

**Book of Abstracts**

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# PLENARY SESSIONS

## José Antonio Sánchez Fajardo (Univertat d’Alacant): “‘Nail tat conference paper!’ Dos and donts to succeed”

This seminar is intended to help you become a successful conference speaker, so attendees are expected to get both a set of guidelines and practical information on the full process (i.e., from the abstract to the presentation itself). Then, some of the questions that will be addressed are the following: Are all conferences worth attending? How to elaborate an eye-catching and clear abstract? Are there specific strategies to keep the audience’s attention? What makes visuals successful?

## Jorge Diego Sánchez (Universidad de Salamanca): “Research in Action: How to Fill (and Develop) Knowledge Transfer”

Researchers are recommended to exploit research results in patents or, in Social Sciences and Humanities, science-to-science practices. Nevertheless, the importance of knowledge transfer in science-to-public and science-to-university activities is a box to comply with in *acreditaciones*, job offers or scholarships. This workshop will help you conceptualise your research and its knowledge transfer, learning how, when and what you can transfer socially and educationally. You will learn to select the social possibilities of your research to develop Capacity Building Activities, Training Seminars, Teaching Innovation Projects, and Dissemination of Results. Most importantly, you will revert self-anthropophagic comments such as “my research does not interest anybody outside an AEDEAN panel”, “how can I communicate without a PowerPoint presentation?”, “how can I explain my PhD over a family gathering?” or “what is the use of my PhD?”.

# LINGUISTICS

## Coord. María del Pilar García Mayo (UPV/EHU) & Juan Manuel Hernández Campoy (Universidad de Murcia)

### Hugo Álvarez Manso (Universidad de Oviedo): “A Corpus-based Study of the Uses of Modal Verbs and their Grammaticalization in the history of English”

This study aims to conduct a diachronic corpus-based study of the lexical uses of the modal verbs. For the purpose of this seminar the focus is on *will* and *can*. Even though this subject has been widely covered, there seems to be a lack of quantitative studies drawing from data of the periods involved. Modal verbs have their root in Old English pre-modals, a set of full lexical verbs.

However, in Present-day English they lack lexical properties and belong to a separate category: modal auxiliary verbs. Such development is considered to be a paradigmatic case of grammaticalization.

The study aims to tackle the following questions:

1. Is it possible to track the gradual disappearance of lexical uses of modal verbs throughout the history of English?
2. Did all lexical constructions disappear at the same rate?
3. Are there any traces of lexical value in Present-day English modals?

I selected the Penn Parsed Corpora of Historical English, which include the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, second edition (PPCME2), the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME) and the Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE). The tokens of each individual form were manually checked to discard irrelevant examples. The valid examples were coded according to type of construction and date.

Some challenges include the scarcity of data for some of the verbs, depending on the period. Moreover, the contrast between *will* v.1 and *will* v.2 had to be taken into account. Finally, the corpora tags one of the lexical constructions under study as a modal construction. Tentative results suggest that the research questions can be tackled. It seems that some constructions were more frequent than others and disappeared at a different rate; some of the lexical uses of modal verbs remain in PDE through obsolete expressions.

### Fahad Alyaqout (Universidade de Vigo): “Predicting Pitch Prominence in Tri-Constituent Compound Nouns: A Speech Perception and Production Analysis”

This study aims at explaining the variance in prominence assignment in tri-constituent compound nouns. The investigation will be a follow-up with Kosling and colleague’s (2013) research paper in expanding on the investigation of the credibility of the *Embedded Prominence Hypothesis* and the *IC-Prominence Hypothesis*. More importantly, this study will test for the first time the perception and production of prominence patterns in tri-constituent compounds at the IC-level in native speakers of American English (AmEng). Incidentally, I will investigate the role of semantics, in the form of informativeness (see Kunter, 2011), and the role of analogy in predicting prominence assignment at the IC-level. I will in like manner attempt to bridge the gap found in the literature by examining how native English speakers perceive and produce prominence in noun compounds. I predict that more informative nouns within a compound will show a higher tendency in acquiring prominence in tri-constituent compounds. On the other hand, I predict that analogy will correlate strongly with prominence patterns as well (see Plag, 2006). Last, I will be testing the credibility and reliability of the ICPH in predicting prominence at the IC-level, which remains uncharted in the literature. I will elicit data using two empirical experiments: 1) a speech production experiment where subjects have to read aloud into a voice recorder sentences containing NNN compounds, and 2) a speech perception experiment, with utterance containing NNN compounds in the form of audio excerpts (retrieved from corpora) and their corresponding text to be presented on a headset and on screen; the participants will choose on a scale which of the 3 nouns is most prominent. All in all, Comprehending how prominence assignment functions will help reduce the degree/rate of mismatch in connotation, thus leading to a more comprehensible speech using logical deduction based on the hypotheses presented.

**Key words:** Phonology; compound nouns; prominence; informativeness; family size; analogy

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### Antonio Hermán-Carvajal (Universidad de Granada): “Access to Scientific Information on Mental Health: How Are Emotion-enriched Texts Perceived by English Native Speakers?”

Texts with emotions are proved to be easier to understand, process and remember than those without them (Citron, 2012). This fact is the starting point for this doctoral thesis, which aims at shedding light on the perception of scientific texts on mental health among English native speakers.

My main hypothesis is that even if emotions may affect the ‘scientific appearance’ of a text, they would eventually enhance comprehension of scientific texts. I will analyze texts whose target audiences are adolescents and young adults and whose topic is mental health, as there is an increasing interest in our society to know more about this field of knowledge.

To carry out this study, a multimodal corpus of texts on mental health will be compiled and analyzed. This will be useful to detect if there is an extended use – or not – of emotions in the conveyance of scientific information. After that, a selection of texts on mental health will be enriched with emotions and emotional elements (such as the ones proposed by Um et al. (2012)) and then a reception study will be carried out.

This research is complemented with the same process and study about Spanish texts and Spanish native speakers. Whereas conducting a reception study among native Spanish speakers is easy in Spain, the situation with English native speakers is not the same. A predoctoral stay is a must to collect data for this study.

The expected result, considering some preliminary data gathered in a previous reception study conducted among Spanish native speakers, is that scientific texts on mental health enriched with emotions will be perceived more positively than those without them, which would be interesting to know in a context in which adolescents and young adults increasingly want to access more information on mental health.

