COLECCIÓN CONOCIMIENTO CONTEMPORÁNEO

Perspectivas contemporáneas en la investigación en la lengua inglesa



Coords.
Carmen Gómez Galisteo
Manuel Macías Borrego

Dykinson, S.L.

PERSPECTIVAS CONTEMPORÁNEAS EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN EN LA LENGUA INGLESA



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2026

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PERSPECTIVAS CONTEMPORÁNEAS EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN EN LA LENGUA INGLESA

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SECTION 1: LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

The first section of this edited volume focuses on the study of the English language and its linguistic study, but also in its practical and pedagogical applications and approaches. In this day and age, in the twenty-first century, both the practicalities of teaching and the analysis of English in academic contexts demand approaches that necessarily go beyond traditional approaches. The expert now must also embrace the pragmatic, cultural, multimodal and sociolinguistic dimensions of language and language use. The chapters that follow explore these areas through recent work in the mentioned areas: Applied Linguistics, Education, and Translation, showing how the language, cultural and contextual factors interact to (re)shape the way English is understood, acquired, and used in diverse contexts and settings.

In the first chapter, approaching the field of modality (from a pragmatic point of view), Carolina González Quintana examines how modal verbs serve as essential tools for expressing modal meaning: necessity, obligation, certainty and/or commitment. The comparative study of native and non-native speakers of English demonstrates that the use of modal (pragmatic) markers is strongly influenced by text genre, language competence and the sociocultural context. These findings do highlight the effectiveness of teaching English, which – itself- requires explicit

attention to these modality elements in order to develop pragmatic awareness and competence, and to build on context interpretation.

In the second and third chapters of the first section, Manuel Macías Borrego explores the connection between Pragmatics and verbal humour in the American sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*. His research focuses on the violation of Grice's maxims and Leech's Politeness Principle(s). The researcher shows how flouting or violating conversational norms can create comic effects, and that flouting in human communication can offer valuable insights for understanding spoken English in authentic situations. Macías Borrego's study highlights the importance of sociocultural and pragmatic understanding for real-world communication.

Fourthly, while exploring contrastive grammar, Sylvia Zamanillos Lagrejos explores similarities and differences between English and Spanish language and linguistic structures, addressing frequent challenges faced by Spanish-speaking learners. The researcher does that while combining historical, structural and pedagogical analysis.

Subsequently, Patricia Díaz Muñoz, studies the pragmatics of Facebook comments within the tourism sector, and by Rocío Gragera Retuerto and Laura Padrón Brito, analyse American Eagle's advertising campaign and the multimodal construction of ideology and gender analysing the inner linguistic structure of human communication mediated by pragmatic and grammar component. These studies do stress and underline the value of Applied Linguistics for the analysis of digital and media discourse, as well as the need to integrate cultural and discursive perspectives into English teaching to promote access to real-world communication.

In the seventh chapter of the first section, Elena Shorokhova investigates one key area in Pragmatics: impoliteness strategies, the researcher does so focusing on televised political debates. In fact, Shorokova presents a study comparing the discourse of Kamala Harris and Ksenia Sobchak. Her research reveals that pragmatic devices and markers, which traditionally would be associated with masculine styles are also used strategically by women to achieve communicative and political aims. Thus, the research does succeed in pointing at the sociocultural and gendered dimensions of communicative competence.

The following chapter in the first section is focused on the study of historical discourse and corpus studies. In her research, Blanca Fernández Soriano examines how girlhood is represented in late-modern English biographies, showing how lexical patterns and semantic nodes build gendered narratives of childhood. Meanwhile, in the eight chapter, Néstor de Armas Guerra and Laura Padrón Brito analyse how certain events in British press are covered in the Canary Islands, as well as focusing on Elton John's lyrics, in their second study, thus demonstrating how evaluation, modality and discourse analysis and understanding can shape social interpretations of news and songs. These studies do show how cultural texts make use of the linguistics features to encode identity, and social norms through language.

In the tenth chapter the interest shifts to understanding issues of linguistic and legal accessibility, which are addressed by Inés Megido González. He research focuses on the adaptation of legal documents into plain language usage, and their translation into English. This particular work shows that genuine comprehension of legal English depends on cognitive, cultural and sociolinguistic awareness. One key aspect of the research presented by Megido is the fact that it proposes methodological tools that promote inclusion and fairness in formal contexts.

Thus, it needs saying that by looking at the study of Anglistics from this perspective, language should not be treated merely as a system of rules, norms and impositions, but as a living tool for social interaction, cultural mediation and identity formation. Hence, the study of language calls for methods that blend theoretical analysis, corpus research, case studies and pedagogical reflection. These are the reasons that support this section aiming at offering an integrative and approachable framework which can be successful at linking theory and practice, and helping students and teachers to interpret, produce and adapt English effectively across varied cultural settings.

SECTION 2: LITERATURE AND LITERARY STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

The second section of this volume turns to the study of English and Anglophone literatures. This section opens with Gómez Galisteo and

Izquierdo Berasaluce reflection on American Literature. They do so by diving into American literature from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries and how it presents particular challenges in distance-learning contexts, where student diversity and the need to foster engagement require careful pedagogical strategies. Thus, Gómez Galisteo and Izquierdo Berasaluce (2024–2025) describe an innovative teaching project developed for the course *North American Literature I: 17th to 19th Centuries* at UNED. These researchers do highlight that their project aimed to enrich learning through short, focused audiovisual materials. They also demonstrate that far from being simple supplements to traditional lectures, these videos explored contextual and cultural aspects essential to understanding the texts—from everyday life in Puritan New England to humour in Mark Twain's work, and from the relationship between literature and self-help books to the representation of Indigenous peoples. This project lays its foundations onto the principle that literature cannot be fully understood in isolation, but that it must be considered within its historical, social and ideological contexts. This research also addresses the limitations of an educational curriculum that spans a wide chronological range and therefore necessarily treats topics in a condensed manner. The objectives set for the research included (but were not limited to) contextualising literary texts, fostering interdisciplinary links between literature, history and culture, encouraging critical reflection, and helping students visualise the social and ideological dynamics of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

The eleventh chapter in this edited volume shifts focus to contemporary English literature and the fact that it has increasingly embraced interdisciplinary approaches which examine identity, memory and family relationships in both young adult and adult fiction. In this light, Ángela M. Alonso Morais studies *The Binding* by Bridget Collins, in a multidisciplinary light and point of view. The researcher shows that the novel depicts the repression of traumatic memories and their effects on identity formation, particularly in contexts of sexual marginalisation. It is hence shown that by understanding the main character, Emmett Farmer, the novel can be seen as a device which main interest is to explore the tension(s) between personal autonomy and social control, thus,

highlighting how forgetting can serve as liberation but also as a marking of erasing the self.

In the following chapter, Almudena Nido examines *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs. The research focuses on the role of the neglectful mother and the protagonist's process of individuation. Nido points how the series is successful at blending fantasy and gothic elements to portray complex psychological processes related to loss, alienation, and emotional independence - from the family of origin. Nido's argues that Jacob, the protagonist, embarks on a journey of maturation, a sort of *bildungsroman*, that allows him to distance himself from an insensitive mother figure and allows him to find alternative models of care in Miss Peregrine.

In the thirteenth chapter, Marta Aguza Berral (2025) studies and explores *Frankissstein* by Jeanette Winterson. The research embarks on the exploration of the selected *pièce* with attention to gender and bodily disembodiment in trans and posthuman contexts. Her research shows how trans identity can be constructed through acceptance of ambiguity and multiplicity of being, thus, challenging binary and normative transition narratives. Aguza is successful at depicting the posthuman context of her selected pièce, while also providing a critical perspective on transhumanist ideology. Aguza's research does illustrate how contemporary literature employs fantastic elements to investigate identity, trauma and autonomy—whether be it through memory manipulation, negotiation of maternal relationships, or be it by the inclusion of mechanisms reconfiguration of body and gender. In her second contribution, Marta Aguza Berral, while continuing with familiar topics, examines *Heroes and Villains* by Angela Carter from an anti-imperialist light, highlighting how the fragmented post-apocalyptic world of the novel breaks and negates notions of "hero" and "villain"; Aguza's research is, thus, successful at revealing the power dynamics and ideological construction of the "other(ness)." This study shows how fiction can question imposed cultural orders and internalised languages of domination, while also offering a critique to quiet power structures and to those structures that extend beyond direct colonial history.

In the next (fifteenth) chapter, Estefanía Avilés Mariño focuses on understanding, from gothic and psychological perspective, the horror within *The Tomb* by H. P. Lovecraft. Avilés analyses the use of unreliable narrators— which are a sort of detached observer and a doppelgänger to characters in the narrations, as Avilés points out—to create a liminal narrative space. Her study demonstrates how shifts from traditional focalisation and the concept of storyworld possible selves (SPS) can influence reader empathy, thus, generating controlled disorientation. As Avilés points out, quantitative analysis of focalisation and linguistic cues reveals how narrative duality betters the immersion and the psychological complexity, thus, effectively affirming Lovecraft's innovation in speculative storytelling.

In the following chapter, the researcher Ariadna García Carreño introduces a historical and materialist perspective by examining the poetry of Sterling and Nora May French in early twentieth-century Northern California. Her research questions the traditional sustained view which poses that these poets were merely imitators of English Romanticism. García Carreño, through historical poetics, analyses effectively how material conditions of publication and circulation promoted pastoral conventions. The research also highlights that privately circulated poems revealed greater diversity in purpose and function that traditionally sustained. Thus, the study underlines the key importance that considering production and reception contexts for a full understanding of literature has; García is thus successful at showing how lyrical forms operate in public and private settings, and in showing how contemporary criticism often imposes modern biases on historical works.

The seventeenth chapter is devoted to the research presented by Marta Parrondo González. Her research and focus approach is determined by the study of Anne Bannerman's gothic poetry. Parrondo argues that female ghosts act as subversive figures challenging the boundaries of gender, space, and life and death. For the researcher, these poems do represent an early form of narrative resistance to patriarchal structures, thus giving voice to historically marginalised women writers. This line of research is sustained in the next chapter by Almudena Romero Sánchez. Her work analyses the evolution of virtue in English fiction

from Samuel Richardson to Jane Austen. Romero argues that while Richardson's heroines, such as Pamela, base their virtue on the capability to show endurance, social validation and marital reward, Austen relocates moral authority within the individual – women in particular. In this sense. Romero explains that Fanny Price, from Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814), does embody an internal and relational ethic that operates independently of external approval, which helps her shape the moral awareness of those around her. Romero's study also contrasts Richardson's didactic Puritanism with Austen's moral modernity, emphasising how narrative techniques such as free indirect discourse are successful at presenting the main character's ethics both introspectively and socially. In doing so, Romero argues that Austen created a model of virtue that lays its foundations onto psychological (one's) insight, thus redefining moral reward in the English novel.

In the final chapter of the second section, Patricia Leonor López Carrillo examines *The Rainmaker's Mistake* by Erna Brodber. The research examines the selected *pièce* in light of postcolonialism and Afrofuturism. The novel explores the African diaspora, the legacy of slavery, and emancipation through fragmented narrative structures, multiple narrators, and the use of allegory and myth (although not limited to). This interdisciplinary approach combines history, culture and speculative fiction, being thus, successful at linking perspectives from diaspora studies, and Afrofuturism. López's work demonstrates that contemporary Caribbean literature does articulate visions of liberation and reconfigures the colonial past via an imaginative storytelling.

SECTION 3: THEATRE AND DRAMA IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

The third section of this volume focuses on theatre and drama in the Anglophone context. This section opens with Manuel Macías Borrego's research on the Shakespeare tragedy *Richard II*. The researcher studies the *pièce* in pragmatic perspective. The main focus in this research is examining how language shapes authority, power and identity in Elizabethan drama in general and in Shakespearean tragedy in particular.

Macías-Borrego argues that the play centres on Richard II's tragic fall, by contrasting the king's illocutive elevated, ceremonial language with Bolingbroke's direct, locutive speech. The research also argues that this contrast is what truly allow Bolingbroke to challenge the royal authority and claim the throne. Macías Borrego applies Contemporary Pragmatics to analyse speech acts, politeness strategies, deixis, irony and metaphor in *Richard II*; thus, being successful at showing how Shakespeare depicts power relations and political tension through the use of specifically selected language. This study demonstrates that, at least in *Richard II*, language helps drive dramatic development and do convey authority and identity on stage.

The twentieth chapter in this volume is authored by Manuel Iglesias Vázquez. His research contributes with a study focused on stage design and theatrical typology, particularly analysing the evolution of scenography in early nineteenth-century English theatre by looking at the impact of the development of the so-called box set on representing domesticity and gender hierarchy in English theatre. Iglesias argues that the introduction of this architectural device in London theatres allowed for three-dimensional interiors, which helped expos private life to public view, thus creating an unprecedented illusion of intimacy and realism. Iglesias's analysis is successful at combining theatre history and gender studies. The research focuses on various key aspects. On the one hand, Iglesias points that the box set replaced painted backdrops with interactive, three-dimensional spaces, increasing verisimilitude and audience identification with bourgeois domestic life. Secondly, the research underlines how gender and female visibility were enhanced by depicting domestic spaces on stage, which allowed to create and reflect visions of "separate spheres," thus reinforcing the moral role of women in the home. Iglesias's research is particularly focused on Madame Vestris, who helped consolidate authority in theatrical production, combining traditional feminine skills with economic and artistic management. Additionally, in his research, the researcher delves into resistance and reception of female theatre. Despite satirical critiques of decorative excess, the persistence of Vestris and the favourable response from target audiences demonstrated the viability of a model in which female

leadership institutionalised creative and theatrical authority. Iglesias Vázquez concludes, thus, that the box set was not only a formal innovation but a true device that reconfigured relationships integrating gender perspectives and power dynamics into nineteenth-century theatrical practice and theatre gender.

In his second contributed chapter in this third section. Iglesias Vázquez examines spatiality in Elizabethan theatre typology in two selected pieces: *Hamlet* and a *Midsummer Night Dream*. Iglesias focuses on how the Globe's architecture influenced the representation of space. The analysis is successful at showing how spatial characterisation and thematization may allow audiences to reconstruct fictional worlds through shared conventions. The research concludes that in *Hamlet*, Elsinore Castle symbolises surveillance, confinement and psychological tension. Whereas, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the contrast between Theseus's palace (symbolising order and law) and the Athenian Forest (meaning confusion, desire and transformation) generates tenson and dynamics within the play. The scarcity of scenery, Iglesias argues, made the audience necessary co-creators of space, and interpreters of minimal props. This study, thus, combines theatre history, architectural analysis and textual interpretation, highlighting the interaction between the Globe's physical space and the textual reality of Shakespeare's works. Iglesias concludes that Elizabethan stage space was not just a container for action but an active agent of meaning creation, thus, necessarily shaping audience experience to amplify the dramatic impact of the plays in the minds of the audience.

Finally, in the last chapter within this third section, Iglesias Vázquez presents research on the use of theatre in contemporary television, examining the fictionalisation of English stage architecture in the canonical BBC series *Doctor Who*. Historical theatres—from the Elizabethan Globe to Victorian venues, such as the Palace Theatre—are used not only as historical settings but as narrative spatial devices to enrich significance within media discourse. These selected locations, argues Iglesias, act as cultural palimpsests, intertwining memory, national identity and temporal speculation. This research piece concludes that in the series, scenography, costume, lighting and performance are combined

to create an expanded illusion of theatricality, thus, transforming theatre buildings into symbolic interfaces of historical knowledge which help connecting different worlds and times. *Doctor Who*, according to Iglesias helps reinterpret English theatrical heritage for contemporary audiences, thus, showing that theatricality is not merely a backdrop prop but a dynamic and very symbolic field, in which architecture, fiction and media studies can converge to generate new forms of cultural experience and social understanding.

SECTION 4: CULTURAL STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE.

The following section in the book, consisting of five chapters, deal with cultural studies. This is a field that started in the United Kingdom in the 1960s with the aim of analyzing how culture influences society, revealing how issues such as identity, social class, race, gender, or ideology permeate our cultural practices. Going beyond traditional literary studies, the field of cultural studies allows us a broader scope to understand and transform social, cultural and political realities.

The section opens with Carmen Gomez-Galisteo's exploration of how Edgar Allan Poe's short story, "The Tell-Tale Heart" has been the inspiration of multiple works of online fan fiction. The chapter examines the literary value and main characteristics of these pieces of somewhat ephemeral literature as well as pointing out how the use of generative Artificial Intelligence may change our interpretations and readings of Poe.

Maria Consuelo Forés Rossell looks into the aesthetic standards of the period that the Pre-Raphaelites changed, among others, through the painting of female literary characters. Highlighting the main role of literature in the Pre-Raphaelite artistic revolution of the 19th century, the research discusses representations of female figures such as Ophelia, the Lady of Shalott, and the Virgin Mary.

Unai Izquierdo Berasaluce makes a rather provocative case for a new reading of Herman Melville's masterpiece, *Moby-Dick* in conjunction with the 2022 movie *Avatar: The Way of Water.* This chapter discusses the evolution of the whale from its interpretation of human's attempt to

dominate nature to a new paradigm marked by relational ethics and environmental preservation.

In the next chapter, Maria Consuelo Forés Rossell discusses the relationship of African American artworks pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement with major literary works and how the latter ones still support their common demand for freedom and equality. By considering the interplay of art and the Black liberation struggle, it reveals the ways in which both were mightily equipped to unveil racial injustice and to advocate for social change. The analysis of Black art and literature is used to show their double function of being both mirrors of the United States' racial conflict and intellectual tools for revolution.

Carmen Gómez-Galisteo goes beyond the image of Louisa May Alcott as a one-book writer to explore her literary production other than *Little Women*. By comparing *Work: A Story an Experience* to a lesser known Gothic thriller of "the Children's Friend," the similar experiences of young, single women in 19th-century fiction are revealed.

SECTION 5: TRANSLATION STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

The studies in the section Translation Studies are closely related through their common focus on the analysis of language, translation, and education as the three main instruments for promoting intercultural understanding and, consequently, global communication. They all contribute to giving an outline of the process of people getting knowledge, making their identities, and getting unified through the exchange of languages and cultures as the main contributor to all these three aspects. The authors of some of these studies go to the extent of defining translation as an act not only of communication between languages but a complex battleground where power, ideology, and ethical choices are in constant struggle, and where the outcome can influence the political discussions, the communication in institutions, as well as the reception of the literary works. The others spotlight the pedagogical aspects of language acquisition, accenting the impact of English for Specific Purposes, legal English and literary texts in developing one's

employability, critical thinking, and the facilitation of democratic values. This common event of shedding the light on the contribution of translation and language education to the promotion of intercultural dialogues, inclusivity, and the development of globally competent individuals in the present-day academic and socio-cultural context mirrors a commitment that is shared among the researchers of the field.

Ángela M. Alonso Morais explores the potential of racial discrimination short stories to the mending of relationships, and the establishment of tolerance, intercultural understanding, and equality in the society. Their shortness gives a chance for more extensive academic exploration of the text, and also encourages the development of critical and democratic values. Besides, by identifying with the issues students gain the qualities of awareness, empathy, and active citizenship which are the main features for the formation of the open-minded and socially responsible people that the European educational system aims at.

The June 26, 2024, presidential debate between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, which was streamed live on CNN, is the focus of Alejandro Sevillano Martín. This was the event that changed the course of the U.S. election, resulting in Biden's stepping down and the appointment of Kamala Harris as the new candidate. It also illustrated the change of U.S. political discourse through the digital era. This chapter reviews not only the power and translation dynamics, media localization strategies, and ways to enhance the autonomy and ethical decision-making of translators but also the role of translators in political communication.

Antonio Manuel Brenes Castaño presents a study which has two major goals that are linked to the area of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The first goal is to determine the scope of the ESP courses in the degree programs by scripting their occurrence and distribution in the seventeen Spanish universities chosen at random. The second one has to do with the specialized English and the University of Cádiz's internationalization strategy, as it is a matter of assessing if the students do indeed acquire the competences stipulated by the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area. The study also reviews the expectations and opinions of students, alumni and coordinators as to ESP's contribution to employability. A descriptive, exploratory method

is employed, which mingles national and institutional data to point out new trends and educational needs.

