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table of contents

Articles

15

LEAH GEOGHEGAN
(Universidad de la Rioja)

Lexical Availability in Multilingual CLIL: Gender-dependent Differences in English and French

Disponibilidad léxica en AICLE multilingüe: Diferencias dependientes del género en inglés y francés

39

PATRICIA MARTÍN MATAS
(Comillas Universidad Pontifica)

Translating the Representation of Malabo in the United States and Spain: The case of Paul Theroux's *The Lower River*

La representación de Malabo traducida a los Estados Unidos y España: El caso de *En Lower River* de Paul Theroux

61

MARÍA MÉNDEZ RUIZ
(Universidad de Granada)

Stress Shift in Noun-Verb Conversion Pairs: The case of *Import*^{N}-*Import*^{V} Pairs

El cambio de posición del acento en parejas de conversión nombre-verbo: El caso de parejas como *import*^{N}-*import*^{V}

Articles

87

Mª ÁNGELES ESCOBAR-ÁLVAREA
(Universidad Nacional a Distancia, UNED)

Language for Specific Purposes and Audio Description Tasks: A Case Study

Lenguaje de especialidad y tareas de audio descripción: Un estudio de caso

111

SARAH CARÉ
(Universidad de Jaén)

Female Animal Characters in Roald Dahl's Children's Books: A Feminist Approach

Personajes femeninos en los libros infantiles de Roald Dahl: Un enfoque feminista

131

CRISTINA CRUZ GUTIÉRREZ
(Universitat de les Illes Balears)

The Affective Forces of the State: Overcoming Biographies of Violence in Yejide Kilanko's *Daughters Who Walk this Path*

Las fuerzas afectivas del estado: Superando las biografías de violencia en *Daughters Who Walk this Path*, de Yejide Kilanko

151

VÍCTOR HUERTAS-MARTÍN
(Universitat de València)

"Some kind of peace will follow": Archivism and Anarchivism in Shakespearean Appropriations in *Rome* (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005-2007)

"Algún tipo de paz vendrá después": Archivismo y anarchivismo en las apropiaciones Shakespearianas en *Rome* (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005-2007)

175

MAURICIO D. AGUILERA LINDE
(Universida de Granada)

“A picayune fragment of the possible total”: Stone Allegories in Saroyan’s Life-Writing

“Un fragmento insignificante del posible total”: Alegorías de piedra en la escritura autobiográfica de William Saroyan

193

SILVIA PÉREZ CASTELO
(Universidad de Oviedo)

The Reciprocal Relationship between the City and its Subjects in Sam Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* and Dionne Brand’s *What We All Long For*

La relación recíproca entre la ciudad y sus habitantes en *The Lonely Londoners* de Sam Selvon y *What We All Long For* de Dionne Brand

211

ANTONIO CASTRO BALBUENA
(Universidad de Almería)

El arquetipo heroico femenino en la fantasía épica contemporánea. Daenerys Targaryen, heroína implacable y madre de dragones

The Feminine Heroic Archetype in Contemporary Epic Fantasy. Daenerys Targaryen, Relentless Heroine and Mother of Dragons

Reviews

233

PALOMA FRESNO CALLEJA
(Universitat de les Illes Balears)

María Isabel González Cruz (ed.): *Discourses and Identities in Romance Fiction. Anglophone Visions from Madeira and the Canaries*. Málaga/Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2022

239

SUSANA-LUISA COSTA-OTERO
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Stefania M. Maci, Michele Sala (eds.): *Corpus Linguistics and Translation Tools for Digital Humanities: Research Methods and Applications*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022

245

ANDREEA ROSCA
(Universitat de València)

Tamara Bouso: *Changes in Argument Structure: The Transitivizing Reaction Object Construction.* Bern: Peter Lang, 2021

Notes for contributors

251

Acknowledgements

261

Articles

LEXICAL AVAILABILITY IN MULTILINGUAL CLIL: GENDER-DEPENDENT DIFFERENCES IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

DISPONIBILIDAD LÉXICA EN AICLE MULTILINGÜE: DIFERENCIAS DEPENDIENTES DEL GÉNERO EN INGLÉS Y FRANCÉS

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Abstract

It has been suggested that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) positively affects learners' content-related vocabulary. While CLIL has become increasingly popular throughout Spain, the language of instruction in this learning environment has predominantly been English, largely to the neglect of other languages. Calls have consequently been made to conduct comparative research across other languages to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of CLIL irrespective of the language of instruction. In addition, female learners have been found to outperform males in areas of vocabulary such as lexical availability (LA) in English. However, given suggestions that CLIL may blur gender differences, it is unclear whether this difference is also found in a multilingual CLIL context. This study thus aims to determine whether an English advantage is observed in LA in a multilingual CLIL environment, and whether this advantage varies in male and female learners. Results indicate that there is a clear dominance in English over French, regardless of gender. However, analysis across different grades reveals that CLIL instruction has a clear effect on the students' LA in different languages, but in different ways for male and female learners. The findings are of key importance to CLIL stakeholders wishing to support male and female learners in multilingual classrooms.

Keywords: content and language integrated learning, gender, lexical availability, English as a foreign language, French as a foreign language.

Resumen

Se ha indicado que el Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) tiene efectos positivos en el aprendizaje del vocabulario relacionado con el contenido. No obstante, aunque el AICLE haya crecido a gran escala por toda España, la gran mayoría de los programas se imparten en inglés y se han desatendido en gran medida los idiomas distintos del inglés. Por eso, se ha hecho un llamamiento a la investigación comparativa de diferentes lenguas meta, con el fin de comprender las fortalezas y debilidades de AICLE independientemente de la lengua del programa. Además, la investigación sobre género y disponibilidad léxica ha comprobado que las alumnas suelen obtener mejores promedios de respuestas que los alumnos. Sin embargo, dado que se ha sugerido que un contexto AICLE tiene la capacidad de desdibujar las diferencias de género, se necesita más investigación para entender si la instrucción AICLE afecta a esta ventaja, o si los alumnos y las alumnas obtienen promedios parecidos. Por consiguiente, este estudio pretende analizar la disponibilidad léxica en un contexto AICLE para determinar si existe una ventaja en inglés y si esta ventaja depende del género. Los resultados indican diferencias claras entre la disponibilidad en inglés y francés, con ventaja del inglés, independientemente del género. No obstante, un análisis transversal indica que la instrucción AICLE tiene un fuerte impacto en la disponibilidad léxica en cada idioma, pero de manera distinta para las chicas y los chicos. Los hallazgos son de suma importancia para quienes quieran apoyar a las alumnas y los alumnos en un aula multilingüe.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas extranjeras, género, disponibilidad léxica, inglés como lengua extranjera, francés como lengua extranjera.

1. Introduction

The rise of English as a global language has had a remarkable impact on the field of language learning. Not only has its importance led to a notable increase in the number of learners studying the language, but it has also vastly overshadowed the study of languages other than English (LOTEs) (Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie 2017). One teaching context where this is particularly evident is that of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). While CLIL approaches were originally introduced into European classrooms with the aim of promoting multilingualism, English has clearly dominated as the language of instruction (San Isidro 2018). This is so much the case that some definitions of CLIL neglect entirely the possibility that LOTEs may be used. For example, Lyster and Ballinger (2011) suggest that one of the key differences between immersion and CLIL is that, although both integrate content and language instruction, immersion does so in languages other than only English. Graddol also neglects the possibility of LOTEs in CLIL, noting that "CLIL is an approach to bilingual education in which both curriculum content —such as Science or Geography— and *English* are taught together" (2006: 86, emphasis added). Given this prevalence of English, Dalton-Puffer (2011) has even suggested that it would perhaps make more sense to refer to the approach as CEIL, that is, Content and English Integrated Learning.

Within a multilingual context whereby CLIL instruction is delivered in English as well as another target language (TL), there are two factors which are of central interest. Firstly, it has been suggested that vocabulary is crucial in a CLIL context, particularly in terms of content-related vocabulary (Heras and Lasagabaster 2015). However, in some areas of vocabulary research, such as lexical availability (LA), there have been calls to provide evidence of the relationship between the vocabulary to which students are exposed and the vocabulary they are able to produce, for example, by measuring production in LA prompts which are actually linked to the content subject (Canga Alonso 2017). Secondly, regarding gender, female students have often been found to outperform male students in terms of vocabulary, potentially due to higher language learning motivation (Agustín Llach and Fernández Fontecha 2014). However, recent research indicates that this advantage may depend on the teaching context at hand (Gallardo-del-Puerto and Blanco-Suárez 2021). In addition, this research has largely focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL), with a clear lack of studies on LOTEs.

The present study intends to address these two issues in a multilingual CLIL context. Firstly, it aims to investigate learners' LA in English and French using content-related prompts, to determine whether there is indeed an English advantage over French. Secondly, it seeks to determine whether this advantage varies in male and female learners in each TL.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Lexical Availability in Multiple Target Languages

LA is generally assessed by means of the lexical availability task (LAT), a paper-and-pencil questionnaire in which participants are given a prompt and asked to write down any words which come to mind in two minutes (e.g. animals: dog, cat, bird, etc.). One of the clear advantages of this task is that it provides an extremely valuable indication of learners' lexical resources and, additionally, allows researchers to obtain this data in a straightforward, economical way (Jiménez Catalán and Fitzpatrick 2014). Nevertheless, while LA is well understood to be an integral part of lexical and communicative competence, there has been a clear scarcity of LA research in foreign language learning and even less in vocabulary studies (Jiménez Catalán 2014a). This is particularly so in terms of EFL, not to mention LOTEs, as LA research thus far has largely focused on L2 Spanish (Martínez-Adrián and Gallardo-del-Puerto 2017).

Over the last decade, however, LA research addressing EFL alongside LOTEs has begun to take form. For example, Šifrar Kalan (2014) investigated the LA of university students of English (*n* = 20) or Spanish (*n* = 20) in a Slovenian context. Results indicated that, although there were similarities in the productivity of different prompts, slightly higher means were found among those studying English. In a Spanish context, Santos Díaz (2017) also addressed the LA of university students, measuring production in both the participants' mother tongue, Spanish, and a TL, either English (*n* = 150) or French (*n* = 21). While results understandably indicated that the highest means were observed in participants' mother tongue, they also revealed that those in the EFL group obtained a higher mean (261.67) than those in the French as a Foreign Language (FFL) group (221.23). Finally, Sandu and Konstantinidi (2021) assessed LA in different learners who had visited a TL country, but who came from two distinct contexts, namely, upper-secondary school students of Spanish in Romania and university students of English in Spain. Although each group had comparable language levels, it was found that the EFL students again produced a higher number of tokens than those studying Spanish. While this research by and large suggests that there is an English advantage in terms of LA, it should be noted that these studies have compared different groups of students, rather than assessing the same cohort of students simultaneously studying English alongside a LOTE. They have also largely focused on university students, with a scarcity of research on secondary education. In addition, research has yet to address this issue in a multilingual CLIL context in which the same participants take content classes in more than one TL. It is thus necessary to specifically address these gaps by carrying out research which compares the LA of the same cohort of secondary CLIL school students in two TLs: English and a LOTE.

2.2. Lexical Availability and Gender

In addition to the English advantage discussed above, another key factor which is thought to influence LA is that of gender. Within a Spanish context, research on gender and LA has primarily been carried out on EFL learners, with an evident dearth of research on FFL.

In terms of young learners, Jiménez Catalán and Ojeda Alba (2009) compared the English LA of 105 males and 105 females in 6th grade of primary school. Findings showed that female students produced a statistically significant higher number of tokens than male students across all fifteen prompts under analysis. Agustín Llach and Fernández Fontecha (2014) also assessed 6th grade learners (106 male and 84 female), and additionally adopted a longitudinal approach by assessing the same participants three years later in 9th grade of secondary school. Across the nine prompts under analysis, female participants again produced a statistically significant higher number of words in English than their male peers at both levels. However, the significance values decreased at the second data collection, suggesting that differences in gender in LA might also be related to age. Adolescent learners in 8th grade were assessed by Fernández Fontecha (2010), who compared the English LA of 139 male and 111 female students. Findings showed that, again, female students produced a statistically significant higher number of tokens than the male students. Although the above studies show a clear advantage for female students, very different results have been reported by Jiménez Catalán and Canga Alonso (2019) in terms of older high school students. This study, which compared 94 male and 171 female learners in 12th grade, found no statistically significant difference between male and female learners' LA. Thus, contrary to results from younger Spanish EFL students, there appears to be no female advantage in LA in English by the end of high school.

While the above research suggests that Spanish female students generally outperform their male peers in terms of LA in English, there are two important observations which must be considered. Firstly, this advantage has been found in primary and early secondary school students up to 9th grade, whereas no differences have been found in 12th grade high school students (Jiménez Catalán and Canga Alonso 2019). This, alongside the longitudinal findings of Agustín Llach and Fernández Fontecha (2014) above, suggests that the gender differences in earlier grades may dissipate as learners age. However, given the lack of research on students in upper secondary education, it is unclear whether this is indeed the case. LA research is needed in cohorts of students between 9th and 12th grade in order to determine whether there is an age-related effect. Secondly, recent research suggests that female advantages in language learning may be context dependent. For example, findings by Gallardo-del-Puerto and Blanco-Suárez (2021) have indicated that while a female advantage in motivation was found in non-CLIL students, the same was not true for CLIL students. It thus remains to be seen whether female advantages in LA are also observed in contexts where students received not only typical FL classes, but also CLIL instruction. In this vein, there is a clear need to carry out further LA research on different TLs to ascertain whether this female advantage remains in later school years, particularly 9th and 10th grade, and whether CLIL instruction plays a part.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Design

This study aimed to determine whether there were quantitative differences between male and female learners' lexical availability in English and French in an upper secondary CLIL context. In particular, it sought to address two issues: firstly, whether an English advantage in LA would be observed when assessing a cohort of students simultaneously studying two TLs in both male and female learners; and secondly, whether these differences would be observed from one grade to the next. To this effect, the following research questions were proposed:

1. Are there quantitative differences in the English and French lexical availability of Spanish male and female upper secondary school CLIL students?
2. Are there quantitative differences in the English and French lexical availability of Spanish male and female upper secondary school CLIL students when measured cross-sectionally over two grades?

In order to address these research questions, data were collected from four cohorts of students: male students and female students in 9th grade and male students and female students in 10th grade. Prior to data collection, the directors of both participating schools as well as each participating student signed consent forms which detailed the purpose of the study, the data collection, confidentiality, and results of the study. Participants then completed a LAT in both of their TLs, English and French. This approach entailed that male and females' LA in both TLs could be compared in each grade under analysis, as well as cross-sectionally from 9th to 10th grade.

3.2. Participants

This study was carried out with a total of 83 Spanish native speakers from 9th and 10th grade. All participants attended one of two semi-private sister schools, one for males and one for females, which conduct both content and language classes in Spanish, English, and French. This plurilingual approach is offered to students throughout early childhood education, primary education, and obligatory secondary education, so that students receive classes in each of these three languages from the age of 3 until approximately the age of 16. In some cases, content classes in a TL also continue into high school. Each language is used as a vehicular language and should take up a third of the students' school day. In terms of language level, students are expected to have obtained a B2 or C1 level in each of their TLs before they finish school. In addition, students have the opportunity to study a fourth language, such as Latin or Greek.

For the purposes of this study, students were grouped according to both grade and gender, as outlined in Table 1:

	Male	Female	Total
9th grade	19 (16 only for English)	23	42
10th grade	15	26	41

Table 1. Participants

A total of 42 and 41 students took part in the study in 9th and 10thgrade, respectively. However, there were some male students from 9th grade who took part in the tests for only French. This was due to the fact that, following the French tests, three students later opted not to take part in the English tests.

In terms of the participants' CLIL classes, it should be noted that while the schools' plurilingual approach supposedly entails that one third of the students' day is allotted to each language of instruction, in reality these students appear to receive a great deal more exposure to English than French, particularly in certain grades. For example, in 9th grade, participants studied four content classes in English as compared to just one in French. In some cases, the classes taken in a TL varied from year to year, with subjects such as Technology being studied in English in 9th grade but not in 10th grade. Other classes, such as Physical Education in English and Geography and History in French, were taken throughout secondary education. In addition, there were some differences depending on the school, meaning that in some cases males and females took different classes (Table 2).

	English	French
9th Grade	Physics and Chemistry Biology Physical Education Technology	Geography and History
10th Grade	Science* (*n* = 26) or Economics (*n* = 15) Physical Education	Geography and History

Note. * Males studied Physics and Chemistry (*n* = 10); females studied Biology (*n* = 16)

Table 2. CLIL subjects taken by participants

Throughout obligatory secondary education, including 9th and 10th grade, all students studied Physical Education through English and Geography and History through French. In 9th grade, participants additionally studied Technology and two science subjects (Physics and Chemistry, and Biology) in English. In 10th grade, however, students choose between continuing with one of these science subjects or beginning to study Economics. The science subject available was dependent on school and consequently gender; boys could study Physics and Chemistry while girls could study Biology.

3.3. Instruments

In order to assess the participants' LA, two LATs were administered: one in French and one in English. The tests were administered during the students' English and French language classes, with each group taking the two tests on the same school day. The tasks were paper-and-pencil questionnaires, in which participants were given prompts and told to write down any words which came to them in a period of two minutes. Each prompt was displayed on a separate page with numbered lines and participants could not move on to the next prompt until told to do so by the researcher. Five prompts were included in this study, which were the same in both TLs:

(1) Animals
(2) Food and drink
(3) Sport and physical activities
(4) Environment and climate
(5) Economy and money

The prompts chosen included two general prompts, *Animals* and *Food and drink,* and three prompts which aimed to tap into participants' content-related vocabulary: *Sport and physical activities* (Physical Education studied through English), *Environment and climate* (Geography and History, studied through French), and *Economy and Money* (Economics, studied through English). The general prompts were adopted from previous research in the field which has analyzed the LA of Spanish adolescents (Fernández Orío and Jiménez Catalán 2015; Canga Alonso 2017). These prompts have been found to be particularly productive, likely given the fact that they include vocabulary to which students typically receive a high level of exposure (Fernández Orío and Jiménez Catalán 2015). While the remaining prompts catered specifically to the participants in this study, comparable semantic domains had been addressed in previous research, namely *Sports and hobbies*, which was included in Agustín Llach and Fontecha (2014) and *The Environment* and *The Economy*, which were included by Neilson Parada (2016).

3.4. Data Analysis

Prior to analysis, participants' responses were lemmatized following criteria applied by Jiménez Catalán and Agustín Llach (2017). This included correcting spelling mistakes; removing unintelligible words or words which were not in the TL; counting repeated words only once; removing proper nouns; and changing plural words into the singular form, except in cases where the word is always plural.

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS (Version 26). Prior to conducting the analysis, the normality of the overall LA tasks and that of each prompt was assessed for each group of students. The data were found to be normally distributed, except in the following three cases: *Animals* in English and *Sport and physical activities* in French for 9th grade males; and *Animals* in French for 9th grade females. The results of the normality tests were used to determine which test was run when analyzing the quantitative differences in the English and French LA of male and female participants: paired samples t-tests were used when the data were normally distributed, while the non-parametric alternative, Wilcoxon signed-rank tests, were used when the data were non-normally distributed (Dörnyei 2007). Participants' LA was compared in terms of the mean tokens produced across all five prompts as well as the total tokens produced in each of the five prompts. Analyses were first run on the male participants in each grade, comparing their responses in English with those in French. This was followed by an analysis of female participants' responses in English and French. Results of the two sets of analyses were then compared, in order to determine whether there were differences between genders in English and French LA. For the cross-sectional analysis, two-way mixed ANOVAS were carried out in order to compare participants in 9th and 10th grade. This included one within-subjects factor (language) and one between-subjects factor (grade). The analysis was again run first for male students and then for female students, and then the results of the two analyses were compared.

4. Results

4.1. Male and Female Participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

Research question 1 addressed whether there were quantitative differences in the words retrieved by male participants and female participants in English as compared to French in each grade. Token production in each language was thus compared, first for male learners and then for female learners. The results of each were then analyzed in order to determine whether any advantages observed were gender-dependent or varied in male and female learners.

4.1.1. Male Participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

In order to compare the overall number of tokens and the total number of tokens produced for each individual prompt by male participants in English and French, paired samples t-tests (Wilcoxon signed-rank tests in the case of the prompts *Animals* and *Sport and Physical Activities* for 9th grade students) were run (Table 3).

9th grade

Prompt	*M*		*SD*		*t / z*	*df*	*p*
	English	French	English	French			
1) Animals*	16.94	7.47	8.31	3.53	-3.07		.002
2) Food and drink	13.88	6.63	8.17	3.72	3.65	15	.002
3) Sport and physical activities*	14.06	6.95	7.10	3.70	-3.31		.001
4) Environment and climate	14.19	7.88	8.47	5.35	3.25	15	.005
5) Economy and money	7.69	4.88	6.61	3.24	2.05	15	.058
Mean Lexical Availability	13.35	6.72	6.90	3.00	4.27	15	.001

10th grade

Prompt	*M*		*SD*		*t*	*df*	*p*
	English	French	English	French			
1) Animals	17.73	8.40	4.496	2.77	10.45	14	< .001
2) Food and drink	19.87	8.07	4.734	4.31	10.36	14	< .001
3) Sport and physical activities	14.93	11.47	2.764	2.03	4.19	14	.001
4) Environment and climate	15.27	7.60	6.19	3.66	6.46	14	< .001
5) Economy and money	11.60	10.67	4.71	3.71	.788	14	.444

Mean Lexical Availability	15.88	9.24	3.41	2.58	11.80	14	< .001

Note. * = non-parametric test used, as data were not normally distributed.

Table 3. Male students' lexical availability in English and French

As shown, results indicate that male participants in each grade retrieved a statistically significant higher number of words in English than in French overall. In terms of the individual prompts, male students generally produced a statistically significant higher number of tokens in English; however, this was not the case for the prompt *Economy and money* in either grade, where no statistically significant differences were observed. It should be recalled that this prompt was included to tap into participants' content-related vocabulary from their Economics class, which was taken as an elective subject by some students in 10th grade. Notably, 9th grade students did not take this subject, and 10th grade students had been studying the subject through English for just four months at the time of the data collection. It appears that this short period of time may not be enough to make a difference between the students' English and French LA in this prompt.

4.1.2. Female Participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

In order to compare the overall number of tokens and the total number of tokens produced for each individual prompt by female participants in English and French, paired samples t-tests (Wilcoxon signed-rank tests in the case of the prompt *Animals* for 9th grade students) were run (Table 4).

9th grade							
Prompt	*M*		*SD*		*t / z*	*df*	*p*
	English	French	English	French			
1) Animals*	20.57	12.70	5.86	5.98	-3.79		< .001
2) Food and drink	24.05	12.23	6.40	4.73	8.10	21	< .001
3) Sport and physical activities*	15.14	11.68	5.12	2.93	3.43	21	.002
4) Environment and climate	19.48	11.83	6.29	4.68	6.34	22	< .001
5) Economy and money	12.35	10.26	4.83	4.57	2.93	22	.008
Mean Lexical Availability	18.25	11.72	4.96	3.33	8.94	22	< .001

10th grade							
Prompt	*M*		*SD*		*t*	*df*	*p*
	English	French	English	French			
1) Animals	18.50	8.62	5.08	3.87	9.92	25	< .001
2) Food and drink	22.62	12.38	5.42	5.216	8.95	25	< .001
3) Sport and physical activities	17.58	11.08	5.13	2.85	6.98	25	< .001
4) Environment and climate	20.54	12.04	4.79	4.60	8.40	25	< .001
5) Economy and money	15.31	10.27	4.36	3.82	5.46	25	< .001
Mean Lexical Availability	18.90	10.87	3.96	3.19	11.47	25	< .001

Note. * = non-parametric test used, as the data were not normally distributed.

Table 4. Female students' lexical availability in English and French

Results reveal that female participants in each grade retrieved a statistically significant higher number of words in English than in French overall, which was also the case for male participants. In addition, female participants also produced a statistically significant higher number of tokens in English than in French in each of the five individual prompts.

4.1.3. Gender-dependent Differences in English and French Lexical Availability

The results above indicate that, by and large, both male and female participants tend to produce a higher number of tokens in English than in French (Figure 1).

These results are consistent with the abovementioned research by Sandu and Konstantinidi (2021), Santos Díaz (2017) and Šifrar Kalan (2014), which found higher LA in students taking English as opposed to those taking a LOTE. In this study, similar results are observed when assessing the same cohort of students in both of their TLs, which is understandable given the focus on EFL in a Spanish context and the higher exposure that students generally receive as a result.

However, one key difference in gender was observed in the case of the content-relevant prompt *Economy and money*, where an advantage for English was found among female students but not for male students, both in 9th and 10th grade. This indicates that there is a greater difference between the economics-related vocabulary which female students have in each language than there is for male students. Given suggestions in previous research that CLIL can help to blur gender

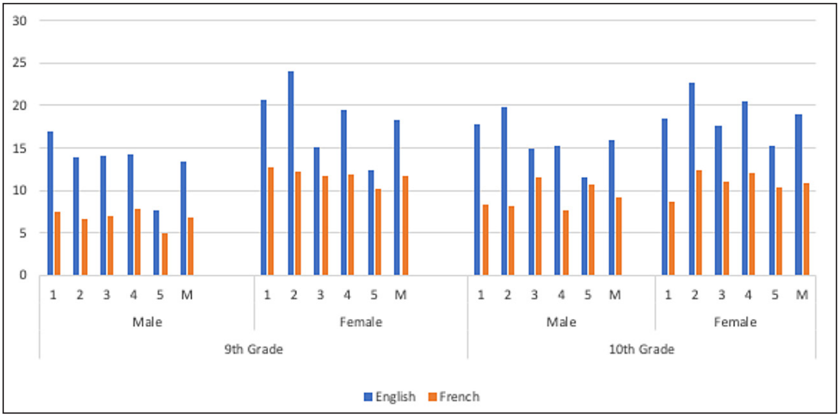

Figure 1. Differences in male and female participants' English and French LA

differences (Lasagabaster 2008), it would be expected that male learners taking content classes through the medium of a FL would perform in a similar way to their female peers. However, it is unlikely that exposure to content-related vocabulary has played a part in these results, as this difference was found both in 9th grade, where students do not take Economics through English, and in 10th grade, where a subgroup of students take Economics through English. Another explanation could be that these findings are due to the nature of the prompt at hand, as *Economy and money* is a relatively more open prompt as compared to prompts such as *Animals* and *Food and drink*, which are more closed. It may be the case that in this particular, potentially more challenging domain, male students have relied more on linguistic similarities between their two TLs; for example, using their knowledge of English to help them to produce tokens in the French test. This would have decreased the gap between the words produced in each TL, leading to the lack of differences observed in the male participants. Further research is evidently necessary to determine whether this is the case, and whether gender and the specific lexical domain have played a role in the results.

Despite the differences observed in this prompt, however, it appears that both male and female upper secondary school CLIL students generally have higher productive vocabulary in English than in French, regardless of gender.

4.2. Cross-sectional Differences in Male and Female Participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

The second research question addressed whether there were quantitative differences in the English and French LA of male and female upper secondary school CLIL students when measured cross-sectionally. For both male and female students, two-way mixed ANOVAS were used to analyze the LATs in English and French, to determine whether there was a main effect of grade (a difference between 9th grade and 10th grade students in both languages), a main effect of language (a difference between English and French in both grades), and an interaction between grade and language (a difference between 9th and 10th grade and English and French). This was done first for males and then females. The results of each were then compared to determine if there were gender-dependent variations.

4.2.1. Cross-sectional Differences in Male participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

Firstly, for male students (Table 5), while means of the overall English and French tests were higher in 10th grade ($M = 12.56$) than 9th grade ($M = 10.03$), findings revealed no significant main effect of grade on the mean LATs ($F(1, 29) = 3.64$, $p = .066$, $\eta_p^2 = .112$). That is to say, when taking into account both TLs, the number of words produced was relatively similar in each grade. However, there was a statistically significant main effect of language ($F(1, 29) = 61.45$, $p = < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .679$), where overall means for the English task ($M = 14.61$) were found to be a great deal higher than for the French task ($M = 7.98$). In terms of the interaction between grade and language, no statistically significant interaction was observed ($F(1, 29) = .000$, $p = .993$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$); in both languages, a higher number of tokens was produced by males in 10th grade (English: $M = 15.88$; French: $M = 15.88$) than males in 9th grade (English: $M = 13.35$; French: $M = 6.72$). This indicates that the number of tokens produced in each grade was not dependent on the language: 10th grade males generally produced more tokens regardless of the language at hand.

As regards the five individual prompts, findings showed that the means of both LATs were higher across all prompts for 10th grade students. However, there was a significant main effect of grade only in the case of the prompts *Food and drink* and *Economy and money*, with no significant main effect for the prompts *Animals, Sport and physical activity* and *Environment and climate*. In other words, when taking into account both languages, the older male students produced a notably higher number of words only in *Food and drink* and *Economy and money.* In all five prompts, there was a statistically significant main effect of language; as in the case

Grade					
	M		*F*	*p*	η_p^2
	9th Grade	10th Grade			
1	11.96	13.06	.587	.450	.020
2	10.25	13.96	5.27	.029	.154
3	10.65	13.20	3.51	.071	.108
4	11.03	11.43	.045	.834	.002
5	6.28	11.13	11.18	.002	.278
Mean	10.03	12.56	3.64	.066	.112

Language					
	M		*F*	*P*	η_p^2
	English	French			
1	17.33	7.70	59.45	< .001	.672
2	16.87	7.34	67.03	< .001	.698
3	14.49	9.35	35.71	< .001	.552
4	14.72	7.73	36.59	< .001	.558
5	9.64	7.77	4.22	.049	.127
Mean	14.61	7.98	61.45	< .001	.679

Grade*Language							
	M				*F*	*p*	η_p^2
	9th Grade		10th Grade				
	English	French	English	French			
1	16.93	7.00	17.73	8.40	.058	.811	.002
2	13.87	6.62	19.86	8.06	3.82	.060	.117
3	14.06	7.25	14.93	11.46	3.78	.061	.115
4	14.18	7.87	15.26	7.60	.343	.562	.012
5	7.68	4.87	11.60	10.66	1.06	.311	.035
Mean	13.35	6.72	15.88	9.24	.000	.993	.000

Note. Prompt 1 = *Animals*, Prompt 2 = *Food and drink*, Prompt 3 = *Sport and physical activity*, Prompt 4 = *Environment and climate*, Prompt 5 = *Economy and money.*

Table 5. Cross-sectional differences for male participants in English and French

of the overall task, means for English were much higher than for French. Finally, no statistically significant interaction was found between grade and language in any of the individual prompts. This suggests that the number of tokens produced in a particular grade does not depend on the language, as the older 10th grade students in general produced more tokens than the 9th grade students, regardless of the language at hand.

4.2.2. Cross-sectional Differences in Female Participants' Lexical Availability in English and French

Secondly, for female students (Table 6), while means were slightly lower in 10th grade ($M = 14.89$) than 9th grade ($M = 14.99$), there was no significant main effect of grade on the mean LATs ($F(1.47) = .010$, $p = .922$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$). This implies that when taking into account both TLs, female students in both grades performed similarly. However, as in the case of the male participants, there was a statistically significant main effect of language ($F(1.47) = 206.68$, $p = < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .815$), where overall means for the English task ($M = 18.58$) were found to be a great deal higher than the French task ($M = 11.30$). In terms of the interaction between grade and language, no statistically significant interaction was observed ($F(1.47) = 2.21$, $p = .144$, $\eta_p^2 = .045$), though there were some differences in each language. In English, a higher number of tokens was produced by females in 10th grade ($M = 18.91$) than females in 9th grade ($M = 18.25$). In French, on the other hand, fewer tokens were produced by females in 10th grade ($M = 10.88$) than females in 9th grade ($M = 11.73$).

As regards the five individual prompts, findings showed that there were some clear differences in terms of the general and content-relevant prompts: while means were higher in the general prompts *Animal* and *Food and drink* for 9th grade females, they were higher in the content-relevant prompts *Sport and physical activity*, *Environment and climate* and *Economy and money* for 10th grade females. Nonetheless, there was a significant main effect of grade only in the case of the prompt *Animals*, with higher means in both tasks in 9th grade, but no significant main effect for the prompts *Food and drink*, *Sport and physical activity*, *Environment and climate* and *Economy and money*. As was the case for male participants, in all five prompts, there was a statistically significant main effect of language; means for English were again much higher than for French. Finally, although no statistically significant interactions were observed between grade and language for male students in any of the individual prompts, this was not the case for female students. Interestingly, statistically significant interactions were found between grade and language specifically in the two prompts which were related to the students' English CLIL classes, namely, *Sport and physical activity* ($F(1, 47) = 4.93$,

	Grade				
	M		*F*	*p*	η_p^2
	9th Grade	10th Grade			
1	16.63	13.56	5.64	.022	.107
2	18.14	17.50	.242	.625	.005
3	13.41	14.33	.855	.360	.018
4	15.65	16.29	.264	.610	.006
5	11.30	12.79	1.79	.187	.037
Mean	14.99	14.89	.010	.922	.000

	Language				
	M		*F*	*p*	η_p^2
	English	French			
1	19.53	10.66	138.73	< .001	.747
2	23.33	12.31	145.63	< .001	.760
3	16.36	11.38	52.74	< .001	.534
4	20.01	11.93	106.91	< .001	.695
5	13.83	10.27	36.00	< .001	.434
Mean	18.58	11.30	206.68	< .001	.815

	Grade*Language						
	M				*F*	*p*	η_p^2
	9th Grade		10th Grade				
	English	French	English	French			
1	20.57	12.70	18.50	8.62	1.78	.188	.037
2	24.05	12.23	22.62	12.39	.755	.389	.016
3	15.14	11.68	17.58	11.08	4.93	.031	.097
4	19.48	11.83	20.54	12.04	.295	.590	.006
5	12.35	10.26	15.31	10.27	6.17	.017	.116
Mean	18.25	11.73	18.91	10.88	2.21	.144	.045

Note. Prompt 1 = *Animals*, Prompt 2 = *Food and drink*, Prompt 3 = *Sport and physical activity*, Prompt 4 = *Environment and climate*, Prompt 5 = *Economy and money*.

Table 6. Cross-sectional differences for female participants in English and French

$p = .0312$, $\eta_p^2 = .097$) and *Economy and money* ($F(1, 47) = 6.17$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .116$). Regarding the prompt *Sport and physical activity*, means in English were slightly higher in 10th grade ($M = 17.58$) than 9th grade ($M = 15.14$), whereas in French they were slightly lower in 10th grade ($M = 11.08$) than in 9th grade ($M = 11.68$). Regarding the prompt *Economy and Money*, means in English were slightly higher in 10th grade ($M = 15.31$) than 9th grade ($M = 12.35$), whereas in French they were very similar in both 10th grade ($M = 10.27$) and 9th grade ($M = 10.26$). This indicates that there is likely a clear influence of the increased exposure students receive to content-related vocabulary on their LA in English.

4.2.3. Cross-sectional Gender-dependent Differences in English and French Lexical Availability

When turning to the cross-sectional analysis, there appear to be some noteworthy gender-based differences in terms of grade and the interaction between grade and language. These differences are summarized in Table 7 and discussed in turn below.

	Grade		Language		Grade*Language	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1		✓	✓	✓		
2	✓		✓	✓		
3			✓	✓		✓
4			✓	✓		
5	✓		✓	✓		✓
M			✓	✓		

Note. ✓ = statistically significant differences, 1 = *Animals*, 2 = *Food and drink*, 3 = *Sport and physical activity*, 4 = *Environment and climate*, 5 = *Economy and money*, M = Mean LAT.

Table 7. Summary of cross-sectional differences in English and French LATs by gender

Firstly, for male students, a significant main effect of grade was found for the prompts *Food and drink* and *Economy and money*. In both cases, the older, 10th grade students had higher means in their TLs. These findings make sense given the extra number of hours of exposure that the 10th grade students would have received. In addition, given that several 10th grade students studied Economics through English, whereas 9th grade students had not yet had the opportunity to take this subject, it is unsurprising that the 10th grade group would perform better in this prompt. The fact this was found for males, and not for females, may be consistent with the suggestion that male students, who are often outperformed by their female peers in terms of language learning, may compensate for lower language learning motivation with higher motivation towards the content subject (Heras and Lasagabaster 2015). In other words, exposure to content-related vocabulary in their Economics class seems to make a greater difference among the male students when comparing those in 9th and 10th grade. On the other hand, for female students, a significant main effect of grade was found only for the prompt *Animals*, for which the younger 9th grade group had higher means. This result is unexpected, as it would be assumed that the older 10th grade students would produce more tokens across all five prompts, given the fact that they had spent one year more studying their TLs than their 9th grade peers. Given the nature of the approach used, it is possible that this finding may be explained by group differences; further longitudinal analysis would help to clarify whether this is the case.

In terms of the interaction between grade and language, there were again clear differences depending on gender. For males, no statistically significant interaction was found in any of the five individual prompts or in the overall task. On the other hand, for females, a statistically significant interaction was found in the two prompts which were related to content taught through English, namely *Sport and physical activity* and *Economy and money*. For both prompts, 10th grade students produced a higher number of tokens than 9th grade students in English, while in French means for the former were slightly lower and for the latter were largely the same. This is very likely due to the exposure that students receive in their CLIL classes: Physical Education, taught in both 9th and 10th grade, and Economics, taught in 10th grade. While this is consistent with suggestions by Dalton-Puffer (2008) and Heras and Lasagabaster (2015) that receiving content classes through the medium of a TL can improve content-related vocabulary, the current findings suggest that this is only the case for female students, and particularly so in English. It remains to be seen whether this is due solely to gender, or whether other factors, such as the school which students attended, may play a role.

5. Conclusion

This study sought to investigate the quantitative differences between Spanish male and female learners' LA in English and French in an upper secondary plurilingual CLIL context. Results showed that both male and female participants produce a higher number of tokens in English than in French, indicating that gender generally does not affect the LA of these students in their different TLs. However, results of the cross-sectional analysis revealed that differences do arise between male and female learners, which appear to be related to the participants' CLIL classes and the content-related vocabulary to which students are exposed. These findings offer important implications for the design of CLIL programmes. As the results suggest that gender-related differences in each TL are most apparent across time, it is particularly important that plurilingual CLIL programmes are designed with these variations in mind. For example, this study showed that when taking into account both TLs, 10th grade males appear to produce a larger number of words than 9th grade males in the general prompt *Food and drink* and the content-related prompt *Economy and money*. This was not, however, the case for their female peers. In these cases, it appears that combining lexical knowledge in both TLs has offered older male students an advantage over their younger male peers. In practice, plurilingual programmes could benefit greatly from helping male students to take advantage of this possibility, by encouraging acquisition of conceptual vocabulary across both TLs (e.g., promoting cognate awareness to facilitate acquisition). On the other hand, it seems to be the case that 10th grade female students produce more tokens than 9th grade female students in English in prompts related to their English CLIL classes. However, the same advantage is not found in the prompts in French. It may thus be useful to offer female students additional exposure to French in the same topics, or again provide guidance on drawing on knowledge from one TL to help with the other.

While these findings offer interesting insights into the LA of male and female learners in different TLs, there are a number of areas which may be addressed in future research. Firstly, participants in this study attended single-sex schools. While these were sister schools which largely followed the same curriculum, there are evidently variables in each context. It is therefore unclear whether the differences observed can solely be attributed to gender or to the specific learning environment in which the participants study. Future research would benefit from investigating the same issues in a mixed school in which both male and females attend the same classes with the same teachers. Secondly, while it was beyond the scope of this paper to include the data collection on language proficiency, this is undoubtedly an important factor which should be borne in mind. This is particularly so when dealing with LA, as it has been suggested that more advanced learners tend to produce a higher number of tokens in these types of tasks (van Ginkel and van der Linden in Schmitt 2000). Finally, as previously noted, one issue with the cross-sectional design of the study is that it may be unsuitable for monitoring sequential linguistic development of the learners over time and cannot be used to assess individual differences (Wei and Moyer 2009). It would thus be beneficial to adopt a longitudinal approach in order to address these issues and better understand the effect the participants' linguistic exposure has over time and whether the findings observed here are attributable to group differences or to the exposure itself.

While the results of this study largely point to higher abilities in English, there are clear indications that CLIL instruction plays a key role in the development of content-related LA, and that male and female learners may respond differently to this instruction in each TL. It nonetheless appears that exposure to such content-related vocabulary may enable students to improve in these specific linguistic domains. In this vein, it is necessary for teachers and stakeholders to be made aware of this possibility, with the aim of using the learning context to students' advantage and to better support both male and female learners in the acquisition of LOTEs.

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TRANSLATING THE REPRESENTATION OF MALABO IN THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN: THE CASE OF PAUL THEROUX'S *THE LOWER RIVER*

LA REPRESENTACIÓN DE MALABO TRADUCIDA A LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS Y ESPAÑA: EL CASO DE *EN LOWER RIVER* DE PAUL THEROUX

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Abstract

In this paper we analyze how Malabo and Africa appear represented in the novel *The Lower River*, by American author Paul Theroux, and how his cultural and linguistic vision of the city and the continent reach Spain through the translated version. In order to do so, a description of the publishing market is provided to understand its importance both for the original text and for the translation in Spain. Through a textual analysis of both texts using the software Wordsmith Tools (Scott 2004), including word-frequency and concordance searches, we will explore if there is a positive or negative portrayal of Malabo. Finally, through a linguistic comparative analysis of the original and the translation, we will determine to what extent the reader in Spain can draw the same inferences as the English reader of the original.

Keywords: Theroux, representation, WordSmith, Africa, translation, Spain.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza cómo Malabo y África aparecen representados en la novela *The Lower River*, por el autor norteamericano Paul Theroux, y cómo su visión lingüística y cultural de la ciudad (y el continente) llega a España a través de su versión traducida. Se comienza ofreciendo una descripción del mercado editorial para comprender su importancia, tanto del original como de la traducción. Se emplea el software Wordsmith Tools (Scott 2004) para realizar un estudio textual de ambos textos, realizando búsquedas de frecuencia de palabras y de concordancias, para explorar la representación de Malabo y comprobar si esta es positiva o negativa. Finalmente, mediante un análisis comparativo lingüístico se estudia hasta qué punto el público en España puede realizar las mismas inferencias que el público del original en inglés.

Palabras clave: Theroux, representación, WordSmith, África, traducción, España.

1. Introduction

Africa has long held a place both in the literary imagination of the United States and in the literary panorama in Spain. Since colonization, there has been a novelization of Africa and its people in many different literary genres, and as Krishnan states:

> A colonial invention, "Africa", as a unified entity, embodies the constant struggle of representation to find a moment of closure which is forever denied. Africa, that is to say, remains elusive; yet, it perpetually offers its spectral presence. In its simultaneous transparency and opacity, Africa stands as a paradox that speaks as much about us, its readers, as it does about the place and its people. (2014: 15)

It is the aim of this paper to analyze how Malabo is represented in literature in modern times, focusing on the novel *The Lower River* (2012) by American author Paul Theroux, and how his cultural and linguistic vision of the city (and the continent) is read in Spain through the translated version, published in 2014 and translated by Ezequiel Martínez Llorente.

Paul Theroux has been selected as he is a well-known author, mostly due to his novel (and movie and TV adaptations) *The Mosquito Coast* (1981), that won the James Tait Black Memorial Price in the same year. *The Lower River* (2012) is the most recent novel by Theroux to deal with the subject of Africa, as his last three novels —*Mother Land* (2017), *Under the Wave at Waimea* (2021) and *The Bad Angel Brothers* (2022)— focus on different subjects. Ezequiel Martínez Llorente, the Spanish translator, has been an active literary translator since 2007, working as well as a reviewer and writer.

It is our aim to offer a holistic approach to the novel, focusing on different aspects that affect our reception and understanding of *The Lower River*. First, we provide a description of the publishing market in order to understand the literary context of the country in which the translation is published. Then, through a textual analysis of both texts using the software Wordsmith Tools (Scott 2004), including word-frequency and concordance searches, we will determine if there is a positive or negative portrayal of Malabo in this text and whether there is an equal portrayal in the translated version into Spanish. Through a linguistic comparative analysis of the original and the translation, we will explore if the reader in Spain may draw the same inferences as the English-speaking reader of the original, following Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) taxonomy of translation techniques as used by Martínez Llorente in his translation of this literary text. Thus, a combination of methodologies will be used to offer a global vision of the novel.

For this analysis, we will consider that Theroux is already translating Africa and its people for the reader from the United States. Venuti points out that:

> Within the hegemonic countries, translation fashions images of their subordinate others that can vary between the poles of narcissism and self-criticism, confirming or interrogating dominant domestic values, reinforcing or revising the ethnic stereotypes, literary canons, trade patterns, and foreign policies to which another culture may be subject. (1998a: 159)

2. The Representation of Africa in the Literary Panorama in Spain

In Spain, most of the literary production about Africa is available to the public through translated versions. Few authors in Spain write directly about Africa (mostly in books that could be included in the travel literature genre and bestseller authors such as Javier Reverte or Alberto Vázquez-Figueroa). In this paper, we focus on how the reader in Spain perceives Malabo (and Africa) through Theroux's *The Lower River*.

In 2014, the year the translation *En Lower River* was published, the percentage of total books in general translated in Spain was 22% of the total published (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España 2019). In this same year, Statista reports that the number of books translated into Spanish was 23,063 titles, continuing a downward trend in translated books that started in 2008 ("Evolución anual" 2020). The Spanish National Institute of Statistics (2020) shows that in 2012, English was the most translated language in Spain, with 4,858 books.

Understanding how the market selects what titles are published and translated is fundamental so as to understand that the perception of Africa by the Spanish reader can vary depending on which titles are selected. As Brouillette states, "the expansion of the market for English literatures has been mostly an Anglo-American phenomenon" (2011: 58), which means that the "kind of postcolonial writing most often picked up for global distribution has certain characteristics. It is typically novels, currently the bestselling literary genre. Writing in European languages, and especially in English, is privileged" (Brouillette 2011: 58-59). Being published in English by a big publishing house (*The Lower River* was published by the Penguin Group) also has the advantage of making it easier to get translated into Spanish; the translation in this case was published by Alfaguara, a Spanish publishing house owned by Penguin Random House.

A search of translated editions of books by African writers published in Spain revealed that most of the titles translated into Spanish were originally published in English. Furthermore, not many African writers are available to the general reader, except African authors who have received international recognition through international literary prizes (such as Coetzee or Achebe).[1] This has led some scholars in Spain to believe that African literature has little interest for the Spanish reader, as María Sofía López states in her interview with Rodríguez Murphy (2014). López indicates that the literature that attracts the interest of publishing houses in Spain comes after authors from the Anglo-American market receive prizes, for example, and who become part of the "World African Literature". López believes that the cultural neo-colonialist press needs to accept authors so they can reach the wider public, after fitting in with what the West considers marketable (in Rodríguez Murphy 2014: 246).

We must not forget that when we talk about African literature and post-colonial literature in the current globalized world, translation is fundamental. As wa Thiong'o states, "[i]n that context [globalization], we do need a language that can bring colours and languages together, and that language, in my view, now has a name: Translation" (2012: 118).

This article focuses on a book about Africa written by an American author and translated into Spanish, so there are several translation-layers interacting: The author metaphorically translating Africa for the English-speaking reader and the book translated into Spanish for the reader in Spain. Part of the marketing strategies of this book included using the autobiographical genre as a way of increasing interest in the novel, but also selling it as travel literature, which has been widely explored both in translation studies and in cultural studies, "for this is the genre in which individual strategies employed by writers deliberately to construct images of other cultures for consumption by readers can be most clearly seen" (Bassnett 1998: 138). In this case, the image constructed for the reader in the United States and translated for the reader in Spain is that of Malabo, generalized for readers as "Africa".

3. Methodology

The present research is empirical and qualitative in nature. It is, therefore, an exploratory and holistic study. It aims to better understand how a multilayered text is received in translation. For this reason, this work does not start from a hypothesis, but rather it is an exploratory, descriptive and inductive piece of research. As for the corpus used, the complete text is studied, both the original and the translation.

This paper uses the software Wordsmith Tools Version 4 (Scott 2004) to create word-frequency lists and concordance searches. In order to be able to use the program, both novels were digitally scanned and converted into .txt documents as this is the format supported by Wordsmith Tools. After importing each book separately, we obtained word lists generated in frequency order, to identify the most common words and how they could relate to the main topics in the novel. Also, as stated in the program Help facility, using wordlists is a way to "compare the frequencies of cognate words or translation equivalents between different languages" (Scott 2004).

We focused on nouns and adjectives, and the results show that the two most frequent nouns are *Hock* (1230 instances) and *Manyenga* (425 instances), the two opposing characters in the novel, and that the most repeated place name in the novel is *Malabo* (186 instances), where the action of the novel takes place. This wordlist analysis can be used to determine the main topics of the novel: the clash the main character suffers after returning to Africa (represented in his conflicts with Manyenga); the representation of Africa (as we have frequent words such as *Malabo*, *Sena*, *Africa*, *village*); the importance of money (the term *money* appears 176 times); and the opposition between *dark* (61 instances)/*black* (35 instances) and *white* (75 instances). After selecting the words to be analyzed, we made a concordance analysis to see each word in its context (both in the original and in the translation). As Wordsmith Tools does not provide full quotations for each concordance (for example page numbers), we searched manually for each concordance line included as examples in the following sections (four and five) of this article, to be able to provide full quotations.

The Sena language is also important throughout the novel, appearing 75 times. Theroux includes Sena words (marked typographically in italics), a strategy kept by Ezequiel Martínez Llorente, the translator of the novel into Spanish, and examples of these are provided in section five of this article. Sena words were first identified manually in the physical books (as they are marked typographically) and then tracked using Wordsmith Tools, as the software does not include formatting (such as italics).

In addition, Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) taxonomy of translation strategies was used when analyzing the discrepancies between Wordsmith Tool's English and Spanish results, as they provide a comprehensive classification of translation techniques that can be applied in literary translation. This taxonomy can help explore the decisions taken by the translator, to help us discover how the singularities of the original text are represented in the translated version.

4. *The Lower River* and *En Lower River:* Textual Analysis

As languages interact, so do cultures, and through these interactions we aim to appreciate whether the portrayal of Africa offered to the reader has any connotations (positive or negative), both in the original text and in the translation into Spanish. As Venuti states, "[r]elations of power and domination have always existed between languages" (1998a: 136), and these complex power relationships existing between languages —deeply rooted in the colonial process— have survived until today.

We aim to discover if the image of Africa constructed by the author reflects any change from the images created during colonization, or if the same stereotypes remain, considering the biased lens of an American author. As Bassnett reminds us:

> A writer does not just write in a vacuum: he or she is the product of a particular culture, of a particular moment in time, and the writing reflects such factors such as race, gender, age, class, and birthplace as well as stylistic, idiosyncratic features of the individual. Moreover, the material conditions in which the text is produced, sold, marketed and read also have a crucial role to play. [...] Translation, of course, is a primary method of imposing meaning while concealing the power relations that lie behind the production of that meaning. (1998: 136)

The Lower River follows the main character, Ellis Hock, an American returning to Africa at the age of 62. Hock is following his own dream, the memories he has of Malabo, where he spent four years as a teacher with the Peace Corps and which were "[t]he happiest years of his life" (Theroux 2012: 35). Hock returns to Africa only to find that it has changed so much he no longer recognizes it. After arriving in Malabo, Manyenga, the man who runs the village and its people, keeps him there. Money is all the villagers seem to care for, and Hock feels trapped, trying fruitlessly to escape several times. The story that this novel tells, previously published as a fiction story in *The New Yorker* under the title "The Lower River", reinforces Theroux's special interest in the themes he develops further in the book.

After analyzing the word list obtained with Wordsmith Tools, we saw that the representation of Africa was one of the main topics, as we have frequent words such as *Malabo*, *Sena*, *Africa*, *village*. The word frequency analysis of the original text shows that *Africa* appears 47 times (0.04% of the total word count) as opposed to the *United States* (5 times) and *Europe* (4 times). After conducting a concordance search to see the connotations of these words, paying attention to the adjectives surrounding them, the results show that the *United States* appears with no positive or negative connotations, as can be seen in Examples 10-12:

(1) Nor did the newer stores offer Hock's quality —Scottish tweeds, English shirts, argyle socks, Irish knitwear, Italian leather goods, even Italian fedoras, and shoes from the last great shoemakers in the **United States**. (2012: 9)

(2) Hock saw an American flag hanging from a steeply angled pole, and a plaque identifying the newish building as the ***United States*** *Consulate*. (2012: 44)

(3) "Great", he said, and gave him a gold-embossed name card: *Kent Gilroy, Consulate of the* ***United States*** *of America*. (2012: 48)

(4) The girl leaned closer and shouted into his ear, "What country?" "**United States**". "Big country", she said, still shouting. (2012: 51)

(5) Hock wished that someone he had known back in the **States** —Deena, or Roy— could witness him here, the tableau of his calmly sitting among the elders in the remote village on the Lower River. (2012: 71)

Europe appears with negative connotations (the Agency, a fictional company managing all the international money, is from Europe, and Europe is presented as having *war*, *machines*, *materialism*, *frozen food*): "Maybe outsiders felt that in this green preindustrial continent it might still be possible to avoid the horrors that had come to Europe —war, machines, materialism, frozen food— to develop a happier place" (Theroux 2012: 36).

Africa is used mostly in descriptive sentences idealizing the continent; however, in 4 instances it is described in negative terms, including *hopeless* and *punishing*, as we can see in Examples 6-10 from the novel:

(6) None of what he saw from the car was lovely: the **Africa** of people, not of animals. And that was its oddity, because it looked chewed, bitten, burned, deforested, and dug up. (2012: 64)

(7) Only self-interested outsiders trifled with Africa, so **Africa** punished them for it. (2012: 110)

(8) HE DID NOT want to think that **Africa** was hopeless. (2012: 126)

(9) Anyway, **Africa** didn't exist except as a metaphor for trouble in the minds of complacent busybodies elsewhere. (2012: 126)

American appears 25 times, used by Theroux as the demonym for citizens of the United States, with no relevant negative or positive connotations, as can be seen in the following concordance lines:

(10) **Americans** like coming to the bush. (232)

(11) But surely they would not have ignored such a desperate plea from an **American** citizen. (256)

(12) Hock whispered, "Did you give my message to the **Americans**?" (259)

Theroux offers two different representations of Africa: the real Africa, which is the changed reality that welcomes the main character when he returns, versus the romantic utopia that the character remembers and seems reluctant to forget. Thus, we see the idealized image of Africa in the form of Hock's own lost paradise where he spent the best years of his life: "I always tell people, 'Africa was my Eden'" (Theroux 2012: 41). As such, the main character feels as if his departure from Africa was like losing a bit of himself. The novel represents the displacement of the self that the main character experiences, as "On the Lower River, at Malabo, Hock has been the *mzungu* from America; in the Medford store, he was the man who'd lived in Africa" (Theroux 2012: 19).

