

Regarding Cameron, we also found recurrent patterns of conceptualisation from the times of Major. For example, when Cameron is confronted by a political problem or enemy, he is depicted as an endangered animal within the British context, such as a fox (due to hunting, which is a legal activity in the UK) or as a hedgehog, an animal which is critically endangered mainly due to the invasion of their habitats and consequently a great number of them die in roadkill

accidents every year. This conceptualisation pattern was also found for Major,
as the Figures 4 and 5 show.

Figure 4: Brookes on Cameron. *The Times*, January 2015
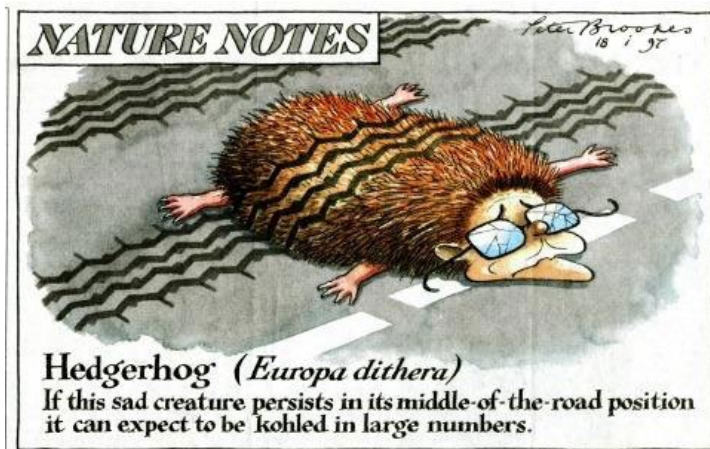

Figure 5: Brookes on Major's political prospects. *The Times*, January 1997

Finally, after Cameron's resignation in 2016, Theresa May spear-headed the campaign for the 2017 GE under the Brexit controversy.

In cartoons dealing with her leadership in both the domestic and international political arena, her political leadership is pervasively conceptualised through the domain of MOVEMENT, which again reveals itself as the most pervasive one, often in combination with that of ANIMALS. In all the cartoons analysed in this section she can be identified thanks to either her distinctive leopard-print shoes or necklaces, instantiating the metonymy POSSESSION FOR OWNER. In five different cartoons, May is portrayed as a pet owner who exerts control over the movement of other politicians, be it political rivals or conservative aggregates such as the soon-to-be Prime Minister Boris Johnson. In other occasions, May's political power is conceptualised as an octopus, whose different arms can control the movements of political adversaries, with a caption that reads 'BLUE PLANET (a BBC documentary series)', again making references to British cultural events. However, it was also reported that, whenever negotiations concerning the Brexit issue were the topic of the editorial, she was often represented as an exploited, endangered, or even extinguished animal (see Figure 6 below).

Figure 6: Brookes' cartoon about May's electoral prospects. *The Times*, July 2017

Finally, the main findings of our paper are summarised in the following table. It shows the most pervasive metonymies and conceptual metaphors accounted for and the most widely used scenarios in the cartoons analysed.

Metonymies	Metaphors	Scenarios
POSSESSION FOR OWNER	MOVEMENT	Cultural events and TV shows Folk Tales (Robin Hood, Red Riding Hood, etc…)
BODY PART FOR PERSON	ANIMALS	News: natural phenomena, accidents, etc.

Table 3: Most common conceptualisation strategies reported in the analysis

In summary, it has been reported that metaphor and metonymy interaction play an important role in the conceptualisation of the leadership within the Conservative Party. It has been shown that the most prominent cartoonists working for the British conservative press make extensive use of metonymy and metaphor to conceptualise the political leadership within the British Conservative Party.

5. Final remarks

Thanks to the framework used for our analysis, we were able to identify some of the strategies used by cartoonists which result in dysphemistic representation of Conservative leadership. Throughout the analysis of the 90 cartoons, we have seen that the main aspect represented here is political failure or stagnation of electoral prospects for the British Conservative Party. This is visually conceptualised in cartoons which show the conservative leader of the time depicted as an animal which is either unable to move or has suffered an accident.

Conservative leaders are metonymically cued in a visual mode by using physical features such as Hague's forehead or through accessories deemed as distinctive by cartoonists, such as Major's glasses, Thatcher's hairstyle, May's leopard-print shoes, and coloured-balls necklaces.

We have identified the source domains of MOVEMENT and ANIMALS as the most pervasive source domains for metaphorical conceptualisation. They instantiate the conceptual metaphor POLITICIANS ARE ANIMALS (normally visually cued as animal species which are already extinct or threatened for being involved in activities or events such as hunting and car accidents). They instantiate conceptual metaphors such as POLITICAL INABILITY IS LACK OF PHYSICAL

MOVEMENT or NEGATIVELY EVALUATED POLICIES ARE ANIMALS (monsters, aggressive animals/ uncontrollable animals) and POLITICAL FAILURE IS LACK OF CONTROL OVER PHYSICAL MOVEMENT.

At the same time, we have also shown how the source domain of ANIMALS is pervasively used to transfer undesirable features from animals (inability to adapt, etc.) onto politicians.

The interplay of metaphor and metonymy instantiates scenarios which are probably well-known by the average British reader, showing roadkill accidents, traditional folk tales or even broadcasted cultural events, such as TV shows.

The framework used in this analysis could establish a fruitful research line in the field of political communication, which may contribute to the development of cognitive cultural models that play a role in the construction of social identities. In politics, the knowledge of the cognitive and sociological elements that shape cultural identities contributes to reciprocal understanding. However, due to the political bias of the newspapers analysed here, this framework could be applied to contrastive studies between press with different editorial lines within certain states in the first place, paving the way to a second stage in which the development of cognitive cultural models are identified through contrastive analyses.

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LOS VERBOS FRASALES EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

Elaine Millar y María del Carmen Camus Camus

Universidad de Cantabria

elaine.millar@unican.es, maria.camus@unican.es

Resumen

El presente estudio examina si las recomendaciones provenientes de las investigaciones basadas en los estudios de corpus y la lingüística cognitiva se ven trasladadas al sector editorial destinado a la enseñanza de lenguas. Para ello, se ha llevado a cabo un estudio de caso en un libro de texto utilizado ampliamente en la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, analizando la selección y la presentación pedagógica de los verbos frasales (VF) en el mismo. Los resultados sugieren una brecha entre la investigación académica y su reflejo en los manuales destinados a la enseñanza general de la lengua inglesa. La muestra analizada contiene una frecuencia relativamente baja de VF *tokens* y dedica pocos ejercicios a su aprendizaje. Asimismo, se pudo constatar poca sistematicidad en la selección, distribución y presentación pedagógica de los VF. Los resultados son similares a los obtenidos en estudios anteriores. Se subraya la necesidad de un acercamiento entre la lingüística aplicada y el sector editorial de materiales didácticos de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: Verbos Frasales, Didáctica del Inglés, *English Profile*, Libros de Texto

Abstract

The present study explores the influence that corpus linguistic and cognitive linguistic research has had on English Language Teaching (ELT) publishing. Focusing specifically on multi-word verbs, it analyses item selection and pedagogical presentation of content in a

widely used secondary education textbook and aims to determine if insights and recommendations from these applied linguistic fields are present. Results suggest that a distance remains between academic research and mainstream language education. The sample analysed has a relatively low token frequency and few exercises dedicated specifically to multi-word verb learning. Furthermore, little systematicity was found in the selection, distribution and pedagogical presentation of content in the sample. These results reflect those of similar studies, and suggest that closer ties must be built between the fields of applied linguistic research and ELT materials development.

Keywords: Phrasal Verbs, English Language Teaching, English Profile, Textbooks

1. Introducción

En el contexto de la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera, se suele emplear el término *phrasal verbs* (VF en español) para referirse a lo que Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, y Svartvik (1985) definen como *multi-word verbs*. Esta clasificación sintáctica está conformada principalmente por tres categorías: *phrasal verb* (verbo + partícula adverbial), *prepositional verb* (verbo + preposición), *phrasal prepositional verb* (verbo + partícula + preposición), además de una cuarta categoría que agrupa combinaciones diversas tal y como *cut short* (verbo + adjetivo) o *take into account* (verbo + frase preposicional). A nivel semántico, designa a una serie de unidades léxicas compuestas de dos o más palabras que actúan como un verbo y tienen significados más allá de sus componentes individuales. Este grupo de verbos constituye posiblemente una de las características más importantes y problemáticas de la pedagogía de la lengua inglesa. Se asocia estrechamente con la fluidez del hablante nativo (Siyanova-Chanturia y Schmitt 2007) y tiene una alta frecuencia, tanto en el lenguaje oral como en el escrito (Biber et al. 2004; Liu 2011). Un buen conocimiento de los VF es muy ventajoso para los aprendices del inglés, pero desafortunadamente, las complejidades semánticas y estructurales tan características hacen que este grupo de verbos sea una fuente de frustración para muchos discentes de la lengua. Los VF son muy polisémicos (Garnier y Schmitt 2015) por lo que implican una carga léxica extremadamente elevada, y si se añade a esto las variaciones sintácticas que acompañan a los VF, se puede entender la magnitud del reto al que se enfrentan los aprendices. Los lingüistas cognitivos sostienen que la pedagogía tradicional ha hecho poco para mitigar esta situación (Kovács 2011; Kurtyka 2001) ya que aborda la tradición de tratar los VF como ítems léxicos arbitrarios

y, aparte de la memorización de uno a uno, ofrece pocas estrategias para aprender los significados múltiples de las VF (Side 1990). Afortunadamente, los avances tecnológicos y, de su mano, el colosal desarrollo de la lingüística de corpus y la lingüística cognitiva han desvelado la naturaleza repetitiva del lenguaje y la sistematicidad que da lugar a la formación de los VF (Boers y Lindstromberg 2008). Este conocimiento constituye una excelente oportunidad para mejorar los métodos y materiales didácticos; en primer lugar, los datos de corpus permiten un enfoque pedagógico en el que se trabajen aquellos aspectos del lenguaje más frecuentes o relevantes para los aprendices. Por otra parte, la lingüística cognitiva explica los sistemas conceptuales que dan lugar a la formación de los VF. Parece ser que la unión del verbo y la partícula en un VF nace de los marcos conceptuales y las metáforas implícitas propios de la lengua inglesa. Por esta razón los nativos tienen una capacidad innata de crear nuevos VF de forma espontánea. No obstante, los aprendices en muchas ocasiones no disponen de los mismos marcos ni metáforas y por tanto muestran dificultades en el aprendizaje de los VF (Armstrong 2004).

2. Objetivos

El presente estudio pretende averiguar si los hallazgos de la lingüística de corpus y la lingüística cognitiva tienen influencia en el contexto de la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa en Educación Secundaria. Para ello, se presenta un estudio de caso de cómo se presentan los VF en un libro de texto utilizado ampliamente en la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria. Por un lado, se contrasta la selección de los VF de la muestra con los corpus a gran escala y, por otro lado, se analizan los planteamientos didácticos de las actividades dirigidas a su aprendizaje. Se plantean tres preguntas de investigación:

1. ¿Cómo se relacionan los VF de la muestra con los datos provenientes de los corpus y con los perfiles A1-C2 del Marco Común Europeo de Referencia de Lenguas (MCERL)?
2. ¿Qué correspondencia existe entre las partículas y preposiciones de los VF en la muestra y las de los VF más frecuentes provenientes de los corpus?
3. ¿Qué enfoques pedagógicos se pueden inferir de los ejercicios centrados en la enseñanza de los VF en la muestra?

3. Metodología

3.1. Muestra

Para garantizar la relevancia de este estudio de caso, las autoras estimaron imprescindible encontrar una muestra que fuera representativa de los métodos mayoritariamente empleados en la Educación Secundaria en Cantabria. Por tanto, realizaron una búsqueda en Internet para indagar qué materiales didácticos se seguían en su comunidad autónoma. Constataron que, en su región, 43 de los 46 Institutos de Educación Secundaria (IES) utilizaban en sus programaciones didácticas libros de texto, provenientes de tres editoriales diferentes. Como muestra, seleccionaron el manual más empleado de la editorial más demandada por los IES en el año escolar 2017-2018. La muestra final constituye el libro de texto de nivel A2, destinado a aprendices en la cuarta etapa de la Educación Secundaria junto con su cuaderno de actividades y los guiones de los ejercicios de comprensión auditiva. Fue publicado en 2011, y contiene un total de 86.779 *tokens* y 8.358 lemas.