Juan Carrillo Del Saz y Nuria Gasó Gómez integrate descriptive translation studies with literary criticism to investigate the translations over fifty years and the reception of Katherine Mansfield's writings. The objective is to produce a list of the oldest translations and to set them in context with respect to their translators, plus to carry out a comparison of one short story and its translations. Relying on texts, paratexts, and records, it piecemeals a microhistory that uncovers the attraction for Mansfield in the Spanish-speaking world during 1925-1975 and the various translation strategies that were employed.

María Nieves Leal Silva aims to evaluate the proficiency in legal English of the final-year Law students at the University of Cádiz (Algeciras campus) before and after the course Basic Legal Terminology in English. The specific goals are to recognize the self-learning strategies students apply to enhance their legal English, to reveal the most significant problems they meet in comprehending and applying legal terminology, to analyze their attitude towards the course's importance in their professional practice, and to suggest measures for improving the acquisition of legal English in and out of the classroom.

María Isabel Alconero Gutiérrez examines how translation has been ever-present through the ages, and like humanity, it has developed through the intercultural exchanges made possible by trade, religion, and war. These interactions made it clear that there was a need for interpreters and that translators ought to be formally trained, which eventually resulted in the establishment of such institutions as the Toledo School of Translators in Spain during the 12th and 13th centuries. On the other hand, the sakoku period of Japan, which enforced strictly isolationist policies, became a barrier to the growth of translation. In Africa, the situation was exactly the opposite; the presence of multiple languages and the use of some powerful languages for colonial purposes facilitated the development of studies in various languages. The digital revolution has had a magnificent influence on translation just as the social networks, with their non-stop interaction and surprising twists, continue to reshape its future in unpredictable ways.

Ana Córdoba Sánchez studies the “Spain Marks” campaign so as to describe its communicative purpose and to analyze how image and language contribute to meaning construction. Specifically, it examines the text accompanying the poster focused on religious and brotherhood tourism and evaluates how well the terms used fit the translation process and the target cultures.

Francisco Bautista Becerro analyzes the scientific and institutional perspectives of the texts that were published in the health-related section of the WHO (World Health Organization) website. Looking particularly at the Spanish versions, it investigates the author's style, the choice of words and the degree of institutional support that affects the production of the text. The ratio of Spanish texts to English and other official WHO languages is also assessed.

Claudia Baaken offers a study based on a corpus that includes transcripts of videos from ARD and RTL+, articles from automotive magazines, information from IT blogs, and content from YouTube channels. The main goals are to demonstrate the widespread occurrence of English in German texts, to analyze the differences in the use of English vocabulary in various sources, and to consider the implications of these results for German-to-Spanish translations. The research is conducted using a qualitative, comparative methodology.

SECTION 6: MISCELLANEOUS APPROACHES TO ANGLISTICS IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

The last section in the books unites a number of studies that, while dealing with different contexts and disciplines, all point to the same issue - the transformative power of language, translation, and intercultural communication in the contemporary academic and professional landscapes. The writers of these papers collectively discuss the roles played by linguistic proficiency, digital technologies, and specialized language training in the processes of internationalization, professional development, and social inclusion. They give importance to the role of English as the main language of communication and a channel for global exchange, and at the same time, they are considering the ethical, cultural,

and communicative aspects of translation and media representation in the digital era. The studies also point out that the pedagogical innovation in methods, especially through virtual learning and continuous professional development, comes to be the main factor for developing inter-cultural understanding and making the institution competitive. They all together give a multi-faceted viewpoint on the matter of language and translation being facilitators for the breach of borders—be they linguistic, cultural or disciplinary—under the scenario of a world that is intertwined and globalized more so than ever before.

Ángela M. Alonso Morais examines the use of Virtual Exchange. With a primary focus on the incorporation of Virtual Exchange in teaching English as a foreign language and in the realm of English as a lingua franca, this chapter aspires to give a comprehensive picture of Virtual Exchange as a pedagogical tool. The specific research study will be used as a model to introduce the concept of Virtual Exchange to the teachers and the researchers who are keen to know about its foundations and the prospective ones.

Alejandro Sevillano Martín offers a detailed scrutiny of the depiction by digital platforms of the deportation of Kilmar Ábrego Garcí, an undocumented migrant from El Salvador who was held in the U.S. because of Trump's immigration enforcement policy. It also investigates the correspondence between social media translations relating to his case and the worldwide dissemination of political discourses on immigration. The research looks into the impact of the media, polarization of discourses, and the potential for translator-activist collaborations to increase the online visibility of migrant voices.

Antonio Manuel Brenes Castaño with an emphasis on creating a model that satisfies faculty requests for English course organization in multiple formats, this chapter examines the adaptation processes and contemporary issues that universities face. In order to create a course design protocol that encourages ongoing learning, motivation, and institutional internationalization, the study intends to examine the needs and expectations of the University of Cádiz's teaching and research staff.

María Nieves Leal Silva analyzes the value of maritime English as a tactical instrument in the Port of Algeciras is the goal of this study. In order to improve communication, efficiency, and safety in port operations, it focuses on analyzing the function of maritime English in the port's logistics and security, determining the particular language proficiency needed by its staff, and suggesting specialized training approaches that cater to the professional demands of the maritime environment.

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SECCION I.

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

LA IMPORTANCIA DEL TIPO DE TEXTO EN EL USO DE LOS VERBOS MODALES

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La modalidad constituye un componente esencial del discurso, ya que permite a los autores expresar distintos grados de necesidad, obligación, certeza, posibilidad y compromiso con las proposiciones que formulan. Sin embargo, a pesar de su relevancia, el uso de marcadores como los verbos modales presenta dificultades particulares para los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (L2), debido a su carácter polisémico y altamente dependiente del contexto.

El presente estudio se enmarca en una revisión y análisis comparativo de investigaciones empíricas relevantes, con el objetivo principal de analizar el uso de verbos modales en contextos académicos escritos. Busca comparar su frecuencia y función en diversos tipos de textos redactados por hablantes nativos y no nativos de inglés, y reflexionar sobre las implicaciones didácticas de estos hallazgos para la enseñanza del inglés académico.

Diversos estudios, como los de Alonso-Almeida y Cruz (2011), Peña (2010), Mukundan et al. (2013), Chen (2012) y Hyland y Milton (1997), han señalado consistentemente que el uso de la modalidad está profundamente condicionado por factores como el género textual, el nivel de competencia lingüística y los factores socioculturales. De hecho, el significado de los modales varía notablemente según el registro y el tipo de texto, ya que su interpretación depende en gran medida del contexto discursivo.

Los hallazgos de estas investigaciones revelan que los estudiantes de L2 suelen emplear una gama más limitada de marcadores de modalidad, con una marcada predominancia de los verbos modales. Esta dependencia puede estar ligada a prácticas pedagógicas tradicionales y a una menor exposición a la diversidad de formas deónticas, epistémicas y dinámicas. Además, la transferencia cultural es un factor significativo que incide en el uso y la percepción de la modalidad, condicionando las nociones de obligación y necesidad en diferentes culturas. Se ha observado también que, a medida que mejora el nivel lingüístico, los estudiantes tienden a diversificar su uso hacia adjetivos y sustantivos.

Ante esta situación, se subraya que la enseñanza del inglés académico debe integrar enfoques que consideren no solo aspectos lingüísticos, sino también pragmáticos y culturales. Es fundamental proporcionar a los estudiantes de L2 una instrucción explícita sobre la función y la interpretación contextual de los verbos modales, así como implementar propuestas didácticas que les permitan dominar los complejos matices discursivos que estos verbos aportan.

2.MARCO TEÓRICO

La literatura ha señalado de forma reiterada que los aprendices se encuentran con obstáculos para controlar los matices propios de los verbos modales, tanto en lo relativo a la elección léxica como en la adecuación a los contextos pragmáticos (Mukundan et al., 2013; Hondo, 2012). De hecho, Biber et al. (1999) demuestran en su estudio que el uso modal varía notablemente según el registro, puesto que el significado depende en gran medida del contexto. Junto a Biber et al., Aijmer (2002) añade que el tema es sólo uno de la variedad de factores que explican las diferencias en la expresión de la modalidad y que, sobre todo, el tipo de texto (literario frente a argumentativo) denota que algunos de los resultados cuantitativos deben ser interpretados con cautela. Esta autora sugiere que los docentes tienden a prestar una atención desproporcionada a significados modales poco frecuentes y que el tratamiento de los modales en los manuales difiere de su uso en el inglés real. La autora añade que intervienen factores más complejos, como la

posible transferencia de normas culturales propias de cada lengua, las distintas tradiciones retóricas o los métodos de enseñanza de la escritura, e incluso las actitudes que los aprendices adoptan frente a la tarea de redacción. En su investigación sobre el empleo de las expresiones modales en inglés por parte de aprendices francófonos, Dagneaux (1995) observó diferencias significativas en relación con los escritores nativos. Mientras que los aprendices franceses tendían a recurrir con menor frecuencia a los auxiliares modales que expresan posibilidad o probabilidad, los escritores nativos de inglés los utilizaban con mayor regularidad en la producción de textos argumentativos. No obstante, este patrón se invertía cuando el tema de la redacción era literario: en ese contexto, los nativos reducían considerablemente el uso de dichos auxiliares, a diferencia de los aprendices. Por su parte, Hinkel (1995) ha demostrado la importancia del tema a la hora de influenciar la frecuencia de uso de los verbos modales. En su análisis de ensayos académicos sobre educación, Hinkel constató que los escritores no nativos cuyo L1 era el chino, japonés, vietnamita, coreano o indonesio, tendían a hacer un uso excesivo de los verbos modales *must* y *should*, mientras que el verbo modal *must* no aparecía en los ensayos de temática política.

Junto al factor del tema del texto, podemos encontrar otros que expliquen la utilización excesiva de estos verbos o su contrario, como puede ser la transferencia de patrones de la lengua materna o las propias estrategias del estudiante. Otra de las causas puede ser la diferencia en la distribución de modales entre el modo oral y el modo escrito (Kennedy, 1998).

3. OBJETIVOS

Este artículo tiene como objetivos principales:

- Analizar el uso de verbos modales en contextos académicos escritos.
- Comparar la frecuencia y función de estos verbos modales en textos redactados por hablantes nativos y no nativos de inglés.
- Reflexionar sobre las implicaciones didácticas de los resultados obtenidos para la enseñanza del inglés académico.

4. METODOLOGÍA

Para alcanzar los objetivos planteados, se ha llevado a cabo una revisión y análisis comparativo de estudios empíricos relevantes. Esta metodología se basa en el examen de investigaciones previas que han abordado el uso de la modalidad en contextos similares. La metodología se sustenta, en primer lugar, en una revisión de investigaciones previas que han abordado el uso de la modalidad desde distintas perspectivas, entre las que destacan los trabajos de Alonso-Almeida y Cruz (2011), Peña (2010), Mukundan et al. (2013), Chen (2012) y Hyland y Milton (1997), entre otros. Estos estudios recurren tanto a enfoques cuantitativos como cualitativos, lo que permite contrastar la frecuencia y distribución de los modales con análisis más interpretativos de su función discursiva. Asimismo, los corpus empleados en dichas investigaciones muestran una amplia diversidad, ya que incluyen géneros textuales tan variados como sinopsis, ensayos y contratos, además de considerar diferentes niveles de competencia lingüística y contextos sociolingüísticos heterogéneos.

Esta aproximación metodológica permite un análisis comprehensivo de los hallazgos existentes y la identificación de patrones y diferencias en el uso de los verbos modales entre hablantes nativos y no nativos de inglés en el ámbito académico.

5. RESULTADOS

Comenzaremos con Hyland y Milton (1997) quienes realizaron un estudio sobre textos académicos y los problemas que los estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua se encuentran a la hora de expresar oraciones con un grado apropiado de duda o certeza. Estos autores destacan que para los estudiantes de inglés resulta especialmente complejo emplear adecuadamente la expresión de la duda y la certeza, aunque se trata de una habilidad fundamental en la escritura académica. Para lograr eficacia comunicativa, el autor o la autora debe formular afirmaciones que los lectores especializados consideren justificadas y que, al mismo tiempo, reflejen interacciones sociales apropiadas dentro de la comunidad discursiva. En este sentido, las afirmaciones no solo han de mostrar el grado de convicción de quien escribe, que puede ir desde la

posibilidad incierta hasta la predicción firme, sino también transmitir deferencia y modestia frente a la audiencia.

En la misma línea que Hyland y Milton (1997), Salazar (2008) señala que la modalidad constituye un aspecto particularmente problemático en la escritura académica, tanto para escritores con experiencia nativos como no nativos. Por su parte, Neff et al. (2003) encontraron diferencias significativas en la expresión de la postura del escritor entre editoriales profesionales y textos argumentativos producidos por escritores noveles nativos y no nativos. Los hallazgos de esta y otras investigaciones (Bloor y Bloor, 1991; Connor y Lauer, 1988; Johns, 1990; McCann, 1989; Neff, 2008; Silva, 1993) indican que las expresiones modales constituyen una fuente clara de dificultad para los escritores no especializados. Dada la importancia pragmática de la modalidad en el discurso académico, Salazar (2008) enfatiza que esta dimensión de la competencia retórica merece un estudio más profundo.

Esta autora añade que en los textos académicos, los recursos modales no solo reflejan la relación entre el autor y la proposición, sino que establecen la relación entre el autor y su audiencia (Salazar, 2008). Neff (2008) presenta un estudio sobre los autores españoles de textos y su escasa utilización de verbos modales junto al uso excesivo y forzado de adjetivos evaluativos que dan como resultado textos argumentativos demasiado contundentes en inglés. A esta idea se suman Hyland y Milton (1997) puesto que afirman que la expresión de duda y certeza es vital para la práctica de los textos académicos en inglés en los que se les pide a los autores que ofrezcan una evaluación de la información que proporcionan mediante el comentario sobre la provisionalidad o el carácter definitivo de sus afirmaciones.

Salazar (2008), quien también apunta que entender el contexto en el que aparece el recurso modal es necesario para interpretar correctamente su significado, realizó un estudio con tres corpus compuestos cada uno de ellos de aproximadamente 100.000 palabras de textos argumentativos en inglés realizados por estudiantes universitarios americanos, filipinos y españoles. Estos textos debían versar sobre uno de los siguientes temas, teniendo en cuenta la importancia del tema para el uso e interpretación de la modalidad: "*man and nature, money as the root of all evil,*

the consequences of crime, the effectiveness of the prison system, the value of university degrees, the role of censorship in society, the influence of television, the meaning of equality, the usefulness of military service, and the place of dreaming and imagination in the modern world." (Salazar, 2008, 15). En los resultados, esta autora expone que los verbos modales *can*, *could*, *may*, *must*, *should*, *will* y *would* figuran entre los 10 recursos más empleados por los estudiantes en los tres corpus. En los tres corpus el recurso para expresar modalidad más empleado son los verbos modales y entre los verbos modales más usados, es el verbo modal *can* quien gana la batalla al resto con diferencia en los textos de estudiantes filipinos y malayos mientras que el verbo más empleado por los estudiantes nativos es el verbo modal *would*. En el caso del corpus español, el verbo modal *can* se utilizaba con el pronombre personal *we* casi en el 30% de los casos. Además, expone que estos resultados coinciden con los obtenidos por Neff, Martínez y Rica (2001) quienes encontraron un uso marcado del patrón *we can + verb of mental or verbal processes* en toda la sección española de ICLE (*International Corpus of Learner English*). Asimismo, en ambos estudios los resultados muestran el escaso uso de los verbos modales *may* y *might*, lo que combinado con el uso excesivo del verbo modal *can*, les lleva a concluir que la inseguridad en el uso de *may* y *might* propicia que los estudiantes españoles hagan un uso excesivo de *can*, a pesar de que en muchos casos los estudiantes utilizan este último verbo para expresar posibilidad (que además es la traducción directa del verbo español *poder*) cuando en inglés los verbos modales que expresan este significado suelen ser *may* y *might* (Salazar, 2008). En definitiva, esta autora apunta a la transferencia de estrategias del discurso españolas a la lengua inglesa en casos en los que una postura más impersonal se considera más apropiada en esta lengua.

A continuación, presentamos los resultados obtenidos por Mukundan et al. (2013) sobre los textos argumentativos y la exactitud en el uso de los verbos modales en inglés por parte de estudiantes malayos. Como el resto de autores, los creadores de este estudio también nombran que uno de los principales problemas en el aprendizaje y la enseñanza del inglés como segunda lengua es la complejidad de su sistema modal. En

el estudio se empleó *el Malaysian Corpus of Students' Argumentative Writing* (MCSAW) y se analizaron las composiciones de 274 estudiantes que tuvieron que realizar un texto argumentativo con el tema "*Do you think Facebook has more advantages tan disadvantages"*. En los resultados se presentan los verbos modales más empleados y si han sido utilizados apropiadamente. En este caso, los verbos más usados son *can* y *will* con gran diferencia frente al resto. Además, el uso incorrecto de estos verbos en los contextos analizados constituye menos del 10% en el caso de *can* y un 6% en el caso de *will*. Por lo tanto, se llega a la conclusión de que los estudiantes malayos tienen el conocimiento sobre el uso de los verbos modales y que prefieren el uso de los modales *can* y *will* al resto de modales.

Por otro lado, nos centramos en el estudio de Peña (2010) quién analizó el desarrollo de estudiantes de Segundo curso de Bachillerato y de estudiantes de postgrado con respecto a la estructura de un texto argumentativo y al uso de la modalidad en éste. Para ello, recopiló 9 composiciones sobre el tema "*the drinking age should be twenty-one*" que los estudiantes tuvieron que redactar en 30 minutos. Según esta autora, los estudiantes tienen una variedad limitada de verbos modales. En las conclusiones presenta que los estudiantes de postgrado utilizan más variedad para expresar obligación que los estudiantes de Bachillerato mediante los verbos *must*, *have to* y *should*. Se repite la misma situación con las expresiones de posibilidad, ya que los estudiantes de postgrado las utilizan más que los estudiantes de Bachillerato mediante los verbos *will*, *would*, *could* y *may*. En la exposición de estos resultados, la autora añade que el significado de la predicción se expresa en muchas ocasiones desde un punto de vista personal, mientras que la expresión de la posibilidad se expresa probablemente de manera más objetiva.

Nos centramos en un estudio de Alonso-Almeida y Cruz (2011) sobre el valor del verbo modal *may* como marcador epistémico y evidencial en sinopsis médicas en lengua inglesa. Los datos han sido extraídos del *Corpus of Specialized Papers in English* (Evycorp), recabado en el Instituto Universitario para el Desarrollo Tecnológico y la Innovación en las Comunicaciones (IDeTIC) en la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. El corpus contiene artículos científicos de tres disciplinas

(medicina, informática y derecho) y se han analizado 41 sinopsis que preceden a artículos del campo de la medicina y que suman un total de 12.784 palabras. Los resultados de este estudio muestran la presencia predominante del verbo modal *may* con un 35% de los casos con respecto a otros modales con el valor de posibilidad. El otro verbo modal relacionado con la expresión de probabilidad, posibilidad o permiso es *might*, pero éste solo ocupa el 5% de los casos. Los autores hacen hincapié en que el uso tan elevado de *may* puede deberse al tipo de texto en el que se encuentra, puesto que este género textual tiene el objetivo de presentar las ideas e intenciones desarrolladas en el artículo de manera resumida y este modal puede disminuir la carga de una descripción y justificación excesivas además de que al expresar posibilidad o probabilidad hace que sea ideal para introducir nuevos conocimientos en un texto científico. En las conclusiones estos autores aluden a la importancia del contexto como herramienta para evitar la ambigüedad de significados de estos verbos, como ya hemos comentado anteriormente en los resultados de otros autores.