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### David Hernández Coalla (Universidade de Vigo): “Approaching Non-standard Second Person Pronouns”

Although textbooks and grammars describe the English pronominal system as a restricted collection of words set in stone, alternative forms have emerged across geographical varieties and exhibit different degrees of acceptance and use. Amongst these forms, it appears that second person pronouns enjoy relative success, perhaps because they may be used in contrast with the standard *you* to distinguish between singular and plural reference (Valentínyová 2015). In particular, pronouns consisting of a combination of *you* and a quantifier or a noun, such as *you-all* (and its variants *y’all*, *yall*, and *ya’ll*), *you guys* or *you lot*, seem to be preferred over one-word alternatives (e.g., *oonu*, *youse*, *you’uns*).The aim of this paper is to expand our knowledge about these pronouns and study in depth some of these forms in American English, where they are thought to be well established. In order to do this, a corpus-based study will be carried out with data extracted from both synchronic (e.g., COCA; Davies 2008-) and diachronic corpora (e.g., COHA; Davies 2010). This study will thus contribute to our current understanding of these pronouns (see Galiano 2022; Lipsky 1993; Sienicki 2014) by providing new insights into their history and possible usage difference across registers. Early research shows that these forms may be more common in colloquial registers and their frequency probably has grown in the last decades.

**Key words:** diachrony, registers, second person pronouns, *y’all*

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### Pedro Humánez-Berral (Universidad de Cantabria): “On Primary Education Students’ Attitudes towards English Pronunciation”

The implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in primary schools involves providing students with increased exposure to the English language and opportunities to use the language themselves. This increased exposure offers learners the benefits of starting to learn a foreign language at a young age, such as a stronger sense of identity, improved motivation or better attitudes (Genesee et al., 1995). All this may lead to better pronunciation skills in English. Furthermore, CLIL instruction has been shown to narrow the gender gap in learning a foreign language and in motivation, which means that the differences between boys and girls tend to be smaller in CLIL settings compared to traditional English as a Foreign Language (EFL) approaches (Gallardo-del-Puerto & Blanco-Suarez, 2021; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015). However, this tendency has yet to be proven to affect pronunciation learning attitudes, motivation, accent awareness, and anxiety.

This PhD dissertation has two main objectives:

1. To gather empirical evidence on the impact of the type of instruction (CLIL or EFL) on the affective component of English pronunciation in primary school students.
2. To examine the mediating effect of the gender variable on the relationship between the type of instruction (CLIL or EFL) and the affective component of English pronunciation in primary school students.

For my project thesis, I am collecting data from students aged 9 to 10 in five public primary schools in Cantabria. Three of these schools have already implemented a bilingual programme, while the other two follow a conventional English teaching approach. The data collection process involves administering questionnaires in paper form about students' motivation, accent awareness and speaking anxiety.

This being a quantitative research project, the questionnaires employ a Likert scale to assess the different constructs. Once the data have been collected, they need to be digitised, processed, and analysed statistically.

As CLIL instruction entails a higher amount of exposure to the target language, we expect that the CLIL learners will develop greater familiarity and comfort with English pronunciation, resulting in higher levels of motivation and a more positive attitude towards speaking the language.

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### Timothy William Lawrence (Universidad de Cantabria): “A Meaning-based Analysis Derived from *Método de los Relojes* Employing Parataxis and Hypotaxis through CEFR Descriptors to Indicate Development of Syntactic Complexity by Spanish and English L1 and L2 Written Texts”

Syntactic complexity is understood as the range and sophistication of grammatical resources exhibited in language production (Ortega, 2015). A reason for measuring complexity in SLA is to benchmark developmental levels (Ortega, 2012). A number of studies have researched which measures are a reliable index to gauge L2 writers overall proficiency (Ai & Lu, 2013; Lu, 2011; Norrby & Håkansson, 2007). Results revealed the relationship between syntactic complexity to L2 writing quality may vary among different measures and syntactic complexity may also vary among learners and CEFR proficiency levels (Lu & Ai, 2015).

Systemic-functional linguistics has been viewed as a multidimensional perspective for analyzing syntax complexity. The theoretical justification stems from language development at lower levels proceeding from parataxis while intermediate levels use hypotaxis to express ideas through grammatically intricate texts. Use of grammatical metaphor appears in advanced learners which contributes to lower levels of subordination (Norris & Ortega, 2009). This study proposes a meaning-based approach derived from the Spanish descriptive grammar framework *Método de los Relojes* and grounded in the structural-functional linguistics to introduce new syntactic complexity measures to a line of research which has received little attention yet has raised significant questions (Ryshina-Pankova, 2015).

Corpus data was taken from *the EF-Cambridge Open Language Database*, *Corpus de Aprendices de Español* and the *Corpus Escrito de Español L2* comprising a representative sample of over 1.4 million words spanning CEFR proficiency levels. The quantitative analysis applies meaning-based categories and units to examine frequency and use in L2 English and Spanish written texts. It is expected to find evidence that parataxis and hypotaxis are manifested at different frequencies in Spanish versus English with key meaning-based units standing out. Preliminary findings suggest that both parataxis and hypotaxis in L2 English texts increases through higher intermediate levels. Analysis is expected to negate the validity of cognitive linguistics theory and divulge types of parataxis and hypotaxis used by learners.

**Key words:** Meaning-based units; Cognitive Linguistics; Structura-Functional Linguistics; CEFR; *Método de los Relojes*

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### Beatriz Mediavilla Martínez (Universidad de Burgos): “Integrating Intercultural Communication in English Language Teaching Education: A Proposal”

This work focuses on the effective integration of interculturality in ILTE programmes. The main hypothesis of my study is that the implementation of a common training in ILTE in Europe, with a non-essentialist approach, will significantly improve the Intercultural Competence of language teachers, reduce inequalities in teacher education, and better prepare them for international career opportunities.

The objectives pursued are: to re-think the approaches to interculturality in ILTE programmes in Europe to make them more inclusive and to develop and provide with a common framework that help teacher students to develop Intercultural Competence regardless of their socio-economic background.

The methodology consists of two main parts. Firstly, a review of European policies and the current state of the art to identify the main trends. For it, a study visit was made to the University of Catania to collaborate with peers and compare ILTE programmes in European countries. Secondly, a more inclusive and comprehensive program will be developed and evaluated through case studies involving ILTE students in a university setting.

The main challenge of this project is the development of a common program that accommodates the diverse needs of ILTE across Europe. However, a more inclusive training will result in the reduction of the inequalities in the education of language teachers and increased collaboration and knowledge-sharing among ILTE programs across Europe, while the more inclusive and diverse ILTE curriculums, will reflect the multicultural nature of modern societies.

### Carmen Moreno Romero (Universidad de Granada): “Machine Translation for Non-expert Users within Public Administrations”

Nowadays, machine translation (MT) engines are being integrated into translators’ workflow to meet the needs of an increasingly demanding translation industry (ISO 18587:2017). It is common to combine the use of MT with post-editing (MTPE), the editing and correcting of MT output.

This proposal is based on the fact that many public administrations do not allocate sufficient resources to hire translators. Due to the potential of MT, we aim to explore the use of MT by public administrations when making more multilingual information available to citizens. If public administrations use MT to disseminate content in more languages, they will inform a greater number of citizens. We aim to study the levels of acceptability required for disseminating MT-generated content and to design MTPE guidelines aimed at professionals who are not translation experts.