In order to find out if the translation carries the same connotations, we performed a parallel word frequency analysis and concordance searches on the translated text. The results show that *África* appears 45 times (0.04% of the total words), two times fewer than in the original. In both instances, the original read *South Africa*, which was translated as *Sudáfrica*, the Spanish name of this country. *Europa* appears 4 times (as in the original), but the main difference comes when analyzing *los Estados Unidos*. Even though in the original we only find 5 instances of *the United States*, we saw that Theroux used *American* (25 times) as a demonym. In the translation, *los Estados Unidos* appears 9 times, and *estadounidense* and *estadounidenses* appear 23 times. Martínez Llorente chooses to use the denomyn *estadounidense* in his translation, as in Spain the denomyms *estadounidense* and *norteamericano* are preferred over the general term *americano* to designate citizens from the United States. For example, we find *the American Consul* as e*l consulado de los Estados Unidos*, or *I'm an American* as *soy estadounidense*. In this case, as in the original, the results show that the term *United States* appears with no positive or negative connotations (Table 1).

	The Lower River (2012)	*En Lower River* (2014)
(13)	Nor did the newer stores offer Hock's quality —Scottish tweeds, English shirts, argyle socks, Irish knitwear, Italian leather goods, even Italian fedoras, and shoes from the last great shoemakers in the **United States**. (9)	Las tiendas nuevas tampoco ofrecían la misma calidad que Hock's: *tweeds* de Escocia, camisas inglesas, calcetines de rombos, géneros de punto irlandeses, prendas de cuero italianas, fedoras de ese mismo país y zapatos fabricados por los últimos grandes artesanos de **Estados Unidos**. (17-18)
(14)	Hock saw an American flag hanging from a steeply angled pole, and a plaque identifying the newish building as the ***United States*** *Consulate.* (44)	Hock advirtió una bandera estadounidense que colgaba de un mástil muy torcido; una placa identificaba ese edificio, bastante nuevo, como el consulado de los **Estados Unidos**. (58)
(15)	"Great", he said, and gave him a gold-embossed name card: *Kent Gilroy, Consulate of the* ***United States*** *of America.* (48)	—Muy bien— dijo, y le entregó una tarjeta con su nombre escrito en relieve de oro: Kent Gilroy, Consulado de los **Estados Unidos** de América. (62)
(16)	The girl leaned closer and shouted into his ear, "What country?" "**United States**". "Big country", she said, still shouting. (51)	La chica se inclinó buscando más cercanía. —¿País? —le gritó al oído. —**Estados Unidos**. —Gran país —dijo, todavía a voces. (65)
(17)	Hock wished that someone he had known back in the **States** —Deena, or Roy— could witness him here, the tableau of his calmly sitting a mong the elders in the remote village on the Lower River. (71)	Hock deseó que alguno de sus conocidos en **Estados Unidos** —Deena o Roy— pudiera contemplarlo allí: esa estampa con él sentado calmadamente entre los ancianos de una aldea remota en Lower River. (86)

Table 1. Examples of the concordance lines of *United States* and *Estados Unidos*

Europa also appears with the same negative connotations in the translation: "Tal vez los forasteros creían que en ese continente verde y preindustrial podrían evitarse los horrores que habían azotado Europa —guerra, máquinas, materialismo, comida congelada— para construir una sociedad más feliz" (Theroux 2014: 49). *África* appears mostly in descriptive sentences idealizing the continent. However, in 4 instances it is described in negative terms, including *castigaba* and *caso perdido,* the same ones as in the original:

(18) Los paisajes contemplados desde el coche no eran lo que se dice de postal: se trataba del **África** de las personas, no de los animales. Y, paradójicamente, parecía mordisqueada, masticada, quemada, deforestada y removida. (78)

(19) Sólo los foráneos con intereses particulares perdían el tiempo en **África**, y **África** los castigaba por ello. (131)

(20) Hock se resistía a considerar **África** como un caso perdido. (149)

(21) En general, en las mentes de los benévolos entrometidos en el extranjero **ese continente** sólo existía como una metáfora de la adversidad. (149)

Continuing with our analysis of the representation of Africa as a theme, based on the word frequency results from Wordsmith Tools, the novel includes specific locations in the continent, including *Malabo* (it appears 186 times, 0.17%), *Mozambique* (23 times, 0.02%) and *Malawi* (22 times, 0.02%). Malabo becomes the center of the narration, the focus of Theroux's description. He places his main character in Malabo during two very different moments in history. The moment of independence, during his visit in those first years of happiness, and after 40 years when he comes back. Theroux shows that independence did not only not solve people's problems, as the problems created by colonization where too deeply rooted to be overcome, but created new ones. The preconceived ideas that Hock has of Malabo are reminiscent of the colonial discourse and the passing of time has exposed its consequences, as Theroux states: "He saw the foolishness of his decision. He had come expecting to be welcomed; he'd wanted to contribute something to the village or the district. But no one was interested" (2012: 141).

A concordance analysis of *Malabo* in the original novel shows that Theroux uses negative terms associated with it. *Malabo* appears surrounded by terms such as *sick*, *confusion*, *disorder*, *prison*, *robbed*, *nothing*, *terrible*, *distant* or *unknown*, which perpetuates traditional stereotypes of corruption and violence in the place. Examples of these concordances can be seen in Table 2.

In the translation, the word frequency analysis shows that *Malabo* appears 186 times (0.17% of the total word count), three times fewer than in the original. The three cases constitute examples of Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) reductions, a translation strategy that involves suppressing information in the translated text, and that in these cases does not entail any loss of meaning from the original:

	***The Lower River* (2012)**	***En Lower River* (2014)**
(22)	He had not seen them like this since first arriving back in **Malabo** and being welcomed with apprehension. (276)	Pero no los había visto reunidos así desde su llegada, cuando salieron a recibirlo llenos de aprensión. (318)
(23)	The sacks from **Malabo** were stamped with the shield logo and the words *L'Agence Anonyme.* (307)	Los sacos tenían el sello con el escudo y las palabras L'Agence Anonyme. (354)
(24)	He had forgotten again the length of time he'd been in **Malabo** –three months now? (309)	Había vuelto a perder la noción del paso del tiempo; ¿llevaba allí tres meses? (356)

Table 2. Examples of the concordance lines of reductions of Malabo in the Spanish translation

As can be seen in Table 3, in the rest of the instances, *Malabo* carries the same negative connotations as in the original.

	The Lower River **(2012)**	***En Lower River*** **(2014)**
(25)	**Malabo** was more distant than Mars. It was perhaps not all that remote in miles, but it was unknown, so it was at the limit of the world. Because of its isolation it was absurd, fantastic, unreal, a place of the naked and the misshapen. (92)	**Malabo** estaba a una distancia mayor que Marte. Tal vez no tan lejano en kilómetros, pero era desconocido, y por eso se situaba en los confines del mundo. Su aislamiento lo hacía absurdo, fantástico, irreal, un retiro para los desnudos y los disformes. (111)
(26)	He had been happy when he had never suspected anyone in **Malabo** of having a darker motive. (107)	Había sido feliz mientras no había sospechado que en **Malabo** alguien pudiera albergar intenciones oscuras. (127)
(27)	I might have died, he thought, and reflected on **Malabo** as a terrible place to die —alone, in this heat, among strangers. (144)	Podría haber muerto, pensaba, y **Malabo** era un sitio realmente terrible para morir: solo y bajo el calor, entre extraños. (168)
(28)	And none of the boys had risen, in itself an act of defiance, for on the Lower River, even in the disgrace that was **Malabo**, the children stood up in the presence of adults. (168)	Ninguno de los chicos se había levantado todavía, lo cual constituía ya de por sí un acto de desafío, puesto que en Lower River, incluso en ese desorden que era **Malabo**, los niños se ponían de pie en presencia de adultos. (195)
(29)	**Malabo** was a prison now, and the only strength that Hock had was bluff. (226)	**Malabo** era una cárcel, y la única fuerza de Hock era un farol. (263)

Table 3. Examples of concordance lines of Malabo with negative connotations

Mozambique appears the same number of times in the translation (23) with the same connotations as in the original, and *Malaui* appears 23 times, one instance more than in the original. Comparing the concordance results we find that in one instance the translator decides to use the same strategy of reduction, as "He would stay there, become a Malawi citizen" (Theroux 2012: 98) is translated for "solicitado la nacionalidad" (Theroux 2014: 117). Even though he omits the origin of the nationality, it is perfectly understandable from the context. In the two remaining instances the translator decides to specify the country for clarification, like "llevaba seis meses en Malaui" (2014: 60) instead of "he had been in the country six months" (2012: 46), and "como hacía otra gente en Malaui" (2014: 121) for "as other Malawians did" (2012: 101). By using the addition technique and making explicit the country, the translator helps the reader to better understand the text.

As seen before, the word frequency analysis of the original text showed that the two characters' names that appear most frequently are *Hock* and *Manyenga*.

Considering the antagonism between the characters, the word *white* appears 75 times (0.07%) whereas *black* appears 35 times (0.04%). A concordance analysis of these words (*Hock*, *Manyenga*, *white* and *black)* shows that Theroux describes *Hock*, the main character, in such a way as to create sympathy in the reader, while he characterizes *Manyenga* using words such as *anger*, *raged*, *screamed* or *fierce*. Of the 35 times that *black* appears in the novel, only 5 refer to skin color, whereas on 28 occasions *white* refers to skin color (out of 75).

In the translation, we find significant differences in the number of instances of both words: *Hock* and *Manyenga*. *Hock* appears 1,324 times (1.15% of the total words), 124 times more than in the original. The translator decides to specify the main character's name substituting *he* with *Hock*, a strategy that fits with Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) particularization translation technique, where a more precise term is used. This strategy explains this difference in word frequency and helps the reader focus on the main character. However, *Manyenga* appears 407 times (0.35% of the total words), 18 fewer than in the original. Martínez Llorente uses different strategies in this case. On the one hand, following Molina and Albir's taxonomy (2002), he uses reductions, as in Spanish the subject of a sentence can be elided, such as in "tuvo a todo el auditorio en un puño" (2014: 367) ("assured Manyenga of their close attention" (Theroux 2012: 317)). On other occasions, the translator opts for the description strategy, changing Manyenga's name for a noun that describes his status, for example, "la consternación *del jefe*" (Theroux 2014: 369, emphasis added) ("Manyenga's consternation", (Theroux 2012: 319) back translated as "the chief's consternation"). As in the original, *Hock* is portrayed to develop sympathy in the reader, being described as *struggling*, *condemned man*, *full of fear* and *exhausted*, while *Manyenga* is characterized using negative words such as *ira*, *enrabietado*, *gritando* or *fiera*.

In the case of the translation of the adjectives *black* and *white*, the Spanish language reflects adjective agreement, meaning that the adjective has to agree with the noun it defines in gender and in number. After analyzing the word frequency of the adjectives, we found that *blanca* appeared 26 times, *blancas* 6 times, *blanco* 37 times and *blancos* 6 times, adding up to a total of 75 instances, the same number as in the original. However, while *black* appeared 35 times in the original, adding up *negra* (16 times), *negras* (5 times), *negro* (9 times) and *negros* (10 times) gives a total of 40 instances of this adjective in the translation. After comparing the concordance results, this difference in the total frequency can be explained by the translator's decision to translate the English adjective *dark* as *negro* in the following four examples: *víboras negras* (*dark vipers*), *traje negro* (*dark dress suit*), *medallón negro* (*dark medallion*), *largo blusón negro* (*dark smock-like dress*). In the last case, *los huecos negros en su dentadura* (*his teeth missing*), the translator uses translation by converse or semantic adjacency of a causal kind, which following Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) taxonomy can be considered an example of a modulation translation strategy, in this case a really effective strategy to keep the naturalness of the translation.

As in the original, out of the 35 times that the words *negra/negro/negras/negros* appear in the novel, only 5 refer to skin color, whereas on 28 occasions the translation of *white* refers to skin color (out of 75). A concordance analysis shows that in many cases there is a direct association between *Hock/white people* and *money*, as can be seen in the clusters result from Wordsmith Tools, which shows that *money*, *Hock* and *said* form a cluster (pattern of repeated phraseology in the text).

The term *money* appears 176 times in the original text, 0.16% of the total words, which makes it another main theme of the novel, according to the wordlist results from Wordsmith Tools. A concordance search shows that the term *money* is always connected with Hock, for example, "Hock gave them money, each man a thickness of kwacha notes" (Theroux 2012: 68) or "Hock called for his duffel bag. He took it aside and unzipped it so that no one could see what it contained —the fat envelopes of money" (72).

Theroux turns around colonialism in the sense that the white man is the one "squeezed" until there is no more money to be got from him. Theroux reflects this in Hock naively believing that "When he had nothing left, he'd go" (2012: 108). After Hock's failed attempt to escape by helicopter and after being attacked by a group of children, he is "rescued" by Manyenga (ironically, the man Hock feels is holding him prisoner for his money) and brought back to Malabo. In a sense, Manyenga mirrors colonial ideas of slavery, as he is keeping Hock in Malabo and tells him "You belong to us" (309). He clearly states all he wants is his money: "'What is the price of one human life?' Manyenga asked" (221). After Hock is left with no money, there is still something they can get from him: Manyenga sells Hock for food.

In the translated version, *dinero* appears 177 times, one more than in the original. This extra instance of the term appears in "Manyenga siempre alargaba la palabra 'dinero' con una especie de gañido" ("Manyenga, as always, whined the word, making it *maahhnee*"). While in the original Theroux decides to imitate how Manyenga pronounces the English word, in Spanish the translator has decided to include the word *dinero* and explain the manner in which it was pronounced, an example of Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) amplification translation strategy, which involves using extra information or explanations through paraphrasing, as we will see in the next part of the article.

Linked to the corruptive nature of money that runs through the novel is the emergence of Theroux's belief that giving money to Africa is not a solution, but part of the problem (Theroux 2005), as money seems to be the driver of all interactions with the locals. Money appears as an illness rooted in society, one that seems to move people's interests and to have changed traditional cultural values. This is reflected in the text by a mysterious company, L'Agence Anonyme or The Agency. The word *Agency* appears 47 times in the original text (0.04%) (the same number of times as *Agencia* in the translated text). This company manages all the money received from international aid and the visits from rock stars to Malawi. Theroux criticizes how The Agency manages the money: "'The money is rubbish,' Manyenga said. 'They don't give it the right way. They were cheating me'" (Theroux 2012: 95).

Both the original and the translation reflect Theroux's opinions about the current situation of Africa regarding international aid, amongst other political and economic reflections on Africa's reality. In his contribution to *The New York Times*, "The Rock Star's Burden" (2005), we can identify all the aspects mentioned above that appear in *The Lower River*, including "the impression that Africa is fatally troubled and can be saved only by outside help —not to mention celebrities and charity concerts— is a destructive and misleading conceit" (Theroux 2005).

5. *The Lower River* and *En Lower River*: The Use of Different Languages

As previously stated, *The Lower River* is a book written in English by an American author trying to convey the African reality in Malabo. The textual analysis has shown how Theroux's selection of words reflects his idea of Africa. Another way Theroux uses to convey a sense of "Africanism" through language is by appropriating traditional strategies used by postcolonial authors to subvert the canons and applying them to try to represent the complexity of the linguistic variations of African English in order to create a more realistic image.

Ashcroft et al. state the importance of the English language during colonization as "[o]ne of the main features of imperial oppression is control over language" (1989: 7). The imperial education system marginalized variants. In order to fight this language hegemony, some strategies appear in the writings of post-colonial authors, such as the inclusion of dialects, the use of vernacular expressions and the refusal to translate key words in an attempt to undermine colonial control. These strategies are used also by Theroux, for example, "Hock spoke the sentence he had rehearsed: '*Ndi kupita ku Nsanje*'" (2012: 44).

Theroux uses these strategies but he turns them into a way of offering a "real" representation of Africa that favors the exotic in the novel. Theroux includes Sena words (marked typographically in italics), a strategy kept by Ezequiel Martínez Llorente in the translation. From the beginning, when Hock is in America, he uses words in Sena, for example: "[…] of the sort of *mganga* he had known long ago in Africa" (Theroux 2012: 3), referring to black magic. The subversive postcolonial intention of making the reader feel excluded by, for example, not offering a translation of the term, is not present here. Every term in Sena has its explanation in *The Lower River* (and in the translation) so that the reader understands them, as in Example 30a and its translation (Example 30b):

(30) a. One of the derivations of *mzungu* was "spirit", but the word meant "white man". (Theroux 2012: 20)

b. Una de las derivaciones de *mzungu* era «espíritu», aunque la palabra significaba «hombre blanco». (Theroux 2014: 31)

Theroux does not even try to explain the complexities of the Sena language to the reader. The Sena language is a cross-border language with two different language profiles: from Malawi and Mozambique. As Funnell states:

> The Sena people on the Malawi side of the border are living in an Anglophone country and are influenced by English and the very dominant Chichewa language, while the Senas on the Mozambique side are in Lusophone territory and are influenced by Portuguese. As a result of this situation two separate standardised varieties of the Sena language have developed. (2004: 1-2)

Theroux only refers in his novel to the Sena language in general, without making any distinction between both varieties and without mentioning the characteristics of the Sena languages in Malawi and Mozambique. As Funnell (2004) explains, Sena is one of the fifteen Bantu languages spoken in Malawi and one of the thirty-nine living languages spoken in Mozambique. There are some differences between the two varieties of Sena (Funnell 2004), such as the *m* versus *n* spelling variations between the Malawi and Mozambique varieties. This difference in orthography enables us to identify Theroux's use of the Malawi variety of Sena in the novel, as he writes *mzungu* instead of *nzundu* (the Mozambique variety), even though both written words are pronounced the same. Another clue to the use of the Malawi variety of Sena in the text is the mark —*ku*— signaling the present continuous tense, as we can find in the following example: "*Ndikufuna thandiza*. We need help" (Theroux 2012: 67), which literally translated would be [We are needing help].

When Hock returns to Africa the second time, he still remembers the Sena language, even rehearsing the sentences he has to say in order to fit in: "The immigration officer asked him his reason for being in the country. Hock spoke the sentence he had rehearsed: ‘*Ndi kupita ku Nsanje*’” (Theroux 2012: 44). What he finds is that people answer him back in English, and some people in the city do not even understand the Sena language. The city officers use English, which reinforces wa Thiong’o’s idea that: “The second mode of captivation was that of elevating the language of the conqueror. It became the language of the elect. […] Thus equipped with the linguistic means of escape from the dark Tower of Babel” (1993: 32). However, in this novel, no escape has occurred and the subject of the imposition of English language seems unimportant in Malabo.

Theroux also applies the strategy of altering the standard use of English and transforms it into a mere representation of the inability of locals to speak English “properly”. As we have seen, the representation of Sena words in the Spanish translation follows the same strategy as in the original (marking the words in italics), but the representation of English phonetics is more difficult to transfer into the Spanish language, as the readers in Spain are reading a translation and are not expected to know English.

For example, from Theroux’s descriptions of how natives speak the English language, the reader can deduce that, as a general rule, the locals extend the pronunciation of the vowel *e* with an /i:/-like sound, and that they also introduce this as an extra vowel between syllables or to substitute vowel combinations they cannot pronounce. We can find in Table 4 the following representative examples both in the original and in the translation.

	***The Lower River* (2012)**	***En Lower River* (2014)**
(31)	At last he said, ‘Six,’ in the local way, *sick-ees.* (83)	—Seisdijo— por fin, al modo local, que partía el six inglés en «sik-iis». (101)
(32)	‘Beatriss,’ Gala said. The word was unpronounceable on the Lower River. The Beatles had just reached southern Africa. (99)	—Bitriss— dijo Gala. La palabra resultaba impronunciable en Lower River. Los Beatles acababan de llegar al sur de África. (118)
(33)	In the darkness she was not the bright schoolteacher […] but an African of wondering bluntness: ‘*What ees eet?* And *Ees wait* and *I hev nayvah.*’ (102)	En la oscuridad había dejado de ser la brillante profesora […] y ahora se parecía a cualquier mujer africana que preguntaba toscamente: ¿qué es? Es blanco. ¡Yo nunca! (121-122)
(34)	[S]poke his one English word –‘fee-dee-dom.’ (109)	[U]tilizó la única palabra inglesa de su vocabulario:— Fi-di-dom –«libertad». (130)
(35)	[A]nd, correcting further, attempted ‘Meeneestah.’ (151)	[Y] llevando al extremo la corrección, aventuró en su precario inglés:— Ministah. (176)

(36)	The boy said in English to Hock, 'Reevah.' (156)	El chico le dijo a Hock en un inglés vacilante: —Río. (181)
(37)	'Jinny,' she said, with effort, her tongue against her teeth. Hock shook his head, squinting at the word. '*Ulendo*.' 'Yes, journey,' he said. 'Big journey.' (216)	—Jinny— dijo ella con esfuerzo, chocando la lengua contra los dientes. Hock sacudió la cabeza, intentando descifrar el sentido de la palabra. —*Ulendo*. —Sí, una travesía— dijo él identificando el «*journey*» inglés—. Una larga travesía. (250)
(38)	'Give money,' Mantenga said, licking his lips – *geev mahnie.* The crude demand made all of Manyenga's replies like the grunts of a brute. 'Who am I?' 'Chiff.' 'What do you say to the chief?' 'Puddon?' Hock repeated his question. 'Pliss.' 'I'll give it to you later, when you have food for me.' (218)	—Dinero— dijo Manyenga pasándose la lengua por los labios. La demanda sin ambages de Manyenga transformó todo el resto de sus réplicas en los gruñidos de un bruto. —¿Quién soy yo? —Jefe. —¿Qué se dice al jefe? —¿Perdón? Hock repitió la pregunta. —¿Por favor? —Te daré lo tuyo después, cuando tú me hayas dado comida. (252-253)

Table 4. Examples of representations of oral characteristics of the English language spoken in Africa in *The Lower River* and *En Lower River*

Theroux uses eye-dialect (Walpole 1974), alternating nonstandard typographic representations in order to convey the phonetic characteristics of these words and the differences in pronunciation from the standard. For example, these representations include using italics (like *ees eet* from Example 33, or *Sick-iis* in Example 31) and the doubling of the consonant to indicate a long sound like /i:/ (like in Examples 35 *Meeneestah*, or in 31, 33, 34 and 38). Theroux also modifies words, for example by including and extra vowel *i*, as in Example 38: *Chiff*, *Pliss.* These simple changes in spelling are enough to give the reader the impression of a different accent, an "exotic" one.

The readers of the Spanish translation cannot grasp these "translations" of the spoken English language. In almost all cases, the translator decides to leave the word in English and typographically indicate it in the text, then state that the word was said in English before offering a translation into Spanish, using the amplification translation strategy included in Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) taxonomy of translation techniques. The exceptions are in Examples 35 and 36, where no translation is provided and the reduction translation technique is used. In Example 35, "Ministah", the translator uses the borrowing technique, taking a word directly from another language. By using these translation techniques, the reader still gets the idea of exoticism transmitted in the original. In Example 36 there is no adaptation or explanation of the word *river*, but an explanation that this word is pronounced in an "unsteady English" (another example of amplification). However, there are certain instances when the translator decides to use the strategy of reduction, as in Example 33, where all the spelling markings of the difference in pronunciation disappear and the words are translated into standard Spanish. This strategy is very effective, as it facilitates the Spanish reader's understanding of the conversation by avoiding all references to the English language, which the Spanish reader is not expected to know. Thus, the translation is more direct, so the reader can concentrate on the meaning and not get lost trying to infer what the conversation is about.

6. Conclusion

This paper uses a holistic approach to ascertain whether readers of the *The Lower River* (2012) and its translation into Spanish perceive a specific representation of Malabo and Malawi in this novel. Images are created for the reader representing the personal opinions of the author on the main topics (such as politics and international aid), thus offering a biased point of view.

The questions that this literary piece of fiction raises are many and profound, and we can only wonder why this fabricated representation of Malabo and Malawi written by an American author has been so quickly translated in Spain while many African authors offering a different point of view remain untranslated and unknown to the Spanish readers. Venuti states that the "hegemony of English in the current global economy has brought new concerns" (1998b: 140), concerns that over 15 years after this affirmation seem to be more relevant than ever. We agree with wa Thiong'o when he states, reflecting on the importance of languages: "If the globe is seen as a circle, then languages should be seen as occupying their place in the ring, and all contributing to the human centre" (2012: 122). As we have seen, Theroux's novel has characteristics that make it fit for global distribution by publishing houses, including the fact that the publishing house in Spain (Alfaguara) belongs to the publishing house of the original text (Penguin House) and, as stated in the introduction, that the author was already well known in the international market mostly due to his novel *The Mosquito Coast*.

Publishing market statistics have shown that the market in Spain publishes mostly English translated works, accounting for almost 50% of the total of translated books, which leaves many other languages and literatures largely ignored. We have seen that it seems to be fundamental that books come directly from an Anglo-Saxon publishing market or that the books have been previously translated into

English and received international “recognition”. This gives English a language hegemony that exemplifies wa Thiong’o’s idea that “[i]n more ways than one, the global world is an inheritor of global colonialism. A handful of languages literally dominate all the other languages on the globe. […] The world of languages and cultures has thus become divided into a dominant few and a marginalised many” (2012: 121).

En Lower River was published in 2014 and more current publications in Spain seem to be driving the Spanish literary market into a more open field, where other depictions of Africa originally published in other languages besides English are now being published by small, independent publishing houses (for example, Lília Momplé’s *Neighbours*, translated by Alejandro de los Santos and published by Libros de las Malas Compañías). Finally, the main problem in Spain is also that “African writers in Spanish are usually published by small local publishers with a very limited distribution” (Brancato 2009: 5-6). Understanding the singularities of both publishing markets, then, provides us with a first approach to the novel and its translation, one that helps us better understand the context in which *The Lower River* was produced.

By including both a textual analysis and a study of how different languages are used in *The Lower River*, using the software Wordsmith Tools version 4.0, we can approach the novel from a more qualitative perspective, looking for the main themes of the book based on the most frequent words, making concordances to see their collocations (thus better understanding the topics) and analyzing the translation strategies followed by Martínez Llorente when word frequency discrepancies were found in the results.

Thus, thanks to the wordlist option in Wordsmith Tools we were able to provide a list of topics in the novel based on the most frequent words in the text: the clash the main character suffers after returning to Africa (as *Hock* and *Manyenga* are the two most frequent nouns); the representation of Africa (as frequent words include *Malabo*, *Africa*,); the importance of *money* (the term *money* appears 176 times); the opposition between *dark/black* and *white*, and the importance of the Sena language. Following the textual analysis to see if the main words from the wordlist results had positive or negative connotations, we saw that Theroux uses mostly negative terms to refer to Malabo and Manyenga (such as *sick*, *confusion* or *terrible*), as the character represents Malabo’s values, and that the term *money* is the nexus between the different topics present in the text.

The discrepancies in the frequency of certain words found by Wordsmith Tools in the English novel and its translation into Spanish were the result of the translation strategies used by Martínez Llorente. Analyzing these has helped us understand how the Spanish reader is presented with the singularities of the original, such as

Theroux's use of eye-dialect in the original and how this is represented in the translation. Following Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) classification of translation techniques, the most frequently used strategies by the translator in the examples analyzed in this article are: reduction (as in the case of *Malabo*, *Malaui*, *Manyenga*), amplification (as in the example of *dinero*), particularization (by including the main character's name, *Hock*), description (as in the *Manyenga* example), modulation (as in the translation of *dark*) and borrowing (as in the example of *Ministah*). These strategies help the reader understand the complexities of the novel, and they solve linguistic problems that otherwise would make elements of the text incomprehensible to the reader (such as the representation of English phonetics).

This study has limitations, mostly due to the holistic approach that does not allow us to provide a deeper analysis of each aspect analyzed. For example, a more comprehensive linguistic approach could be pursued to focus predominantly on the translation strategies used by the translator and consequently examine if and how literary translation influences readers' reception of the novel. Also, focusing only on the results provided by the software Wordsmith Tools is a further limitation. Including other software tools to identify keywords or clusters could help us deepen our understanding of the characteristics of this novel.

Notes

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1. This analysis summarizes the results from the research undergone in the Spanish National Library database, searching for translated versions published until the year 2014. For more information on the results, see Cadera and Martín Matas (2017).

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STRESS SHIFT IN NOUN-VERB CONVERSION PAIRS: THE CASE OF *IMPORT*^{N}-*IMPORT*^{V} PAIRS

EL CAMBIO DE POSICIÓN DEL ACENTO EN PAREJAS DE CONVERSIÓN NOMBRE-VERBO: EL CASO DE PAREJAS COMO *IMPORT*^{N}-*IMPORT*^{V}

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Abstract

Conversion is a word-formation process characterised, among other aspects, by the formal identity between the original word and the resulting one (*bottle* → *to bottle*). However, there are a few cases of conversion-related words which challenge this formal identity characteristic of conversion. One of these cases is that of noun-verb conversion pairs such as *import*^{N}-*import*^{V}, in which a type of phonological base allomorphy occurs: stress shift. In such cases, stress shift consists in nouns tending to be stressed on the first syllable (*import*^{N} /ˈɪmpɔːt/) while verbs are usually stressed on the last one (*import*^{V} /ɪmˈpɔːt/). This study aims to determine which are the most frequently occurring noun-verb conversion pairs displaying stress shift and why this type of allomorphy occurs. To answer these questions, a corpus of 157 noun-verb conversion pairs was compiled from frequency lists of nouns and verbs. Out of these pairs, 25 presented stress shift. Additionally, information about the etymology and the year of introduction into English of the 25 pairs with stress shift was gathered. It was found that all the noun-verb conversion pairs with stress shift are of Romance origin. Furthermore, the results suggest that the stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs might be due to their adaptation to the Germanic stress system after being introduced into English from either Latin or French.

Keywords: allomorphy, conversion, derivational paradigms, (Germanic/Romance) stress assignment, stress shift.

Resumen

La conversión es un proceso de formación de palabras caracterizado, entre otros aspectos, por la identidad formal entre la palabra original y la palabra resultante (*bottle* → *to bottle*). Sin embargo, hay unos cuantos casos de palabras relacionadas por conversión que desafían esta característica de identidad formal. Uno de estos casos son las parejas de conversión nombre-verbo como *import*^{N}-*import*^{V}, en las que ocurre un tipo de alomorfía fonológica en la base de la palabra: cambio de posición del acento. En tales casos, el cambio de posición del acento consiste en que los nombres tienden a acentuarse en la primera sílaba (*import*^{N} /ˈɪmpɔːt/) mientras que los verbos se suelen acentuar en la última (*import*^{V} /ɪmˈpɔːt/). Este estudio pretende determinar qué parejas de conversión nombre-verbo son las que presentan más habitualmente cambio de posición del acento y por qué este tipo de alomorfía ocurre. Para responder a estas preguntas, se recopiló un corpus de 157 parejas de conversión nombre-verbo provenientes de listas de frecuencia de nombres y verbos. De entre estas parejas, 25 presentaban cambio de posición del acento. Además, también se anotó la etimología y el año de incorporación al inglés de las 25 parejas con cambio de posición del acento. Se encontró que todas las parejas de conversión nombre-verbo con cambio de posición del acento son de origen romance. Asimismo, los resultados sugieren que el cambio de posición del acento en las parejas de conversión nombre-verbo puede deberse a la adaptación de dichas parejas al sistema de acentuación germánico una vez incorporadas al inglés del latín o el francés.

Palabras clave: alomorfía, conversión, paradigmas derivativos, asignación del acento (germánico/romance), cambio de posición del acento.

1. Introduction

'Conversion' is a word-formation process characterised, among other aspects, by the formal identity between the original word and the resulting one (Valera and Ruz 2020). Consider the word *bottle* in the sentences below:

(1) I have just bought a bottle of wine.

(2) My uncle bottles wine at his vineyard.

The underlined words in (1) and (2) are examples of conversion. By means of this word-formation process, the noun *bottle* (illustrated in (1)) generates the verb *to bottle* (illustrated in (2)). As typically occurs in conversion, the original word *bottle*^{N} and the converted (i.e. resulting) word *bottle*^{V} are formally identical.

However, there are a few cases of conversion pairs similar to *bottle*^{N}-*bottle*^{V} in which this feature of formal identity is challenged to some extent. This is because such cases present phonological base allomorphy. For instance, there are cases of voicing of the final phoneme (e.g. *house*^{N} /haʊs/ vs. *house*^{V} /haʊz/), stress shift[1] (e.g. *import*^{N} /ˈɪmpɔːt/ vs. *import*^{V} /ɪmˈpɔːt/) and stress shift in combination with consonant syllabicity/vowel reduction (e.g. *rebel*^{N} /ˈrɛbl/ vs. *rebel*^{V} /rɪ̵ˈbɛl/).

The aim of the present study is to investigate stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs in order to better understand why it occurs. Given that stress shift may be displayed on its own (*import*^{N} /ˈɪmpɔːt/ - *import*^{V} /ɪmˈpɔːt/) or along with another type of allomorphy (i.e. consonant syllabicity/vowel reduction: *rebel*^{N}/ˈrɛbl/ - *rebel*^{V} /rɪ̵ˈbɛl/; vowel reduction: *object*^{N} /ˈɒbdʒɛkt/ - *object*^{V} /əbˈdʒɛkt/), the present study will be based on cases that exhibit both stress shift and stress shift in combination with vowel reduction.

2. Theoretical Framework

Before analysing the issue at hand in more detail, it is necessary to discuss first the concepts of 'derivational paradigms', 'allomorphy' and conversion. A discussion about derivational paradigms is relevant because noun-verb conversion pairs such as *bottle*^{N}-*bottle*^{V}, *import*^{N}-*import*^{V} or *object*^{N}-*object*^{V} can be considered to constitute a paradigm (together with other words) based on lexico-semantic properties. For example, (part of) the derivational paradigm of *import* would be:

(3) *import*^{V}
import^{N}
importer
importation
importable

Secondly, as the cases of *import*^{N}-*import*^{V} and *object*^{N}-*object*^{V} present phonological base allormophy, it is pertinent to discuss the phenomenon of allomorphy in some detail. Lastly, given that these pairs are cases of conversion, it is also helpful to offer an overview of this word-formation process.

2.1. Derivational Paradigms

The notion of paradigm (i.e. a set of items which are abstractly represented in a set of cells associated with a series of properties (Štekauer 2014: 355; Bauer 2019: 156) is typically associated with inflectional morphology and, therefore, applied to cases of inflection. For instance, the inflectional paradigm of the Spanish verb *cantar* 'to sing' for the present tense (and indicative mood) is:

(4) *cant-o*	sing-PRS.IND.1SG
cant-as	sing-PRS.IND.2SG

cant-a	sing-PRS.IND.3SG
cant-amos	sing-PRS.IND.1PL
cant-áis	sing-PRS.IND.2PL
cant-an	sing-PRS.IND.3PL

This treatment of inflection in terms of paradigmatic structure has not been traditionally applied to derivation. Gaeta and Angster explain that, while the insertion of a word into a syntactic structure is not considered to require any reference to a paradigm because any lexeme can be inserted into any syntactic structure, inflection does require the notion of a paradigm because, once the lexeme to be inserted is selected, the appropriate word-form of this lexeme has to be chosen from the set of all its possible word-forms to fit into the syntactic context (2019: 250-251). However, this traditional view is challenged by authors who argue that not only inflectional morphology but also derivational morphology can be discussed in terms of paradigmatic structure and that, in fact, the notion of paradigm is important in derivation (Bauer 1997; Štekauer 2014; Boyé and Schalchli 2016; Bauer 2019).

In the literature, inflectional paradigms have been mainly characterised by the following features: (i) inflectional paradigms are arranged around a basic form and the members of any given paradigm share the same base or base-type (Bauer 1997: 244); (ii) each cell of an inflectional paradigm is filled with a word form realising some properties, namely morpho-syntactic properties (e.g. PLURALITY, GENDER, CASE, TENSE, etc.) (Bauer 1997; Beecher 2004; Bauer 2019); and (iii) inflectional paradigms are considered to be regular and very predictable (Bauer 1997; Štekauer 2014; Bauer 2019). Arguably, these features can also describe derivational paradigms.

Regarding the first feature, Bauer highlights that derivational paradigms are also organised around a basic form and that they are sets of derivationally-related items (1997: 245), namely words which share a base or base-type:

(5) *man*
man-ful
man-hood
mann-ish
man-ly

(Bauer 2019: 159)

The above set of words forms a paradigm that is made up by derivationally-related words which are arranged around the same basic form: the base *man-*.

With respect to the second feature, Bauer (1997), Beecher (2004) and Bauer (2019) point out that each cell of a derivational paradigm is filled with a word realising some properties, namely lexico-semantic properties (e.g. AGENT, INSTRUMENT, RESULT OF ACTION, etc.):

(6)	*attend*	*compete*	*cook*^{V}	*create*	*dance*
	attendant	*competitor*	*cook*^{N}	*creator*	*dancer*

(Bauer 2019: 160)

In (6), each of the columns presents a derivational paradigm, and each of these paradigms is constituted by one form which realises the lexico-semantic property of AGENT.

Along the same lines, Štekauer offers another way of presenting this feature by carrying out a parallel analysis of both inflectional and derivational paradigms (2014: 358-359). The author argues that, in the same way that members of a plural inflectional paradigm such as *cat, cats* are semantically related to each other on the basis of the cognitive category of PLURALITY, the members of a derivational paradigm can be semantically related to each other based on cognitive categories such as RESULT OF ACTION, AGENT, INSTRUMENT, etc.

As to the third feature attributed to inflectional paradigms, derivational paradigms are typically defined as being more irregular and less predictable than inflectional paradigms (Bauer 1997; Štekauer 2014; Bauer 2019). According to Bauer, gaps can be easily found in derivational paradigms, and words are not considered members of derivational paradigms unless they are established forms in the language (2019: 165). Furthermore, derivational patterns are not as easily generalisable as inflectional ones, as they cannot be applied to all the cases of the same word-class. In fact, this absence of regularity in derivational paradigms is the most frequently cited argument to justify their "non-existence" (Štekauer 2014: 357).

However, this argument is not entirely justified for rejecting the notion of derivational paradigm because the regularity and predictability of inflectional paradigms do not lack controversy, either. Phenomena such as defectiveness, deponency, overabundance and syncretism in inflectional paradigms reveal that inflection is not as regular as initially considered and that it can also be problematic (Bauer 1997; Boyé and Schalchli 2016; Bonami and Strnadová 2019).

On the other hand, predictability and regularity can also be found in derivational paradigms (Bauer 1997; Antoniová 2016). For example, the nominal forms of verbs which end in *-ize* take *-ation* (*colonize-colonization*, *realize-realization*); the nominal forms of verbs ending in *-ify* take *-ication* (*simplify-simplification*, *beautify-beautification*); and the nominalisations of verbs that end in *-ate* take *-ion* (*hesitate-hesitation*, *anticipate-anticipation*). Furthermore, gapless derivational paradigms are canonical (Stump 2019: 273).

The notion of derivational paradigm is not only justified by the fact that a parallel analysis can be carried out of both inflectional and derivational paradigms but also by the fact that derivational paradigms are important in derivation. This is because the words of the same derivational paradigm are inter-related (Beecher 2004: 24-29).

2.2. Allomorphy

Allomorphy is the phenomenon whereby different morphs, namely allomorphs, realise one and the same morpheme (Plag 2018: 28). For example, the definite article *the* has three realisations, that is, three (allo)morphs:

i. [ðə] when the article is followed by a consonant sound;
ii. [ði] when *the* is followed by a vowel sound; and
ii. [ˈðiː] when *the* is uttered in isolation.

This shows that different morphs are allomorphs of one and the same morpheme when they present the same meaning or function. Furthermore, it also shows that allomorphs stand in complementary distribution, that is, they are not in competition with each other because the occurrence of one to the detriment of the others is conditioned by the linguistic environment.

Some authors (Kastovsky 2006; Booij 2007; Embick 2012) analyse instances of allomorphy as part of a scale. At one end, there are cases which can be explained by the phonological rules of the language (Kastovsky 2006: 159; Booij 2007: 32; Embick 2012: 22-23). An example of this is the formation of the regular past in English because a phonological rule (i.e. voicing assimilation) assimilates the morpheme for the expression of the past tense to the preceding sound (Lieber 2015: 178). Thus, the morpheme has three allomorphs:

i. [t] after voiceless consonants;
ii. [d] after voiced consonants; and
iii. [ɪd] after [t] or [d].

At the other extreme, there are cases that present suppletion, i.e. one and the same morpheme is expressed by distinct phonological realisations (Booij 2007: 33; Embick 2012: 23). For instance, in the inflectional paradigm *good*, *better*, Booij argues that the lexeme GOOD may be realised by two different stems, *good* and *bet-* (2007: 33).

The cases of allomorphy between the above extremes are cases which do not fit neatly into either of them. This is because alternations are restricted to a specific subset of words and because they share most of their phonological material (Booij 2007: 33; Embick 2012: 23).

As can already be deduced, allomorphy can occur in both affixes and bases:

(7) Affix allomorphy

i. *cause* + *al* → *caus**al***
ii. *pole* + *al* → *pol**ar***
iii. *inflection* + *al* → *inflection**al***
iv. *nodule* + *al* → *nodul**ar***
v. *distribution* + *al* → *distribution**al***
vi. *cellule* + *al* → *cellul**ar***

(Plag 2018: 29, emphasis added)

(8) Base allomorphy

explain [**ɪkˈspleɪn**]
explan + *ation* [**ˌɛkspləˈn +** eɪʃən]
explan + *atory* [**ɪkˈsplan +** ətɔːri]

(Plag 2018: 28, emphasis added)

The affixes -*al* and -*ar* in (7) are allomorphs of the morpheme {-al}. The occurrence of the allomorphs is determined by the phonological properties of the final segment of the base (whether it is /l/ or not), which means that the occurrence of -*al* and -*ar* is phonologically conditioned. As allomorphy affects the suffix -*al* in (7), that is, the phenomenon occurs at affix level, this is a case of affix allomorphy.

On the other hand, example (8) illustrates different allomorphs of the base EXPLAIN, which implies that there is base or stem allomorphy in this case. According to Plag, the pronunciation of the base EXPLAIN varies depending on the affix attached to it (2018: 28). The attachment of the suffix -*ation* triggers (i) shift of the main stress from the second syllable of the base to the third; (ii) lowering in the pronunciation of the first vowel from [ɪ] to [ɛ]; and (iii) secondary stress on the first syllable of the derivative. Meanwhile, the attachment of -*atory* triggers the change of pronunciation of the second syllable of the base from [eɪ] to [a]. As the base allomorphs are conditioned by the type of affix attached to the base, allomorphy in these cases is morphologically conditioned.

The aforementioned cases of *house*^{N} /haʊs/ vs. *house*^{V} /haʊz/, *import*^{N} /ˈɪmpɔːt/ vs. *import*^{V} /ɪmˈpɔːt/ and *rebel*^{N} /ˈrɛbl/ vs. *rebel*^{V} /rɪ̵ˈbɛl/ illustrate phonological base allomorphy. In each pair, there are phonological changes (voicing of the final phoneme, stress shift, and stress shift in combination with consonant syllabicity/vowel reduction, respectively) that affect the base of the words and that distinguish the nouns from the verbs. However, unlike the examples in (7) and (8), it is not clear what conditions or motivates these cases of base allomorphy.

Finally, it must be noted that allomorphy can also be studied from a historical perspective. English presents two lexical strata, as there are words of native origin (i.e. Germanic origin) and of non-native origin (i.e. mostly Latin and French loanwords). Allomorphy in the native stratum of the lexicon can be traced back to the Old English period, as alternations were common in Old English (Kastovsky 2006: 171). For example, traces of such alternations can be found in the so-called 'strong verbs', such as *write-wrote-written* from OE *wrītan-wrāt-writon-ġewriten*. By contrast, the non-native words typically display the alternations of their native language. For instance, in the pair *deduce-deduction*, the derivative (*deduction*) takes the participial stem form of the Latin verb *duco, -is, -ere, duxi, ductum* 'to lead', which presented different stems.

2.3. Conversion

The underlined words in Examples (1) and (2), i.e. *bottle* and *bottles*, are examples of the process of conversion. Schönefeld describes it as "the use of a word of a particular category as a word of another category, without this being indicated by any formal marker or change" (2005: 131). This description captures the two conditions typically required for this process to happen: (i) word-class change and (ii) formal identity between the original word and the resulting one (Valera 2014: 154). The process can be interpreted in numerous ways. In fact, depending on the interpretation, this phenomenon is referred to as 'zero-derivation' (Lee 2009), 'conversion' (Sweet 2014), 'event-schema metonym' (Dirven 1999; Schönefeld 2005) and 'relisting of lexical items' (Lieber 2005), among others. Given that there is not a unanimously accepted interpretation of the process, I will simply refer to it as conversion henceforth.

Conversion can be described from a diachronic perspective, accounting for the formal identity of conversion-related pairs. Jespersen highlights that one of the most characteristic features of Modern English is the formal identity of a number of words which belong to different word-classes (1949: 84). This author explains that in Old English, there were verbs, nouns and adjectives which shared the same root and were distinguishable from one another by their endings (Jespersen 1949: 86). This is the case of the OE pair *lufu*$^{\mathrm{N}}$ 'love' - *lufian*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ 'to love'. As the English language developed in the subsequent centuries, the vowels of unstressed syllables were levelled to <e> [ə] (Late Middle English *luve*$^{\mathrm{N}}$ 'love' - *luven*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ 'to love'), and the <e> and <n> of the endings eventually ceased to be pronounced (fifteenth century), leading thus to the current formal identity (*love*$^{\mathrm{N}}$ /lʌv/ - *love*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ /lʌv/) of two originally distinct words (Jespersen 1949: 86-87). Therefore, this approach does not regard one of the members of conversion-related pairs as the result of word-formation but considers the evolution of the English language as the reason for the existence of formally identical, category-specific pairs in present-day English.

Another interpretation is that by Sweet (2014). In the same way that *white* can become another part of speech (i.e. word-class) by the addition of the suffix *-ness whiteness*), the verb *walk* (as in *he walks*) can be made into another part of speech without any modification, except for the change of inflection (Sweet 2014: 38). Sweet regards conversion as a matter of form and distribution, and not of meaning, because converted words adopt the formal properties (i.e. inflection) of the part of speech into which they have been made and the distribution of that part of speech within the sentence (2014: 39). Under this interpretation, *bottle* in (1) is a noun because it may take the plural ending *-s* (*bottle* → *bottles*) and because it may be preceded by articles (such as *a*) and followed by prepositional phrases (such as *of wine*), just as nouns usually do. On the other hand, *bottle* in (2) is a verb because it may take verbal inflectional endings (such as the *-s* ending for third person singular) and because it may be preceded by noun phrases functioning as subjects (such as *my uncle*) and followed by noun phrases functioning as objects (such as *wine*).

Together with Sweet's account, the most widespread interpretation is that of conversion as zero-derivation. For this approach, conversion is a word-formation process, an "instantiation of derivation" (Don 2005: 2). Marchand explains that conversion is a type of derivation which produces new words by the addition of a zero-morpheme (in Martsa 2013: 11-12), i.e. a morpheme without phonic expression, and justifies its existence by highlighting the same syntactic-semantic pattern (e.g. "make X") in derivatives by overt morphemes (e.g. *legal-ize*^{V}, *national-ize*^{V}, *steril-ize*^{V}) and by the covert/zero morpheme (e.g. *clean*^{V}, *dirty*^{V}, *tidy*^{V}). Conversion as zero-derivation presents advantages over other interpretations: (i) it offers a simple description of the phenomenon (Lee 2009); (ii) it accounts for the base-derivative relationship between the members of conversion pairs (Plag 2018: 105); (iii) it solves the problem of directionality of conversion by determining that the semantically more complex form must be the derived (i.e. converted) word (Plag 2018: 106); and (iv) it provides an explanation for pairs such as *éxport*^{N}-*expórt*^{V} and *hou*[s]*e*^{N}-*hou*[z]*e*^{V} by arguing that, as zero-morphemes are affixes, they can cause phonological changes (Lee 2009).

Nevertheless, this interpretation is controversial. The existence of a single zero-morpheme is questionable because, given their semantic diversity, one and the same zero-affix could not cover all the different types of conversion, which implies that there must be more than one zero-morpheme (Štekauer in Schönefeld 2005: 137). Sanders justifies the zero morpheme on the basis of its parallelism in meaning and function with overt morphemes ('overt analogue criterion') (in Plag 2018:

110). However, Plag argues that the mere application of the overt analogue criterion shows that there is no such parallelism between overt affixes and the zero-morpheme, challenging the existence of the latter (2018: 110-112).

Within the field of word-formation, conversion has also been described as a "unique, specific word-formation process, based upon principles different from those that characterize the process of derivation" (Štekauer in Schönefeld 2005: 137). In relation to its productivity, conversion is an extremely productive process. Bauer argues that all word-classes can undergo conversion, that conversion can produce new words of any of the open word-classes, and that derivatives, compounds, acronyms, blends, clipped forms and simple words are possible inputs to conversion, as there do not seem to be morphological constraints on the forms that can be bases of this process (1983: 226). The only apparent restriction on the process is that derived nouns are rarely bases of conversion, especially of converted verbs (Bauer 1983: 226).

From a cognitive linguistics perspective, conversion is regarded as a conceptual phenomenon of semantic extension with morpho-syntactic implications (Schönefeld 2005: 140-150). The basis of this proposal is that there is a metonymic relationship between the source base and the converted word (Schönefeld 2005: 149-150). Dirven argues that conversion involves a type of metonymy applied at a predicate argument level, which means that any participant (except for the agent) in an event schema can carry saliency and, therefore, be an input to conversion (1999: 278). In relation to this, Dirven coined the term 'event-schema metonymy' to refer to the process whereby a salient participant becomes the designation for an event itself (1999: 279). Morpho-syntactic consequences emerge from this process as the converted word adopts the inflectional paradigm and the syntactic distribution of the associated word-class (Schönefeld 2005: 140).

Another interpretation considers conversion as category underspecification. Focusing on noun-verb and verb-noun conversion pairs, Farrell (2001) argues that there is no process (either of word formation or of any other kind) that creates words of a certain word-class from words of another. This is because words usually identified with conversion, such as *kiss*, *hammer*, *bag* or *sneeze*, are categorially underspecified, which means that they are not inherently associated to any word-class. According to Farrell (2001), this approach to conversion is preferable, as it accounts for why there is no derivational morphology indicating the creation of one word from another and for the related meaning of conversion pairs.

A final interpretation of conversion is that of conversion as relisting of lexical items in the lexicon. Lieber explains that conversion is not a derivational process nor any other type of directional process, but a process of relisting lexical words in the mental lexicon (2005: 421). For this author, a converted word simply comes from a process which consists in re-entering in the lexicon an already existing word as a new word of another word-class (Lieber 2005: 421). Thus, a converted verb is simply the result of relisting a noun or an adjective as a verb in the lexicon (Lieber in Don 2005: 7). Therefore, instead of being a morphological process, conversion is regarded as a process similar to coinage (Lieber 2005: 421).

The interpretations of conversion reviewed are attempts to explain what this process is. Another dilemma of conversion is to identify the exact nature of the relation between conversion pairs. Valera and Ruz (2020) highlight the relevance of this question given the unique profile of conversion, i.e. the formal identity, the word-class contrast and the semantic relatedness of conversion pairs. Some of the reviewed proposals already provide a description for this relation. To the zero-derivation approach, the relation between conversion pairs is that of a base and its derivative (i.e. a derivational relation) and, to the conversion as event-schema metonymy proposal, there is a metonymic relation between the said pairs. Valera and Ruz (2020) argue that for central cases of conversion, that is, clear-cut instances of the process (e.g. *dirty*$^{\text{Adj}}$-*dirty*$^{\text{V}}$ or *spy*$^{\text{N}}$-*spy*$^{\text{V}}$), conversion's unique profile is accurately covered in terms of paronymic relations. On the other hand, Valera and Ruz (2020) also argue that the relations of polysemy and homonymy can better account for other (less central) cases, such as those of participial conversion (e.g. *interesting*$^{\text{V PRS. PART.}}$-*interesting*$^{\text{Adj}}$).

Finally, note that if conversion is characterised by the formal identity of the original word and the converted one, pairs such as *éxport*$^{\text{N}}$-*expórt*$^{\text{V}}$ or *hou*[s]*e*$^{\text{N}}$-*hou*[z]*e*$^{\text{V}}$ deserve special consideration, as their members are not formally identical. So far, conversion as zero-derivation is one of the few approaches[2] that has offered an explanation for such cases, which implies that further research in the field is needed. The present study aims to address this gap, at least partially, by investigating stress shift in pairs such as *export*$^{\text{N}}$-*export*$^{\text{V}}$.

2.4. The Present Study

As has been seen, cases of stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs (*ímport*$^{\text{N}}$-*impórt*$^{\text{V}}$, *éxport*$^{\text{N}}$-*expórt*$^{\text{V}}$) deserve special treatment. On the one hand, they challenge the formal identity that characterises conversion. On the other hand, they present a phonological base allormorphy whose conditions or motivations are unclear. As a result, the present study aims to investigate these cases of noun-verb conversion pairs. More specifically, it intends to answer the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1 Which are the most frequently occurring noun-verb conversion pairs displaying stress shift?

RQ1 Why does this type of allomorphy occur?

3. Method

In order to investigate stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs, a corpus of 157 noun-verb conversion pairs was compiled for analysis. Out of these pairs, 25 were clear cases of noun-verb conversion pairs with stress shift, and they were closely examined in order to answer the research questions. In what follows, Section 3.1 lists the instruments needed to compile the data, and Section 3.2 provides a description of the steps followed to elaborate a list of noun-verb conversion pairs presenting stress shift.