Siguiendo en la misma línea que en los casos anteriores, presentamos un estudio llevado a cabo por Chen (2012) en el que realiza un análisis contrastivo de expresiones epistémicas en textos argumentativos de estudiantes universitarios chinos de inglés como lengua extranjera de 4 niveles avanzados (*proficiency)* con textos argumentativos escritos por nativos de la lengua inglesa. Para ello, hace uso de dos corpus, uno de hablantes nativos de inglés denominado *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays* (LOCNESS) y otro de alumnado chino llamado *Chinese learner corpus* (CLEC). El estudio intenta abordar cuáles son las características de las expresiones de la postura epistémica en textos de estudiantes chinos comparados con los de hablantes nativos y si hay alguna diferencia en la expresión del valor epistémico en diferentes niveles avanzados de lengua. Los resultados exponen que hay considerables similitudes en el número total de recursos epistémicos empleados en los dos corpus, puesto que ambos grupos han empleado alrededor de 26~27 expresiones epistémicas cada 1.000 palabras, lo que implica que ambos grupos eran conscientes de la expresión de la modalidad epistémica en textos y pudieron emplear esos recursos en los casos necesarios.

Atendiendo a la categoría gramatical, Chen (2012) indica que los verbos modales son los recursos preferidos para expresar la modalidad epistémica tanto para los estudiantes nativos como para los estudiantes chinos. En los resultados, al agrupar los niveles entre aquellos con menor nivel y aquellos con mayor nivel, entre ellos puede apreciarse como hay un declive en el uso de los verbos modales a favor del uso de adjetivos y nombres. Estos resultados sugieren que a nivel que mejora el nivel avanzado de lengua de los estudiantes, éstos pueden seleccionar un mayor número de recursos epistémicos para expresar esta modalidad.

Como conclusiones, Chen (2012) expone, por un lado, que los resultados sugieren que la mejora en la selección de un nivel apropiado de compromiso en las proposiciones expresadas está relacionada con el aumento del nivel de conocimiento de los estudiantes. Por otro lado, los estudiantes chinos emplean un rango restrictivo de recursos epistémicos para expresar esta modalidad lo que supone que sus textos están señalados por afirmaciones injustificadas y marcadas en comparación con los de los estudiantes nativos. Junto a sus hallazgos, Chen propone algunas posibles explicaciones para las diferencias observadas entre los dos corpus. Entre ellas, señala que los escritores nativos han recibido formación en sus clases de escritura para realizar afirmaciones y matizaciones de manera adecuada, mientras que en las clases de inglés en China es relativamente poco frecuente enseñar el uso correcto de las expresiones que revelen la postura del autor. En ese contexto, la enseñanza de la escritura se centra principalmente en la organización del texto, la corrección gramatical y la variedad sintáctica, prestando escasa atención a la expresión apropiada de la postura del autor. Chen también sugiere que las diferencias culturales podrían ser otro factor que contribuya a las disparidades entre ambos corpus.

Como ya hemos nombrado con anterioridad, debemos tener en cuenta que el género del texto también aporta una carga importante del significado del verbo modal. Pongamos como ejemplo ahora un estudio de Klinge (1995) en un artículo en el que el autor analiza la interpretación lingüística de la modalidad en los contratos. En este artículo, a diferencia del resto, el autor no compara textos escritos por hablantes no nativos de la lengua inglesa, sino que apunta que para llegar a un marco

descriptivo adecuado de la modalidad en los contratos, es necesario explicar el vínculo entre la semántica lingüística y el marco pragmático especial de los contratos.

Según este autor, la modalidad ha sido objeto de estudio en filosofía y lingüística, pero hay poca investigación disponible sobre la modalidad lingüística en los contratos, que el autor describe de la siguiente manera: "[…] the most obvious area of social interaction where modality plays a crucial role. The balance of a contractual relationship rests fundamentally on what is permitted and what is obligatory and on what is possible and what is necessary." (Klinge, 1995, p. 649).

En este artículo, Klinge (1995) apunta que, si emparejamos los verbos modales con significados modales como permiso, obligación y prohibición, podemos encontrarnos en el lenguaje contractual que 3 formas lingüísticas, concretamente *shall, must y will*, expresan aparentemente el mismo significado modal. En su estudio demuestra que los tres verbos modales no son semánticamente. Este autor establece una distinción entre el significado codificado lingüísticamente, es decir, el significado semántico, y el significado determinado según la situación, es decir, el significado pragmático. Este autor aporta un claro ejemplo de Austin (1962, p. 33 en Klinge, 1995) en el que no se puede saber si el verbo modal *shall* expresa una promesa, una amenaza o una predicción en la frase: *I shall be there*, por lo que las interpretaciones no son significados codificados en la semántica de la frase y, por lo tanto, no pueden ser significados codificados en el modal *shall*.

Otro de los estudios consultados es el llevado a cabo por Hyland y Milton (1997) acerca de la expresión de duda y seguridad en estudiantes de L1 y L2 y del que ya hemos presentado algunas ideas. Como hemos apuntado anteriormente, estos autores también explicitan que uno de los mayores problemas para los estudiantes de segundas lenguas a la hora de escribir textos argumentativos en inglés es transmitir declaraciones con un grado apropiado de duda y seguridad puesto que los comentarios epistémicos son vitales en los textos académicos donde los autores tienen que distinguir entre una opinión y un hecho y evaluar sus afirmaciones de forma correcta. Este estudio está basado en un corpus de 1.000.000 de palabras que compara textos escritos de examen de 900

alumnos cantoneses de Hong Kong con 770 alumnos ingleses de similar edad y nivel educacional. El objetivo del estudio es determinar las formas y significados típicos empleados por los dos grupos para presentar afirmaciones en prosa académica en inglés. Además, este estudio pretende encontrar cómo se expresa el área de la competencia pragmática en textos de estudiantes de segundas lenguas, puesto que las expresiones modales resultan especialmente complejas para los escritores noveles debido a su carácter polipragmático, Por ello, los significados solo pueden interpretarse atendiendo a los contextos en los que las expresiones se utilizan, ya que no residen en los elementos lingüísticos en sí, sino que se asignan a los enunciados que los contienen. En consecuencia, comprender el uso de una expresión modal requiere una interpretación pragmática de casos concretos de uso (Hyland y Milton, 1997). Para demostrarlo, estos autores nos presentan otros trabajos que han identificado variaciones en la seguridad con la que se expresan argumentos en diferentes lenguas, como pueden ser el estudio sobre los textos académicos en alemán y checo que parecen más directos que en inglés (Bloor y Bloor, 1991), fineses (Mauranen, 1993), japoneses (Harder, 1984), malayos (Ahmad, 1995) y chinos (Bloch y Chi, 1995) parecen hacer uso de un estilo más cauteloso e indirecto cuando se expresan opiniones. Todos estos estudios sugieren que los estudiantes de culturas diferentes pueden tener ideas preconcebidas acerca de las características formales de los textos apropiados cultural y retóricamente y que pueden diferir del marco académico inglés.

En los resultados del estudio llevado a cabo por Hyland y Milton (1997), estos autores exponen una tabla con los elementos más empleados para expresar modalidad epistémica, en donde encontramos que los verbos modales *will, may* y *would* aparecen como los recursos más utilizados tanto por los autores nativos como por lo no nativos, aunque también se puede apreciar que las frecuencias de uso son considerablemente diferentes. Otro dato relevante es que la distribución de frecuencia de los verbos modales *will* y *would* sugiere diferencias conceptuales puesto que los hablantes no nativos expresan predicciones más seguras con el verbo modal *will* y los hablantes nativos expresan expresiones más provisionales con el verbo modal *would*. En cuanto a la distribución

gramatical, como en estudios anteriores, el uso de los verbos modales y de adverbios para expresar un significado epistémico sobrepasa al de otros recursos empleados. La preferencia por los verbos modales de los estudiantes no nativos comparado al uso que de éstos hacen los estudiantes nativos puede deberse a una transferencia de su lengua materna o puede demostrar la atención desproporcionada que los verbos modales han recibido en los materiales pedagógicos de segundas lenguas.

A modo de comparación con los resultados obtenidos por Chen (2012), Hyland y Milton (1997) en su estudio también compararon las variaciones de las categorías gramaticales según el nivel avanzado de conocimiento de los estudiantes. Los resultados arrojan que los tres niveles más avanzados emplean considerablemente más recursos que los dos grupos con nivel más bajo y que la proporción de uso de adverbios tiende a incrementar con el nivel avanzado mientras que el uso de los verbos léxicos declina. Esto hace que el grupo de estudiantes más avanzados se acerque a las cifras de los estudiantes nativos (Hyland y Milton, 1997).

Por último, en las conclusiones, estos autores resumen que mientras los datos obtenidos muestran que los dos grupos de estudiantes nativos y no nativos dependen en gran medida de una variedad limitada de elementos, principalmente, verbos modales y adverbios, la manipulación de la certeza en textos académicos es particularmente problemático para los estudiantes de segundas lenguas. Los estudiantes de Hong Kong tendieron a emplear construcciones sintácticamente más simples, utilizaron un repertorio más limitado de recursos, realizaron afirmaciones con mayor grado de compromiso y presentaron mayores dificultades para transmitir con precisión el nivel de certeza. Según estos autores, esta falta de familiaridad con convenciones centrales de muchos géneros expositivos en inglés puede resultar perjudicial para las oportunidades académicas y profesionales de los aprendices, ya que estos errores no solo afectan la percepción de coherencia y comprensibilidad por parte de los lectores, sino que también pueden influir en la efectividad del argumento y en la evaluación de la competencia académica del escritor.

Para finalizar, nos centramos en dos trabajos realizados por Hinkel (1995, 2009) que muestran que, a la hora de escribir en una segunda lengua, la preponderancia de uso de los verbos modales puede ser

dependiente de la cultura y del tema: "Pragmatic and sociocultural assumptions represent fundamental points of reference that may not be frequently questioned by members of a language community in which values and common background beliefs appear to be mutually shared" (Hinkel, 1995, p. 329). Esta autora apunta que otros investigadores han establecido que puede haber una pequeña conexión entre un nivel avanzado de lingüística y exposición a construcciones sociales y conceptuales de L2 por un lado, y por otro, la disposición o habilidad para asumir las creencias socioculturales y las normas de la L2 (Adamson y Regan, 1991; Schmidt, 1983; Schumann, 1978).

En su investigación, Hinkel (1995) para determinar si los estudiantes nativos y no nativos empleaban de forma similar los *root modals* (*must*, *have to*, *should*, etc.) en composiciones escritas sobre un mismo tema, seleccionó de forma aleatoria 30 composiciones de cada grupo para cada uno de los siete temas (tradiciones, educación, patriotismo, racismo, política, entre otros). Los resultados indican que el uso de los *root modals* en las composiciones de nativos y de no nativos parece ser dependiente de la cultura y el contexto, puesto que, en este caso, las construcciones socioculturales taoístas, confucionistas y budistas utilizan este tipo de verbos modales para expresar los valores sociales y las presuposiciones de estas culturas, en contra del uso que los estudiantes nativos angloamericanos hacen de los verbos modales en los mismos tipos de textos. Un análisis contextualizado de los *root modals* y sus vinculaciones socioculturales pueden atraer las diferentes nociones de obligación y necesidad en las culturas angloamericanas, confucionistas, taoístas y budistas. Este hecho tiene repercusión en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje y así lo apunta Hinkel (1995) al añadir que las implicaciones de presunciones socioculturales fundamentales y divergentes pueden ser objeto de discusión incluso al tratar temas aparentemente sencillos, como la descripción de roles y relaciones familiares, docentes y clases, o amistades, los cuales son comunes tanto en tareas de escritura para hablantes nativos como para estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua. Abordar estas presunciones socioculturales básicas, que tanto estudiantes como profesores dan por sentadas y cuya veracidad se cuestiona rara vez, puede convertirse en una experiencia de aprendizaje enriquecedora para ambas partes.

6. DISCUSIÓN

La modalidad representa un componente esencial del discurso que permite a los autores expresar diversos grados de necesidad, obligación, certeza, posibilidad y compromiso con sus proposiciones. A pesar de su relevancia, el empleo de marcadores modales, en particular los verbos modales, plantea dificultades significativas para los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (L2), debido a su carácter polisémico y su intrínseca dependencia del contexto. De hecho, diversos estudios han evidenciado la influencia determinante del género textual, el nivel de competencia lingüística y los factores socioculturales en la selección de estos recursos lingüísticos.

La investigación de autores como Alonso-Almeida y Cruz (2011), Peña (2010), Mukundan et al. (2013), Chen (2012) y Hyland y Milton (1997), entre otros, confirman que el uso de la modalidad está profundamente condicionado por estos factores. En relación con el género textual, Biber et al. (1999) y Aijmer (2002) demuestran que el uso modal varía notablemente según el registro, ya que el significado de los modales depende en gran medida del contexto. Por su parte, Dagneaux (1995) encontró que los escritores nativos emplean más auxiliares modales de posibilidad o probabilidad en temas argumentativos que en literarios. Hinkel (1995) también destacó cómo el tema influye en la frecuencia de modales específicos, observando un sobreuso de los verbos modales *must* y *should* en ensayos sobre educación de escritores no nativos, a diferencia de ensayos sobre política. La complejidad se manifiesta en géneros como los contratos, donde formas como *shall*, *must* y *will* pueden parecer sinónimas pero no lo son semánticamente, requiriendo una distinción entre significado codificado y determinado por la situación. Alonso-Almeida y Cruz (2011) hallaron una predominancia del verbo modal *may* en sinopsis médicas, sugiriendo su idoneidad para introducir nuevos conocimientos al expresar posibilidad o probabilidad en este tipo de textos.

En cuanto al nivel de competencia lingüística, se observa que los estudiantes de L2 tienden a usar una gama más limitada de marcadores de modalidad, con una predominancia de verbos modales. Sin embargo, a medida que su nivel lingüístico mejora, se produce una diversificación

hacia el uso de adjetivos y sustantivos, lo que implica una mayor selección de recursos epistémicos. Chen (2012) y Hyland y Milton (1997) lo evidenciaron en estudios con estudiantes chinos y de Hong Kong, respectivamente, donde los niveles avanzados mostraban una mayor variedad y una aproximación a los patrones de los hablantes nativos. Peña (2010) también notó que los estudiantes de posgrado utilizan una mayor variedad de modales para expresar obligación y posibilidad en comparación con los de Bachillerato.

Respecto a los factores socioculturales y la transferencia de L1, las investigaciones confirman que las diferencias culturales influyen directamente en el uso de los verbos modales, condicionando las nociones de obligación y necesidad en distintas culturas. La transferencia cultural incide en la percepción y uso de la modalidad. Por ejemplo, Salazar (2008) encontró un uso excesivo del verbo modal *can* por parte de estudiantes españoles y filipinos, particularmente en la construcción *we can* + verbos de procesos mentales/verbales, lo que sugiere una inseguridad en el uso de *may* y *might* y una transferencia directa del español "poder". Hinkel (1995) demostró que el uso de *los root modals* está condicionado por la cultura y el contexto, ya que las construcciones socioculturales taoístas, confucionistas y budistas emplean estos modales para expresar valores sociales de manera diferente a los angloamericanos. Estas diferencias culturales y retóricas pueden llevar a los estudiantes de L2 a tener ideas preconcebidas sobre las características formales de los textos que difieren del marco académico inglés.

Finalmente, la capacidad de expresar duda y certeza de forma apropiada es una tarea compleja pero crítica para el éxito en la escritura académica en inglés. Los autores deben diferenciar opiniones de hechos, evaluar afirmaciones y transmitir un grado adecuado de deferencia y modestia a la audiencia. Para los estudiantes de L2, esta es una fuente clara de dificultad. Hyland y Milton (1997) observaron que los aprendices de Hong Kong empleaban construcciones sintácticamente más simples, dependían de un rango más limitado de recursos, ofrecían compromisos más fuertes y mostraban mayores problemas para transmitir un grado preciso de certeza. Esta falta de familiaridad con una convención central de muchos géneros expositivos en inglés puede ser perjudicial para

sus oportunidades académicas y profesionales, afectando la coherencia, comprensibilidad y el impacto del argumento, así como la evaluación de la competencia del escritor. Chen (2012) también concluyó que los estudiantes chinos emplean un rango restrictivo de recursos epistémicos, lo que resulta en textos con afirmaciones injustificadas y marcadas. La interpretación de los modales exige una comprensión pragmática del contexto, más allá de su significado semántico codificado, lo cual los estudiantes de L2 desarrollan progresivamente. La dependencia de los verbos modales por parte de los estudiantes de L2 también puede estar ligada a prácticas pedagógicas tradicionales y una menor exposición a la diversidad de formas deónticas, epistémicas y dinámicas, así como a una atención desproporcionada a significados infrecuentes en los materiales pedagógicos.

7. CONCLUSIONES

A partir de la revisión y análisis comparativo de la literatura, se extraen las siguientes conclusiones fundamentales. Primero, la modalidad es un aspecto crítico y multifacético del discurso académico, y su dominio es esencial para la comunicación efectiva y la credibilidad académica en L2. Segundo, los estudiantes de L2 enfrentan dificultades significativas en el uso de los verbos modales debido a su polisemia, su dependencia contextual, su tendencia a utilizar una gama limitada de recursos y la transferencia de patrones de su lengua materna y normas culturales. Tercero, factores como el género textual, el nivel de competencia lingüística y los aspectos socioculturales son determinantes en la elección y uso de los marcadores de modalidad. A medida que los estudiantes avanzan en su nivel de L2, demuestran una mayor diversificación en el uso de recursos modales, aproximándose a los patrones de los hablantes nativos. Por último, la interpretación de los verbos modales requiere una comprensión pragmática del contexto, más allá de su significado semántico codificado, siendo una habilidad que los estudiantes de L2 desarrollan progresivamente.

Los resultados de esta investigación tienen implicaciones didácticas cruciales para la enseñanza del inglés académico a estudiantes de L2. Es

fundamental que la enseñanza del inglés académico integre enfoques que consideren no solo los aspectos lingüísticos, sino también los pragmáticos y culturales de la modalidad. Los estudiantes de L2 necesitan una instrucción explícita sobre la función y la interpretación contextual de los verbos modales, con un énfasis particular en los matices de certeza y duda, que son vitales en la escritura académica. Se deben implementar propuestas didácticas que ayuden a los estudiantes a dominar los complejos matices discursivos que estos verbos aportan en el discurso académico. Esto incluye abordar la transferencia de patrones de la lengua materna (como el sobreuso de *can*) y las presuposiciones socioculturales que influyen en la expresión de la obligación y la necesidad. Los materiales pedagógicos deberían reflejar el uso auténtico de los modales en diversos géneros textuales y evitar la atención desproporcionada a significados infrecuentes, reconociendo que el tipo de texto influye en el uso de los modales para un enfoque didáctico contextualizado. Finalmente, es importante fomentar el desarrollo de una competencia retórica y sociopragmática que permita a los estudiantes diferenciar opiniones de hechos, evaluar afirmaciones y transmitir un grado adecuado de deferencia y modestia, evitando las afirmaciones injustificadas y marcadas que pueden perjudicar su credibilidad académica.

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REVISIÓN CRÍTICA SOBRE EL USO Y ADQUISICIÓN DE LOS VERBOS MODALES EN INGLÉS COMO L2

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Los verbos modales constituyen una de las áreas más desafiantes dentro de la gramática inglesa para los estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua (L2), debido a su naturaleza polisémica, multifuncional y altamente dependiente del contexto discursivo. Verbos como *can*, *may*, *might*, *must* o *should* no solo cumplen funciones gramaticales, sino que actúan como marcadores modales que expresan posibilidad, obligación, necesidad, permiso o certeza, tanto desde una perspectiva epistémica como deóntica o dinámica (von Wright, 1951; Palmer, 1990; Hoye, 2008). Esta pluralidad funcional exige al aprendiz un alto grado de competencia lingüística, pragmática y sociolingüística.

Diversos estudios han documentado las dificultades que enfrentan los hablantes no nativos para dominar el uso de los modales. Hinkel (1995) subraya que los estudiantes suelen fracasar en captar los matices modales de la lengua, mientras que Aijmer (2002) señala que incluso los hablantes nativos usan estos verbos de forma compleja y variable, lo que añade una dificultad adicional para los estudiantes. Chen (2012) destaca que la modalidad epistémica representa un reto particular debido a la ambigüedad y versatilidad contextual de muchos modales. Salazar (2008), por su parte, indica que la adquisición de la modalidad no se limita a una cuestión formal, sino que implica el desarrollo de una competencia retórica que permita modular el discurso con eficacia.