3.2. Fuentes de referencia

El estudio cuenta con tres fuentes de referencia, cada una de ellas basadas en los corpus a gran escala. En primer lugar, se utilizó el diccionario online de *Cambridge* (COD[1]) para confirmar el estatus de los VF encontrados en la muestra. Posteriormente, se contrastó esta lista final con listados de la gramática descriptiva, *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (LGSWE) y de la base de datos, *English Vocabulary Profile*[2] (EVP). Siguiendo la clasificación sintáctica de Quirk et al. (1985), el LGSWE de Biber et al. (2004) aporta información sobre los VF más frecuentes del *Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus* (LSWE). Más pertinentes para la presente investigación son las partículas y preposiciones frecuentes. El EVP, una base de datos en abierto y disponible en internet, facilita los perfiles de niveles de referencia del MCERL. Se compiló a partir de los datos proporcionados por el *Cambridge Learner Corpus* y el *Cambridge English Corpus*. Esta aplicación permite búsquedas avanzadas por

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1. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/
2. https://www.englishprofile.org/wordlists/evp

campos o aspectos gramaticales. En este caso, se hizo uso de su listado de VF, que consta de 726 ítems formados a partir de 236 verbos y 38 partículas y preposiciones. Como se ve en el Gráfico 1, 31 VF pertenecen al nivel del usuario básico (A1 y A2), 412 del usuario independiente (B1 y B2), 283 del usuario competente (C1 y C2).
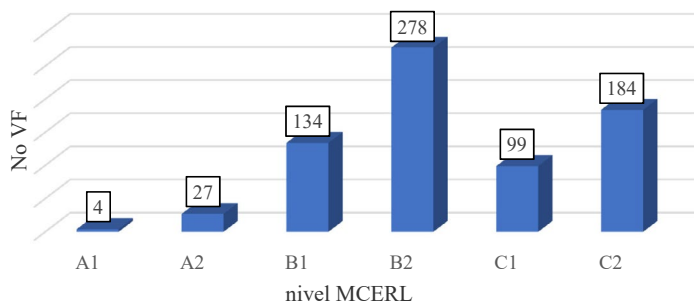

Gráfico 1: distribución de VF en el EVP

Cabe señalar que, a diferencia del LGSWE, que aporta información sobre la frecuencia léxica en su corpus, el listado de VF en el EVP contiene una compilación seleccionada de ítems basados en datos de corpus. Al ser una aplicación en abierto al público en general, el EVP no detalla la frecuencia de los VF en su lista, ni la de las partículas o preposiciones. No obstante, las autoras consideran que la categorización de los VF por niveles MCERL es de gran utilidad y, por tanto, decidieron incluirlo en el presente estudio.

3.3. Procedimientos

En la recogida de datos se siguieron dos fases. En la primera, se extrajeron los VF de la muestra, utilizando el programa de concordancias *WordSmith 5*. Como han demostrado investigaciones de corpus previas (Biber et al. 2004; Liu 2011), los VF se forman con una gran cantidad de verbos, pero con un número reducido de partículas y preposiciones. Por tanto, se llevó a cabo una búsqueda de concordancias con las 39 partículas y preposiciones del LGSWE y el EVP. Se trasladaron los datos resultantes al programa *Microsoft Excel* donde

se identificaron los VF uno por uno, utilizando el diccionario COD para poder distinguir entre los VF y las *combinaciones libres* (Quirk et al. 1985). Una vez que se identificaron todos los VF en la muestra, se anotó el significado según el contexto y el correspondiente nivel del MCERL. En la segunda fase, se adoptó un procedimiento exploratorio partiendo de los estudios de Alejo-González, Piquier-Píriz, y Reveriego-Sierra (2010), y Zarifi y Mukundan (2013). Se seleccionaron los ejercicios dedicados específicamente al aprendizaje de VF, que fueron analizados según tres criterios: la organización de contenidos, la tipología de la actividad, y el metalenguaje empleado para describir el grupo de verbos. Con los datos proporcionados por estos análisis, se dedujo el enfoque pedagógico general de la muestra.

4. Resultados

4.1. Selección y distribución

En total, la muestra contiene 488 VF *tokens* y, tras el proceso de lematización, estos se reducen a 122 tipos. A su vez, se encontraron 37 *tokens* y 26 lemas distribuidos en ocho ejercicios dirigidos específicamente al aprendizaje de los VF. Siguiendo la clasificación de Quirk et al. (1985), el Gráfico 2 ilustra cómo se distribuyen todos los *tokens* y lemas de la muestra por combinación sintáctica. Se observa que en la muestra los VF aparecen con una frecuencia de 0,56 por cada 100 palabras de texto. En cambio, en el LSWE aparecen con una frecuencia de 0,65 por cada 100 *tokens*. Asimismo, en su análisis del LSWE, Biber et al. (2004) constatan que las combinaciones verbo + preposición tienen una frecuencia de tres a cuatro veces más alta que las combinaciones verbo + preposición adverbial. Sin embargo, en la muestra se encuentra una mayor presencia del patrón verbo + preposición adverbial. Se observa que los editores de materiales didácticos tienden a reducir la densidad del input lingüístico para facilitar el aprendizaje (Gilmore 2007), y quizás el hecho de que la muestra difiera de los datos de corpus en cuanto a su distribución sintáctica y frecuencia de *tokens* se deba a este proceso de adaptación.
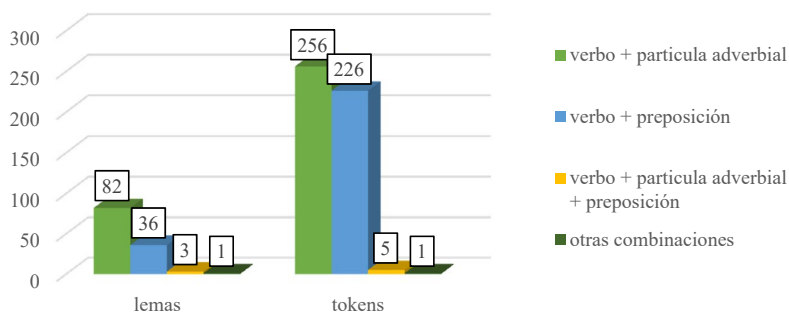
Gráfico 2: VF de la muestra organizados por su clasificación sintáctica

En el Gráfico 3, se encuentran todos los VF lemas de la muestra organizados por los niveles del MCERL. Son 23 ítems los que pertenecen al nivel del usuario básico (A1 y A2), 77 del usuario independiente (B1 y B2), y 13 del usuario competente (C1 y C2). Se encontraron 9 ítems clasificados como VF en el diccionario COD, pero no incluidos en el EVP. La frecuencia de los ítems de nivel C1, C2 y los del grupo *no-listado* es relativamente bajo; en toda la muestra, 20 de ellos aparecen entre una y tres veces, y otro (*stay on*) aparece cuatro veces. *Refer to*, que pertenece al nivel C1, aparece 17 veces en la muestra, pero únicamente en instrucciones para ejercicios.

El Gráfico 4 muestra los niveles de los ítems incluidos en los ejercicios centrados en el aprendizaje de VF. De nuevo, se observa que la mayoría de ellos pertenecen al nivel del usuario independiente. Aunque es cierto que el libro de texto analizado está destinado para aprendices de nivel A2, la tendencia observada en la muestra es similar a la que se encontró en el EVP.
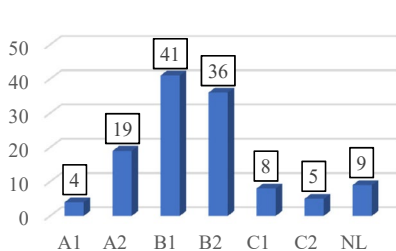
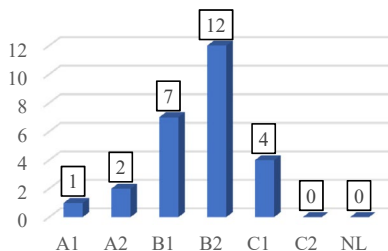

Gráfico 3: Niveles MCERL de los VF en la muestra completa

Gráfico 4: Niveles MCERL de los VF en los ejercicios específicos

4.2. Partículas y preposiciones

Se constató que los VF en la muestra estaban representados por 29 partículas y preposiciones. Estas corresponden a un 85,3% de las partículas y preposiciones en el EVP, y un 71,6% de las más frecuentes listadas en el LGSWE. Los ejercicios VF constan de 13 partículas y preposiciones (Tabla 1), todas ellas incluidas en el EVP y el LGSWE. Las partículas *up*, *out* y *on* están listados entre las seis más frecuentes en el LGSWE.

up	(5)	after	(1)
out	(4)	behind	(1)
away	(3)	by	(1)
on	(3)	in	(1)
back	(2)	off	(1)
over	(2)	round	(1)
		with	(1)

Tabla 1: Partículas y preposiciones en los ejercicios VF

Los resultados observados en las secciones 4.1 y 4.2 constatan que la selección y distribución de VF en la muestra se relacionan con los datos provenientes de la lingüística de corpus en ciertos aspectos y difieren en otros. Las partículas y preposiciones más frecuentes provenientes de corpus sí están presentes en la muestra, pero se observa poca sistematicidad en su distribución en los ejercicios VF, por lo que se podría inferir que su selección fue aleatoria. Los niveles MCERL de los ítems en la muestra están en línea con la tendencia vista en el listado EVP, pero existe una marcada diferencia en la distribución de combinaciones sintácticas y en la frecuencia de *tokens*. Parece ser que hay escasa evidencia de que el lenguaje más frecuente extrapolado de la lingüística de corpus se haya trasladado al libro de texto en cuestión de forma sistemática. De todos modos, es necesario analizar los contenidos de los ejercicios VF para poder constatar si realmente la muestra está informada de los hallazgos de la lingüística aplicada o no.

4.3. Presentación pedagógica

Word Builder Phrasal verbs have got a different meaning than the verb by itself. Use a dictionary to find the meanings of the following phrasal verbs.

stay out
stay in — **stay** — stay up
stay on — stay behind

Copy and complete the sentences with the correct form of a phrasal verb from Exercise 4.
1. I'm too tired to go out tonight. I'd like to ___ .
2. My little brother likes to ___ late to watch TV, but then he can't get out of bed the next morning.
3. We had tickets to the concert, but Kelly was ill so she ___ .
4. Are you going to leave school this year, or are you going to ___ ?
5. Sue can't ___ very late, because her parents will start to worry.

Word Builder *Put out* and *break out* are phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb has got a different meaning from the verb on its own. **Choose the correct meaning of the phrasal verbs in bold in the sentences below.**
1. Firefighters **put out** the fires. Then everyone was safe. (stopped / caused)
2. The police have told everyone to **get away**. They think the area is dangerous. (come near / leave)
3. Rescuers **gave up** looking for missing people. They knew there were no more survivors. (stopped trying / continued trying)
4. A fire **broke out** in a house on Murdock Street yesterday. It destroyed all of the first floor. (started suddenly / stopped suddenly)
5. Authorities must **deal with** the problem. There are many people who need help. (ignore / take action to solve)

Phrasal Verbs with *take and go*

9. **Read the sentences and match each phrasal verb with its meaning below.**
   1. I don't think they should **take away** my driving licence.
   2. Ronald plans to **go on** to university.
   3. We'll never **go back** to that terrible hotel!
   4. A dictator might **take over** the government.
   5. I have to **go over** the material for the exam.
   6. Don't worry. The time will **go by** quickly.
   7. The children **take after** their father. They are very tall.
   8. Why don't you **take up** painting? You'll love it.

   a. cancel   e. are similar to
   b. return   f. pass
   c. get control of g. revise
   d. begin   h. continue

Figura 1: Ejemplos de ejercicios VF en la muestra

La tercera pregunta de la investigación pretende elucidar los fundamentos pedagógicos que sustentan los ejercicios dedicados a los VF, centrándose en la organización de los contenidos, la tipología de las actividades y el metalenguaje empleado para explicar el grupo de verbos. En la Figura 1, se muestran tres ejemplos de los ocho ejercicios encontrados en la muestra. En cuanto a su organización, los VF en los ejercicios están principalmente seleccionados y ordenados por la temática de la unidad. Por ejemplo, en una unidad enfocada en las situaciones de emergencia (*It's a Disaster*) se encuentran ítems como *break out, put out, get away*, y *give up*. Dos ejercicios agrupan los VF por su

verbo, pero aparte de eso, se observa una distribución aleatoria de partículas, preposiciones y estructuras sintácticas en todos los ejercicios. Asimismo, los ejercicios se caracterizan por unas tipologías de actividad que tratan los VF como unidades léxicas arbitrarias. Los discentes tienen que deducir los significados de ítems según el contexto, buscar definiciones, y reconocer antónimos. Hay dos ejercicios que piden la unificación de los verbos con sus partículas, pero estos no parecen ser motivados por la lingüística cognitiva porque no hay referencia al papel especial de la partícula o preposición en la formación del VF. Lo mismo se puede decir sobre el metalenguaje, que trata el grupo de verbos como si fuera una serie de unidades léxicas arbitrarias. Emplea el término *phrasal verb*, y ofrece tres explicaciones introductorias en tres ejercicios: 1. «*Put out and break out are phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb has got a different meaning from the verb on its own*», 2. «*Phrasal verbs have got a different meaning than the verb itself*», 3. «*A phrasal verb is a verb followed by a particle which has got a different meaning from the verb on its own*». Los cinco ejercicios restantes no reflejan el hecho de que se están tratando VF.