The chosen methodology will require a systematic literature review on MT and MTPE for non-expert users. Next, we will design a questionnaire aimed at public administrations and NGOs working in the health sector to find out how they use MT. Thirdly, health-related content will be translated with MT and errors will be classified according to the DQF-MQM error typology. Professional evaluators will post-edit the MT-generated content, which will allow us to assess the quality of the MT-generated output. Lastly, we will analyse the changes required during the MTPE phase to design guidelines for

post-editing health-related content in the English-Spanish and Spanish-French language combination.

On the one hand, we hope to gather sufficient information on the changes needed during the MTPE phase to determine if users who are not experts in translation can make use of this technology to disseminate information within public institutions. On the other hand, we aim to design an extensive guide on MTPE health content in the aforementioned language combinations.

### María Paula Roverso (Universidad de Cantabria): “Authorial Stance in English Medical Research Article Introductions”

Writing research article (RA) introductions is one of the most difficult tasks for novice and experienced writers (Swales 1990). One of the most challenging aspects for them is to decide how much to express their voice and how to do it (Flowerdew, 1999; Pho, 2012). Therefore, the different manifestations of authorial stance in academic writing have become the focus of attention in different disciplinary fields.

The aims of this study are: (1) to analyze the rhetorical structure employed in medical RA introductions of four different subdisciplines: Neurology, Oncology, Pediatrics and Psychiatry; (2) to explore the authorial stance markers used in the different parts of the introduction in the subfields under study; (3) to investigate whether there is any variation between the subfields.

To this end, I created a corpus of 120 medical RA introductions written in English from the four subdisciplines and published in 12 different journals. For the classification of the rhetorical structure, a top-down analysis was performed with a careful reading of each introduction to distinguish changes in the topic to aid coding. The software LancsBox 6.0 (Brezina, V., Weill-Tessier, P., & McEnery, A., 2020) was used to identify the authorial stance markers present in the introductions and a further close reading of each text was needed to identify linguistic manifestations not readily identifiable with the software.

The study combines quantitative and qualitative methods: it compares the frequency of use of the different moves and steps and stance markers in the four subdisciplines; and it describes the rhetorical structure of the RA introductions and the associated linguistic realizations of authorial stance.

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### Ana Eugenia Sancho Ortiz (Universidad de Zaragoza): “The Use of Twitter in Science Dissemination: First Steps in the Study of Knowledge Recontextualisation”

The consolidation of digital technologies as a vehicle for global communication has prompted an increasing interest in exploring the functionality of digital modes and media within specialised domains. Within these domains there stands out the field of science, in which online communication platforms have been conceived as convenient resources to expand the range of influence of scientific research among experts and non-experts and share specialised knowledge with multiple audiences. This has led to an ever-expanding ecology of –hybridised– digital genres in which scientific knowledge is recontextualised and remediatised.

Within this context, my doctoral dissertation is aimed to study the newly emerging digital practices adopted for the dissemination of scientific knowledge, focusing more specifically on the use of Twitter for this purpose. It intends to examine the process of recontextualisation of specialised knowledge when directed to diversified audience reached through social networking sites, as well as to identify the rhetorical, pragmatic, discursive and multimodal features that are prototypical in such digital practice(s). Similarly, it tries to explore identity-related issues by observing and analysing the disseminating patterns adopted by individual and corporative Twitter users and their connection to identity crafting. For this aim, this thesis departs from the compilation and analysis of the *HealthTweet* corpus, a selection of tweets from individual and corporative Twitter accounts for science dissemination dealing with physical-health-related issues. Such corpus will be approached from a working framework which combines various scholarly practices of direct impact in the study of digital discourse, namely, (digital) genre studies, pragmatics, multimodal analysis and digital discourse analysis, all of which will be completed with ethnographic research methodologies. Despite the early (first-year) stage of my thesis, certain research challenges are already being faced, such as issues of validity, generalisability and representativity both in the compilation of the corpus and the application of ethnographic methodologies

### Stella Ville (Universitat de les Illes Balears): “The Verbotonal Method for English Pronunciation Teaching”

**Introduction**

Pronunciation teaching has recently received much attention (Levis, 2015). Most English teachers, having little to no training in pronunciation, do not explicitly teach it, or make little use of methodological corrective procedures (Frost & Henderson, 2013). Furthermore, and increasingly since COVID-19, digital tools (e.g., CAPT), are being used, which often neglect key components of pronunciation in dynamic human-to-human interaction.

In the fifties, Guberina created a method for pronunciation teaching (Roberge, 2003) — and language teaching in general (1984) — that approached human communication holistically, including its social and physical dimensions. This “verbotonal” method (VTM), provides tools for speech modification. It eschews the use of meta-language and is embodied, rather than cognitive. VTM tools include work on *tension*, defined as the energy spent while creating sound, *timbre* (the subjective perception of pitch), and provides a set of techniques, all the while giving priority to prosody. Granting importance to affect (Bally, 1931), phonological deafness (Trubetzkoy, 1939) and enhanced by recent work on embodied pronunciation (Baills, 2022), VTM offers a compelling alternative to traditional pronunciation teaching. VTM is used in teaching French and other languages (Carrera-Sabaté, 2022),

and is used with deaf rehabilitation in English (Mildner, 2006), but little known in ESL, until now.

**Main objectives**

The objective of the study is to determine whether a pronunciation training course applying the principles of the verbotonal method could yield compelling results. If so, I hope to spread awareness of VTM in teaching and in research communities: it can be used to teach all languages, as it relies on

universal speech mechanisms, and both students and teachers respond very positively to this approach.

**Methodology**

The currentstudy was carried out in 2023 in Spain, where 85 A1-A2 Spanish native participants, aged 16 to 60 were trained with VTM. They received two 30-min sessions weekly, during their 2-hour classes. They completed a pre-test (reading, description, repetition) and a post-test after their 12-week course. Comprehensibility, fluency, and prosody were assessed. I also collected data from linguistic background questionnaires, including learning history and habits.

**Problems and challenges**

The first challenge is to adapt the principles of a method elaborated for French teaching to the teaching of English. Both languages differ very much in prosodic features, the sound repertoire they use and the way they use and combine them. Another challenge was to offer a syllabus that would be motivating for students with little to no background in second language learning, musical training, or particular interest for pronunciation. Finally, designing a protocol to assess and accurately represent the performances pre and post training of the participants was also challenging.

**Expected results**

We hope to observe a clear improvement in terms of prosodic features realization (lexical and nuclear stress, intonation, etc.), phonemes realization, fluency, and intelligibility. We also hope to demonstrate that this method has a positive impact of learners affects, which in turn enhances motivation.