Además, el bajo rendimiento de los estudiantes europeos en pruebas de producción escrita en inglés (Bonnet, 2002) y los resultados empíricos

de estudios aplicados a poblaciones concretas, como los estudiantes árabes (Saeed, 2009), muestran que el aprendizaje de los verbos modales sigue siendo un área problemática y descuidada en los contextos educativos. Ante esta situación, se impone una revisión crítica que integre hallazgos teóricos y datos empíricos, con el fin de repensar las estrategias de enseñanza y aprendizaje de este componente esencial de la competencia comunicativa en inglés como L2.

2. MARCO TEÓRICO

Diversos estudios han documentado las dificultades que enfrentan los aprendices para dominar los matices de los verbos modales, tanto en términos de elección léxica como de adecuación pragmática (Mukundan et al., 2013; Hondo, 2012). Por su parte, Hinkel (1995, p.356) argumenta el hecho de que los aprendices no nativos de la lengua inglesa muestran serias dificultades en el aprendizaje del uso correcto de los verbos modales. Así mismo, Aijmer (2002), en su análisis corpus-lingüístico, subraya la complejidad de los usos modales en inglés nativo, lo que complica aún más su adquisición por parte de hablantes no nativos. Las diferencias no sólo radican en el tipo de modales utilizados, sino también en la frecuencia, la posición sintáctica, la función discursiva y la adecuación a situaciones comunicativas específicas. Chen (2012), por su parte, señala que la modalidad epistémica, es decir, el modo en que los modales expresan grados de certeza o posibilidad plantea serios desafíos para los estudiantes, debido a su naturaleza polipragmática. Esto significa que un mismo modal puede asumir diferentes significados según el contexto, lo que dificulta su correcta interpretación y uso.

Por su lado, Salazar (2008) también apunta en su estudio la dificultad de los estudiantes para adquirir la modalidad como estrategia retórica y resalta que esta falta de control de las expresiones modales por estudiantes no nativos de esta lengua se debe a diversas razones, como pueden ser la amplia gama de significados que estas expresiones pueden transmitir; la enorme variedad de formas en las que se puede expresar modalidad (desde verbos modales hasta verbos léxicos, adjetivos,

adverbios y nombres); la ausencia de materiales pedagógicos que presenten las expresiones modales y sus usos correctos así como las variaciones culturales y lingüísticas con respecto a la postura del autor.

Mukundan et al. (2013) incide en esta misma línea al argumentar que uno de los mayores problemas en la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua es la complejidad de su sistema modal. Según estos autores, los verbos modales no solo abarcan una amplia gama de significados, desde el permiso hasta la obligación, sino que además desempeñan un papel fundamental en la construcción del significado en la comunicación, constituyéndose como elementos esenciales tanto para el lenguaje como para el funcionamiento de la sociedad.

Junto a estos autores, Celce-Murcia y Larsen-Freeman (1999) han mencionado que la adquisición de los modales es uno de los aspectos más difíciles en el aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua debido a la naturaleza supuestamente idiosincrática de éstos. Asimismo, Tyler et al. (2010) añaden que tanto el profesor como el aprendiz de dicha lengua pueden tener la impresión de que el único enfoque para dominar este campo es memorizar expresiones hechas para cada acto de habla y qué modales pueden emplearse en dichas expresiones.

Chen (2012) hace un resumen de las razones identificadas por Hyland and Milton (1997) sobre porqué el uso de los recursos epistémicos, en este caso, son tan problemáticos: la naturaleza polipragmática de las expresiones modales; la doble función de la modalidad epistémica, que consiste tanto en expresar el grado de compromiso del autor con sus afirmaciones como en negociar la relación con los lectores; y el hecho de que los significados epistémicos pueden expresarse de múltiples formas. Así mismo, Chen apunta que para los estudiantes de inglés y los escritores noveles, la dificultad para expresar un grado adecuado de confianza en la veracidad de las afirmaciones que realizan puede ser aún mayor.

Cruse (2004) expone las expresiones modales que define como aquellas que señalan una actitud particular por parte del hablante y ejemplifica esta idea con la comparación entre dos oraciones que presenta Hondo (2012):

1. Katelyn is John's wife.

2. Katelyn could be John's wife.

La primera representa un contenido proposicional claro en la que una mujer con el nombre de Katelyn es la mujer de un hombre cuyo nombre en John. La segunda, con el modal *could*, indica posibilidad, pero que resulta ambigua sin contexto: Katelyn podría ser suficientemente mayor para ser la esposa de John, podría estar dispuesta a casarse con él, o podría compartir su apellido, entre otras interpretaciones posibles (Hondo, 2012). Este ejemplo ilustra cómo, sin contexto, un verbo modal puede generar significados diversos y a menudo confusos.

En este contexto, se hace necesario revisar de forma crítica los enfoques actuales sobre la adquisición y enseñanza de los modales en inglés como L2.

3. OBJETIVOS

Este artículo tiene como objetivos principales:

- Analizar las principales dificultades que enfrentan los estudiantes de inglés como L2 en el uso y adquisición de los verbos modales.
- Identificar las diferencias de uso entre hablantes nativos y no nativos, especialmente en términos de frecuencia, variedad, función y adecuación contextual.
- Explorar los factores lingüísticos, pragmáticos y pedagógicos que inciden en el aprendizaje de la modalidad.
- Proponer implicaciones didácticas que favorezcan un enfoque más efectivo para la enseñanza de los verbos modales en contextos formales.

4. METODOLOGÍA

El presente estudio adopta una metodología de revisión crítica de literatura académica y estudios empíricos. Se analizaron trabajos con enfoques diversos (corpus-lingüístico, análisis de errores, estudios experimentales y evaluaciones internacionales), a fin de identificar patrones

comunes y diferencias en el uso y aprendizaje de los verbos modales en inglés como L2. Entre las fuentes consideradas destacan Aijmer (2002), Hinkel (1995), Hondo (2012), Mukundan et al. (2013), Chen (2012), Salazar (2008) y datos del estudio europeo coordinado por Bonnet (2002).

5. RESULTADOS

Durante 2002 se llevó a cabo un proyecto europeo en 8 países europeos denominado *The assessment of pupils' skills in English in eight European countries*. La participación española en este estudio contó con 123 colegios con 2.957 estudiantes de 4º de la ESO de todas las comunidades autónomas (Bonnet, 2002). El test estaba compuesto por 65 elementos cuyo objetivo era medir la consecución del alumnado en cuatro bloques de contenido (conocimiento lingüístico y tres competencias comunicativas: comprensión oral, comprensión lectora y producción escrita). Presentamos este estudio porque al centrarnos en la producción escrita, se observa que el 50% de las respuestas correctas sólo las consiguen los alumnos del cuarto cuartil y que el resultado del 10% del alumnado con los mejores resultados es 5 puntos porcentuales por debajo de cualquiera de las otras habilidades. Una visión general de los resultados conlleva a indicar que puede ocurrir que en las clases no se emplea un enfoque comunicativo tal como plantea el curriculum, puesto que las partes de lectura y gramática han sido las competencias con mejores resultados en este estudio (Bonnet, 2002).

Por lo tanto, queda expuesto que la producción escrita es un área de mejora en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje, no sólo para los estudiantes de español, sino para los de otras lenguas europeas (franceses, noruegos, finlandeses, daneses, alemanes, suecos y neerlandeses), puesto que esta competencia es en la que se han obtenido los resultados más bajos.

Los resultados de este estudio nos han planteado indagar sobre otros que hayan sido realizados sobre la modalidad o el uso de los verbos modales por parte de personas no nativas de la lengua inglesa, por lo que presentamos el caso de estudiantes árabes de inglés como lengua extranjera en un estudio realizado por Saeed (2009) en el que se analizaron 50

cuestionarios realizados por estudiantes del departamento de inglés de la Universidad de Sharjah, con un nivel supuestamente intermedio-alto tras estudiar esta lengua entre 12 o 14 años antes de comenzar en la universidad. Además, el autor apunta que estos estudiantes han realizado numerosos cursos de lingüística, literatura y traducción, entre otros (Saeed, 2009). Para comenzar, nos informa en la introducción de su estudio que el sistema arábico carece de un sistema modal. A pesar de tener algunos verbos como *sa* y *swafa* que poseen valor de futuro y se asemejan al caso del verbo modal *will*, en ningún caso estos dos verbos modales constituyen un sistema capaz de expresar una variedad de significados como en el caso del modal inglés. Este hecho redundará en los resultados obtenidos porque los estudiantes tienen que aprender un complejo sistema modal que no existe en su propia lengua materna (Saeed, 2009).

Dicho cuestionario consta de dos versiones, una para evaluar la habilidad del alumnado para reconocer el uso de los modales y una para medir la habilidad de los estudiantes para utilizarlos. Los resultados obtenidos de ambos cuestionarios son notablemente bajos, dado que el porcentaje medio de respuestas correctas en la parte de reconocimiento es de un 64% frente a un 49% en la parte de producción en estudiantes que se consideran que tienen un nivel alto, por lo que los resultados deberían ser mayores (Saeed, 2009). Su análisis reveló una serie de dificultades que enfrentan los estudiantes árabes de inglés como lengua extranjera al reconocer o producir verbos modales. Una de las principales complicaciones radica en la superposición de significados y funciones entre muchos modales, lo que con frecuencia conduce a su uso incorrecto. Además, la complejidad semántica de esta categoría gramatical y la multiplicidad de sentidos que puede adoptar un solo verbo modal convierten su dominio en un verdadero desafío. A ello se suma la falta de un sistema equivalente de verbos modales en la lengua árabe, lo que agrava la dificultad especialmente en las etapas iniciales y pre-avanzadas del aprendizaje del inglés. Otro aspecto problemático es el desconocimiento por parte del alumnado de los usos idiomáticos de los modales, como se evidencia en expresiones coloquiales. Asimismo, los estudiantes suelen mostrar dificultades para identificar los matices que distinguen a cada modal y que determinan su adecuación contextual. Finalmente, el

estudio evidencia que los usos motivados por el contexto comunicativo resultan más complejos para los estudiantes que aquellos regidos por normas gramaticales explícitas, pero experimenta mayores obstáculos en situaciones menos estructuradas y más dependientes del contexto.

Hondo, en un artículo publicado en 2012, presenta un estudio preliminar con 119 universitarios japoneses con el objetivo de investigar cómo se entienden los diferentes significados del verbo modal *must*. Los participantes debían traducir significados deónticos del verbo modal *must* y significados epistémicos de este mismo verbo dentro de una revista de viajes. Al analizar los resultados obtenidos, el 84,66 % de las traducciones correspondientes al verbo modal *must* con significado deóntico fueron correctas, frente a sólo el 29,46 % de traducciones correctas para el significado epistémico. Por lo tanto, se demuestra que en el nivel universitario, los estudiantes japoneses de inglés conocen el significado deóntico de *must*, pero no ocurre lo mismo con el significado epistémico de este verbo (Hondo, 2012).

Sin embargo, Hondo apunta que la diferencia en los resultados puede deberse al hecho de que en los significados deónticos, el verbo modal *must* estaba seguido de la forma base del verbo. Por el contrario, los significados epistémicos de este verbo modal estaban seguidos de un infinitivo perfectivo. El autor apunta que normalmente en los institutos se explica el significado deóntico de *must*, pero no así el significado epistémico, a pesar de que este último significado esté incluido dentro de los libros de textos para institutos administrados por el ministerio de educación japonés. Este hecho se contrapone a los resultados que indican que existe una falta de comprensión del significado del verbo modal *must* en los niveles universitarios (Hondo, 2012).

Por otro lado, presentamos un artículo de Aijmer (2002) sobre la modalidad en la interlengua en textos escritos de estudiantes avanzados suecos, en el que compara la variedad y la frecuencia de algunos recursos modales en textos de nativos ingleses y textos de estudiantes universitarios de inglés como segunda lengua con un nivel avanzado. Este estudio se basa sobre muestras de 52.000 palabras aproximadamente en las que se tiene en cuenta no sólo los verbos modales sino cualquier

recurso modal, como pueden ser los adverbios o los verbos léxicos con significado modal (Aijmer, 2002).

Esta autora presenta en su estudio los resultados de una comparación del uso de los modales de posibilidad en textos escritos por hablantes franceses, alemanes, suecos y británicos en los que se demuestra que todos los grupos utilizan en demasía la categoría de los modales de posibilidad en general, pero que hay una variación en el uso los verbos modales individuales, como es el caso de *can* y *could* en los estudiantes alemanes o *may* que sólo fue empleado de forma excesiva por los estudiantes franceses. Sin embargo, el verbo modal *might* fue usado por todos los grupos, aunque los usuarios suecos lo emplearan más que los franceses o los alemanes. En cuanto a las formas de expresar un significado epistémico, *will¸would, may, might* y *could* son los principales auxiliares epistémicos, según esta autora. Añade que *will* se utiliza para predecir lo que ocurrirá en el futuro con alguna seguridad y que *may* expresa un grado más bajo de certeza. Sin embargo, apunta que la modalidad epistémica es un área borrosa que incluye diversas maneras de expresar duda y seguridad mediante equivalentes gramaticales y funcionales a los modales epistémicos, como ya hemos mencionado anteriormente (Aijmer, 2002).

Asimismo, esta autora señala que, en el caso de los estudiantes suecos, la tendencia a utilizar expresiones pleonásticas para marcar la modalidad podría estar influenciada por factores interlinguales. En sueco, los significados modales epistémicos suelen expresarse con mayor frecuencia mediante adverbios o mediante la combinación de adverbios y verbos modales, a diferencia del inglés, donde estos significados se comunican típicamente a través de verbos modales por sí solos. Esta diferencia estructural puede inducir una transferencia lingüística desde la lengua materna, lo que refuerza una inclinación ya presente en la interlengua hacia el uso redundante de marcadores modales. Por ello, advierte que es fundamental que los estudiantes suecos tomen conciencia de que, en su lengua, los auxiliares modales ocupan una posición periférica, mientras que los adverbios o sus combinaciones con modales tienen un papel más central que en inglés. Por último, coincide con otros autores al apuntar que el uso excesivo de verbos modales como herramienta principal para

expresar modalidad es una tendencia que puede estar inducida por la enseñanza. En este sentido, Holmes (1988) apunta que numerosos libros de textos dedican una cantidad injustificada de atención a los verbos modales negando de esta manera otras estrategias alternativas.

Por otro lado, nos enfocamos un estudio llevado a cabo por Sun (2014) sobre los errores gramaticales cometidos por estudiantes chinos en textos en lengua inglesa. Esta autora contó con la participación de 30 estudiantes universitarios que habían estudiado la lengua inglesa durante más de 12 años. Se les pidió que realizaran una composición de aproximadamente 250 palabras sobre un tema a elegir por ellos mismos. En este contexto, Lee (2010) considera que la ventaja de escribir sobre un tema libre es que refleja el conocimiento interiorizado del alumnado de forma subconsciente en comparación con textos controlados. De las 323 muestras de error que se recogieron, el 11,46% corresponden a errores relacionados con la forma o el tiempo verbal. De hecho, esta autora apunta a que una de las posibles explicaciones sobre la dificultad de estos estudiantes para elegir la forma o el tiempo verbal correctos reside en que en la lengua china no existe el tiempo verbal (Sun, 2014). Entre los errores que cita se encuentran los verbos modales, por lo que este estudio también ratifica lo que hemos comentado anteriormente sobre la dificultad que poseen los estudiantes de inglés como L2 sobre el uso del sistema verbal.

Otro de los estudios a los que debemos prestar atención es el realizado en 2003 por Marjidono sobre los errores gramaticales cometidos por estudiantes indonesios de nivel avanzado de inglés del departamento de inglés. En las 17 propuestas presentadas, sólo se examinaron los errores gramaticales con el objetivo de descubrir qué tipo de errores son los más usuales para poder ayudar a los profesores en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje (Marjidono, 2003). En los errores morfológicos encontrados por esta autora, queda reflejado que estos estudiantes avanzados de la lengua inglesa siguen teniendo errores básicos como pueden ser el uso de la inflexión de tercera persona del singular con verbos modales o incluso la inflexión del pasado con este tipo de verbos.

Para finalizar, queremos nombrar la línea de investigación llevada a cabo por Sánchez y Alonso sobre los verbos modales ingleses (2004) y el estudio contrastivo de los verbos modales (2005) en cuyos trabajos

se han comparado estudiantes nativos de la lengua inglesa con estudiantes españoles. El propósito del primer trabajo comentado es estudiar la organización cognitiva de los estudiantes de la lengua inglesa y los nativos con respecto a los verbos modales mediante el uso de redes semánticas (Sánchez y Alonso, 2004). En este primer estudio se usaron dos pruebas con verbos modales: una en un contexto oracional libre, en la que se presentaban los verbos modales en un ejercicio de opción múltiple en la que debían identificar la función del verbo modal; y en la otra prueba, en un contexto oracional restringido, en la que se diseñó un ejercicio para medir el grado de proximidad de los verbos modales según el juicio de los estudiantes (Sánchez y Alonso, 2004). Estas autoras presentan dos conclusiones en este primer estudio que son las siguientes: la primera en la que exponen que en el contexto oracional restringido prima el valor semántico sobre los aspectos formales o gramaticales y la segunda en la que presentan que los verbos modales tienen un valor intrínseco cuando se piensa en ellos de forma aislada puesto que el contexto oracional restringido cambia en ciertos aspectos la percepción que se tiene de ellos por separado (Sánchez y Alonso, 2004). Por último, presentamos una conclusión expuesta por las autoras que está relacionado con la docencia de estos verbos:

> Es muy importante señalar que pese al parecido entre las redes de los nativos y las de los estudiantes en contexto oracional restringido, se notaron diferencias cualitativas y cuantitativas entre ambos grupos. Además, los datos obtenidos en el contexto oracional libre manifestaron una gran diferencia en cuanto conocimiento y pusieron de relieve los problemas conceptuales de los estudiantes en cuanto a los distintos usos de los modales. Los datos tomados en conjunto marcan la necesidad de practicar la docencia de estos términos de modo distinto al que se viene haciendo, para que los estudiantes lleguen a adquirir un dominio en el uso de los mismos (Sánchez y Alonso, 2004, p.126).

En su segundo estudio (Sánchez y Alonso, 2005), estas autoras no sólo comentan que los verbos modales y su aprendizaje resultan difícil por su complejidad intrínseca y su uso, como ya hemos nombrado anteriormente, sino que apuntan que las dificultades para los estudiantes españoles vienen dadas por las diferencias entre la lengua materna y el inglés en cuanto a los recursos de ambas lenguas para expresar la realidad del hablante:

> En el ámbito puramente verbal, existe una falta de correspondencia directa, de índole incluso numérica, entre la amplia red de verbos moduladores que utiliza la lengua inglesa para cubrir la gama semántica de lo "hipotético", lo "irreal", lo "supuesto", lo "imaginario", […] y el sistema modal español que realiza estas funciones semánticas mediante el uso formalmente más restringido de los modos subjuntivo y condicional (Alarcos Llorach, 1994) (Sánchez y Alonso, 2005, p. 96).

El objetivo de estas autoras con esta investigación es conocer objetivamente el estado real de las carencias teórico-prácticas que presentan los estudiantes españoles de inglés como lengua extranjera en el aprendizaje y uso de los verbos modales. Desde su punto de vista, estas autoras argumentan que los estudiantes españoles reciben en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje la explicación teórica y la exposición práctica del significado y funcionamiento de los verbos modales a través de presentaciones graduales y con una orientación gramatical en los libros de textos (Sánchez y Alonso, 2005).