5. Conclusión

Se podría decir que los VF son uno de los fenómenos más numerosos y problemáticos para los hablantes no-nativos de lengua inglesa. Los avances recientes en la lingüística aplicada han aportado datos muy relevantes sobre el comportamiento de este grupo de verbos, los cuales pueden facilitar su aprendizaje en los contextos de enseñanza formal. Este estudio pretendía averiguar si los libros de texto destinados a la enseñanza general de la lengua inglesa están influenciados por las recomendaciones que emanan de los estudios en la lingüística de corpus y la lingüística cognitiva. Es necesaria más investigación, pero parece que, al menos con el libro de texto que se ha analizado, la didáctica de los VF sigue estando arraigada en métodos tradicionales. No se pudo constatar sistematicidad en el contenido, y el enfoque pedagógico trata los VF como unidades léxicas sin motivación. Para facilitar el aprendizaje de los VF, es necesario mejorar la metodología didáctica y tomar como referencia los valiosos datos que aportan la lingüística de corpus, así como ir adoptando los fundamentos conceptuales que nos aporta la lingüística cognitiva.

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LEXICAL VARIATION IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN ENGLISH: ATTRACTION AND DIFFERENTIATION IN A SYNONYM SET[1]

Daniela Pettersson-Traba
University of Santiago de Compostela
daniela.pettersson@usc.es

Abstract

The present study considers the recent history of three near-synonymous adjectives from the olfactory domain, namely *fragrant*, *perfumed* and *scented* in American English. The contexts of use of these adjectives are examined across four fifty-year periods from 1810 to 2009, focusing particularly on semantic characteristics of the nouns they typically modify with the aim of investigating whether processes of attraction and differentiation have taken place in the history of this synonym set. The findings suggest that most changes undergone by the adjectives can be understood as processes of attraction whereby one (or more) of the near-synonyms in the set comes to share more semantic ground with the rest. Furthermore, there seems to be an overall process of substitution or replacement, with *scented* being on the rise in several contexts at the expense of *fragrant* and, particularly, *perfumed*.

1. Introduction

It is a well-established assumption that languages actively work against absolute synonymy and that this leads to competition between semantically related words (e.g., Wierzbicka 1988, 13-4; Nuyts and Byloo 2015, 62-3). In the words of Samuels (1972, 65), "if […] two exact synonyms exist for a time in the spoken chain, either one of them will be less and less selected and eventually discarded, or a difference of meaning, connotation, nuance or register will arise to distinguish them". This is why most synonyms existing in language are in fact near-synonyms, i.e., words or constructions which share the same core denotational meaning but differ in peripheral aspects or in other dimensions such as connotation, style and/or collocation (Cruse 2000, 159-60). Absolute synonyms are thus expected to become functionally more dissimilar over time, undergoing processes of substitution or differentiation. In the former case, one of the alternatives progressively takes over more of the originally shared semantic ground and, consequently, the other variant becomes less selected until it falls into disuse. In the latter case, one of the synonyms will experience some change in meaning, such as specialization or generalization (Kay and Allan 2015, 75-6). This view of competition between synonyms is recurrent in research on language change and, in fact, the literature is brimmed with examples of synonymous expressions that have ultimately become more differentiated (cf., for instance, Murphy 2003, 161). Although this competition theory is widespread and has proved successful to understand many changes in language (e.g., Berg 2014), some scholars have postulated that it is an oversimplification as it fails to account for situations in which synonyms become more similar over time, instead of more dissimilar, a process that has been labelled attraction (De Smet et al. 2018, 203).

The aim of this contribution is to analyze the diachronic evolution of the distributional patterns of three near-synonymous adjectives in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American English, namely *fragrant*, *perfumed*, and *scented*,

which share the definition 'exhibiting a sweet, pleasant smell'.[2] Whereas much synchronic corpus-based research has been conducted on near-synonymous lexical items (e.g., Divjak 2010; Gries and Otani 2010; Liu 2010), to my knowledge, only a handful of studies have considered this semantic relation from a diachronic perspective (Kaunisto 2001; Baker 2017, 95-101; Pettersson-Traba 2018). The present study is an attempt to partially fill this gap in the literature.

2. Data and methodology

To model the choice of near-synonym over time, data was extracted from the *Corpus of Historical American English* (*COHA*, Davies 2010–), a diachronic corpus of more than 400 million words of American English between 1810 and 2009. Instances of the near-synonyms were retrieved and annotated for eight external and internal variables. The extralinguistic predictors include the historical period and genre in which the examples occurred. The time span covered in *COHA* is divided into twenty decades, but for our purposes, four fifty-year periods were distinguished: 1810-1859 (P1), 1860-1909 (P2), 1910-1959 (P3) and 1960-2009 (P4). In addition, *COHA* categorizes texts into four genres, namely 'fiction', 'non-fiction', 'magazine' and 'newspaper', and this classification was maintained here with the only exception of 'magazine' and 'newspaper', which were merged into a single category labeled 'periodicals' due to the low number of instances of the adjectives in the latter.

The language-internal variables in turn contain factors pertaining to the semantics of the nouns which the adjectives modified and morphosyntactic characteristics of the adjectives themselves. The modified nouns were first classified according to whether they denote entities which release a *natural* smell on their own or, on the contrary, entities which can acquire a pleasant smell only by being impregnated by a sweet-smelling substance (i.e. *artificial* smell). This variable, labeled *sense*, included two additional levels: one termed *figurative*, including cases where the adjectives modify nouns which cannot exhibit a smell (e.g., *memory*) and are thus used metaphorically to mean simply 'sweet/

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2. An additional near-synonym was also considered, namely *sweet-smelling*. However, this adjective had to be excluded from the present analyses due to its low overall frequency in the corpus (i.e. 253 instances, thus accounting for less than 5 % of the total data) and the large number of explanatory variables examined (cf. Table 1).

agreeable', and another level called *neutral* to account for instances where it was not possible to identify the sense. Consider (1) and (2):

(1) A HANDSOME Westchester matron, chic in a Hattie Carnegie dress and **fragrant** with *Patou's Moment Suprme*, […] (*COHA*, 1955, MAG, *Time*)

(2) For a moment she laid her cheek against Angie's warm **fragrant hair. She was almost** choked by her surging love for the child and by the crisis of the last hour.
(*COHA*, 1984, FIC, *CrescentCity*)

Example (1) illustrates the artificial sense, since it is clear that the person has been impregnated with the perfume *Patou's Moment Supreme*. However, in (2) we cannot be sure about the sense, as we do not know whether the smell of the child's hair is its natural smell or whether the aroma stems from an artificial source such as a cleansing agent. Consequently, (2) was categorized as neutral. The second semantic variable concerned the semantic category of the modified nouns. The process of identifying semantic classes of words is often highly subjective and far from being straightforward. Consequently, in order to achieve a certain degree of objectivity, two different systems of semantic classification were resorted to, namely the *UCREL Semantic Analysis System* (*USAS*, Rayson et al. 2004) and the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* (*HTOED*). On the basis of these two resources, twelve different categories were distinguished:[3] ABSTRACT (e.g., *charm*, *knowledge*), BODY & PEOPLE (e.g., *cheek*, *woman*), CLEANING (e.g., *bath*, *soap*), EARTH & ATMOSPHERE (e.g., *hill*, *rain*), ESTHETICS (e.g., *cologne*, *cosmetics*), FOOD & DRINK (e.g., *apple*, *beverage*), OBJECTS (e.g., *book*, *candle*), PLANTS & FLOWERS (e.g., *bud*, *shrub*), SENSATION (e.g., *aroma*, *tone*), SPACE (e.g., *boudoir*, *kitchen*), SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS (e.g., *liquid*, *steam*) and TEXTILE & CLOTHING (e.g., *dress*, *linen*). Modified nouns were also annotated for two additional semantic factors, namely concreteness and countability, and two variables concerning morphosyntactic characteristics of the adjectives, degree and syntactic function. Table 1 summarizes the data annotation process.

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3. The resulting categories, despite being heavily based on *USAS* and *HTOED*, are not identical to any of the two classification systems as they do not fully overlap. Even though based on the nomenclature of *USAS* and/or *HTOED*, the labels used here are my own. The classification of nouns into semantic categories is a highly complex process and therefore it cannot be explained here in-depth (but see Pettersson-Traba 2018 for a preliminary semantic classification of nouns).

Type of predictor	Predictor	Values
Extralinguistic	Period	P1: 1810-1859 P2: 1860-1909 P3: 1910-1959 P4: 1960-2009
	Genre	Fiction Non-fiction Periodicals
Intralinguistic	Sense	Natural Artificial Figurative Neutral
	Semantic category	ABSTRACT BODY & PEOPLE CLEANING EARTH & ATMOSPHERE ESTHETICS FOOD & DRINK OBJECTS PLANTS & FLOWERS SENSATION SPACE SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS TEXTILE & CLOTHING
	Concreteness	Concrete Abstract
	Countability	Countable Uncountable Other[4]
	Degree	Positive Comparative Superlative
	Syntactic function	Attributive Predicative Postpositive Other (e.g., fused-head, predeterminer)

Table 1: Variables considered in the annotation process

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4. Given that the near-synonymous adjectives also modify proper nouns and pronouns, it was
necessary to add a third value to the variable Countability, labelled Other, since neither

The influence of the predictors on the near-synonymous adjectives was assessed by means of multinomial logistic regression (Levshina 2015, 277-289). Regression analysis predicts the probability of occurrence of the levels of a response variable (here, *fragrant*, *perfumed* and *scented*) on the basis of explanatory variables. The eight extra- and intra-linguistic predictors in Table 1 were included as explanatory variables. Additionally, the interaction between period and the other predictors was also tested, as the focus of the present study is on the diachronic evolution of the distributional behavior of the near-synonyms. The predictors sense and semantic category are highly correlated: some semantic categories always correspond with a particular sense, for instance, all ABSTRACT nouns are always classified as figurative, and all PLANTS & FLOWERS nouns as natural. This poses a problem for regression modeling, so two separate analyses were conducted, one with sense and another one with semantic category (and the other predictors).

3. Results and discussion

A total of 5,349 instances of the three adjectives were retrieved from *COHA*. Table 2 displays the distribution of the three near-synonyms across the four periods distinguished. *Fragrant* is the most frequent adjective of the set, as it accounts for more than 60% of the data, followed by *perfumed* and *scented*, which amount to around 18.30% each. The distribution of the adjectives over time reveals an interesting development. Although *fragrant* is the most frequent adjective throughout all periods, its frequency decreases, especially from P2 to P3: whereas it accounts for more than 70% of the data in P1, it only totals 52.73% in P4. Conversely, *scented* increases in frequency, from 11.53% in P1 to 27.17% in P4, changing trends precisely from P2 to P3. Finally, *perfumed* remains rather stable throughout. The frequencies shown in Table 2 point to certain diachronic changes from P1 to P4, but they do not clarify whether these changes took place across all contexts of use or only in some of them, or if, for instance, the increase of *scented* was at the expense of *fragrant*. Let us turn now to the results of the regression analyses to shed light on these issues.

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proper nouns nor pronouns can be spoken of as count or non-count. Reference grammars make a distinction between common and proper nouns and while the former can be further divided into count and non-count nouns, the latter cannot (Quirk et al. 1985, 245-247).