3.1. Materials

Two frequency lists were used for the compilation of the source data: a frequency list of nouns and a frequency list of verbs. A frequency list is a list in which the words of a given corpus are grouped by frequency of occurrence and by word-class, among other criteria. The frequency lists used in the study are contained in *Word Frequencies in Written and Spoken English* by G. Leech, P. Rayson and A. Wilson and were extracted from the entry "Frequency lists" of the authors' companion website to their book (Leech et al. 2001).

The frequency lists were used to guarantee a random selection of the words to be examined in the study. As the aim was to investigate stress shift in *noun-verb* conversion pairs, the frequency lists used were that of nouns[3] and that of verbs.[4]

Next, the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* was used to determine which of the compiled noun-verb conversion pairs displayed stress shift. Additionally, the *OED* was used to examine the etymology of the noun-verb conversion pairs and their approximate year of introduction into the English language.

3.2. Procedure

The steps (Ss) below were followed to select the data to be analysed and to elaborate a list of noun-verb conversion pairs presenting stress shift:

S1. From the aforementioned "Frequency lists" entry, the frequency lists of nouns and verbs were copied and pasted in a single column in a Word document, creating an extensive list of words.

S2. Tab stops were removed from the list of words.

S3. The list of words was alphabetised.

S4. The alphabetised list of words was copied and pasted into an Excel document.

S5. Items presenting percentages, numbers or symbols such as "&", "*" or "/" were removed from the list.

S6. Nouns and verbs that were not in conversion pairs were also removed from the list in order to exclusively leave noun-verb conversion pairs.

S7. Monosyllabic noun-verb conversion pairs were eliminated from the list, as they cannot display stress shift.

S8. The pronunciation of the remaining disyllabic and polysyllabic noun-verb conversion pairs was checked using the *OED*, assigning value 0 to the pairs that did not present stress shift and value 1 to those which did display this type of allomorphy. The pairs that were assigned value 1 included pairs such as *import*$^{\mathrm{N}}$ /ˈɪmpɔːt/ - *import*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ /ɪmˈpɔːt/, which present only stress shift, and pairs such as *object*$^{\mathrm{N}}$ /ˈɒbdʒɛkt/ - *object*$^{\mathrm{V}}$/əbˈdʒɛkt/, which display not only stress shift but also vowel reduction. Even though the latter present another type of allomorphy, i.e. vowel reduction, they were included in the study because they do exhibit stress shift.

S9. At the same time, the etymology of the disyllabic and polysyllabic noun-verb conversion pairs was noted together with the year in which they were first introduced into English.

S10. The pair *address*$^{\mathrm{N}}$-*address*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ was assigned value 0 because only the American pronunciation of the noun displayed stress shift from the last syllable to the first (i.e. /ˈadrɛs/) and because it is not even the preferred pronunciation, as it co-exists with the pronunciation that stresses the noun on the last syllable (i.e. /əˈdrɛs/).

S11. A total of 27 pairs with value 1 ("stress shift") was placed in a folder called "Pairs with stress shift" to be studied in isolation, thus allowing the identification of common patterns among the exemplars. The pairs *attribute*$^{\mathrm{N}}$-*attribute*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ and *finance*$^{\mathrm{N}}$-*finance*$^{\mathrm{V}}$ were removed from the analysis (see Section 4 for further details). Thus, a list of 25 noun-verb conversion pairs with stress shift was obtained in order to study this type of allomorphy.

Furthermore, the morphological structure "prefix + base" was observed in the 25 pairs. After this observation, the next steps were followed:

S12. As some of the disyllabic pairs with value 0 ("no stress shift") presented the same morphological structure as the 25 pairs under study, they were extracted, placed into another Excel folder called "Pairs to be compared" and classified into the categories "Pairs stressed on the last syllable" and "Pairs stressed on the first syllable".

S13. The 25 pairs of the study were added to the folder “Pairs to be compared” to be contrasted with the pairs already placed there (i.e. those without stress shift).[5]

4. Results

From the frequency lists of nouns and verbs, a total of 4,133 words was collected. As shown in Figure 1, 828 words (20% of the collected words) were in noun-verb conversion pairs, and the remaining 3,305 were removed as they were not relevant for the purposes of the study (note that the removed words were not in noun-verb conversion pairs).

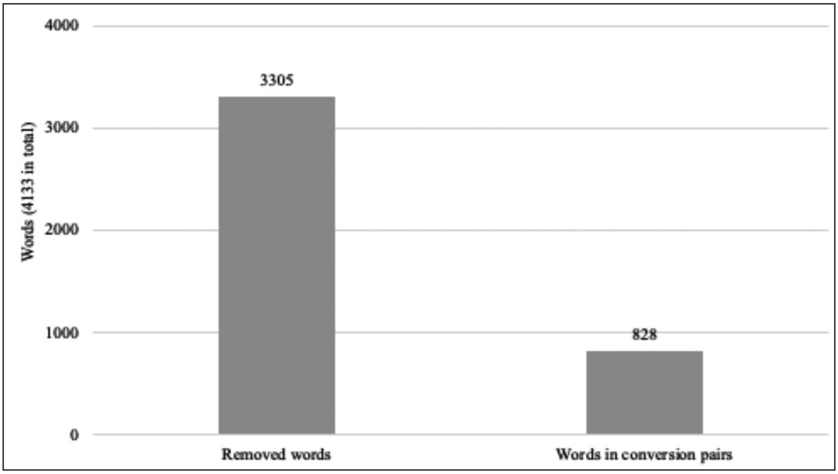

Figure 1. Removed words and words in noun-verb conversion pairs

The fact that there are 828 words in noun-verb conversion pairs means that there is a total of 414 pairs.

Stress shift is a type of allomorphy that can only occur in words with two or more syllables, as stress can shift from one syllable to another only in those cases. As shown in Figure 2, 257 pairs, i.e. 62% of the pairs, were removed because they were monosyllabic. On the other hand, 137 pairs were disyllabic, and 20 pairs were polysyllabic, which suggests that there is a total of 157 pairs that could present stress shift.

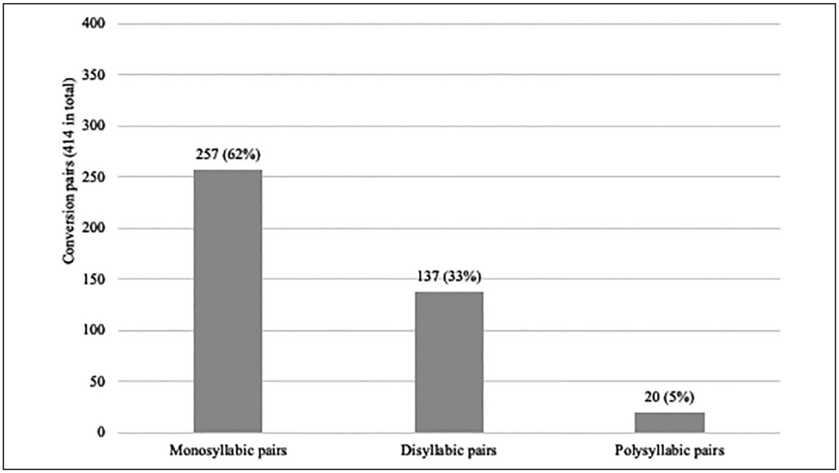

Figure 2. Monosyllabic, disyllabic and polysyllabic pairs

Out of these 157 noun-verb conversion pairs, only 27 (17%) presented stress shift, as shown in Figure 3.

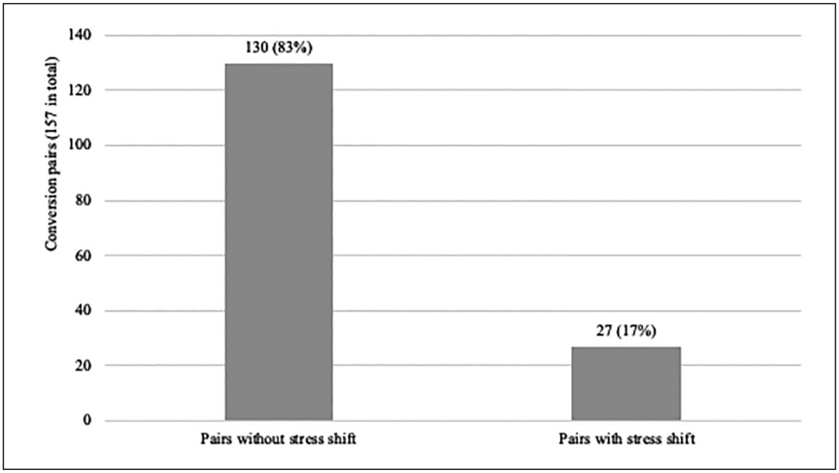

Figure 3. Pairs without/with stress shift

From the list of the 27 pairs presenting stress shift, two pairs were removed. The pair *attribute*^{N}-*attribute*^{V} was eliminated because it was the only trisyllabic pair and, therefore, it could not be compared with other pairs of the same kind. The second was *finance*^{N}-*finance*^{V}. The decision to eliminate this pair was due to the fact that it did not follow the morphological structure “prefix + base” that the rest of pairs presented (further details hereunder). Therefore, the study was eventually based on a list of 25 disyllabic noun-verb conversion pairs to explain stress shift.

Stress shift affects the pairs in a systematic way. As shown in Table 1,[6] nouns tend to be stressed on the first syllable while verbs are usually stressed on the last one.[7] This systematic stress shift behaviour of disyllabic noun-verb conversion pairs is not surprising, as it is a well-documented fact (see sources as early as Gimson 1962: 227-229; Sherman 1975). Nonetheless, the list in Table 1 indicates which are some of the most frequently occurring noun-verb conversion pairs displaying stress shift. Furthermore, it suggests that cases of stress shift in combination with vowel reduction tend to be more common, as the examples of stress shift and vowel reduction (18) far outnumber the pairs displaying only stress shift (7).

N-V conversion pairs	**Pronunciation**
access^{N} vs. *access*^{V}	/ˈaksɛs/ vs. /əkˈsɛs/
comment^{N} vs. *comment*^{V}	/ˈkɒmɛnt/ vs. /kəˈmɛnt/
conduct^{N} vs. *conduct*^{V}	/ˈkɒndʌkt/ vs. /kənˈdʌkt/
contact^{N} vs. *contact*^{V}	/ˈkɒntakt/ vs. /kənˈtakt/
contract^{N} vs. *contract*^{V}	/ˈkɒntrakt/ vs. /kənˈtrakt/
contrast^{N} vs. *contrast*^{V}	/ˈkɒntrɑːst/ vs. /kənˈtrɑːst/
desert^{N} vs. *desert*^{V}	/ˈdɛzət/ vs. /dᵻˈzɜːt/
discharge^{N} vs. *discharge*^{V}	/ˈdɪstʃɑːdʒ/ vs. /dɪsˈtʃɑːdʒ/
export^{N} vs. *export*^{V}	/ˈɛkspɔːt/ vs. /ɛkˈspɔːt/
extract^{N} vs. *extract*^{V}	/ˈɛkstrakt/ vs. /ɛkˈstrakt/
import^{N} vs. *import*^{V}	/ˈɪmpɔːt/ vs. /ɪmˈpɔːt/
increase^{N} vs. *increase*^{V}	/ˈɪŋkriːs/ vs. /ɪŋˈkriːs/
object^{N} vs. *object*^{V}	/ˈɒbdʒɛkt/ vs. /əbˈdʒɛkt/
present^{N} vs. *present*^{V}	/ˈprɛznt/ vs. /prᵻˈzɛnt/
proceed^{N} vs. *proceed*^{V}	/ˈprəʊsiːd/ vs. /prəˈsiːd/
progress^{N} vs. *progress*^{V}	/ˈprəʊgrɛs/ vs. /prə(ʊ)ˈgrɛs/
project^{N} vs. *project*^{V}	/ˈprɒdʒɛkt/ vs. /prəˈdʒɛkt/
protest^{N} vs. *protest*^{V}	/ˈprəʊtɛst/ vs. /prəˈtɛst/

record^{N} vs. *record*^{V}	/ˈrɛkɔːd/ vs. /rɨˈkɔːd/
research^{N} vs. *research*^{V}	/ˈriːsəːtʃ/ vs. /rɨˈsɜːtʃ/
subject^{N} vs. *subject*^{V}	/ˈsʌbdʒɛkt/ vs. /səbˈdʒɛkt/
survey^{N} vs. *survey*^{V}	/ˈsɜːveɪ/ vs. /səˈveɪ/
suspect^{N} vs. *suspect*^{V}	/ˈsʌspɛkt/ vs. /səˈspɛkt/
transfer^{N} vs. *transfer*^{V}	/ˈtrɑːnsfə/ vs. /trɑːnsˈfɜː/
transport^{N} vs. *transport*^{V}	/ˈtrɑːnspɔːt/ vs. /trɑːnˈspɔːt/

Table 1. Pronunciation of the 25 noun-verb (N-V) conversion pairs with stress shift[8]

As to the year of introduction of the pairs into English, Figure 4 shows the approximate year in which each member (nouns and verbs) of the 25 pairs was introduced.

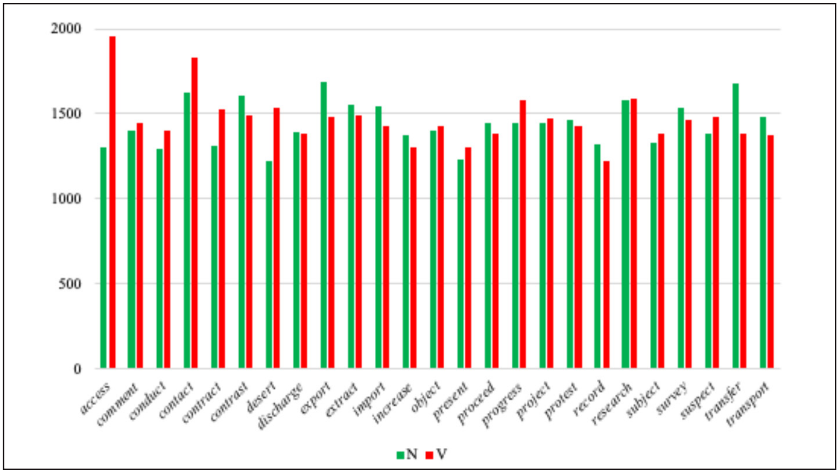

Figure 4. The 25 N-V conversion pairs and their approx. year of introduction into English

Each member of the 25 pairs entered the English language at different points in time. Out of the 50 members, 36 entered during the Middle English period (1150-1500) and 14 were introduced during the Modern English period (1500-1900).

Regarding the etymology of the pairs, all of them are of Romance origin (see Figure 5). It was found that 7 pairs (28%) came clearly from Latin, that 5 pairs (20%) were originally French and that 13 pairs (52%) were from either Latin or French origin.

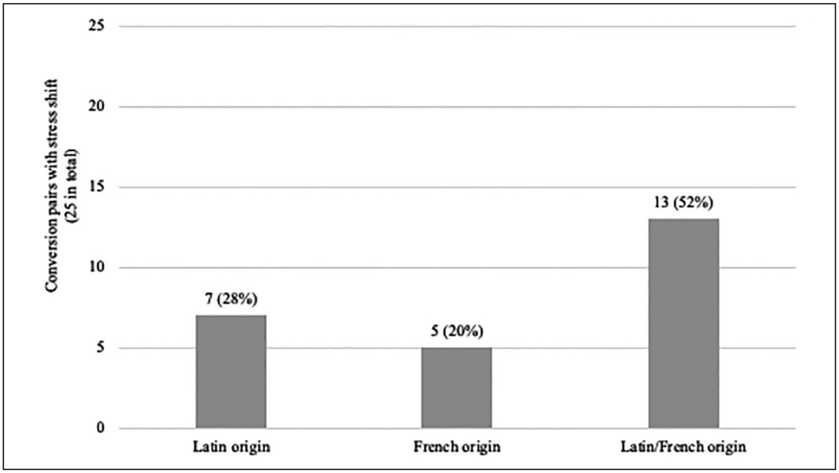

Figure 5. Etymology of the pairs

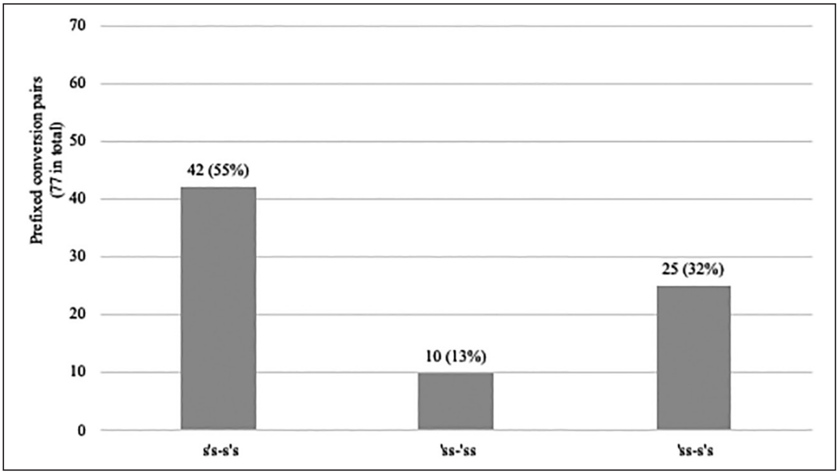

Figure 6. Prefixed pairs with stress on the last syllable, with stress on the first syllable and with stress shift

Apart from being of Romance origin, the 25 pairs of the study share the same morphological structure: "prefix + base". This is because the pairs derive from prefixed verbs in their language of origin, i.e. Latin and French.

The common structural pattern “prefix + base” was not only observed in the 25 pairs presenting stress shift but also in some disyllabic pairs where stress shift did not occur. Additionally, these 0-valued disyllabic pairs were also of Romance origin. Taking into account these similarities and differences, three types of pairs were distinguished: pairs with both members stressed on the last syllable (sˈs-sˈs), pairs with both members stressed on the first syllable (ˈss-ˈss) and pairs with stress shift (ˈss-sˈs). As can be seen in Figure 6, there is a total of 77 pairs with the morphological structure “prefix + base”. Of these, 42 are stressed on the last syllable, 10 are stressed on the first syllable, and, evidently, 25 present stress shift.

5. Discussion

Present-day English is a language that is originally Germanic. However, throughout its history, English has been influenced by other languages, especially Latin and French. Such influence led to the introduction of Latin and French words into the English vocabulary. For this reason, English presents two lexical strata: a native stratum (i.e. words of Germanic origin) and a non-native stratum (i.e. words of mostly Latin and French origin) (Kastovsky 2006: 170). The native stratum of the vocabulary follows the Germanic assignment of stress. In Old English, stress was assigned to the first syllable of the root (Kastovsky 2006: 172). For illustration, consider the following OE nouns and verbs from Baugh and Cable: *gíefu*^{N} ‘gift’, *húnta*^{N} ‘hunter’, *méte*^{N} ‘food, meat’, *líbban*^{V} ‘to live’, *drícan*^{V} ‘to drink’ and *hélpan*^{V} ‘to help’ (2013: 52-57). In the case of OE prefixed verbs, stress was assigned to the first syllable of the root as well: *be-séttan*^{V} ‘to appoint’ and *wiþ-sprécan*^{V} ‘to contradict’ (Baugh and Cable 2013: 62).

During the Old English period (450-1150), stress assignment was quite homogenous because, as Baugh and Cable point out, “the vocabulary of Old English is almost purely Germanic” (2013: 52). However, stress assignment was influenced by the Latin and French loanwords that entered English in the Middle English (1150-1500) and the Modern English (1500-1900) periods. According to Kastovsky, French and Latin assign stress depending on syllable weight, that is, stress falls on heavy syllables (2006: 172). This implies that the Romance rule of stress assignment would co-exist with the Germanic assignment of stress if the Romance loanwords did not adapt to the Germanic stress system. Thus, as Kastovsky points out, “we have two competing stress assignment rules in the non-native vocabulary” (2006: 172).

The results of the empirical study show that stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs occurs in prefixed disyllabic pairs of Romance origin. Furthermore, stress shift takes place in the same way in all the pairs, that is, there is a tendency for nouns to be stressed on the first syllable and for verbs to be stressed on the last syllable. These findings lead to the formulation of the following hypothesis as to why this type of allomorphy happens: stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs occurs as a result of their adaptation to the Germanic stress system.

Either directly or through their French adaptation, the vast majority of pairs derive from the participial stem of Latin prefixed verbs. The supine forms and the deverbal nouns of Latin prefixed verbs present the participial stem of the verb and are usually trisyllabic items stressed on the penultimate syllable, as this is the heavy one. Consider the Latin verb *extrahô, -is, -ere, extrâxî, extractum* 'to extract' for illustration. The supine form (*extractum*) of this Latin prefixed verb (*ex-trahĕre*) is a trisyllabic item stressed on the penultimate syllable (*extráctum*). If the participial stem *extract-* were to be borrowed by other languages such as French or English, one possible outcome would be for the stem to maintain the syllable *-tract-* stressed in those languages.

The 25 pairs of the study were introduced into English from Latin and French during the Middle English and the Modern English periods. Furthermore, most of them originally derive from the participial stem of Latin prefixed verbs, as mentioned before. Applying the above logic followed with the participial stem *extract-*, it is very probable that the pairs still enjoyed the Romance stress rule when they first entered the English language.

Once the pairs were part of the English lexicon, they must have adapted to the Germanic stress system, which caused stress shift. For instance, the members of the pair *extract*^{N}-*extract*^{V} were initially stressed on the syllable *-tract-*. However, as Germanic languages tend to assign stress to the first syllable, there was a stress shift in nouns from the originally stressed syllable to the first syllable. This stress shift did not affect verbs because the Germanic stress system does not stress prefixes in prefixed verbs, but the first syllable of the root, and stress was already on that syllable.

The above explanation can account for the stress shift of those noun-verb conversion pairs which originally derived from the participial stem of a Latin prefixed verb. Among these are *access*^{N}-*access*^{V}, *comment*^{N}-*comment*^{V}, *conduct*^{N}-*conduct*^{V}, *contact*^{N}-*contact*^{V}, *contract*^{N}-*contract*^{V}, *object*^{N}-*object*^{V}, *subject*^{N}-*subject*^{V}, *suspect*^{N}-*suspect*^{V}, *present*^{N}-*present*^{V} or *project*^{N}-*project*^{V}. However, there are other pairs which derive from the infinitive form of a Latin prefixed verb, either directly from Latin or through the French adaptation. This is the case of the pairs *export*^{N}-*export*^{V}, *import*^{N}-*import*^{V}, *transport*^{N}-*transport*^{V} or *transfer*^{N}-*transfer*^{V}. The Latin verbs *exportāre* 'to export', *importāre* 'to import', *transportāre* 'to transport' and *transferre* 'to transfer' were most likely to have been introduced without the infinitive inflectional ending, so that they could adopt the French infinitive ending *-er* or the Middle English *-en*. Considering the Middle English adaptation of the verbs (i.e. *exporten*, *importen*, *transporten* and *transferren*, respectively), these verbs must have been stressed on the penultimate syllable following the Romance stress rule, as the heavy syllable is the penultimate one in these cases. Following the

Germanic stress system, the verbs must have maintained the stress on that position, as that is the first syllable of the original root, and their converted nouns would have shifted stress to the first syllable or would have been created directly with the stress on the first syllable.

It must be noted that stress shift may trigger another phonological change in some pairs, i.e. the pairs that were categorised as displaying both stress shift and vowel reduction. In these pairs, there is a tendency for stress to enhance the quality of the first-syllable vowel in nouns. In most cases, when stress is shifted to the first syllable, the vowel becomes more prominent, changing from [ə] to [ɒ], as in the pair *contact*^{N}-*contact*^{V}; to [ʌ], as in the pair *suspect*^{N}-*suspect*^{V}; or to [a], as in the pair *access*^{N}-*access*^{V}. In other cases, the first-syllable vowel changes from [ᵻ] to [ɛ] as in the pair *desert*^{N}-*desert*^{V}.

Lastly, the study also shows that there are noun-verb conversion pairs that derive from Latin prefixed verbs and whose members are stressed either on the last syllable or on the first one. For discussion, the pairs *suppórt*^{N}-*suppórt*^{V} and *prómise*^{N}-*prómise*^{V} will be considered. The Latin origin of *suppórt*^{N}-*suppórt*^{V} is the prefixed verb *supportāre* (*sub-portare*) 'to support'. This verb was introduced into English either directly from Latin or through its French adaptation *supporter*. Either way, the verb must have entered without the infinitive inflectional ending to adopt the Middle English *-en* and must have been stressed on the penultimate syllable following the Romance stress rule. In this case, the converted noun did not adapt to the Germanic stress system but maintained the Romance stress pattern. Regarding *prómise*^{N}-*prómise*^{V}, its Latin origin is the noun *prōmissum* 'promise', which derives from the participial stem *prōmiss-* of the prefixed verb *prōmittere* 'to promise' (*prō-mittere*). In this case, the noun must have entered the English language with the stress on the syllable *-mi-* and shifted it to the first syllable. Then, the verb must have been converted from the noun following the stress pattern of the latter.

6. Conclusion

Conversion is a word-formation process that has been extensively described in the literature, as shown in Section 2.3. Regardless of how it has been interpreted, the process is characterised by the formal identity, the word-class contrast and the semantic relatedness between the original word and the converted one.

As any other word-formation process, conversion may be affected by allomorphy, a phenomenon whereby one morpheme may have different realisations, i.e. allomorphs. Allomorphy can take place in both affixes and bases. The type of allomorphy that may occur in conversion is base allomorphy, i.e. the base of the original word and that of the converted one may present different realisations. Out of the three possible cases of allomorphy in conversion (i.e. voicing of the final phoneme, stress shift, and stress shift in combination with vowel reduction), certain conclusions have been reached in this study about stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs.

Stress shift in noun-verb conversion pairs seems to have a historical explanation. The phenomenon occurs in noun-verb conversion pairs that originally derive from Latin prefixed verbs. When the words entered the English language either directly from Latin or through their French adaptation, they adapted to the Germanic stress system. Thus, stress was shifted from its original position to the first syllable in nouns but was maintained in the syllable after the prefix in the case of verbs, following the Germanic stress system which stresses nouns on the first syllable and the first syllable of the root in prefixed verbs.

Despite the findings, further research is still a *desideratum* in this field. There are other noun-verb conversion pairs that originally derived from Latin prefixed verbs and that do not display stress shift (e.g. *support*^{N}-*support*^{V} and *promise*^{N}-*promise*^{V}), which implies that what makes these pairs different from pairs with stress shift is still unexplained.

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Notes

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1. The term 'stress shift' refers here to a type of phonological base allomorphy in which one member of a noun-verb conversion pair is stressed on a particular syllable while the other member is stressed on a different one. For instance, stress shift may be found in the pair *import*^{N}-*import*^{V} because, while stress falls on the first syllable in the noun, it falls on the last one in the verb.

In other fields of linguistics, i.e. phonetics and phonology, stress shift rather refers to a contextual shift of stress in order to avoid stress on adjacent syllables (*good ˌafterˈnoon* vs. *ˈafternoon ˈtea*). However, this is not how the term is used here.

2. Carstairs-McCarthy (2006) addresses this issue as well. He argues that the relationship between *éxport*^{N}-*expórt*^{V} or *hou*[s]*e*^{N}-*hou*[z]*e*^{V} can be accounted for by their internal modification as "derivational relationship is signalled not by adding new

material to the base (that is, by affixation) but by changes internal to the base itself" (Carstairs-McCarthy 2006: 752).

3. The frequency list of nouns is available via the following link: <https://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/bncfreq/lists/5_1_all_rank_noun.txt>.

4. The frequency list of verbs is available via the following link: <https://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/bncfreq/lists/5_2_all_rank_verb.txt>.

5. The data is available via the following link: <https://zenodo.org/doi/10.5281/zenodo.10077943>.

6. Note that this list is not meant to be exhaustive. The study is based on the conversion pairs extracted from the frequency lists of nouns and verbs specified in Section 3.1. Other pairs displaying the same stress shift pattern, such as *cóntest*^{N}-*contést*^{V}, *díscount*^{N}-*discóúnt*^{V}, *ínsult*^{N}-*insúlt*^{V} or *próduce*^{N}-*prodúce*^{V} (among others), could also have been included in the study. However, they were not considered because they are not in the frequency lists used.

7. It is also possible to find some variation in the pronunciation of certain members of the pairs. For example, in *comment*^{N}-*comment*^{V} or *contact*^{N}-*contact*^{V}, stress falls on the first syllable in the noun, but it may fall on the first or the last one in the verb. Conversely, in *research*^{N}-*research*^{V}, the verb is stressed on the last syllable while the noun may be stressed on the first syllable or the last one. Despite this variation, stress shift is the main stress pattern found in the pairs.

8. The transcriptions are mainly based on the British English transcriptions of the *OED*. Note that the cases of variation in footnote 7 have not been transcribed here for the sake of clarity.

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LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES AND AUDIO DESCRIPTION TASKS: A CASE STUDY

LENGUAJE DE ESPECIALIDAD Y TAREAS DE AUDIO DESCRIPCIÓN: UN ESTUDIO DE CASO

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Abstract

In the Foreign Language (FL) classroom, video description and dubbing have recently been introduced for the development of communicative skills in various types of didactic methods (Vermeulen and Ibáñez 2014, 2017; Talaván 2020; Ávila-Cabrera and Rodríguez-Arancón 2021). This paper offers an innovative didactic proposal of Audio Description (AD) in the English for Tourism (ET) classroom. It supports the hypothesis that authentic tasks enhance communicative skills in LSP (Language for Specific Purposes) education (Melnichuk et al. 2017). It presents a quasi-experimental study of student performance in two different productive tasks (writing and speaking). The study follows a Task-Based Learning (TBL) approach and addresses a group of 119 students within an undergraduate program of ET (B2 level) at a Spanish distance-education university (UNED). As a post-task, a twofold rubric, designed in a previous teaching project, scored and analyzed student writing and speaking responses to an AD script of a mute video about a touristic place of their choice. Results show that implementing an AD task in the LSP classroom had a positive effect on students' marks in their final test. In addition, the number of students who completed the writing task was around 50% greater than those who completed the speaking task. Introducing ICT tools in the LSP classroom seems to be positive, and it will be argued that developing digital technologies, such as mobile apps, may be a necessary step to foster future professionals' language performance and competences.

Keywords: Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), English for Tourism (ET), Audio Description (AD), Task-Based Learning (TBL), rubrics, digital technology.

Resumen

Recientemente, en el aula de Lengua Extranjera (LE) se ha implantado la descripción de vídeos y el doblaje para el desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas a través de diversos métodos didácticos (Vermeulen e Ibáñez 2014, 2017; Talaván 2020; Ávila-Cabrera y Rodríguez-Arancón 2021). El presente artículo muestra la práctica de la Audio Descripción (AD) en el ámbito del lenguaje de especialidad (LSP, en inglés), con el fin de comprobar la efectividad de incluir actividades comunicativas auténticas en el aula de enseñanza de LSP (Melnichuk et al. 2017), y que a la vez englobe tareas (TBL). De este modo se propone la AD con fines didácticos. El estudio de caso va dirigido a un grupo de 119 estudiantes universitarios de inglés (nivel B2) en el Grado de Turismo de una universidad española de educación a distancia (UNED). A través de un estudio cuasiexperimental se examina el desempeño de los participantes en dos tareas de producción escrita y oral. Como tarea posterior, se utilizó una rúbrica doble, diseñada en un proyecto de enseñanza anterior, para calificar y analizar las tareas principales de producción escrita y oral de un guion AD sobre un vídeo mudo de un lugar turístico a su elección. Los resultados muestran que la práctica de AD en el aula de LSP tuvo un efecto positivo en las calificaciones finales de los estudiantes. Por otra parte, la tarea de producción escrita la completaron más estudiantes que la tarea de producción oral. La introducción de herramientas TIC en el aula de LSP parece ser positiva, y se argumenta que el desarrollo de tecnologías digitales, como las aplicaciones móviles, puede ser un paso necesario para fomentar el desarrollo de competencias lingüísticas de los futuros profesionales.

Palabras clave: Lengua para Fines Específicos (LFE), Inglés para Turismo (ET), Audio Descripción (AD), Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas (ABT), rúbricas, tecnologías digitales.

1. Introduction

The value of video description materials in the Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) classroom is now supported by a substantial body of literature (Rodgers and Ni Dhonnchadha 2018; Yeh et al. 2021). Nevertheless, the modalities of video creation integrated into Foreign Language (FL) education have mainly been limited to writing skills, and only more recently has Audio Description (AD) been incorporated and exploited as a resource to develop both grammar and oral competence in the target language (Vermeulen and Ibáñez 2014, 2017; Talaván 2020; Vermeulen and Escobar-Álvarez 2021; Escobar-Álvarez and Vermeulen 2022; Talaván et al. 2022). The present contribution focuses on the potential for AD in English for Tourism (ET) education. It explores new strategies to enhance communicative language competences and underlines their importance in developing students' digital competence as part of their professional skills.

By doing this, the study contributes an AD lesson designed to accomplish a real-life task, i.e., describing a video to tourists. Thus, ET video description was adopted as a pedagogical tool in a quasi-experimental study addressing a large group of participant students enrolled in a university undergraduate program at the Spanish Distance University (UNED). Data were collected through tailor-made rubrics to assess communicative skills of students both in the written and oral production following descriptors for levels of achievement. In this way, the rubrics helped students to evaluate their own performance with respect to (1) language competence and (2) productive skills, and their scores showed the pedagogical potential of AD in ET education.

The article opens with a theoretical review of good practices applied to LSP materials, Task-Based Learning (TBL) methodology, AD teaching applications, and the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). After discussing the methodology adopted in our case study and presenting the scores obtained by the ET students in the tasks and in the course final exam, new digital strategies are proposed for the development of oral production skills, such as the use of mobile apps, in the area of ET education.

2. Literature Review

LSP involves "the study of the ways in which language can be used in specific contexts and to achieve specific ends" (Gollin-Kies et al. 2015: 11). It was originally aimed at identifying specific needs of adult learners of languages (Basturkmen 2010; Bocanegra-Valle 2016; Brown 2016; Anthony 2018). Currently, however, ESP provides instruction that aims to serve learners' communication needs in English in a certain domain. By and large, the focus of research and curriculum development has been in this international FL as it is widely used in LSP when it focuses on the analysis and teaching of language in order to meet specific communication needs of non-native speakers (Upton and Connor 2012). Tonić (2010) places ESP within the concept of English Language Teaching (ELT) and shows that it pertains to specific domains such as English for Tourism (ET). Within the context of language use research, Swales (2000) claims that instruction should be descriptive and within context to meet LSP needs and, therefore, the language employed by ordinary users should be the primary focus of analysis.

Thus, we have used pedagogical and methodological techniques aimed to help learners become professionals capable of writing engaging messages for target audiences. Firstly, a Task-Based-Learning (TBL) model permits a lesson structure where students solve a task that involves authentic use of language rather than simple questions about grammar or vocabulary in the study lesson. Secondly, Audio Description (AD) is taken as the main task to enhance communication in the ET classroom where ICT is required, and provides authentic communicative contexts that can be extended into the LSP field. Finally, mobile app development may provide students with communication support and inspiration for better planned AD tasks as well as to prepare them to cope with future tasks which may be assessed using the corresponding rubrics.

2.1. Task-Based Learning

In general, communication tasks are expected in an LSP context because the focus is not just on language form. Unlike a traditional methodology based on the Present Practice Produce (PPP) method, communication skills to be developed through tasks produce language performance not expected a priori. This alternative method is based on the completion of a central task and the language studied is determined by what happens as students complete it. The effectiveness of the language skills lies in whether the main communication objectives of the tasks are met. According to Richards (2006), there is no specific practice that characterizes current Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), but the latter is nourished by various principles that are used in different ways depending on how it is implemented, as in the case of the TBL classroom.

The communicative approach was developed in the 1980s to foster interaction as both the means and the ultimate aim of study. Within this framework, educators highlighted *the exchange of meanings as the main goal between FL learners.* TBL offered a learner-centered approach to language teaching and an alternative to more traditional approaches such as the PPP model based on the teacher presenting a language item, the learners practicing it in controlled exercises, and then producing it in some form of communication. Some of the problems with PPP are that this methodology does not consider the specific needs of each learner, nor does it guarantee that they will remember to use the target language in natural situations, and it may lead to the overgeneralization or avoidance of certain structures. In contrast, TBL seeks to use authentic language during the whole task cycle (Willis 2009), through communicative activities meeting specific learning objectives (Ellis 2003), within a specific cultural context (Mallén-Estebaranz 2007), and where real-life language is essential in tasks that ultimately seek the achievement of an outcome (Skehan 1989).

To ensure success, pre-task planning is crucial to prepare students to meet the complexity of establishing meaning and communication to successfully complete specific tasks (Skehan and Foster 1997, 2001). Learners are encouraged to use all linguistic tools at their disposal during the completion of the central task (Willis and Willis 2007). Regarding task assessment, Teaching Based Language Teaching (TBLT) started to contribute to successful language assessment tools which promote student self-learning processes, as argued in Nunan (2004). Following Carless (2015), the notion of co-assessment (i.e. evaluation in which teachers and students alternate the roles of evaluators and evaluated) is required to implement the combination of teacher assessment, peer assessment, and self-assessment in TBLT, on the assumption that task performance in the classroom conveys support, responsiveness to others' ideas, and a genuine desire to work together to achieve mutual goals.

2.2. Audio Description (AD)

Today, audio describers address all types of users, including FL students. Despite initially aiming to meet the needs of the blind and visually impaired, AD soon proved to be very beneficial for sighted people, especially in FL classrooms (Ibáñez Moreno and Vermeulen 2016; Talaván 2020). Different studies have shown that AD translation tasks can promote certain skills in the FL classroom because —as a mode of audiovisual translation— it verbalizes the visual information that is needed to fully understand and enjoy the message that is being communicated (Benecke 2004; Snyder 2006).

Briefly, AD involves translating images into words (Hyks 2005; Kruger and Orero 2010). While a scriptwriter converts a text (a script) into images, the audio descriptor allows an individual to identify parts of images and turn them into text, which are then spoken or read aloud using the pauses in a monologue (narrations) or between dialogues. Following this definition, AD consists of techniques and skills that assist in capturing the visual part contained in any type of message by providing adequate sound information (Fryer 2010, 2016). AD applications are useful, for example, for blind or visually impaired receivers as they narrate what appears on the screen and makes the content accessible. AD requires precise vocabulary because of the limited time frame between dialogues or sounds from a clip and, in fact, special attention must be paid to avoid superfluous or explanatory information because even though a blind person cannot see, they can interpret what is happening through key words.

In real professional contexts, AD requires the collaboration of multiple professionals: a writer, a voice actor, and a sound technician (Hernández Bartolomé and Mendiluce Cabrera 2005; Cintas and Massidda 2019). Once the source material is analyzed, the audio describer has to look for the natural pauses in the narration or dialogues and time the intervals where the descriptions of the visual clues can be inserted for the target audience. These intervals are normally very restricted in time: a ratio of around 180 words per minute. Once the audio description script is finished, it is read aloud while viewing the document. The recording is normally rendered in the language of the audiovisual product. In the case of subtitled films, AD can be combined with audio subtitles, or even an audio introduction if required. The main objective of an AD script is to give the target audience information to which, for one reason or another, they have no access so that they can grasp the context of an audiovisual product. However, it should also provide a pleasant experience that avoids overburdening people's information-processing capacities, which is why audio describers are expected to portray what they see in an appealing way —a highly subjective activity since it is mostly based on their own interpretation. Audio describers need to find a balance between their personal interpretation or formulation and a more text-based interpretation, which is undoubtedly a challenging endeavor (Holsanova 2016). Therefore, interpreters and translators can be considered both linguistic and cultural mediators since language and culture are mutually interdependent (Chaume 2020).

In order to guide learners in the process of effective AD, and to allow them to reflect on their competence development, rubrics can be a useful tool. Indeed, in the LSP classroom, rubrics are recommended for self-evaluation, reflection, and peer review (Ibáñez and Polyakova 2019). Following Ibáñez Moreno (2023), scoring rubrics may help to assess complex tasks or assignments like written work (e.g. video scripts) or oral presentations (recordings), by rating several criteria presented in a table so that quality descriptions are matched for each criterion and task.

2.3. ICT and Effective Communication

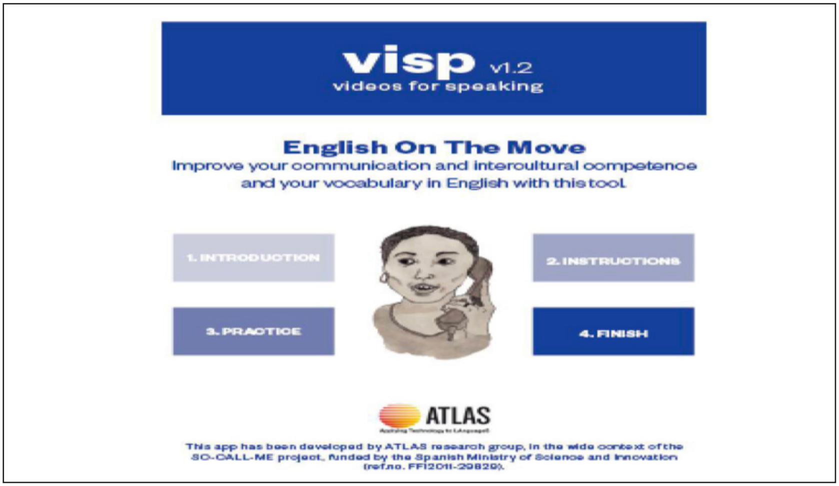
TBLT supports communicative instruction and is centered on learners' needs. As a result, LSP instructors in search of authentic communication should provide students with examples of the target language in a natural environment to ensure that the language in the classroom is indeed reflective of that used in the world and required in the classroom. ICT implementation may be a good strategy, since —through ICT— meaningful communicative contexts and situations can be brought into the LSP classroom. By offering authentic materials and tasks, learners may share personal experiences connected to both classroom learning and social interaction with their peers outside the classroom (Nunan 2004).

These claims are supported by a wealth of studies; for instance, Johns (2013) shows that ICT contributes to rich audio and visual materials. Camargo Pongutá (2018) also presents evidence that English communicative competence can be fostered using technology among undergraduate students in the EFL classroom, once it was determined that students preferred activities with ICTs to learn English. According to Aguaded Gómez and Pozo Vicente (2011), communicative competence through ICT supports immersive multilingual programs. Following Levy and Kennedy (2004), pre- and post-tasks are particularly required when technology plays a role in projects that last, and indeed grow and develop over time thanks to Computer-Assisted Language Learning. This may be extended to mobile apps since tasks and technologies should alternately lead to focussing the learners' attention on communication and fluency, and on accuracy and form. Students can satisfy this need with mobile apps having options to deliver different types of engaging tasks and activities to develop their language competence. The availability of a massive amount of relevant content in LSP ensures continuity in learning irrespective of the fact that a student is physically in a classroom or is at home.

2.4. Mobile Apps

A considerable amount of literature has been published on LSP course development, but there is less bibliography on task assessment, especially through ICT, probably because evaluation targets LSP courses, while assessment targets teaching/learning tasks, which require focus on learners' individual differences. Furthermore, the process of individual assessment is crucial for language development for a number of reasons. Firstly, because task assessment helps to determine if language performance is effective and therefore forces instructors to continuously improve the LSP program. Secondly, self-assessment may be *per se* a motivating factor among students, as has been observed in the use of popular language-assessment apps such as Kahoot, Mentimeter, or Google Forms, which serve as robust tools for both self-assessment and review.

In this context, mobile app development can be added as providing effective learning tools (Bárcena et al. 2015). On the one hand, mobile apps may help to improve EFL with fun and engaging materials such as games, podcasts, videos and quizzes played at home or on the move. On the other hand, mobile apps can also serve to support productive oral language skills in the FL classroom. For instance, the app VISP (VIdeos for SPeaking) in Figure 1 seeks to develop users' communication and intercultural competence as well as vocabulary practice as a didactic tool in the FL classroom (Ibáñez Moreno et al. 2016).



English On The Move

Improve your communication and intercultural competence and your vocabulary in English with this tool.

This app has been developed by ATLAS research group, in the wide context of the SO-CALL-ME project, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (ref.no. FFI2011-29829).

Figure 1. VISP initial page (Ibáñez Moreno et al. 2016)

3. Method

The lesson plan developed for this study followed the stages required by TBL approaches, where a task cycle with instructions on the AD methodology allowed the learners to follow them smoothly. The first stage was a pre-task, where learners were trained to design an AD script using the specific vocabulary and style required by the context. The second stage involved task discussion in forums for students to raise questions and doubts. Thirdly, a main task was proposed which required students to search for a mute video on the Internet and then describe it using AD conventions. This process provided students with an immersive experience where a natural context developed as they explored the net and, in doing so, were exposed to a whole range of authentic tourist scenarios. During the searching for a mute video for the main task, students were motivated to look for the target language as much as possible; the said language mostly reflected the students' needs. Finally, for the post-task stage, a rubric was delivered for self-assessment to all participants. This rubric was designed in a previous project and will eventually be implemented in a mobile app to make use of the AD mode in the ET classroom. This will be discussed in the Discussion and Conclusions section.

3.1. Setting and Participants

The setting for this study is an ET course offered during the second year of the undergraduate program in Tourism at the *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* (UNED Spain). The purpose of the course is to enable learners to reach B2 proficiency (CEFR) in two main language skills (reception and production) within the context of Tourism studies. The semester (February-June) included an online course where students could get feedback from the Teaching Team through several forums as well as voluntarily attend one 1.5-hour class per week with a different tutor who was also in charge of assessing their tasks. The participants who attended the face-to-face sessions were divided into different groups located in different cities in the Spanish territory and were asked to upload their tasks onto the online course so that the Teaching Team could access the tasks previously marked by each group tutor. Overall, student participants shared similar profiles; their L1 was Spanish and their English proficiency levels were homogenous within each group. The course tutors were English language practitioners with professional experience.

Table 1 shows a total number of 139 students enrolled in the course. At the beginning of the semester, they were informed about the project and 119 students chose to participate. This meant completing a double production task: an AD writing task and an oral task. They were informed that their performance in their written and oral tasks as well as in their tests would be used for research purposes only and that it would be treated anonymously. Although the totality of the 119 participants completed the writing, only 63 students did the speaking task. There were 14 online tutors who oversaw the development of both productive tasks and their final assessment. In this study, the Teaching Team was exclusively responsible for the assessment of the final course test.

Participants	N	AD writing task 1	Oral task 2
Students	139	119	63
Tutors	14	14	14

Table 1. Study participants

For the study, the tutors used a twofold rubric to score each task. The mean grade provided by tutors was very similar for both assignments. The learners also used the same rubrics as self-assessment but differences were revealed between both tasks, as discussed in the following sections.

3.2. Study Design, Materials and Procedure

As stated above, the main purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to explore the pedagogical potential of AD in ET education. Given the novelty of the AD methodology, a summary of what it entails was provided to students so that they could perform the tasks as the study required. In fact, the pre-task consisted of a sample of an audio description script for students to follow as a model**.** Prior to this, a practical lesson focusing on the new methodology in the FL classroom was designed and evaluated; and it was deemed that self-assessment should be encouraged by allowing participants to complete a rubric designed for this purpose once their tasks were finished, and which also served as a post-task activity (Ibáñez Moreno 2023). Drawing on the pedagogical/teaching principles of both AD and TBL, the central task was created around a real-life scenario. The instruction students received was to select a mute video with interesting visual content and describe it to the best of their ability. Tables 2 and 3 below include the objectives and stages in the development of each task.

Task 1: Writing instructions	**Objectives**	**Activity description**
Warm-up: Link to sample mute video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7S7smPw9EiE&t=37s	Provide a model of AD script. Generate interest in mute video narration. Introduce topic and find key words: *New York, aerial view, New York skyline, sky, drone, view, New York city, skyscrapers, etc.*	Mute video Description (30 seconds) Drone snap, explore the world presents: New York City, USA. Magnificent view of Manhattan from the sunny sky. Impressive skyscrapers, roads full of traffic, together with green areas and tall apartment buildings conform the perfectly arranged urban plan of this sleepless city.
Central Task: Insert the URL of the selected mute video (30-60 seconds) Provide topic background and corresponding key words (10, max.) Write the AD script (100-160 words).	Provide a draft of the video. Develop productive skills when describing the scene and the picture actions. Enhance students' digital specific skills. Use language that raises interest among listeners (visually impaired or not).	AD video writing activity: write a description for the selected mute video.
Post-task: Reflection and discussion Fill-out the rubric of AD script	Promote self-assessment and learning to learn competences. Reflect on students' own performance.	Students complete the rubric as self-assessment. Students raise questions about their experience with their tutors on the corresponding forum.

Table 2. Task 1 stages

While Task 1 in Table 2 focused on writing the AD script for the chosen video, Task 2 in Table 3 focused on oral production and consisted of recording students' script narrations using their own voice following the AD style, as explained in section 2.2. above.

Task 2: Speaking instructions	**Objectives**	**Activity description**
Pre-task: Listen to the script of the sample mute video. Identify topic and find key words (as in the writing task).	Generate interest in oral production and audio description.	Tutors provide guidelines for video AD recordings.
Main task: Record your voice separately from your video. Use a voice recorder (remember your computer might have one already).	Develop students' oral productive skills. Promote accuracy and fluency in oral production. Learn linguistic and discursive constraints in context.	Students record an AD script of their selected video.
Post-task reflection: Fill out the rubric of video-recording performance	Assess self-performance of their oral task. Reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of video recordings.	Students complete the rubric as self-assessment and receive feedback from their tutors.

Table 3. Task 2 stages

According to the objectives of both tasks, students were required to analyze and describe visual content while considering the audience's needs, use creative thinking, and enhance productive oral skills. After the completion of each task, participants filled in a rubric as a post-task, which also served to compare their self-performance results with the feedback given by their tutors. Both learners and tutors had to send their rubrics to the Teaching Team for contrastive analyses, which will be discussed below. The mute videos selected by students to perform their tasks ranged from national and international cities to trendy neighborhoods and exotic beaches, both in Spain and abroad. Some examples of videos described by students included: (i) Spanish cities (Madrid, Málaga, Marbella, or Oviedo); ii) countries and cities abroad (Bulgaria, Italy, The Philippines, San Francisco, Bahamas, Seoul, Stockholm); iii) Spanish beaches (Ibiza, Mallorca).[1]

The rationale for selecting these videos was that students felt the places inspired them to write and talk about them in their own words and style and also that keywords and vocabulary were accessible even when following the AD guidelines. Once the tasks were finished, the students sent them to their tutors through the online course —the AD script as a Word file and the oral recording as an MP3 file. They were also asked to complete the two-fold rubric for either task so that they could compare them with the tutors' feedback following the same performance criteria. For future research, the chosen clips together with the participants' recordings will be inserted into a mobile app designed to practice AD inside and outside the classroom to promote accuracy and fluency in oral production. This app is still under development, but the intention is to create a supportive mobile-assisted language learning application tool inspired by the VISP app shown in Figure 1 above.

3.3. Data Analysis

As mentioned above, two rubrics measured the participants' productive competences. The first rubric assessed the writing task (AD script), and the second one the spoken task (recording). Table 4 details the assessment criteria for both tasks.

TASK 1 Language skills	**Reflection questions**	**Poor (0.25)**	**Adequate (0.5)**	**Good (0.75)**	**Very good (1)**
Grammar	Did you use adequate and structured expressions?				
	Is there grammatical and punctuation accuracy?				
Vocabulary	Did you use a wide range of vocabulary?				
	Did you use specific vocabulary appropriate for the given context?				
	Did you use words in their correct form?				
Content/Audio description	Did you accurately describe the images on the video?				
	Did you include important information necessary for the listener to understand the content?				
	Did you avoid language that may be insensitive to the listener (e.g., *see*)?				

Communicative skills	Did you present relevant information in a concise manner, avoiding repetitions? Did you use expressions that could help understand what was being shown?				

TASK 2 Language skills	Reflection questions	Poor (0.25)	Adequate (0.5)	Good (0.75)	Very good (1)
Pronunciation and fluency	Pronunciation of sounds and words is accurate. I used appropriate intonation and stress. I did not repeat, self-correct or hesitate. I spoke fluently and confidently. I was clear and intelligible.				

Table 4. AD rubrics

Since not all participant students completed both tasks, the number of rubrics varied depending on the task. While 119 students completed the rubric concerning the AD script, only 63 students also completed the recording rubric. This difference may be due to students judging assessing oral performance to be more difficult and/or their lower confidence in their oral skills. Although this might be the case, we consider it a limitation of the study since we did not ask the reasons why participants avoided the second rubric.

The number of students who completed the writing AD task was almost 50% greater than those who completed the speaking AD task. In addition, tutors had to complete an assessment rubric on students' writing performance on their AD script in the post-stage of the study. Table 5 displays the evaluation criteria for this task. On the one hand, some topics focused on formal language (grammar and vocabulary) were considered, along with language accuracy. Both formal language and fluency were relevant for the ET course since all students (including those who participated in the study) had to take a final exam paper on formal contents similar to those in the course textbook *English Grammar and Learning Tasks for Tourism Studies* (Escobar Álvarez 2011). Therefore, the final exam served as an independent test to check whether the activities in the study helped students improve their language performance.

Language skills	Success descriptors
Grammar (up to 2 points)	Grammatical and punctuation accuracy Text cohesion (connectors)
Vocabulary (up to 3 points)	Wide range of vocabulary Specific vocabulary Collocations
Accuracy (up to 3 points)	Selection of appropriate images Relevant information Avoidance of insensitive language
Communication skills (up to 2 points)	Presentation of relevant information Use of plain language to facilitate understanding

Table 5. Writing task assessment criteria

4. Results

In this study, whether AD methodology aligns with the goals of the syllabus and curriculum of the course is relevant because the ultimate objective is to make students learn and develop language skills which will be tested in the final course exam. Thus, the purpose of this paper was to provide a comprehensive evaluation of various crucial research aspects covering areas of planning, implementation, and assessment. We explore learner confidence when searching for their own material on the Internet, as well as delve into the effectiveness of AD methodology through the written and oral productive tasks, which may also provide insights into overall language proficiency. We determine if the participants achieved the learning objectives required for the course by offering a contrastive analysis of results from their tasks and the final exam.