# LITERATURE AND CULTURE

## Coord. Mª Dolores Herrero Granado (Universidad de Zaragoza) & Ana Mª Manzanas Calvo (Universidad de Salamanca)

### Carla Abella Rodríguez (Universidad de Salamanca): “Monitoring Blackness: Inhospitality in African American Literature”

My PhD thesis delves into the exercise of inhospitable practices under the form of surveillance in African American literature by analysing monitoring power structures in novels from the 21st century. The main goal is to explore the representation of violence against Blackness, with a focus on the violence exerted against Black women in these texts. To achieve this, the study seeks to anatomise the multiple means by which that monitoring and control over Blackness is exercised and the spaces where this violence takes place. Through an analysis of a corpus of literary works, it is argued that the Black body is embedded in discourses of control and violence.

The methodology of the project rests on the examination of contemporary African American narratives. The main challenge here is the diversity of subgenres of the texts in the pursuit of a more unified corpus. The study is anchored in a theoretical scaffolding where hospitality theory is in conversation with surveillance studies. Emmanuel Lévinas and Jacques Derrida’s philosophical tenets are at the core of the analysis, with an emphasis on the tension between hostility and hospitality. Surveillance studies allows the examination of the regulation and hostility against racialised subjects. More specifically, the thesis takes Michel Foucault and his theorisations on discipline as point of departure. From this analysis, I expect to map out anti-Blackness directed to Black women in contemporary African American fiction and unveil the specificities of this gendered violence.

### María Abizanda Cardona (Universidad de Zaragoza): “Reading the Posthuman at the Crossroads of Mistery and Speculative Fiction”

Under the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the subsumption of biology to scientific and technological manipulation has prompted a redefinition of humanity, looking toward the posthuman stage. This transition has been translated into literature, which plays a key role in shaping our sociotechnical imaginary. If technological breakthroughs had historically been circumscribed to speculative fiction, in the 21st century they have become so all-pervading that they have colonized other literary genres. A notable example is the cluster of novels combining the conventions of speculative and mystery fiction, which is gaining momentum in the literary market but remains unexplored by critical scholarship.

My doctoral dissertation aims to study the representation of the posthuman in this group of works, focusing on their critical depiction of the hallmark phenomena of the Fourth Industrial Revolution – human enhancement, neoliberalism, biopiracy, surveillance – and their effects on human subjectivity and social structures. Besides, it intends to chart the aesthetic models, motifs and techniques resulting from this generic crossbreeding. To this end, I focus on three recent American novels (Mur Lafferty's Six Wakes, Lincoln Michel’s The Body Scout and Rob Hart’s The Warehouse) and the hypertextual narrative Neurocracy. These works harness the formal and ideological conventions of different mystery novel subgenres to denounce the indexation of technoscientific development to transhumanist, neoliberal values, and spell alternatives pathways for a non-hierarchical, ethical posthumanity.

My approach to the corpus texts will combine formal analysis drawn from the tenets of postclassical narratology with a thematic or ideological reading grounded on critical posthumanism, a philosophical movement indebted to antihumanism, postanthropocentrism and new materialism. These perspectives will be coupled with genre studies, as both speculative and mystery fiction are conceived as indices of contemporary aspirations and anxieties, and powerful tools for intervention and dialectical exchange with material technoscientific development.

###  Cecília Almeida Rodrigues (Universidad de Valladolid): “‘At the Wall’: Sir Thomas Wyatt in Spain”

An erudite and an intrepid translator, the elusive poet Sir Thomas Wyatt was Henry VIII’s ambassador to Charles V’s peripatetic court from 1537 to 1541. The focus of my research is the two-year stint (1537-39) in Iberia, namely the nature and extent of its influence on his writing. The scarcity of literature on Wyatt’s Iberian connections beyond the diplomatic sphere is puzzling. There has been a predilection for Italian influences in English Renaissance studies to the detriment of other cultural spaces. Patricia Thomson’s *Sir Thomas Wyatt and his Background*, which constitutes the only book length study on Wyatt’s influences, exemplifies this bias. Notwithstanding her call for caution regarding Wyatt’s contacts with foreign scholars and poets, and the matter of influence,1 I contend that more recent studies on manuscript and print circulation in Iberia and by Iberian individuals writing in exile will open-up a fresh perspective on this matter.

Wyatt’s embassy elicits a survey drawing on history and cultural studies and I envisage the poems themselves at the core of the project, dictating the whole structure. Following Jason Powell’s forensic analysis of British Library Egerton 2711 MS, I have been considering a cluster of poems that can be dated to Wyatt’s sojourn in Spain or exhibit characteristics that suggest either a connection with Iberia or that they might have been entered in the manuscript during those ambassadorial years.

For the doctoral seminar I will present a paper on Egerton’s ‘Off cartage he’ (folio 54v), ‘So feble is the threde’(fols.67r-68v), ‘Tagus fare well’ (fol. 69r). Also, ‘When Dido festid first’ (fols.100r-101r; Arundel, fols. 99rv; Tottel, 127), which elicits a reflection on reading practices and on the function of the ‘poetic I’, namely in relation with the Homeric and Virgilian models. Finally, ‘Dido am I the founder first of Carthage’, the ‘unascribed’ strambotto in *Blage Trinity College Dublin MS.D.2.7*, since it is closer to peninsular takes on the topic than the two lines in Ausonius often suggested as source. In addition to being examples of Wyatt’s idiosyncratic concern with technique, autochthonous and foreign, returned into English, these poems enable a discussion on issues beyond the linguistic and literary spheres, namely history, diplomacy, philosophy— an intersection where one also finds Garcilaso, Boscán, and Mendoza, Wyatt’s Spanish coevals, moving boundaries.

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1 “to save any misunderstanding, it may be said at the outset that, from all Wyatt’s foreign travels, no record survives of meetings […] the modern student can speak only of opportunities and likelihoods, not established facts”; “Wyatt’s French and Spanish contacts are distinctly subordinate to his Italian ones, or, rather, they serve to reinforce the importance of the Italian […] certainly, wherever he went, between 1526 and 1540, the Italian influence was paramount”. Thomson, *Wyatt and his Background*, pp.53-54. For more recent approaches, see for instance ongoing academic multidisciplinary projects such as Networks of Exchange at the University of Valladolid <<http://www.estudiosingleses.com/networksexchange/en/presentation/sec/57/>> and TIDE an ERC funded project <<http://www.tideproject.uk/research/>> which have been focussing on mobility and cultural interchange.

### Luis Cañadilla Pons (Universidad Complutense de Madrid): “Dehumanization & De-gendering: Understanding Alzheimer’s Disease through its Representation in Contemporary North American Literature”

Forgetting is a common experience that affects our short- or long-term memory, but it is perceived differently when it results from a neurodegenerative disorder like Alzheimer's disease (AD). AD affects 57 million people worldwide with projections to reach 153 million by 2050, becoming a major public health concern (alzint.org). Accordingly, it has been labelled as an epidemic, infusing discourses of fear and dread towards the disease and stigmatising its patients. Discourses on dementia often dehumanize patients by framing it as a loss of personhood and idea that is often tied to gender and gendered intelligibility, leading to a twofold discrimination against AD patients. Hence, they are not only stripped of their humanity by being considered "undead," but also of their gender due to their inability to meet established standards. A reconceptualization of the portrayal of people with AD is thus needed to foster critical thinking, clinical empathy, and a better understanding of the disease.