Near-synonym	P1	P2	P3	P4	Total
Fragrant					
%	71.34%	69.15%	57.42%	52.73%	63.46%
N	(804)	(1,291)	(712)	(588)	(3,395)
Perfumed					
%	17.13%	17.84%	18.31%	20.09%	18.27%
N	(193)	(333)	(227)	(224)	(977)
Scented					
%	11.53%	13.01%	24.27%	27.17%	18.27%
N	(130)	(243)	(301)	(303)	(977)
Total					
%	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100%
N	1,127	1,867	1,240	1,115	5,349

Table 2: Frequencies of the three near-synonyms under study across periods

Table 3 shows the summary statistics for the two regression models computed. Both models are statistically significant, with *p*-values lower than 0.001. McFadden's R^2 is an index that measures how well the models fit the observed data. Values between 0.2 and 0.4 indicate a good fit, so the values achieved here reveal that there is still some variance which is not accounted for. This can also be observed in the accuracy values, 67% and 68.4% respectively, which indicate the percentage of correct predictions of the models. All the explanatory variables have a statistically significant impact on the choice between the near-synonyms, but there are only three significant interactions, namely period and sense (in model 1), period and semantic category (in model 2), and period and genre (in both models). In the rest of this section only the interactions between period and sense and between period and semantic category are discussed. This is because the focus of the present study is on the diachronic evolution of the adjectives. Additionally, out of all the variables included, period, sense and semantic category explain most of the variation found in the data. In fact, in models including only these three predictors the McFadden's R^2 and accuracy values did not decrease considerably.

Statistic model	Model 1 (sense)	Model 2 (semantic category)
McFadden's R^2	0.1266	0.1656
Accuracy	67%	68.4%

Table 3: Summary statistics

The probabilities of the adjectives in the different senses across the four periods are visualized in Figure 1. *Fragrant* dominates in the natural sense in all periods and, although there is not much change in this sense, in P3 and P4 there seems to be a slight increase of *scented* at the expense of *fragrant*. In the artificial sense, *perfumed* dominates in P1, but its probability of occurrence decreases from P2 onwards. In fact, in P3 the three adjectives seem to be almost equally likely and, in P4, *scented* surpasses *perfumed* and becomes the most probable adjective in this sense. Similarly, there are also some significant changes in the neutral category: although *fragrant* is the most probable adjective from P1 to P3, it seems to be in competition with *perfumed* in P4, as the two are practically equally frequent. Finally, a similar pattern emerges in the figurative sense, where *fragrant* loses its predominance in P4 and enters into competition with *perfumed*. The patterns revealed in Figure 1 allow us to conclude that, except in the natural sense, the adjectives seem to have undergone a process of attraction, thus coming to share more semantic space over time. This is particularly noticeable in P4, where the probabilities of the adjectives in the artificial, neutral and figurative senses are much more similar than before.
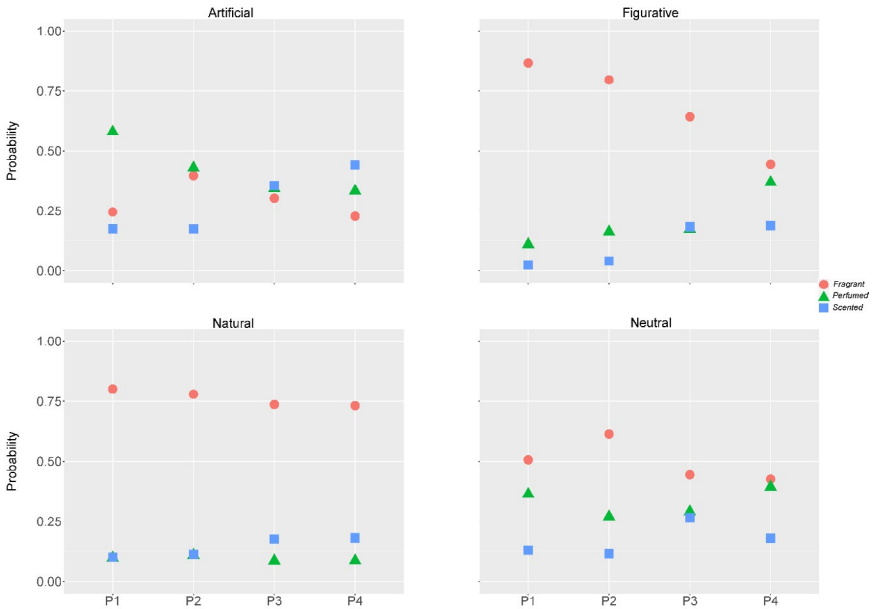
Figure 1: Probabilities of the near-synonyms across senses over time

The interaction between period and semantic category confirms that the process of attraction is more evident in some semantic categories, particularly those which correspond more closely with the senses artificial, neutral and figurative. Figure 2 plots the probabilities of the near-synonyms across periods in the semantic categories ABSTRACT, BODY & PEOPLE, SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS and TEXTILE & CLOTHING. In all four cases, the probabilities of the adjectives become more similar over time. For instance, in ABSTRACT *fragrant* loses ground at the expense of the other adjectives, especially *perfumed*. In fact, in P4 *fragrant* and *perfumed* are almost equally likely with ABSTRACT nouns. A similar process of attraction, although less pronounced, can be observed in BODY & PEOPLE and TEXTILE & CLOTHING. This is also the case in SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS, although

here *fragrant* seems to become first differentiated from *perfumed* and *scented* in P2 and P3 before becoming slightly more similar in P4.[5]
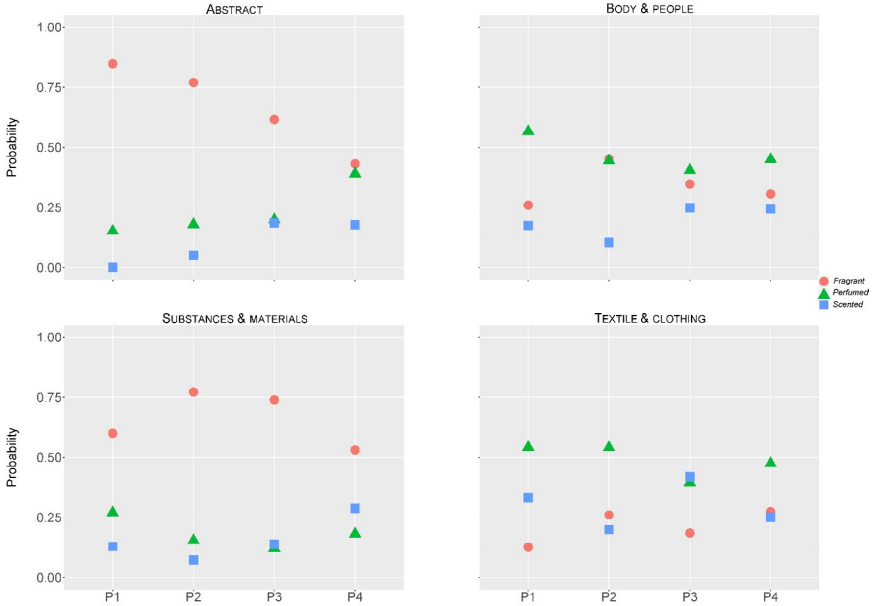

Figure 2: Probabilities of the near-synonyms across periods in ABSTRACT, BODY & PEOPLE, SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS and TEXTILE & CLOTHING

In addition, in CLEANING, ESTHETICS and OBJECTS there is a process of attraction followed by replacement, that is, one or two of the adjectives come to be more probable than the one which was originally predominant. The probabilities of the near-synonyms across periods in these three semantic categories are shown in Figure 3. In CLEANING and OBJECTS, the three adjectives become first more similar, but then *scented* surpasses *perfumed*, the dominant item in P1, and becomes increasingly differentiated from the other two from P3 onwards.

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5. The semantic category SPACE exhibits a similar development as that of SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS, but the changes are much less salient and, therefore, they are not visualized in Figure 2.

In ᴇsᴛʜᴇᴛɪᴄs, *perfumed* and *scented*, the less probable adjectives in P1 and P2, become more similar to *fragrant* in P3, and in P4 they both surpass it.
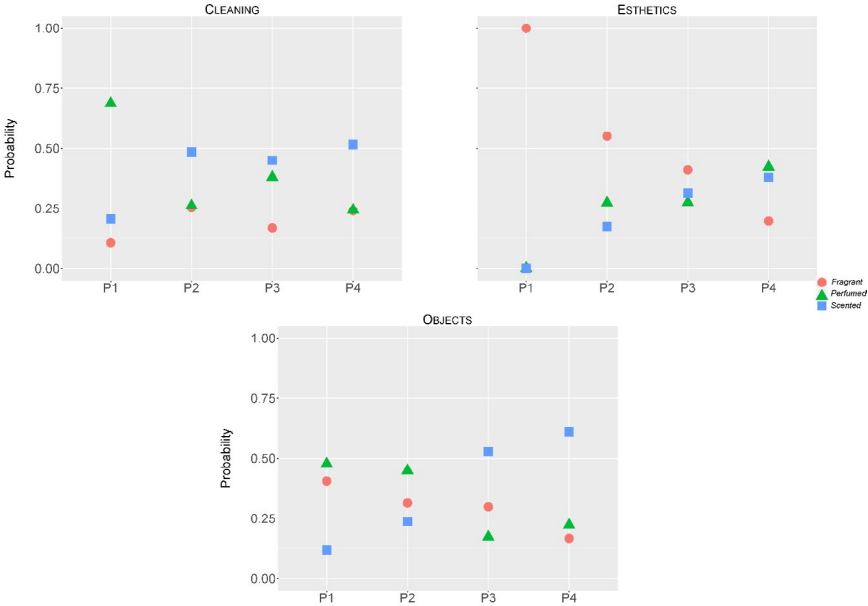

Figure 3: Probabilities of the near-synonyms across periods in ᴄʟᴇᴀɴɪɴɢ, ᴇsᴛʜᴇᴛɪᴄs and ᴏʙᴊᴇᴄᴛs

Finally, the natural categories ᴇᴀʀᴛʜ & ᴀᴛᴍᴏsᴘʜᴇʀᴇ, ꜰᴏᴏᴅ & ᴅʀɪɴᴋ, ᴘʟᴀɴᴛs & ꜰʟᴏᴡᴇʀs and sᴇɴsᴀᴛɪᴏɴ, which are visualized in Figure 4, all exhibit a similar trend: the adjectives display only minor changes in these four categories. In all cases, there is a slight increase of *scented*, but the relations between the near-synonyms remain rather stable.
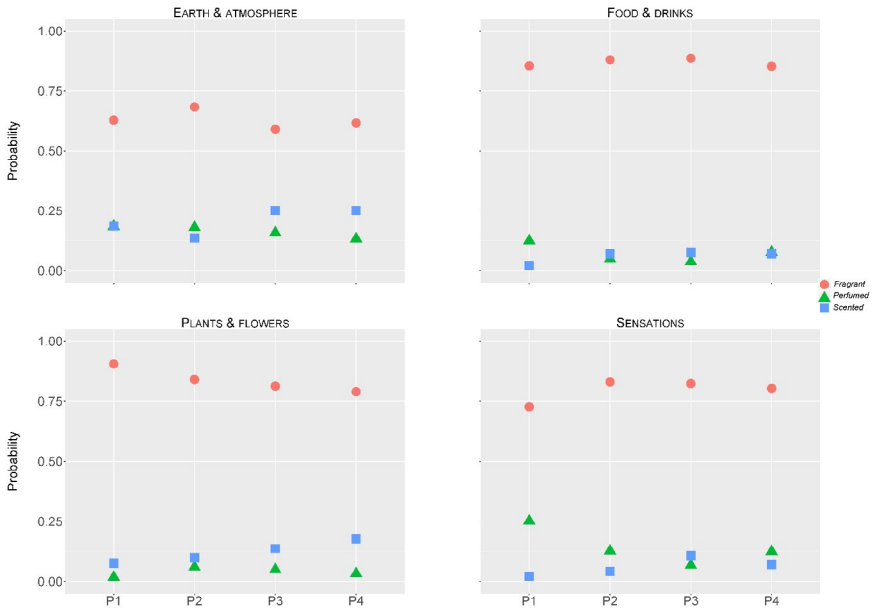
Figure 4: Probabilities of the near-synonyms across periods in EARTH & ATMOSPHERE, FOOD & DRINK, PLANTS & FLOWERS and SENSATION

4. Conclusions

Despite the fact that differentiation is by far the most widely discussed semantic development in research on synonymy, in the case of the synonym set examined in the present contribution the clearest process seemed to be that of attraction: it was the process at work in three out of four senses (i.e., artificial, figurative, neutral; see Figure 1) and in five out of the eight semantic categories which exhibited changes over time (i.e., ABSTRACT, BODY & PEOPLE, SPACE, SUBSTANCES & MATERIALS, TEXTILE & CLOTHING; see Figure 2). Only in CLEANING, ESTHETICS and OBJECTS did substitution or replacement of one adjective by another took place (see Figure 3), and only in the first and last of these three categories did *scented* become differentiated from *fragrant* and *perfumed* over time. Except in the natural sense and the associated semantic categories (i.e., EARTH & ATMOSPHERE, FOOD & DRINK, PLANTS & FLOWERS, SENSATION; see Figure 4), the near-synonyms converge in terms of their probabilities so that, by the

end of the time span, there is not just one clearly dominant adjective in many contexts of use. For instance, in ABSTRACT and ESTHETICS in P4 none of the three adjectives is much more probable than the others as the probabilities of the three synonyms are relatively similar. Overall, the findings suggest that there might be an ongoing process of replacement taking place, as *scented* seemed to be on the rise in several of the categories, even leaving the other adjectives behind in some cases, such as with CLEANING and OBJECT nouns.