As discussed above, the value of embracing ICT in the LSP classroom is that it provides an inexhaustible source of authentic material. In the study, the learners' capacity to write video scripts for their chosen mute videos was tested following the AD methodology and eased by the fact that they had control over which videos they used. Table 6 displays the number of scripts produced by the participants. 119 students narrated their selected mute videos following AD specifics and completed the writing productive task. In addition to this, around half of them recorded their narrations and completed the second task. Participating tutors marked both tasks independently as indicated below.

Task type	Total tasks	From 9 to 10	From 7 to 8.99	From 5 to 6.99	From 1 to 4.9
AD writing (Script)	119	46	41	18	14
Oral task (Recording)	63	18	27	17	1

Table 6. Students' tasks scores

Considering that 10 points is the maximum score for each task, the first observation is that students perform better in the writing task than in the oral task, although assessment grades provided by tutors were also positive for the second task despite the lower participation. In the first task, 53% of students scored 9.5 points; 49% scored 7.9; 21% scored 5.9; 17% scored 3.4. In the second task, 11% of students scored 9.5 points; 17% scored 7.6; 17% scored 5.9; less than 1% scored 2.

Next, to compare tutor and student scores, we looked at each task separately to provide the study with a contrastive analysis after completion of both tasks. Similar rubrics were designed for both tutors and students to assess the AD task performance. Table 7 shows rubric results per task as there are similarities and differences between participants. First, 94% of students and 96% of tutors scored around 8 points in the AD script (written task). Second, the students who completed the second rubric scored around 7.4 points in the second task (oral task) and tutors scored around 7.6 points, with the caveat that fewer students completed the rubric of the spoken task (36 compared to 63).

Participants	N	Task 1 (writing) rubrics	Assessment score means	Task 2 (recording) rubrics	Assessment score means
Students	119	119	7.9	36	7.4
Tutors	14	119	8.05	63	7.6

Table 7. Assessment rubrics (both groups)

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the rubric, we measured the performance of students and tutors after completing both rubrics, and analyzed possible differences using a paired sample t-test. We wanted to contrast the means of both task scores (script writing and voice recording) among Tutors (Ts) and Students (Ss) per task. Table 8 shows all participants' scores (means and *p*-results of the paired test).

	Ts task 1	**Ts task 2**	**Ss task 1**	**Ss task 2**
Means	8.06	7.60	7.91	7.39
Variance	3.14	2.61	1.62	2.57
Statistic t	1.50		1.73	
P(T<=t) two tails	0.14		0.09	

Table 8. Participant scores and *p* values (within groups)

Looking at Table 8, we observed a *p*-value of 0.14 for the tutor score means for both tasks (8.06 vs. 7.60), and a *p*-value of 0.09 for student score means for the same tasks (7.91 vs. 7.39). Although the results showed that the *p* value was even smaller in the case of student score means, the *p*-value was greater than 0.05 in both cases, so we could not reject the null hypothesis of no difference between tasks within either group. As for the standard deviation, participants' results varied from the arithmetic median of the whole group. The statistic t results were as follows: 1.50 points in the case of tutor tasks and 1.73 in the case of student tasks. Hence, score performance did not vary significantly between tasks in either group of participants. In other words, scores retain similar values in the written and oral tasks among students, and among tutors.

The Pearson correlation evaluates the linear relationship between two continuous variables. When calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient, we consider a value between -1 to 1, with a value of -1 meaning a total negative linear correlation, 0 being no correlation, and +1 meaning a total positive correlation. In this study, we would expect the Task 1 Rubric and the Task 2 Rubric to have a Pearson correlation coefficient significantly greater than 0 but less than 1 and this was the case (p= 0.25). The graphic in Figure 2 visualizes this positive correlation of the relationship between the two variables since a change in one variable was associated with a proportional change in the other variable.

As for whether the completion of tasks had a positive impact on student performance in the final exam, a comparison of scores was conducted within the group of 63 students who completed both tasks with the caveat that they did not fill in all the corresponding rubrics. Table 9 displays the grades obtained in both tasks and in the final course exam.

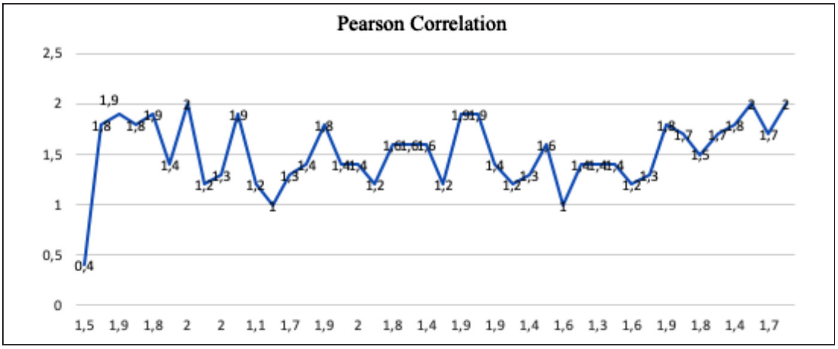


Figure 2. Written and oral AD task rubric correlations

Participants	N	Task 1 (2 points max.)	Task 2 (2 points max.)	Final course exam (10 points max.)
Students	63	1.6	1.5	7.1

Table 9. Total course grades

Both task scores in Table 9 were positive, and the final exam yielded high grades (7.1/10), which may serve as independent evidence to support the hypothesis that the AD task performance had a positive effect on their final assessment. One of the main goals of the study was to test whether AD project methodology could have a positive impact on the final course exam, which consisted of a multiple-choice test that assessed other formal aspects —reading skills, grammar, and vocabulary— explained in the course textbook (Escobar Álvarez 2011). A t-test is an inferential statistic used to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two variables. Thus, we performed a t-test since we wanted to see whether the means of the final exam scores of participant (after completing tasks, variable 1) and non-participant students (only final exam, variable 2) were significantly different. The p-value obtained after conducting the t-test is indicated in Table 10.

	v1. Final exam (after tasks)	v2. Only final exam
Means	7.02	5.48
Variance	1.96	2.34
Statistic t	4.26	
P(T<=t) two tails	0.00	

Table 10. Final exam results and *p*-value

In Table 10 we find the means of the final exam for both variables (v1:7.02 vs. v2:5.48) and a *p* value of 0.00 (t-test). This statistically significant test result (P< 0.05) indicates that the null hypothesis of no difference between final exam scores from both groups should be rejected. This significant difference in scores within groups can be interpreted as further confirmation of the hypothesis that the implemented methodology in the study had a positive impact on the participants' language performance. On the other hand, the difference in exam means (7 vs. 5.5) may also suggest that limiting language learning to a formal course syllabus with only one single final test as general assessment does not trigger similar positive learning effects.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This paper focuses on a case study of how to implement AD in the ET classroom through a double task. First, students searched for authentic mute videos showing topics of interest to tourists and for which they had to select appropriate information and write a short video script directed to a specific audience. In a second task, students were invited to deliver a voice recording of their script narration. The results show that not only did the participants practice their productive skills, but also that their performance in the final exam was improved. Moreover, the improved final grade in their final exam serves as independent evidence to support AD task-based methodology in the LSP classroom. However, the findings have also shown that only around 50% of students completed both tasks, with the second task (the oral recording) apparently being less motivating. More research on the reasons why ET students did not complete the oral AD task and on further strategies to develop oral language skills is therefore necessary.

Technology is nowadays part of our lives and one of its greatest benefits is the fact that students can take control of their own learning process. The contributions that an expert in LSP can make to ICT developments are valuable from multiple points of view. Firstly, authentic examples of videos exploited in the English for Tourism classroom is a felicitous innovation since AD learning has positive outcomes on all productive competences (Ávila-Cabrera and Rodríguez-Arancón 2021; Fernández-Costales et al. 2023). Video AD-based pedagogical applications may foster the use of a wider range of videos providing students with exposure to different touristic scenarios for critical comparisons, of classroom practice with vocabulary-focused activities to describe potential experiences in the tourism industry, and of student self-assessment controlled by means of helpful rubrics. These assessment tools may also encourage discussion among peers and target revisions of student tasks with a focus on communication for a professional purpose.

Secondly, ICT tools implemented in different tasks can prepare future graduates and professionals to work with authentic material within the LSP professional environment. The incorporation of mobile technology can increase practice both inside and outside the classroom. For this purpose, the Teaching Team are working on a new mobile app that will provide students with an autonomous recording resource to improve oral production skills in the field of English for Tourism. On the one hand, the app will help understand and measure learning performance. On the other hand, it will make it easier for the final products to make more sense for those who will be their end users: LSP students.

Finally, the research conducted in this study has shown that students need to use specific assessment tools to ponder on their communication skills within the task-cycle project, and it is in this context that the app being developed at UNED will serve its best purpose. The new app will include student recordings to provide ET students with a support tool and a wide range of videos to keep practicing AD methodology outside the classroom. Furthermore, new tasks will be available, so that future students may have more opportunities to implement a communicative project-based methodology in other ESP domains (Melnichuk et al. 2017). By using voice recording, they will also be able to rehearse their performance and measure their productive competences. In addition, and as discussed in the study, tailor-made rubrics can serve for both self-assessment and collaborative assessment to guide students in their completion of AD tasks and their reflection upon their learning and competence development. Testing new possibilities offered by supporting technologies will certainly increase collaboration and communication through authentic materials among learners, which is in the end a most welcome result in LSP education.

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Notes

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1. URL(s) examples of mute videos selected by students:
Madrid (https://youtu.be/wkGoES-V5Ys)
Málaga (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mp24v98bzSc&t=4s)
Marbella (https://youtu.be/WXxlcZRxBnY)
Oviedo (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ch9ofWIdz8&t=32s)
Bulgaria (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1KxyO6AxVk)
Italy (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4tyzzP33Cw)
The Philippines (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2Cjf8gHH3Y&ab_channel=TourismPhilippines)
San Francisco (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ywxF4PSdDU)
Seoul (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soXtvoa7JLw&t=2008s)
Stockholm (https://www.youtube.com/clip/Ugkxy6LbBmTMIwUwWYmtd65a33ZkxnQ6woNO)
Ibiza (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvZW8Q3JAqY)
Mallorca (https://youtu.be/d5tevmNdd3U)
Bahamas (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3apbS5OBuaA)

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FEMALE ANIMAL CHARACTERS IN ROALD DAHL'S CHILDREN'S BOOKS: A FEMINIST APPROACH

PERSONAJES FEMENINOS EN LOS LIBROS INFANTILES DE ROALD DAHL: UN ENFOQUE FEMINISTA

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Abstract

Children's literature introduces children to the world, stimulates their imagination, and mirrors the society they live in by reproducing its social rules and accepted norms. This is especially true with gender stereotypes, which display and reinforce the masculine and feminine roles constructed by a given society. This binary, one-dimensional, and conventional representation is harmful as it negatively impacts young readers' apprehension of gender roles as well as their personality, behaviour, and aspirations for the future. World-renowned children's author Roald Dahl has recently been criticised as a controversial author and a racist, misogynistic person. By adopting a feminist literary critical approach, this study analyses Dahl and his illustrator Quentin Blake's portrayal of female anthropomorphic characters, generally neglected by previous researchers in favour of human characters, in four books: *James and the Giant Peach* (1961), *The Magic Finger* (1966), *Fantastic Mr Fox* (1970), and *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me* (1985). Female characters are weak, inactive, confined indoors, and constantly belittled by their male counterparts who are portrayed as adventurous and as decision makers. Therefore, this study aims to encourage parents and educators to teach young learners to read children's books with a critical eye to identify and interpret different stereotypical representations.

Keywords: children's literature, gender stereotypes, gender roles, Roald Dahl, feminist literary criticism.

Resumen

La literatura infantil introduce a niñas y niños al mundo, estimula su imaginación y refleja la sociedad en la cual viven al reproducir sus reglas sociales y normas aceptadas. Esto se nota especialmente con los estereotipos de género que exhiben y refuerzan los papeles masculinos y femeninos de una sociedad. Esta representación binaria, unidimensional y convencional es dañina para lectoras y lectores jóvenes porque impacta negativamente su comprensión de los roles de género, así como su personalidad, comportamiento y aspiraciones para el futuro. Roald Dahl, autor infantil mundialmente reconocido, ha sido recientemente revisado y criticado como escritor controvertido y persona racista y misógina. Desde un enfoque feminista crítico literario, esta investigación analiza la representación que Dahl y su ilustrador Quentin Blake hacen de los personajes animales antropomórficos femeninos en *James y el melocotón gigante* (1961), *El dedo mágico* (1966), *El súperzorro* (1970) y *La jirafa, el pelicano y el mono* (1985). Los personajes femeninos son débiles, inactivos, confinados en interiores y constantemente denigrados por los personajes masculinos, atrevidos, líderes y decisivos. Por lo tanto, esta investigación anima a que madres, padres y docentes enseñen a lectores jóvenes a leer libros infantiles con un ojo crítico para identificar e interpretar representaciones estereotípicas.

Palabras clave: literatura infantil, estereotipos de género, roles de género, Roald Dahl, crítica literaria feminista.

1. Introduction

Children's literature is crucial in children's development (Peterson and Lach 1990; Burke and Copenhaver 2004; Lerer 2008; Coats et al. 2022). Besides teaching them about the world and stimulating their imagination, it also reflects the society they live in and reproduces its accepted norms and social rules. This is particularly true when it comes to gender stereotypes, which show and reinforce the masculine and feminine roles constructed by a certain society. A binary and one-dimensional representation is detrimental to young readers' perception of gender roles, personality, behaviour, and dreams for the future. While it is negative for both female and male readers, it is undoubtedly worse for the former, who already suffer from systemic and institutional discrimination in their everyday life. The interest in the way children's books in English convey gender stereotypes has considerably increased since the 1970s and there have been noticeable changes since then. However, recent research shows that female characters are overall still underrepresented and stereotypically portrayed in contemporary children's books (McCabe et al. 2011; Sunderland and McGlashan 2012; Hill and Bartow Jacobs 2019; Lee and Chin 2019; Moya-Guijarro and Martínez Mateo 2022).

Many record-breaking children's authors have inspired generations of readers around the world. Roald Dahl is one of the most influential, with his books translated into more than 59 languages ("Roald Dahl centenary" 2015), sold over 250 million copies (Slater 2020), and adapted into movies and musicals. The British writer has been read by millions of children everywhere and is still one of the best-selling children's authors ("*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*" 2016). However, he has increasingly been criticised both as the author of disturbing and outrageous stories and as a racist, anti-Semite, and misogynist (Sturrock 2010; Anderson 2016). Evidently, as Dahl was born in 1916 in the UK, he grew up in a radically different society from our current world. He started publishing during the advent of second-wave feminism and his last books were released during third-wave feminism. His writings reflect the way women were considered at the time, but today they are being reappraised through a feminist lens.

While his stereotypical and misogynistic depiction of female characters in *The Witches*, *Matilda*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* has been debated (Mulders 2016; Þórðardóttir 2019; Stauri 2020), anthropomorphic animal characters —animals with human characteristics— have been neglected from the perspective of feminist criticism. Omnipresent in children's literature, anthropomorphic characters help young readers understand how their society works and emotionally distance themselves from unpleasant situations (Burke and Copenhaver 2004: 213). This detachment is harmful when it comes to gender stereotypes and misogyny, as children are more prone to assimilate negative representations of gender roles and attributions, which might adversely affect their cognitive development and impact their personality, behaviour, and aspirations for the future (Peterson and Lach 1990: 193).

Dahl's anthropomorphic animal characters are highly stereotypical. While male animals are adventurous and resourceful, female animals are barely visible, confined indoors, and belittled. Therefore, through a qualitative method, the first objective of this study is to adopt a feminist literary critical approach to systematically review Dahl's portrayal of female animal characters and his illustrator Quentin Blake's visual representation in four books: *James and the Giant Peach* (2007), *The Magic Finger* (1997), *Fantastic Mr Fox* (1996), and *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me* (2009). The second objective is to determine to what extent their description is stereotypical and misogynistic. The findings are expected to fill a gap in the field since anthropomorphic animal characters in Roald Dahl have not yet been studied from a feminist approach. They can also help parents and educators understand the importance of teaching children to read with a critical eye and to identify and interpret stereotypical representations.

2. Terminology: Defining Key Terms

It is first necessary to explain a series of key concepts. To start with, *gender* is commonly confused with *sex*. While the latter is biologically assigned at birth (male or female), *gender* is the "cultural constitution of notions concerning femininity or masculinity" (Wolfreys et al. 2006: 45). It represents the socially sanctioned way of being male or female through clothes, activities, career, studies, behaviour, and interests. Simone de Beauvoir's iconic "One is not born a woman, but becomes one" (1956: 6) establishes a difference between what makes everyone biologically (sex), socially (gender), and in practice (gender roles) a woman or a man. Gender is socially and culturally constructed (Basow 1992: vii; Fallaize 2007: 84), and performed as an "act" (Butler 2006) to match society's expectations. Gender identity is how one feels about their gender, which may or may not match their sex and its associated gender role.

A stereotype has been defined as "a standardized mental picture […] held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment" (Merriam-Webster 2023). Thus, stereotypes help create mental preconceptions of individuals or groups according to their race, class, or gender. Regarding the latter, masculine and feminine roles are omnipresent in our lives through the media, toys, music, sports, grammar, politics, and religion (Basow 1992: vii). Anne Cranny-Francis et al. state that "whether we are sleeping, eating, watching TV, shopping or reading, gender is at work. Yet because it is everywhere, it is sometimes difficult to see it in operation" (2003: 1). The overriding importance of gender in the Western world has led to a normalisation of gender stereotypes, with men seen as strong, rational, ambitious, risk-taking, and protective, while women are shy, creative, motherly, elegant, and submissive. In the binary opposition men/women, the first is "privileged hierarchically over the other" (Wolfreys et al. 2006: 18). Men have culturally, socially, and historically been put in the forefront as providers, kings, leaders, heads of family, managers, in short, superior to women and in charge of them.

This alleged male superiority has led to sexism and misogyny. While these terms are commonly used interchangeably, they are "analytically and ontologically separable, while ideologically linked" (Savigny 2020: 3). Indeed, whereas the

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *sexism* as "prejudice or discrimination based on sex, especially: discrimination against women", *misogyny* is a "hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women". In other words, sexism is rooted in the belief that men are biologically superior, and misogyny is an institutionalised and internalised ideology that enforces sexism. Both thrive in patriarchal societies and they affect women's salaries, health, security, and sexuality. Having said that, we cannot separate sexism and misogyny from other types of discrimination based on class, race, and physical ability. Women experience sexism differently even though the basis is the same in essence (Savigny 2020: 1). However, the turn of the 21st century and the advances of feminist movements have brought visibility and legal recognition for women. The term *sexism* was lost in the "postfeminist" era when feminism was deemed unnecessary as its goals had allegedly been reached, but sexism made a come-back in the form of "retrosexism", which reflects a need to reaffirm men's superiority in view of the menace that the advances made by women symbolise (Savigny 2020: 2).

3. Feminist Literary Criticism

Feminism is an umbrella term that includes many ideas and positions. Since it was fully theorised and academically recognised in the 19th century, there have been four waves of feminism which are "not mutually exclusive or totally separate from each other" (Kang et al. 2017: 114). Although each of them denounces the limitations of the previous one, they also praise the advances made, "as with a palimpsest" (Pellicer-Ortín et al. 2021: 224). Briefly summarised, the first wave (late 1800s to early 1900s) focused on political engagement and voting rights with a lack of intersectionality that would later be criticised; the second wave (late 1960s to early 1980s) centred on economic equality and reproductive rights with a low consideration for discrimination based on class and race; the third wave (mid-1980s to early 1990s) fought for inclusiveness by defending "non-white, disabled, trans, single or non-monogamous, middle-class, or non-western" people (Kang et al. 2017: 129) thanks to the emergence of sub-groups like the Queer movement, Sex-positive feminism, Transnational feminism, and Ecofeminism; and finally, the fourth wave, which arose in the early 2010s and is still ongoing today, uses social media to denounce rape culture, sexual abuses, and body shaming (Burkett and Brunell 2021).

Closely related to feminist movements and theories, feminist literary criticism is "a specific kind of political discourse, a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism" (Moi in Tunç Opperman 1994). It studies the oppressive representation of femininity and its symbols (Freedman

2007: xvii) and how this depiction "contain[s] and constrain[s] women in practice" (Plain and Sellers 2007: 6). Although it essentially aspires to "understand the position of females and gender conflict as a feature in literary works written by male writers" (Peter 2010: 58), it uses the theoretical groundwork formed by the different waves of feminism. As such, it has evolved from the need to denounce androcentrism by re-reading male authors to the re-discovery of female writers who had been erased from literary canons, including the multiple experiences of women from all classes and ethnic groups. Thus, feminist literary criticism offers "new substitute models of reading and writing" by deconstructing male authority and challenging unreal representations of female characters (Peter 2010: 58).

In this study, the books have been analysed through a feminist reading that aims at reviewing the cultural codes in which a given literary work is embedded in order to explore the relationship between real-life women and their portrayal in literature. In other words, it questions the meaning of "masculine" and "feminine" as cultural myths and abstract entities (Mora 1982: 3-4). Denouncing the unjust and deceptive representation of women in literature can then lead to efforts to build a new system that would recognise "the differential but non-hierarchizing status of opposed groups", that is, of each sex (Kristeva 1968: 117). Gabriela Mora defines a feminist reading as the need to "connect the text with human actions and concerns in an effort to discover the similarities, differences, alterations, and erasure between women as an empirical object and the characteristics that codes have imposed on them in literature" (1982: 4-5). However, she warns against the dangers of falling into the opposite position of antagonism. Far from supporting repressive or abusive analysis, a feminist reading calls attention to biased representations and tries to restore a balance between men and women. For Patsy Boyer, a feminist reading does not refer to the sex of the reader or critic (1982: 198). She characterises a feminist reading as opposed to a masculinist one:

> By masculinist I mean that reading which focuses on the male protagonist and his fate, which often obviates serious consideration of the female character or casts her in a negative light. […] Similarly, feminist […] means a perspective that focuses on the nature and role of the female character and clarifies the impact of this image on the male and female reader. (1982: 198)

To complete this definition, Gill Plain and Susan Sellers add that a feminist reading aims at revolting "against the androcentrism that […] dominate[s] literary studies" (2007: 102), constructing a history of women's writing, and recovering "lost and marginalised traditions of women's writing" that do not only reflect the experience of white, heterosexual, middle-class feminists (2007: 103).

4. Gender Stereotypes in Children's Literature in English

Children's literature, understood as "the body of written works and accompanying illustrations produced in order to entertain or instruct young people" (Fadiman 1998), has a long-lasting influence on its young readers' cognitive development, which is why the messages it conveys must be carefully evaluated. Many problems denounced in today's society that are related to gender roles, gender stereotypes, and misogyny are commonplace in classical and contemporary children's books (Hill and Bartow Jacobs 2019; Lee and Chin 2019; Moya-Guijarro and Martínez Mateo 2022). Along with the media, such as television, music, movies, or social platforms, children's literature maintains "hidden sexism" (Lee and Chin 2019: 58) that shapes young readers' minds.

In 1972, Weitzman et al. published their ground-breaking work on what they called, at the time, "sex-role stereotypes" (1972: 1125). They found that characters in best-selling children's books were extremely stereotypical. Gender stereotypes in children's books are all the more harmful as they are taken as a reference by young readers. They influence both their understanding of the world and how they grow and shape their personality (Weitzman et al. 1972; Peterson and Lach 1990; Hamilton et al. 2006; Lewis et al. 2021). Children's books prescribe activities, clothes, behaviours, jobs, goals, and language use for male and female characters (Weatherall 2002). Regarding the latter, Lewis et al. (2021) have found that in 247 popular and contemporary children's books, female characters mainly speak about care, feelings, school, and communication; on the other hand, male characters typically speak about work, transportation, mechanics, and tools. While all characters are represented stereotypically, "male" is the default gender (Heuring 2021) and female characters are particularly affected (Nebbia 2016: 21).

Weitzman et al.'s four main findings about the stereotypical portrayal of female characters were: (1) they are outnumbered by their male counterparts in the titles, the text, the plot, and the illustrations; (2) they are emotionally and physically stereotyped; (3) they are homebound and inactive, as opposed to male characters, who carry out varied and interesting activities in groups and outside; and (4) they are dependent and "cannot exist without men" (1972: 1136). While there have been significant changes, particularly in the last few decades, recent studies show that British and American children's literature remains stereotypical (Brower 2016; Nebbia 2016; Lee and Chin 2019; Lewis et al. 2021; Moya-Guijarro and Martínez Mateo 2022). In particular, McCabe et al.'s (2011) analysis of 5,618 children's books published in the USA throughout the twentieth century shows the constant disparities and inequalities between female and male characters.

Outnumbered by male characters in the titles, the plot, and the illustrations, female characters are thus “invisible” (Weitzman et al. 1972: 1128; see also Hamilton et al. 2006: 761). McCabe et al. speak of a “symbolic annihilation” (2011: 198) which mirrors the underrepresentation of women in real life. Secondly, female characters are emotionally and physically stereotyped as kind, gentle, modest, and shy. They do not speak but whisper or murmur; they do not walk but tiptoe. As far as clothes are concerned, they wear “frilly, starchy, pink dresses” (Weitzman et al. 1972: 1137; see also Hill and Bartow Jacobs 2019), and have big eyes and long eyelashes. These scholars state that the “girl’s clothes indicate that she is not meant to be active” (Weitzman et al. 1972: 1137): this is why female characters are homebound and inert. They cook, take care of children, gossip, listen to music, and sew. As adults, women have limited options. They stay at home and are overrepresented in nurturing roles, particularly as mothers (Lee and Chin 2019: 58), whereas men have jobs that bestow a higher status (Weitzman et al. 1972; Hamilton et al. 2006: 761). Female characters appear helpless and dependent, incapable of living without men. In their research on how children talk about the depiction of characters in picture books, Hill and Bartow Jacobs found that not only is a character’s gender key for young readers, but it is also always determined by the social norms and constructs that children are exposed to (2019: 99).

5. Roald Dahl: Prominent yet Controversial

In 1986, Dahl’s official biographer Donald Sturrock met the British author, who was at the time “the most famous and successful living children’s writer” (2010: 10-11). Sturrock summarises the first twenty-five years of Dahl’s life as follows: “Norwegian parents, a childhood in Wales, miserable schooldays, youthful adventures in Newfoundland and Tanganyika [today Tanzania], flying as a fighter pilot, a serious plane crash, then a career as a wartime diplomat in Washington” (2010: 9). While Dahl claimed his personal life did not inspire his writing, his universe is filled with traumatic childhoods, orphans, animals, sickness, bullies, corporal punishments, and abusive parents.

In 1943, Dahl published his first children’s book, *The Gremlins.* Walt Disney’s project to adapt it into an animated movie was cancelled due to tensions between the two men. For the next twenty years, Dahl published adult fiction, novels, and short stories that most readers and critics today consider “macabre” (Anderson 2016), “outrageous” (Casulli 2015: 4), “sardonic” and “gruesome” (Henfridsson 2008: 6-7). He came back to children’s literature in the 1960s, a gruesome decade for Roald Dahl, as his son was hit by a taxi, his seven-year-old daughter died of measles, and his pregnant wife Patricia Neal suffered strokes. Dahl could not write prolifically before the 1980s, when he published 15 books and divorced his first wife to marry his yearslong mistress. When he died at the age of 74 in 1990, Dahl left an estate of over three million pounds (Henfridsson 2008: 5) and an astonishing legacy of hundreds of books, anthologies, screenplays, and short stories. His heritage, which now also includes a charity and a museum, is managed by The Roald Dahl Story Company and The Roald Dahl Family.

Although his books were first published over 70 years ago, Dahl "still ranks in the top five best-selling children's authors on Amazon's UK site […] alongside modern day best-sellers" ("*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*" 2016). A dozen movies were based on his books and the rights to his stories sell for billions of dollars. The Roald Dahl Story Company makes millions of pounds every year (Bayley 2022) and the sales are soaring after Puffin announced they would publish edited versions (Schultz 2023). Yet, Dahl's indisputable notoriety is now tainted with controversy and polemic. He would reuse plots from his adult stories in stories for children, which is why "dreadful, morbid, and macabre […] and even sadistic elements" can be found in his children's books (Casulli 2015: 5) —called "tasteless and brutal" by many critics (Sturrock 2010: 21). Abusive parents, frightful incidents, and vicious children abound in all of Dahl's stories, as well as racist elements. For example, *James and the Giant Peach*'s Grasshopper exclaims he would "rather be fried alive and eaten by a Mexican" (Dahl 2001: 107) and the representation of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*'s Oompa Loompas as "small black pygmies" has been criticised (Rosenthal 2014). Consequently, several of Dahl's books were banned from reading lists in different countries.

Dahl's personal opinions are similarly contentious, from racist remarks about the population in Baghdad in his letters to his family (Sturrock 2010: 128) and anti-Israeli and colonialist articles in the 1980s to anti-Semitic statements in interviews (Anderson 2016). Although his racism, anti-Semitism, and misogyny were mitigated by his publishers' careful editing, his integrity has regularly been questioned. The Dahl family released an official statement in December 2020 to apologise for some of the author's declarations. However, this apology was conveniently published in a bidding war between streaming platforms to acquire the rights to Dahl's works. After Netflix bought the author's entire catalogue for $502 million, the Dahl family donated "a significant part" of this sum to anti-racism, anti-hate, and children's rights charities, although "no further details explain which organizations those donations might support" (Grossman 2022). Recently, readers' anger at Puffin's amended versions brought about a revived love for Roald Dahl's original pieces of work.

6. An Analysis of Roald Dahl's Female Animal Characters

As has been mentioned, this study focuses on anthropomorphic characters, "animals possessing human capabilities and characteristics" (Burke and Copenhaver 2004: 206; see also Hill and Bartow Jacobs 2019: 97). Their animal nature keeps young readers curious and interested while their human abilities and behaviour replicate reality and serve to guide and instruct children. In other words, anthropomorphic characters allow writers to deal with controversial or delicate topics with a "soften[ed…] didactic tone" and "a degree of emotional distance" (Burke and Copenhaver 2004: 210-213). Nonetheless, the emotional distance anthropomorphic characters create can produce a dissociation from the reality that they mirror. Consequently, young readers might not realise that the characters mirror their life and they might not understand the seriousness of certain topics, such as racism or sexism. Interestingly, McCabe et al. notice that the least parity between female and male characters in children's books is found among animal characters, while child characters are more equal (2011: 220).

Animal characters abound in Roald Dahl's books, both real and anthropomorphic. There are even cases of transmogrification, "people morphing into animals" (Burke and Copenhaver 2004: 207), such as the unnamed protagonist changed into a mouse in *The Witches* (1983), or Mrs Winter turned into a cat and the Gregg family into ducks in *The Magic Finger* (1997). For this study, it was necessary to identify Dahl's children's books that include female anthropomorphic characters. Those that only contained non-anthropomorphic animals or that did not include female animal characters were discarded. As a result, four books were finally selected: *James and the Giant Peach* (2007), *The Magic Finger* (1997), *Fantastic Mr Fox* (1996), and *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me* (2009). The editions illustrated by British artist Quentin Blake were favoured; the work of the London-born illustrator cannot be separated from Dahl's books as his peculiar, immediately recognisable style has given to most of Dahl's characters a visual identity that inhabits the childhood of millions of readers. In addition, however popular and beloved Blake's drawings are, they are not less sexist than Dahl's written portrayals, and in all these books the "complementarity between images and words" is undeniable (Moya-Guijarro and Martínez Mateo 2022: 179).

James and the Giant Peach, first published in 1961, was later reedited ten times and illustrated by Quentin Blake in 1995. It was adapted into a film in 1996 and in 2010 into a musical that is still produced today. The book follows James, a young boy who is bullied by his two awful aunts. After discovering a magic potion, James enters into a colossal peach that hosts a group of gigantic insects and embarks on a magical journey that involves a dive into the ocean, a shark attack, an army of seagulls, and a memorable impalement on top of the Empire State Building. Written in 1962 but not published until 1966, as it went against the mighty US gun lobby

(The Roald Dahl Story Company Limited 2018), and illustrated in 1995 by Blake, *The Magic Finger* features an unnamed young girl who uses her magic finger to punish her neighbours, the Gregg family, who are avid hunters. She transforms them into half-human, half-duck creatures, thus forcing them to build a nest and escape from revengeful real ducks. In 1970, *Fantastic Mr Fox* gave life to a family of foxes that only survive thanks to the ingenuity of Mr Fox, who outwits their three abominable neighbours Boggis, Bunce, and Bean by stealing their chickens, ducks, geese, and apple cider. Illustrated by Blake in 1996, the story was adapted into a theatre play (2001), an opera (1998, 2010), a movie by Wes Anderson (2009), and a musical (2016). Finally, *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*, published in 1985 with Blake's illustrations, narrates the adventures of a boy who dreams of opening a candy shop. His life changes when he meets the three members of the Ladderless Window-Cleaning Company: a giraffe, a pelican, and a monkey.

These books present female anthropomorphic animal characters. There are four of them in *James and the Giant Peach*: Miss Spider, Ladybird, Silkworm, and Glowworm, and only one in *The Magic Finger*: the mother of the duck family. *Fantastic Mr Fox* mentions several of them, but only one is recurrent and useful to the plot, Mrs Fox, while the others do not even have a name or a personality. Finally, the giraffe is the only female character in *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*. All these characters are treated, described, and illustrated in a sexist way. The following analysis is based on the elements of sexism in children's books identified by Weitzman et al. in 1972: the invisible woman, the physical description of female characters, the activities of boys and girls, and the relationship between male and female characters (domination for the first, dependency for the latter).

6.1. The Invisible Woman

In the four selected books, the only ones of Dahl's works that include female animal characters, the female characters are invisible, either literally or because of their behaviour. In *Fantastic Mr Fox*, all the female characters, except for Mrs Fox, are absent from the storyline, simply mentioned by their husbands as "and all our wives and children" (Dahl 1996: 48). In *James and the Giant Peach*, Silkworm and Glowworm are made invisible by their conduct. The first one is "sleeping soundly and nobody [is] paying any attention to it" (Dahl 2007: 47). At first, the pronoun "it" is used to refer to her, thus erasing her identity as a female character. Later, as James realises he will need silk to escape from the sharks, the Old-Green-Grasshopper reminds him of the existence of Silkworm, whom everybody had forgotten:

> 'But my dear boy, that's exactly what we do have! We've got all you want!'
> 'How? Where?'

> 'The Silkworm!' cried the Old-Green-Grasshopper. 'Didn't you ever notice the Silkworm? She's still downstairs! She never moves! She just lies there sleeping all day long'. (76)

The Silkworm goes completely unnoticed and her silence reinforces her insubstantiality, as she does not utter a single word in the entire story. She never appears in any of Blake's drawings, even though her silk saves everyone when they need to escape from the sharks. Even the other female characters forget about the Silkworm, for instance, when Miss Spider says, "None of us three girls" (Dahl 2007: 68) to refer to herself, Ladybird, and the Glowworm, thus omitting the Silkworm. Similarly, the Glowworm is described as "a very shy and silent creature" (87). She is drawn twice, but only one half of her body is shown, and she is a mere lightbulb. The other characters treat her as a "lighting system" (65) and take for granted that her only role is to illuminate the peach:

> 'Let's have some light!' shouted the Centipede.
>
> 'Yes!' they cried. 'Light! Give us some light!'
>
> 'I'm *trying*', answered the poor Glowworm. 'I'm doing my best. Please be patient'. (66)

Finally, in *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*, while the Giraffe is more present than the female characters previously mentioned, her withdrawn behaviour and the fact that the male characters speak much more than her contribute to her invisibilisation.

6.2. Physical Description and Clothing

In *James and the Giant Peach*, Ladybird is described as "obviously a kind and gentle creature" (Dahl 2007: 56), "so beautiful, so kind" (133), an insect who speaks "primly" (71) and "modestly" (95) and who blushes when others address her. She is protective of James and has a motherly attitude towards him. Miss Spider does everything "calmly" (87) and is illustrated with long eyelashes even though the text never mentions them. Female characters are sensitive; when James jumps to save the Centipede, "Miss Spider, the Glowworm, and the Ladybird all began to cry" (100). Mrs Fox does not speak but sobs (Dahl 1996: 16) or murmurs (43). Throughout the book, while her husband is doing everything, she quivers (16), cries (17), and acts "tenderly" (15) and "shyly" (77). The Giraffe has "big round dark eyes" (Dahl 2009: 13) and is depicted by Blake with long eyelashes even though they are not textually mentioned by Dahl. She sings "so softly that [you can] hardly catch the words" (28), she tiptoes "very gingerly" (32), she whispers (32), she murmurs (42), and she does not want to sound "pushy" when she asks for food (42). All the female characters are withdrawn and their actions constantly measured; everything they do is softened or toned down. Finally, while no details about the way characters are dressed are mentioned in the text itself, the illustrations show the female duck wearing an apron (Dahl 1997: 36) and Mrs Fox wearing a long dress (Dahl 1996: 15, 34, 43, 74). This implies that illustrators can take liberties and reinforce stereotypical representations, which is particularly relevant as illustrations in children's books are as important —if not more so— as the text for children. In Seth Lerer's words, "[t]he history of children's literature is a history of image as well as word" (2008: 322).

6.3. Girls' Activities

Female characters only engage in activities that are stereotypically reserved for them. For example, Ladybird likes music (Dahl 2007: 92) and gossiping (139), while Miss Spider is expected to make the beds for everyone "as soft and silky as possibl[e]" (53). Later, she panics when James suggests they should abandon the peach and swim: "None of us three girls can swim a single stroke" (68). Swimming, and sports generally, is seen as a male activity. The mother duck cooks alone in the kitchen (Dahl 1997: 36) and Mrs Fox is only mentioned when the next menu is concerned: "'I think we'll have duck tonight', said Mrs Fox" (Dahl 1996: 10), "My son […], run back with these to your mother. Tell her to prepare a feast" (42), "'A feast it shall be!' she said, standing up. […] Hurry up, child, and start plucking those chickens!" (44), and finally, "My darlings […], run back as fast as you can to your mother. Tell her we are having guests for dinner" (57). Mrs Fox is a mere caregiver to her children and her husband as well, tending to him after he is shot by the farmers.

Consequently, it can be argued that the female characters are passive overall. In *The Magic Finger*, while the three male ducks are holding rifles and shooting, the mother duck is standing next to them, her hands on her hips (Dahl 1997: 45-46). In *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*, the Giraffe is much less active than her male counterparts. While she carries her friends on her back and helps them clean the windows, reach the top of the trees, or arrest thieves, her role is subordinate and derisory. This misogynistic portrayal of female characters as mild, quiet, and caring creatures confined to the inside, especially the kitchen, is further strengthened by the way male and female characters interact with each other, as will be shown below.

6.4. Relationships Between Male and Female Characters

Interestingly, the female characters do not interact with each other, either because they do not have another woman to talk to or because they only address male characters, who all adopt a paternalist and superior attitude towards them. In *James and the Giant Peach*, the male insects see their female counterparts as objects or slaves that can be used and mistreated. For example, when James decides he will need silk to carry out his project, the Centipede forces the Silkworm to spin silk and insults her: "Spin, Silkworm, spin, you great fat lazy brute! Faster, faster, or we'll throw you to the sharks!" (Dahl 2007: 82). Earlier in the book, the Centipede mistreats the Glowworm when she forgets to turn her light off by shouting "Wake up, you lazy beast!" and throwing his boots at her (54).

The female characters have internalised their presumed inferiority and weakness. As soon as a problem arises, Miss Spider and Ladybird panic; instead of working towards a solution, they turn to James: "'Is there *nothing* we can do? […] Surely *you* can think of a way out of this'. 'Think!' begged Miss Spider. '*Think*, James, *think*!'" (75, emphasis in original). They have no self-confidence and believe that only a man could save them from this critical situation. Similarly, when the Giraffe notices the burglar in the Duchess's room, she immediately turns to the Pelican and the Monkey, who find a way to capture the thief (Dahl 2009: 32). Mrs Fox, the weakest of all, completely relies on her husband and children. She is also under her husband's spell: three times in barely 80 pages, she exclaims, "Oh, what a fantastic fox your father is!" (Dahl 1996: 19, 44, 77). Her declaration is even written in capital letters the third time: "Then Mrs Fox got shyly to her feet and said, 'I don't want to make a speech. I just want to say one more thing, and it is this: MY HUSBAND IS A FANTASTIC FOX'" (77). Mr Fox incontestably takes pleasure in his wife's obedient and idolatrous behaviour as he claims he "loved her more than ever when she said things like that" (19).

Therefore, the female animal characters are seen as physically and morally inferior to the male characters. They are feeble, inept, and dependent. They do not make decisions and need to be taken care of. As Weitzman et al. suggest, female characters in children's books do not spend time together and their tendency to systematically turn to men in critical situations "impl[ies] that women cannot exist without men" (1972: 1136). Their finding that "boys rescue girls" (1135) in the majority of the children's books they studied is also true for Dahl's books.

6.5. Evolution of the Representation of Female Animal Characters

A slight improvement of this underlying sexism can be noticed from *James and the Giant Peach* in the early 1960s to *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me* in the mid-1980s. First, female characters become more present as the years go by, both in the text and in the illustrations. For instance, the Giraffe appears in the title of the book along with her two male counterparts as well as in the majority of the illustrations, unlike Miss Spider, Ladybird, or the Glowworm. The Giraffe is also more involved in the story than any previous female character as she accompanies the male characters and takes part in the group decisions. Similarly, even if the female duck is mostly inactive, she does leave the house to escort the male ducks and she acts as a mediator between the Greggs and the ducks. This significantly contrasts with *James and the Giant Peach* and *Fantastic Mr Fox*, whose female characters remain inside the giant peach or in the foxhole. Finally, how male characters treat women evolves noticeably. In *James and the Giant Peach*, the male insects insult, objectify, and bully women, while Mr Fox ultimately loves his wife, and the Pelly and the Monkey worry about the Giraffe's safety and ask for her opinion.

Thus, it appears that second-wave feminism and early research in children's books influenced children's literature in general and Dahl's writings in particular, or at least his publisher's editing. In the 2000s, stereotypical and misogynistic representations were more commonly challenged, reflecting societal changes. Yet, male characters' behaviour remained paternalistic and condescending throughout all of Dahl's books and female characters were still underrepresented, even in the most recent ones. This finding is similar to that of McCabe et al.: there are changes over time, "but not consistent improvement" (2011: 219), particularly with animal characters (221).

7. Conclusion

Gender stereotypes have always been present in Western children's literature, which is damaging to young readers' cognitive and affective development. By internalising one-dimensional and stereotypical descriptions from a very young age, children perpetuate them as they grow up (Lewis et al. 2021). While there is more awareness of the issues related to gender representation, studies conducted recently show the same results as Weitzman et al. in 1972 when experts started being interested in this topic; thus, contemporary children's books still produce misogynistic representations (McCabe et al. 2011; Sunderland and McGlashan 2012; Hill and Bartow Jacobs 2019; Lee and Chin 2019; Moya-Guijarro and Martínez Mateo 2022). This is especially harmful in the case of world-renowned authors like Roald Dahl. Although his books were published over 30 years ago, his stories have constantly been revived with successive reeditions, Quentin Blake's illustrations in the 1990s, and numerous adaptations into movies, musicals, or theatre plays. Today, countless read-aloud versions of Dahl's books gather millions of views on YouTube and audio versions read by famous actors and actresses are available online. Roald Dahl is still one of the best-selling and most famous children's books' writers in the world and his books have a considerable influence.

The objectives of this study were to review four of Dahl's children's books with a feminist literary critical approach and to analyse his portrayal of female anthropomorphic characters, extremely common in his stories but neglected by previous studies that only take human characters into consideration. Animal characters significantly affect children's imagination and understanding of the world (Burke and Copenhaver 2004: 213), which is why the depiction of female animal characters is of such importance for the young readers' cognitive development (Peterson and Lach 1990: 193). Apart from being barely visible, female characters in Dahl's books are inferior to male characters, both physically and emotionally. Confined indoors and mostly irrelevant to the plot, they are brutalized and bullied by their male counterparts. Although second-wave feminism and early studies in gender stereotypes in children's books produced changes that can be noticed between the early 1960s and the mid-1980s, Dahl's representation of female animal characters remains simplistic and misogynistic.

Having said that, this does not mean that Roald Dahl's books should be censored, taken out of reading lists, or banned from libraries. Oppenheimer supports "condemning without cancelling"; obviously, "we should not ignore the public ugliness of a public figure", but in this case, "the perpetrator is gone" (2020). Therefore, it is necessary to teach parents, educators, and readers how to identify and interpret misogynistic representations on the one hand, and to encourage new generations of authors and illustrators to bring to life characters of all ages, genders, ethnicities, and social backgrounds, on the other hand. While young readers should be able to read with a critical eye, children's writers should also create non-sexist, gender-fair stories that feature less caricatured characters and more multi-faceted female characters. Such stories must also be recognised by publishing houses, award committees, and school programmes.

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THE AFFECTIVE FORCES OF THE STATE: OVERCOMING BIOGRAPHIES OF VIOLENCE IN YEJIDE KILANKO'S *DAUGHTERS WHO WALK THIS PATH*

LAS FUERZAS AFECTIVAS DEL ESTADO: SUPERANDO LAS BIOGRAFÍAS DE VIOLENCIA EN *DAUGHTERS WHO WALK THIS PATH,* DE YEJIDE KILANKO

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Abstract

This article delves into the abuses stemming from the Nigerian state forces and their failure to protect Nigerian citizens as illustrated in Yejide Kilanko's *Daughters Who Walk this Path* (2012). The novel narrates the struggles undergone by young Morayo as she is repeatedly abused as a child by an elder cousin, Bros T. Here, I seek to trace a parallelism between the instances of physical and affective violence against Morayo and the episodes of "intra-societal violence" (Hill 2012: 15) occurring in Nigeria from the 1980s to the mid-1990s, when the country's socio-political sphere was marked by the social chaos resulting from armed robberies, military coups, rigged elections, and instances of police brutality towards women. I shall analyze such episodes as instances of 'forced intimacy' within the public and private spheres, which translates into the impositions of negative forms of affect upon personal and collective development. In this context, the physical and psychological abuses suffered by Morayo will be presented as shaping what Ahmed refers to as one's "biographies of violence" (2017: 23). My ultimate aim is to trace Morayo's development of what I will describe as 'affective resilience' against the affective forces of the state.

Keywords: forced intimacy, Yejide Kilanko, biographies of violence, Nigeria, affect.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza los abusos cometidos por las fuerzas del estado en Nigeria y su incapacidad de proteger a los ciudadanos, tal y como se refleja en la novela de Yejide Kilanko *Daughters Who Walk this Path* (2012). Kilanko narra las dificultades sufridas por la joven Morayo al ser repetidamente violada durante su niñez por su primo, Bros T. Este artículo trazará un paralelismo entre la violencia física y afectiva sufrida por Morayo, lo cual se relacionará con los episodios de "intra-societal violence" (Hill 2012: 15) que tuvieron lugar en Nigeria entre la década a los ochenta y los noventa, cuando la esfera socio-política del país estuvo marcado por un caos social resultado de la ola de robos armados, golpes de estado, fraude electoral, e instancias de brutalidad policial hacia mujeres. Dichos episodios se analizarán como instancias de 'intimidad forzada' tanto en la esfera pública como en la privada, lo cual se traduce en la imposición de formas negativas de afecto en la evolución personal de Morayo y colectiva de Nigeria. En este contexto, los abusos físicos y psicológicos sufridos por Morayo se presentarán como un ejemplo de lo que Ahmed denomina "biografías de violencia" (2017: 23). Finalmente, el desarrollo personal de Morayo se analizará como una forma de 'resiliencia afectiva' que se desata contra las fuerzas afectivas del estado.

Palabras clave: intimidad forzosa, Yejide Kilanko, biografías de violencia, Nigeria, afecto.

1. Introduction

Police brutality and corruption within the Nigerian armed forces have increasingly become two major issues of concern in Nigeria, causing particular unrest among young Nigerians (Orjinmo 2020). A study by Antonia Okoosi-Simbine reveals that the Police is deemed to be the most corrupt profession in Nigeria (2011: 164), a matter which has mobilized Nigerians to engage in massive protests since 2017. Amnesty International denounced that there were "at least 82 cases of torture, ill-treatment and extra-judicial execution by SARS[1] between January 2017 and May 2020" (Orjinmo 2020). Dissent reached its zenith on October 20, 2020, after a series of marches in Lagos against the Nigerian Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). This event turned into a tragedy known as the Lekki Massacre after the Nigerian Army opened fire against peaceful protesters at the Lekki Toll Gate ("Nigeria: The Lekki Toll Gate Massacre" 2020). Using the hashtag #ENDSARS ("End Sars Protests" 2020), protesters had been rallying crowds for two weeks before the attack, with daily demonstrations leading to the official ending of the SARS unit ("End Sars Protests" 2020). The history of ruthlessness attributed to

Nigerian police and military forces has demonstrated that "corruption, brutality and little regard for human rights" are generally perceived as intrinsic features of the Nigerian armed forces (Orjinmo 2020). The protests following the Lekki Massacre are but an open expression of today's socio-political unrest in Nigeria; the result of previous decades of oppression on the part of those meant to protect civilian rights. The irritation with law-enforcement officers can be metaphorically read as evidence of the general sense of frustration with the Nigerian political system.

The abuse stemming from the state forces and their failure to protect Nigerian citizens are illustrated in Yejide Kilanko's *Daughters Who Walk this Path* (2012). Kilanko's novel is an exploration of the struggles undergone by its female protagonist, Morayo, after being repeatedly abused as a child by her cousin, Bros T. Morayo's first-person narrative retells her brave journey of self-acceptance, her overcoming of the family shame she endures, and her difficulties in conciliating the memories of the assaults with an affective relationship and healthy sexual life as an adolescent. Kilanko's novel has mainly been explored from the perspective of Trauma Studies, particularly focusing on Morayo's emotional trauma after enduring sexual violence and emotional abuse (Chandran et al. 2018) and on the intrusive thoughts and psychological distress experienced by Morayo as a trauma survivor of sexual abuse and parental neglect (Dodhy 2017a). The novel has also been explored in terms of the sexism and victimization stemming from intra-familiar rape in African countries (Nutsukpo 2018). The traumatic effects of rape as a form of sexual victimization in African societies has also been an object of discussion in relation to Morayo's evolution (Ogbazi and Amah 2021). Mary B. Aiyetoro and Esther U. Amarachukwu have explored Kilanko's novel as exposing a conflictive relationship of tradition and modernity within the Yoruba family structure (2020: 178). In this article, I explore instances of physical and affective violence against Morayo as related to a national context marked by social chaos as a result of armed robberies, military coups, rigged elections, and instances of police brutality towards women. Although Kilanko narrates Morayo's personal growth from 1982 to the 2000s, my focus is on the period ranging from 1982 to the mid-1990s, the period covering the initial steps in Morayo's identity formation. This part of Morayo's life coincides with Nigeria undergoing massive political unrest, for the country endured three consecutive military regimes: from 1983 to 1999 General Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985), General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (1985-1993), and General Sani Abacha (1993-1998) ruled the country before civilian rule was reinstated in 1999.

Kilanko's depiction of armed assaults, police violence, and rigged elections work as the actual settings for acts of abuse exerted upon Morayo. I refer to such abuses as episodes of 'forced intimacy', which involves the endurance of private and public forms of abuse such as the encouragement of heterosexual behaviors and affects, the imposition of family-arranged courtship and marriages, including polygyny practices, sexual abuses, and the socialization into reproduction (Cruz-Gutiérrez, forthcoming). Forced intimacy is thus the act of imposing or creating negative affects, such as shame, disgust or hatred, on the other. Braidotti explains that this type of behaviour may counter and menace the stability of positive affects such as love, joy, or pride, thus exerting a devastating impact on the human capacity to perceive the reality and interact with others (2009: 50). Nonetheless, as I argue in relation to Morayo, it is possible to transform negative affects into positive affects with the potential to become "a resource for political action" (Cvetkovich 2007: 460). The first section of this article will explore the episodes of forced intimacy endured by Morayo in the 1980s as a metaphorical representation of the violence Nigerians endured in the wave of armed robberies which marked that decade. I will discuss those instances of forced intimacy as influencing the development of Morayo's identity in regard to the formation of "biographies of violence" (Ahmed 2017: 23). In the second section, I will focus on Morayo's involvement in politics during the 1990s and on the role of her Aunty Morenike as a feminist figure who teaches her to develop what I shall refer to as affective resilience counterbalancing the effects of "intra-societal violence" (Hill 2012: 15).

2. Private and Public Acts of Forced Intimacy

Morayo is entrapped into a net of forced intimacy within her own household. The endurance of such violence shapes the girl's perception of reality and by extension influences her account of the negative affects experienced at a physical and psychological level, thus defining her narrative as what Ahmed calls "biographies of violence" (2017: 23). The fact that these events occur against the background of armed robberies taking place in Nigeria during the 1980s allows Kilanko to establish a parallelism between private and public forms of violence and denounce how state failure affects the course of the lives of Nigerian citizens. The novel demonstrates that affective violence is sticky and fluid, capable of permeating into the private domain and infecting it with the corruption of the public sphere.

Yejide Kilanko starts her novel by associating the first act of forced intimacy committed against Morayo with the wave of violent burglaries which dominated Nigeria during the 1980s and 1990s. Historically, the 1980s and 1990s can be remembered in terms of a national crisis reflected in a climate of political unrest in which several military coups and/or coup attempts succeeded each other.[2] One of the consequences of this crisis was that armed robberies in Nigeria dramatically increased from 12,150 in 1970 to 106,857 in 1976, 271,240 in 1982, and 311,961 in 1983 (Aderinto 2018: 264). *Daughters Who Walk this Path* illustrates the extent to which Nigerians had normalized the trespassing of armed robberies into their lives. Early in the novel, during Buhari's military rule, young Morayo has "recurring nightmares [about] armed robbers in the house" (Kilanko 2012: 67). Her nightmares appear to have become true when one night she notices an intrusion in her bedroom. After hearing a strange noise, Morayo wakes up and recalls that robbers had indeed sent a letter to her neighbors "announcing that they were coming and warning against any police involvement" (67). Morayo has also heard stories about neighbors not complying with their wishes and being punished by robbers "forcing some of the male tenants to sleep with their neighbours' wives while their husbands watched" (67). But Morayo realizes that the noise is not caused by a trespasser but by her cousin, Bros T, who is meant to take care of her while her family is away. She suddenly realizes that Bros T is entering her room to sexually assault her.