In the study of AD and how its patients experience memory loss, literature becomes a valuable tool for answering urgent questions that cannot be answered through traditional modes of investigation (Block 2014). This thesis shows how fictionalizing personal experiences is a valuable contribution to the public discourse on AD, dementia studies, and critical medical humanities. To limit the scope of research, I will analyze the representation of AD in contemporary North American literature due to the deep obsession and unprecedented attention that has been given to memory in the United States for several decades (Basting 14). Indeed, AD has been used as a metaphor for the memory loss of a country that seems to forget its past (Garrigós 16). Ultimately, this study seeks to raise awareness about AD by analyzing its representation in selected literature, focusing on the importance of memory in relation to identity to expose the ethical component of the disease and aiming to help people with AD and their social environment.

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### María del Mar Coronado (Universidad Pablo de Olavide): “Is Shakespeare’s love Interpretation Bawdy? Research into the Influence of the Social Context in Translation”

My research aims to analyze how the context in which professional translators undertake their work influences the translation of bawdy aspects. In order to test this hypothesis, a comparison between several passages from *Romeo and Juliet* translated by Guillermo Macpherson (1875), Jaime Clark (1874), Manuel Ángel Conejero (1988) and Ángel Luis Pujante (2010) is provided. I discuss three issues. Firstly, I test whether the translation of Viñas-Suñols altered the original meaning of Shakespeare’s work. Secondly, I look into reasons why the four translators opted to modify and omit, or simply follow the source text. Thirdly, I check whether literary translation reflects social changes. To achieve these objectives, my analysis identifies which literary translation techniques described by Hurtado-Albir and Molina (2002) were used by each translator, what textuality criteria has guided their translations established by De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) and what socio-cultural particularities they contain.

My research also discusses some background of how the social context affects literary criticism, translation theory and literary translation by exploring the history of Spanish Shakespearean translation, by explaining how cultural translation is undertaken and, finally, by illustrating how several national and international translators translate sexual and bawdy language both generally and in Romeo and Juliet. My preliminary conclusions show that the historical period in which a translator lives influences his work due to the writing conditions, censorship, the need to adapt to the reader’s cultural circumstances and the authors’ popularity.

Macpherson and Clark’s translations, which are characterized by its omissions, adaptations and variations, would have been affected either due to literary censorship or because of his desire to avoid damaging the growing popularity of Shakespeare in Spain in the 19th century. Conversely, Conejero and Pujante’s translations, which are faithful representations of the Shakespearean work, does not conceal the sexual side of the universal tragedy.

### Claudia García Pajín (Universidad de Oviedo): “From ‘Angry Young Men’ to ‘Angry Young Women’: The Evolution of ‘Anger’ in Anglo-American Contemporary Literature”

Under the provisional title of “From ‘Angry Young Men’ to ‘Angry Young Women’: The Evolution of ‘Anger’ in Anglo-American Contemporary Literature”, the study will focus on analysing how recent mainstream literature has been revolving around the idea of female anger or ‘rage’, and how that connects back to the British 1950s when male anger was the main theme of popular literature as seen with the great commercial success of the Angry Young Men. The study intends to pinpoint how and why that evolution in contemporary literature has taken place, and how the topic of rage is represented differently when seen from the perspective of gender.

The study will be undertaken from the framework of Cultural Studies – particularly through the cultural contexts of gender, class, ethnicity, and age – and through textual and discourse analysis methods. It intends to map out the intertextuality of anger through contemporary literature but also to link the texts to the material conditions of their production, mainly through Marxist literary criticism.

The corpus will expand from the 1950s to the 2020s, establishing the first limit with the rise of the Angry Young Men and the second one with the upsurge of literary works that feature female anger as their main theme. The main challenge of the research will precisely be this: the novelty of female anger in mainstream literature and the difficulty of grasping its evolution as it is occurring. Its novelty might also be its greatest point of interest, though, as the ultimate goal of this study is to group all of these new writings by women dealing with female rage into a cohesive new movement or literary group formed by a wide range of female voices.

### Ángela Gómez García (Universidad de Cantabria/Universidade de Santiago de Compostela): “*Everything about me invites you in*: An Introduction to the Monster and its Creation; Masculinities and Viewer Reception in *Dracula*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *Fifty Shades of Grey* and *After*”

As a result of the premiere of Coppola’s film, many dissertations were written on the topic of the monster and *Dracula* (1992), its iconography, and even queer perspectives. But there is an unsolved need for how this monster was created and how it was transformed by the viewers into an object of desire. Dracula became the face of a different kind of monster, capable of neutralising some of the aspects that canonically defined the monster. This is of high importance as it has become popular in the current society where it happens with monsters per se, as in *The Vampire Diaries* (2009-2017) but also with some human characters as in *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2015-2019) and *After* (2019-2023).

The analysis I am carrying out tackles how monsters, which used to convey fear, convey desire now, as readers and viewers end up feeling compassion and sympathy for them. At the same time, somehow their aura of sinister power, based on rooted rules from the yet patriarchal society, spawns some degree of desire from the audience who, although rejecting those masculinities, seems to be eager to see these monsters embodying them.

With this project, I intend to answer how the monster is constructed and perceived by the audience through a cultural and psychological perspective to understand why it becomes object and subject of desire. Altogether and based on gender studies, I am also trying to understand how the rather feminine audiences interact with the monster and how it reinforces rooted existent masculinities in society. The answers for these questions will critically explain or not the relationship that apparently exists among these human-like monsters and the reasons why these societies would choose a monster over a normal human.

### Rosa Haro Fernández (Universidad de Málaga): “Female Attachment in Contemporary Fiction in English”

The main objective of my doctoral dissertation is the analysis of complex female characters and relationships in a selected corpus of novels. Most of them are from the 21st century, potential choices being Eliza Clark’s *Boy Parts* (2020), Ottessa Moshfegh’s *Eileen* (2015), Liane Moriarty’s *Big Little Lies* (2014) or Melissa Broder’s *Milk Fed* (2021); and one of them from the 80s/90s –either *Cat’s Eye* (1988) or *The Robber Bride* (1993) by Margaret Atwood– in order to compare the contemporary ones with one from earlier in the tradition of complex female relationships in fiction in English.

Specific objectives include an in-depth study of the tradition of fiction where psychologically complex female characters and relationships represent are central to the story, the analysis of a corpus of contemporary novels (and one from the 80s/90s) of this kind and the detailed study of the theoretical and critical perspectives chosen for the textual analysis.

As critical framework, I am using feminist psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin’s theory of intersubjectivity, which revolves around the process of mutual recognition and is based on the concepts of *recognition* and *destruction*, and her interpretation of the dynamics of domination. Furthermore, I am carrying out my analysis from a gender perspective and therefore will link it with the dynamics of the patriarchal society.