Future research should consider the individual noun collocates of the near-synonyms, besides more general classifications of nouns into senses and semantic categories. In fact, preliminary results point to the conclusion that individual noun collocates such as *candle*, which is strongly associated with *scented* but not with *fragrant* or *perfumed*, have a large impact on the choice between the near-synonymous adjectives. In fact, by adding the individual noun collocates to the regression models, almost double the amount of variation in the data can be explained than with the models presented here, which contain only more coarse-grained categorizations into senses and semantic categories. In other words, the near-synonyms seem to exhibit a strong lexical fixation with specific nouns. This issue is currently being explored to shed further light on the evolution of the internal relations among these three adjectives.

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MEASURING LINGUISTIC DISTANCE IN WORLD ENGLISHES: SUBJECT PRONOUN DELETION IN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE[1]

Iván Tamaredo
Universidade de Vigo
ivan.tamaredo.meira@uvigo.es

Abstract

The present study examines how, and how often, speakers of varieties of English choose between syntactic variants across mediums of production. As a case study, differences in frequency and the constraints determining the choice between overt and deleted pronominal subjects are examined in British, Indian, and Singapore English. To this purpose, relevant observations of the overt and deleted variants were annotated for several language-internal constraints, as well as for medium and variety. Differences in the way in which speakers omit subjects across varieties and mediums were calculated on the basis of (a) the relative frequencies of the variants and (b) the statistical significance, effect strength, and variable importance values of language-internal constraints. Results indicate that speakers of the three varieties delete pronouns differently in spoken than in written language and that, in fact, medium has more explanatory power than variety.

Keywords: linguistic distance, World Englishes, probabilistic grammar, medium of production, subject pronoun deletion

1. Introduction

How to quantify (dis)similarities among languages and/or dialects is a crucial issue in the fields of typology, dialectometry, and comparative (socio)linguistics, among others (cf. Szmrecsanyi et al. 2019). An extensive body of research has measured grammatical (dis)similarity on the basis of atlas data, that is, the shared presence/absence of grammatical features in a set of languages or dialects (e.g., Szmrecsanyi and Kortmann 2009; Cysouw 2013). Atlas-based approaches certainly have advantages, in particular, their large sets of features and wide geographical coverage. However, atlas data is less than perfect as it cannot provide fine-grained frequencies of occurrence and it is usually gathered using indirect means such as questionnaires (Szmrecsanyi 2011, 48). A more in-depth and realistic method of assessing distance is to consider corpus data, either in the form of text frequencies (e.g., Szmrecsanyi 2011; Grieve 2016)—languages/dialects with comparable frequencies of a given grammatical feature are more similar—or by examining the set of constraints that influence how speakers select between linguistic alternatives (e.g., Szmrecsanyi et al. 2019; Tamaredo et al. 2019). Corpus data is undeniably more naturalistic than atlas data and, therefore, the present study follows the corpus-based approach to measuring (dis)similarities.

Theoretically speaking, this contribution lies at the intersection of the probabilistic grammar (e.g., Bresnan 2007) and World Englishes (e.g., Schneider 2007) paradigms. On the one hand, the probabilistic grammar framework claims that grammatical knowledge is partially probabilistic in that speakers have intuitions regarding statistical patterns of use. It is, therefore, assumed that grammatical knowledge may be restructured throughout a speaker's lifetime under the influence of his/her linguistic experiences. On the other hand, the World Englishes framework focuses on structural differences among varieties of English, particularly in connection with their sociohistorical backgrounds. In this paradigm, differences among varieties have been usually connected to their degree of nativization or indigenization, a notion which refers to "the emergence of locally characteristic linguistic patterns" (Schneider 2007, 6). Indigenization processes have been claimed to occur mainly at the "lexicogrammatical interface" (Schneider 2007, 131), with lexical items being used in new grammatical patterns. However, research that combines the probabilistic grammar and the World Englishes frameworks has recently shown that nativization can also be

observed in the underlying probabilistic constraints that influence speakers' syntactic choices (Szmrecsanyi et al. 2016; cf. also Schneider 2007, 87). This process, which has been termed "probabilistic indigenization", is defined as "the process whereby stochastic patterns of internal linguistic variation are reshaped by shifting usage frequencies in speakers of post-colonial varieties" (Szmrecsanyi et al. 2016, 133).

The present study aims to examine how similar the probabilistic knowledge of English grammar is on the part of speakers with different regional and cultural backgrounds. The focus is on how often speakers use a particular grammatical feature and how they select a specific variant when they have a choice between semantically similar alternatives. In addition, the influence of medium of production on the choice between syntactic variants is also examined and its explanatory power is compared to that of speakers' sociocultural backgrounds. In what follows, a case study is presented dealing with the alternation between deleted and overt pronominal subjects, exemplified in (1) and (2) respectively, in three varieties of English: British (BrE), Indian (IndE), and Singapore English (SgE).

(1)   […] philosophy$_i$ is good general background for all sorts of things Ø$_i$ Doesn't give one skill like many of the courses here. (ICE-GB: S1A-033)
(2)   The vision$_i$ was not very clear. It$_i$ was murky or rather uh foggy or misty. (ICE-IND: S1B-006)

2. Data and method

Instances of deleted and overt subject pronouns were retrieved from the British, Indian, and Singaporean components of the *International Corpus of English* (*ICE*). Whereas BrE was included to act as reference variety, IndE and SgE were selected because they are in different evolutionary stages and instantiate different types of varieties. IndE is between phase 3 and phase 4 of the *Dynamic Model* (Schneider 2007, 161–173) and is an L2 variety (Sharma 2012, 523). SgE, on the other hand, is in phase 4 (Schneider 2007, 153–161) and possibly also in the process of becoming an L1 variety (Leimgruber 2013, 9).[2]

2. IndE is considered to have advanced to phase 3 at the beginning of the 20th century and to have shown phase 4 characteristics from approximately the 1960s onwards (Schneider 2007, 165); SgE is claimed to have been in phase 4 from the 1970s (Schneider 2007, 155). Given

Due to the difficulty of retrieving all the relevant instances of deleted pronouns in *ICE*, only forty texts from each national subcorpus were analysed, amounting to approximately eighty thousand words each. To achieve a balanced sample, half of the texts contained spoken language and the other half written language, and, within each of these mediums of production, half of the texts were informal and the other half formal: spoken informal texts were extracted from the *ICE* text categories *face-to-face conversations* and *telephone calls*, spoken formal texts from *classroom lessons*, *broadcast discussions*, *broadcast interviews*, *parliamentary debates*, *legal cross-examinations*, and *business transactions*, written informal texts from the *social letters* category, and written formal texts from *academic writing*, *popular writing*, *press news reports*, *instructional writing*, and *press editorials*. From this sample, deleted pronouns were manually retrieved, a process which resulted in 1,229 instances in the three varieties, and, subsequently, a random sample of 1,229 overt pronouns was automatically extracted. The final dataset was annotated for several language-internal variables and two external ones. The language-external factors include variety and medium of production, while the language-internal predictors include factors that have been found in previous research to have a significant effect (e.g., Torres Cacoullos and Travis 2014; Tamaredo 2018, 104–17). Given that the present study focuses on aggregate differences across varieties and mediums of production rather than on the specific effects of each factor, only a brief summary of the variables, together with their levels, is provided in Table 1.

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that the data analysed in the present contribution was produced in the 1990s, the classification of IndE and SgE as phase 3-4 and phase 4 varieties, respectively, still applies.

Variable type	Variable	Levels
Language-external	Variety	BrE vs. IndE vs. SgE
	Medium	Spoken vs. written
Language-internal	Accessibility	High vs. intermediate vs. low
	Clause position	Initial vs. non-initial
	Clause type	Main vs. subordinate
	Coordination	Coordination vs. no coordination
	Priming	Deleted pronoun vs. overt pronoun vs. noun phrase/no priming
	Referent	Speaker/hearer vs. other
	Verb class	Lexical vs. modal auxiliary vs. non-modal auxiliary

Table 1: Variables and variable levels considered in the analysis

Dissimilarities in the frequency of the variants across varieties and mediums of production were calculated on the basis of mere percentages of occurrence. However, a more sophisticated method is necessary to capture differences in the probabilistic constraints determining syntactic variation. Szmrecsanyi and collaborators have developed an approach to measure linguistic distance between dialects on the basis of probabilistic differences, called *Variation-based Distance and Similarity Modelling* (*VADIS*; Grafmiller and Szmrecsanyi 2018; Szmrecsanyi et al. 2019). *VADIS* uses the output of multivariate tests to measure dissimilarities in the way that speakers choose between syntactic variants by comparing varieties across three lines of evidence. The first line contrasts the number of factors that have a statistically significant effect, calculated by means of binary logistic regression (e.g., Levshina 2015, 253–76), on the choice between two variants across different subcorpora. The subcorpora examined here were the different variety-medium components: BrE spoken, BrE written, IndE spoken, IndE written, SgE spoken, and SgE written. The second line compares the effect size and direction of the probabilistic constraints across subcorpora, as extracted from logistic regression models. Consider the following two hypothetical scenarios in Table 2. In scenario 1, the direction of the effect

of factor A (with levels A_1 and A_2) is the same, but it is stronger in variety Y: the degree to which variant α is more frequent in level A_1 than in A_2 is greater in Y than in X. Therefore, X and Y are not identical but similar. Contrariwise, in scenario 2 the direction of the effect is the opposite: in variety X variant α is more frequent in level A_2, whereas the opposite is true in Y. Finally, the third line of evidence compares the explanatory power of the different factors across subcorpora. This line is extracted from the results of random forest analysis (e.g., Levshina 2015, 297–9), the output of which is an order of constraints according to how important they are to distinguish between two variants. If two varieties exhibit the same ranking of constraints, they are identical, but, if the ranking is different, then they also differ.

Scenario 1				
Factor A	Variety X		Variety Y	
	Variant α	Variant β	Variant α	Variant β
Level A_1	60 %	40 %	90 %	10 %
Level A_2	40 %	60 %	10 %	90 %
Scenario 2				
Factor A	Variety X		Variety Y	
	Variant α	Variant β	Variant α	Variant β
Level A_1	10 %	90 %	90 %	10 %
Level A_2	90 %	10 %	10 %	90 %

Table 2: Differences between two hypothetical varieties X and Y with respect to the effect size and direction of a hypothetical factor A

The results of the three lines of evidence of the *VADIS* method are three distance matrixes, one per line, which compare each subcorpus with the rest. Distance matrixes were visualized with the help of Multidimensional Scaling (MDS; cf. Levshina 2015, 336–48). The output of MDS is a map with several points, which in the present study represent the different variety-medium components: the further away two points are from one another, the more dissimilar they are (see Figures 1–5 in section 3).