The young girl is repeatedly raped by Bros T. The violation of her body becomes the crucial event in configuring her biography of violence, shaped not only by physical and sexual abuse, but by the betrayal of her trust, beliefs, and rights (Ahmed 2017: 23). Through Morayo's rape, then, Kilanko visibilizes the common experience of many young women in the country, as well as the ongoing problem of sexual abuse exerted by an elder member of the family.[3] The accumulation of episodes of forced intimacy against Morayo provokes a change in her perception of the world that surrounds her, of her family, and even of her own body, with the result that Morayo senses the world as a danger (Kilanko 2012: 24). In Morayo's case, the private trauma of being physically abused extends to the public fear of being attacked by armed robbers. Morayo's traumatic experience coincides with the impassivity of the Buhari Administration with regard to these forms of sexual violence as well as its inefficacy in preventing and punishing such crimes. This shows that Kilanko's denunciation is twofold as the citizens' acceptance of armed robberies on a regular basis is intermixed with the normalization of assaults towards girls by members of the family. In this manner, Kilanko follows a present trend in contemporary Nigerian literature in which "the family's misfortune is that of society writ small" (Eze 2016: 74).

Aderinto explains this devastating wave of armed robberies as directly stemming from the economic crisis of the 1980s (2018: 264), in turn deriving from a context of embezzlement and corruption where, as Nigerian scholar Stephen Ekpenyong argued in a 1989 article, "ostentatious display of ill-gotten wealth is applauded; where criminals, men in positions of power and trust, and law enforcement agents tend to collude, and where the needs and aspirations of the majority are neglected, [which] is likely to breed armed robbers" (1989: 21). In this regard, Aderinto points at the "failure of political leadership at all levels of the society" as the most important cause of disorder (2018: 267). Similarly, Marenin underlines that Nigerians were aware of the increase in crime as "a dramatic illustration of the shortcomings of national life" (2008: 268). The fact that this historical episode is featured in a number of contemporary Nigerian novels[4] reflects that negative affects toward the nation, such as hatred, can ultimately turn against innocent Nigerian citizens. In the novel, the circulation of negative affects extends from the body of the nation to Morayo's body. She is unprotected in her own house, in the same manner in which citizens are not safe in their own country. If intimacy is understood as what "links the instability of individual lives to the trajectories of the collective" (Berlant 1998: 283), forced intimacy becomes sticky, as it can impregnate both the political and private spheres. The intertwining of private and public forced intimacies evinces to what extent affects are social (Brennan 2004: 65), since they are "attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, including other affects" (Sedgwick 2002: 19).

Following in the steps of a negligent state, Morayo's parents not only fail to protect their daughter but actively become complicit in the exertion of forced intimacy towards her. Weeks before enduring her first sexual assault, during one of NEPA's[5] frequent blackouts, Morayo's dad tells her and her sister Eniayo a Yoruba story about a woman who is punished as a result of not being able to keep a secret. The story concludes: "if you don't want everyone to know your secret, don't share it with anyone" (Kilanko 2012: 14). This Yoruba tale enforces customary moral lessons on Morayo and Eniayo, preventing Morayo from telling her family about the horrid reality she is living as Bros T continues to abuse her for months (76). The tale constitutes yet another instance of forced intimacy, as Morayo is advised to remain silent to avoid public exposure. That this particular lesson is taught during one of NEPA's blackouts is indeed symbolic because Morayo is being taught to keep her secret in the dark. In the novel, Morayo explains that "any time the lights flickered out, Eniayo and I would raise our fists in the air and shout with frustration, 'NEPA!' Outside, we heard our neighbours shouting too" (11). The blackout episode[6] serves Kilanko to illustrate NEPA's incompetence in failing to supply electricity to the country as "emblematic of the ineptitude of the Nigerian state to meet citizen needs that are crucial to functioning in the contemporary world" (Okome 2013a: 4-5). The depiction of Nigeria's neglect of the needs of its citizens runs in parallel with Morayo's parents exerting psychologically forced intimacy towards her. In this manner, this episode strengthens the relation between the public and the private that Kilanko delineates in the novel.

The misinformation that Morayo's mother gives her about sexuality further blocks her way out of the emotional trap of forced intimacy, as Morayo becomes unable to share her emotional turmoil and the negative affects she is forced to experience. Until Bros T assaults her, Morayo's interaction with boys is limited to her friend Kachi "sneaking glances" at her in class (Kilanko 2012: 39) or walking her home after school. When her mother finds out that Morayo and Kachi have spent time together she tells her: "if you let a boy touch any part of your body, […] if I catch you, Morayo, I will kill you before you bring shame to this family" (39). Her mother prevents any interchange of information or possibility of answering questions about her sexuality when she cuts short Morayo's innocent curiosity by exclaiming: "what kind of nonsense talk is this?" (47). This is reinforced when Morayo's mother scolds her for seeing Kachi without supervision: "'have you no shame?' […] 'Tell me, who would want such a woman as a wife?'" (55). Negative affect in the form of shame submits Morayo to her mother's will, and makes it impossible for Morayo to evolve, as she explains: "Mummy always told Eniayo and me that having no shame was a terrible flaw" (55). As a result, Morayo experiences a psychological trauma caused by her mother's discouragement to disclose pain, with the consequence that "instead of forgetting the traumatic experience […] the intrusive thoughts interfere with her thought processes, thus contaminating her mental health" (Dodhy 2017a: 99). Her parents' behavior, together with Bros T's rape, can be interpreted as a con-joined succession of acts of forced intimacy that Morayo cannot fight. Morayo feels that she must conform to the teachings of her parents if she does not want to bring shame onto her family. The novel then illustrates the combined workings of two institutions contributing to the formation of biographies of violence: the family, which forcibly inculcates customary laws or socially accepted patterns of behavior to prevent shame; and the government, which fails to pass laws that protect children (and girls) as Nigeria's most vulnerable citizens.

Morayo's reluctance to tell the truth plays against her development as she enters a state of apathy towards her assaulter, accepting the attacks and realizing that "Bros T's violation had lost its strangeness. It had become… familiar. With each passing month, his hand at my neck became gentler and gentler, until there was no need for it to remain there" (Kilanko 2012: 90). Her giving in to these violations and the shame stemming from them are part of a process that Ahmed refers to as "the effect of being made a stranger" (in Antwi et al. 2013: 4). This occurs when affects and emotions are repetitively imposed on a body to the extent that such acts become detached and strange. This mechanism is conducive to one's intimacy and agency not belonging to oneself but to those who force an act of intimacy on one. One's space and emotions are lived through those of others, which gives way to "'alienated intimacy' [or] how some are made into the aliens in spaces they call home" (in Antwi et al. 2013: 4). Morayo's description of Bros T's violations becoming familiar recalls Ahmed's description of shame as a negative affect that "impresses upon the skin" as it is an "intense and painful sensation" which is "felt by and on the body", being ultimately "bound up with how the self feels about itself" (2014: 103). This description becomes quite literal in Morayo's case, as her shame is the result of physical abuse. As a result, Morayo begins to perceive her world as a danger, a place where nobody can be trusted. At this point, she contemplates the idea of committing suicide, as "it would feel like not to be trapped in [her] heavy body but floating around free" (Kilanko 2012: 96). Her idea denotes a need to detach the suffering of her body from the shame of her mind by means of ceding her body to abuse in an attempt to achieve mental and emotional ease.

Morayo's normalization of shame within the private domain echoes how Nigerians ultimately came to accept conflicts and acts of public violence, such as the wave of armed robberies, as part of their lives (Aderinto 2018: 264). To avoid further and more brutal violence, very much like Morayo, in the 1980s Nigerian citizens learned to comply with the robbers' wishes (Aderinto 2018: 264). The novel shows how neighbors packed money and belongings, handing them over to the robbers on the terms they specified (Kilanko 2012: 67). The notion of being made a stranger as a result of the imposition of affects also applies to Nigerians, as they progressively became apathetic before the coups and counter-coups of a country which was betraying them instead of reciprocating their hope that the 1960 independence from the British Empire would bring a better future (Aderinto 2018: 263).

Unfortunately, apathy and alienation do not bring ease but rather perpetuate the pain and shame caused by forced intimacy. In Morayo's case, the lethargy of her body leads to what she refers to as "silent screams in [her] head" (Kilanko 2012: 82) which provoke her first act of rebellion. This occurs when she decides to tell her family about the sexual abuse after having an abortion (81). She describes this moment with a combination of relief, indifference, and remorse:

> my voice rang out clearly in the silence: "Bros T has been coming to my room at night". […] I exhaled, sitting back in my chair. Mummy's eyes filled with tears. […] While [Daddy's] face gave nothing away, his trembling hands told a different story. [Mummy] laid her hand on Daddy's arm, silently pleading with him. (82-83)

Such "silent screams" in her head are arguably the spark that incites agency for her liberating transformation. Her indignation and exasperation can be perceived as negative emotions growing inside her as a result of the injustices she experiences. Humiliation progressively mutates into disappointment and rage towards her father, who shows no emotions, and her mother, who clearly "pleads for her nephew" (Kilanko 2012: 84), Bros T, and who instead of consoling her daughter is worried about personal discredit.

Her parents perpetuate shame with a behavior which recalls the political landscape of Nigeria. This situation corresponds with Idowu's claim that the problem of alienation experienced by Nigerian citizens is a consequence of the absence of democracy in the country (1999: 34). Within the context of the family, Morayo's parents become dictators passing moral judgments and customary laws in the form of tales told to Morayo, impeding a democratic interchange of emotions and feelings through dialog within the household, this being a metaphor of Nigeria. As a result of her parents' disappointing reaction, Morayo appears to be condemned to endure the abuses that Nigeria suffered until the turn of the century. Yet, her Aunty Morenike shall appear as a figure of hope that helps Morayo to develop what I will define as 'affective resilience'. This change will constitute my focus of attention in the following section, as I analyze Morayo's shame turning into emancipatory anger against national abuse.

3. Towards Emancipation: Anger as a Catalyst of Affective Resilience

The forced intimacy experienced by Morayo is not only reflected in the wave of armed robberies affecting Nigeria in the 1980s but also in the instances of police brutality and rigged elections endured by Nigerians in the 1990s. In this section, I analyze these public events as defining Morayo's later life. The novel depicts Morayo's involvement in the Ibadan local elections of 1990 as a narrative strategy through which Kilanko tackles the role of women in the public and political sphere during Babangida's rule of Nigeria. I will also pay attention to Morayo's relationship with her Aunty Morenike, who introduces Morayo into the world of Nigerian politics, underlining the interrelation between politics and intimacy. Morenike helps Morayo to understand and discuss the abuses she has endured, to develop what I refer to as affective resilience, and to embrace her anger, an emotion prompting Morayo's emancipation despite the political landscape of the early 1990s. In this respect, I shall argue that, as a result of their having endured manifold forms of forced intimacy in the private sphere, both can critically perceive and oppose national abuses.

The bonding between Morayo and Aunty Morenike starts to unfold when Morenike stops Morayo from committing suicide. Morenike embodies an iconic figure in contemporary Nigerian literature: the emotionally supportive aunt who compensates for parental neglect (Andrade 2011: 97), which can be read as a metaphor of the national neglect examined above. Morenike shares with Morayo that she too has suffered sexual violence (Kilanko 2012: 105). In 1981, Morenike is assaulted by her father's friend when he is taking her to school. Subsequently, she becomes a victim of the Nigerian political system, more specifically of the Ministry of Education, as its regulation "clearly stipulates that pregnant students be automatically expelled" (Kilanko 2012: 113). Morenike decides to continue with her pregnancy despite also being expelled from her house by her father. Morenike stands as an example of how Nigerian laws disadvantage women but also as a badge of feminist success: she manages to complete a degree in English and Sociology and joins the BAOBAB for women's Human Rights association.[7] Through Morenike, Kilanko voices the dedication of this real association "to promote, protect, and defend the rights of women and girls" at a religious, legislative, and customary level ("BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights" 2023). Although her story is briefly sketched in the novel, it is clear that Morenike overcomes forced intimacy and becomes an advocate for women's participation in the political sphere. Her fight for women's rights suggests the character is based on Nigerian female activist Lady O. Morenike Abayomi, who dedicated her life to "social work and the improvement of women" (Falola et al. 2008: 16). As the embodiment of the spirit of female comradeship, Morenike soon becomes Morayo's role model.

It is only with Morenike that Morayo can discuss her inner fears without being judged or silenced. As a woman who has undergone the same affective and sexual violence, Morenike teaches Morayo to detach the emotions and affects of the mind from the sensations and reactions experienced by her body, and convinces Morayo that what Bros T did to her was not her fault:

> "But even though I didn't want him to come to my room, what he did felt good". My chest tightened and I whispered the words tainted by shame. "And I liked it".
> Aunty Morenike sighed. "It still was not your fault".
> "But …"
> "You know how you cry when cutting onions?"
> I nodded. "Yes".
> "It's because the vapours from the onions make you cry, even though you're not sad. Those feelings in your body were just like that: mere physical reactions. It does not mean that you wanted him to do what he did". (Kilanko 2012: 99)

This is how Morenike sparks critical thinking in Morayo, instructing her to question shame and guilt. Considering Morenike's words, it can be argued that, when forced intimacy comes into play, imposed physical emotions are part of the coercion stemming from negative affects. Morenike teaches Morayo to distinguish between the affects which stem from her emotions and the mere physical reactions resulting from forced intimacy. This lesson incorporates a dynamic view of negative affects necessary to change their nature (Braidotti 2009: 52) and to turn pain, shame, and horror into the political activism that shall help Morayo to free herself from the position of victimhood.

As part of this mentorship, in 1990, when Morayo turns sixteen, Morenike asks permission to take her to a political rally at Dugbe Market (Kilanko 2012: 151). In this setting, Morayo learns about the mechanics and schemes of Nigerian elections, which in this case involves the election of the Chairman of Ibadan North West Local Government (153). At this point of the narrative, Kilanko introduces young educated and hardworking Tiamiyu, a man who echoes the actual political figure of Chief Gani Fawehinmi,[8] and who wants to improve the situation for local citizens subjected to the tyranny of Chief Omoniyi. This corrupt figure is considered a "demigod in [Ibadan's] local government" (155). Despite her age, Morayo is already mature enough to understand the control that Chief Omoniyi exerts upon the citizens of West Ibadan:

> his family members and friends held all the top government positions. And his political thugs, notorious for their brutality, were his personal law-enforcement body. Two years earlier, men riding on okadas had gunned down Chief Omoniyi's main opponent. […] The year before, a man who publicly challenged Chief Omoniyi at a local government meeting disappeared. He was never found. (155)

The fear imposed by Chief Omoniyi and his thugs recalls the actions of Babangida, whose ruling of Nigeria between 1985 and 1993 was characterized by an institutionalized corruption which dominated the political sphere, and more specifically Nigeria's oil industry (Bourne 2015: 111). Babangida played with the faith and patience of Nigerian citizens. In 1986, soon after his access to power, he promised that, after a series of regulations, civilian rule would follow in 1990. The date was postponed, and Babangida held on to power until 1993, when he declared the voting results null.

Through her involvement in Tiamiyu's campaign, Morenike teaches Morayo "that women have to be politically active in these issues that affect their lives" (Kilanko 2012: 151) and that women who remain passive before political issues that concern them "will suffer the consequences" (151). In this manner, the novel highlights the connection between intimacy and politics. In line with Giddens' observation that intimacy is intrinsically linked to social rights and obligations (1992: 190), that intimacy is not merely limited to emotional interactions but to "prerogatives and responsibilities that define agendas of practical activity" (190), voting is not merely presented as a right but as a duty. Morenike's engagement in political activism bears witness to the possibility of "depathologiz[ing] negative affects so that they can be seen as a possible resource for political action rather than as its antithesis" (Cvetkovich 2007: 460). By taking Morayo to the market, she further proves that negative affects can be reversed and overcome, albeit not erased, to ultimately become "sites of publicity and community formation" (460).

Morenike's lessons and their involvement in the local elections recall that Babangida's regime was the scenario for "marginal numerical gains for women" (Soetan 2013: 162). Women's political demands during the late 1980s and 1990s served to win certain social battles; for instance, the Ministry for Women's Affairs was founded during the 1990s (Sandals 2011: 121). In 1985, the Nigerian First Lady, Maryam Babangida, promoted the creation of women's associations to participate in the public sphere (Soetan 2013: 162). Yet, these advancements were propagandistic and tokenistic, for Babangida's "regime controlled the extent to which women's associations and other groups could participate in the public sphere" (162). Very frequently, it was upper-class women such as the wives of army officers or Mrs. Babangida herself who mostly benefited from such advancements (162). Against this political background, despite their feminist advancements, Morenike and Morayo are victims of the rigged local elections in which extortion and briberies triumph (Kilanko 2012: 155). Her mother refuses to vote, claiming that "after all, what difference will [her] voting make anyway? Everybody knows these elections are always rigged" (153). When election day comes, Chief Omoniyi takes advantage of his fellow citizens' privations and neediness, bribing them with food. Witnessing this injustice, Morayo wonders

> if the food was a fair exchange for leaky primary schools, unsafe roads, and dry taps. Even we children knew that the money allocated for these programs and services went towards maintaining Chief Omoniyi's harem of women and sending his children to the top schools in the United Kingdom and the United States. (175)

This reflection bears witness to Morayo's impotence before what is clearly an act of forced intimacy in the political terrain. Unfortunately, her progressive gaining of critical thinking as she overcomes forced intimacy does not extend to the national sphere, for her fellow citizens are easily bribed into voting for Chief Omoniyi.

However, Morayo and Morenike fight against the system in spite of their defeat. I consider this a form of resilience deeply intertwined with the affective domain. I propose the term 'affective resilience' to describe resistance against the combined forces of the family and the state as the originators of biographies of violence. This resilience stems from outrage and indignation ultimately prevailing over socially imposed shame. I identify this display of resilience as affective because it is specifically addressed towards rebelling against the forced intimacy which produces negative affects such as shame, hate, and fear. In Morayo's case, the source of such resilience is indignation and anger. By gaining affective resilience, Morayo overpowers the shame imposed by forced intimacy and the agents of customary law. The development of this form of resilience originates from Morayo's fighting four types of abuse: an abusive environment, being treated as an adult while she is a child, the abuse of her body, and being forced to develop a double self (Namasivayam and Rohimmi 2017: 239).

Despite their affective resilience, Morayo and Morenike are still to endure forced intimacy at the hands of Nigerian military officers. Following the fixed local elections of 1990, in 1991 Morayo and Morenike find themselves involved in an episode of police brutality. When heading to the Bodija Market they encounter the truck of the so-called Operation Finish Them (Kilanko 2012: 187). The truck is described as belonging to a joint police-military task force that "had the mandate to deal with the rampant armed-robbery incidents" but "under the pretext of ridding the streets of prostitutes abducted young girls in broad daylight" to sexually abuse and kill them (187). Needless to say, this is a clear reference to the aforementioned Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), set up by Babangida. Ironically, his attempt to solve the armed robberies turned into an excuse for the forces of the state to further violate the rights of Nigerian citizens, especially women. Upon seeing the truck, Morayo recalls

> the stories of missing girls and women, abducted at gunpoint from the roadsides. […] There were whispers of gang rapes at the barracks and mutilated bodies found in nearby bushes like unwanted trash. Frantic relatives of those who survived then had to pay exorbitant amounts of money to bail out victims held on charges of prostitution! (187)

Morenike and Morayo try to escape, but Morenike falls and an officer ultimately spots her. The officer orders Aunty Morenike to enter the truck, but she refuses to do so, even after being threatened with a gun. With this brave act, Morenike proves her affective resilience before military forces. Having endured the violation of her body in the private sphere, she refuses to allow the forces of the nation to impose forced intimacy upon her. This is clearly stated by Morayo when she explains that "Aunty Morenike would rather die by the roadside than allow the men carry her off" (Kilanko 2012: 189). Fortunately, the officer compelling Morenike to enter the truck is called by a superior and must leave the road in haste. This becomes yet another lesson for Morayo who, aware of the possibility of encountering the truck again, promises herself that "if this happened again, like Aunty Morenike [she] would choose to die by the roadside" (191). Morenike's brave reaction before the Operation Finish Them truck constitutes Kilanko's ultimate lesson of affective and feminist resilience.

The Operation Finish Them is deployed by Kilanko to once again denounce an unresolved problem in contemporary Nigeria, that of Nigerians to compel the government to dissolve the SARS. This can be read as a marker of state failure when it comes to "intra-societal violence" (Hill 2012: 15), that is the violence exerted by those in positions of power towards others who are dependent upon them. The implication is that the state has been unable to stop such violence, which turns into a failure "to promote human flourishing" (16). These instances of failure are caused by a lack of intent on the government's behalf, as "it is failure through neglect, failure through negligence, failure through disregard rather than of an inability to control" (16). The intra-societal violence condemned in the novel evinces the failure of military rulers to provide security to the nation, first in the manifestly corrupt behavior of the national police forces, and secondly in their refusal to address criminal issues by failing to invest in "education, social service, and a concerned war against corruption" (Aderinto 2018: 264). What predominates at all levels are instances of "petty corruption in the form of extortion that occur [...] among and within the rank and file of the force" (Okoosi-Simbine 2011: 164).

Her truncated hopes to help improve Nigeria's political system at a local level, together with this episode of intra-societal violence, make Morayo realize that the shame she once felt had "turned to anger" (Kilanko 2012: 229). Ahmed refers to anger as a force of feminist empowerment, even in moments in which we are not capable of articulating what we are angry about (2014: 176). Although, as a child, Morayo initially does not understand the situation of forced intimacy she is experiencing, she becomes progressively aware of what she is angry about: her family as supporters of the system of abuse that oppresses her. However, although anger "creates an object, it also is not simply directed against an object, but becomes a response to the world" (Ahmed 2014: 176). In other words, even if Morayo's family becomes the object of her anger, it is Nigerian customary laws and the corrupt social and political system that her anger is directed at. This becomes evident after the Operation Finish Them situation. After this episode, Morayo decides to leave Ibadan and move to Lagos to enroll in a degree course and become independent. Despite the triumph of affective resilience displayed by Morenike, Morayo is utterly disappointed and angry at Nigeria:

> what changed for me was the anger —a smouldering anger that woke up with me in the morning and stayed with me late into the night. Before our roadside encounter, I had told myself countless times that when I became an adult I would be safer, stronger. Just like my Aunty Morenike. But it seemed as if age or education made little difference. Now when I walked out of the house, I often wondered if I would come back. (Kilanko 2012: 193-194)

At this point in her life, Morayo suddenly realizes that education and age do not guarantee women's safety, and that the rudeness of those in public positions of power can at any time destroy and defeat private stability. Morayo's wrath can be read as metaphorically representing that of Nigerians in the 1990s as a result of abuses exerted by the army and the police. Instances of citizens confronting such abuses can be traced to 1999 in Bayelsa State, when the military killed 2,483 citizens after twelve members of the police force had been killed by "armed gangs clamoring for resource control" (Hassan 2018: 461). A similar situation occurred in Benue State in 2001 when over 200 people were killed in retaliation for the death of nineteen soldiers at the hands of armed gangs (461).

Morayo's expression of her inner fury echoes Chimamanda N. Adichie's words in "We Should All Be Feminist", where she emphasizes her indignation before the fact that gender constructs have not evolved in Nigeria: "anger has a long history of bringing about positive change, but in addition to being angry I am also hopeful" (Adichie 2012). Aunty Morenike notices Morayo's unmeasured ire and prevents her "unchecked anger" from "only erod[ing] self-control" (Kilanko 2012: 197) before the young woman departs to Lagos to become an independent university student. This statement reminds readers of the "problematic distinction between anger and reason" (Ahmed 2014: 177). For anger may catalyze self-emancipation, but can at times blind reason. Yet, with Morenike's wise help, Morayo leaves Ibadan for Lagos to start her new life, away from her family. Anger thus serves as an emancipatory device, a sign of affective resilience against intra-societal violence and its extension to the private sphere. Morayo's triumph in leaving her family behind after developing affective resilience bears witness to Ahmed's claim that "anger is creative; it works to create a language with which to respond to that which one is against, whereby 'the what' is renamed, and brought into a feminist world" (Ahmed 2014: 176). Morayo has learned to fight against the indoctrination of keeping secrets, against victim shaming, and against surrendering before political thugs. These learnings are key for her in Lagos, where she is reunited with Kachi, her first love. Thanks to Morenike, Morayo develops the emotional strategies necessary to establish a healthy affective relationship with Kachi, whom she ultimately marries. Although her relationship with Kachi does not constitute the focus of this paper, it is still relevant to mention that, as a result of her affective resilience, Morayo is capable of establishing a positive affective relationship despite the traumas of her childhood and adolescence. Unfortunately, Kilanko does not transfer such a positive outcome to the body of the nation. The annulment of the democratic elections in 1993 immerses Nigeria in yet another period of military rule until 1999. Yet, as an adult woman, Morayo develops the skills necessary to overcome the multiple episodes of forced intimacy that she shall continue to endure at a public level, this time stemming from the military system and the state forces.

4. Conclusion

Daughters Who Walk this Path reflects upon sexual violence against women, police brutality, and rigged elections as unresolved episodes of forced intimacy in Nigeria's history. Focusing on the socio-political events taking place in Nigeria from the 1980s to the mid-1990s, I have traced Morayo's and Morenike's biographies of violence, which stand as a metaphor of Nigerians enduring intra-societal violence. Anger becomes a catalyst for emancipation for Morayo, who after suffering forced intimacy in the private sphere develops a sense of critical thinking that helps her cope with abuses in the Nigerian public domain. Hence, the novel shows that she has learned to cope with the consequences of being abused in the same manner in which she learns to critically approach the faults in the governmental management of infrastructure and public services.

Although Morayo's development is presented as a hopeful message for affective resilience in the form of feminist resistance, this does not translate into a synonym for Nigerian citizens rebelling against authority. This idea is further conveyed in Kilanko's tackling of unresolved issues in the Nigerian political sphere such as ongoing police brutality, armed robberies, the inefficiency of NEPA, and political bribery. In this manner, *Daughters Who Walk this Path* offers hope for the personal development of Nigerian citizens by introducing the positive progression of an abused female character in spite of the ongoing problems in the Nigerian public sphere.

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Notes

1. The Special Anti-Robbery Squad was created in 1992 by Ibrahim Babangida. Since its creation, the squad "has been accused of harassing and physically abusing thousands of civilians" ("Nigeria's SARS" 2020).

2. These decades were overshadowed by "oil bust, economic collapse, devaluation of the currency, the closing of Nigerian publishing houses and the evaporation of book markets [which] exacerbated the country's political troubles" (Hewett 2005: 74). The year 1979 saw the birth of a rather short Second Republic (1979-1983) led by Shehu Shagari, after whom two dictators —Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985) and Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993)— overthrew the government. The 1980s were also marked by a deep economic crisis which "roared heavily in the 1990s" (Aderinto 2018: 265). Five different Heads of State ruled Nigeria during the nineties, thus bearing witness to the instability of the government.

3. As a sociological study carried out among Nigerian adolescents in 2017 reveals, sampled women report their age of sexual debut to be between ten and fifteen years old (Envuladu et al. 2017: 2). Sadly enough, a high number of females, especially those out of school, reported having been forced to have sex by older men "including family members" (3).

4. Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010) and Ayọ̀bámi Adébáyọ̀'s *Stay with Me* (2017) introduce burglaries as a metaphor for national chaos, focusing on armed robberies as a source and/or context for forced intimacy, sexual or otherwise.

5. Nigeria's National Electric Power Authority is known as NEPA.

6. This very same strategy of casually introducing NEPA's blackouts in the daily lives of fictional characters can be found in contemporary Nigerian works such as Noo Saro-Wiwa's *Looking for Transwonderland*: *Travels in Nigeria* (2012); Chibundu Onuzo's *Welcome to Lagos* (2017); Chimamanda N. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003); and Chinelo Okparanta's "Runs Girl" and "Wahala!" included in the collection of short stories *Happiness Like Water* (2013).

7 "BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights is a not for profit, non-governmental women's human rights organization that is committed to the promotion and protection of rights of women and girls under the three parallel systems of law in Nigeria: namely customary, statutory, and religious laws" ("BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights" 2023).

8. Chief Gani Fawehinmi (1938-2009) was a man "who worked for social justice and fundamental human rights. He want[ed] to bring a positive change in the lives of masses who are victims of institutional corruption" (Dodhy 2017b: 94).

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"SOME KIND OF PEACE WILL FOLLOW": ARCHIVISM AND ANARCHIVISM IN SHAKESPEAREAN APPROPRIATIONS IN *ROME* (HELLER, MACDONALD AND MILIUS 2005-2007)

"ALGÚN TIPO DE PAZ VENDRÁ DESPUÉS": ARCHIVISMO Y ANARCHIVISMO EN LAS APROPIACIONES SHAKESPEARIANAS EN *ROME* (HELLER, MACDONALD AND MILIUS 2005-2007)

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Abstract

This article explores the appropriation of Shakespeare's works in *Rome* (Heller, MacDonald and Milius 2005-2007). Drawing on archive theory, it looks into the use of Shakespeare's archive in this TV series by examining gender variables. The results of this research show that the traces of Shakespeare's archive in *Rome* form different assemblages for female and male characters. This fact reflects the cultural hierarchies of the TV seriality of the period in which *Rome* was aired. Nonetheless, the appropriations of different Shakespearean dramatic genres —mainly tragedy and romance— raise transformative possibilities for those gender politics in *Rome*'s narrative world.

Keywords: archive, anarchivism, trace, tragedy, romance.

Resumen

En este artículo se explora la apropiación de las obras de Shakespeare en *Rome* (Heller, MacDonald and Milius 2005-2007). Sirviéndonos de la teoría del archivo, abordamos la utilización del archivo de Shakespeare en esta serie televisiva prestando atención a variables de género. Los resultados de esta investigación muestran que las huellas del archivo de Shakespeare en *Rome* forman diferentes ensamblajes para personajes femeninos y masculinos. Estos reflejan las jerarquías culturales de la serialidad televisiva del periodo en que *Rome* se emitió. No obstante, las apropiaciones de diferentes géneros dramáticos shakespearianos —principalmente, la tragedia y el romance— plantean posibilidades transformadoras en lo tocante a estas políticas de género en el mundo narrativo de *Rome*.

Palabras clave: archivo, anarchivismo, huella, tragedia, romance.

1. Introduction

This article explores the role of Shakespeare's archive in strengthening the egalitarianism attributed to the TV series *Rome* (Heller, MacDonald and Milius 2005-2007).[1] *Rome*'s first season concluded with the assassination of Julius Caesar (Ciarán Hinds), a pivotal point in Shakespeare's eponymous tragedy. The tyrannicide in *Rome* was tied to the death of a plebeian: Niobe (Indira Varma), wife of the veteran Lucius Vorenus (Kevin McKidd). In this last episode (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 12), Calpurnia (Haydn Gwyne) predicted Caesar's death, in a reformulation of her dream.[2] Also, Niobe foresaw disaster for her family. The fulfilments of both prophecies were, therefore, intertwined. En route to the Senate, Vorenus was told Niobe had been unfaithful while he was at war. Without Vorenus' protection, Caesar was unprotected and murdered. In exchange for her out-of-wedlock son's life, Niobe killed herself in front of her husband. This intertwining was proof that "the Plebeians [were] given at least as much attention as the Patricians" (Bataille 2009: 230). This set the premise for series two: Vorenus was haunted by Caesar and, intensely, by Niobe's memory. He sought redemption and struggled to reunite and be reconciled with his children. *Rome*'s was, at first sight, predominantly inter-connected to the Roman tragedies. Yet, after the end of season one, a complex interplay of Shakespearean genres —tragedy and romance— was revealed.

The Shakespeare archive in *Rome* is formed by Shakespearean traces. A 'trace' is "some sort of linguistic, cultural, or thematic residue, an absence or exile" (Iyengar 2023: 184).[3] The Shakespeare archive can be considered as "the imagined totality of playbooks, documents, versions, individual variants, comments, adaptations, and other preservable records that underwrite the transmission of Shakespeare's texts" (Galey 2014: 3). This archive also includes traces of Shakespeare's screen adaptations (Guneratne 2016) and performance props (Hodgdon 2016). It inspires performance practice (Buchanan 2020) and interpretation of the plays (Burt 2017). In the particular case of *Rome*, Shakespeare's assembled traces mobilize unexpected meanings.

However, the part played by the Shakespeare archive in *Rome* is ambivalent. As the story goes, *Rome*'s vision of society was "moulded by democratic thought, something that [could] hardly be expected of Shakespeare" (Bataille 2008: 223). The series took issue with the legacy of *Julius Caesar* by individuating the Roman mob and devaluing the power of rhetoric, a distinctive weapon used by the elites in Shakespeare's tragedy (Lockett 2010: 107-111). But, while *Rome*'s egalitarianism and the restorative power attributed to Shakespeare seem natural allies, it is misguided "to assume that the adaptational process is necessarily progressive or that it can easily contemporize Shakespeare" (Henderson and O'Neill 2022: 6). In fact, "adaptational processes can seek to close off as well as open up new ways of thinking (and it can do both —and often does— in different ways in the same work)" (Lanier 2014: 33). Shakespearean traces provided *Rome*'s plot and characters with narrative depth and psychological complexity, but the reparative appropriations of Shakespeare in this TV series predominantly favored male characters. This article shows that the Shakespeare archive in *Rome* serves characters differently on the basis of gender. As the series progresses, there is a shift in this politics —also reflected in the Shakespeare archive— which sets the basis for social change in the story.

2. *Rome* and Shakespeare

Scholars and practitioners have identified and exploited the intertextual connections between Shakespeare and *Rome*. Executive Producer Jonathan Stamp said that the series creatives wanted to avoid the classical legacy that haunted popular memories of Rome.[4] Stamp was referring both to Shakespeare and to the epic film and TV traditions that preceded *Rome*. Yet, Sylvaine Bataille claimed that "the ghost of Shakespeare" was not always relegated to the wings, since "he more often than not show[ed] up on the stage" (2008: 229). Bataille identified Shakespearean scenes —e.g. the forum scene, in which Shakespearean dialogues or situations were paraphrased, parodied, rethought or versioned (2008: 231-238). She also listed *Rome*'s non-verbal allusions to Shakespeare's works. Such non-verbal Shakespearean allusions —to plot, characterization, metaphors, tone, theatricality, etc.— are recurrent in contemporary popular productions of Shakespeare (Lanier 2022: 50). Traces of the Shakespeare performance archive were discerned in *Rome*. For instance, Lindsay Marshall's boyish and soldierly characterization recalled stage characterizations of Cleopatra (Bataille 2008: 241). Visual citations from Joseph Mankiewicz's and Stuart Burge's films were identified.[5] *Rome* inspired Lucy Bailey's RSC Courtyard Theatre production of *Julius Caesar* (2009), which enriched the ongoing dialogue between Shakespearean series and stage performances.[6]

The Roman Plays are not the only Shakespearean sources of *Rome*. As observed in other series —e.g. *Westworld* or *Succession*— *Rome*'s Shakespearean themes and dramaturgic strategies extend to more than one play (Bronfen 2020: 12; Wald 2020: 2). The Newsreader (Ian McNeice) was compared to Shakespeare's choruses in the histories and comedies (Bataille 2008: 236). Lockett saw, in *Rome*'s "Falstaffian history", a "fictional supplement […] to echo and parody the events of the actual history —such as the interaction between Hal and Falstaff [parodying] the relationship between Hal and his father" (2010: 105). According to Monique L. Pittman, *Rome* appropriated Shakespeare's acting metaphor, perennial in the author's oeuvre, "as a vehicle for understanding power and history, and the limits of any attempt to adapt a text and tell the fiction of the history itself" (2010: 209-210).

However, *Rome*'s cultural substrata failed to impress all critics. Alessandra Stanley argued that, despite its "arresting scenes", *Rome* did "not open a new frontier in HBO's empire" (2005). Robert Lloyd thought that, "like its HBO slate-mate *Deadwood*", *Rome* attempted "to re-create the social order and prejudices of a gone time in a way that resonate[d] with and play[ed] against our own without exactly judging it" (2007). *Rome*'s gender imbalances and indulgence of male violence were attributed to the scriptwriters' male-chauvinism (Press 2005: 50). The series was described as an upholder of patriarchal ideals and an enemy of feminist ideals (Peers 2009: iii). Although the success of several series —*Mad Men*, *The Wire*, *Breaking Bad*, etc.— had been due to their male-centric approach (Cascajosa-Virino 2016: 173), the masculine ethos of complex TV series was discredited by the time *Rome* ended. HBO's male-chauvinistic clichés were scorned by academics (Laverette, Ott and Buckley 2008: 6-7); it was argued that showrunners' behaviors had "mirrored [those] of the macho antiheroes in their dramas" (Press 2019: 10); whereas gender-stereotyping is shown as recurrent in contemporary seriality (Fedele, Planells-de-la-Maza and Rey 2021: 4).

Shakespearean appropriations have been overtly complicit with gender imbalances in TV series such as *Sons of Anarchy* and *Deadwood* (Burzynska 2017: 272; Ronnenberg 2018: 103). According to Pittman, *Rome* also indulged in the misrepresentations of race often seen in Shakespearean performance (2010: 230). Additionally, Pittman perceives a middle-class bias in the representation of plebeians in *Rome* (2010: 212). Lockett (2010: 104) and Huertas-Martín (2019: 44) have suggested that the treatment of women in *Rome* altered Shakespeare's masculine focus in the Roman Plays. However, it is *Rome*'s selective use of the Shakespeare archive that is detrimental to female characters. *Rome*'s politics can be inscribed in post-feminist ideas which became hegemonic in the early 2000s (Raucci 2015: 114). According to Angela McRobbie, post-feminism suggests that equality has already been achieved and, therefore, feminism is "a spent force" (2004: 255). This post-feminist turn inspired some exciting Shakespearean adaptations such as *Mean Girls* (Waters 2004), in which *Julius Caesar* was recast as a high school film.[7] In the words of Ramona Wray, films such as *Much Ado About Nothing* (Percival 2005) and *Taming of the Shrew* (Richards 2005) raised awareness "of the ways in which post-feminist understanding of gender and genre push[ed] into productive proximity early modern constructions of 'woman' and twenty-first-century reflections upon love, marriage and heterosexual relations" (2006: 186). In *Rome*, Shakespearean traces shift from post-feminism towards a more nuanced understanding of gender relations.

3. From Archivism to Anarchivism

The currency of Shakespeare's works in popular culture facilitates their identification without specific textual references. Post-textual Shakespearean adaptations are, in fact, "capable of much wider use in the marketplace" than canonical Shakespearean adaptations (Lanier 2011: 150). Part of the excitement of serial Shakespeares —i.e. series in some way based on Shakespeare— has to do with the viewers' discoveries of the Shakespearean wealth that, following Stephen O'Neill, is in TV more present than could be seen at first glance (2021: 3). Of the terms that explain Shakespeare in series —"cross-mapping" (Bronfen 2020), "returns" (Wald 2020), "slingshot" (Wilson 2020)— Jason Mittell's "drilling" seems the fittest, as serial viewers mine "to discover something that is already there, buried beneath the surface" (2015: 289). In continuity with Mittell's metaphor, archive theory supplies the theoretical framework to discuss this Shakespearean wealth in series.

Michel Foucault used "archaeology" and "archive" as metaphors to explain dispersions of textual units (2002: 64-65) with which archives are constructed. These units are, for Foucault, reactivated, rewritten or transferred across fields of application. This results, he continues, in new discursive formations (66-85). I employed Foucault's lens in my analysis of *Sons of Anarchy*, in which activations of the *Hamlet* archive —beyond Shakespeare's source text— were identified (Huertas-Martín 2022). As the conclusion, *Sons of Anarchy* challenged patriarchy with a "self-derogatory, yet somewhat self-affirming epitaph" (2022: 54). For an analysis of *Rome*, this framework has been enriched with an anarchivist lens that has taken into account the gender-based hierarchies within subaltern groups which, in the series, are associated to specific uses of Shakespearean traces.

Andrés Maximiliano Tello defines anarchivism as "assemblages of bodies, affects and technologies that *alter* the registers of identities, positions and functions labelled in the social machine that distributes the general production of the body

[…] on the surface of inscription that we call reality" (2018: 8, my translation, emphasis added).[8] Challenging the hegemony of institutional recording technologies, routines and affects, Tello proposes the use of *hypomenmata* (notebooks) to appropriate archival technologies. Note-taking cultivates and trains the self, who registers what she/he hears, reads or thinks, not for reproductive but for self-developing purposes (275-276). Such writing involves selecting, cutting and assembling inscriptions from textual input. Registered notes form assemblages; assemblages allow the modification of memory registers. This practice leads to ethical transformations of the self, and may produce new archival regimes. Socio-political transformations are plausible if, Tello argues, producers collaborate to create a better version of the established social archive (284). Considering the Shakespeare archive "a public object" offering "a progressive politics in allowing anyone who deems himself or herself addressed by the texts" (Albanese 2010: 9), I will explore the anarchivist reconfigurations found in the Shakespearian archive of *Rome*.

4. Masculine Anarchivism

Unlike Shakespeare's Roman plays, *Rome* elevates the plebeians, but predominantly grants dignity to male citizens. The Pilot begins showing Caesar laurelled in close-up as a voice-over summarizes anxieties over his leadership: "Caesar stands with the common people. A man like that —an aristocrat with soldiers, money and the love of the people— might make himself king" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 18). The clamor that follows echoes that offstage popular uproar heard by Brutus and Cassius in the first act of *Julius Caesar* (1.2.79-80, 1.2.131). This close-up of Caesar is followed by another one showing Vorenus. The suggested equation between the two characters symbolizes the equal claims to sovereignty of Caesar and Vorenus, an anecdotal character —with Titus Pullo (Ray Stevens)— in *Gallic Wars* (Caesar V.XLIV: 129-130). Later on, the road accident that almost costs Young Lucius his life means Cicero's warning to Brutus and Cassius on the Caesarian alliance never reaches its destination (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 12). Young Lucius alters the course of history and Vorena the Younger makes a parchment crown for him, a gesture that confirms the series' elevation of the male commoners to suzerainty (Figure 1).

Figure 1. "Philippi" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 18)

The Plebeian advancement in *Rome* goes hand in hand with advancement in plebeian instruction. Contrary to Lockett's suggestion (2010: 108), such an advancement does not take place in *Rome* at the expense of literacy. This aspect re-strengthens parallels between the series and Shakespeare's works. The Globe was inaugurated with *Julius Caesar* in 1599, and Shakespeare's company refused "a certain kind of comedy" by marketing the brand-new theatre as a "playwright's and not an actor's theatre" (Shapiro 2005: 43). Though *Julius Caesar* was a reaffirmation of theatre "as a mass medium", in the Roman Plays it was the writerly character, Octavius, who eventually prevailed (Pennacchia 2019: 338-339). *Rome*'s writerly dimension is, I suggest, deeply Shakespearean. HBO's success was, truly, based on the exhibition of a "tele-literary product that place[d] emphasis on smart writing" (McCabe and Akass 2008: 89). Pullo's command to Young Lucius to "go learn to read of something" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 21) is shown as relevant at a time in which the plebeians at the Aventine are gaining political power. Caesar's slave, Posca (Nicholas Woodeson), is the custodian of Caesar's will and, later, Antony's. It is he —not Antony, as in Shakespeare— who weeps over Caesar's corpse at the capitol and, as suggested, saves Caesar's will (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 13). The political strategy to outmaneuver Brutus is designed by Octavian (Max Pirkis), who orchestrates the coup that leads Antony to the forum scene. This mirrors the dynamics of TV scriptwriting, with the executive producer gathering writers in the room to map season-long arcs, establish benchmarks, goals, narrative structures, outlines of episodes, screenplays and dialogues. This logic emerges during *Rome*'s proscription scene (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 18), modeled on the same scene in *Julius Caesar*. Although Octavian appears as "showrunner", the interventions of Gaius Maecenas (Alex Wyndham) and Posca prove decisive to Octavian as they help justify some of the seemingly necessary killings for the triumvirate to prosper.

In *Rome*, plebeians carry out actions that, in Shakespeare's works, are in the hands of aristocrats. This occurs, for instance, during Pullo and Vorenus's fight across season two, a rambunctious version of Brutus and Cassius's "quarrel scene" in *Julius Caesar* (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 15). Likewise, *Rome*'s Shakespearean appropriations often show a positive regard for aristocrats. Brutus (Tobias Menzies) asks for forgiveness from Janus by becoming baptized (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 15). This citation of the Biblical legacy sustaining Roman history in the epic tradition is redolent of King Harry's atonement on the eve of Agincourt (H5, 4.1.203-257). When informed in "Philippi" that the Caesarians hold nineteen legions against his fourteen, Brutus's speech on the "tide in the affairs of men" (JC, 4.3.216) is replaced with a more decisive one: "If we win, all the more glory for us. And if we are to die, this is as good a place as any. It's in the hands of the gods now" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 18). *Rome*'s creatives reformulated Harry's Agincourt speech: "If we are marked to die, we are enough/ To do our country loss. And if to live,/ The fewer men, the greater share of honour" (H5, 4.3.20-22). When *Rome* was aired, Kenneth Branagh's interpretation in *Henry V* (1989) had already laid out the pattern for a type of war hero which would reappear in *Saving Private Ryan* (Spielberg 1998) and *Band of Brothers* (Spielberg and Hanks 2001), whose influence was noted in *Rome*'s affiliation with the bromance, i.e. "an emotionally intense bond between presumably straight males who demonstrate an openness to intimacy that they neither regard, acknowledge, avow, nor express sexually" (DeAngelis 2014: 1). This hero was "untested, imperfect, and stained but not cynical" (Crowl 2011: 196). In this way, *Rome*'s anarchivist practice replaced Shakespeare's Brutus's political idealism for *Rome*'s Brutus's Harry-like zest.

5. Feminine Archive

Rome's uses of Shakespearean traces favor male aristocrats and plebeians, but women do not obtain an equal share in this benefit. Timon (Lee Boardman), Atia's Jewish bodyguard, dreams of the bliss of sharing his aristocratic mistress' bed. When she (Polly Walker) tells him that "horseshit suits [him] better" than the perfume he uses to seduce her (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 3), like Nick Bottom's, Timon's fantasy vanishes. Scriptwriters, nonetheless, turned Timon's disappointment into an opportunity to glorify masculinity. Ordered by Atia, he tortures Servilia (Lindsay Duncan). The camera focuses on his struggle between allegiance to Atia and pity for Servilia as shots presenting the tortured Servilia are alternated with shots presenting the punisher, Timon, who resents the fulfillment of his duty. *Rome*'s creatives decided that Timon was too decent to continue his murderous treatment of Servilia. His decision to confront Atia is precedented in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, in which a servant challenges Cornwall to protect the blinded Gloucester (3.7.71-77). Unlike Shakespeare's servant, Timon overcomes his domina, whose neck he grabs declaring: "I am not an animal! I am not a fucking animal!" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 16; see Figure 2). Marketed as faithful to historical reality, *Rome*'s vindication of male dignity became complicit with what has been identified as the male-chauvinism of contemporary screen fiction, plagued with pleasure at beaten feminine bodies, sex as aggression, high praise for male suffering, humorous portrayals of rape, and justifications of violence (see Aguilar-Carrasco 2010).

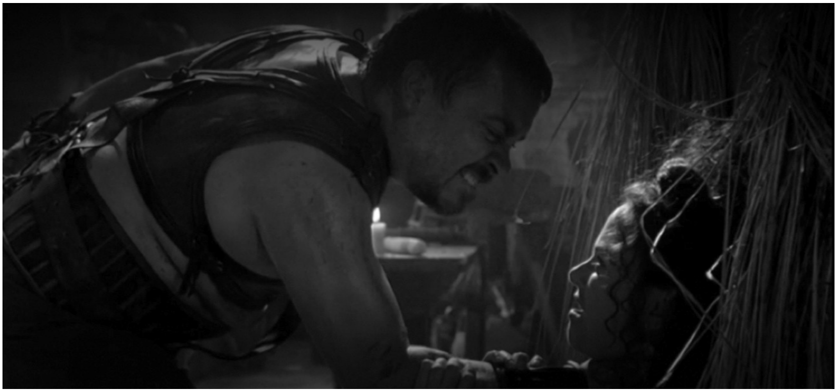

Figure 2. "Testudo et Lepus" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 16)

It may be argued that Shakespeare's archive is, in *Rome*, made part of this premise, particularly with regards to plebeian and racialized women. The license to rape a shepherdess granted to Antony (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 2) reflects the culture in *Henry V* (3.4.5-43) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1-7), which depicts rape as inevitable in war. Gaia (Zuleikha Robinson) and Eirene's (Chiara Mastalli) quarrel for Titus Pullo is not based on Shakespearean precedents, but it is founded on divides of race, class, gender and status, which were intensified in Medieval and Modern European culture.[9] Lavinia's dismissal of Tamora is, similarly, based on the latter's preference for Aaron the Moor, pejoratively described as "experiments" (Tit, 2.2.69). This is, in *Rome*, paralleled by fair Eirene's despotism over her darker servant Gaia, who responds, like Tamora, by killing her female rival. In *Titus Andronicus*, Lavinia is buried in her family's mausoleum (5.3.190-193) and the "ravenous tiger, Tamora" is allowed no "funeral rite, nor man in mourning weed,/ No mournful bell", but is thrown "forth to beasts and birds of prey" (5.3.192-197). Eirene is buried in an open field to honor her ancestors (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 20); the marked Gaia is, unburied, thrown into a ditch (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 21; see Figure 3). Octavian's encounter with a foreign prostitute, Egeria (Francesca Fowler), echoes and distorts Lysimachus's encounter with Marina in *Pericles*. In Shakespeare's play, the mythical and hagiographical echoes of the name Egeria match the aura attached to Marina's devotion, wisdom and noble ascendancy (4.5.115-116). However, Egeria's inarticulateness does not move Octavian the way Marina's speech moves Lysimachus; the sadistic Octavian commands Egeria to prostrate herself. Women-wise, *Rome* embraces what is marketed by HBO/BBC as the real Roman past, not the utopia prevailing in Shakespeare's romance.

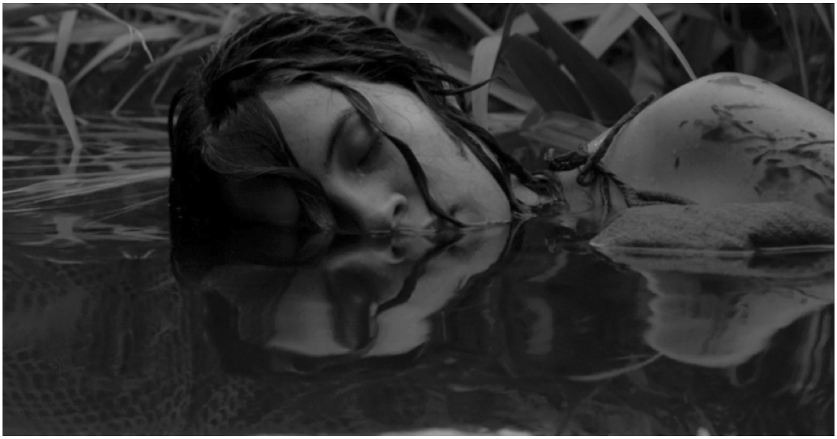

Figure 3. "Deus Impeditio Esuritori Nullus" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 21)

Rome's uses of Shakespearean traces are equally unfair with aristocratic women. According to Coppélia Kahn, Lucrece's suicide in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* marks the rise of the Republic (1997: 27). The anesthetization of Lucrece's death follows, according to Kahn, the coded logics of patriarchy (1997: 28). In

Rome, Servilia's suicide marks the end of the Republic, but it also follows coded logics of patriarchy. For Peers, Servilia's death as an isolated and pitied figure contrasts with the dignity of Pullo and Vorenus's brotherly fight in the arena (2009: 38-44). It is tempting, though, to think of Lindsay Duncan's Servilia as an expansion from her previous participation as Portia in Peter Gill's *Julius Caesar* (Riverside Studios, London, 1980).[10] *Rome* erases Portia, but Servilia —not Cassius— writes the pamphlets supporting Brutus; she leads with Brutus and advises against the death of Antony (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 12). Brutus's echo of Caesar's words ("Et tu, Brute?") —paraphrased as "You too, mother?" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 12)— addressed to Servilia, stresses, as Bataille says, the creatives' playfulness with Shakespeare (2008: 235). Also, it emphasizes Portia's emulation of Brutus insofar as she undertakes actions that, in Shakespeare's play, correspond to him. Convincingly, Bataille compared Servilia and Lady Macbeth: like Macbeth, Brutus in *Rome* is hesitant and unready; like Lady Macbeth, Servilia pushes her male ally into action, points at his cowardice and stops him from shuddering as he washes his hands after the killing (2008: 242-243; see Figure 4). Yet, Shakespeare's female characters are of little use in empowering the women of *Rome*.