En este estudio, en el que contaron con la participación de un grupo de estudiantes nativos y un grupo de alumnos españoles de primer curso de Filología Inglesa de la Universidad de Salamanca, las autoras realizaron varias tareas como ejercicios de relación de los verbos modales sin contexto y en contexto oracional, ejercicios de reconocimiento de los verbos modales y ejercicios sobre la utilización de los verbos modales en la producción propia (Sánchez y Alonso, 2005). A pesar de que los resultados de las tres pruebas son significativos, prestaremos atención al tercer ejercicio el que se analizan composiciones realizadas por los estudiantes. Los participantes realizaron 3 redacciones en lengua inglesa con diferentes formulaciones, una producción escrita "no controlada" para propiciar el uso de los verbos modales mediante un tema de carácter hipotético, una redacción "controlada" en la que se pedía el uso del mayor número posible de verbos modales y una tercera "libre" con un tema completamente abierto. Las conclusiones extraídas de este ejercicio son la escasa utilización que los dos grupos hacen de los verbos modales en su propio discurso, a excepción de *would* con un índice de frecuencia mayor sobre el resto de modales en las redacciones "no controladas" y "controladas", al que le sigue el verbo modal *could* como el siguiente más empleado en las tres producciones. Sánchez y Alonso (2005) observaron que los hablantes nativos tienden a organizar

su uso de los verbos modales desde una perspectiva semántica más que gramatical. Esta preferencia se manifiesta en la frecuencia con la que utilizan formas como *would* en contextos hipotéticos, incluso sin una instrucción explícita para emplear modales, lo que sugiere una interiorización más natural del sistema modal. Por el contrario, los estudiantes españoles de inglés como L2 responden de manera más literal y gramatical a las consignas, incrementando notablemente el uso de modales cuando se les solicita expresamente. Aunque su frecuencia total de uso puede ser comparable a la de los hablantes nativos, su repertorio modal es más limitado y se apoya en formas semánticamente más marcadas como *can* o *must*, lo que evidencia una menor variación y flexibilidad discursiva. Estos resultados ponen de relieve una diferencia clave entre la competencia implícita de los hablantes nativos y la ejecución más reglada de los aprendientes avanzados de inglés.

Por último, estas autoras después de analizar los resultados de los tres ejercicios, exponen unas breves conclusiones en las que apuntan que el enfoque prioritariamente gramatical que se suele adoptar en el proceso de enseñanza –aprendizaje de los verbos modales no es el más eficaz para favorecer su asimilación o su utilización y recomiendan una metodología que "(1) se centrase en aquellas formas y usos que, utilizando patrones expertos, hemos considerado prototípicas […]; (2) introdujese los verbos modales prioritariamente como parte del discurso en el que se producen, dentro de un contexto semántico y pragmático adecuado, muy probablemente de corte hipotético" (Sánchez y Alonso, 2005, p. 105).

6. DISCUSIÓN

Los datos examinados evidencian que el sistema modal del inglés plantea desafíos tanto lingüísticos como pedagógicos. El carácter polipragmático de muchos modales, como *might* o *could*, los convierte en elementos ambiguos que requieren habilidades inferenciales avanzadas y una adecuada comprensión contextual (Chen, 2012; Hondo, 2012). Además, la enseñanza tradicional basada en reglas gramaticales aisladas no prepara adecuadamente a los estudiantes para usar los verbos modales de forma eficaz en contextos reales de comunicación.

Salazar (2008) señala que la adquisición de la modalidad implica también el desarrollo de una competencia retórica: saber modular la voz del hablante o escritor para expresar distintos grados de compromiso, cortesía, duda o certeza. Esta dimensión discursiva suele estar ausente en los enfoques pedagógicos, que privilegian la memorización de estructuras y la traducción mecánica.

El contraste entre hablantes nativos y no nativos también es revelador. Sánchez y Alonso (2005) demostraron que los nativos usan el condicional *would* de forma espontánea en contextos hipotéticos, mientras que los estudiantes de la lengua inglesa solo lo emplean cuando se les exige, mostrando una comprensión más superficial y dependiente de las instrucciones explícitas.

7. CONCLUSIONES

Los verbos modales en inglés constituyen un área compleja y desafiante para los estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua debido a su polisemia, multifuncionalidad y dependencia del contexto en el que se emplean. Las investigaciones revisadas coinciden en que la adquisición y uso adecuado de los modales es compleja tanto por la superposición de significados como por la ausencia de sistemas equivalentes en las lenguas maternas de los estudiantes, especialmente en casos como el árabe.

Además, la modalidad epistémica plantea retos adicionales por su doble función, es decir, expresar el compromiso del hablante y negociar relaciones interpersonales y por la multiplicidad de formas para expresar grados de certeza y posibilidad. La carencia de materiales pedagógicos específicos y la poca atención a la dimensión pragmática y discursiva de los modales agravan estas dificultades.

Por otro lado, estudios empíricos como el europeo sobre producción escrita y el análisis de estudiantes árabes evidencian que, pese a niveles altos de competencia lingüística, el dominio efectivo de los modales es limitado, particularmente en la producción. Esto sugiere que el enfoque pedagógico debe ir más allá de la memorización, incorporando el desarrollo de competencias pragmáticas, contextuales y retóricas.

Finalmente, para mejorar la competencia modal en estudiantes de inglés como L2 es necesario adoptar enfoques integradores que consideren tanto los aspectos formales como los funcionales y contextuales de los verbos modales. Así, se facilitará un aprendizaje más significativo, efectivo y comunicativamente apropiado.

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¿COOPERAR PARA COMUNICAR? ERROR PRAGMÁTICO Y COMICIDAD: EL CASO DE SHELDON COOPER EN *THE BIG BANG THEORY*

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La globalización ha facilitado un acceso sin precedentes a la cultura estadounidense, especialmente a través de películas y programas de televisión. Entre estos, la comedia de situación (*sitcom*) ha ganado popularidad internacional, convirtiéndose en un vehículo importante para la difusión cultural y lingüística. Las *sitcoms* se caracterizan por contar con un elenco fijo, escenarios recurrentes y episodios autoconclusivos o con continuidad narrativa limitada, generalmente grabados en estudios con audiencia en vivo. Esto permite que los actores reciban retroalimentación inmediata, ajustando su interpretación según la reacción del público (Mills, 2005).

Desde la década de 1940, este género ha mantenido su relevancia, destacando por la capacidad de combinar elementos cotidianos con humor, contradicción y exageración. En particular, el humor verbal constituye su rasgo distintivo y principal mecanismo narrativo, cuyo estudio permite comprender las complejidades de la comunicación humana y los mecanismos pragmáticos que la sostienen (Attardo, 1997; Raskin, 1985).

La pragmática estudia el uso del lenguaje en contextos comunicativos específicos, considerando la relación entre el significado literal, la intención del hablante y la interpretación del oyente. Dentro de este campo, Grice (1975) formuló el principio de cooperación, que sostiene que los interlocutores colaboran implícita o explícitamente para lograr una comunicación efectiva. Este principio se articula a través de cuatro

máximas: cantidad, calidad, relevancia y modalidad. Su cumplimiento facilita la interpretación de implicaturas conversacionales y la comprensión del significado no literal.

Sin embargo, el principio de cooperación tiene limitaciones, especialmente cuando se considera la dimensión social de la interacción. Para complementar esta perspectiva, Leech (1983) introdujo el Principio de Cortesía, que incorpora máximas como tacto, generosidad, aprobación, modestia, acuerdo y simpatía. Estas normas regulan la relación social entre los interlocutores y permiten manejar conflictos, transmitir respeto y mantener la armonía en la conversación. Investigaciones recientes enfatizan que el cumplimiento de estas máximas depende no solo de principios abstractos, sino también del contexto social, la relación interpersonal y factores culturales (García, 2023; Muzaqi, 2025).

El humor es un componente esencial de la interacción humana, capaz de modificar el estado de ánimo, aliviar tensiones y facilitar la comunicación. Se divide en dos grandes categorías: humor visual, basado en imágenes y acciones, y humor verbal, representado por expresiones lingüísticas cómicas (Martin, 2007). A continuación, se enuncian algunas de las teorías clásicas del humor:

- Teoría de la superioridad: propuesta por Hobbes (1651), sostiene que la risa surge de la percepción de la superioridad frente a las debilidades ajenas.
- Teoría de la liberación: formulada por Freud (1976), considera que la risa libera tensiones psicológicas y sociales acumuladas, proporcionando alivio emocional.
- Teoría de la incongruencia: según Attardo (1997), la risa surge al percibir elementos contradictorios o incompatibles dentro de un mismo contexto.

Por otro lado, en los años 80 y 90 del siglo XX se desarrollaron enfoques semánticos modernos:

- Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH): Raskin (1985) plantea que el humor se entiende a través del conocimiento

semántico y del contexto, estableciendo un límite entre la competencia lingüística y el conocimiento del mundo.

– General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH): Attardo (1994) amplía la SSTH incorporando narrativa, contexto situacional y mecanismos lógicos de interpretación.

Por último, es importante señalar que este trabajo se privilegia la perspectiva pragmática. Los estudios pragmáticos consideran cómo las normas conversacionales y la cortesía influyen en la construcción del humor. La transgresión deliberada de las máximas conversacionales, por ejemplo, puede generar humor verbal mediante ironía, exageración o contradicción entre expectativa y realidad (Cutting, 2008; Mao & Xu, 2019).

2. REVISIÓN TEÓRICA

2.1. ERROR PRAGMÁTICO Y HUMOR

El error pragmático se produce cuando un hablante utiliza un enunciado inapropiado para el contexto comunicativo, ya sea por desconocimiento de las normas sociolingüísticas, interpretación errónea de la intención del interlocutor o dificultades en la competencia comunicativa (Thomas, 1983; Taguchi, 2021). Este tipo de error puede manifestarse como violación de máximas conversacionales, incumplimiento de principios de cortesía o interpretación incorrecta de implicaturas.

En el ámbito del humor verbal, los errores pragmáticos se convierten en un recurso narrativo poderoso. Por ejemplo, en *The Big Bang Theory*, Sheldon a menudo interpreta literalmente los comentarios de sus compañeros, como cuando Penny se queja de no poder abrir su puerta y él responde con explicaciones técnicas irrelevantes sobre cerraduras y llaves. Este desajuste entre la intención comunicativa esperada y la interpretación literal de Sheldon genera un efecto cómico inmediato, pues el público percibe la incongruencia entre la situación y la respuesta (Attardo, 2020; Xu, 2022).

Asimismo, los errores pragmáticos pueden violar deliberadamente las máximas de cortesía —como tacto, generosidad o simpatía— para

producir humor. Cuando Leonard proporciona información excesiva o inadecuada a Penny sobre conceptos científicos irrelevantes, se observa una violación de la máxima de cantidad y, al mismo tiempo, un error pragmático que provoca risa. En este sentido, el humor surge de la intersección entre la incompetencia social percibida del personaje y la transgresión de normas pragmáticas, reforzando tanto la caracterización como el efecto cómico (Wang & Li, 2023).

En resumen, el error pragmático no solo refleja limitaciones en la competencia comunicativa, sino que también se convierte en un mecanismo creativo para generar humor, especialmente cuando los personajes incumplen normas de cortesía o interpretan incorrectamente las implicaturas conversacionales.

2.2. THE BIG BANG THEORY: CONTEXTO

The Big Bang Theory, una de las *sitcoms* más populares de los últimos años, se ha convertido en un referente para estudiar humor verbal y pragmática aplicada. Ambientada en Pasadena, California, sigue la vida de cinco personajes principales:

- Leonard Hofstadter y Sheldon Cooper: físicos brillantes, pero socialmente torpes.
- Penny: vecina y camarera, cuyo sentido común y habilidades sociales contrastan con la torpeza de los protagonistas.
- Howard Wolowitz: ingeniero aeroespacial, y Rajesh Koothrappali: astrofísico, ambos amigos y colegas.

El humor surge de la interacción entre la genialidad científica de los protagonistas y su incapacidad para gestionar situaciones sociales, especialmente con mujeres. La serie ofrece un terreno fértil para observar cómo la violación o cumplimiento de las máximas de cortesía genera efectos humorísticos y construye la identidad de los personajes (Attardo, 2001; Mills, 2005).

2.3. HUMOR Y PRINCIPIO DE CORTESÍA EN LOS DIÁLOGOS

Violación de las máximas de aprobación y modestia

Sheldon a menudo realiza disculpas que violan la máxima de aprobación, reforzando rasgos negativos de los interlocutores, y la máxima de modestia, mostrando arrogancia en lugar de reconocer su responsabilidad. Por ejemplo, en un episodio dirigido a Amy:

> Sheldon: "No veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías."

Este tipo de interacción falla en restaurar la armonía y provoca conflicto, generando simultáneamente un efecto humorístico (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983).

Violación de las máximas de tacto y generosidad

Cuando Penny descubre que Sheldon y Leonard limpiaron su departamento sin permiso, Sheldon intenta disculparse, pero exige que no juzgue a Leonard y hace insinuaciones personales. Esto infringe las máximas de tacto y generosidad, provocando mayor enfado y fracaso en la disculpa.

Violación de las máximas de acuerdo y simpatía

En la interacción con Rajesh, Sheldon arruina una cita y culpa indirectamente a Raj, violando las máximas de acuerdo y simpatía, lo que impide reparar la relación y aumenta la tensión interpersonal.

Otros ejemplos de transgresión

- Máxima de consideración: Howard minimiza la ofensa al disculparse condicionalmente con Bernadette.
- Máxima de simpatía: Leonard centra la disculpa en sí mismo al romper un objeto de Sheldon.
- Máxima de tacto: Rajesh intenta suavizar un comentario, pero lo intensifica, aumentando la incomodidad de Penny.

Estos ejemplos muestran cómo la violación estratégica de máximas pragmáticas genera humor verbal y refuerza la caracterización de los

personajes, combinando aspectos semánticos, contextuales y culturales (Muzaqi, 2025; García, 2023).

Así pues, parece viable señalar que la integración de la pragmática, el principio de cooperación y el humor verbal permite un análisis más completo de la comunicación humana. *The Big Bang Theory* ofrece un caso ilustrativo en el que la violación estratégica de máximas conversacionales genera efectos humorísticos, construye identidad de personajes y refleja dinámicas sociales complejas. Además, los hallazgos recientes destacan la relevancia de considerar el contexto social, cultural y digital en el estudio del humor, con aplicaciones en educación, medios y comunicación intercultural.

El Principio de Cooperación y la Creación del Humor

El Principio de Cooperación y las máximas conversacionales relacionadas, propuestos por H.P. Grice, se han consolidado como una de las teorías más influyentes en el desarrollo de la pragmática. La teoría de Grice intenta explicar cómo el oyente pasa de lo que se dice a lo que se quiere decir, es decir, desde el significado expresado hasta el significado implícito. Para explicar el mecanismo mediante el cual las personas interpretan las implicaturas conversacionales, Grice (1975) introdujo cuatro máximas conversacionales junto con el Principio de Cooperación (CP). El CP se plantea de la siguiente manera: Haz tu contribución de tal manera que sea requerida, en el momento en que ocurre, de acuerdo con el propósito aceptado o la dirección del intercambio conversacional en el que estás involucrado (Grice, 1975).

Aunque Grice expresó el CP en modo imperativo, no estaba diciendo a los hablantes cómo debían comportarse. Más bien, sugería que en la interacción conversacional las personas operan bajo el supuesto de que un conjunto de reglas está en funcionamiento, a menos que reciban indicaciones de lo contrario.

En *Logic and Conversation*, Grice propuso cuatro máximas: Cantidad, Calidad, Relación y Manera, formuladas de la siguiente forma:

- Cantidad: Aporta tanta información como sea necesaria para el propósito de la conversación. No proporciones más información de la requerida.
- Calidad: No digas lo que crees que es falso. No digas aquello para lo que no tengas evidencia suficiente.
- Relación: Sé relevante.
- Manera: Evita la obscuridad de expresión, evita la ambigüedad, sé breve (evita prolijidad innecesaria) y ordenado.

Cumplimiento de las máximas

El caso menos interesante es cuando un hablante sigue todas las máximas, como en el siguiente ejemplo:

Ejemplo 1

Esposo: ¿Dónde están las llaves del coche?

Esposa: Están en la mesa del pasillo.

La esposa responde claramente (Manera), con veracidad (Calidad), aporta la cantidad exacta de información (Cantidad) y aborda directamente el objetivo de la pregunta (Relación). No se genera implicatura, es decir, lo que dice coincide con lo que significa.

3. RESULTADOS

Existen muchas ocasiones en las que los hablantes no cumplen las máximas, ya sea de manera intencional o no. Grice clasificó estos incumplimientos en cinco grupos: *flouting* (desafiar la máxima), violación, infracción, *opt-out* (rechazo de la máxima) y suspensión, dependiendo de si se pretende crear una implicatura, engañar o si es involuntario. En *The Big Bang Theory*, estas máximas se incumplen de diversas formas, generando efectos humorísticos repetidamente.

INCUMPLIMIENTO DE LA MÁXIMA DE CALIDAD

Ocurre cuando el hablante dice algo claramente falso o sin evidencia suficiente.

Ejemplo 2

- Sheldon: Su nombre no es Toby. Toby es un nombre absurdo para un grillo.
- Raj: ¿Y qué le pondrías?
- Sheldon: Un nombre apropiado para un grillo. Por ejemplo, Jimmy.

Sheldon demuestra de manera humorística su deseo de sobresalir sobre Raj y asumir control incluso en aspectos triviales.

Ejemplo 3

- Sheldon: Nunca he dormido en un colchón inflable antes. No tiene soporte de madera.
- Howard: Tal vez estarías más feliz en un banco del parque.
- Sheldon: No veo cómo meter un banco del parque aquí.

Aquí Howard infringe la máxima de calidad intencionalmente, provocando humor al destacar la torpeza social de Sheldon.

Ejemplo 4

- Howard: Mira a estas mujeres.
- Leonard: Son preciosas.
- Sheldon: Oh, Whorf, ¡qué bien! Qué pena que sea un nombre propio.

Howard exagera y distorsiona la realidad para generar comicidad.

INCUMPLIMIENTO DE LA MÁXIMA DE CANTIDAD

La máxima de cantidad establece que la contribución debe ser suficiente, pero no excesiva. En la serie, los personajes proporcionan información desmesurada, causando sorpresa y humor.

- Ejemplo 5
- Penny: ¿Quieres saber la parte más patética? Aunque odio su mentira y traición… todavía lo amo, ¿eso es loco?
- Sheldon: Sí.
- Leonard: No, no es loco… es un… un… paradoja. Las paradojas son parte de la naturaleza…

Leonard confunde a Penny con información innecesaria, provocando humor por su nerviosismo y obsesión científica.

- Ejemplo 6
- Leonard: Técnicamente, lo que estás comiendo no es yogur…
- Penny: Oh, qué interesante.
- Leonard: Tampoco es rosa ni tiene frutos…
- Penny: Sí, pero no responde mi pregunta…

Incumplimiento de la máxima de relación

Se da cuando la respuesta es irrelevante al tema.

- Ejemplo 7
- Penny: ¿Qué tal con Leslie?
- Leonard: No creo que funcione.
- Penny: Bueno, seguro que hay alguien perfecto para ti.
- Sheldon: ¿Sabes por qué esta hamburguesa supera a la *Big Boy*?…

Sheldon ignora la pregunta de manera exagerada, generando humor a través de la irrelevancia.

Incumplimiento de la máxima de manera

Ocurre cuando el lenguaje es oscuro o desordenado.

Ejemplo 8

- Sheldon: Leonard, ¿cómo va la mímesis?
- Leonard: ¿Mímesis?
- Sheldon: La acción en la que el imitador toma las propiedades de un objeto u organismo específico…

Ejemplo 9

- Penny: Sabía que Leonard tenía un pequeño *crush*…
- Sheldon: Un pequeño *crush*, como Menelao con Helena de Troya.

Sheldon intenta usar humor erudito, pero fracasa en la comunicación directa, aumentando la comicidad.

Limitaciones de la teoría de Grice

Aunque la teoría de Grice es fundamental para la pragmática, presenta algunas limitaciones. Las máximas pueden superponerse, ser difíciles de distinguir y no siempre reflejan la complejidad de la interacción humana en contextos culturales o humorísticos (Cutting, 2022). Además, la intención del hablante y la interpretación del oyente pueden variar según factores sociales y contextuales.

TEORÍA DE LA RELEVANCIA Y LA CREACIÓN DEL HUMOR

Comunicación Ostensiva-Inferencial

Según Sperber y Wilson (1995), la comunicación es un proceso ostensivo-inferencial. Desde la perspectiva del hablante, la comunicación es ostensiva, lo que implica dos capas de información:

Primera capa: La información que se ha señalado o manifestado.