### Inés Hernández Martínez (Universidad de Oviedo): “Welcoming Dissidences through Fiction: What’s Left when Normative Relationships Are Dead?”

“Welcoming Dissidences through Fiction: What’s Left when Normative Relationships Are Dead?” is the prospective title for my thesis, in which I study the representation of ethical non-monogamies in Anglophone fiction ─mainly focusing on literature and the role Relationship Anarchy has in some novels. This approach has at its basis the Western construction of romantic love and how it has been questioned lately by dissident discourses that reject the established white heterosexual monogamous model ─both of love and family. It is my goal, then, to find in literature non‑normative relational models in which readers can find a reflection of their own realities, more and more diverse than they used to be.

At the same time, it is key to state how difficult it has been to find fiction on this topic in which non‑monogamies are not treated as a incidental, “just a phase”, from a comedic perspective, and so on; which is exactly the point of view I want to distance myself from. In fact, the two novels that will be the focus of my dissertation (*The Giddy Death of the Gays & the Strange Demise of Straights* (2015),written by English author Redfern Jon Barrett, and *Love You Two* (2008), by Italo‑Australian author and researcher Maria Pallotta‑Chiarolli) were that hard to get that they have been provided by their authors themselves.

In order to come up with dissident relationship styles and their models as reflected in fictional literature I am applying theories of affect, theories of emotion, classical conceptions of romantic love with their consequent deconstruction, and theories on new relationship models, such as polyamory and relationship anarchy. From this analysis it is my goal to present a comprehensive study on how fiction offers tools and plausive examples away from the norm in which dissident individuals can see themselves reflected.

### María López González (UNED): “‘Other Indias’: Heterodox Visions and Representations in Indo-Anglian or Anglo-Indian Writing in English”

Being half local and half foreign, Anglo-Indians embody the burden of the British Empire in India. Cosmopolitanism was natural for them, a logical result of their cultural, and sometimes racial, syncretism, while their language, despite being inherited by their foreign forefathers, needed to adjust to represent new local realities or perspectives. On the one hand, their dual belonging or cultural affiliation has taken its toll on them at several levels: in Menen's case, oblivion, in Sealy's, the fact that Salman Rushdie's work has overshadowed his own, which is scarcely known in the West. On the other hand, the use of satire or humor allows them to demystify and relativize, an exercise of post-modernity that many others have followed, especially when referring to episodes of discrimination or controversial chapters in Indian history. The so-called Indo-Anglian or Anglo-Indian writers (in some cases simply because they write in English or due to their condition of diasporic) are a perfect example of "uncomfortable subalterns", which neither Indian critics have been interested in (for being a group that did not hide its British, i.e. oppressive and colonial, heritage, even if this was only literary or cultural), nor colonial studies (by extending the concept of subaltern to a group which is certainly a minority and which, despite having a voice, in many cases it has been silenced or questioned because of a presumed "lack of authenticity" which is justified on essentialist grounds).

Thus, this research will consider very well-known works of internationally acclaimed authors along with a deeper analysis of others that have been almost ignored (such as Aubrey Menen, Irwin Alan Sealy or Ruskin Bond) as to enhance the importance of such works from a new post-colonial vantage point while studying the reasons for the obscurity they have remained in, despite their relevance as postmodern and postcolonial writings and, moreover, their underlying influence in other major, reputed authors.

Cultural and Postcolonial Studies, as well as Postmodern critical approaches and terminology, will be used to disentangle the current critical trends and controversies, whereby some authors are validated or rejected according to their origins, their ideological standpoint, or their place of residence. The selection of the texts is varied and covers a broad time span that starts before Independence, with the writings of Aubrey Menen (1947), and reaches into very recent novels, such as Gods and Ends(2021), written by Lindsay Pereira. Through Discourse and Textual Analysis, this research will try to unveil the different representations of the diverse Indian identities that remain hidden under the restrictive label of “Anglo Indian Writing”.

### Olalla López Muñoz (Universidad de Oviedo): “The Passions and Affects of Female Characters in Ian McEwan’s *Atonement*”

The main objective of this research is to explore some characteristics of the affective domain in women’s life during the first half of the twentieth century, with special attention to love, guilt and the intellectual passions. The period was inexorably defined by technological advances, industrial development and world wars, but it also marked the beginning of the process of liberation for women in some western countries. Since sharp dichotomies and the positivist paradigm were being progressively left behind, feelings and emotions began to be understood as potential elements of social analysis, and not belonging exclusively to the realm of fiction.

In order to achieve an analysis which allows an immanent study of the literary works but still considers the sociocultural context in which the argument unravels, an interdisciplinary approach combining the History of Emotions and Narratology will be used. The passions and affects of the female characters in *Atonement* (2001) and *The Innocent* (1990) will be the main target of analysis, as well as the type of language used to express their emotional experience. The hypothesis that triggers the investigation is that these characters’ emotions also own a social and collective dimension. Given the fact that both novels are set around the great wars that took place in the first half of the last century, a comparative analysis will be carried out with the aim of finding similarities that can relate the practical-corporal disposition with socially and culturally constructed discourses. These issues will be also considered – less exhaustively – for the male characters in the stories to compare both perspectives.

Among others, the specific objectives include an overview of the British literary scene as well as fieldwork and archival research in order to find women’s private correspondence during that historical period or fictional texts which contain manifestations of emotional experience.

### Marta Martín Amor (Universidad de Alcalá): “The Construction of the Female Experience in Contemporary Feminist Irish Drama”

Throughout the last few decades, a new wave of female playwrights has carved their place within the Irish dramatic scene to challenge the way often controversial topics –female sexuality, family dysfunctionality, motherhood, sexual abuse– have previously been depicted from a uniquely male perspective. Authors like Marina Carr, Emma Donoghue, Anne Le Marquand Hartigan or Lizzie Nunnery have reshaped the way female characters and their experiences have been portrayed on stage. Therefore, they have contributed to make theatre a genre that is increasingly more aware of issues regarding female and gender oppression, and to help give visibility to complex female experiences and struggles, attempting to expose, criticise, and even subvert the ever–present male bias when it comes to the representation of women in drama.

Thus, this research will carry out a comparative analysis between the abovementioned dramatists and their works, seeking out the way they all, in their own way, employ drama to highlight, explore, and challenge gender tropes and female archetypal characterization. This study will explore the construction and representation of female characters and the development of arguments and discourses related to gender issues and female oppression in the context of contemporary feminist Irish drama. Moreover, it will delve into the influence that the proposed playwrights have had –and continue to have– in the present and future Irish dramatic landscape. Fundamentally, both gender and feminist criticism will be employed as the baseline for the analysis. In addition, for a more specific approach to Irish drama, key contributions from experts in the field will be employed, particularly those regarding the analysis of family dysfunctionality.