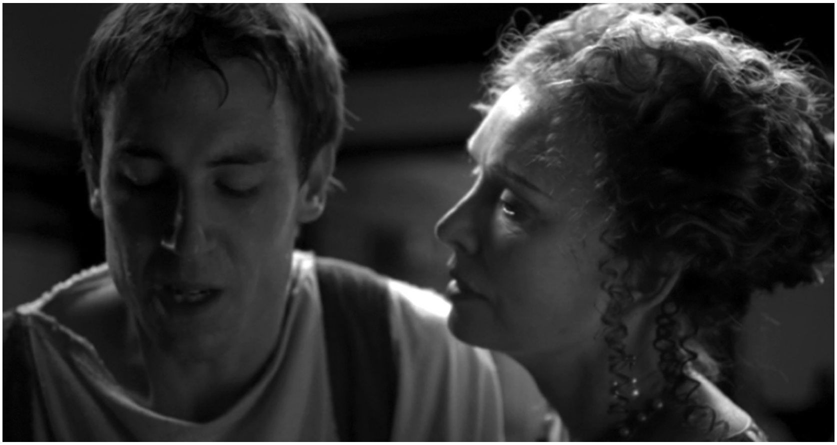

Figure 4. "Passover" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 13)

The equating of Lady Macbeth, one of Shakespeare's loneliest characters, with Servilia, a politically active historical character, ends up hurting the latter's status as a character in *Rome*. Like Lady Macbeth, *Rome*'s Servilia dies by her own hand. Yet, Servilia, at this stage of Roman history, is known for having worked to restore the dignity of her family (Syme 1939: 69). As Susan Treggiari points out, Servilia had powerful allies; she may have been a mediator between the Caesarians and the liberators; her initial siding with Caesar may have been strategic, not sentimental (2019: 160). It has not been proven that she knew about the conspiracy, let alone taken any part in it out of resentment (182). She commanded authority even amongst the likes of Cicero (192), and she survived Brutus. Octavius and his allies perhaps saw advantages in cultivating her friendship because of her personality, her contacts and her experience (216). The astute historical Servilia has little to do with *Rome*'s appealing but self-destructive character.

Rome's selective uses of Shakespeare's archive also undermine Atia's potential as a character. Due to their parallels —mainly her political aspirations and liaisons with Antony— critics suggest Fulvia was a model for Atia.[11] But, unlike Atia Balba, Fulvia was sufficiently audacious to successfully lead an army against Octavian at Praeneste (41-40 BC). In *Rome*, Atia makes Antony pay for his refusal to meet her in Egypt; yet, her revenge on Antony is countered by her final submission to Octavian. Fulvia is, in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, depicted as a domineering wife and a remarkable leader, more than a match for Octavius, mourned and betrayed by Antony, who acknowledges having desired her death —"There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it" (1.2.129). Unlike Fulvia, Atia survives but her body, like Servilia's, is "shown to be used and abused, as the viewer witnesses the desexualization of these main female protagonists" (Augoustakys 2015: 117). At *Rome*'s conclusion, "the women debate varied meanings of the battle" of Actium, challenging Octavian and Livia's official interpretation (Pittman 2010: 223). But this seems too scholastic for Fulvia —a significant erasure— who, in Shakespeare, rises —although dead, a soul-stirring specter— above her political rivals and inconstant allies. Other Shakespearean traces were detrimental to Atia. The triangle formed by Octavian, Atia and Antony mirrors that of Hamlet, Gertrude and Claudius. Octavian's refusal to acknowledge Antony as family (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 14) echoes Hamlet's reluctance to acknowledge Claudius. His disgust for Atia's attraction to his rival parallels the Danish Prince's scorn at Gertrude's love for her brother-in-law. By turning a Fulvia-like character into Octavian's mother, her political ambitions were subordinated to the young Caesar's, her role reduced to that of pawn amidst male rivalry.

All these aspects lead me to conclude that some opportunities to use Shakespeare to strengthen feminine agency were dismissed in *Rome*. Atia's first farewell —"May fortune smile on you" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 1)— can be considered as a reformulation of the King's blessing of Bertram and Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*: "Good fortune and the favour of the King/ Smile upon this contract" (2.3.169-170). For Bataille, the value of this allusion is merely that of an archaic turn of phrase (2008: 235). Nonetheless, in *Rome* Octavia (Kerry Condon) and Marcus Agrippa (Allen Leech) become lovers. This suggests an inter-class alliance similar to the one established in *All's Well That Ends Well* resulting from feminine volition. However, Octavia and Agrippa are tragically separated by Antony and Octavian's agreement to become in-laws (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 19). This inter-class alliance is short-lived due to Agrippa's incapacity to challenge Octavian. Uses of Shakespeare's archive for feminine utopianism are defined by hints of what may have happened if only masculinity had not imposed itself.

6. Anarchivism and Genre Interplay

These imbalances in the uses of Shakespearean traces in *Rome* were at some point, intentionally or not, modified by the creatives. Addressing the *collegia* leaders, during season two, Vorenus predicts that "Whoever wins in Greece wins in Rome. Some kind of peace will follow […] Peace is no friend to men like us […] The *collegia* must change or they'll die" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 18). This shift is reflected in the series posters: season one's features an armed soldier walking the blood-soaked streets; season two's poster presents a ghostly woman, dagger in hand —ready to fight for her freedom— the city gilded by a splendor announcing a new era. Embodying this utopianism, "the final shot [in season one] of Pullo walking hand-in-hand with his beloved Eirene, whose name means 'Peace', offer[ed] a visual promise of the ultimate survival of the Roman people" (Cyrino 2008: 6; see Figure 5). Arguably, season two resorts to Shakespeare's romance, which suggests an interplay of genres within *Rome*'s archive itself.

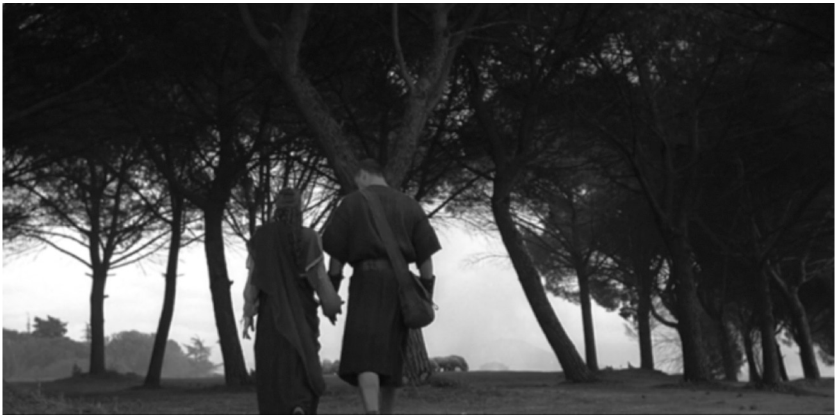

Figure 5. "Kalends of February" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 12)

Such generic interplay runs alongside *Rome*'s transition from male-chauvinistic to feminine-orientated politics. Vorenus kills the local leader Erastes Fulmen to avenge his children (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 13). The scene exhumes *Macbeth*'s tragic conclusion, in which Macduff holds up the tyrant's head, announcing a new age in Scotland (5.9.20-25). It does not seem accidental that Fulmen is played by Lorcan Cranitch, who played Macduff in Michael Bogdanov's *Macbeth* (1998), an adaptation that set the Scottish Play in a deprived 20th-century suburban environment whose inhabitants experienced living conditions similar to those found on *Rome*'s Aventine Hill. McKidd seems to take the baton from Cranitch, a more veteran Shakespearean actor in a popular appropriation of the Scottish tragedy. Vorenus and Pullo climb up the tenements' ladder holding Fulmen's head (Figure 6); meanwhile, the camera tilts to reveal the mount and the sky whose glimpses of hope reify the survival spirit of the neighborhood (Figure 7).

In keeping with this, Shakespearean allusions are identified in the Aventine scenes across season two. Pullo describes the collegium as a "merry band" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 14), suggesting a similarity with the "merry men" gathered around Duke Frederick to "fleet the time […] as they did in the golden age" in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (112-113). Vorenus's decision to deliver fish and bread to the neighbors, like in "the old days", assumes the political undertaking Gonzalo proposes in *The Tempest* —"nature should bring forth/ Of it own kind, all foison, all abundance/ To feed [his] innocent people" (2.1.159-161). Pullo's advice to the Aventine neighbors to endure famine in the absence of grain from Egypt (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 21) approximates Menenius's warning to the Roman plebs to be moderate in times of famine, too (Cor, 1.1.84-158). The proliferation of these allusions suggests a Shakespearean substratum that reinforces the sovereignty —sometimes, under duress— that the plebeians are progressively acquiring in the Aventine.

As the series continues, the suggested social transformation in *Rome* is concentrated in the Aventine. After Caesar's victories in Pharsalus and Utica, a well-paid actor who enacts Caesar's victory over the Pompeians insistently repeats the slogan "Happy day!" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2005: episode 9), which echoes Octavius Caesar's proclamation in *Julius Caesar*: "So call the field to rest, and let's away/ To part the glories of this *happy day*" (5.5.79-80; emphasis added). According to John Drakakis, the theatre's liminality in *Julius Caesar* does not merely ventriloquize political domination but engages forms of representation that encourage subversion (2002: 79). *Rome*'s appropriation of Shakespeare's theatricality seems, to my mind, in line with Richard Wilson's interpretation of *Julius Caesar* as theatre-state apparatus, whose echoes make actors complicit with state power (2013: 158). Despite the Roman plays' tendency to hypothesize on political change, and despite cultural materialist efforts to read populism in *Julius Caesar* as emancipatory, *Rome*'s egalitarianism required a different covenant with Shakespeare —outside the Roman plays— to prosper.

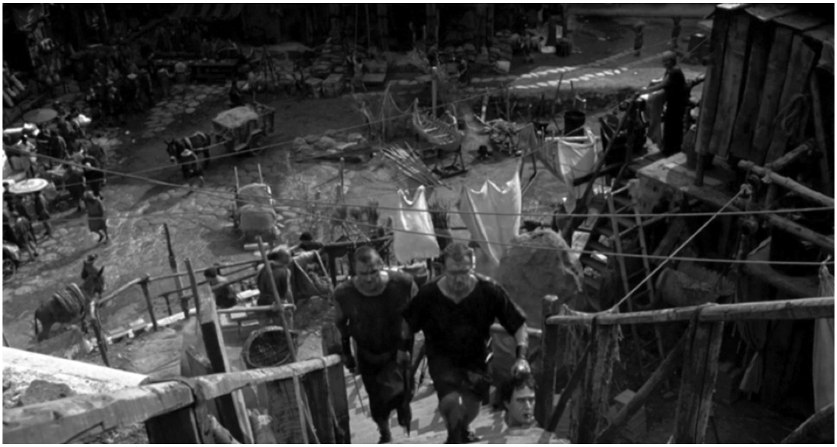

Figure 6. "Passover" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 13)

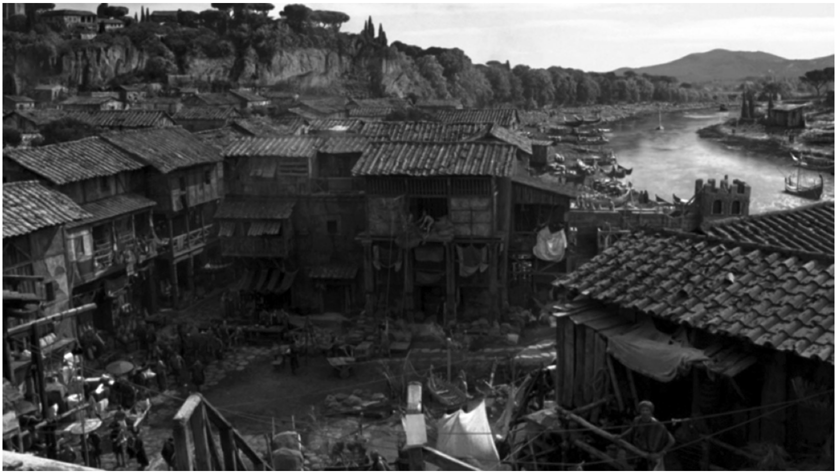

Figure 7. "Passover" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 13)

Shakespeare's romances, I argue, fuel *Rome*'s politically transformative drives. The romances harbor horizons of possibility, the triumph of benevolent humanity over the tyranny of actuality; they tackle the loss and recovery of royal children, and examine the journeys of flawed rulers who, after years of hardship, find redemption. Miraculous twists of fate alter characters' curses. Reunions and resurrections of characters presumed dead are engineered by divine agencies (Thorne 2003: 1). In *Rome*'s season two, these conventions are deployed in the separation, reunion, recognition and later reconciliation of Vorenus's family. The scriptwriters did not grant Niobe the resurrections that Shakespeare gave to Thaïsa and Hermione. But, in the words of Bataille, the eliminations of the supernatural was "in keeping with the naturalistic stance of the series" (2008: 223). Such naturalism is, in contemporary TV seriality, disinterested, following Wald, "in non-realistic early modern theatre practices" (2020: 11). Following these principles, Niobe's haunting memory approximates features of romance, without actualizing it. Vorenus's reunion with his children takes place through miraculous turns of events which are typical in Shakespearean romance. After accusing Pullo of infidelity with Niobe, the two friends separate (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 15). In the same episode, narrative time, like Time in *The Winter's Tale* (4.1.1-32), is unusually accelerated for TV's naturalistic standards: the Newsreels reader announces the battle that will take place in Mutina (43 BC). A second narrative jump brings Pullo and Eirene back from Massilia. A divinity has compelled Pullo to return to make peace with Vorenus. An additional stroke of the pen by a *Deus ex Machina*: Lyde (Esther Hall) appears with news that the children are alive in a slave camp. The gods again favored Pullo; providence reunites Vorenus with his children. This accumulation of accidents and narrative accelerations mark the series' generic shift from tragedy to romance.

A reunion scene in which Vorenus embraces Young Lucius as his own, seems moving in the way in which reunions in romances are touching, particularly with the accompaniment of "Niobe's Theme" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 16). But that the most reparative aspects of romance are blocked raises questions about the solubility of this Shakespearean genre in TV series. Vorena the Elder's (Coral Amiga) plotting against and eventual challenge to Vorenus resituates the family reunion within the realm of tragedy's family split: "Oh yes! I betrayed you! And I was glad to do it. […] You killed my mother. You cursed us to Hades. You made me a fucking whore. […] I hate you! We all hate you. I wish you were dead" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 20). Like his Shakespearean counterpart, Lear, Vorenus feels driven out. *King Lear*'s conclusion is identified with "a movement towards redemption that is incremental, unsteady, and indeterminate" (Lynch 2011: 131). Similarly, in *The Winter's Tale*'s end, the weight of tragedy is "subsumed into a larger, redemptive, comic vision of the triumph of times over time" (Lynch 2011: 135). I argue that *Rome*'s ending seems to be situated in this same indeterminate territory discerned in *King Lear* and *The Winter's Tale*. As I have claimed, *Rome*'s conclusion is as problematic as the one found in *The Winter's Tale* since both Hermione's silence —after resurrection— and the closure during the reconciliation of the dying Vorenus and Vorena do not allow precise conclusions to be drawn about the stability of such reconciliation (2019: 43). Additionally, unlike *The Winter's Tale*, *Rome* does not allow resurrection for the dead wife. *Rome*'s traces of *King Lear* —the brutal separation of the father from his offspring— and the implausible reconciliations of Shakespearean romance lead, nonetheless, to transformative results. Although the reconciliation between Vorenus and the children takes place in the last episode, Vorena's acquired vestal dignity grants her the freedom to choose to forgive her father (Figure 8). Vorenus's attempted political renewal is signified by the other two children's acquired positions in the Aventine: Vorena the Younger (Ana Fausta Primiano) starts to run the tavern; Young Lucius (Marco Pollack) takes up the non-violent trade of mason. If *Rome*'s Palatine remains under Octavian too faithfully tied to the imperial resolution in the Roman plays —in which "Mechanic slaves/ With greasy aprons, rules and hammers […] In their thick breaths,/ Rank of gross diet" (At, 5.2.208-210) flock around "an Egyptian puppet" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 10)— the Aventine shapes a new society, starting with Vorenus's family. The miraculous twists of fate and turns of romance are replaced by a more familiar generational relay; the excess of tragedy is diluted in the less impressive daily struggle for family survival in a social environment bent on getting by. The women of the family are protagonists of this relay and this commitment.

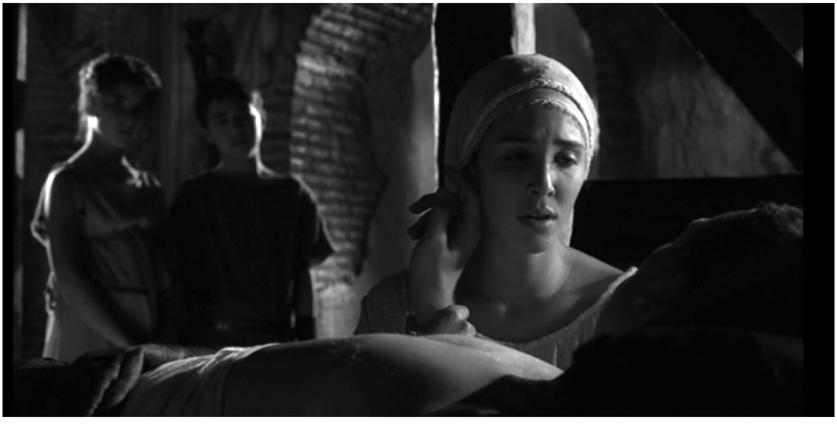

Figure 8. "De Patre Vostro" (Heller, Macdonald and Milius 2007: episode 10)

Conclusion

Recent performance practice, screen and multimedia adaptation, and other forms of appropriation of Shakespeare's works reveal that Shakespeare's archive is a heuristic source of outstanding productive potential. Serial Shakespeares liberally employ this archive to appropriate the legacy of Shakespeare's works. *Rome's* Shakespeare archive followed trends in popular adaptations which took the plays —and what, at the time, they stood for— as "the momentary glimpse of a utopian horizon that [could] propel longing for a more just future that ha[d] yet to arrive" (Albanese 2010: 5-6). Recalling the dramaturgic techniques of adapters such as Charles Marowitz, John Osborne and Edward Bond, *Rome*'s script might have been an equivalent to Alan Sinfield's proposal for *Julius Caesar*, that would have made "prominent the incidents where the people feature and supply business" (1992: 20). *Rome*'s dramaturgy was interconnected with the adaptive millennium turn which replaced reverent reconstructions of Shakespeare with scripts —such as Christine Edzard's *As You Like It* (1992), Penny Woolcock's *Macbeth on the Estate* (1997), Michael Bogdanov's *Macbeth* (1998), Tim Blake Nelson's *O* (2001), Sangeeta Datta's *Life Goes On* (2009), Ralph Fiennes' *Coriolanus* (2011), etc.— that laid the foundations of Shakespearean screen adaptation in the 21st century (Greenhalgh 2022: 253), and explored the actuality of contemporary history with Shakespeare on screen. Therefore, *Rome* did not merely pick up traces of Shakespeare. It echoed concerns present in gritty, revisionist, vernacular and socially orientated (though not unproblematic) adaptations of Shakespeare.

Satisfactorily or not, Shakespeare's archive strengthens the feminine turn near the end of series two. Undoubtedly, the series' post-feminism and male-chauvinism were made part of its appeal; therefore, *Rome*'s Shakespeare is double-edged gender-wise to say the least. This fact illuminates the series' transitionary status. During the 2010s, serial Shakespeares started to pursue drastically different gender politics. *House of Cards* (2013-2018), *Westworld* (2016-), *Succession* (2018-), *Black Earth Rising* (2018), *The White Lotus* (2021-) represented a departure from male-centered Shakespeare-inflected shows such as *The Wire* (2002-2008), *Deadwood* (2004-2006), *Rome* (2005-2007), *Breaking Bad* (2008-2013), *Sons of Anarchy* (2008-2014), etc. This divide shows that, as suggested above, there is much to gain from historicized research on serial Shakespeares by probing into the contexts in which archival selections of Shakespeare are made. All things considered, *Rome*'s investment in Shakespeare's romance is not unprecedented in serial Shakespeares. Analyzing characters, themes and motifs of Shakespeare's romance in *Lost* (2004-2010), Sarah Hatchuel and Randy Laist identified a shift from bloody tragedy to redemptive romance (2016). Such a shift is, as this article has shown, equally found in *Rome*. Both series are, therefore, representative of an incipient recurrence of allusions to other genres beyond tragedies and histories —initially dominant— in serial Shakespeares. *Rome* in Shakespeare's adaptive archive stands out as an anarchivist inscription. Shakespeare's archive reveals the lights and the shadows in the narrative arcs of *Rome* from the perspective of gender bias that has been explored in this study.

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Notes

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1. Created by Bruno Heller, John Millius, William J. Macdonald, David Frankel, Adrian Hodges and Alexandra Cunningham, *Rome* first aired 28 August 2005 and last aired 25 March 2007.

2. See Calpurnia's dream in North's translation of Plutarch, *Life of Julius Caesar* (83-84); see also Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (2.2.13-26).

3. Traces may also be referred to as "remains", which, in the absence of explicit reference to writers' authorities, get "under the skin", permeate "an affective register", and incite "repeated inquiries into and identification with a body of work" (Lehmann 2002: 2).

4. See "Ghosts at Cockrow, Inside the Episode 02/10, With Jonathan Stamp", https://www.hbo.com/rome/watch/season2/episode22.html (unavailable now), cited in Bataille (2008: 221).

5. See Bataille (2008); Hatchuel (2011).

6. For Bailey, *Rome* "was astonishingly fresh and tapped into the addictive violence and brutality that [she] found in the play" (2009).

7. Listen to Barbara Bogaev's interview with Ian Doescher, "If Shakespeare Wrote 'Mean Girls'…", in *Folger Shakespeare Unlimited Podcast*, posted 22 July 2019, <https://www.folger.edu/podcasts/shakespeare-unlimited/doescher-mean-girls/>.

8. *"ensamblajes de cuerpos, afectos y tecnologías que alteran los registros de identidades, posiciones y funciones rotuladas en la máquina social que distribuye la producción general del cuerpo […] sobre la*

superficie de inscripción que llamamos realidad.”

9. See Gruber (2003), Kaplan (2013), Gajowsky (2017), etc.

10. See *Richard III* (1.3.296-302).

11. According to a reviewer, “Even in silence she rivet[ed] respect” (Cushman 1980).

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"A PICAYUNE FRAGMENT OF THE POSSIBLE TOTAL": STONE ALLEGORIES IN SAROYAN'S LIFE-WRITING

"UN FRAGMENTO INSIGNIFICANTE DEL POSIBLE TOTAL: ALEGORÍAS DE PIEDRA EN LA ESCRITURA AUTOBIOGRÁFICA DE WILLIAM SAROYAN

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Abstract

This article explores William Saroyan's notion that life can only be grasped as a fragment of the Absolute, and that any attempt to understand one's existence is by definition a frustrated project. By applying Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy's theory of the fragment, the mark of the 'incompletable incompletion' (1978), I will read Saroyan's formless autobiographical experiments (ranging from 1952 to the late 1970s) as the author's failure to endow his elusive identity with a stable meaning and order. The culmination of his concern with fragmentation finds its best expression in the finding of a stone, an *object trouvé* which operates either as the transcendentalist symbol of the recovery of the totality or else as a negative allegory in the sense adumbrated by Walter Benjamin, i.e., a concept which allows the author to revisit and interrogate history as the landscape of death and decline. Steeped in the mythical aura of Armenia as the country of stones, Saroyan's petrified fragment can only be interpreted not as a vehicle of unity and fulfilment but as a reminder of tragedy, dispersion, and the failure to coalesce, all of them inevitably linked with the writer's diasporic consciousness.

Keywords: William Saroyan, life-writing, autobiography, theory of the Romantic fragment, Armenian-American identity.

Resumen

La escritura autobiográfica de William Saroyan comprende una serie de experimentos que comienzan en 1952 y continúan hasta los setenta. A través de una lectura de su filosofía, este artículo explora la idea posromántica de que la vida solo puede ser concebida como un fragmento del Absoluto, y de que cualquier intento de dotarla de sentido es un proyecto inconcluso. Aplicando la teoría del fragmento que caracteriza la epistemología romántica según Lacoue-Labarthe y Nancy (1978), me propongo examinar este discurso autobiográfico como el intento fallido de dotar de un patrón estable a la identidad de un sujeto definido por la fractura y el azar. La preocupación de Saroyan por la fragmentariedad encuentra su mejor expresión en el hallazgo fortuito de un guijarro o una roca, una imagen ambivalente que opera como el símbolo transcendentalista de la unidad con el Absoluto o como una alegoría en el sentido vislumbrado por Walter Benjamin, esto es, un objeto que posibilita interrogar la historia como catástrofe. En consonancia con el sobrenombre de Armenia como el país de las piedras, solo cabe interpretar el fragmento como un testigo de la tragedia y la diseminación, temas inevitablemente asociados con la conciencia diaspórica del escritor.

Palabras clave: William Saroyan, memorias, autobiografía, teoría del fragmento romántico, identidad armenio-americana.

1. Introduction

In 1959, harrowed by a sense of foreboding at a stage when his creativity was losing steam, William Saroyan undertook a journey that he firmly believed was going to be his last. Forgotten, if not despised, by the critical establishment, and harassed by the onerous weight of debts at a time when all he got was rejection slips from mainstream publishers, the writer envisioned a voyage across the Atlantic that operated as a paradoxical reversal of his father's exile from Bitlis to America, to meet, like his progenitor, his death. The literary outcome of this journey is one of his most celebrated memoirs, *Not Dying* (1963). Conceived as a makeshift diary-project comprising all the days of July 1959, the book is a self-narrative of decline and a formless declaration of his ideas about knowledge, life and art. In what follows, I intend to examine how Saroyan's self-narratives, a collection of ten titles —from his first memoirs entitled *The Bicycle Rider in Beverly Hills* (1952) to *Obituaries* (1979)[1]— map an existential terrain largely made of fragmentation.

In addressing this aspect, I am referring not only to a writing style that remains essentially formless —"aphasic and metonymic" in the words of William Boelhower (1988: 274)— but to an epistemological linchpin that can be traced back to the

Romantic imagination: a condition of brokenness, incompletion and ruin that can only be accounted for as part of an indissoluble relation to the System or the Absolute. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy's arguments on the poetics of the fragment (1978) will prove essential to grasping Saroyan's never-ending writing project, one that is conceived as a concerted effort to provide a guide to something as perpetually fleeting as the writer's protean identity. "Is identity a fraudulence?" (Saroyan 1976: 14), Saroyan asks. "[B]oth inherited and acquired identity in its very nature is helplessly fraudulent, but there we are, aren't we?" (14). Notwithstanding this caveat, his countless conscientious attempts at encapsulating his self-image into writing are a sure indication that he can only aspire to bring together "the ragbag, bobtail, odds and ends" of memory (Saroyan 1978: 25), the harvest seemingly amounting to an almost total absence of meaning. At its best, Saroyan admits, his memoirs reveal something that is "only partly true, and true only part of the whole, and each part is a paltry part, so let's get that part of the paltry part straight at the outset" (1979: 126), i.e., a preposterous collection of scraps that may nonetheless reveal a figment of truth. If, as Louis A. Renza puts it, the autobiographical task is profoundly (and intentionally) marked by a "fragmented narrative appearance" (1977: 10), Saroyan's life writings increasingly become a sort of "hupomnemata" in the Foucauldian sense (1997). They can be understood as an accumulating archive of multifarious fragments that does not provide a narrative of the self but a makeshift scaffold that will allow the writer to return and recollect, and in doing so, discern part of his disaggregated identity.

Saroyan's undeterred autobiographical impulse has been explained from a variety of standpoints. David Stephen Calonne identifies the author's decision to maneuver his writing "from the creation of works [in]to the creation of self" as the driving force of a project that seeks to understand "the radical disjunction of Self and World" (1983: 142, 143). Water Shear (1995) interprets Saroyan's memoirs as part of his struggle against obliteration and chance whereas Nona Balakian (1998) sees it as the result of a growing fusion of the man and the artist. In the author's words, "[t]he very thing I was after as a writer was to be in my writing precisely who I was in my life" (Saroyan 1964: 112). Yet no attempt has ever been made to trace out the logic of Saroyan's memoirs in connection with the Romantic theory of the fragment. My ultimate goal is to show that, if the writer's autobiographical discourse is segmented into a congeries of loose pieces that follow no overarching design, it is not only because it seeks to reflect the self's mystifying life as faithfully as possible but also to the extent that it aspires to build up a story of life as art. Art must be understood here as aesthetic Absolute. In the writer's own words, "[t]here is no point in glancing at the past, in summoning it up, in re-examining it, except on behalf of the art —that is the meaningful real" (Saroyan 1952: 49). In the following pages, I will discuss how the logic of post-Kantian fragmentation accounts for the ways in which the subject, unable to blend his atomistic individuality, and thereby restore his sense of belonging, into the Absolute, will counteract the impact of nihilism through its own aesthetic presentation. The belief that the Self's being can be erected as a work of art does not imply the recovery of the totality. Far from it, it reveals the contours of an ever-shifting gravitational point which will become peripheral the instant it is located. Saroyan's strategy seeks to underline the insufficiency of the fragment (his living recollections) to complete the ensemble. Moreover, paradoxically enough, it aims to deploy a rhetoric that, contrary to sidestepping incompletion, redirects our attention to the individual fragment, for it is its disjointedness, fragility and instability that generate a meaning. In tune with Adorno's ideas (1997), in Saroyan's self-narratives, the whole ceases to take center stage, and all our attention as readers is engaged, time and again, in what is fractured.

Peter Bürger's discussion of Water Benjamin (1984) as an allegorist will help to clarify how the finding of a fragment triggers a self-posited meaning, away from the object itself and its original function, which may serve as a locus to interrogate history and identity. In Benjamin's view, an allegory is by definition a fragment which, instead of insisting on totality as the symbol does, accentuates despair and loss and interrogates progress. Much unlike the classicist who conceives his work as an organic unit heralding fulfilment and redemption, the avant-gardiste culls parts from the life-totality and turns them into emblems of a vision of history in decline, a death mask of "a petrified, primordial landscape" (Benjamin in Bürger 1984: 69). In this regard, I will focus my attention upon Saroyan's stone-fragment, an object that epitomizes the inherent uprooting of the diasporic Armenian-American subject. In choosing the fragment both as the vehicle (his ideal of "formlessness", a hybrid genre that allowed him to write about himself)[2] and the tenor (the stone as the emblem of his hybrid identity), Saroyan carves out a unstable space which does not only challenge the illusion of beginning, climax and denouement in telling one's life, the faux demands of the biographical *telos*, but also problematizes a diasporic writer's position in the narration of the nation. If allegory is "in the realm of thought what ruins are in the realm of things" (Benjamin 2019: 188), Saroyan's landscape is fundamentally a landscape filled with debris. Thus, in order to maneuver through the intricate scaffolding of Saroyan's *episteme*, the article is divided into two sections: (i) Life and Memory, and (ii) Stone-Finding. Saroyan's view oscillates between his deep-rooted conviction of the impossibility of knowledge and his hope that memory and writing may establish a new order, albeit fragmentary, to what essentially, and inevitably, remains "a shambles" (1996: 14).

2. Life and Memory: Unsatisfied Fragments in the Search for the Grand Book

Memoirs constitute a system of fragments.
Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments.*

In an early piece of writing entitled "Genesis" (1935), a spoof not only "of the scientific theory of the creation of the Universe", as James H. Tashjian rightly observes in one of his expanded notes to the collection (Saroyan 1984: 368), but of the Bible as well, Saroyan recounts the story of the creation of the world. In the beginning a Great Void, ruled by motionlessness and an eternal silence, dominated the cosmos. Shortly afterwards, "small fragments" started to leap nervously out of it. This unprecedented movement brought silence to a halt by unleashing a commotion of noises and "one holy error after another" (Saroyan 1984: 182). Fragments joined themselves to larger bodies, breathing came about, life and change ensued, and God's only begotten Son, a man partially blind, came into being. His birth was the result of the incongruity of two forces: a molecule fell in love with an electron, resulting in a dialectic of opposing forces —the first was governed by the spirit and the second by matter— that caused "in each of the early lovers a deep sense of frustration" (183). This feeling of sadness sparked the birth of the Word, or the articulation of language. Reminiscent of Kierkegaard's idea (1983) that man is the impossible synthesis of the temporal and the eternal, the story reveals Saroyan's conviction that the Absolute is inevitably fragmented, and that the link that united each of the fragments to the whole is irremediably lost. The answer to the question he raises, "What brotherhood relates each subtle fragment to the subtler whole?", can only revalidate his permanent sense of frustration in discovering that "[w]e have broken everlasting now into small units of sadness: the second, the minute, the hour, the week, the month, the year, and eternity" (Saroyan 1936: 124). Not surprisingly, in Saroyan's view, "[(wo)m]an is an accident" (1989: 227), and all we can aspire to be at most "is a picayune fragment of the possible total" (223).

Saroyan's belief in the rigmarole of phenomenal reality —the idea that the relation between language and subject is irredeemably fractured— appears early in his work. In the opening chapter of *The Bicycle Rider in Beverly Hills* (1952), the narrator reminisces about how music contributed to his growth as an artist early in his childhood. While riding a bicycle as a telegraph messenger, a tune frequently came into his mind, "a song which was not whole, which never in fact became whole" (Saroyan 1952: 20). This fragment of a song, however, always aspired to complete itself but inexorably failed to reach completion, not on account of its musical notes and rhythms but of its words: “And here perhaps lies the clue to the failure of this form to fulfil itself —its involvement in words” (20). Unlike sounds which reach their goal without any help, “words must be *driven* to their ends” (20, emphasis in original), making knowledge partial or impossible. In other words, “[t]he *real* story can never be told. It is untellable. The real (as real) is inaccessible” (43, emphasis in original), for we “are slow things, and truth is swift, it is instantaneous, it is both always and now, it is complete and we aren’t” (1996: 206). It comes “in an instant and [is] gone, leaving me with the rest of my life to puzzle it out” (206).

The fragmentary nature of our life attests to the fact that, in Saroyan’s philosophy, “the whole universe is a distortion, a tearing to pieces of things that were perhaps once whole” (1978: 126). Walter Shear has observed that, if there is a recurrent principle that rules Saroyan’s memoirs, it is arbitrariness since chapters provide neither a chronology nor a sequential narrative (1995: 177). Saroyan’s first autobiographical installment, *The Bicycle Rider in Beverly Hills*, anchored in the conviction that life is “an essay at art” (1952: 178), narrates, through a random collection of objects and incidentals, his growth as a writer. *Days of Life and Death* (1970) is based upon scraps of observation (which the author calls “details”) aiming to bring together the most banal episodes (a basil plant just bought, a newspaper headline read in the bathroom, problems with the plumber, weather changes, a flâneur’s ramblings in Paris, etc.) in order to save them from oblivion, for the journal-keeper has now discovered that the only incontestable truth is to be found in “every day’s confusion” (Saroyan 1970: 111). *Obituaries* (1979) consists of 135 fragments of a similar length (around 80 lines) that follow *Variety*’s 1976 necrology list. The catalog displays a jumble of names which serve as a lame excuse to give vent to memories of the past, rambling discussions and non-sequiturs. *Places Where I’ve Done Time* (1972) and *Chance Meetings* (1978) are made up of disconnected vignettes of everyday life, the first choosing a list of places and the second a group of people and snatches of conversation to frame episodic memories that follow one another like loose pieces of an incomplete mosaic.

Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy (1988) hold the view that the fragment is the key philosophical concept of Jena Romanticism, the core of eidaesthetics[3] that permeated the post-Kantian Romantic project insofar as it offered an artistic solution to an epistemological question: How can we know what is beyond our noetic self-awareness? Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) had already established the limits of knowledge of the world. The result was an unbridgeable gap, a hiatus between the subject’s speculation of the Absolute and the impossibility of its presentation or visibility. The fragment solved, at least aesthetically, the subject's nostalgia for a totality. A fragment must not be merely understood as a broken-off bit of a lost object. It is not only *das Bruchstück*, the remnant *trouvé* of something that existed before, but something that is grasped as complete in itself, albeit in its jaggedness. In Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy's words, it can only be properly understood as "the exergue of the total, infinite work" (1988: 48). As such, it draws out a finished completion —elsewhere, in the realm of transcendental imagination— despite its evident incompleteness. To put it more simply, it contains, like a seed, an embryonic idea of the System of which it constantly provides a mirror-like reflection, thereby enabling, in Novalis's words, "the presentation of the unpresentable" (in Sanford 2016: 26), a strategy that allows a makeshift way out of this philosophical impasse. Thus, the fragment sets forth the same logic of the ruin: it recalls and obliterates the past, paradoxically binding evocation and substitution together (Wasser 2016: 28). Thomas McFarland argues that its incompletion entails the (fleeting) hope that one can recompose the original unity by finding and bringing together its "membra disjecta" (1981: 28).

Despite the meaninglessness of phenomenal reality, a giant-sized jigsaw whose pieces cannot be put back in place —"There is no dispelling of yesterday's confusion, and no seeing through today's" (Saroyan 1970: 111)— Saroyan still harbors the hope of finding the connection of his life with the Absolute, for the fragment is built upon the exigency of completion. His autobiographies are primarily conceived as trial-and-error exercises at deciphering "the lost and revealed Book", a series of hit-and-miss attempts to write about All (Saroyan 1996: 84). Writing one's life amounts to "having the same happen again; only this time as part of a whole" (84). The author's unflagging efforts over forty years to "understand the whole thing in all of its parts" (Saroyan 1970: 111) are doomed to failure from the outset, for it is impossible to write without leaving things out. Life-writing is inherently fragmentary: it is based upon memory, and memory is selective, "follows no rules", "works its own wheel, and stops where it will, entirely without reference to the last stop, and with no connection with the rest" (Saroyan 1978: 124-126). In the long run, to remember is not a far cry from inventing (15).

In other words, how can a self that is by definition "moving and transitory" aim towards "the Intelligence-of-All" (Saroyan 1989: 227)? "How do you pick and choose? All is all, isn't it?" (Saroyan 1996: 156). In his bid to provide an answer to this conundrum, he stacks up a welter of memories that range from his childhood at the orphanage, horse races, trivial aspects about a character in an unidentified story, a Native American's death on a New Mexico reservation, and a long etcetera. In short, he cobbles random details together, like the tiny white flowers in a lawn, or the passing of a white butterfly he remembers watching one July morning in 1911 when he was only three:

> Now that I want to write about All […] I still don't know how, I don't know where to start, and you have surely looked at these white flowers that grow in lawns? Well, what about them? I can't leave them out, can I? But if I try to put them in, I don't know *where* to put them in, and I don't know what they are called either. I am not asking for help. I am just letting you know what a difficult thing it is for a man to write about All. (Saroyan 1996: 155, emphasis in original)

Fully aware of the futility of his task, not only does the writer acknowledge his failure to inscribe the Absolute in his writing, thus revalidating the "impossibility of closure and totalization" towards which any autobiographical text aspires (de Man 1979: 922), but he also creates a palimpsest where a plethora of concurring memories compete to carve out a space. The result is even more deliberately fragmented, a conglomerate of scattered nuggets that reveal neither a grand design nor a form containing the truth. Rather than achieving his goal of recovering an order of the self, the particular, with its erratic nature and garbled language, has effaced the vision of the whole. Despite the writer's longings for order and the completion of the self, the quest proves to be futile: "The order I found was the order of disorder. The self that came to me, was not my own" (Saroyan 1952: 171). In Audrey Wasser's words, incompletion brings forth "the threat of formlessness or chaos" (2016: 33), a possibility that was never dismissed by Romanticism. Thus, if "the fragments infinitize the completion of their own system", the result foreshadows "the absence of the whole" (33).

Yet, paradoxical as it seems, certain fragments may emanate a complete meaning. As James Olney holds in his extensive work on autobiography, autobiographies merge self-knowledge and cosmology together, for the comprehension of one's personal experiences requires the finding of an object, myth or metaphor which allows the self to grasp "the unknown through the known" (1972: 31). In other words, the discovery of this object bridges the gap between a constantly challenged, time-bound self and the quest for a (permanent) meaning. It is through the contemplation of stones that Saroyan creates the ideal fragment that allows him to satisfy his need for order, thus temporarily accomplishing the process of self-restoration which Paul de Man (1979) deems as inevitable in every autobiographical work: the recovery of the fragments enables the subject, if not to achieve, at least to scratch the surface of closure.

3. Stone-Finding

3.1. The Logic of the Fragment: Pebbles as Mirrors of the Infinite

> *The miscellaneous objects of the world, however, that interest me are fragmentary, broken off in the sequence of time, and of no continuity […] and after a while […] a part of the continuity of life itself: yours or mine […] It is all One.*
>
> William Saroyan, "Tiger".

Saroyan's fascination with pebbles evinces not only an awareness of the fragmentary nature of human life but also a hope for unification with the Absolute. Tony Tanner (1963) has provided an account of the genealogy of the metaphor from Margaret Fuller to Sherwood Anderson, tracing its origin back to Transcendentalism. Tanner finds the key to interpreting the ubiquitousness of the image in Emerson's conviction that Plato's approach to knowledge relied upon two sources or vases, "one of ether and one of pigment", the first alluding to a transmaterial reality and the second to "low, concrete facts" (1963: 41). In his quest for tangible signs evoking a mystical presence, Emerson discovers the "truth-speaking pebble", an incontestable piece of evidence of the relation of fragments to an otherworldly reality, the Over-Soul (in Windolph 2007: 19). While holding the pebble in his hand, Emerson interprets the "manufactory" that "eddies around" it through "endless ages" (in Windolph 2007: 19) as unmistakeable proof of unseen agential forces. Rather than a mute empirical signifier, the pebble becomes the eyewitness of a metaphysical dimension through which we can commune, though partially, with the Infinite. As Christopher J. Windolph argues, Emerson's answer to the mystery of the stone is not to be found in geology, or in any other science, but in "look[ing] up" (2007: 19), for it is just an instrument of one of the axes of knowledge, one that prioritizes a vertical-otherworldly projection rather than a horizontal-worldly approach. The pebble emerges then as the epitome of the Romantic fragment: the image of its brokenness adumbrates the belief in a superior design which orchestrates everything back into its place.

It is interesting to note at this point that Paul Valéry's "Eupalinos" (1956), an aesthetic treatise in the guise of a Socratic dialogue, interprets the trope from a totally different standpoint. Apropos of the beautifully crafted object he has come across, the philosopher observes: "Thou resembles nothing and yet thou art not shapeless" (1956: 114). The question is whether the pebble can be viewed as a piece of art because of its singular shape. Socrates concludes that, despite the fact that it appeals to the eye, it cannot be regarded as such, for its perfection is merely accidental, the sum total of aimless forces of nature, whereas the defining condition of the aesthetic artefact —like that of the Greek temples built up by Eupalinos, a synthesis of formation, order and stability— is the conscious activity of the human mind and the human hand. In short, the pebble is the result of one of the modes of production, "chance", just like a line scratched, without thinking, on a wall (101), and not the outcome of man's intended action. Accordingly, it cannot be regarded as an artwork, for art must "cut across this nature and this chance", imposing "an act of thought" (126), whereas nature lacks both a model and an aim, and is unable to distinguish the details from the whole.[4]

While Saroyan's admiration of the *object trouvé* partially resonates with the Emersonian conviction that the most insignificant entity bespeaks Nature's invisible order, it nevertheless underscores accident as its ruling principle, thus invalidating Kant's view of the aesthetic object as "purposiveness without a purpose" (2007: 57) on which Valéry's ideas seem to be grounded. A pebble mirrors life's haphazard, unpredictable course for "[t]here is a constant flux, a continuous procedure of change and surprise, which at best is far more appealing than art, for this is the stuff from which art is to be made, from which art is to be continuously enlarged and renewed" (Saroyan 1978: 56). In Saroyan's view,

> The sea is in men, and pebbles are in them, too. The sea is a tiresome talker whose remarks its rocks have written with careless joy and careful accident […] Every one of the sea's pebbles says 'this' in one way or another. It is incredible how this one word can be so unrepetitious, so variable, so freshly meaningful, and so satisfying. (1948)

Not surprisingly, Saroyan ruminates over the discovery, on one of his strolls in Paris, of the art machine, a gadget made of a metal finger that randomly produces art abstractions, an entanglement of lines that always comes up as new, after pressing one button and choosing a number of pieces of chalk. The anecdote perfectly illustrates that art cannot but be the result of haphazard activity, for human experience, its true basis, is erratic, fragmented and shorn of balance. The basis of writing must be utterly unforeseeable: "You can never predict what the stuff is going to be; you work and wait for it" (Saroyan 1996: 35) for a writer's true goal is to achieve "a thing without a form" (75).

"Preposterously simple and profoundly mysterious" (Saroyan 1968: 9), the essential contradiction of pebbles is the result of combining their eternally broken, unfinished nature with a call for a definite form. "[M]ade accidentally, inevitably, haphazardly, without plan, without beginning or end, without intention", they evoke, through their "sameness and infinite variety" (Saroyan 1968: 8), "the unity of all matter", thereby becoming "eyes shining through eternity" (Saroyan 1936: 148). The paradox is, once more, the corollary of the fragmentary imperative: being shoved and tossed about, they emerge as "marks of time" (Saroyan 1968: 7) that, paradoxically, mirror the undividedness of the Absolute. Albeit not entirely static, they have reached a form which is the consequence of having been excised and eroded through the action of the wave motions. This form is both unique and not alien to, or disassociated from, the picture of the whole; and yet it is the memory of their rupture, their aspiration towards a form and their blanket denial of if that give them their ontological being. In Saroyan's episteme, stone-fragments voice a condition that is not closed off by any organicist whole but defined by its transient nature. It is for this reason that they operate as the analogue of human life: "A pebble is not unlike a face", and watching a number of them is like being "in the presence of a congregation of people" (Saroyan 1968: 7), for life is nothing but a collection of fleeting moments —the word that the pebbles repeat over and over again before the vastness of the sea— that resist being included in any order.

3.2. Rocks: History as a Cross-Stone

The dead, all who were now without shape and substance, clamored within him […] The rocks, he sang in Armenian, are weeping […] Many times, he believed, he had walked among those boulders, those great solid rocks in the valleys of the old country.

William Saroyan, *Inhale and Exhale.*

In 1973, after chasing Saroyan for four or five years, Ara Güler, the celebrated Armenian-Turkish photographer, succeeds in taking a batch of snapshots of the writer in his Paris apartment on 74 Rue Taitbout (Güler 2011: 188). The pictures show a prematurely aged-looking man with a sapper's mustache posing on his balcony beside his collection of rocks. In one photo, taken at a slightly high angle, the writer holds one of them, his frowning eyes revealing, in the author's own words, that he has "made a fiasco of [his] life", but at least discovered "the right material to work with" (Saroyan 1989: 3). As a matter of fact, his rock collection was an obsession that started early in his life: not only pebbles but also driftwood filled up jars in every nook and cranny of his myriad houses. Actor Edward Hagopian recounts an episode he shared with the writer while roaming about Père Lachaise Cemetery in search of the tombstone of General Antranik, the revered father of the Armenian Liberation Movement. Driven by an unaccountable zest, Saroyan started to pick up odd bits of stone around the commander's tomb that he immediately pocketed. For the author, Hagopian interprets, stones "were nuggets of everlasting time", a tangible atom revealing a hidden grand design (1987: 120).

Leif Weatherby (2017) has argued that the German Romantics' early fervor for geology was prompted by the belief that the science provided the perfect rationale and terminology to spell out the connection between the fragment and the search for an order. Despite the fact that the shards that the geologist collected were characterized by a plurality of shapes, the indeterminacy of their form did not preclude the scientist's attempt to classify them into a hypothetical system which, integrating their contingent formation and internal structure, showed a sense of finality beyond chaos. Fragments, Weatherby argues, have no complete form; yet they are "neither accidental nor motivated, neither merely constructed nor totally arbitrary" (2017: 414). It is in the space between these two extremes —chaos and purpose— that they gain their meaning.

In Saroyan's memoirs, this logic of fragmentation oscillating between hope for unity and dispersal finds its best expression in the futile search for a homeland. As he expresses in *Chance Meetings*, we "are willing exiles that nevertheless deeply long for a place [we] know [we will] never see again" (Saroyan 1978*:* 84). In a letter to Sean O'Faolain dated November 21, 1946, the writer does not hesitate to acknowledge the importance of his ethnic origins: "Do I feel more Armenian than American? I certainly do […] You can't move out of your heritage but you can move out of your environment" (1997*:* 29). Saroyan's memory is, using James Olney's classification of memory types (1998), mostly spatial or archaeological. Fresno, California, becomes the place that articulates the memory of the living. The other narrative —that of the dead— lurks in those sites where one can continually return for digging into the past. Armenia —the elusive totality, a historic country broken up into the western provinces (now Eastern Anatolia, Turkey) and Azerbaijan[5]— can be partially brought forth by the sight of a barren, rocky landscape, or evoked by the accidental encounter of a stone, an *objet trouvé*, which becomes a keepsake of the homeland, a decision that the author traces back to the proverbial saying:

> "Hayastan, Karastan" […] Hayastan means the country of the Hais, pronounced Highs, the country of the Armenians, as they came to be inaccurately named […] Karastan means the country of stones. Thus, the people and the stones, they are together, they are the same. (Saroyan 1989: 157)

Hamlet Petrosyan claims that it was the Armenian nationalist movement that made the crumbling temple and the cross-stone a symbol of their identity, "depicting 'Mother Armenia' as perpetually mourning over her ruins" (2001: 50). The most basic of all Armenian images, the rock, is no doubt Mt. Ararat, which, as Margaret Bedrosian holds, "does not move, yet mobilizes the deepest yearnings of the Armenians", a beacon that guides those in exile (1991: 3). Bearing in mind that diasporic consciousness is a subjective condition prompted by repeated acts of memory that revolve around "the histories of displacements and genealogies of dispossessions" (Cho 2007: 14) in an urge to resist assimilation and forgetting, Saroyan's allegory of the stone fragment allows the markers of the self (ethnicity and homeland) to coalesce together.

In a chapter of *Here Comes, There Goes You Know Who* (1989), precisely entitled "The Stones", the narrator recounts his discovery of them near the source of the Aras river, the border limit between Turkey and Armenia, during his second trip to the old country in 1960: "Suddenly each of the stones was a human being and very dear to me; faceless but true and proud as living human beings can never be proud, nameless, unknown, gathered together in hard silence" (Saroyan 1989: 56). The author's impulse is to pick up these stones and carry them with him. The three people who come to his mind are his uncle Aram, his grandmother Lucy, and his cousin Hoosik, all of them dead at the time. John Frow argues that, although a stone belongs to a non-human world, it may turn, "by a familiar paradox, into a quasi-subject in its own right" (2001: 285), thereby conjuring "a dream of immortality, of inherence and persistence beyond all change" (273). This process of transferring the memory of the dead into the materiality of stones also reveals what Carol Bardenstein calls the diasporic subject's "fixation on particular metonymic fragments of the homeland" (2007: 23). Rocks become the saturated repositories of the memory of the past, an allegory of the nameless deprived of a voice, for their story has been omitted from history. In contradistinction, the author himself thinks back to the three rock-carved portraits of the presidents on the Mount Rushmore Memorial Monument (he deliberately excludes the last head to be added in 1939, Theodore Roosevelt's controversial portrait), a shrine of democracy erected to historicize the national American identity. Following the imperative to resurrect the subjugated past that haunts the present, Saroyan opposes the progressive history of the nation's pedagogy (the colossal monument was precisely erected in the Black Hills, a sacred land for the Lakotas)[6] to the silenced history of oppression and suffering of Armenians, dispossessed of a territory and forced to live in dispersal. In moving from the ethnic to the non-ethnic he is breaking up, once more, the continuum of American culture:

> There are a million stones in that little country, the whole country no bigger than a Texas ranch, and every one of the stones is flesh and blood. The silent, faceless, raging stones of the Armenians, who actually aren't even Armenians, although they have never figured out how to make sense of that, because if they aren't Armenians, what are they? They are stones, a nation of stones, they've got more dead than they've got living, but the dead and the living are both stones. (Saroyan 1989: 76)

Another episode of this rock-collecting obsession is included in the diary entry dated November 10, 1968 from *Days of Life and Death and Escape to the Moon* (1970). Back to Fresno, in one of his drives through the countryside, he reaches a dry riverbed where he starts looking among the boulders on the banks for a sculptured rock. Soon he spots one, lifts it up and carries it back to the road where he parked the car. Driving back to Piedra (the symbolic echoes of the name are noted by Saroyan himself) he thinks of the bygone days he enjoyed as a child swimming in the racing waters of the Kings River together with his cousins, some of them "lately gone, one by heart attack in the desert, the other by suicide, on the other side of the river" (Saroyan 1970: 64-65). The recollection of the dead unleashes some other memories over which broods the shadow of the Armenian genocide: after a dip in the river the bathers would go to the railroad tracks of the spook Santa Fe line to watch the train dump "a load of lost souls" [i.e. rocks] "into the river, right there at the weir" (65). If all artworks are, in the words of Adorno, "similar to those pitiful allegories in graveyards, the broken-off stelae" (1997: 126), Saroyan finds in these stones not only an indelible emblem of cultural memory but a *facies hippocratica*. Immediately the rock he carries morphs into a cross-stone or *khachkar*, an allegory of the dead. "What did I want with that rock? Was it a tombstone?" (Saroyan 1970: 65), he asks himself while recalling those voices, now irremediably lost in the flotsam and jetsam of his present reality.

4. Conclusion

Saroyan's conviction that writing is by definition autobiographical accounts for his indefatigable search for a design that lends cogency to a blurred past and an evanescent present. However, his dawning recognition that any effort to restore some order into "the untranslated and chaotic page of the world" through life writing (Saroyan 1936: 93) is a project *manqué* does not preclude an endless series of formless experiments that enable him to embrace, at least for a moment, what is elusive. Not in vain, the idea of composing "a whole book" containing "all experience, all error, all truth, brought together" before "the words of it blur and blend and finally disappear" (Saroyan 1996: 204, 206) inspires every single self-narration. My purpose has been not only to prove that this longing for the revelation of the secret entails a deep-rooted belief that one's life is but a fragment— "incomplete, impossible to complete, flawed, vulnerable, sickly" (Saroyan 1966: 61)— of the Absolute: coupled with it is also the pipe dream that one can discover, in the jotting down of diary notes, "an order of self" that is "deeply meaningful" and "entire", "a part of a larger entirety after another, into infinity" (61). The metaphysics of Romanticism, as Wasser contends, is based on the alternation between the hope of unifying the loose pieces into an organic form and the hovering threat of chaos and dispersal. Sometimes, Saroyan concludes, using the metaphor of car-driving to illustrate life's journey, our attention is diverted "away from the total into the particular" (62), and we clumsily begin to lose sight of the destination, deeply absorbed by the mishmash of numbers and signs. Rather than a stable repository of self-identity, his autobiographies sketch out a subject that is constantly effaced, closer to alterity and errancy; a locus, in short, defined by erasure and fragmentary inscription.