Segunda capa: La información de que la primera capa ha sido señalada intencionalmente.

En términos concretos, en la primera capa, el hablante muestra su intención informativa al hacer manifiesto al oyente lo que ha dicho. En la segunda capa, el hablante expresa su intención comunicativa, de modo que el oyente comprenda lo que realmente quiere lograr.

Desde la perspectiva del oyente, la comunicación es inferencial. Para que la comunicación sea exitosa, el oyente debe seleccionar las suposiciones contextuales correctas que el hablante pretendía transmitir. Si el oyente no logra inferir la intención del hablante, puede malinterpretar el mensaje o generar conflictos durante la interacción.

Ejemplo 10

- Sheldon: Si un fotón pasa por un plano con dos rendijas y se observa cualquiera de ellas, no pasará por ambas. Si no se observa, sí lo hará. Sin embargo, si se observa después de salir del plano, pero antes de alcanzar su objetivo, tampoco habrá pasado por ambas.
- Leonard: De acuerdo. ¿Cuál es tu punto?
- Sheldon: No hay punto, solo pensé que sería una buena idea para una camiseta.

Aquí, Sheldon da tres afirmaciones detalladas y profesionales sobre la física de un fotón. Leonard, y el público, infieren inicialmente que la explicación tiene relevancia académica. Sin embargo, el objetivo real de Sheldon era trivial: una camiseta. Esta contradicción entre la ostensión de Sheldon y la inferencia de Leonard genera un efecto humorístico.

Relevancia Máxima y Relevancia Óptima

Sperber y Wilson (1995) sostienen que todos los aspectos de la cognición y la comunicación están regidos por la búsqueda de relevancia. Existen dos principios generales:

Principio cognitivo: La cognición humana tiende a maximizar la relevancia.

Principio comunicativo: Cada acto de comunicación ostensiva comunica la presunción de su relevancia óptima.

Durante la interacción, el oyente compara la nueva información con su conocimiento previo, enfoca su atención en la información más relacionada y hace suposiciones sobre la intención del hablante con el mínimo esfuerzo cognitivo posible. La comunicación también crea expectativas de relevancia óptima: el oyente espera información suficiente para comprender la intención del hablante sin demasiado esfuerzo.

No obstante, las diferencias en experiencias personales, conocimientos previos y habilidades comunicativas pueden impedir alcanzar la relevancia óptima, generando malentendidos y efectos humorísticos. El humor surge del contraste entre relevancia máxima (lo que el hablante considera importante) y relevancia óptima (lo que el oyente interpreta como relevante).

Ejemplo 11

- Sheldon: Necesito acceso al congelador industrial de la *Cheesecake Factory*.
- Penny: Cariño, ya te dije que la carne para hamburguesas está fresca y a temperatura segura.
- Sheldon: No. Es para entrenar para una expedición de tres meses al Polo Norte.
- Penny: ¿Qué?
- Sheldon: No entiendo cómo puedes confundirte… pero para explicarlo…

Sheldon solicita el congelador para entrenamiento en frío. Penny interpreta su solicitud de manera literal y se sorprende, generando humor a partir del desajuste entre la intención de Sheldon y la interpretación de Penny.

Ejemplo 12

– Penny: Sí, no puedo abrir mi maldita puerta.

– Sheldon: Parece que pusiste la llave del coche en la cerradura, ¿lo sabías?

– Penny: Sí.

– Sheldon: Bien.

– Penny: ¡Maldita sea, maldita sea, maldita sea!

– Sheldon: ¿Podrías hacerlo un poco más despacio?

– Penny: No puedo sacar la maldita llave.

– Sheldon: No es sorprendente; la cerradura Baldwin de tu puerta usa cilindros tradicionales, mientras que la llave de tu Volkswagen usa un sistema central.

– Penny: Gracias, Sheldon.

– Sheldon: De nada. ¿Por qué pusiste tu llave en la cerradura?

– Penny: Porque hoy tuve una audición, me tomó dos horas llegar, esperé una hora y me dijeron que me veía "demasiado del medio oeste" para el papel…

Aquí, Sheldon interpreta literalmente la frustración de Penny, mientras que Penny esperaba una respuesta empática. La contradicción entre la relevancia máxima de Sheldon y la relevancia óptima de Penny provoca el efecto cómico. Desde la perspectiva del Principio de Cooperación, Sheldon viola la máxima de cantidad al explicar en exceso, y Penny flaquea la máxima de relevancia al expresar su frustración de forma emocional.

INTEGRACIÓN PRAGMÁTICA: PRINCIPIO DE CORTESÍA Y HUMOR

Además del Principio de Cooperación y la Teoría de la Relevancia, el Principio de Cortesía propuesto por Leech (1983) permite analizar cómo los personajes de *The Big Bang Theory* violan deliberadamente normas sociales de interacción para generar humor. Estas violaciones muestran cómo la gestión estratégica de la imagen propia y ajena puede

ser transformada en un recurso cómico, reforzando la caracterización de los personajes y produciendo tensión narrativa.

Violación de las Máximas de Aprobación y Modestia

El comportamiento de Sheldon con Amy ilustra claramente la violación de estas máximas:

Ejemplo 13:

- Sheldon: "Amy, algunas personas podrían encontrarte… rara. No veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías."
- Amy: "¿Qué quieres decir con eso?"
- Sheldon: "Solo digo que te acepto, rarezas y todo."

En este caso, Sheldon califica indirectamente a Amy de "rara", infringiendo la máxima de aprobación, que busca minimizar críticas hacia los demás. Al mismo tiempo, al decir "no veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías", viola la máxima de modestia, ya que adopta una actitud arrogante en lugar de reconocer su propia responsabilidad. La consecuencia es un efecto cómico basado en la incomodidad de Amy y la exageración de los rasgos de Sheldon, lo que genera risa en la audiencia.

Violación de las Máximas de Tacto y Generosidad

Otro ejemplo se da cuando Sheldon intenta disculparse con Penny tras la intrusión en su apartamento:

Ejemplo 14:

- Sheldon: "Penny, lamento lo ocurrido, pero no juzgues negativamente a Leonard."
- Penny: "¡¿Qué?! ¡Tú fuiste el que entró sin permiso!"
- Sheldon: "Además, Leonard es un hombre maravilloso… y supongo que tú podrías aprender algo de él."

Aquí Sheldon viola la máxima de tacto, ya que no atenúa el costo para Penny, y la máxima de generosidad, al desplazar la responsabilidad y no asumir los costes del acto. El efecto humorístico surge de la combinación de arrogancia y torpeza social, mientras que narrativamente se refuerza su caracterización como un personaje egocéntrico y socialmente inepto.

Violación de las Máximas de Acuerdo y Simpatía

La interacción entre Sheldon y Rajesh demuestra cómo la falta de empatía puede producir humor:

- Ejemplo 15:
- Raj: "Tenía una cita con Emily y tú la arruinaste…"
- Sheldon: "No creo que haya sido culpa mía. Además, no creo que ella me habría invitado si no hubieras estado aburrido y borracho."
- Raj: "¿Qué?!"

En este caso, Sheldon incumple la máxima de acuerdo, al no mostrar consenso con Raj, y la máxima de simpatía, al no expresar solidaridad o empatía. El efecto humorístico se genera a partir del contraste entre la seriedad del daño emocional y la indiferencia cómica de Sheldon, creando tensión dramática y ridiculizando la situación de forma deliberada.

Violación de la Máxima de Consideración

Un ejemplo con Howard y Bernadette muestra cómo la minimización de la responsabilidad también puede generar humor:

Ejemplo 16

- Howard: "Lo siento si te molestó lo que dije."
- Bernadette: "¿Si me molestó? ¡Claro que me molestó!"

El uso de la condicionalidad ("si te molestó") desplaza la responsabilidad hacia la interpretación de Bernadette, infringiendo la máxima de consideración (Leech, 1983), que busca minimizar el daño emocional

del interlocutor. La comicidad surge de la insinceridad percibida de la disculpa y de la frustración de Bernadette.

Función Narrativa de las Violaciones de Cortesía

En conjunto, estas transgresiones no deben considerarse simplemente como fallas comunicativas o errores sociales de los personajes, sino como estrategias narrativas cuidadosamente diseñadas por los guionistas para cumplir múltiples funciones dentro de la serie. Al infringir deliberadamente las máximas del Principio de Cortesía, los diálogos revelan la idiosincrasia de cada personaje, exponiendo sus limitaciones sociales, inseguridades, egocentrismo o exceso de racionalidad, lo que permite al público comprender y recordar mejor a cada individuo. Por ejemplo, la arrogancia sistemática de Sheldon, su literalidad extrema y su incapacidad para empatizar producen situaciones cómicas que, sin necesidad de recurrir a recursos visuales complejos, generan humor verbal basado en la incomodidad y la exageración social.

Además, estas violaciones crean tensión dramática y expectativa narrativa. Cada infracción de cortesía introduce un conflicto momentáneo entre los personajes, que luego puede resolverse, escalar o permanecer irresuelto para efectos cómicos. Esta dinámica mantiene al espectador comprometido, ya que anticipa la reacción de los personajes y disfruta del contraste entre la intención del hablante y la percepción del oyente. En términos pragmáticos, la transgresión de máximas actúa como un mecanismo de implicatura conversacional, donde el significado implícito y la interpretación del oyente se convierten en el eje del humor, reforzando la conexión entre lenguaje y cognición (Attardo, 2020).

Desde una perspectiva académica, analizar estas violaciones ofrece una oportunidad valiosa para el estudio comparativo de la interacción social y la cortesía lingüística en contextos culturales diferentes. Por ejemplo, lo que genera humor en un entorno estadounidense —como la franqueza brutal o la literalidad exagerada de Sheldon— podría interpretarse como descortés o inapropiado en otras culturas, lo que permite estudiar cómo los principios pragmáticos, incluidos el Principio de Cooperación y el Principio de Cortesía, se aplican o se transgreden de manera intercultural (Xu, 2022; Wang & Li, 2023).

En síntesis, estas infracciones no solo cumplen la función de entretener, sino que también sirven como herramientas pedagógicas para comprender la pragmática del humor, la construcción de personajes y las normas sociales implícitas en la comunicación. La manipulación deliberada de las reglas de cortesía, por tanto, actúa simultáneamente como recurso humorístico, elemento narrativo y objeto de análisis lingüístico, evidenciando cómo la interacción verbal, aun en un contexto de comedia, refleja complejas estrategias cognitivas y sociales.

4. CONCLUSIONES

En este estudio, se ha examinado el humor verbal en *The Big Bang Theory* desde las perspectivas del Principio de Cooperación de Grice (1975), la Teoría de la Relevancia de Sperber y Wilson (1995) y el Principio de Cortesía de Leech (1983). Los resultados muestran que estas teorías proporcionan un marco teórico sólido para explicar la generación de efectos cómicos en la serie, ya que permiten analizar cómo los personajes deliberadamente transgreden normas pragmáticas para producir humor y al mismo tiempo construir la personalidad de cada personaje.

El hallazgo principal de este trabajo ha sido la posibilidad de realizar un análisis de las violaciones de máximas pragmáticas para revelar cómo estas transgresiones funcionan como estrategias narrativas conscientes.

Por un lado, violaciones de las máximas de aprobación y modestia: Sheldon califica a Amy de "rara" y añade "no veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías", incumpliendo estas máximas y generando humor a partir de la arrogancia y la falta de sensibilidad social. La audiencia percibe la tensión cómica y la exageración de los rasgos de Sheldon, mientras Amy permanece molesta, mostrando cómo la transgresión también intensifica la interacción dramática.

Asimismo, se han observado violaciones de las máximas de tacto y generosidad: Cuando Sheldon se disculpa con Penny tras la limpieza no autorizada de su departamento, le pide que no juzgue a Leonard y hace insinuaciones sobre su vida íntima, infringiendo la máxima de tacto al no reducir el coste para Penny y la máxima de generosidad al no asumir apropiadamente la responsabilidad. La reacción de enfado de Penny,

combinada con el comportamiento insensible de Sheldon, genera un efecto cómico que refleja la torpeza social de los personajes.

Otro elemento estudiado son las violaciones de las máximas de acuerdo y simpatía: En la interacción con Rajesh, Sheldon arruina la cita de Raj y culpa a Rajesh por la situación ("la chica no te habría invitado si no hubieras estado aburrido y borracho"), transgrediendo las máximas de acuerdo y simpatía al no mostrar consenso ni empatía. Este comportamiento provoca humor mediante la exageración de la falta de consideración, destacando la peculiaridad social de Sheldon.

Un elemento muy significado de este trabajo ha sido la comprensión de las violaciones de las máximas de calidad, cantidad, relación y manera (Principio de Cooperación): Leonard proporciona explicaciones científicas excesivas cuando Penny se queja de su exnovio, violando la máxima de cantidad al dar información innecesaria; Sheldon explica detalladamente la física de los fotones en relación con camisetas, violando la máxima de relevancia; y utiliza un lenguaje excesivamente técnico y ordenado de manera confusa para los demás, infringiendo la máxima de manera. Estas transgresiones crean un humor basado en la incongruencia entre la expectativa del receptor y la información ofrecida por el emisor, y muestran cómo la precisión científica y el pensamiento lógico extremo pueden ser cómicamente incompatibles con situaciones cotidianas.

Además, se han estudiado las violaciones según la Teoría de la Relevancia: La interacción entre Sheldon y Penny sobre la puerta de su coche ilustra el contraste entre relevancia máxima (lo que Sheldon considera importante) y relevancia óptima (lo que Penny espera como respuesta práctica). Sheldon da explicaciones detalladas sobre la cerradura y la estructura del congelador, ignorando completamente la frustración emocional de Penny, lo que produce humor al mostrar la incapacidad de Sheldon para interpretar la intención comunicativa del otro.

En conjunto, estas transgresiones no son meras fallas comunicativas, sino estrategias narrativas intencionadas que permiten a los guionistas resaltar la personalidad única de cada personaje, generar tensión dramática y producir humor basado en interacciones socialmente inadecuadas. Desde un enfoque pragmático, el análisis de estas violaciones

demuestra cómo la manipulación deliberada de las normas de cortesía y cooperación funciona simultáneamente como recurso cómico y herramienta de construcción narrativa, ofreciendo además oportunidades para el estudio comparativo de estrategias de interacción en contextos culturales distintos (Attardo, 2020; Xu, 2022; Wang & Li, 2023).

Asimismo, el estudio de *The Big Bang Theory* pone de manifiesto que el humor verbal cumple múltiples funciones: entretener a la audiencia, construir personajes consistentes, reforzar dinámicas de grupo, y ofrecer un objeto de estudio para la pragmática aplicada y la sociolingüística intercultural. La combinación de Principio de Cortesía, Principio de Cooperación y Teoría de la Relevancia proporciona un marco integral para entender cómo los personajes utilizan violaciones estratégicas de normas lingüísticas para crear efectos cómicos, y cómo estos efectos dependen de la interacción contextual y del conocimiento compartido entre emisor y receptor.

En conclusión, el análisis demuestra que el humor verbal en *The Big Bang Theory* es un recurso multifuncional y complejo, que integra la transgresión deliberada de normas pragmáticas, la exageración de rasgos individuales y la manipulación de expectativas conversacionales para producir comicidad efectiva, contribuyendo tanto a la narrativa de la serie como a la investigación académica sobre comunicación y humor en contextos interculturales.

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¿CORTESÍA O SARCASMO? UNA APROXIMACIÓN PRAGMÁTICA AL ACTO DE DISCULPARSE COMO ESTRATEGIA HUMORÍSTICA EN *THE BIG BANG THEORY*.

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INTRODUCCIÓN:

La cortesía nace en la comunicación interpersonal y siempre ha constituido un elemento objetivo y necesario en todos los aspectos de la vida humana, adaptándose y evolucionando al compás del desarrollo de la civilización. Desde tiempos antiguos, las normas de cortesía han servido como un mecanismo para regular las interacciones sociales, disminuir la posibilidad de conflicto y reforzar los lazos comunitarios. Si bien estas normas han variado de acuerdo con las culturas y épocas, su función esencial —mantener la armonía en las relaciones humanas— se ha mantenido constante.

La forma más importante de interacción entre los seres humanos es el diálogo, y dentro de él la cortesía discursiva se convierte en la base fundamental para garantizar una comunicación fluida, eficaz y socialmente aceptable. No obstante, en la vida cotidiana no existen guiones ni líneas preestablecidas: las palabras de cada persona se construyen de manera espontánea, influenciadas por el contexto, la relación entre los interlocutores y los propósitos comunicativos. Solo en ocasiones específicas, como en representaciones teatrales, conferencias académicas, discursos políticos o presentaciones públicas, los enunciados tienden a estar planificados con antelación.

A pesar de esa espontaneidad característica del habla, resulta imprescindible seguir ciertos principios pragmáticos para que el diálogo y la

comunicación entre las personas se desarrollen de manera adecuada y no se vean obstaculizados por malentendidos o conflictos. Precisamente, uno de los campos donde estas dinámicas se observan con mayor claridad es en las producciones audiovisuales contemporáneas. Un ejemplo ilustrativo es la exitosa sitcom estadounidense *The Big Bang Theory*, una serie de historias centradas en cuatro científicos y tres mujeres muy distintas, donde los diálogos brillantes, las teorías científicas expuestas con un toque de humor vertiginoso y las peculiaridades lingüísticas de cada personaje logran arrancar carcajadas constantes de la audiencia.

Estos rasgos no solo han atraído a millones de espectadores alrededor del mundo, sino también a investigadores y lingüistas interesados en analizar los mecanismos discursivos que subyacen al humor verbal. En este contexto, la serie se convierte en un corpus idóneo para observar cómo las normas de cortesía y cooperación son aplicadas, infringidas o manipuladas con fines humorísticos.

En estudios previos, los investigadores han prestado atención a cómo se construye el éxito conversacional bajo el cumplimiento de principios pragmáticos como el Principio de Cooperación (Grice, 1975), que sostiene que los interlocutores tienden a colaborar para que la comunicación sea eficaz, y el Principio de Cortesía (Brown y Levinson, 1987), que enfatiza la importancia de proteger la "imagen social" de los participantes. No obstante, es interesante destacar que, en muchas interacciones, los hablantes pueden infringir deliberadamente estos principios, no porque fracasen en su comunicación, sino porque buscan generar efectos especiales: ironía, indirectas, insinuaciones o humor.

En este sentido, el humor en *The Big Bang Theory* constituye un terreno fértil para observar cómo la transgresión de normas pragmáticas genera comicidad y, al mismo tiempo, refuerza la identidad de los personajes. Así, Sheldon Cooper, por ejemplo, al mostrar una notoria incapacidad para seguir las normas de cortesía tradicionales, se convierte en una fuente recurrente de humor, pero también en un personaje complejo cuya forma de hablar refleja sus limitaciones sociales y su visión particular del mundo. Por otro lado, personajes como Leonard o Penny funcionan como contrapuntos, oscilando entre el cumplimiento y la

violación estratégica de las normas de cortesía, lo que crea contrastes discursivos que enriquecen la interacción.

De este modo, el estudio de la cortesía en la serie no solo permite entender mejor los mecanismos del humor televisivo, sino que también abre nuevas vías para la enseñanza del inglés y para el análisis de la comunicación intercultural, donde las diferencias en el uso de la cortesía pueden ser clave para comprender la dinámica de los malentendidos y los procesos de negociación de sentido.

2. REVISIÓN TEÓRICA

CORTESÍA Y DISCULPAS EN EL ACTO COMUNICACIONAL HUMANO

El célebre filósofo del lenguaje H. P. Grice propuso por primera vez el principio de cooperación en su conferencia de 1967 en la Universidad de Harvard. Según él, en el proceso comunicativo los interlocutores parecen seguir —de manera consciente o inconsciente— ciertas reglas con el fin de cooperar eficazmente y cumplir las tareas de la comunicación. Posteriormente, Lakoff (1977) planteó dos principios de competencia pragmática: la claridad y la cortesía. Un año más tarde, Brown y Levinson (1978) formularon su influyente teoría de la gestión de la imagen (*Face),* basada en el concepto de "imagen social" (*Face*), sosteniendo que la finalidad de la cortesía es proteger la imagen de ambas partes en la interacción.