3. Results and discussion

Figure 1 plots the distances between the six variety-medium components on the
basis of the percentages of deleted and overt pronouns displayed in Table 3. Not
surprisingly, the components pattern according to medium rather than variety.
There is a written cluster to the left of the MDS map and a spoken cluster to
the right. On the contrary, not many differences can be observed among vari-
eties, which indicates that the frequency of occurrence of the variants does not
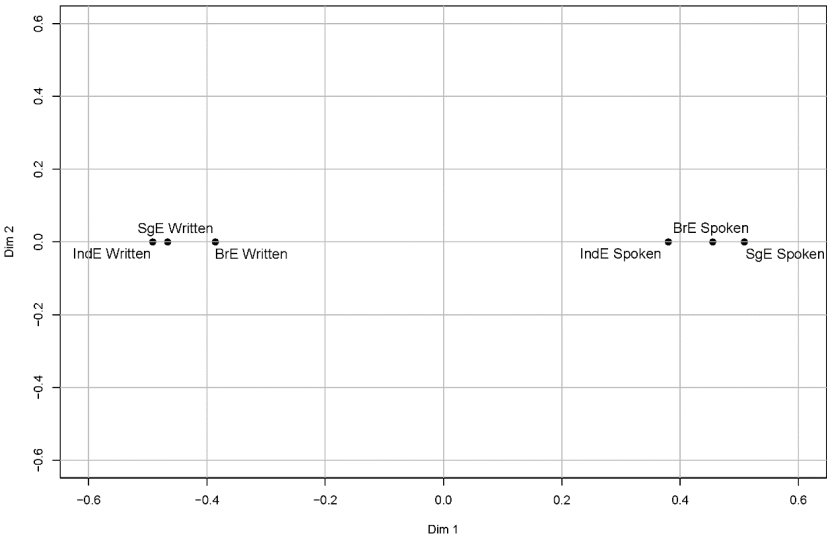depend on the speakers' variety but on medium of production.

Figure 1: MDS visualization based on the percentages of occurrence of the deleted and overt
pronominal subject variants

Medium	BrE		IndE		SgE	
	Deleted	Overt	Deleted	Overt	Deleted	Overt
Spoken	36.26 % (128)	63.74 % (225)	38.64 % (148)	61.36 % (235)	34.57 % (187)	65.43 % (354)
Written	62.93 % (236)	37.07 % (139)	66.29 % (177)	33.71 % (90)	65.49 % (353)	34.51 % (186)

Table 3: Frequency of deleted and overt pronouns per variety and medium

Some interesting patterns can also be observed regarding the effect of probabilistic constraints on the choice between the two syntactic alternatives. Figure 2 plots the MDS solution for the distance matrix obtained on the basis of the first line of evidence of the *VADIS* method, namely statistical significance. Except the IndE written component, which is clearly separated from the rest, the other components do not seem to be grouped neither according to variety nor medium. A Hierarchical Agglomerative Cluster (HAC) analysis (e.g., Levshina 2015, 309–20) confirms this interpretation: only two significant clusters emerge, namely the IndE written component versus the rest.[3] This means that, despite not being completely homogenous, all components except the IndE written one behave fairly similarly as regards which probabilistic constraints have a significant effect on the choice between the deleted and overt pronominal subject variants. This result replicates what has been consistently found in previous research on other syntactic alternations: the set of constraints determining syntactic variation seems to be fairly stable across varieties of English (e.g., Szmrecsanyi et al. 2016).

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3. HAC is a statistical technique "used to objectively group a large number of cases […] into a smaller number of discrete and meaningful clusters on the basis of some sort of similarity" (Szmrecsanyi and Kotmann 2009, 1652).
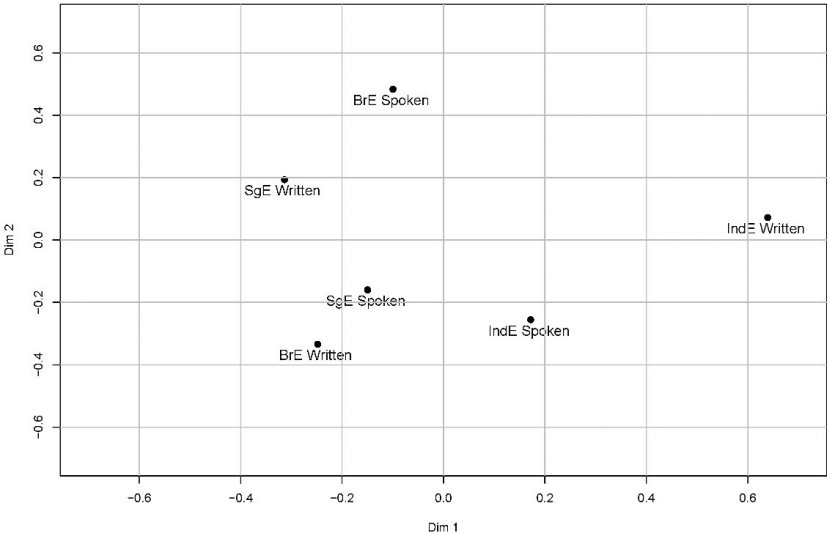
Figure 2: MDS visualization based on the first line of evidence of the *VADIS* method, statistical significance
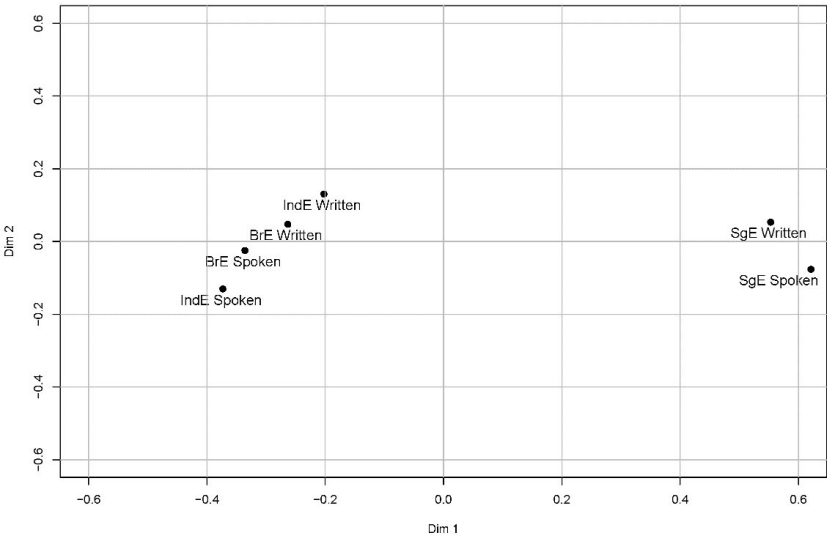

Figure 3: MDS visualization based on the second line of evidence of the *VADIS* method, effect size and direction

Distances between the variety-medium components on the basis of the second line of evidence, effect size and direction, are shown in Figure 3. In this case, the components pattern according to variety rather than medium. There are two clear clusters: one containing the SgE written and spoken components, and another one containing all the BrE and IndE components. Interestingly, BrE and IndE are grouped together in the same cluster, which means that they behave similarly with respect to the size and direction of the effects of probabilistic constraints. This state of affairs is in line with the exonormative orientation of IndE. SgE, on the other hand, forms its own cluster, possibly because it is in a more advanced evolutionary stage.
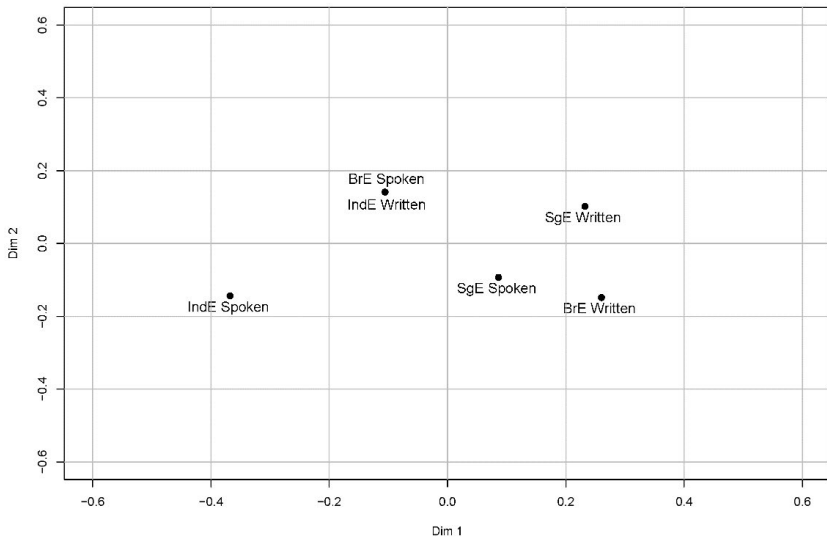

Figure 4: MDS visualization based on the third line of evidence of the *VADIS* method, constraint ranking
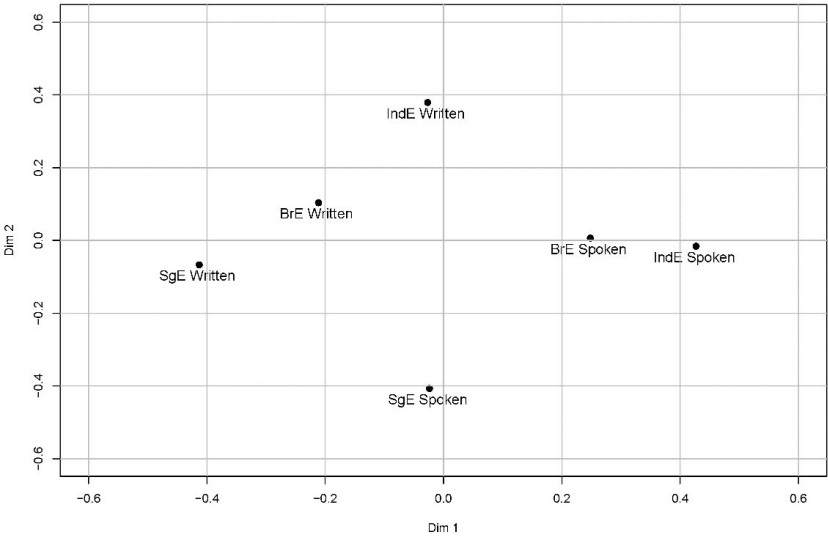
Figure 5: MDS visualization based on distance matrix merging the results of frequency and all three lines of evidence of the *VADIS* method

The results of the third line of evidence are visualized in Figure 4. In this case, no clear patterns emerge: the IndE spoken component is separated from the rest, the BrE spoken and IndE written components are located in exactly the same coordinates, and the SgE—both spoken and written—and BrE written components seem to form an independent cluster. There does appear to be, however, a continuum of components from more spoken, in the bottom left corner of the plot, to more written, in the bottom right corner, but this cline is by no means clear.

Finally, Figure 5 plots an MDS solution summarizing all the distances between the components. This MDS plot is the result of merging together the individual matrixes computed on the basis of frequency, statistical significance, effect size/direction, and constraint ranking. Overall, the components pattern according to medium: there are two clusters, one written and one spoken. The spoken and written components of each variety are relatively aligned but they are not grouped together. This suggests that, as regards variation between deleted and overt pronominal subjects, medium of production has more explanatory power that variety.

4. Conclusions and further research

The main objective of the present study was to quantify grammatical dissimilarities across spoken and written language in three varieties of English. The focus was on the alternation between deleted and overt pronominal subjects. Distance was measured on the basis of the relative frequency of occurrence of the alternatives and the variable influence of several language-internal probabilistic constraints. The findings indicated that, overall, how and how often speakers omit subject pronouns is determined by medium rather than variety. Within the spoken and written clusters found in the analysis, IndE and BrE behaved rather similarly, particularly in spoken language, which was argued to be a consequence of the exonormative orientation of IndE. This was true in the merged distance matrix visualised in Figure 5, but also as regards the effect size/direction of probabilistic constraints (Figure 3). In fact, it was only in the second line of evidence that components patterned according to variety, with all BrE and IndE components in one cluster and the SgE subcorpora in another. Therefore, it can be concluded that differences between varieties as to the choice between deleted and overt subjects are mostly found in how strongly the different levels of probabilistic constraints favour one variant over the other.

The MDS plot based on the third line did not show any clear clusters of components, which raises the question of whether there are other language-external factors that would account for differences in the ranking of probabilistic constraints. Preliminary findings suggest that level of formality might play a role here and work is now under way to adapt the database to include in the analysis the distinction between formal and informal contexts of use.