I have also argued that Saroyan's obsession with fragmentation also evinces a concern with his diasporic identity, one inevitably marked by dissemination and dissolution. In tune with Benjamin's concept of the allegory as the site where transience and eternity collide, Saroyan's stone-allegories allow him to find a material object, analogous to the divided nation, which wavers between its perpetually fragmented nature and the endlessly deferred promise of the historical homeland. Notwithstanding the narrated self's yearning for an organic whole that integrates identity, memory and nation, the quest for completion remains perpetually unaccomplished, pushed to some endless centrifugal dynamics that forces the writer to start afresh when he believes he has finished. "Trying is all we really have", Saroyan pithily remarks (1978: 3), "When the tallying is done, the rest is ash, dust, and the slag heaps of error and loss" (3).

Notes

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1. The list comprises the following titles: *The Bicycle Rider on Beverly Hills* (1952), *Here Comes, There Goes, You Know Who* (1962), *Not Dying* (1963), *Short Drive, Sweet Chariot* (1966), *Letters from 74 Rue Taitbout* (1968), *Days of Life and Death and Escape to the Moon* (1970), *Places Where I've Done Time* (1972), *Sons Come and Go, Mothers Hang in Forever* (1976), *Chance Meetings* (1978) and *Obituaries* (1979).

2. "Between the essay and the short story, [...] it seemed to me there existed a form or formlessness which would permit me to write" (Saroyan 1950: 24).

3. A term coined by the authors, a compound of *eidos* (idea) and aesthetics.

4. From another standpoint, Jean Paul Sartre's protagonist of *La Nausée* (2007), Antoine Roquentin, experiences his first feeling of existential nausea when he holds the pebble on the beach. The thingness of the thing, the object that is "flat and dry" on one side and "damp and muddy on the other" (2007: 2), embodies the "being-in-itself", opaque and lacking self-consciousness, against which the incompleteness and imperfection of the "being-for-itself", or the Self, is clearly silhouetted. It is the Self alone that is able to detach from itself and cause "nothingness" to emerge. As Prendergast contends, Sartre's stone, like Camus' adaptation of the Sisyphus myth, condenses the existentialist conflict derived from the struggle between "desire for meaning" and "the world's resistance to that meaning" (2017: 601).

5. The historical homeland included the provinces of Erzurum, Hakkari, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Kharput and Sivas.

6. The Lakotas' fight to preserve Paha Sapa, the center of their universe, against the invasion of gold prospectors is one of the infamous chapters of American history. The decision to build the National Memorial Monument on Mount Rushmore is no less reprehensible.

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THE RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY AND ITS SUBJECTS IN SAM SELVON'S *THE LONELY LONDONERS* AND DIONNE BRAND'S *WHAT WE ALL LONG FOR*

LA RELACIÓN RECÍPROCA ENTRE LA CIUDAD Y SUS HABITANTES EN *THE LONELY LONDONERS* DE SAM SELVON Y *WHAT WE ALL LONG FOR* DE DIONNE BRAND

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Abstract

This article seeks to examine the significance of geographical setting in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005) in order to understand the undeniable reciprocal relationship that exists between the city and its subjects. Hence, it analyses the role played by London and Toronto in the construction and development of their inhabitants' identities, as well as the power that city dwellers have in (re)shaping urban spaces. The article aims to examine the dynamic and fluid character of the city and intends to identify the effects that migrant communities have on rewriting and remapping urban spaces when exercising their agency.

Keywords: *The Lonely Londoners*, *What We All Long For*, geographical setting, identity, urban space.

Resumen

Este artículo busca examinar la importancia del entorno geográfico en el que se desarrollan las obras *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) de Sam Selvon y *What We All Long For* (2005) de Dionne Brand para así entender la recíproca e innegable relación que existe entre los sujetos y las ciudades que éstos habitan. Con este fin pretendo analizar el papel desempeñado por las ciudades de Londres y Toronto en la construcción y el desarrollo de las identidades de sus habitantes, así como el poder que los ciudadanos tienen a la hora de (re)diseñar los espacios urbanos. El artículo pretende examinar el carácter dinámico y fluido de la ciudad y busca identificar los efectos que tienen las comunidades migrantes en el proceso de reescribir y recartografiar los espacios urbanos a través del ejercicio de su agencia.

Palabras clave: *The Lonely Londoners*, *What We All Long For*, entorno geográfico, identidad, espacio urbano.

1. Introduction

The significance of geographical setting has been a subject of study in postcolonial literature for decades. Contemporary postcolonial cities have been discussed either for their status as modern cities or as reinterpretations of old colonial cities. According to Asef Bayat, the modern city has "a tendency to differentiate, individualize, and fragment its inhabitants, to weaken the traditional ties […] and increase geographic mobility" (2009: 188). Nevertheless, urban nuclei also serve as a refuge for their inhabitants. They function as spaces where subjects can share experiences and construct their identities. Taking these contrasting views on the role of cities into account, this article aims to analyse Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) in relation to Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005). Samuel Selvon was a Trinidadian-born novelist and short story writer who emigrated to London during the fifties. He extensively depicted Caribbean life and used creolised English in his works. Dionne Brand is a renowned Trinidadian-born poet, essayist and novelist who emigrated to Toronto. She is well known for her use of language, which can be described as lyrical, sumptuous, evocative and innovative, and her commitment to issues of social justice, focusing mainly on race and gender.

On the one hand, Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* is set in post-World War II London and follows the daily lives of a group of West Indian immigrants as they struggle to survive in the big city, facing several instances of racism, class prejudice and loneliness. On the other hand, Brand's *What We All Long For* takes place in twenty-first-century Toronto and narrates the overlapping stories of a small group of friends living in the multicultural city as second generation immigrants, described as queer and racialized people. Although both novels are set in two different modern cities and were written at completely different times and places, they share common elements. This article argues that the representation of both urban nuclei and the effect they have on their inhabitants are, to a great extent, quite similar. Both cities construct and are (re)constructed by their dwellers. As both novels focus on the lives of the immigrant population, the article will also examine the discriminatory power of locations, as well as their potential to generate a feeling of belonging, at-homeness and safety. Drawing on theories that argue for a view of space as socially constructed (Lefebvre 1991) and relational (Massey 2005), I argue that these novels represent a mutually constitutive relationship between the city and its inhabitants. As the cities both shape and are shaped by the experiences of the migrant communities, London and Toronto are not only the setting for the action, but they also operate almost as characters in their own right.

2. Analysing Spaces in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

In Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, we are presented with two different and almost opposing 'Londons': the real versus the imagined city, the 'dark' city versus the 'Big City'. In the novel, London is presented as "a place divided up into 'little worlds and you stay in the world you belong to and you don't know anything about what happening in the other'" (2006: 60). The city that the 'boys' (immigrants) inhabit is in constant flux, giving rise to different moods and feelings: from desire and excitement to despair, frustration or anxiety.

As readers get immersed in Selvon's narrative, one becomes aware of the effect that city spaces have on the group of immigrants focalizing the story. These West Indian immigrants are relegated exclusively to specific locations within the city and excluded from others. Drawing from theories on Black studies (Hartman 2002; Sharpe 2016; Moten 2017), it can be argued that "blackness isn't a people problem; it is the problematization of the people" (Moten 2017: 202). Black existence has often been determined by "racial subjection, incarceration, impoverishment and second-class citizenship" (Hartman 2002: 766), which constitute the legacy of slavery. Black bodies have been excluded from "social, political, and cultural belonging" (Sharpe 2016: 14), and they have been geographically and historically displaced. In the novel, London itself appears to have been designed to marginalize them, concentrating immigrants in ghetto-like areas. This purpose of ghettoizing the city is highlighted when a sign that reads "Keep the Water White" (Selvon 2006: 77) is mentioned in the novel, meaning that this specific part of the city does not welcome coloured immigrants. Therefore, geographical distribution, employment opportunities and housing become signifiers of alienation and segregation based on racial issues. Black immigrants are usually concentrated in specific neighbourhoods in London. One of those neighbourhoods is Harrow Road, a working-class neighbourhood with old, grey, cracking houses piled up in rows on both sides of the street (59). This area is described as “the real world, where men know what it is to hustle a pound to pay the rent when Friday come” (59). There, the immigrants are often jammed into small rooms shared with other family members or homeless people. This situation is prompted by Black immigrants’ unemployment or poor working conditions. The boys, situated at the bottom of the social hierarchy, are forced to accept the jobs rejected by ‘the rich’ (the white population). Thus, as Kabesh states in her analysis of the politics of movement in Selvon’s novel, “*upward* mobility, is blocked by the colour bar” (2011: 7, emphasis in original). The migrants’ skin colour becomes an obstacle to freedom, social mobility and the promise of happiness.

That is the reality faced by West Indian immigrants arriving in London, one of several barriers and limits to their mobility and freedom (physical, social and political). A reality that clashes with the immigrants’ expectations about the ‘Big City’: a city of dreams, prosperity and streets ‘paved with gold’. This idyllic idea of London “granted by imperial tutelage had a much more powerful influence on many of them [immigrants] […] than their experience of the actual reality” (Lamming 1998: 5). Take the example of Tanty taking the tube to go to Great Portland Street. She is afraid of the unknown but “the thought that she would never be able to say she went made her carry on” (Selvon 2006: 70). Or take Galahad feeling important for saying “he was going there [Charing Cross Station]” (72). For them, the conditions in which they live in London are not as important as the fact of being in the metropolis. Still taking the character of Galahad as an example, we can see how the miserliness of his room, described as an “old basement room” from which “a whiff of stale food and old clothes and dampness and dirt” come out of the door (81), drastically diverges from the fancy public spaces of the city in which he enjoys strolling.

Throughout the novel, immigrants often experience a journey from idealism to disillusionment. When they arrive in London, the idea of a magnificent city turns unsavoury, and London becomes a “lonely miserable city” (Selvon 2006: 126). This pessimistic and more realistic vision of London is personified in Moses, since he “is no longer stirred by the city’s well-known sites and place-names” (Dyer 2002: 126). Moses’s character notably clashes with wide-eyed new West Indian immigrants like Galahad. Contrasting with the idealistic view of other characters, Moses sees London as a place of moral decadence, nothingness and emptiness: “All them places is like nothing to me now. […] back home […] You say to yourself, ‘Lord, them places must be sharp.’ Then you get a chance and see them for yourself, and is like nothing” (Selvon 2006: 73). Moses shows us the other side of the coin, the ‘dark’ city. He usually presents a menacing depiction of London to the boys, as when he refers to London as a “lonely miserable city”, a city where people are dying alone in their rooms and “nobody don’t know nothing until the milk bottles start to pile up in front of the door" (Selvon 2006: 126). Moses turns the city of London into a necropolis and "declares his life to be inert" (McLeod 2004: 35). He highlights the stillness and immobility of his life in London after all those years: "still the same way, neither forward nor backward" (Selvon 2006: 124). To resist the bitterness, Moses frequently takes refuge in his room and daydreams about a utopian view of Trinidad: "I want to go back to Trinidad and lay down in the sun [...] I go and live Paradise [...] get an old house [...] no ballet and opera and symphony" (Selvon 2006: 25). Feeling displaced and alienated in London makes him see his home country as a paradise, a place where he could live freely in a house, not the basement where he lives, with "London and life on the outside" (McLeod 2004: 35). He is not part of English society, 'life' is outside while he is inside, immobile. Hence Moses can be considered the epitome of Ahmed's 'melancholic migrant' (2010). The immobility that paralyses Moses's development can be related to him getting stuck in bad feelings; he has completely lost hope and is constantly longing for his past life. Sara Ahmed describes the melancholic migrant as the one who cannot "let go", as the one who "holds onto" something that has been lost (2010: 139). Moses is incapable of getting over the memories of Trinidad, and his suffering becomes a way of holding on to that ideal.

Galahad, on the contrary, spends most of his time wandering around the city; he is associated with movement and vitality. However, as time goes by, Galahad is also affected by the city of London. He gradually becomes disillusioned by a reality that clashes with his imperial education: no job opportunities, decaying housing, immobility or racism. Similar to Moses, he encounters "a city that threatens to disintegrate him" (Habchi 2022: 82). Galahad's journey goes from the "good migrant who wants what the nation wants him to want" to disillusionment (Ahmed 2010: 157). As stated by Ahmed, "it is the migrant who wants to integrate who may bear witness to the emptiness of the promise of happiness" (2010: 158); and this migrant is Galahad. In Selvon's novel, West Indian immigrants experienced "a situation that robbed them of their humanities and turned them into different beings which invariably often lead them to an undesired end in their bid to survive and bring the two ends of their lives together" (Mgbeadichie and Asika 2011: 48). Following Ahmed's ideas, the racism experienced by the migrants "becomes readable as what the melancholic migrant is attached *to*, as an attachment to injury" which explains their refusal to participate in society and becomes an obstacle to their own happiness (2010: 143, emphasis in original). This state of apathy and unhappiness is shared among most of the boys in Selvon's novel, who feel alienated in the city. To avoid this feeling, they take refuge in a frenetic lifestyle, distracting themselves or gathering together seeking understanding.

Some geographical locations serve as a kind of shelter for the boys, starting with Moses's room, where the immigrants gather every Sunday. This domestic space contrasts with the feelings of alienation and detachment they experience in the outside world. In Moses's room, the boys create their own community within English society since it offers them comfort, bonding, support and stability. Therefore, in this domestic location, the West Indian immigrants gain agency.

Spaces in the novel do not only affect the characters negatively. Some of them contribute positively to the formation of a new identity and the development of their agency. West Indian migrants live a life exposed to vulnerability. They have no nation to protect them and their citizenship is not respected or recognised, which leaves them in a position in which Black life is "lived in, as, under, despite Black death" (Sharpe 2016: 22). According to Sharpe, to act from this position enables Black subjects to find ways of "re/seeing, re/inhabiting, and re/imagining the world" (2016: 22). Similar to Moses's room, where the boys can develop a real sense of kinship, Harris's fete at St Pancras Hall also offers the possibility of bonding and enjoyment. As McLeod describes, "Selvon transforms St Pancras Hall into an inspirational source of spatial creolization" (2004: 38), as well as social and cultural integration. There, the boys share the space with other white guests and feel 'at home' due to the atmosphere, the music and the dancing. Thus, the Hall becomes a space where cultural and social rules can be transgressed. Another instance in which West Indian immigrants share space with the white English population is Hyde Park. Setha Low, Dana Taplin and Suzanne Scheld, in their work *Rethinking Urban Park*, state that parks can function as a home for marginalized individuals and contribute to the process of cultural reproduction (2005: 147). In Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, the park is presented as a kind of liminal space, a contact zone where individuals from different classes and ethnicities converge. The boys integrate with members of the 'upper-social classes' who otherwise would be unreachable: "you does meet all sorts of fellers from all walks of […] it might be your boss […] some big professional feller because it ain't have no discrimination" (Selvon 2006: 95). Consequently, the rules of colonization and hierarchy do not seem to be enforced, enabling a certain degree of Black agency and leading to a situation of social and racial equality. Nevertheless, the encounters that take place in the park are mainly sexual in nature. Black immigrants are not only tolerated, but almost desired: "boys coast lime while the pretty pieces of skin suntan as the old geezers watch" (Selvon 2006: 92). The objectification of the Black male body and its hypervisibility leads to Black invisibility (Yancy 2017: xxx). As stated by George Yancy, within a "racially saturated field of hypervisibility, the Black body still functions as the unseen as it does in the case of its invisibility" (2017: 68). Though in the park the immigrants might feel more integrated and may develop their agency, they are still invisible. Only their Black bodies as objects of white female desire are visible.

Finally, the last instance in which Black immigrants exercise their agency is by walking and wandering across London. In her analysis of Selvon's novel, Rebecca Dyer states that: "The migrant characters' […] trajectories of their walks, their gatherings in small, rented rooms, […] are political acts... however incomplete in their ability to alleviate the hardships of actual immigrants' lives in London" (2002: 112-113). Though wandering across the city of London may not alleviate all the difficulties faced by the migrant population, it creates a space in its use and enables the boys to gain some agency. According to Kristine N. Kelly, the activity of wandering and strolling in *The Lonely Londoners* can be considered a strategy "that is integrative, digressive, and layered and that allows the narratives a share in authority over the city's topography and its concomitant meaningfulness" (2019: 66). In connection with this idea of wandering, it is possible to identify in this novel Baudelaire's figure of the *flaneur*: a kind of urban dweller who observes city life and experiences the city through his wanderings. Nevertheless, since London is reconstructed and reconceptualized through the immigrants' peripatetic wanderings, it can be argued that Selvon's characters are closer to De Certeau's (1984) idea of the '(resistant) walker': a subject whose movement across the city constitutes a strategy of resistance; an activity that enables the transgression of boundaries and a control of space. Their movement across the city places characters such as Galahad within the realm of the *flaneur* or the walker: "[…] the old Galahad walking out to the road, […], bowing his head in a polite 'Good evening' and not giving a blast if they answer or not. This is London, this is life oh lord, to walk like a king with money in your pocket, not a worry in the world" (Selvon 2006: 75). Mobility gives these characters a certain degree of autonomy to reshape London, creating a sense of place and belonging.

This ability to reshape urban spaces grows from the migrant awareness of living "in the wake of slavery, in spaces where we were never meant to survive" (Sharpe 2016: 130). This self-awareness enables them to reimagine and transform spaces in order to create a feeling that is closer to freedom, safety or belonging; though always remembering that this takes place within a specific consciousness: Black existence. As stated by Kristine N. Kelly, "mobility thus becomes a resource for immigrant self-imagining in this metropolitan urban space that often inhibits movement by geographical directives or containment" (2019: 86). The dwellers and their walks across the city streets create new layers of London, stressing that the city is not static or immobile but a developing and shifting space. The characters' mobility and journeys across the city help create a new 'Black' and 'immigrant' London. Thus, not only does the city have an impact on West Indian immigrants, but the boys also influence London by reconfiguring the spaces and (re)claiming parts of the city. The city's fluid character and its potential to be rewritten by its inhabitants is also central in Dionne Brand's work, more specifically in her novel *What We All Long For*.

3. Analysing Spaces in Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*

In Brand's novel, the city of Toronto becomes alive; it becomes a character in itself. From the very first page of the novel, Brand reveals the centrality of the city, its inhabitants and its spaces to the novel. As the story unfolds, the personification of Toronto becomes more and more evident. The city is given human characteristics, such as breathing or thinking, together with its constant change: "[…] streets seem to be their own selves, reflective, breathing some other breath, going some other way without the complications of people" (Brand 2005: 39). Brand's Toronto goes beyond the function of a mere setting for the story; it has the power to define and dominate the lives of its inhabitants. Some critics have defined Brand's Toronto as the perfect example of "diaspora space", "a site of 'migrancy' and 'travel' which seriously problematises the subject position of the 'native' […] [and which] includes the entanglements of genealogies of dispersion with those of 'staying put'" (Brah 1996: 182). *What We All Long For* has been described as "a novel concerned with how the city operates in and influences the lives of its inhabitants and how its inhabitants negotiate the city in their various efforts to find their own comfortable spaces" (McKibbin 2008: 502). Brand presents the city as a space where interpersonal encounters between strangers take place. Toronto can be considered a space of cultural translation "in which the protagonists translate the city's cultural and spatial divisions by creating points of contact that, on the one hand, open up dialogues between different groups of people and, on the other, create silences that point to failed encounters" (Fellner 2010: 232). Toronto is depicted as a cosmopolitan city whose spatial histories are also recognized. The different ethnic neighbourhoods (different 'worlds') that constitute the city are brought together, creating a heterogeneous picture of Toronto, without forgetting the historical origins of the territory:

> There are Italian neighbourhoods and Vietnamese neighbourhoods in this city; there are Chinese ones and Ukrainian ones and Pakistani ones and Korean ones and African ones. Name a region on the planet and there's someone from there, here. All of them sit on Ojibway land, but hardly any of them know it or care because that genealogy is wilfully untraceable except in the name of the city itself. (Brand 2005: 4)

The city depicted by Brand could be considered contradictory, since it presents both positive and negative features. For some characters, the city becomes a "threatening" and "dangerous" place, sometimes described as a "prison" (2005: 115, 309, 166). Similarly, other characters perceive Toronto as a "mothering" place (2005: 67), a place that inspires them and makes them feel at home. These contradictions reflect Doreen Massey's conception of space as not fixed or permanent, but always in a process of construction: since space "is a product of relations-between, relations which are necessarily embedded material practices which have to be carried out, it is always in the process of being made" (Massey 2005: 9). Due to its shifting character and transitoriness, Brand's Toronto perfectly illustrates this take on urban space: "How does life disappear like that? It does it all the time in a city. One moment a corner is a certain corner, […] then it disappears […] A bank flounders into a pizza shop, then into an abandoned building […] it springs to life as an exclusive condo" (Brand 2005: 183). Consequently, Toronto becomes an example of a postmodern, always-in-flux city.

What is interesting about the constant flux of the city is that it seems to equate to the dynamic identities of its inhabitants. As stated by Isabel Carrera Suárez, "the physical and mental flux of the characters is closely related to the defining characteristics of the global city, which is always described as a *process* formed by a succession of fluxes" (2008: 191, emphasis in original). This fluidity and dynamism in relation to the city and its inhabitants' identities might be ambivalent. Although it may offer freedom of identification, it also implies a certain degree of uncertainty and chaos.

Just as in *The Lonely Londoners*, the relationship between the city and its inhabitants is central to Brand's work. In this context, it is necessary to highlight that first-generation and second-generation immigrants present totally different and often opposing relations with the city of Toronto, resulting in diverging spatial identifications. In Brand's novel, first generations are usually associated with fixed and permanent spaces, such as family homes or the workplace (for example, the Vus's restaurant). They tend to focus on collective spaces where they can establish a relationship with their past (a lost one), ethnicity and cultural background. Their identities seem to be defined by those city spaces and tied to the notions of traditional multiculturalism or what Bannerji describes as 'official multiculturalism' (2000: 37); a multiculturalism that presents an essentialized vision of cultural diversity, an "uncritical, de-materialized, seemingly de-politicized reading of culture through which culture becomes a political tool, an ideology of power which is expressed in racist-sexist or heterosexist differences" (Bannerji 2000: 37). In contrast, their offspring are constantly searching for new subjectivities. They feel much closer to the urban, and their identities combine aspects of both the global and the local. Younger generations do not "follow the 'roots/routes' of ethnic belonging" (Rosenthal 2009: 232). Although they are partly defined by the migratory history of their parents and the characteristics of Toronto as a global city, they occupy transitory and fluid spaces, where they enjoy the present moment and transcend the notions of ethnicity by creating new cultural practices. They embody the intrinsic contradictions of multiculturalism in Canada, since they party reflect the official multiculturalism that characterises their parents' experiences, but they also represent the so-called "multiculturalism from below" (Bannerji 2000: 18). Though Bannerji locates this type of multiculturalism in the US, it can also be applied to Brand's second-generation immigrants, who represent an "oppositional, or at least an alternative, way of contesting the dominant culture and making participatory space for the nation's others" (Bannerji 2000:18). Their hybrid and fluid identities become the perfect example of Toronto as a site of contradiction and diversity.

As previously stated, first-generation characters are defined by the city. From the very beginning, they are perceived as a stereotype rather than real people. This perception is reflected in the spaces they occupy, the neighbourhoods they inhabit and their jobs. When arriving in Toronto, they are forced to abandon their previous way of life and do not always manage to establish a place of refuge in the new city. Their experience in Toronto is framed within the notions of an official multiculturalism. Tuyen's parents, for example, are not able to keep working as a doctor and an engineer respectively. Instead, Tuyen's mother "became a manicurist in a beauty salon near Chinatown while [her father] unloaded fruit and other produce from trucks to the backs of stores on Spadina" (Brand 2005: 65). After some time in the city, Tuyen's parents realised that in order to succeed, they had to "see themselves the way the city saw them: Vietnamese food" (66-67), so they opened a Vietnamese restaurant.

Regarding space and belonging, there is a clear feeling of displacement among first-generation immigrants. Once again, Tuyen's parents are the perfect example. Coming to Toronto as refugees, the Vus's first residence was a small room in a rooming house, located in downtown Toronto (Brand 2005: 55). Thanks to their hard work, the Vus were able to move to a house in Richmond Hill: "one of those suburbs where immigrants go to get away from other immigrants, […] end up living with all the other immigrants running away from themselves" (54-55). This transition from downtown Toronto to Richmond Hill symbolizes their discomfort about being immigrants. They moved there to "eradicate that person once and for all", "the one that does not fit, that keeps drawing attention to language or colour", believing that Richmond Hill will "give them distance from that troubled image of themselves" (55). As Pooch points out, Tuyen's parents try to achieve the

American Dream, to climb up in society, by physically distancing themselves from other immigrants (2016: 111). Despite their success in the city, their house is tied to the past, full of "generations of furniture and generations of pots and pans and […] papers of all kinds" (Brand 2005: 62). Tuyen's parents are "psychologically immobilized in that moment of personal tragedy, which acquires the poignancy of a 'door of no return'" (Roupakia 2015: 37); and the only way they feel secure is by constantly recalling their past life. This obsession with former times is shared with Oku's parents, who "lived in the near past and were unable or unwilling to step into the present" (Brand 2005: 190). Thus, Tuyen's and Oku's parents embody the figure of Ahmed's melancholic migrant. Additionally, Tuyen's parents rarely leave the house or their restaurant. This immobility that characterizes the Vus's spatial behaviour relates to their fixed identities. For these immigrants the city of Toronto becomes a "site of marginalization where the places open to them are predicated upon invisibility and separation"; "an unwelcoming city where their difference becomes insurmountable and isolating" (Johansen 2008: 50). Their lack of agency and immobility, both physical and emotional, prevents them from influencing city spaces; they are the ones "being defined by the city" (Brand 2005: 66).

Contrasting with first generations' experience in the city, the main protagonists (Tuyen, Carla, Oku and Jackie) feel as if they "inhabited two countries —their parents' and their own" (Brand 2005: 20). Second-generation immigrants "inherit family histories of marginalization, oppression or victimization. Yet rather than asserting difference against some particular form of external oppression, [they] are torn between conflicting loyalties towards personal and communal relationships" (Roupakia 2015: 34-35). Even though their parents tried to transmit their culture of origin, the youngsters share a feeling of "detachment from their parents" (McKibbin 2008: 504) and feel Canadian: "breaking their doorways […] arrived at their own birthplace —the city. They were born in the city from people born elsewhere" (Brand 2005: 20). In Toronto, they find a sense of origin and a feeling of at-homeness. This idea of the city as a place of origin is discussed by Brand in *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*, where she states that cities are not places of origin but places of "transmigrations and transmogrifications. Cities collect people, stray and lost and deliberate arrivants. Origins are rehabilitated and rebuilt here" (2001: 62). Second-generation immigrants in this novel experience a constant process of transformation and self-creation: from their parents' origins to their own sense of belonging. Contrary to their progenitors, they lack an immediate sense of origin or belonging, they only have a sense of "drift" (Brand 2001: 118); and within this drift is where they feel they belong. While all of them must confront racism and overcome several barriers in their daily lives, they all encounter in the city a place where they fit in: "as disturbing as all they were living was, they felt alive. More alive, they thought, than most people around them. They believed in it, this living. Its raw openness. They saw the street outside, its chaos, as their only hope" (Brand 2005: 212). Second generations are willing to leave their homes, since they do not identify themselves with their progenitors; instead, they find "comfort inhabiting the city as [they know] it" (McKibbin 2008: 506). It is in the city where second generations are able to establish their own refuges, search for new subjectivities and create their mixed cultural identities. Additionally, finding an autonomous place contributes to the development of their identities. Though their identity is constructed across different axes, such as race, class, gender, age or sexuality, "their alternative subject position is neither uprooted or deterritorialised but firmly located in the streets of Toronto" (García Zarranz 2014: 91). In Toronto, second-generation immigrants voice their agency by reshaping the city and claiming its spaces for themselves; and this is possible because "when the socially marginalized emerge from the margins, a spatial shift occurs" (Peach 2004: 78). Thus, as theories on the social production of space show (De Certeau 1984; Lefebvre 1991; Massey 2005; Tonkiss 2005), not only does the city affect its inhabitants, it is also affected by them.

Starting with Tuyen, when she leaves her parents' house in Richmond Hill to live in an apartment on College Street, her father is offended. While for him returning to downtown Toronto would be a step backwards and would not reflect their achievements, for his daughter it represents a completely different thing: her apartment implies freedom (including sexual freedom) and creativity. Tuyen does not feel the need to distance herself from other immigrants because she sees Toronto as 'home': "You didn't bring me here, Bo, I was born here" (Brand 2005: 56). Tuyen's apartment becomes a mirror of the city, reflecting its fluidity and transitoriness. It also becomes a kind of museum but, unlike her parents, Tuyen includes objects from the streets of the city that represent the present time. Additionally, the apartment, similar to Moses's room, becomes a meeting point for other inhabitants of the city: "places of refuge, not just for their immediate circle but for all the people they picked up along the way to their twenties. Like the Graffiti Boys across the alleyway, Tuyen's friends from the gay ghetto, a few hip-hop poets […]" (Brand 2005: 23).

Contrary to Tuyen, Jackie decides to remain in her neighbourhood: Alexandra Park. This "urban warren of buildings and paths" (Brand 2005: 92), which can be considered an "ethno-suburb" (Pooch 2016: 82), is described as a ghostly place, as a reminder of its inhabitants' misfortune:

> The scarred brown buildings […] ghostly, sometimes scary life at night. With one thought they could have made it beautiful, but perhaps they didn't think that poor people deserved beauty […] Jackie's childhood might have been less hazardous […]

> The sense of space must have triggered lighter emotions, less depressing thoughts, a sense of well-being. (Brand 2005: 260-261)

The environment is blamed for the hopelessness of the community. The roughness of the neighbourhood has contributed to the creation of Jackie's unreachable personality. Vanauley Way and Alexandra Park "had given shape to her" (Brand 2005: 92), and that is why, although she would love to leave, she feels a certain degree of loyalty to the place. Consequently, she decides to open a shop "on the border where Toronto's trendy met Toronto's seedy" (99). Nevertheless, Ab und Zu (Jackie's shop) will always be defined by its location within "a mix of the old neighbourhood —the working class, the poor, the desperate" (99). Despite this, Jackie sees the city as full of possibilities, at least in her mind: "if the city didn't have the good grace to plant a shrub or two, she would cultivate it with her own trees and flowers. And so she did. In her mind" (264). That is her way of re-imagining the city and claiming ownership of it.

Oku, as well as his friends, is willing to leave his home. There, he does not feel understood and he is struggling to be independent. As a Black man, he is aware of the dangers posed by his ethnicity and the barriers that he would have to overcome. In the novel, he is constantly in search of an autonomous place. He is afraid of ending up like his father (a small-minded man who works in construction) or as a criminal (like Carla's brother, Jamal) due to the label that has been assigned to him as a Black man: "despite Toronto's cultural diversity, Blackness is the least 'normal', the least 'at home' in the Canadian city" (McKibbin 2008: 518). He finds Toronto distressing and threatening, a "prison, although the bars were invisible" (Brand 2005: 166). He spends most of his time away from his parents' home, searching for an autonomous place, but he does not find any other refuge in the city. Incapable of properly wandering the Canadian city, Oku lacks a sense of home. His only comfort is Jackie; he only develops a feeling of at-homeness when he is with her.

Lastly, Carla's relationship with the city is relatively different from that of her friends. Although she lives downtown with Tuyen, her home is actually the city itself. Since she cannot find refuge in her apartment because she lost the sense of home when her mom died, she seeks it in the city. Carla "loved the city. She loved riding through the neck of it, the triangulating girders now possessed by the graffiti crew. She loved the feeling of weight and balance it gave her" (Brand 2005: 32). For her, Toronto is a maze in which she can feel relief when wandering through its streets. The city has a kind of therapeutic effect on her: "any small trouble she took care of herself by giving it to the linden trees and the maple trees and the forsythia bushes on her way home" (249-250). Carla usually claims her position in the city by wandering through its streets and racing on her bike: "she saw the city as a set of obstacles to be crossed and circled, avoided and let pass. She saw it as something to get tangled in. […] Against the flow of the rush-hour traffic […] just pedal, just go, go, go…" (32). That is her way of rewriting the city, through her own gaze and movement. Thus, the character of Carla might remind us of Selvon's Galahad. Consequently, she could be considered a *flâneuse*, the feminine counterpart of the *flaneur*. Nevertheless, this term has been extensively discussed and many critics do not recognise its existence (Wolff 1985), since that figure was not conceived as female; women lacked ownership of space. Additionally, considering that Brand's novel is set in a postcolonial and multicultural city and takes place within an urban discourse, it can be argued that Carla embodies the figure of the 'pedestrian' (Carrera Suárez 2015). Drawing on Meskimmon's theory of the 'aesthetic of pedestrianism' (1997), in which she describes pedestrians as "knowing space through embodiment", being "sentient participants" in the city (1997: 21), Carrera Suárez defines pedestrian as a subject who presents a "physical and emotional engagement with the city, a space shared and inhabited" (2015: 857). In the process of wandering and observing, Carla makes sense of the city and public life; instead of being the object of others' gaze, she becomes the subject of the action. As stated by Caroline Rosenthal, "Carla presents us with a city on street level, below representative buildings, with a city that bustles with the desires of different people" (2009: 238). In her wanderings, she is not detached from the city, she is not a mere observer of city life, she becomes an example of those "resistance bodies who take action in public spaces" (Carrera Suárez 2015: 864). Carla actively interacts with the space and this enables the remapping of Toronto. Therefore, once again, we can see how second-generation immigrants are able to rewrite and redefine the Canadian city.

After examining the characters' relationship with the city of Toronto, it can be concluded that while first-generation immigrants are time-focused —constantly longing for their past and rendered invisible in the city— second generations are space-focused —presenting a powerful connection with the city of Toronto, which contributes to the development of their unhyphenated identities, crossing not only spatial borders but also ethnic and national ones. For second-generation immigrants, the global city becomes a "strategic site", since it enables them "to gain presence, to emerge as subjects, even when they do not gain direct power" (Sassen 1998: xxi). These diverging ways of experiencing life might be explained by the feeling of uprootedness experienced by first generations, who live between two worlds: "a lost past and a non-integrated present" (Chambers 1994: 27). This feeling prevents them from establishing a connection with the spaces they inhabit and results in a sense of displacement, which can only be overcome by emotionally clinging to their past life.

4. Conclusion

The above analysis leads me to conclude that, although written and set in completely different historical moments and geographical settings, both novels perfectly exemplify the mutual influence between urban spaces and their inhabitants. By focusing on the lives of migrant populations, Selvon and Brand depict two dynamic cities and their impact on their dwellers, also paying attention to the (re)construction of city spaces by migrants as a way of exercising their agency.

In Selvon's novel, it can be seen that the majority of the immigrant population has to face barriers in their daily lives and are geographically limited to particular locations within the city. Similarly, in Brand's novel, first-generation characters feel they inhabit two different worlds and mostly perceive the city of Toronto as a marginalizing and unwelcoming place which renders them invisible. Contrary to Brand's first generations, defined by urban space and unable to influence the city, some of the immigrants in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* powerfully reshape the city they encounter upon their arrival, enabling the creation of diasporic communities.

As discussed by James Procter, Selvon's London is simultaneously a place of "dislocation and alienation" and a "landscape of belonging" (2003: 53). In Brand's *What We All Long For*, second-generation characters "resist their imposed invisibility in the city" (Johansen 2008: 49-50) by managing to reshape the city and claiming public spaces for their own. The four friends try to find a sense of belonging and construct a new cosmopolitan identity that reflects their subjectivities. These identities are intrinsically linked to the physical place of Toronto and its reimagination to invert stratification. The city of Toronto is rewritten and reshaped by second generations: take Tuyen's *lubaio* (a traditional Chinese totem, a kind of signpost where people leave notes, which functions as a representation of ethnicity and diversity in the city of Toronto) and the graffiti crew's mural as tangible examples. Therefore, the Canadian city is depicted as a place "where identity and alterity, where what is one's own or another's, live together and interact in a productive manner" (Cornejo Polar in Pooch 2016: 92); a fluid space of cultural intermingling.

Both novels revolve around two ideas: segregation and a constant search for connection by trying to feel at home within the English and Canadian societies. In Selvon's novel, readers can see how the perception of an environment and its idealisation can make the immigrants live happily or in constant anxiety created by that feeling of not belonging. London spaces are not mere settings; they provide either a sense of safety or strangeness, affecting the lives of its inhabitants. Likewise, the spaces in Brand's novel and the city of Toronto itself are not merely the setting for the action or the place where the characters live. Urban space clearly has an influence on its inhabitants, either a feeling of isolation and incomplete integration or a sense of belonging and at-homeness. Moreover, Toronto's inhabitants also (re)construct the city where they live. Therefore, the cities of London and Toronto are not presented as fixed places; they have room for development and change, which is usually caused by their citizens.

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EL ARQUETIPO HEROICO FEMENINO EN LA FANTASÍA ÉPICA CONTEMPORÁNEA. DAENERYS TARGARYEN, HEROÍNA IMPLACABLE Y MADRE DE DRAGONES

THE FEMININE HEROIC ARCHETYPE IN CONTEMPORARY EPIC FANTASY. DAENERYS TARGARYEN, RELENTLESS HEROINE AND MOTHER OF DRAGONS

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Resumen

La fantasía épica es conocida por sus abundantes protagonistas masculinos, que encarnan el modelo heroico heredado de su tradición mitológica y de leyenda. En cambio, el personaje femenino queda relegado al rol de dama en apuros o de premio para el héroe. Sin embargo, ¿no existe ningún personaje femenino en el momento actual del género que pueda conformar su propio arquetipo heroico? En busca de respuestas, este artículo acude a la tradición para elaborar, desde una perspectiva narratológica y literaria, una visión de los arquetipos femeninos habituales que puedan evolucionar hacia el heroísmo. A partir de aquí se propone el arquetipo de la Heroína Implacable basado en tres rasgos principales: uno, la rebelión del personaje femenino contra el sistema que le oprime; dos, la relación con la guerra, que condicionará las diferentes etapas de su evolución narrativa; y tres, el mundo ficcional como contexto, el cual influirá en su comportamiento actancial. Como aplicación práctica de este arquetipo, se analiza el personaje literario de Daenerys Targaryen (de la serie *Canción de hielo y fuego*, de George R.R. Martin) en busca de las directrices que la convierten en Heroína Implacable, en Madre de Dragones y, en definitiva, en una heroína de conducta proactiva, independiente del héroe varón.

Palabras clave: arquetipo, personaje femenino, heroína, fantasía épica, Daenerys Targaryen.

Abstract

Epic fantasy is known for its abundant male protagonists, who embody the heroic model inherited from its mythological and legendary tradition. In contrast, female characters are often relegated to the roles of maiden-in-distress or award for the hero. But is there no female character in the current state of the genre who can follow her own heroic archetype? Looking for answers, this essay turns to tradition to develop —from a narratological and literary perspective— a vision of common female archetypes that can evolve toward heroism. From this point, the archetype of the Relentless Heroine is proposed, based on three main traits: one, the rebellion of the female character against the oppressive system; two, the relationship with war, which will shape the different stages of her narrative evolution; and three, the fictional world as a context that will influence her actantial behavior. As a practical application of this archetype, Daenerys Targaryen, character of the series *A Song of Ice and Fire* (George R.R. Martin), is analyzed to identify the guidelines that make her a Relentless Heroine, a Mother of Dragons and ultimately a proactive heroine, who does not need a masculine hero.

Keywords: archetype, feminine character, heroine, epic fantasy, Daenerys Targaryen.

1. Introducción: Fantasía épica, héroes y heroínas

Frodo Bolsón, Geralt de Rivia, Kvothe, Kaladin, Elric de Melniboné, Traspié Hidalgo, Ged, Logen Nuevededos, Aragorn, Jon Nieve, Derguín Gorión… Dos rasgos unen a todos estos nombres: uno, que todos son héroes de fantasía épica; y dos, que son personajes masculinos. ¿Acaso en fantasía épica no hay heroínas que puedan engrosar esta lista? ¿O se trata de un género literario hostil para los personajes femeninos y, en consecuencia, las mujeres?

Para definir la fantasía épica podemos partir de tres perspectivas: desde la tradición, como una narrativa surgida de la mitología, las leyendas y los cuentos de hadas con sus propias leyes racionales (Palmer-Patel 2020: 4-5); desde un punto de vista formal, como género que alberga mundos ficcionales con parámetros espaciotemporales propios ajustados o no a los de nuestra realidad (Martín Rodríguez 2022: 571); o desde una perspectiva multimodal, como género capaz de extenderse por múltiples soportes artísticos manteniendo sus características esenciales: los personajes, el mundo ficcional y el mito (Castro Balbuena 2023). Como puede observarse, ninguna de estas definiciones rechaza a la mujer. En paralelo al éxito del género en el cine, la televisión o el videojuego, lo cierto es que siempre lo han acompañado los prejuicios, que señalan a la fantasía épica como un género literario conocido por sus héroes masculinos, batallas sangrientas y hechiceras sexualizadas (Oliver 2018: 356). Pero ¿cuánto se aproximan a la verdad estos prejuicios? ¿Puede la mujer, como personaje femenino, convertirse en la protagonista de la saga de fantasía épica o está condenada a ser una figura decorativa? El objetivo de este artículo es responder a tales preguntas porque, si el héroe es quien protagoniza las narraciones de fantasía épica, deberíamos poder hablar también de *heroínas*. De hecho, en fantasía épica habitan personajes femeninos memorables: Galadriel, Yennefer de Vengerberg, Cersei Lannister, Kettricken de las Montañas, Devi… Pero ¿alguna de ellas protagoniza su propia historia? Y, de ser así, ¿pueden ser definidas como heroínas? ¿Qué tipo de heroínas? ¿Serán semejantes al héroe tradicional, destinado a salvar el mundo, o tendrán sus propias características?

Para responder a estas y otras cuestiones seguiré el siguiente planteamiento desde una perspectiva narratológica y literaria a partir de las siguientes fuentes bibliográficas. En primer lugar, exploraré los arquetipos de personajes femeninos más habituales, como la Madre (French 2001; Rooks 2016) y la Mujer Caída (Howard y Prividera 2008; Braun 2015), en busca de su progreso desde la tradición. En segundo lugar, y a partir de la evolución de tales arquetipos, definiré la base del arquetipo de la Heroína Implacable, condicionado por la guerra y el mundo ficcional. Aunque aplicado a un caso concreto, este arquetipo habrá de contener los pilares básicos para futuros análisis de otras heroínas de fantasía épica. Por último, y como reconstrucción del boceto teórico previamente esbozado, se profundizará en Daenerys Targaryen (*Canción de hielo y fuego*, George R. R. Martin, 1996-), que sirve, como se concretará posteriormente, de enlace entre la tradición del género y el momento actual de la fantasía épica. Finalmente, en el apartado final, recogeré las conclusiones más relevantes de este estudio.

2. Sobre arquetipos que evolucionan y se unen entre sí: La Madre y la Mujer Caída

Los arquetipos están por encima de culturas, tradiciones y lenguajes; son una idea superior a todo ello y, según Jung, no dependen del tiempo ni de influencias externas (2010: 13). Esta visión del arquetipo se basa en el colectivo inconsciente, aquel conocimiento compartido que constituye un saber común superior al individuo, pero que está presente en todos ellos (Jung 2010: 4). Su importancia es capital en narratología, donde la crítica de los arquetipos se encarga de identificar patrones en la historia, así como asociaciones simbólicas, entre nuestro conocimiento lector (Al-Jaf 2017: 691), y cuyo mayor exponente fue Northrop

Frye con su obra *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957). Los elementos que conforman el significado compartido siguen un patrón, un conjunto de rasgos comunes, como los define Bassil-Morozow (2018: 14). Se trata entonces de significados que la sociedad mantiene, patrones que diferentes generaciones heredan. Y como se sabe que la sociedad no es inmutable, que su pensamiento varía con el tiempo del mismo modo que lo hacen su tecnología y sus valores morales, parece improbable que estos arquetipos permanezcan inmutables. En tanto que, como señaló Todorov, los arquetipos se muestran como una interpretación del mundo, estos conjuntos de significados dependen del emisor que ha de elaborar esa interpretación, del momento en el que vive y la sociedad en que habita (1997: 3). Estos tres elementos suponen que el arquetipo mantenga sus fronteras formales, aunque la narración que contenga cambie a lo largo del tiempo. Empleando la terminología de Frye, el mito —la narración— es inmutable, en tanto que lo que está escrito no puede cambiar, mientras que el significado variará según la interpretación del arquetipo (1951: 103-104).

Veamos un ejemplo de esta evolución. En 1992, y en su definición del heroísmo, Philip Sellier plantea su propia visión de la heroína:

> The heroic fantasy almost always creates masculine figures: this phenomenon can be explained by the physical superiority of men, the social position of women until recent times, and by motherhood. At a deeper level, we should consider the hypothesis that the heroic is a masculine fantasy: there are many women creators in the history of literatures, but none have been tempted by the epic world. Nevertheless there are 'heroines'. However, they are usually portrayed as slim, hard, unattainable virgins, quite the opposite of the feminine opulence which bewitches the heroes. (1992: 564)

Lo cierto es que el autor francés, al referirse a la fantasía heroica, parece haber olvidado en su exposición a algunas autoras de su tiempo como Ursula K. LeGuin o Margaret Weis, precursoras de autoras contemporáneas del género como Robin Hobb o N.K. Jemisin. Aun así, Sellier plantea una heroína mermada por su condición física, social y biológica; es decir, se refiere a la heroína como un personaje débil, sin voz y lastrado por su maternidad. Los argumentos de Sellier no se basan tanto en un juicio moral —como emisor que elabora una interpretación de un determinado arquetipo en un determinado momento desde una determinada sociedad— sino en un análisis de los relatos mitológicos, esto es, la tradición. Es este punto, entonces, al que debemos acudir en busca del heroísmo que parece negársele a las mujeres en fantasía épica. Así, Sellier se sirve de una supuesta condición biológica limitante, que correspondería al arquetipo de la Madre, y a una debilidad que conduce a la derrota, la cual ejemplifica el arquetipo de la Mujer Caída. Por ello, repasemos brevemente estos arquetipos.

En su primigenio estudio sobre los arquetipos, C.G. Jung ya hablaba de la Madre como mujer que reúne aquello que nutre, que fomenta el crecimiento y la fertilidad (2010: 16). De este arquetipo —de todos los arquetipos que estudió— Jung distinguió dos facetas, una positiva y otra negativa. La que ha perdurado en Occidente es la de la Madre pacifista —un arquetipo basado en la Virgen María— que define a la mujer como sumisa y débil, incapaz de ejercer poder por temor al pecado (French 2001: 54). Esta imagen coincide con la mujer-vasija de Neumann: destinada a procrear, delicada como la porcelana y con unas funciones predeterminadas, tales como dar vida, la crianza y la protección de sus crías (2015: 39-43). Frente a esta visión positiva, Jung habla de la Madre terrible vinculada a lo oscuro, la muerte, la seducción y el veneno (2010: 16), la cual se caracteriza, según Rooks, por priorizar su deseo sexual antes que sus deberes maternales (2016: 124). De esta manera, el arquetipo de la Madre se divide entre el bien absoluto de la Madre pacifista, basado en la protección de la camada, frente a la desidia de la Madre terrible, quien no solo desprotege a los suyos, sino que causa el mal a los demás. Pero ¿es así cómo se construyen los personajes literarios?

La influencia que lo verosímil ejerce en fantasía épica ha reducido el elemento maravilloso del cuento de hadas, en tanto que el mundo ficcional se construye sobre hechos razonados —mágicos o no— que buscan provocar un *efecto de lo real* o pátina de posibilidad (Castro Balbuena 2023: 314, énfasis en el original). Esta verosimilitud afecta también a los personajes, los cuales, libres de influencias maniqueístas, persiguen sus propias metas como entes individuales. Desde el punto de vista de la psicología, y más acorde a esta visión realista, Shannon E. French (2001) propuso tres variantes del arquetipo de la Madre en consonancia con los principios tradicionales, pero con la flexibilidad que supone no depender de una elección obligada entre el Bien y el Mal. Así, French habla de la Madre protectora, quien defenderá a sus hijos de cualquier modo, también con violencia y guerra; la Madre vengadora, quien se enfocará en destruir a sus enemigos si la meta es recuperar la paz; y la Madre instigadora, que cría a sus hijos para la victoria, aunque buscarla requiera hacer la guerra, y como ejemplo menciona a la madre espartana, que animaba a su hijo a marchar a la guerra para adquirir los rasgos que ella creía necesarios para medrar en la vida (French 2001: 60). Posteriormente, en campos literarios más alejados de la fantasía épica, el arquetipo de la Madre ha adquirido otras formas, como la Madre luchadora que nutre a sus hijos discapacitados al tiempo que pelea contra los obstáculos con la furia de un guerrero (Sousa 2011: 239), la Madre devorada y anonimizada por la dictadura de Franco que después se rescata en la novela de posguerra española (Schumm 2016: 160) o la Madre muerte, vinculada con los infanticidios, los desórdenes psicológicos y la negación de la propia maternidad, y conformada a partir del mito, la psicología, la historia y la literatura (Sherwood 2021).

Otro arquetipo relacionado con la sesgada definición de Sellier es el de la Mujer Caída. Este arquetipo surge en época victoriana para describir a la mujer a partir de su incumplimiento de los preceptos morales y materiales de su tiempo (Howard y Prividera 2008: 294). Entre los pecados que conducen a ese fracaso se encontraban el sexo extramatrimonial o no seguir la moda de aquella época, motivos por los que, como recuerda Braun, las doncellas preferían morir vírgenes antes que sufrir el castigo por su libertinaje (2015: 342). En literatura, este arquetipo supone abordar temas como la moralidad sexual, el adultero, la prostitución y la violación (Chatraporn 2008: 27), lo cual supone valorar, además de la relación de la mujer con el hombre, la sociedad que impone tales castigos y obligaciones a la mujer.

Como ocurría en el caso de la Madre, la Mujer Caída se construye no tanto como un comportamiento concreto de la mujer, sino como un comportamiento femenino *en relación con el hombre* —como apuntaba Frontgia en referencia a los arquetipos en general (1991: 15)— y además *en relación con la sociedad en la que habita*. Profundizar en los temas de la Mujer Caída provoca diferentes versiones del arquetipo, como la víctima de violación, una alternativa que trasciende la ubicuidad de la víctima, según Jean-Charles (2014: 40), y que sitúa a la mujer como una superviviente más que como una mujer mancillada o corrupta. Esta supuesta corrupción se refleja, por ejemplo, en algunos relatos de *El Silmarillion* (1977), donde la violación se plantea como la definitiva corrupción de lo bello y, en consecuencia, de lo divino (Whitaker 2010: 67). La moralidad sexual produce su propia variante de la Mujer Caída, la prostituta. En este sentido, la relación mujer-hombre vuelve a ser protagonista: por ejemplo, con la idealización del rescate de la prostituta por el varón, según Skoler (1998: 98-100), o las figuras estereotipadas que suponen las mujeres de las obras de Augusto Roa Bastos, las cuales pueden definirse desde el arquetipo de la prostituta (Weldt-Basson 2010: 211).

La Mujer Caída se compone entonces de dos elementos: por un lado, la sumisión condenatoria; y, por otro lado, el castigo tan duro que, en ocasiones, la muerte definitiva es la única opción posible. Sin embargo, al considerar a la Mujer Caída como *superviviente*, en fantasía épica contemporánea —y como en la realidad extratextual— los personajes femeninos tienden a escapar del castigo mediante una defensa activa, que sustituye a la pasividad que las empuja a la corrupción, a la marginación y, por último, a la muerte. Para huir de estas "estructuras patriarcales", Tolmie señala una serie de acciones propias del personaje femenino de este género literario, como

> the development of magic/mind powers as a female escape from oppression (magic as the new cross-dressing); the thematization of female-to-female bonding and love-affairs as legitimate and desirable alternatives to compulsory heterosexuality; the

> frequent erasure of the hero as a necessary aspect of the representation of the heroine; and overtly anti-Christian commentaries. (2006: 151-152)

Esta consideración del rol proactivo supone una evolución en nuestra manera de interpretar los arquetipos: de una Madre pacifista (pasiva) a la Madre orgullosa (activa), capaz de cualquier violencia con tal de proteger o beneficiar a sus pequeños; de una Mujer Caída (pasiva), mancillada y despreciada por todos, a una Mujer Superviviente (activa) que se repone del castigo y evita, así, su final. Sin embargo, en esta evolución arquetípica, ¿cuál debería ser la siguiente fase? ¿Puede ser la Madre, en contra de argumentos como los de Sellier, una heroína? ¿Es capaz la Mujer Caída de sobreponerse de su humillación y realizar las hazañas de las que la sociedad no la cree capaz?

3. La heroína en la fantasía épica contemporánea. Daenerys Targaryen, heroína implacable y Madre de Dragones

3.1. La Heroína Implacable a partir de la guerra y el mundo ficcional

Pese a ciertos análisis teóricos que la reducen a un mero estereotipo de algunos ideales feministas (cfr. Maddox 2018), una de las heroínas más recordadas en fantasía épica es Éowyn de Rohan (*The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien). Éowyn decide sublevarse contra las órdenes de su tío, el rey de Rohan, cuando este parte con sus tropas para romper el asedio de Minas Tirith. En lugar de quedarse con el resto de mujeres y niños, Éowyn recurre al travestismo para infiltrarse entre las filas de los *rohirrim* y acompañarlos a la batalla. Esta acción se ha percibido como una avanzadilla para que el resto de mujeres de la Tierra Media se convirtieran también en soldados y figuras heroicas (Ravikumar y Chandrasekar 2018: 23). Los objetivos de este travestismo pueden plantearse de la siguiente manera: primero, permitir a Éowyn acudir a la guerra pese a su condición de mujer, y segundo, protegerla mediante el camuflaje en el ambiente hostil que es el ejército, como se refieren D'Amico y Weinstein a las fuerzas armadas de los Estados Unidos, definiéndolas como un territorio hostil, literalmente, "No-Woman's-Land" (1999: 5). Si extendemos esta idea de hostilidad, llegaremos al tradicional proteccionismo por el que las mujeres deben permanecer en la seguridad de sus hogares (Harrison 2013: 26). Entonces ¿el lugar legítimo de la mujer en la guerra no existe? O, dicho de otra forma, ¿la mujer guerrera solo puede existir en la ficción?