El Principio de Cortesía, propuesto por Geoffrey Leech (1983), establece un conjunto de máximas que guían la interacción lingüística para promover la armonía social y minimizar los conflictos. Estas máximas no son reglas rígidas, sino principios pragmáticos que los hablantes pueden aplicar o infringir estratégicamente según el contexto comunicativo. A continuación, se detallan y ejemplifican:

Máxima de tacto o adecuación

Esta máxima sugiere que el hablante debe minimizar el daño al interlocutor y, cuando sea posible, maximizar su beneficio. Se centra en

proteger la imagen del oyente y en evitar comentarios que puedan causarle molestia o incomodidad.

Ejemplo: En *The Big Bang Theory*, Leonard intenta disculparse con Penny tras romper un objeto valioso, pero en lugar de asumir toda la culpa, añade excusas sobre la situación, lo que incrementa el daño percibido: *"Perdón, pero no es mi culpa que dejaras eso en medio del pasillo"*. Esto viola la máxima de tacto, generando incomodidad y humor simultáneamente.

Máxima de generosidad

Esta máxima indica que el hablante debe reducir las autoafirmaciones y estar dispuesto a asumir los costes propios en favor del oyente. Implica priorizar el beneficio del otro sobre la autopromoción o los intereses personales.

Ejemplo: Howard intenta disculparse con Bernadette por un comentario sexista, pero dice: *"Lo siento si te molestó lo que dije"*, usando un condicional que minimiza su responsabilidad. Al no asumir plenamente el coste de su error, viola la máxima de generosidad, provocando un mayor enfado.

Máxima de aprobación o reconocimiento

Se refiere a minimizar las críticas hacia los demás y maximizar los elogios o reforzar aspectos positivos del interlocutor. Esta máxima fortalece las relaciones y genera un clima cooperativo. Ejemplo: Sheldon, al disculparse con Amy, comenta indirectamente que ella "es rara", lo que constituye una crítica disfrazada. Al no elogiar ni suavizar la ofensa, viola la máxima de aprobación y su disculpa resulta contraproducente.

Máxima de modestia o humildad

Esta máxima insta a minimizar la autoalabanza y reforzar la autocrítica, de modo que el hablante no aparezca arrogante ni centrado exclusivamente en sí mismo.

Ejemplo: En la misma interacción con Amy, Sheldon añade: *"no veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías"*. Este

comentario refleja arrogancia y autocomplacencia, violando la máxima de modestia y reduciendo la efectividad de la disculpa.

Máxima de acuerdo o consenso

Busca reducir el desacuerdo y aumentar la coincidencia con los puntos de vista del interlocutor. Favorece la cooperación y la estabilidad en la conversación.

Ejemplo: Raj intenta disculparse con Penny por un comentario inapropiado sobre su vida personal, pero introduce una generalización negativa: *"Lo siento, no quise decir que estás desesperada, aunque todos lo piensan"*. Esto rompe la máxima al no validar ni coincidir con los sentimientos de Penny, generando conflicto y comicidad.

Máxima de simpatía o compasión

Sugiere minimizar la falta de empatía y maximizar la solidaridad hacia los sentimientos y circunstancias del interlocutor. Facilita la conexión emocional y la comprensión mutua. Ejemplo: Cuando Leonard rompe un objeto de Sheldon, su disculpa defensiva refleja poca simpatía: *"Perdón, pero no es mi culpa…"*. Al centrarse en sí mismo y no mostrar empatía, la disculpa pierde valor reparador, aunque contribuye a la comicidad de la escena.

En conjunto, estas seis máximas constituyen un marco pragmático flexible que explica cómo los hablantes negocian cortesía, poder y afecto en la comunicación diaria. La violación estratégica de estas máximas, como se observa en *The Big Bang Theory*, permite generar humor y enfatizar rasgos de personalidad, mostrando la intersección entre pragmática, interacción social y narrativa audiovisual.

No obstante, algunos académicos contemporáneos como Muzaqi (2025) han señalado que el principio de cortesía de Leech resulta demasiado extremo, pues siempre enfatiza la maximización y minimización, lo que en la práctica no siempre es aplicable. Con frecuencia, la cortesía en el diálogo depende no solo de principios abstractos, sino

también de factores contextuales como la situación, la posición social, la relación interpersonal y otros elementos extralingüísticos.

En términos generales, la disculpa es un acto de habla reparador y, a la vez, una estrategia de cortesía empleada cuando se han infringido normas sociales mediante una ofensa real o potencial. La disculpa aparece con frecuencia en la vida cotidiana y se ha convertido en un objeto de estudio relevante para lingüistas de todo el mundo (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983). Su función esencial consiste en restaurar las relaciones interpersonales dañadas y mantener el equilibrio y la armonía social. Una disculpa eficaz busca apoyar al oyente afectado, y para lograrlo, el hablante suele adoptar un tono humilde, reconocer la falta y asumir responsabilidades.

En los últimos años, con la profundización de la apertura cultural en global, las series de televisión en inglés han ganado presencia como un medio de comunicación cultural clave, además de servir como modelo para que los estudiantes chinos comprendan mejor los hábitos conversacionales de los hablantes nativos. Una de las más populares ha sido la comedia estadounidense The Big Bang Theory, que narra las interacciones entre cuatro científicos "nerds" y su vecina, Penny. Entre los personajes destaca Sheldon, un genio con dificultades para comprender las emociones ajenas y con fuertes rasgos obsesivo-compulsivos; Leonard, físico experimental con alto coeficiente intelectual pero más adaptable socialmente; y Penny, joven camarera aspirante a actriz, cuyo contraste con los científicos genera múltiples situaciones cómicas.

En esta sitcom, las diferencias de personalidad producen numerosos conflictos irónicos que derivan en distintos actos de habla de disculpa. Algunos de ellos siguen los lineamientos del Principio de Cortesía, mientras que otros los transgreden deliberadamente, generando efectos comunicativos diversos. El análisis de estos actos de disculpa desde la perspectiva de la cortesía no solo permite comprender mejor los mecanismos del humor y la interacción en la serie, sino que también ofrece a los aprendices de inglés una oportunidad valiosa para profundizar en el uso pragmático de la lengua en contextos auténticos.

CORTESÍA Y HUMOR VERBAL

Como principal forma de comicidad, el humor verbal se utiliza ampliamente en la vida cotidiana y en la literatura audiovisual. No solo funciona como un lubricante de las relaciones sociales, sino que también constituye un recurso artístico y literario de gran valor expresivo. Diversos académicos nacionales e internacionales lo han estudiado desde perspectivas variadas —sociología, antropología y psicología—, lo que evidencia la naturaleza interdisciplinar del fenómeno.

En las últimas dos décadas, con el desarrollo acelerado de la pragmática, también ha aumentado el número de investigaciones que emplean este enfoque para analizar el humor verbal, generando logros significativos. En este marco, Geoffrey Leech (1983) propuso el Principio de Cortesía en su obra *Principles of Pragmatics*. La motivación principal fue superar las limitaciones del Principio de Cooperación de Grice (1975), el cual no lograba explicar por qué los hablantes a menudo incumplen las máximas cooperativas durante una conversación.

Leech sostuvo que la cortesía no solo es un complemento del principio cooperativo, sino también un recurso explicativo fundamental que atiende la relación entre los participantes de la interacción, denominados como el "yo" y los "otros". En este sentido, planteó que el grado de cortesía depende de la relación costo-beneficio entre interlocutores: cuanto más directo es un enunciado, mayor es la probabilidad de dañar al oyente y beneficiar al hablante; por el contrario, cuanto más indirecto o eufemístico sea el discurso, menor es el daño para el oyente y mayor la percepción de cortesía.

Sobre esta base, Leech formuló seis máximas – ya enunciadas con anterioridad - que conforman el principio de cortesía:

- Máxima de tacto
- Máxima de generosidad
- Máxima de aprobación
- Máxima de modestia
- Máxima de acuerdo
- Máxima de simpatía

Cabe señalar que no todas estas máximas tienen la misma fuerza normativa, ya que algunas funcionan como guías estratégicas más vinculantes que otras en el marco del diálogo. De este modo, la teoría de Leech explica, al menos en parte, por qué los hablantes infringen las máximas cooperativas: la cortesía opera como una motivación pragmática de primer orden.

No obstante, no todos los interlocutores siguen siempre el principio de cortesía. En ocasiones, con el fin de lograr un efecto comunicativo específico, los hablantes lo violan intencional o inadvertidamente. Uno de los resultados más frecuentes de estas transgresiones es el humor verbal.

Un ejemplo paradigmático se encuentra en la sitcom estadounidense *The Big Bang Theory*, donde los protagonistas —especialmente Sheldon Cooper— infringen de manera recurrente las normas de cortesía en sus interacciones. Sus intervenciones suelen maximizar los beneficios propios mientras desatienden los de los demás, lo que genera situaciones de comicidad que resultan enormemente exitosas entre la audiencia. Estas estrategias discursivas, aunque "descorteses" en términos pragmáticos, producen efectos humorísticos que han convertido a la serie en una de las comedias televisivas más populares de los últimos años.

Desde esta perspectiva, analizar los actos de habla humorísticos en la serie a través del Principio de Cortesía permite comprender mejor los mecanismos pragmáticos que subyacen a la creación del humor. Además, esta aproximación contribuye a enriquecer la enseñanza del inglés oral, ya que los estudiantes pueden observar de primera mano cómo los hablantes nativos utilizan —o deliberadamente violan— las estrategias de cortesía en contextos culturales específicos. En términos más amplios, este enfoque también aporta al entendimiento intercultural, ayudando a evitar malentendidos comunicativos entre hablantes de inglés y aprendices de otras culturas (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

Por ello, este tipo de estudios no solo es relevante para la teoría pragmática, sino que también tiene aplicaciones pedagógicas y socioculturales de gran valor.

3. RESULTADOS

En la sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, muchos de los personajes violan el Principio de Cortesía (Leech, 1983) al formular disculpas, lo que afecta considerablemente la eficacia de dichos actos de habla. Este principio constituye una perspectiva valiosa para el estudio de los guiones de cine y televisión, ya que permite identificar cómo el cumplimiento o la transgresión de las máximas de cortesía configuran las disculpas y contribuyen al desarrollo de los personajes. Analizar los diálogos desde esta óptica no solo revela las verdaderas intenciones de los interlocutores, sino también las decisiones creativas de los guionistas para generar comicidad y dramatismo.

Violación de las máximas de aprobación y modestia

El acto de disculpa, por su naturaleza, es un acto amenazante para la imagen (Brown & Levinson, 1987) del hablante, pero un acto de salvaguarda de la imagen para el oyente. Cuando el hablante no se disculpa tras una infracción, la imagen del oyente queda dañada. Por ello, la disculpa desempeña un papel central en las relaciones interpersonales y ha sido objeto de múltiples investigaciones en el campo del análisis del discurso y la sociolingüística (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983).

En la serie, Sheldon suele transgredir las máximas de aprobación y modestia en sus disculpas hacia Amy. Por ejemplo, cuando reconoce las dificultades de Amy para relacionarse socialmente y la califica indirectamente como "rara", está infringiendo la máxima de aprobación, pues en lugar de elogiar o suavizar sus palabras, refuerza un rasgo negativo. Además, al añadir "no veo a nadie más golpeando esta puerta para aguantar tus tonterías", Sheldon incurre en una clara violación de la máxima de modestia, ya que adopta una actitud arrogante en lugar de reconocer su propia responsabilidad. Como resultado, su disculpa fracasa en restaurar la armonía y Amy permanece molesta.

Violación de las máximas de tacto y generosidad

En otro episodio, Penny se enfada al descubrir que Sheldon y Leonard entraron en su departamento de madrugada para limpiarlo sin su consentimiento. Sheldon, presionado por Leonard, intenta disculparse, pero lo

hace de manera inapropiada: no solo exige a Penny que no juzgue negativamente a Leonard, sino que además hace insinuaciones sobre su vida íntima con él. De esta forma, Sheldon viola la máxima de tacto (pues no reduce el coste para Penny) y la máxima de generosidad (pues no asume las consecuencias de manera adecuada). El resultado es un incremento en el enfado de Penny y el fracaso de la disculpa como acto reparador.

Violación de las máximas de acuerdo y simpatía

La transgresión también se observa en la relación entre Sheldon y Rajesh. Cuando Sheldon arruina una cita de Raj, apenas ofrece un "lo siento" sin reconocer su responsabilidad, y llega incluso a culpar a Raj al decir que la chica no lo habría invitado si él no hubiese estado "aburrido y borracho". Este comentario contradice tanto la máxima de acuerdo como la máxima de simpatía, ya que no muestra consenso ni empatía hacia Rajesh. En consecuencia, su disculpa carece de sinceridad, no repara el daño y refuerza la tensión interpersonal.

Por tanto, el análisis de estas escenas demuestra que las disculpas en *The Big Bang Theory* no siempre cumplen con los parámetros del Principio de Cortesía de Leech (1983). Al contrario, las transgresiones de las máximas de aprobación, modestia, tacto, generosidad, acuerdo y simpatía generan efectos humorísticos que, aunque fallan como estrategias reparadoras, funcionan narrativamente al reforzar los rasgos de los personajes y crear situaciones cómicas. Desde un punto de vista pragmático, este tipo de análisis no solo enriquece la comprensión del humor televisivo, sino que también ofrece una herramienta útil para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera y para el estudio comparativo de estrategias de disculpa en contextos interculturales.

OTROS EJEMPLOS DE TRANSGESIÓN DE MÁXIMAS EN LA INTERACCIÓN EN THE BIG BANG THEORY:

Violación de la máxima de consideración

Escena: Howard intenta disculparse con Bernadette después de un comentario sexista que hizo en público. Su disculpa comienza con un reconocimiento superficial: "Lo siento si te molestó lo que dije". Sin

embargo, el uso de la condicionalidad ("si te molestó") minimiza la ofensa y desplaza la responsabilidad hacia la interpretación de Bernadette en lugar de reconocer el error propio. Esto constituye una violación de la máxima de consideración (Leech, 1983), ya que no atenúa el costo emocional de la interlocutora, sino que lo incrementa al invalidar sus sentimientos. El resultado es una disculpa percibida como poco sincera, que lejos de restaurar la armonía refuerza el enfado de Bernadette.

De este modo, la transgresión de la máxima de consideración en este caso demuestra cómo una disculpa que no reconoce plenamente el daño causado puede intensificar el conflicto en lugar de resolverlo. Este tipo de interacción resalta la importancia de asumir la responsabilidad en las disculpas para mantener relaciones interpersonales saludables.

Violación de la máxima de simpatía

Escena: Leonard rompe accidentalmente un objeto valioso de Sheldon y trata de disculparse. No obstante, en lugar de mostrar empatía por la pérdida, su disculpa está centrada en sí mismo: "Perdón, pero no es mi culpa que dejaras eso en medio del pasillo". Con esta respuesta, Leonard viola la máxima de simpatía, ya que no comparte el sentimiento negativo del interlocutor ni reconoce el daño causado. Por el contrario, adopta una actitud defensiva que genera mayor frustración en Sheldon.

Así pues, la falta de simpatía en la disculpa de Leonard evidencia cómo la ausencia de empatía puede agravar una situación conflictiva. Este ejemplo subraya la relevancia de la empatía en las interacciones sociales y cómo su ausencia puede afectar negativamente las relaciones.

Violación de la máxima de tacto

Escena: Rajesh, en un intento de disculparse con Penny por un comentario indiscreto sobre su vida sentimental, formula su disculpa de manera torpe: "Lo siento, no quise decir que estás desesperada, aunque todos lo piensan". Aquí Rajesh intenta suavizar la ofensa inicial, pero al añadir una generalización negativa termina intensificándola. Este enunciado infringe claramente la máxima de tacto, ya que no reduce el costo para Penny, sino que lo incrementa al introducir una ofensa mayor.

Por tanto, este ejemplo ilustra cómo una disculpa mal formulada puede empeorar la situación, en lugar de aliviarla. La transgresión de la máxima de tacto resalta la importancia de considerar los sentimientos del interlocutor al ofrecer una disculpa.

De este modo, estos ejemplos muestran cómo las transgresiones de las máximas de cortesía en *The Big Bang Theory* no solo generan efectos humorísticos, sino que también ofrecen una visión profunda de las dinámicas interpersonales y el desarrollo de los personajes. El análisis pragmático de estas interacciones proporciona una herramienta valiosa para comprender las complejidades de la comunicación humana y su representación en los medios.

TABLA 1. *Ejemplos de violación del Principio de Cortesía en The Big Bang Theory*

Máxima violada (Leech, 1983)	Personajes	Ejemplo	Efecto de la disculpa	Efecto narrativo/humorístico
Aprobación y modestia	Sheldon → Amy	Califica a Amy como "rara" y añade que nadie más "golpearía su puerta para aguantar sus tonterías".	La disculpa fracasa, Amy sigue molesta.	Reafirma la arrogancia de Sheldon y genera humor por su torpeza social.
Tacto y generosidad	Sheldon → Penny	Se disculpa por entrar a limpiar su departamento, pero exige que no juzgue a Leonard e insinúa su intimidad.	Incrementa el enfado de Penny.	Resalta la falta de empatía de Sheldon y provoca risa por lo inapropiado.
Acuerdo y simpatía	Sheldon → Raj	Ofrece un "lo siento" sin reconocer culpa y lo responsabiliza por arruinar la cita.	Raj no lo perdona, disculpa carece de sinceridad.	Se genera comicidad por la frialdad extrema de Sheldon.
Consideración	Howard → Bernadette	"Lo siento si te molestó lo que dije". Minimiza la ofensa y desplaza la responsabilidad.	Disculpa percibida como poco sincera; Bernadette se enoja más.	Humor por la incapacidad de Howard para disculparse adecuadamente.
Simpatía	Leonard → Sheldon	Tras romper un objeto: "Perdón, pero no es mi culpa que lo dejaras en medio".	No repara el daño, disculpa defensiva.	Comicidad al mostrar la torpeza de Leonard y el enfado obsesivo de Sheldon.
Tacto	Raj → Penny	"Lo siento, no quise decir que estás desesperada, aunque todos lo piensan".	Incrementa el daño y la ofensa.	Risa por la contradicción entre la disculpa y la nueva ofensa.

4. CONCLUSIÓN

El Principio de Cortesía (Leech, 1983) ofrece un marco teórico novedoso y fecundo para el estudio de los guiones de cine y televisión. Este trabajo ha mostrado la viabilidad de analizar los diálogos de una sitcom como *The Big Bang Theory* desde dicha perspectiva, revelando cómo el cumplimiento o la violación de las máximas de cortesía generan distintos efectos discursivos, especialmente en actos de disculpa, y contribuyen a la construcción de los personajes.

En la serie, los protagonistas —caracterizados como "nerds" con escasas habilidades sociales— recurren con frecuencia a interacciones que infringen el Principio de Cortesía, lo que produce efectos humorísticos y refuerza la comicidad de las situaciones. Este hallazgo confirma que, en contextos de ficción, la ruptura de las normas pragmáticas no siempre representa un fracaso comunicativo, sino una estrategia intencional de los guionistas para crear tensión, ironía y humor.

Sin embargo, en la comunicación cotidiana, la cortesía desempeña un papel fundamental para asegurar la fluidez y la armonía interpersonal. El uso imprudente o inapropiado de estrategias que violan las máximas de cortesía puede tener consecuencias negativas: desde dejar una impresión de grosería en el interlocutor hasta provocar malentendidos o incluso conflictos graves. Por ello, resulta esencial comprender tanto la función reparadora de los actos de disculpa como la relevancia cultural de las normas de cortesía, especialmente en interacciones interculturales (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

En conclusión, el análisis pragmático de *The Big Bang Theory* no solo enriquece la comprensión del humor televisivo y de la construcción de personajes, sino que también aporta herramientas para la enseñanza del inglés y para la prevención de fallos en la comunicación intercultural.