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PART IV:
ROUNDTABLES

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST: HISTORIAS SOBRE LA SEDUCCIÓN DEL MITO DEL OESTE[1]

Ángel Chaparro Sainz, Amaia Ibarraran-Bigalondo, Jesús Ángel González López

Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, Universidad de Cantabria

angel.chaparro@ehu.eus, amaia.ibarraran@ehu.eus, jesusangel.gonzalez@unican.es

Abstract

This round table's main goal was to analyze and disclose the way in which the Myth of the American West was introduced as a valid narrative through different audiovisual products that had an impact in the Spanish television audience of the 1980s. The three speakers offered different critical reviews of varied audiovisual products from the 1980s Spanish television, ranging from movies to TV shows and cartoons, in order to analyze how they contributed to the implementation and assimilation of the Myth of the West as an authentic symbol of America. The tone and style of this round table mixed a scholarly rigorousness with a personal and emotional perspective, blending affective recollections with academic scrutiny. The final intention was to examine the strategies through which we were formed and grew up both as individuals and as academics by this exposition to audiovisual products representing a mythic perspective of the American West.

Keywords: The American West, Spain, Television, Myth, 1980s

Resumen

Esta mesa redonda tuvo como objetivo principal el de exponer y analizar algunos de los medios a través de los cuales el mito del Oeste se ha implantado en la imaginación de las audiencias en España. Las contribuciones de los tres ponentes propusieron una reflexión crítica sobre los valores que promocionaron diversos productos audiovisuales de los años 80, contribuyendo de forma directa en la implantación y asimilación del mito del Oeste como símbolo de *lo americano*. Esta mesa redonda se planteó como un puente entre lo personal, lo afectivo y la nostalgia de una infancia, la nuestra, en la que el mito del Oeste formó parte de nuestro imaginario infantil, y lo académico. Tratamos, de este modo, de analizar las estrategias a través de las cuales nos construimos como personas y como académicos, así como el papel del Oeste en este proceso.

1. Introducción

Esta mesa redonda tuvo como objetivo principal el de exponer y analizar algunos de los medios a través de los cuales el mito del Oeste se ha implantado en la imaginación de las audiencias en España. El impacto de las *películas del Oeste* de Hollywood e italianas, así como el de las novelas de quiosco con temática *del Oeste*, tales como las de Marcial Lafuente Estefanía y/o José Mallorquí fue incuestionable en las décadas de los 40 y 50 y colaboró de forma directa en la implantación y asimilación del mito del Oeste como símbolo de *lo americano*. Este, de algún modo, representaba, en su calidad de mito, una clara distribución y lucha entre las fuerzas del bien y del mal, conceptos que se adaptaban de forma adecuada a las exigencias ideológicas del régimen del General Franco (y a las de las sucesivas generaciones).

Partiendo de este contexto, esta mesa redonda se planteó como un puente entre lo personal, lo afectivo y la nostalgia de una infancia, la nuestra, en la que el mito del Oeste formó parte de nuestro imaginario infantil, y lo académico. Tratamos, de este modo, de analizar las estrategias a través de las cuales nos construimos como personas y como académicos, así como el papel del Oeste en este proceso. Las contribuciones de los tres ponentes viajaron, de este modo, de lo personal a lo académico, proponiendo una reflexión crítica sobre los valores que diversos productos audiovisuales de los años 80 contribuyeron a la creación e implantación del mito del Oeste en nuestra generación. Ángel Chaparro Sainz se centró en el análisis de algunos de los dibujos animados de la época. Amaia Ibarraran-Bigalondo observó la representación del mito del Oeste en la serie de

televisión *La casa de la pradera*, y Jesús Ángel González hizo lo propio con el análisis de westerns clásicos y otros contemporáneos y transnacionales y de su impacto en la construcción de la masculinidad *del Oeste*.

2. El Oeste de la animación: Dibujos animados y el Mito del Oeste en la segunda mitad del siglo XX (Ángel Chaparro Sainz)

Que el Oeste Americano se convirtió, para muchas generaciones de la segunda mitad del siglo XX, en un escenario arquetípico con impacto universal suele ser una lectura habitual. ¿Por qué? y ¿cómo? serían, con la perspectiva de la madurez personal y el bagaje académico, dos preguntas que nos hemos hecho y nos seguimos haciendo. En esta presentación, Ángel Chaparro exploró el campo de los dibujos animados como producciones de entretenimiento que afectaron a nuestra formación cultural y social. El ponente propuso un paseo por la nostalgia sin renunciar a la crítica reflexiva. En su presentación se acercó a clásicos como *Lucky Luke* o los productos tanto de la factoría de Hanna-Barbera (*Tiro Loco McGraw* o *Conejo Ricochet*) como del universo Looney Tunes de la Warner Bros, en lugar de hacer un repaso enciclopédico de la producción de animación en la televisión pública nacional y autonómica de la España de los 80. Igualmente, se ciñó a tres productos específicos: la serie *BraveStarr*, la producción francesa *Érase una vez las Américas*, y algunos capítulos de *La vuelta al mundo de Willy Fog*. En la parte final de su exposición, hizo un paralelismo con la producción actual en cadenas como Clan TV o Disney Channel para observar cómo el paradigma se repite, con algunos matices, en la animación contemporánea.

En conclusión, Chaparro reafirmó en su análisis crítico la idea central de esta mesa: la fuerza y arraigo del ideario del mito del Oeste para instalarse con fuerza en el imaginario internacional, sirviendo de instrumento en la formación sentimental de personas ajenas a la cultura origen y, en ocasiones, sin tomar conciencia de esa intervención.

3. Aprendiendo de los Ingalls (Amaia Ibarraran-Bigalondo)

No recuerdo si era los Sábados por la tarde, pero recuerdo a Laura y a Mary, la "pobre cieguita" que sobrevivía en un entorno doméstico afectivo y protector, pero amenazador y hostil fuera de su hogar, su "dulce casa de la pradera". Y recuerdo la muñeca de trapo de mi hermana con su vestido de flores, su

delantal y su tocado y trenzas. Era nuestra Laura Ingalls, la Laura de casa. (Ibarraran-Bigalondo)

Partiendo de esta premisa nostálgica y personal de este primer acercamiento (y fascinación) al mito del Oeste, la presentación de Ibarraran-Bigalondo reflexionó acerca de la representación del Oeste en *La casa de la pradera*, cuyo impacto en las audiencias de los años 70-80 en España fue indudable. La ponente partió de la esencia rizomática (Campbell) y multicultural del Nuevo Oeste, tal y como ha sido definido por académicos contemporáneos (Clifford, Maher). Así, analizó el papel de *los Otros* en la serie, en particular, el de las mujeres, los nativo-americanos y/o otras comunidades minoritarias.

Esta revisión de la serie condujo a la conclusión de que el mito del Oeste ha formado parte activa de evolución personal de las generaciones de los 70 y 80. Del mismo modo, que la recepción del concepto del Oeste se hizo de forma natural, como *historical truth*, y así, a las películas y series de Oeste, como *American history* (Kitses). Se planteó la relevancia de la cultura popular en la construcción y asimilación natural de los mitos, así como su incidencia en la representación de conceptos transnacionales como *el Oeste*, o *lo americano*.

4. Infancia y masculinidad en Westerns y Post-Westerns (Jesús Ángel González)

La siguiente intervención giró en torno a la infancia, la configuración de la masculinidad y la seducción del mito del Oeste. Comenzó con una reflexión personal, recordando la presencia del Oeste en el cine y la televisión de los 60 y 70 (*Bonanza*, *Furia* o *El Virginiano*), y su influencia en los juegos infantiles y la configuración de la masculinidad. Jesús Ángel González se refirió a la presencia de niños deslumbrados por el mito del Oeste en una serie de películas, comenzando por su representación más canónica en *Shane* (1953). En esta, Joey (Brandon de Wilde) queda fascinado por la figura del pistolero Shane (Alan Ladd), quien representa el arquetipo de la masculinidad heroica y violenta característica del Oeste, en contraste con la mansedumbre de su propio padre. Shane ha sido reescrita en más de una ocasión, desde la muy conocida *Pale Rider* (1985), de Clint Eastwood, a la casi desconocida *La vida mancha* (2003), de Enrique Urbizu, en la que Jon bascula también entre el modelo de su padre y la fascinante personalidad de su tío Pedro (José Coronado). González concluyó que esta última es un ejemplo de post-wéstern transnacional, o de aquellas

películas que hacen referencias a las películas del Oeste, trasladadas a un nuevo tiempo y lugar. Incluyó otro ejemplo español de post-wéstern transnacional, *800 balas* (2002) y otras películas originarias de lugares tan distantes como Irlanda (*Into the West* [1992] y *Mickybo and Me* [2004]) y Afganistán (*The Kite Runner* [2007]). A modo de conclusión, González insistió en la influencia de la cultura popular, y en particular de las películas del Oeste, en la configuración de la masculinidad, y recordó la importancia de los post-Wésterns como reescritura crítica de las convenciones genéricas.

Tras las intervenciones, se propuso un debate abierto con los participantes en torno a sus experiencias personales acerca del Oeste, así como una reflexión crítica acerca de su representación y recepción. Se trató de responder a cuestiones como: ¿cuál ha sido el papel de la televisión y el cine en la construcción del imaginario colectivo en torno al Oeste americano?; ¿qué elementos históricos y grupos humanos deja de lado?; ¿en qué sentido ha sido asimilado como equivalente a *lo americano*?; ¿en qué medida prevalece en el imaginario colectivo internacional?

Dado que las presentaciones hicieron alusión a aspectos académicos y también personales acerca de la representación y recepción del mito del Oeste durante los 70-80, las contribuciones de los asistentes fueron abundantes, dando paso a un diálogo fluido y fructífero en torno al Oeste americano, que reafirmaron las conclusiones extraídas en cada una de las aportaciones de la mesa.

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Thresholds and Ways Forward in English Studies

STANCETAKING IN DISCOURSES: EPISTEMICITY, EFFECTIVITY, EVALUATION

Juana I. Marín Arrese[1], Laura Hidalgo Downing[2],
Marta Carretero[1], Elena Domínguez Romero[1],
Sergio Ferrer Navas[1], Laura Filardo Llamas[5],
Carmen Maíz Arévalo[1], Victoria Martín de la Rosa[1],
Natalia Mora López[1], Begoña Núñez Perucha[1],
Paula Pérez Sobrino[4], Alfonso Sánchez Moya[6],
Julia Williams Camus[3]

Universidad Complutense de Madrid[1], Universidad Autónoma de Madrid[2],
Universidad de Cantabria[3], Universidad de La Rioja[4], Universidad de Valladolid[5],
Universidad de Harvard[6]

juana@filol.ucm.es, laura.hidalgo@uam.es,
mcarrete@filol.ucm.es, elenadominguez@filol.ucm.es, sferrer@ucm.es, lfilardo@fyl.uva.es,
cmaizare@filol.ucm.es, mvmartin@filol.ucm.es, nataliamora@ucm.es, begonia@filol.ucm.es,
paula.perez.sobrino@gmail.com, alfonso.sanchezmoya@gmail.com, julia.williams@unican.es

Abstract

This roundtable presented the theoretical and analytical framework of our research project on stancetaking in discourse, STANCEDISC. The individual papers include results on work in progress on the following domains of stance: epistemicity, effectivity and evaluation.

Keywords: stance, epistemicity, effectivity, evaluation, metaphor

Juana I. Marín Arrese, Laura Hidalgo Downing, Marta Carretero, Elena Domínguez Romero, Sergio Ferrer Navas, Laura Filardo Llamas, Carmen Maíz Arévalo, Victoria Martín de la Rosa, Natalia Mora López, Begoña Núñez Perucha, Paula Pérez Sobrino, Alfonso Sánchez Moya, Julia Williams Camus

1. Introduction

Current research on stance in discourse arises at the crossroads of various frameworks and research endeavours, such as the work on stance (Biber and Finegan 1989), affect (Ochs, 1989), evaluation (Hunston and Thompson, 2000), hedging (Hyland 1998), engagement (Martin and White 2005), stancetaking (Englebretson 2007; DuBois 2007) and the sociolinguistics of stance (Jaffe 2009).