Desde un punto de vista histórico, la mujer ha quedado socialmente relegada a un segundo lugar por el hombre, quien debía purificarla, volverla humilde y sumisa

(Fries 1996: 59-60). Sin embargo, algunas mujeres en la Edad Media sí gozaban de autoridad y libertad, aunque ligadas a su condición social; es el caso de Eleanor de Aquitania, Margaret Paston o Juana de Arco. Para conseguir esta posición aventajada debían enfrentarse a la sociedad de su tiempo en busca del heroísmo que en Occidente ha acaparado el hombre blanco, según Hohenstein (2019: 2), por su ventaja social, política y económica. Desde un prisma aún más amplio, numerosísimas mujeres han participado activamente en la guerra en el pasado: desde Boudica, que se rebeló contra la invasión romana en la antigua Britannia del año 26, hasta Agustina de Aragón, cuya intervención en el asedio de Zaragoza por las tropas francesas en el siglo XIX forzó la retirada del enemigo y, por tanto, la victoria de los defensores (Freire López 2018). Pese a esta participación de la mujer en la guerra, se han preferido las historias del héroe varón, quizá, como señala Gottschall, por ser sus actividades más atractivas para el público (2009: 441). Así, la mujer guerrera se ha visto condenada a la ficción, como explican Howard y Prividera en relación a los arquetipos que se ven lastrados por su trasfondo ideológico: "For example, women of any race or ethnicity are, by definition, not embraced as military actors in patriarchal social orders. Thus, the 'woman warrior' archetype primarily manifests as fictional (e.g., Xena in *Xena: Warrior Princess,* Sydney Bristow in *Alias*)" (2008: 293).

Pero la mujer guerrera —personajes históricos aparte— existe fuera de la ficción. Como el hombre, son muchos los roles que la mujer desempeña en este contexto: desde el de guerreras al de esposas, voluntarias, operarias de los sistemas de defensa e incluso prostitutas o trabajadoras sexuales (D'Amico y Weinstein 1999: 4). Lo cierto es que no tenemos que retroceder siglos de historia para analizar la función de la mujer en la guerra, pues su actuación en conflictos bélicos modernos ha sido fundamental. En la Primera Guerra Mundial, las mujeres no solo debieron mantener los niveles de producción industrial cuando la mano de obra masculina empezó a escasear, sino que algunas de ellas engrosaron también la vanguardia (Padilla Castillo y Rodríguez Torres 2013: 196). En la Segunda Guerra Mundial, las mujeres británicas solteras de entre 20 y 30 años fueron movilizadas y cien mil guerreras soviéticas recibieron honores militares (Ramírez 2002: 97-98). Irónicamente, cuando la hora de la supervivencia se aproxima no importan los prejuicios ideológicos: cualquier mano es lo bastante firme para sujetar el arma y combatir por los demás. Ya no importa, así, si Éowyn de Rohan es una mujer o no, sino su intención de defender a los suyos y de combatir junto a ellos. Solo en el momento álgido de su hazaña —antes de derrotar al señor de los Nazgûl (Tolkien 1991: 823)— descubre su identidad, como muestra de que la heroína es tan válida como el héroe.

Sin embargo, debo precisar que, desde una perspectiva narratológica, y aunque iguales en su objetivo final —salvar el mundo (Ramaswamy 2014: 47)— el héroe y la heroína no son del todo iguales. Para encontrar las diferencias, el análisis debe centrarse en *el camino que ambos siguen hasta la hazaña*, o, como Campbell lo denominó hace ya algún tiempo, el camino del héroe o monomito (1993: 30). El teórico estadounidense expuso el camino del héroe como conjunto de una serie de fases y obstáculos que el héroe —tradicionalmente varón— ha de superar en su evolución heroica. El personaje femenino, por lo general, ha estado excluido del rol protagonista en el monomito, relegado al papel auxiliar de amada o, como señaló Noble, el premio que debía ganarse o la damisela en apuros (1990: 7). Volvemos a la descripción tradicional del personaje femenino, tal y como la mostraba Sellier, y cuya definición comentaba en páginas anteriores. Entonces ¿qué rasgos caracterizan el monomito de la heroína, distintos de los del héroe?

La primera característica es la rebelión contra el sistema que habita. Así, es habitual que la primera fase del camino de la heroína —tradicionalmente, la partida del hogar— coincida con la ruptura con aquello que la reprime, por ejemplo, escapar de padres abusadores, matrimonios concertados o de una violación, e incluso tomar las armas (Tolmie 2006: 148). Cuando la mujer se arma suele definirse como *masculinizada*, pues las actividades de la caballería han sido tradicionalmente desempeñadas por hombres (Addison 2019: 74). Es el caso, por ejemplo, de Brienne de Tarth, cuya apariencia física es tan comentada en la saga literaria como su habilidad con la espada (i.e. Martin 2011a: 311-312). Sin embargo, ¿por qué tachar de *masculina* a una mujer que combate cuando, como se ha señalado en líneas anteriores, nuestra historia está plagada de mujeres —conocidas o no— que engrosaron las filas de un ejército o que comandaron su propia tropa? ¿Acaso estas actividades no han sido consideradas como masculinas *por exclusión obligada* de la mujer?

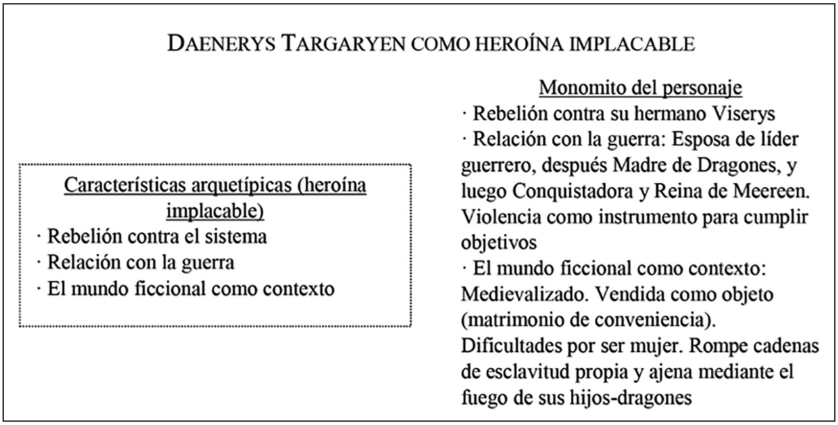
La segunda característica del arquetipo heroico femenino, vinculada con la anterior, es su relación con la guerra. El levantamiento en armas de la mujer simboliza precisamente su rebelión contra el sistema, un rol proactivo que entabla una lucha por conseguir el poder que se le ha negado por ser madre —protectora o no— por estar marcada por supuestos pecados —en plena caída— o simplemente por ser mujer. Es su paso adelante para tomar las riendas de su propia historia, para definirla según sus propios intereses y objetivos, y no como reacción a las actuaciones del varón. Una Madre destinada a evolucionar como mujer, más allá de la protección activa —violenta o no— de sus retoños; una Mujer Caída cuya mácula no solo sea reparable, sino ajena a la voluntad del varón.

El tercer rasgo se intuye a partir de los dos anteriores, pues no puede existir rebelión ni lucha sin algo contra lo que rebelarse o contra lo que luchar. Completa así el arquetipo heroico femenino el mundo ficcional o, más bien, los parámetros del mundo ficcional que oprimen o condicionan el comportamiento de la heroína. En el mundo ficcional —como conjunto de sucesos posibles, de infinita creación y accesible desde nuestra realidad (Doležel 1988)— juega un papel protagonista el *worldbuilding*, cuyo objetivo es proporcionar todos aquellos elementos que componen la vida de un individuo, desde su cultura hasta su ideología (Wolf 2012: 25). En fantasía épica, la narración está llena de sociedades ficticias con sus propios lenguajes, costumbres y tradiciones, si bien el aumento de verosimilitud en el momento actual del género implica que la rebelión de la mujer sirva al autor para ejemplificar los motivos por los que las mujeres de la realidad extratextual podrían emprender un viaje similar (Campbell 2014: 11). La humanización del personaje heroico en el género (cfr. Castro Balbuena 2022) a partir de esa mayor verosimilitud implica que, del mismo modo que su contraparte masculina, la heroína pueda reunir rasgos no canónicos —es decir, distintos de la fuerza física o la autoridad, entre otros (Hohenstein 2019: 2)— los cuales Sellier definió como rasgos diurnos, ya fueran físicos (ojos azules, belleza facial) o psicológicos (valiente, justo, honrado) (1990: 19).

A partir de estas características nace el arquetipo de la heroína implacable, cuyo nombre proviene de la proactividad, rebelión y ferocidad que se intuye no solo en los personajes femeninos de fantasía épica contemporánea, sino también en las nuevas visiones de los arquetipos tradicionales tal y como aquí se han presentado. De esta manera, en su camino hacia el objetivo final, la heroína implacable se sirve del uso directo de las armas, como el héroe tradicional; de sus hijos o de un sentimiento maternal; o de otras inquietudes no marcadas en los arquetipos tradicionales, tales como el gusto por la violencia, la venganza o la ambición, entre otras. Ninguna de estas herramientas librará al personaje de su heroicidad ni de su feminidad, presente en los arquetipos femeninos tradicionales que influyen en la heroína. Estos arquetipos, como se plantearon en el apartado anterior, sirven aquí como marcadores condicionantes de la naturaleza del personaje, cuya aparición en mayor o menor grado otorgará personalidad propia a la heroína implacable en su tránsito hacia la hazaña heroica. Ninguno de ellos la invalidará en su progreso, sino que constituirán fortalezas u obstáculos que deba enfrentar para definirse en un entorno hostil: una Madre enfrentada a la violencia del mundo que la rodea, que trata de reducirla a partir de su supuesta debilidad (sus hijos); o una Mujer Caída que, en lugar de permanecer en la derrota donde otros quieren sumirla, se rebela para plantar batalla. En definitiva, una suma de arquetipos que evolucionan y se unen entre sí para dar lugar a la hazaña y, por tanto, a la heroína implacable. Ejemplo de este arquetipo heroico femenino es Daenerys Targaryen, cuyo periplo narrativo, que desarrollo en el siguiente apartado, servirá como reflejo de cuantos principios teóricos se han expuesto hasta aquí.

3.2. Una Heroína Implacable: Daenerys Targaryen

Daenerys Targaryen es una de las numerosas protagonistas de *Canción de hielo y fuego* (1996-), de George R.R. Martin. La saga del autor estadounidense no solo ha recibido múltiples premios de la crítica (el Hugo, el Nebula, el Locus…), o la adaptación en múltiples medios (televisión, cómic), sino también la atención de la academia en múltiples ocasiones (i.e. Battis y Johnston 2015). El personaje de Daenerys ha sido también ampliamente discutido,[1] lo cual constituye uno de los motivos principales para la elección de su estudio en el presente ensayo. El otro motivo principal es su naturaleza híbrida, percibida en sus acciones como personaje, en el terreno de lo tradicional y de lo contemporáneo. Y es que Daenerys se presenta como una princesa desvalida, apenas una niña tan vagabunda como su hermano que a todas luces precisará de ayuda externa para aproximarse siquiera a la independencia. Este comportamiento la acerca a otras mujeres de la fantasía épica clásica (y de la literatura en general), siempre dependientes del varón para el progreso. Por ejemplo, la princesa Suldrun (*La trilogía de Lyonesse*, Jack Vance, 1983-1989), cuya breve existencia transcurre en un exótico jardín donde su padre la encierra; allí alumbra a su primer y único hijo, y en ese mismo lugar finalmente muere. Frente a ella, a lo largo de la saga Daenerys rompe con las cadenas de la tradición por voluntad propia para aproximarse a la proactividad de los héroes masculinos del género. Una proactividad que, como señalaba en el apartado anterior, es fundamental en el arquetipo de la Heroína Implacable, y cuyo monomito resumo en la figura 1.



DAENERYS TARGARYEN COMO HEROÍNA IMPLACABLE

Características arquetípicas (heroína implacable)

· Rebelión contra el sistema
· Relación con la guerra
· El mundo ficcional como contexto

Monomito del personaje

· Rebelión contra su hermano Viserys
· Relación con la guerra: Esposa de líder guerrero, después Madre de Dragones, y luego Conquistadora y Reina de Meereen. Violencia como instrumento para cumplir objetivos
· El mundo ficcional como contexto: Medievalizado. Vendida como objeto (matrimonio de conveniencia). Dificultades por ser mujer. Rompe cadenas de esclavitud propia y ajena mediante el fuego de sus hijos-dragones

Figura 1. Daenerys Targaryen como heroína implacable. Comparación entre características arquetípicas y el monomito del personaje a partir de la saga literaria. Elaboración propia

Daenerys Targaryen estaba destinada a ser princesa de los Siete Reinos. Sin embargo, cuando su padre, el príncipe Rhaegar, muere en la batalla del Tridente frente a Robert Baratheon, la vida de la pequeña cambia por completo. Su hermano Viserys y ella se convierten en los únicos supervivientes de la estirpe del Dragón cuando escapan antes de que los sublevados les den muerte. A partir de entonces, Viserys se arrastra con su hermana por las Ciudades Libres en busca de aliados para recuperar su reino. Se convierten en dos vagabundos, un rol que la princesa mantiene en sus primeros estadios de desarrollo narrativo. Así se percibe a sí misma cuando, en Qarth, es objeto de la fascinación de los habitantes de aquella ciudad por ser la única poseedora de dragones: "*Yet even crowned, I am a beggar still*, Dany thought. *I have become the most splendid beggar in the world, but a beggar all the same*. She hated it, as her brother must have" (Martin 2011a: 522; énfasis en el original).

Como se atisba en la figura 1, son varios los estadios que Daenerys atraviesa en su definición como Heroína Implacable. El primer escollo del personaje es asimilar los obstáculos del mundo ficcional donde habita, pues la propia configuración de ese lugar ficticio —esto es, las reglas que explican su funcionamiento[2]— condicionan su devenir: su sometimiento como moneda de cambio por ser mujer, y que supondrá que sea vendida en un matrimonio de conveniencia. Además, Daenerys no solo arrastra todavía las cadenas de su indefensión, sino también los vínculos con la tradición arquetípica que la someten al rol de sumisa, pasiva, sin valor alguno. Es una Mujer Caída marginada no por sus pecados de obra, sino de sangre y de sexo. Sin embargo, en lugar de refugiarse en su dolor y en su soledad, tales vínculos le sirven de combustible para fraguar la rebelión contra aquello que la oprime (su hermano) a partir del poder que empieza a poseer, aunque sea prestado por su reciente esposo, con quien se desposa por conveniencia de su hermano. Al principio, la muchacha trata de sublevarse mediante la sumisión, es decir, a través de la autoridad que le confiere el matrimonio de conveniencia que la convierte en *khaleesi*, y también con sus cualidades femeninas, satisfaciendo sexualmente a su esposo (Martin 2011a: 386). Por eso, cuando su hermano se niega a obedecer una de sus primeras órdenes, Daenerys ve a Viserys como lo que siempre fue, "a pitiful thing" (Martin 2011a: 231). Después, la muchacha empieza a ser responsable de sus propias acciones.

La princesa desvalida que es Daenerys desde que se nos describe *ab initio* empieza a diluirse bajo las aguas siempre turbias de la guerra, uno de los principales condicionantes del arquetipo de la Heroína Implacable. El primer contacto del personaje con lo bélico es durante los saqueos que los *dothrakis* —la tribu nómada a la que pertenece su esposo, Khal Drogo— cometen contra los lhazareenos. En uno de tales combates, Drogo resulta herido. Daenerys, que no desea esperar a los sanadores del ejército, elige a Mirri Maz Duur para atender al gran *khal*, una sacerdotisa que la *khaleesi* acaba de librar de una muerte segura. El devenir de Drogo, quien finalmente perece, parece vinculado a las elecciones de su esposa, en tanto que, de haber esperado a los médicos de la tribu, tal vez la muchacha no habría enviudado. Comienza así un conflicto interno de magnas consecuencias: primero, la desintegración del *khalasar*, que se divide en nuevas hordas en cuanto se confirma que Drogo no volverá a ser el mismo; segundo, la pérdida del bebé que Daenerys esperaba, pues el parto coincide con el ritual; y tercero, la renovación de Daenerys como mujer caída, de nuevo, tras la derrota y la pérdida del poder anterior. Se ve empujada así al desierto en busca de la supervivencia, eso sí, con dragones, un tesoro mayor del que podría haber imaginado. De hecho, la resurrección entre las llamas de Daenerys indican su nacimiento figurado, esta vez no como princesa desvalida, sino como heroína.

El poder del personaje no recae solo en su voluntad como tal, sino en los dragones, que surgen tras el ritual pergeñado por la propia Daenerys. Ella es la responsable de que los huevos que la han acompañado eclosionen. Es la primera de sus hazañas, la que la dejará infértil para siempre. Así está condenada por la propia Mirri Maz Duur, cuya maldición la perseguirá durante el resto del relato: "'When the sun rises in the west and sets in the east', said Mirri Maz Duur. 'When the seas go dry and mountains blow in the wind like leaves. When your womb quickens again, and you bear a living child'" (Martin 2003: 759). De esta manera, el personaje parece destinado a alejarse del arquetipo de la Madre. En un movimiento astuto, Daenerys aprovecha la magia oscura de la sacerdotisa para sus propósitos: ofrece su propia vida, también la de la sacerdotisa y el cadáver de su esposo. Luego del ritual, tres dragones se cobijan junto a ella donde antes había una pira funeraria. Los dragones maman de sus pechos como lo haría el bebé que Daenerys ha perdido, y se convierte así, contra todo pronóstico, en una Madre. Eso sí, de dragones. Por otro lado, quienes antes no podían seguirla a la batalla por ser mujer ahora le juran lealtad sin dudarlo (800-806). Es una heroína digna de respeto y veneración: "*I am Daenerys Stormborn, daughter of dragons, bride of dragons, mother of dragons, don't you see? Don't you SEE?*" (806; énfasis y mayúsculas en el original). El único que estaba dispuesto a seguirla, con poder o sin él, es Jorah Mormont, un caballero exiliado que, como revela el relato más adelante, al principio servía como espía para después convertirse en el mejor siervo de Daenerys, de la que acaba enamorándose.

A partir de este punto, el progreso del personaje evoluciona sobre los pilares ya reseñados. En este sentido, se suceden las hazañas heroicas, que se entrelazan con el arquetipo de la Madre. Pues, aunque parecía negársele tras la maldición de la sacerdotisa, Daenerys está destinada a añorar al hijo que perdió, proteger a los hijos inesperados y, desgraciadamente, sufrir el peso de una maternidad desatada, nutrida por miles de esclavos liberados, como se verá enseguida. Así, luego de su primera hazaña —su 'nacimiento' heroico y primer paso hacia la liberación— pronto llegará su segundo logro. Se trata de su brevísima estancia en Qarth, cuando los hechiceros de la ciudad conducen a Daenerys a una trampa. Es entonces cuando Drogon, el que amenaza con ser el más peligroso de los tres dragones —por ser negro como Balerion, dragón mitológico de este mundo ficcional— acude en auxilio de su madre (Martin 2011a: 638). Luego de esta hazaña —aunque Daenerys ocupase un rol pasivo todavía— la Mujer Caída se levantará para convertirse en Madre de Dragones, que evolucionará hacia la Conquistadora primero y hacia la Reina de Meereen después. Todo ello, como decía, mediante distintas hazañas que, a partir del arquetipo de la Madre y la Mujer Caída, la convierten en una heroína, como revelan los últimos estadios de la narración.

Al conocer los numerosos esclavos que son empleados como mano de obra y como producto comercial, Daenerys Targaryen emprende su propia campaña para liberarlos. Cuenta para ello con los Inmaculados, un ejército de castrados que, además de extender su vínculo con lo bélico, la ayuda a enfrentarse al resto de esclavistas. Una vez liberados, los esclavos engrosan la horda de Daenerys no como soldados, sino como hijos:

> "Mhysa!" they called. "Mhysa! MHYSA!" They were all smiling at her, reaching for her, kneeling before her. "Maela", some called her, while others cried "Aelalla" or "Qathei" or "Tato", but whatever the tongue it all meant the same thing. *Mother. They are calling me Mother*. (Martin 2011b: 18-19, énfasis y mayúsculas en el original)

Esta campaña de liberación eleva al personaje precisamente hasta aquello que le estaba negado: la monarquía. Aunque no de los Siete Reinos, como pretende Daenerys, sino de una de las ciudades liberadas, Meereen. Sin embargo, aquí debe enfrentar los efectos de la liberación no deseada de sus nuevos súbditos, que se rebelan, así como otros problemas que, a mi juicio, la aproximan a la figura del monstruo, que en fantasía épica adquiere un tinte más racional y próximo a lo verosímil, como el resto de sus elementos. La presencia de los dragones condiciona racionalmente la configuración del mundo ficcional y, en consecuencia, también la de Daenerys. Así, luego de que uno de sus nuevos súbditos alegase que el dragón Drogon había devorado a su hija, Daenerys —en una reacción de la Madre protectora que perdió a su hijo, y que empatiza con esta víctima— encierra a sus dragones en una cueva subterránea, contradiciendo su propia definición arquetípica maternal. Conforme crece y se convierte en mujer, Daenerys comprende que su poder se basa en la violencia, y que, al ser sus criaturas quienes la provocan, ella es la última responsable:

> *Mother of dragons*, Daenerys thought. *Mother of monsters. What have I unleashed upon the world?* [...] Without dragons, how could she hope to hold Meereen, much less win back Westeros? *I am the blood of the dragon*, she thought. *If they are monsters, so am I.* (Martin 2012a: 185, énfasis en el original)

Daenerys se impone la misión de liberar a los esclavos para después liberar también a los habitantes de los Siete Reinos del yugo de quienes asesinaron al rey Targaryen. Pero teme su propio poder: como humana, es consciente de lo que significa perder un hijo, de no ser más que una vagabunda, de sufrir la violencia de los demás. En última instancia, Daenerys madura y descubre que, para lograr su objetivo final, necesitará la violencia. Serán otros quienes sufran las consecuencias, y no podrá protegerlos a todos. Esta reflexión es la última de las hazañas en el relato literario que conocemos. Perdida en el páramo, enferma y próxima a la inanición, es Drogon quien la auxilia calcinando un caballo para que ella, con las manos desnudas, pueda alimentarse y sobrevivir. Después trepa al cuello de su hijo, sucia y manchada de sangre, sin necesidad de emplear el látigo que anteriormente había usado para intentar imponerle su autoridad a la criatura (Martin 2012b: 474). Es así cuando por fin entiende que, monstruo o heroína, su supervivencia depende de quién es en realidad.

5. Conclusiones

Nacida de los mitos, las leyendas y los cuentos populares, la fantasía épica se nutre de unas raíces extensas que aún hoy condicionan las sagas literarias. Entre los numerosos rasgos afectados están los personajes, elemento narrativo que, además, es una de las consideradas señales modales que se mantienen en los distintos soportes artísticos, además del literario. Es esta línea con la tradición la que se ha estudiado aquí en busca a una pregunta legítima: ¿Por qué los personajes femeninos heroicos no protagonizan su propia historia de fantasía épica? La respuesta subyace bajo décadas de discriminación, de reducción a mujeres-vasija, cuyo lugar era el hogar y no el campo de batalla. Un brevísimo repaso a nuestro pasado demuestra todo lo contrario: que las mujeres han destacado también en lo militar y que poseen sus propias leyendas heroicas, como la de Agustina de Zaragoza.

La heroína en fantasía épica surge, así, a partir de la misma tradición mitológica que la condenaba a ser el premio a ganar o la damisela en apuros. Si la mujer osaba interpretar un rol distinto a aquellos, de inmediato se la tachaba de monstruosa, como la Madre terrible; o de pecadora, como la Mujer Caída. Pero incluso en estos arquetipos negativos se percibe el heroísmo. Porque cuando la Mujer Caída vuelve a levantarse y desata su poder sobre quienes la rodean, pocos permanecen indemnes. Así lo ejemplifica Daenerys Targaryen: su resurgimiento heroico con el nacimiento de los dragones se ve enriquecido por la maternidad —ganada y perdida— y quienes intentan interponerse en su camino acaban reducidos a polvo y ceniza. Una reina hecha a sí misma luego de haber sido una vagabunda sin reino y sometida por su hermano, que a punto está de sucumbir ante la fiereza de su propia naturaleza.

Se ha planteado el arquetipo de la heroína implacable a partir de tres líneas maestras, aplicadas después al personaje Daenerys Targaryen. La primera línea maestra es la rebelión de la heroína contra el sistema que la rodea, que conforma la primera de las etapas de su monomito particular. Es el autorreconocimiento del heroísmo, la elección de objetivos —que, como su contraparte masculina, suele requerir salvar el mundo— y la aceptación de una naturaleza propia, que implicará un cambio en su relación actancial con otros personajes. Segundo, y ligado al anterior, la relación de la heroína con la guerra, ya sea por su participación directa o indirecta, y que a partir de ese momento condicionará todas sus acciones narrativas. Y tercero, el condicionamiento impuesto por el mundo ficcional, que supondrá distintas reacciones, desde la rebelión violenta a la búsqueda constante de libertad. Estas características nacen de los arquetipos tradicionales, como el de la Madre y la Mujer Caída, que marcarán diferentes etapas del monomito de la heroína implacable, así como la injerencia de rasgos no canónicos del héroe, como la ambición o la venganza.

El arquetipo propuesto posee, a mi juicio, las siguientes fortalezas, debilidades y posibilidades. Entre sus fortalezas, el análisis permite reflexionar sobre la progresión del personaje literario en paralelo al monomito original: sus condicionantes previos, nacimiento, progreso y su muerte. En el caso de Daenerys, su ‘muerte’ se traduce —a falta de nuevas entregas de la saga literaria— en la reducción de su naturaleza heroica a una de tintes monstruosos. Otra fortaleza del análisis es la consideración del arquetipo respecto de los pilares fundamentales del género, los cuales lo convierten en una estructura propia del género (la guerra y el mundo ficcional), sin cerrarse a las marcas que convierten a cada personaje en único. En el caso de Daenerys, su marca de unicidad es su cercanía con el monstruo. La última de las fortalezas del análisis es su anclaje con los arquetipos femeninos clásicos, así como sus últimos estadios evolutivos, de manera que no se discute una feminidad impostada, sino basada en ejemplos contrastados. Por otra parte, y pese a su limitación actual —una aplicación basada en un único personaje: Daenerys Targaryen— el análisis supone un primer paso en el estudio sistemático del personaje femenino en la fantasía épica multimodal, cuya siguiente estación conllevaría el estudio de su adaptación televisiva, así como el caso semejante de Rhaenyra Targaryen y su ‘parentesco’ (literal y figurado) con la Daenerys del presente análisis. Del mismo modo, este arquetipo pretende situarse en la senda que apuntaba en páginas anteriores: el estudio de la heroína en la ficción como entidad propia, y no como plagio del héroe masculino con nombre y genitales femeninos.

En conclusión, tradición y contemporaneidad se unen en Daenerys Targaryen para forjar un personaje único, cuyas características e influencias aún pueden precisarse mediante análisis entre diferentes protagonistas femeninas que arrojen aún más aristas. Sin embargo, la esencia de la heroína se ha desvelado con claridad: rebelarse contra quienes pretenden someterla y protagonizar así su propia historia.

Notes

1. Desde la perspectiva feminista (cfr. Schubart 2016) hasta su rol como gobernante (cfr. Carroll 2020), entre otros estudios dedicados a su adaptación televisiva (i.e. Cascajosa Virino y Rodríguez Ortega 2018).

2. Essos es un mundo ficticio de ambientación medieval, con una configuración basada en la leyenda y el mito, así como la existencia (velada) de la magia, que se descubre de forma paulatina durante la saga.

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Reviews

DISCURSOS E IDENTIDADES EN LA FICCIÓN ROMÁNTICA. VISIONES ANGLÓFONAS DE MADEIRA Y CANARIAS / DISCOURSES AND IDENTITIES IN ROMANCE FICTION. ANGLOPHONE VISIONS FROM MADEIRA AND THE CANARIES

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Romance novels have historically enjoyed remarkable levels of popularity, but the genre is currently receiving unprecedented attention, as attested by seemingly inexhaustible popular demand, booming global sales and enthusiastic traditional and social media coverage. After decades of academic neglect, popular romance has also finally begun to receive long-due scholarly consideration. The International Association for the Study of Popular Romance (IASPR), established in 2009, and its associated publication, the *Journal of Popular Romance Studies*, have been decisive in providing a solid infrastructure to the burgeoning field of popular romance studies, which is considered to be in its third critical wave (Teo 2018). As proposed by Frantz and Selinger (2012), the first wave of romance scholarship is considered to start with the publication of the first full-length monographs: Tania Modleski's *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-produced Fantasies for Women* (1982), Kay J. Mussel's *Fantasy and Reconciliation: Contemporary Formulas of Women's Romance Fiction*, and Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (1984). Although these works approached the genre as worthy of academic attention, they reiterated generalised perceptions of romance novels as escapist fantasies, irremediably harmful for women readers because of their underlying patriarchal ideology. The second wave of scholarly work was marked by critical responses from romance authors themselves (Krentz 1992) in their attempt to offer insights into the workings of the genre (Teo 2018) and prove its feminist potential. Pamela Regis's ground-breaking *A Natural History of* *the Romance Novel* (2003), which explores the genealogy and building-blocks of the genre, is often seen as initiating the more interdisciplinary and productive third wave of criticism (Frantz and Selinger 2012; Gleason and Selinger 2016; Roach 2016; Vivanco 2011). Only in the last five years, a substantial list of specialised publications —including research companions (Kamblé et al. 2020; Brooks 2022), single-authored monographs (Allan 2019; McAlister 2020; Vivanco 2020; Fernández-Rodríguez 2021; Arvanitaki 2022; Kamblé 2023), and edited collections (Ramos-García and Vivanco, 2020; Pérez-Fernández and Pérez-Ríu 2021; Fanetti 2022; Pryde 2022)— has appeared to prove the strength, relevance and diversity of the field. *Discourses and Identities in Romance Fiction. Anglophone Visions from Madeira and the Canaries*, edited by María Isabel González Cruz, can be seen as a relevant addition to this array of critical studies.

This collection of essays is devoted to the exploration of a large corpus of contemporary romance novels set in the islands of Madeira and the Canaries and written by Anglophone authors from the mid-1950s to the mid-1990s. The works under analysis reflect long-held perceptions of these Atlantic islands as strategic locations for British imperial expansion and, after the growth of international travel and tourism in the nineteenth century, as exotic places of recreation, adventure or artistic retreat. These Orientalist tourist discourses were invigorated from the mid-twentieth century by romance publishers like Mills & Boon and Harlequin, which directed their attention to these enticing insular settings with a view to attracting new readers and securing high sales. As explained in the introduction, this comprehensive corpus of primary sources (listed at the end of the collection) was compiled and studied in the context of a competitive research project financed by the Spanish government and led by Professor María Isabel González Cruz of the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. This team of Spanish and international scholars have pioneered the research on popular romance in our country, thus contributing to the expansion of a critical tradition so far dominated by North American, British and Australian critics (Kamblé et al. 2020: 9-11). In fact, one of the strengths of the collection is its bilingual character —the eight chapters appear in both English and Spanish—, which guarantees that the book will appeal to an international audience, while also enriching the still scarce list of critical studies on popular romance written in Spanish (the best-known of which is Nattie Golubov's comprehensive introduction to the genre, *El amor en tiempos neoliberales: apuntes críticos sobre la novela rosa contemporánea*, published in 2017). The inclusion of a final pedagogical section with practical exercises and questions about each of the chapters is another original and useful feature of the volume. Although the number of questions devoted to some of the chapters (Chapters 3 and 7, in particular) are fewer and less elaborate than the rest, this pedagogical section will surely serve as an effective teaching tool both in university courses and in non-academic forums, such as book clubs and other activities targeting non-specialised audiences.

The volume is well-structured and shows a clear sense of direction, thus avoiding the thematic dispersal often found in edited collections of this kind. In the Introduction González-Cruz outlines the project's objectives, defines the key concepts guiding the textual analysis, and contextualises the chosen corpus of romance novels according to their thematic and discursive recurrences. Additionally, the Spanish version of the chapter clarifies the editor's preference for the term *ficción romántica*, instead of the often disparaged *novela rosa*. These initial terminological considerations are expanded in Chapter 1, "Popular Romance Novels: Past, Present and Future", by Inmaculada Pérez Casal (in itself an excellent teaching aid to introduce students to the genre). This chapter nicely frames the rest of the volume with its succinct but informative discussion of the history and cultural impact of romance novels and its overview of the main critical waves of romance criticism. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the future of popular romance, particularly in what concerns current moves to incorporate more diverse voices and inclusive perspectives, leaving behind the whiteness that has historically characterised the genre.

This call for more diverse and intersectional approaches suitably sets the tone for the rest of the chapters, devoted to the analysis of novels which perpetuate Orientalist discourses of the islands and their local populations and calcify the contrasts between the supposedly superior cultural values and identity markers of the Anglophone heroines and those of the local population. With its focus on the Atlantic islands of Madeira and the Canaries, the volume offers a geographically and culturally specific reading of a very popular trend of exotic romances which, almost uninterruptedly since colonial times, have narrated the story of a white western woman who travels to a remote location to experience personal transformation and discover true love. In taking up the analysis of this specific corpus of island romances, the collection comes to integrate a solid body of criticism focusing on representation, Orientalism and exoticism in novels set in various historical moments and geographical locations. This work was initiated by Hsu-Ming Teo's ground-breaking *Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels* (2012), and further developed by subsequent studies (Jarmakani 2015; Fletcher and Crane 2017; Ramos-García and Laura Vivanco 2020; Pérez Fernández and Pérez-Ríu 2021). Building on the works of these authors, Chapters 2 and 3 specifically focus on the island of Madeira. Maria del Mar Pérez Gil discusses Mills & Boon romances by Margaret Rome, Katrina Britt, and Sally Wentworth and their ethnocentric construction of Madeira as both an idyllic and an "imperfect paradise", a site of lush beauty and otherness. Aline Bazenga's chapter explores how the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of the island of Madeira are articulated around what she defines as "the tourist chronotope", an ambivalent place of encounter and conflict, which favours the British heroines' perspectives and assumptions about the exotic other.

The rest of the chapters move on to the discussion of romance novels set in the Canary Islands. In Chapter 4, María Jesús Vera Cazorla adopts a more panoramic and, at times, a somewhat descriptive approach to her corpus, exploring how the novels exploit, often in limited or superficial ways, the most recognisable symbols or cultural icons of the islands (Mount Teide, Timanfaya National Park, the Gomeran whistle, or carnival), with surprisingly little variation between novels written in the 1950s and contemporary romances produced at the turn of the twenty-first century. Chapter 5, by María del Pilar Gonzalez-de la Rosa, offers a feminist reading of various Mills & Boon novels by looking at how they variously reflect or resist changing discourses on gender, particularly through the depiction of independent female travellers who engage in relationships with more conservative Spanish men. Chapter 6, by María Teresa Ramos-García, one of the strongest in the volume, discusses two Gothic romances by Louise Bergstrom published in the early 1970s. Ramos-García argues that the stereotypical depiction of the few Spanish characters that appear in the novels reflects anxieties about interracial relations and miscegenation related to the US context at the time of the novels' publication, and that proves the suitability of the Gothic mode to articulate such concerns.

The last two chapters delve into linguistic aspects and illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of the collection, as well as the multiple angles from which popular romance can be approached. Chapter 7, by Susana de los Heros, discusses the use of Spanish in Mary Stewart's *The Wind off the Small Isles* (1968), set in Lanzarote, from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis. Through a discussion of the use of Spanish words and the depiction of Spanish speakers, this chapter reiterates some of the common findings of previous sections, particularly in what concerns the novels' articulation of otherness. Chapter 8, by María Isabel González Cruz, "Interdisciplinarity in Romance Fiction", aptly closes the volume by illustrating through a wide range of examples how the chosen corpus can be approached from the perspectives of Sociolinguistics, Pragmatics or Applied Linguistics, and how the conclusions extracted from these particular novels can be clearly applicable to other geographical or cultural areas experienced through similar cultural encounters.

Collectively, the volume encourages readers to think of popular romance as more than a mere commercial or escapist genre and highlights the value of the cultural, sociological and linguistic information included in these novels as a clear indicator of persistent or changing discourses on gender, race, and national or cultural identity. The volume will appeal to literary scholars in general, and to those working in the fields of gender, postcolonial or cultural studies in particular; it will also open up new paths to academics who have never considered the immense potential of popular romance for their research or for their teaching.

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CORPUS LINGUISTICS AND TRANSLATION TOOLS FOR DIGITAL HUMANITIES: RESEARCH METHODS AND APPLICATIONS

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John Sinclair (2004) defines a corpus as a collection of texts or fragments of texts in electronic format, selected according to external criteria to represent, as far as possible, a language or variety of a language as a source of data for linguistic research. Since the 1960s, corpora have become a key element in the study of languages due to several factors: they contain authentic and representative data; they are in electronic format and are therefore easily accessible; they allow the comparison of different registers, varieties or languages; in short, they facilitate research work. It is not surprising, then, that methodologies such as Corpus Linguistics, which bases its research on real samples of language use, have acquired a paramount role in disciplines such as lexicography (Hanks 2012; Brezina and Gablasova 2015), teaching (O'Keeffe and Walsh 2012; Gabrielatos 2015) and translation (Chitez and Pungă 2020; Tanasescu 2021), among others —thus contributing to the development of Digital Humanities (DH). Indeed, DH are at the forefront of the application of computer-based technology in the humanities. Precisely because of this and in order to answer some initial questions (i.e. How are these three areas related? Can corpus-based methods affect translations? To what extent? What is the contribution of this kind of study to Digital Humanities?), the editors of *Corpus Linguistics and Translation Tools for Digital Humanities*, Stefania M. Maci and Michele Sala, have brought together three fields of study —Digital Humanities, Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Translation Studies (TS)— that have been broadly studied in isolation, but rarely together until the past few years, when artificial intelligence challenged the way in which we understand them. Beginning with an introductory chapter authored by the editors, the rest of the volume is divided into two parts; while Part 1 focuses on the role that Corpus Linguistics acquires in Digital Humanities, Part 2 comprises a series of chapters dealing specifically with corpus-based translation studies.

The opening chapter, "Corpus Linguistics and Translation Tools for Digital Humanities: An Introduction", can be divided into two blocks. The first introduces the definition and characteristics of the three key concepts: Digital Humanities, Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies, explaining their complexity, and elaborating on their connections. For the purpose of this book "DH is the territory [while] CL is the trajectory along which to navigate it" (4). In other words, DH is an umbrella term that covers the intersection between computing and humanities, CL is a methodology, and TS is the field in which CL methods will be applied. The second block includes a chapter-by-chapter summary, therefore prefacing the contents that readers will find throughout the volume.

Chapter 2, titled "Digital Humanities: An Adaptive Theory Approach" opens the book's first section, "Corpus Linguistics for Digital Humanities: Research Methods and Applications" with an analysis of the concept Digital Humanities and its literature. Paola Catenaccio, after introducing the difficulties encountered when defining this term —which, in fact, "seems to escape definition" (19)— classifies the areas covered by digital humanities into three main categories: the study of computer-mediated communication, the use of computer-based techniques for text analysis, and the development of computer-based methods of knowledge organization. Catenaccio discusses those domains from a theoretical and methodological point of view, evidencing not only their challenges but also the fact that they converge and overlap. Then, the author explains the importance that an adaptive (innovative, flexible and integrative) theory acquires for DH in a multimodal scenario where the 'digital' is applied to both the object and the method of study. This theoretical chapter opens the way to the rest of the sections of the first part of the book, focused, on the one hand, on the potential of corpora and, on the other, on CL methodologies.

In Chapter 3, Marina Bondi delves into the potentiality of comparable corpora in cross-cultural genre studies; in particular, in the analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility reports. After a critical inquiry, Bondi describes the characteristics and compilation criteria of the Ba-CSR Corpus and the CSR-ICE Corpus, the two corpora used for the study. The author continues by showing how the integration of different perspectives (top-down and bottom-up) and analysis at different levels (lexico-grammar, semantic and pragmatic) is essential for the cross-cultural study of genres. In this way, in order to offer an accurate insight into genres, Bondi first identifies the components of the Corporate Social Responsibility reports (macro-analysis) and then, thanks to tools such as WS Tools and WMatrix, investigates in detail their language (micro-analysis) using concordances and keywords.

Miguel Fuster-Márquez, in his chapter "Applying a Corpus-Driven Approach in Linguistic Analyses: The Case of Lexical Bundles and Phrase Frames", describes an updated state-of-the-art of lexical bundles and phrase frames —"multiword sequences frequently found in all sorts of discourse" (65)— that allows him to highlight the importance that these expressions acquire in language. Hence, Fuster-Márquez offers a micro-analysis centred on the identification (with special emphasis on Sinclair's distributional approach) and operationalization of lexical bundles. This leads him to conclude the chapter by recognizing possible limitations, such as the lack of consensus in the methodology employed when working with the aforementioned units, thus suggesting future lines of research, and reflecting on the benefits that fields such as SLA could obtain from this kind of work.

In the last chapter of Part 1, titled "Data Triangulation Using Sketch Engine and WMatrix: Ketogenic Diet on *Twitter*", Stefania M. Maci describes how different corpus-based methods can be applied in digital discourse analysis, particularly in e-health communication about the Ketogenic Diet on *Twitter*. Maci begins by examining the concept from a medical and an applied linguistic perspective, positing two research questions: 1) How is Ketogenic Diet presented/described on Twitter? 2) Can Twitter be a locus where (e-)health literacy can be developed? In order to answer them, the author compiles an *ad hoc* corpus of more than 4,000 tweets. For the purpose of the research, she resorts to the triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative data: for the quantitative analysis, Maci uses Sketch Engine and WMatrix, two concordancers that allow her to identify certain linguistic features and semantic domains; for the qualitative one, she relies on discourse analysis. As a result, the author provides readers with a comprehensive study of the topic that sheds light, on the one hand, on Twitter users' approaches towards e-health communication and, on the other, on how triangulation can be used for analysis in the digital realm.

As previously mentioned, Part 2 is devoted to the way in which corpus-based methods can be applied to translation studies and the relevance that they acquire in the process. The first chapter of the section, "The Legal Translator as a Digital Humanist: On the Use of Digital Corpora in Professional Legal Translation", deals with the relationship that exists between legal translation and legal corpora or the macro-level and the micro-level, as the author puts it. Patrizia Anesa, apart from defining key concepts, introduces a list of legal corpora, characteristics and limitations, and the applications they may have in Translation Studies, therefore demonstrating that corpora contribute to the improvement and innovation of specialized translation processes and stressing that "the productive and polymorphous development of translation practices in the legal fields has matured alongside digital advancements" (120).

In Chapter 7 —"A Comparative Study of Emotive Language in English and Italian Migrant Narratives"— Cinzia Spinzi and Anouska Zummo concentrate on exploring cross-cultural variation in emotive language through parallel corpora. By compiling their own comparable corpus and offering a detailed analysis of emotive lexical units based on the Appraisal Theory, that is to say, by using corpus-based methods, they show that the use of corpora "has opened new ways of acquiring knowledge about people, places and politics that are crucial to the long histories of human movement across the world" (143). The authors demonstrate that this is paramount for translation which, in the task of mediating, needs to be culturally sensitive.

The authors of Chapter 8, titled "Learning Analytics at The Service of Interpreter Training in Academic Curricula", delve into the benefits that using the Web may have for didactic purposes. After identifying professional and pedagogical needs, and briefly presenting some software tools that support terminology management, they concentrate on LearnWeb, an online environment "aimed at supporting students of dialogue interpreting in autonomous terminology management-and-acquisition work, and at assisting teachers in overseeing the students' work from a distance" (153). In this way, the use of Web resources is combined with data analysis systems. The last two sections of the chapter are especially interesting. On the one hand, different ways of integrating this new system in the classroom are introduced and, on the other, its possible uses for teaching and research in interpreting studies are presented.

Corpus-based methodologies may also be used to examine multimedia products such as films. This being so, in Chapter 9, "Exploring the Construction and Translation of Film Characters Through a Parallel Corpus: The Case of *Little Women* Adaptations", Gianmarco Vignozzi applies CL approaches to the study of character building and translation in the English original and the Italian dubbed versions of *Little Women*. For the purpose of this corpus-driven study, the author compiles his own parallel corpus which, by analyzing different parameters, allows him not only to examine the identity of the protagonists in the original version but also to explore the translation solutions of the Italian versions. Chapter 10, "Subtitling in the Digital Era: TV Crime Drama Series in Domestic Languages", follows this line and is also characterized by its practical nature. Alessandra Rizzo resorts in this case to crime drama series (i.e. *The Valhalla Murders*, *Deadwind* and

Luther) to analyze subtitles —specifically relating to crime and legal jargon— with the intention of evidencing differences in the interpretation of culture-based meanings from the language of origin (English) to the target language (Italian). In this way, after reviewing relevant literature on subtitling in digital settings and on the digital universe of crime drama series, Rizzo presents the English-Italian parallel corpus created for the study. In this chapter, the author offers an in-depth analysis of *Luther* considering Michael Halliday's 'Systemic Functional Linguistics' theory and finishes by discussing and interpreting the outcomes, exploring the limitation of the corpus and paving the way for future research on the topic.

One of the major merits of this up-to-date volume is that it contributes to the modernization of studies of the Humanities by bringing together Digital Humanities, Translation Studies (traditional discipline) and Corpus Linguistics (methods, tools and applications). Thus, it covers an intersection that has not been explored in detail. In fact, this intersection allows the authors to explore a wide range of contexts (Corporate Social Responsibility reports, *Twitter*, TV crime drama series, etc.) by resorting to different corpus-based tools (Sketch Engine and AntConc, among others) and approaches (corpus-based and corpus-driven approaches). However, the division of the volume into two parts detracts from the coherence of the book, since, instead of bringing together the three key terms, their relation becomes, to a certain extent, blurred. Another flaw can be detected in the title of the volume, which may lead to confusion since most of the tools applied in the contributions belong to the area of Corpus Linguistics and not to Translation Studies.

It is precisely the nature of the chapters —in which both theoretical reflections and case studies are included— that makes the book of interest not only to experts but also to readers who may not have prior knowledge of the subject. The excellent quality of the contributions and the fact that they are highly accessible may attract a broad audience. Notwithstanding this, the connection between the three key elements is not balanced; that is to say, it could be more explicit in some chapters, such as Chapters 3 and 8. In addition, although the book offers relevant information about different topics, from legal translation to the study of emotive language, for instance, it focuses on European contexts, in particular on English and Italian ones. Therefore, including other realities and perspectives in future volumes would add more value to the work. All things considered, and despite the aforementioned. flaws, this publication provides a thorough overview that helps readers gain a better understanding of the topic. Not only that: the thought-provoking chapters also lay the foundation for future research.

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CHANGES IN ARGUMENT STRUCTURE: THE TRANSITIVIZING REACTION OBJECT CONSTRUCTION

Tamara Bouso
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Changes in Argument Structure is a single-authored monograph consisting of eight chapters focusing on the description and diachronic evolution of the English reaction object construction (ROC; e.g. *He* ***smiled*** *warm thanks at the audience*). The ROC is an argument structure construction composed of an intransitive verb (*smile*) followed by an object that conveys an emotion or an attitude (*thanks*) so that the whole syntactic configuration is characterized by the extended meaning [X_i express Y_i by V-ing] as in *He expressed warm thanks by smiling at the audience*.

In the Introduction the author convincingly explains the motivation, significance, and originality of her research. As the English ROC has attracted considerable attention from a synchronic perspective, Bouso's research sets as its goal to contribute to the field of historical linguistics by offering a diachronic study of the ROC and by exploring key issues such as when and how this construction emerges, how it develops over time, and what mechanisms of change and factors have influenced its development.

The book is structured in two blocks: Part I, entitled *Transitivization, Reaction Objects and Construction Grammar*, contains three theoretical chapters (chapters 2-4), and Part II: *Hands-On with Data: A Usage-Based Approach to the History of the ROC* includes three empirical chapters (chapters 5-7) which address the research questions and test the initial hypotheses.

Within Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995; 2006; Hilpert 2014), the theoretical framework adopted in this monograph, the ROC qualifies as a valency-increasing construction, that is, a construction that adds an extra argument (*warm thanks* in the previous example) to the intransitive verb it combines with (*smile*). To discover how the ROC emerged as a transitivizing construction, the first logical step is to understand the process of transitivization that began in Old English (OE), which is clearly described in Chapter 2. This chapter finishes by commenting on Visser's (1963-1973) list of factors that contributed to the large-scale transitivization process. The first part of Chapter 3 is devoted to the treatment of the object in historical and contemporary reference grammars whereas the second part discusses the features of reaction objects as compared to other nonprototypical objects such as cognate objects and *way*-objects. In Chapter 4 the author provides a solid justification for the choice of Construction Grammar as a framework by arguing that the suitability of this theory of linguistic knowledge relies precisely on its need to account for idiosyncratic structures, such as the ROC, that Generative Grammar had relegated to the lexicon. Construction Grammar is proposed here as the best heuristic tool to explain the nonprototypical features of reaction objects and to show how the ROC relates to other constructions within the large English network of constructions. Additionally, the monograph uses Diachronic Construction Grammar (Hilpert 2013; Traugott and Trousdale 2013) to investigate the historical development of the ROC.

Chapter 5 starts by offering a thorough characterization of the modern ROC, which is categorized as a multiple inheritance construction sharing features with various constructions in the English language, such as the experiencer construction (*Tom likes Helen*), the resultative construction (*The gunman shot him dead*), and the ditransitive communicative construction (*Susan wired Joe a message*). For example, both the ROC and the experiencer construction share the surface structure of a transitive construction and involve two similar participants: a sentient agent and a cause/source, which is an emotion or mental state in the case of the ROC (*I sighed relief*). Likewise, the ROC shares a resultative meaning with the resultative construction (*He kissed her farewell*). Lastly, the similarities between the ROC and the communicative construction consist of an identical surface structure, i.e. the ditransitive construction, and the presence of an intended recipient (*He nodded assent* [at Charles]).

The second part of Chapter 5 deals with the historical dimension of the ROC, whose origins lie in Late Middle English (LME). The author also claims that the ROC followed a similar path of development as other transitivizing constructions (e.g. the cognate object construction, the *way*-construction, and the dummy *it* object construction) in that it occurred first with more transitive-like verbs (e.g.

manner of speaking verbs like *roar*, *bray* and nonverbal expression verbs like *moan*) and later expanded to intransitive verbs denoting nonverbal expression like *smile* and modern verbs of sound emission like *purr*.

Drawing on data from the *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts, version 3.0* (CLMET3.0), Chapter 6 examines the constructional changes of the ROC in form, function, frequency, and distribution (across verb classes, time periods and text types) in British English. The focus is on Late Modern English (LModE, 1710-1920) as this is the period during which the ROC proliferates. Results confirm that the ROC is a low-frequency construction in LModE but increased in frequency from the mid-18th century onwards, perhaps because of the emergence and subsequent development of the British sentimental novel, which made extensive use of verbs of sounds and gestures to describe the emotions and affective relations of characters. Regarding the distribution of the ROC across verb types, collexeme analysis shows that five prototypical verbs —namely the manner of speaking verbs *mutter* and *murmur* and the verbs of nonverbal communication *smile*, *nod*, and *wave*— paved the way for the grammatical constructionalization of the ROC and its two main subschemas over the LModE period —namely the manner and the means subschemas (Sentient agent$_i$ cause Y$_i$ become expressed by$_{\text{manner/means}}$ doing V). After its consolidation in LModE, the ROC underwent several 'post-constructionalization constructional changes' throughout the 19th and 20th centuries: (i) increase in productivity; (ii) morphophonological reduction or the tendency to drop the indefinite article (e.g. LModE *nod an affirmative* > Present Day English *nod Ø yes/ nod Ø agreement*); and (iii) expansion of the range of collocates (e.g. inclusion of verbs of gestures such as *peck* or modern verbs of sound emission such as *coo*).

Based on data from the *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA), Chapter 7 focuses on the development of the ROC in American English from the 1810s to the 2000s and describes further constructional changes regarding the frequency and distribution (diachronic and textual) of the ROC. The author also claims that the ROC is a British innovation that later spread to American English as most of the data from COHA belongs to the genre of fiction and the period of lowest frequency of the American ROC (1810-1849) overlaps with the heyday of the British ROC (1780-1849). Furthermore, this chapter confirms a striking parallel development between the ROC and the *way*-construction in that both increased their productivity during the 20th century and attracted new verb classes such as verbs of instrument of communication (e.g. *wire, phone*, etc.), verbs of activity (e.g. *dance*, *drink*, etc.), and verbs of light emission (e.g. *flare*, *glisten*, etc.). Lastly, Chapter 8 provides a summary of the book by assessing how each chapter answered the research questions and confirmed the initial hypotheses. This chapter ends by discussing the limitations and theoretical implications of the study and by proposing further venues of research.

The monograph *Changes in Argument Structure* is a well-documented, rigorous study that will be enjoyed by both experts and novice researchers interested in the history of the English reaction object construction. The strengths of the book are the originality of an uncharted area in historical linguistics, the exploration and comparison of the development of the ROC in two varieties of English, namely British and American, the parallelism between the ROC and other constructions of the English language, such as the *way*-construction, and the use of a complex methodological perspective (e.g. collexeme analysis as well as several statistical tests). As the author herself mentions, one of the weaknesses of the volume is the fact that the corpus-based study using COHA only takes into account a small set of verbs combining with delocutive reaction objects. Thus, further research on the American ROC should consider expanding the list of reaction objects so that the results are more comparable to those for the British ROC.

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As Bachelard claims, while past memories are important, "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home" (2004: 5, emphasis added), which raises a question about the quality of living.

According to Shaw, the works belonging to this genre are concerned with either reflecting imaginatively, responding directly or dealing with the socio-cultural, economic and racial consequences that followed the UK's exit from the European Union (2021: 4).

…language always fulfils three communicative functions (Jewitt et al. 2016).

…this idea has been rejected by several authors (Reger 2017; Evans 2015; Cochrane 2013).

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