Hopefully, the results will shed some light on female contemporary drama which has been, more often than not, overlooked in both the scholarship and the canon, and to explore the way these dramatists have contributed to a genre that had been previously, and almost exclusively, monopolized by men.

**Key words:** feminist drama; Irish drama; familial dysfunctionality; feminist criticism; female playwrights.

### Guillem Mas Solé (Universitat de Lleida): “Of Time and Existence: A Study of Existentialist Constructions of Old Age in English Reinaissance Texts”

The purpose of playing –as well as that of the stage– Shakespeare affirmed, is “to hold, as ‘twere, a mirror up to nature”. The popularity that theatre has had –and still has– amongst people throughout the centuries has given this form of entertainment the ability to greatly influence the viewers’ conception of many social, political and cultural issues, including their own identity markers. Therefore, the public’s notions of age and ageing are clearly part and parcel of this mediated influence. The theatre not only has the ability to reflect the world, but is also capable of generating new forms of thought. The dramatic works produced during the English Renaissance –a period characterised by having witnessed profound religious, political and social transformations– constitute a clear example of this dual capacity.

The PhD research that is being proposed is conceived under the title: “Of Time and Existence: A Study of Existentialist Constructions of Old Age in English Renaissance Playtexts.” By exploring the dramatic constructions of old age reflected in a limited corpus of English plays produced from 1560 to 1625, this study aims to examine how the process of ageing –as well as the condition of “being old” – can be understood from both a cultural and historical point of view. At the same time, it intends to deduce (proto-)existentialist characteristics already present in the Renaissance context, advancing what would become, centuries later, the fully-fleshed philosophy of existentialism. Therefore, this thesis attempts to offer a (re)reading of Early Modern playtexts from this under-examined double lens (that is, combining ageing studies with the existentialist school of thought). Moreover, it intends to build a theoretical corpus of philosophically-attuned texts and treatises on old age with the intention to facilitate the tracing and comprehension of the intellectual development of the notion of ageing throughout the history of European thought.

This project is thus registered, on the one hand and mainly, within Ageing Studies, which already offers a methodological, theoretical and interdisciplinary framework. Such lens has proved to be rich and suitable enough for the development of case study analyses focusing on representations and constructions of old age (as established by the works of Thomas Cole, Jan Baars, Paul Higgs and Christ Gilleard, to name a few.) On the other hand, the second referential framework of the thesis is formed by the extant investigations that have explored the existentialist thinking within theatre studies (such as those of Ewan Fernie, Andy Mousley and Peter Holbrook, amongst others).

The chief outcome of this thesis is therefore to contribute to the emerging current of ageing studies through the different character analyses taken from dramatic works little or not considered from this field of study. Ultimately, this research contributes to challenging and questioning the stereotypical images of older people that have been generated in post-industrial societies, where productivity models have favoured a marginal and reductive view of old age. At the same time, the study of existentialist philosophy through theatre contributes to a much more direct and accessible transfer of knowledge than that which can be promoted from other areas. With these aims, the proposed research seeks to become a source of dissemination in philosophy, applicable to dramatic literature studies and humanities studies in general, at different levels.

### Lidón Prades Yerves (Universitat Jaume I): “The Use of Exempla in Middle English Arthurian Literature”

Exempla are short, edifying narratives appearing in the sermons of mediaeval preachers. As the use of these stories became widespread, they appeared in new contexts and acquired an increasingly literary form. In England, the so-called “literary exemplum” (Scanlon, 2017) was mostly cultivated in vernacular poetry, including the works of Lydgate, Chaucer or Gower. Exempla were also employed in the Arthurian romances produced in Middle English; however, the presence of exempla in this branch of vernacular literature has received scant scholarly attention.

The present research intends to study the presence of exempla in a body of Middle English Arthurian romances with two aims: first, to shed some light on the phenomenon of hybridisation between exemplary literature and Arthurian romance; and second, to record and classify the presence of exempla in Middle English literature, through their inclusion in the database1 being developed at GREMI2, which complements the work of databases that do not cover Middle English works, such as the *Thesaurus Exemplorum Medii Aevi*3, produced by the *Groupe d’Anthropologie Historique de l’Occident Médiéval*.

With this aim, a corpus of Middle English Arthurian romances will be analysed so as to identify the exempla contained in them, establish the sources of those exempla, and trace the path of transmission from the sources to the works under scrutiny. The texts analysed are Middle English romances featuring ghostly apparitions, a common element in exempla narrations, including the works “*The Awntyrs off Arthure*”, “*Sir Amadace*” and “*The Stanzaic Morte Arthure*”. The results obtained in this analysis will help to clarify the ways in which exempla were used in different contexts and for different audiences, taking into consideration issues such as the use of positive versus negative exempla, or the exploitation of corporeal versus ethereal supernatural figures.

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1 <https://exemplum.frasor.es/>

2 [Research group for Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies](https://www.uji.es/serveis/ocit/base/grupsinvestigacio/detall/?urlRedirect=https://www.uji.es/serveis/ocit/base/grupsinvestigacio/detall/&url=/serveis/ocit/base/grupsinvestigacio/detall&codi=242)

3 <http://thema.huma-num.fr/>

### Paula Rustarazo Garzón (Universidad de Málaga): “Maternity, Fertility and Loss in Contemporary Memoir and Fiction”

This research considers how the experiences of miscarriage and unwanted childlessness affect women. My main objective with this study is to provide visibility to the difficulties that women who have had to deal with these traumatic events face, and to show in what ways Western society limits and shapes how they can grieve and continue living with the new, unwanted reality they are in. In order to carry out this analysis, I consider several contemporary memoirs and works of fiction, and examine them through a feminist philosophy mainly based on phenomenology, which allows me to understand how the traumatic realities of miscarriage and childlessness affect women’s sense of identity, and body studies, which in turn encourage the understanding of reality as experienced through the physical body and, thus, as something that is deeply affected by the presence or absence of pregnancy, or its loss. Due to the wide scope of this research, I have decided to limit it to consider white women who are trying to conceive. It remains relevant to represent varied realities of pregnancy or lack thereof, a gap that will surely be overcome in future research. I anticipate that this study will further consolidate the similarities in concerns and needs that these women experience, and will encourage further research on miscarriage and childlessness.