The multiplicity of dimensions involved in the conception of stance has both prompted and inspired our research project, STANCEDISC (Ref. PGC2018-095798-B-I00, Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades), where we are developing a framework which takes into account the following dimensions: (a) epistemic stance as the expression of speakers/writers' dialogical positioning in striving for control of conceptions of reality and providing justificatory support for a proposition (Boye 2012; Langacker 2013; Marín-Arrese 2011, 2015); (b) effective stance as the striving for control of relations at the level of reality, aimed at determining or influencing the acceptance and/or realization of events (Langacker 2013; Marín-Arrese 2011); (c) evaluative stance as positioning with respect to events and the use of metaphor in the representation of social actors (Semino 2008; Thompson and Alba-Juez 2014; Hidalgo-Downing 2015; Cameron 2016).

The paper is divided as follows. Section 2 discusses the expression of epistemicity; Section 3 centres on the expression of effective stance; Section 4 focuses on the expression of evaluation and the use of metaphor in the representation of social actors and events. The concluding section briefly discusses the results and draws tentative conclusions regarding legitimisation and representation in the discourse domains studied.

2. Epistemic stance in newspaper and political discourse

2.1. Objectives and hypothesis

This paper aims to explore the expression of epistemic stance in newspaper discourse and political discourse, including sources of centre-right and centre-left ideologies. The hypothesis was posited that epistemic expressions would be more frequent in newspaper discourse than in political discourse, for the reason that newspaper discourse, even if it has a well-known political leaning, is supposed to be more impartial than political discourse. Epistemic expressions

may well convey a flavour of impartiality, since they most often weaken justificatory support to the communicated content. A second hypothesis was also set forth, that discourse from centre-left ideology would contain more epistemic expressions than discourse from centre-right ideology, given that this last type is often associated with a higher degree of assertiveness.

2.2. Corpus and data

The corpus consists of journalistic and political texts evenly divided by discourse type and ideology: opinion columns from newspapers of both centre-left and centre-right leanings, *The Guardian* (50,601 words) and *The Times* (50,592 words), and political speeches of politicians from the Conservative party (50,053 words) and the Labour party (51,843 words), as representatives of centre-right and centre-left ideologies. All the texts belong to the 2010-decade (2010-2019) and were selected due to their coverage of different authors and topics.

The data consisted of a wide range of epistemic stance markers (modal auxiliaries, adverbs, verbs of cognitive attitude, etc.), classified into the categories of epistemic modality and evidentiality and then divided into a number of subcategories (cf. Marín-Arrese 2011).

2.3. Results

The newspaper and political subcorpora displayed 558 and 319 epistemic expressions, respectively, which confirms the hypothesis. In the two varieties of discourse, epistemic expressions were more common in the centre-right subcorpora (totalling 490) than in the centre-left subcorpora (totalling 387); the second hypothesis was therefore disconfirmed. Finding possible reasons for this difference is an issue for further research.

3. Effective stance in newspaper and political discourse

3.1. Objectives and Hypotheses

The aim of this paper was to explore the similarities or differences in the distribution and use of effective stance strategies in newspaper discourse and in political discourse, and the extent to which they reflect specific discourse strategies prevalent in these discourse domains and genres.

The hypotheses posited that variation may be found due to differences in rhetorical strategies and styles of persuasion in the two domains, newspaper

and political discourse. Variation was also hypothesized within each discourse domain, as a result of ideological differences in newspapers and political parties, which may permeate their styles of persuasion.

3.2. Corpus and data

The paper presented a corpus study on the use of effective stance markers in newspaper discourse and political discourse (see 2.2. above for a description of the corpora).

The data consisted of variety of lexico-grammatical elements (deontic modals, imperatives, hortatives and various forms of directive speech acts, etc.) used in the expression of effective stance, which were annotated manually and classified into a number of categories (cf. Marín-Arrese 2011)

3.3. Results

Results showed a marked overuse of effective stance expressions in political discourse in comparison to the discourse of the press (15,113 vs. 5,811 per thousand words), and in particular in the categories of 'deonticity' and 'intentionality'. However, no significant differences were found in the frequency of tokens for each of the categories of effective stance with respect to ideological slant of the newspapers or ideological positioning of the political parties.

4. Evaluative stance and metaphor in advertising, fora and scientific discourses

4.1. Objectives

Within Evaluative stance, our main objective was to explore the frequency and distribution of the categories we established, namely, Assessment and Attitude, Metaphoric and Non-metaphoric, and Value (Positive, Negative or Other) across the three discourse domains.

4.2. Corpus and Data

The corpus and data we have analysed for Evaluative stance consists of a corpus of scientific discourse, fora and advertising discourse. The corpus of scientific discourse contains a selection of articles extracted from the Science section of two newspapers: *The Guardian* and *The Times*. The corpus of fora focuses on

social issues (REDDIT). Two threads were analysed. One discussed gay marriage, whereas the other dealt with Britain's drinking problem. The corpus of advertising discourse consists of two sets of advertisements of a wide range of commodities (cars, watches, perfumes and beauty products), one of them with more conventional ads, the other with more creative ads.

4.3. Results

Results showed that the most frequent category was assessment (87% in Fora, 98% in Science) followed by attitude (11% in Fora, 2% in Science), which was typically expressed non-metaphorically (72% in Fora, 98% in Science). The connotation value varied across the discourse types, with a higher frequency of negative evaluation in Fora (66%). In Science the value is typically positive when describing the study and the findings, while it is negative when the referring to the causes of the scientific problem to be solved, for example Alzheimer. In the two case studies of advertising, the results showed a higher frequency of metaphoric evaluation and of positive evaluation, both metaphorical or non-metaphorical.

5. Conclusion

The roundtable has presented work in progress within the research project STANCEDISC. The dimensions of stance in the framework are the following: epistemicity, effectivity and evaluation.

The corpus studies on epistemic and effective stance expressions in newspaper and political discourse have shown significant differences in use between these two discourse domains. The corpus studies on evaluative stance and metaphor showed a marked preference for non-metaphorical assessment in the discourse of science and fora, while metaphorical evaluation was preferred in the discourse of advertising.

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GENDER POLITICS IN LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY FICTION

Tomás Monterrey, Sonia Villegas-López, and María José Coperías-Aguilar

Universidad de La Laguna, Universidad de Huelva, Universidad de Valencia
jmonterr@ull.es, villegas@uhu.es, Maria.J.Coperias@uv.es

Abstract

In its origins, the novel was taken as sub-literature, mainly because it was seen as a feminised form. From the early 1660s, the prose works of relevant French female romance writers were translated into English and consumed by an audience eager to read about love and gallantry. The novel provided women authors with new possibilities for imitation, appropriation and experimentation, and many of them published fiction in their own name, like Cavendish, Behn, Manley, Trotter and Pix. We also approach the gender question broadly, in order to explain the origins and popularity of the novel by referring to the conditions of the literary market and women's roles as writers, characters, narrators and readers. We are interested in practices like crossdressing and masquerade to help us analyse gender-genre intersections in stories about love, exoticism and sexual violence, present in the heroic romance, the secret history and epistolary fiction.

Keywords: Novel, gender and genre, romance, secret history, epistolary fiction

In "Women as Addressees, Narratees and Narrators in Early Restoration Prose Fiction in English", Tomás Monterrey examined the narrative communication structure from a gender perspective in the prose fiction originally published

in English in the 1660s. He contended that most romances were addressed to the general public, which challenges the notion that this genre was targeted to women. Only four works were dedicated to them: *Don Samuel Crispe* (1660), Mackenzie's *Aretina* (1660), Dauncey's *The English Lovers* (1662), and Boyle's sixth book of *Parthenissa* (1669), while young experimental writers (Mackenzie, Pordage and Bulteel) also aimed to gain the ladies' critical approval, even though their stories were related by male characters to other male characters. The few ones told in the presence of ladies (the story of Piseta in *Aretina* and "The Historie of Araterus" in *Eliana*), far from being controversial or spicy, proposed models of subservient women within the patriarchal framework. Exceptionally, in *The Practical Part of Love* (1660), a prostitute narrative, the heroine, Helena, learnt from her landlady the story of lustful Gillian of Croydon, but the anonymous author switched to Latin "for modesty sake" to explain *furor uterinus* (16), as did Burton in *The History of Eriander* (1661) to openly describe the sexual organs and reproduction (59).

In general, female narrators were avoided, either because they did not fit the role for the authority and credibility required, or because it was assumed they lacked learning. Except in *The Wise Mistresses* (1663) and in Cavendish's works, an educated woman was rare: the heroes of *Aretina* admired Eudoxa's speech because she "shewed much Learning from whom no Learning could be expected" (4). The occasional stories related by women were embedded in—or mediated by—larger male narratives, except Isabella in *Floridon and Lucina* (1663), Birinthea in *Birinthea* (1664) and Florinda in *Pandion and Amphigenia* (1665). The only full narrative by a woman is *The Life and Death of Mary Frith* (1662), an anti-romance which claims to be the diary of Moll Cutpurse. The technique of the diary—unlike the biographies of popular criminals—allowed the character to justify her ways in the underworld unrestricted by a public narrator's moral judgment, while creating a gendered separation between the male editor and the female narrator, though her language did not match her social extraction.

In "Feminising the East: Images of Libertinism in Restoration Oriental Fictions", Sonia Villegas-López addressed specifically French oriental narratives, translated and published profusely in England in the 1670s and 1680s. The action of many of these novellas was situated in the far-away territories of Morocco and the Ottoman Empire, though telling stories about French and English nobility under cover. They illustrated the exotic life of the seraglio

against a background of political rebellion and absolutist rule, and they reproduced plots in which women, though primarily the objects of love and gallantry, were also prone to give free rein to their desires. Villegas-López chose two novels by Sebástien Brémond, *Hattige, or the Amours of the King of Tamaran* (1680) and *Homais, Queen of Tunis* (1681), and suggested that they construed female protagonists as emblems of libertinism within the safe boundaries of the seraglio. They recreated the scandalous affairs of Charles II and his mistresses Barbara de Villiers and Louise de Keroualle. These female rakes follow their ambition and use their sexual authority over their kings, making fools of them to earn political power in return. Far from being read as models of exoticism and otherness, these strong women and the love intrigues they spin could be interpreted as examples of "transcultural allegories" (Aravamudan 2012, 202). In the generic convergence of forms, these narratives represent the slippery nature of Restoration fiction, characterised by its hybridity and its generic impurity (Bayer 2016, 52).

Villegas-López argued that *Hattige* and *Homais* suggest a number of fictional possibilities to neutralise notions of western, patriarchal and tyrannical government by creating an illusion of power which works only within the safe boundaries of storytelling. The secret narratives of the seraglio offer a feminised and fluid reading of hierarchy, something that libertine writing also reflects upon, an "imaginary journey" of the white male European reader into the realm of the possible that Africa represented (Ballaster 2005, 80). Though models of femininity should be regarded metaphorically, in *Hattige* and *Homais* they also point to real women whose gender transgression is both literal and imaginary, fostering constructions of femininity and entertainment that will gradually disappear in the eighteenth-century novel.

Finally, María José Coperías-Aguilar addressed in "Women Writing Together, *Letters of Love and Gallantry*" the work done by editors and booksellers like Samuel Briscoe, who earned a name in the business in the last decades of the seventeenth century and from the 1690s he specialised in the publication of popular epistolary collections, quite often written by female hands. In 1693, the first volume of a miscellany entitled *Letters of Love and Gallantry and Several Other Subjects. All Written by Ladies* saw the light; and this was followed a year later by a second volume. Even if the publication of these collections was most likely Briscoe's idea, in his address to the reader in the first volume, he insists that it was driven by the desire of several ladies to have their works published.

Both collections should be analysed in the light of a tradition of women writing together and supporting one another in this task. Victoria Burke (2009, 55–56), among other authors, has highlighted the relevance of miscellanies at the time and the blurring of the concept of authorship, especially among women. Writing often became a medium for social exchange deriving into what would be a kind of collaborative or composite authorship.

Letter-writing in fiction had been a popular tradition in many literary cultures and this was also the case in English Restoration during which the epistolary form was one of the favourite novelistic discourses. As Sonia Villegas has argued, the epistolary format, with its focus on the private and personal relationships either of friendship, courtship or marriage, has been considered an appropriate transition genre between autobiographical documents and the novel (2003, 270). Robert Day (1969), concentrating on Catherine Trotter's *Olinda`s Adventures*, as the 1693 "The Adventures of a Young Lady" became popular some years later, also vindicates the novel status of the story based on its restraint and control in contrast to much of the fiction of its time, as well as the introduction of devices such as subplots and suspense, or even an open end to the story.

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