### Asunción Sánchez Padilla (Universidad Complutense de Madrid): “Ideological Reception of Translated LGBTI+ Theatre in the Post-Franco Era: British and American Plays on the Spanish Stage”

My research focuses on the analysis of translated LGTBI+ plays on stage after Franco's death and their reception. Starting from a background of previous censorship, where every literary work was submitted to the censorship apparatus established, my aim is to analyse how it has affected plays which feature LGBTI+ topics or characters on Spanish translations that were represented on stage from both British and American authors. Therefore, this study focuses on two marginalised groups: theatre translations within the field of translation studies, and LGBTI+ plays, which are largely ignored in comparison to heteronormative works. Although the research is in the beginning stages, I am building a theoretical framework based on investigations on translated theatre, translated *queer* works and *queer* theory. I will also be drawing on general censorship literature, and specific censorship in Spain, to establish the historical and sociological background. I am building a corpus of British and American plays that are considered LGBTI+ and were translated and performed on Spanish stages. For this reason, I will be utilising the original texts and the available translated texts put on stage. When possible, I will watch the recordings of the original plays thanks to the public archives but, due to the fleeting nature of performed theatre, these recordings are not always available, so I will also be using reviews from critics in different media like newspapers or magazines to analyse the response of the public. As the research is in its preliminary stages, expected results are still unclear, but I hope to establish a pattern of LGBTI+ plays translated and performed after Franco's death, whether the audience response was better and less censored, and whether lesbian representation is minor to gay representation in the selected plays.

### Clara Sánchez Trigo (Universidad de Málaga): “Re-orienting Emotions and Affect in Contemporary Literature and Videogames”

My doctoral project explores this question to better understand how stories convey emotion and move its audience. Inspired by the renewed scholarly interest in emotions and affect, I wish to look into the relationship between the work, the receiver and authorial intention with a focus on feelings.

Rita Felski has recently explored the bond between reader and work in terms of attachment and identification in *Hooked: Art and Attachment* (2020), and emphasizes that not only content, but also aesthetic devices and personal experience play a significant role. I approach the emotional relationship between artwork and receiver by comparing two media –literature and videogames– that allow for narrative storytelling while each offering very different affordances. I wish to analyse what features make the works in my corpus moving and which of them are specific to each medium or, if any, common to both literature and videogames. I use affect theory, especially regarding the concepts of orientation and assemblage, to analyse emotivity in my corpus.

My preliminary corpus finds unity both in the time period, as it comprises works released in the last ten to fifteen years, and in its topic, as the works in my preliminary selection all revolve around families, memory and intergenerational relationships and trauma. With these elements in common, I try to elucidate what sets them apart in affective terms. The videogames selected so far are all narrative-driven games, namely, *What Remains of Edith Finch* (2017), *Gone Home* (2013), *The Suicide of Rachel Foster* (2020), *Dear Esther* (2017) and *The Beginner’s Guide* (2015). The literary works combine poetry and short stories, such as the poems by Rupi Kaur and the narrative by Penelope Lively in *Family Album* (2009) and *The Purple Swamp Hen and Other Stories* (2017), and by Margaret Atwood in *Moral Disorder* (2006) and *Old Babes in the Wood (*2023).

### Iria Seijas Pérez (Universidade de Vigo): “Queering Girlhood: Lesbian and Bisexual Female Protagonists in Contemporary Irish Young Adult Literature in English”

In recent years, Irish Young Adult –YA– literature has seen a remarkable increase in its number of publications and popularity (see Cahill 2020). While in its early years this was marked by a reluctance to address subjects that were deemed controversial or inappropriate for young readers (see Kennon 2020), current Irish YA literature tackles a wide variety of topics, including the representation of queer sexualities. My research project aims to analyse YA literature with lesbian and bisexual protagonists written in English by Irish women, in order to provide a critical assessment of the representation of the lives of lesbian and bisexual teenage girls in Ireland, and to evaluate the social changes that Ireland has experienced concerning the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, among other objectives. A set of criteria were established to select the texts that would conform the corpus of analysis, taking into account the aspects that were of particular interest for this research. The methodology that will be followed in order to carry out this research is based on critical and comparative readings of critical studies and analyses on YA literature and LGBTQ+ narratives, as well as it will build on queer and feminist theories, as these offer the necessary perspective to approach the main research theme of this project. Currently, the main challenge is the scarcity of studies that focus specifically on Irish YA literature, and more so on the representation of sexuality within this literary category, as these are few. As for the results of this research project, it is expected that the analysis of the texts will reveal how Irish YA literature has developed in recent years regarding its representation of queer sexualities and how this approaches the lives and experiences of the LGBTQ+ community in a contemporary Ireland.

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### Paula Serrano Elena (Universidad de Zaragoza): “Motherhood and Mental Health in Post-pandemic North-American Literature: An Analysis of *Nightbitch* by Rachel Yoder”

The experience of motherhood in the early 21st century is characterized by its extraordinary complexity. The mother must adapt to a normative role reduced, broadly speaking, to two options: the updated version of *The Angel in the House* –a term coined by Coventry Patmore in 19th century Victorian England– and the *Superwoman*, which involves the subjugation to excessive demands and unattainable expectations both at work and home (Badinter, 2013). It is not surprising that the impossibility of adapting to these idealized and unrealistic images causes critical effects on the mental health of women mothers (Crowley Jack 2010), recently exacerbated, moreover, as a result of the post-pandemic context. Addressing the complex relationship between motherhood and mental suffering is therefore particularly relevant at this time. It is also important to tackle it as a structural and political problem, that is, as part of an established ideological system, and not the responsibility of individuals, who do not have the solution in their own hands. In sight of all this, the present paper analyzes the interrelation of motherhood and mental health in the novel *Nightbitch* (2021) by the North American writer Rachel Yoder. The book is about a mother who, alone at home with her newborn son while her husband works out of town, feels like she is turning into a dog. More particularly, I will examine the sum of inequalities, pressures, expectations, demands and ideals that ultimately lead the mother to this transformation in the purest Kafkaesque style. By doing so, I intend to illustrate the formulation of a defiant discourse on motherhood which, as I contend, proves the existence of a new literary and artistic trend that is worth studying in depth.

### Sara Tabuyo Santaclara (Universidade de Vigo): “Girlhood as a Methodology: An Innovative Approach to *The Handmaid’s Tale* Universe”

Margaret Atwood’s dystopian fiction *The Handmaid’s Tale* has gained immense popularity with the release of its series adaptation in 2017, followed by the publication of the sequel, *The Testaments*. The show expanded the scope of the narrative to incorporate new perspectives, including those of young girls in the dystopian world. Despite academic attention paid to the series adaptation and some focus on *The Testaments*, the cultural representations of girlhood in both materials remain largely unexplored. In *The Testaments*, Atwood delves deep into Gilead’s regulations of “girl-making” (Bloustien 2004), while *The Handmaid’s Tale* series includes depictions of girlhood that challenge and contest the codes imposed by the regime. This presentation will provide a general overview of the analysis that will be carried out in my PhD thesis. Using girlhood as an interdisciplinary methodology that seeks to avoid creating a discourse of a homogenized view on girls’ lives (Mitchell, Reid-Walsh & Kirk 2008, X), this discussion will focus on the main issues raised in *The Handmaid’s Tale* universe regarding depictions of girls. On the one hand, they experience the regulation of their embodied experiences through gendered categories created by those in power; on the other, the quality of girlhood as a liminal phase opens up a space to question and potentially transform the boundaries of the dominant culture (Bellas 2017, 20).

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