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CONTRASTIVE GRAMMAR: ANALYSIS AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR BY SPANISH SPEAKERS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a communicative instrument, but a structured system shaped by historical evolution, social interaction, and cognitive processes. The grammatical architecture of each language reflects centuries of cultural exchange and internal development, which explain both common elements across languages and deep structural differences. This article examines the grammatical relationship between English and Spanish through a contrastive lens, focusing on how Spanish speakers acquire English grammar and what linguistic factors facilitate or hinder this process. Although English and Spanish originate from different branches of the Indo-European language family—Germanic and Romance respectively—they have intersected repeatedly throughout history. This contact has produced shared vocabulary and conceptual parallels, while preserving distinct grammatical systems that condition the acquisition of English by Spanish speakers.

In contemporary society, English holds the status of a global lingua franca in international communication, diplomacy, academia, science, and digital environments. Consequently, millions of Spanish speakers engage in the study of English as a second language, not merely to achieve communicative competence, but to access professional, academic, and economic opportunities. However, acquiring English grammar presents persistent difficulties for Spanish speakers, despite lexical similarities derived from Latin. These difficulties cannot be fully explained by general learning theories alone; rather, they require a

contrastive linguistic approach grounded in structural comparison, cognitive implications, and pedagogical outcomes. A detailed analysis of both languages reveals that the learning process is shaped by the degree of congruence between native language structures and target grammatical forms. Positive transfer occurs when there is structural equivalence, while negative transfer, or interference, arises when learners apply the grammatical logic of Spanish to English structures that function according to different principles.

English grammar is characterized by analytical features, a limited inflectional system, obligatory subject presence, rigid word order, extensive use of auxiliary verbs, and the central role of phrasal verbs. Spanish, in contrast, preserves a synthetic structure with rich verbal conjugations, permissive subject omission due to pro-drop properties, flexible word order, and periphrastic constructions that differ in meaning and distribution from their English equivalents. These structural divergences generate predictable challenges in second language acquisition, particularly in areas such as tense–aspect relationships, subjunctive mood, passive voice constructions, inversion, modal usage, prepositions, and word formation processes. Therefore, a contrastive analysis is not merely descriptive, but instrumental to understanding error patterns, cognitive processing, and instructional design for Spanish speakers learning English.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comprehensive contrastive analysis of English and Spanish grammar, identifying facilitating factors and obstacles in the acquisition process, and proposing theoretically grounded pedagogical implications. This analysis is organized along historical, morphological, syntactic, and semantic dimensions, integrating contrastive examples that demonstrate convergence and divergence across the two systems. The findings confirm that contrastive grammar functions as a bridge between linguistic theory and second language pedagogy, offering an evidence-based foundation for improving grammatical competence and communicative accuracy among learners.

This research advances the argument that the acquisition of English grammar by Spanish speakers is most effectively achieved when instruction explicitly acknowledges contrastive features rather than

adopting a monolingual or neutral approach. Historically informed linguistic contrast enhances metalinguistic awareness, reduces fossilization of errors, and promotes conscious learning strategies aligned with cognitive realities of first language influence. Ultimately, this article contributes to the broader field of contrastive linguistics and applied linguistics by demonstrating how comparative grammatical analysis can be transformed into a practical tool for optimizing second language acquisition in Spanish-speaking contexts.

2. OBJETIVES

The aim of this article is to analyze, through a rigorous theoretical approach, the grammatical similarities and differences between the English and Spanish languages, and to assess how these contrastive elements affect the acquisition of English grammar by Spanish native speakers. To operationalize this aim, the article is structured around the following objectives:

2.1 General Objective

To examine the grammatical relationship between English and Spanish from a contrastive perspective in order to identify convergence that facilitates acquisition and divergence that generates predictable learning difficulties, and to articulate implications for second language teaching and cognitive processing.

2.2 Specific Objectives

- To analyze the historical evolution of English and Spanish and determine how layers of linguistic contact have contributed to contemporary grammatical structures relevant to language acquisition.
- To compare the morphological systems of both languages, with attention to verb conjugation, tense, aspect, mood, noun inflection, and word formation.

- To contrast the syntactic organization of English and Spanish, including subject expression, auxiliary use, word order, passive constructions, and comparative structures.
- To identify semantic-pragmatic divergences, particularly in translation, idiomatic expression, modality, and phrasal verb usage, which create challenges for Spanish learners.
- To examine the cognitive consequences of negative transfer from Spanish to English and to propose strategies to minimize interference.
- To formulate pedagogical recommendations for the instruction of English grammar to Spanish speakers, grounded in contrastive analysis and aligned with modern principles of language acquisition.

These objectives position the article as a bridge between descriptive linguistics and applied pedagogy, offering a comprehensive examination of contrastive grammar not only as a theoretical discipline, but as an essential component of effective second language teaching.

3. METHOLOGY

This article employs a theoretical and contrastive methodology grounded in descriptive linguistics and second language acquisition research. The approach is based on three interrelated principles: (1) the structural comparison of English and Spanish grammatical systems; (2) the identification of areas of positive and negative transfer; and (3) the pedagogical interpretation of contrastive findings to inform instructional practices.

The contrastive method involves the systematic comparison of parallel structures in both languages, including their historical development, morphological realization, syntactic patterns, and semantic implications. Rather than presenting isolated rules, the analysis examines integrated grammatical systems and their cognitive accessibility to learners. The methodology is analytical rather than empirical; it does not rely

on new data collection, but on established linguistic research, historical sources, and documented learner error patterns.

Examples are used throughout the analysis to illustrate contrastive features. These examples are drawn from contemporary English and Spanish usage and are selected to reflect structures that recur frequently in instructional contexts and pose common difficulties for learners. Each example is presented with its equivalent in the target language, demonstrating not only literal translation but pragmatic equivalence.

The methodological framework is supported by relevant theories within the field of second language acquisition, including the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, Universal Grammar, the Input Hypothesis, and Interlanguage Theory. This theoretical grounding allows the article to move beyond descriptive contrast and into explanatory analysis, linking structural differences with cognitive and pedagogical outcomes.

The methodology further incorporates a pedagogical dimension that translates contrastive insights into practical implications for teaching. Rather than presenting contrastive grammar as an abstract comparative exercise, the article frames it as a strategic tool for enhancing metalinguistic awareness, preventing fossilization, and promoting efficient learning pathways for Spanish-speaking learners of English

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis of English and Spanish grammar in the context of second language acquisition is grounded in linguistic theory and historical linguistics, supported by cognitive and pedagogical models. Understanding how English and Spanish evolved to their present grammatical forms is crucial to revealing the underlying logic that governs learner difficulties. This section presents the theoretical principles and historical linguistic factors that inform the contrastive study that follows.

4.1. Historical Foundations and Linguistic Genealogy

Both English and Spanish belong to the Indo-European family but emerged from different branches: English from the Germanic branch

(specifically West Germanic), and Spanish from the Italic branch, descending from Latin. Despite this divergence, both languages have undergone centuries of contact with other linguistic groups, resulting in mutual influence that explains lexical similarities while maintaining distinct grammatical frameworks.

4.1.1. The Evolution of English Grammar through Contact

English was originally shaped by the Celtic peoples who inhabited Britain during the Iron Age. The Roman occupation introduced Latin administrative vocabulary, though Latin did not displace the Celtic languages. The most transformative linguistic event occurred in the fifth century, when Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Frisians) invaded Britain. These tribes brought Old English, a highly inflected language characterized by grammatical gender, case endings, and strong and weak verb systems.

Subsequent Viking incursions in the eighth and ninth centuries introduced Old Norse influences, which had a profound grammatical effect: inflectional endings were gradually eroded due to contact between mutually intelligible Germanic dialects, leading to simplification. The adoption of pronouns such as they, them, their from Old Norse marked a decisive shift in the pronominal system.

The Norman Conquest of 1066 marked a pivotal turning point. Norman French became the language of administration, law, literature, and the aristocracy, while English remained the language of the common people. Over the next two centuries, English absorbed thousands of French words, often in domains related to governance, law, the church, and culture (e.g., court, justice, religion, government, beauty). This extensive borrowing expanded English vocabulary while simultaneously contributing to the loss of Old English inflectional morphology. As English re-emerged as the national language in the fourteenth century, it had been structurally transformed: it now relied less on inflection and more on fixed word order, auxiliary verbs, and prepositions to convey grammatical relations.

By the Early Modern English period (1500–1700), further Latin and Greek borrowings entered the language through scientific, philosophical, and religious texts. English had become a predominantly analytical language with minimal inflection, a characteristic that profoundly differentiates it from Spanish.

4.1.2. The Evolution of Spanish Grammar

Spanish originated from Vulgar Latin, introduced to the Iberian Peninsula during the Second Punic War (218 BC). As the Roman Empire imposed Latin as the administrative and cultural language, local Celtic and Iberian languages were progressively replaced or assimilated. Over time, Vulgar Latin evolved into Romance dialects, influenced by contact with Germanic tribes such as the Visigoths and later with Arabic-speaking Moors following the conquest of 711 AD.

Arabic influence contributed more than four thousand lexical items to Spanish, many related to agriculture, science, architecture, and daily life (e.g., azúcar, alcalde, álgebra, aceite). However, Arabic influence was primarily lexical rather than grammatical; Spanish retained the core morphology of Latin, including verb conjugations, gender agreement, and productive subjunctive forms.

During the Reconquista and the reign of Alfonso X in the thirteenth century, Spanish was standardized through official documents, translations of scholarly works, and legal codes. The development of the printing press and the publication of the first Spanish grammar by Antonio de Nebrija in 1492 consolidated Spanish as a language with a strong inflectional system and extensive mood distinctions, especially in the subjunctive.

4.1.3. Historical Divergence and Its Pedagogical Consequences

The historical trajectories of English and Spanish explain the modern structural contrasts that affect acquisition. English, shaped by language contact and morphological erosion, developed a grammar where syntactic position and auxiliary verbs play a central role. Spanish, inheriting Latin morphology, developed a grammar where verb conjugation

encodes tense, aspect, mood, number, and person, allowing syntactic flexibility. Understanding this divergence is essential for predicting which English grammar elements will be intuitive for Spanish speakers and which will require explicit instruction.

4.2. Theoretical Foundations in Contrastive Linguistics and SLA

The analysis in this study is grounded in four complementary theoretical models:

4.2.1. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

Robert Lado's Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (1957) proposes that elements similar to the learner's first language will be easy to acquire, while elements that differ will be difficult. This hypothesis is strongly confirmed in the case of Spanish-speaking learners of English. For example, the existence of cognates facilitates vocabulary acquisition, whereas structural differences in auxiliary usage lead to persistent errors such as She don't goes or I no have.

4.2.2. Interlanguage Theory

According to Larry Selinker (1972), language learners create an interlanguage: a transitional linguistic system with characteristics of both L1 and L2. This explains fossilization of errors such as dropping the subject (Is raining) or literal translations (I have 20 years), which arise from overapplying Spanish grammatical logic to English structures.

4.2.3. Universal Grammar and Parameter Resetting

Noam Chomsky's theory of Universal Grammar suggests that all humans have an innate capacity for language, but each language sets specific grammatical parameters. Spanish and English differ significantly in parameter settings such as pro-drop, tense-aspect interface, and word order constraints. Spanish speakers learning English must reset these parameters to achieve native-like competence.

4.2.4. Input Hypothesis and Metalinguistic Awareness

Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis states that learners acquire language when exposed to comprehensible input at a slightly higher level than their current competence. In the case of contrastive grammar, input must be made comprehensible not only semantically but structurally, explicitly highlighting contrasts. Metalinguistic awareness—understanding how language works—accelerates acquisition, particularly with complex structures such as inversion and the subjunctive.

4.3. Implications of Theoretical Foundations

- The theoretical framework supports a contrastive approach to grammar instruction grounded in linguistic reality and cognitive processing. It establishes that:
    - Lexical similarity cannot compensate for grammatical divergence.
    - Transfer is predictable and can be harnessed positively if identified and addressed.
    - Explicit contrastive instruction is more effective than implicit
    - exposure for structures that are absent or rare in the learner's L1.
    - Teaching English to Spanish speakers requires not avoidance of Spanish, but strategic use of it to build cognitive clarity.

This theoretical foundation paves the way for the detailed linguistic analysis in the next section, which will systematically compare English and Spanish grammar across morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions, including extensive contrastive examples

5. LINGUISTIC CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

This section presents a systematic comparison of English and Spanish grammar across key linguistic domains: morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Each subsection identifies areas of convergence, which facilitate positive transfer, and areas of divergence, which constitute predictable challenges for Spanish-speaking learners of English.

The analysis is supported by bilingual examples to illustrate form, meaning, and use in both languages.

5.1. Morphological Contrast

Morphology is the first level at which fundamental differences between English and Spanish become apparent. English is predominantly analytic, with grammatical information conveyed through auxiliary verbs and fixed word order, while Spanish is primarily synthetic, encoding grammatical relationships through inflectional endings. These contrasting morphological systems represent a major source of interference in second language acquisition.

5.1.1. Verb Conjugation

Verb morphology is significantly more complex in Spanish than in English. Spanish verbs are conjugated according to person, number, tense, aspect, and mood, across three conjugational classes (-ar, -er, -ir). English verbs, by contrast, exhibit minimal conjugation, with tense and agreement largely expressed through auxiliary verbs.

English (Minimal Inflection):

- I speak / you speak / she speaks
- I spoke / you spoke / she spoke
- I have spoken / she has spoken

Spanish (Rich Inflection):

- Yo hablo / tú hablas / él habla
- Yo hablé / tú hablaste / él habló
- Yo he hablado / tú has hablado / él ha hablado

Implications: Spanish-speaking learners often attempt to apply their inflectional logic to English, leading to errors such as “She speak” or “I have 20 years.” The absence of inflection in English requires learners to rely on auxiliary verbs and fixed word order for grammatical accuracy.

5.1.2. Tense and Aspect

English expresses aspect through auxiliary verbs and participles, while Spanish uses inflectional morphology. English distinguishes between simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive aspects, with each carrying specific temporal and discourse functions.

Contrastive Example:

- English: I have lived here for ten years. (present perfect, ongoing relevance)
- Spanish: Vivo aquí desde hace diez años. (present tense, continuous action)
- Incorrect transfer: He lived here since ten years ago.

Analysis: Spanish learners misinterpret the English present perfect due to differences in aspectual distribution between the two languages. Explicit contrastive teaching is needed to clarify that English distinguishes completed past events (simple past) from past actions connected to the present (present perfect).

5.1.3. Mood: Indicative, Subjunctive, and Imperative

Spanish preserves a robust subjunctive system, while English uses limited subjunctive forms often expressed through modal verbs. Learners must understand that English subjunctive is syntactically triggered rather than morphologically expressed.

English (Subjunctive):

- It is essential that he be on time.
- They requested that she go immediately.

Spanish (Subjunctive):

- Es esencial que llegue a tiempo.
- Pidieron que se fuera inmediatamente.

Interference Example:

- Incorrect English: It is important that he arrives on time.

  (indicative instead of subjunctive)

- Target: It is important that he arrive on time.

5.1.4. Noun Morphology: Number and Gender

English nouns are generally marked only for number, with plural formation involving -s or -es. Spanish nouns are marked for both number and gender, and this distinction controls agreement with determiners and adjectives.

English: the red roses

Spanish: las rosas rojas

Spanish-speaking learners may attempt to apply gendered logic to English, expecting determiners and adjectives to agree in gender.

Error Example:

- The car red instead of the red car
- He is engineer instead of He is an engineer (article omission due to Spanish zero-article patterns with professions)

5.2. Syntactic Contrast

5.2.1. Subject Expression and the Pro-Drop Parameter

English requires an explicit subject in every finite clause, including dummy subjects for weather and existential statements. Spanish, as a pro-drop language, allows omission of the subject when person and number are encoded in the verb ending.

English: It is raining.

Spanish: Está lloviendo. (not Es lloviendo)

Error Example:

- Is raining → subject omitted, Spanish transfer

Target: It is raining.

5.2.2 Word Order

English has a rigid SVO word order that is essential for meaning. Spanish allows flexible word order due to its inflectional system.

English: The student reads the book.

Spanish: El alumno lee el libro / El libro lo lee el alumno / Lee el libro el alumno.

While Spanish can front the object for emphasis or topicalization, English requires the subject to precede the verb unless there is inversion.

Error Example:

- Reads the student the book (incorrect inversion)
- Target inversion only under question formation or stylistic emphasis:
- Does the student read the book?
- Never have I seen such a thing.

5.2.3. Auxiliary Verbs and Negation

Auxiliaries are essential to English grammar for forming questions, negatives, progressives, and perfect tenses. Spanish forms negation with the adverb no before the verb, without auxiliary insertion.

English:

- She does not like coffee.
- Do you speak English?

Spanish:

- Ella no toma café.
- ¿Hablas inglés?

Error Examples:

- She no like coffee.
- You speak English? (acceptable in informal speech, but grammatically incomplete in standard English

5.2.4. The Passive Voice

The passive voice represents one of the most significant syntactic divergences between English and Spanish, not only in formal structure but also in frequency, naturalness, and communicative function. English frequently uses the passive voice in both spoken and written registers to emphasize the action or the object rather than the agent. Spanish, while having a formal passive (ser + participio), tends to avoid it in favor of active constructions or impersonal se structures.

General Form in English:

Subject + auxiliary (be) + past participle (+ by + agent)

- The report was written by the committee.
- Mistakes are made every day.

Equivalent in Spanish:

- El informe fue escrito por el comité. (grammatical but formal or literary)
- Se cometen errores todos los días. (more natural for everyday use)

Double Object Passives

English possesses a syntactic feature largely absent in Spanish: passivization of indirect objects.

English:

- They gave him a prize. → He was given a prize.
- She sent Mary a letter. → Mary was sent a letter.

Spanish:

- Le dieron un premio. (active)
- Fue premiado él. (rare, marked)
- A Mary le enviaron una carta. (indirect object clitic required)

Error Path: Spanish-speaking learners often find double-object passives confusing, producing literal translations or avoiding passive forms. They may generate sentences such as He was sent a letter by them (grammatically correct but overly explicit) instead of selecting the more natural alternative He was sent a letter.

Impersonal Passive Structures

English makes extensive use of impersonal passive constructions with reporting verbs.

English:

- It is said that the economy is recovering.
- She is believed to be an expert in her field.

Spanish equivalents:

- Se dice que la economía se está recuperando.
- Se cree que ella es experta en su campo.

The personal construction (Ella se cree ser experta) would be ungrammatical or unnatural.

Key Observation: Spanish uses se impersonal structures pragmatically where English uses passives. This difference must be explicitly addressed during instruction.

5.2.5. Modal Verbs

English modal verbs (can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would) are central to its grammatical architecture. They express ability, obligation, possibility, permission, and speculation. Spanish does not have a class of pure modals; instead, these meanings are expressed

through periphrastic constructions, inflected verbs, and the subjunctive mood.

English Modals: do not change form and are followed by bare infinitives:

- She can swim.
- You must be quiet.
- He should study.

Spanish equivalents:

- Ella sabe nadar / puede nadar.
- Debes guardar silencio.
- Él debería estudiar.

Semantic Divergence: Modal verbs in English also carry epistemic meaning (probability):

- He must be at home. → Es muy probable que esté en casa.
- She might come later. → Puede que venga más tarde. (subjunctive)

Common Error Path: Using literal translation rather than semantic equivalence. Learners incorrectly equate must with "deber" in all contexts, ignoring pragmatic strength.

5.2.6. Inversion Structures

Inversion in English is a grammatical mechanism with syntactic triggers. Spanish, by contrast, allows inversion for stylistic or pragmatic purposes without strict rules.

Question Formation (auxiliary inversion):

- Do you like chocolate?
- Spanish: ¿Te gusta el chocolate? (no auxiliary required)

Negative Adverbials:

- Never have I seen such chaos.

– Spanish: Nunca he visto tal caos. (no inversion)

Only / Hardly / No sooner:

– Only then did I understand the truth.

– Hardly had we arrived when the phone rang.

– Spanish: Solo entonces comprendí la verdad. / Apenas habíamos llegado cuando sonó el teléfono.

Key Observation: English inversion is rule-bound. Spanish permits pragmatic reordering but does not require formal inversion triggered by adverbials. Learners must acquire inversion as a structural rule, not a stylistic option.

5.2.7. Prepositions and Phrasal Verbs

Prepositions in English

English prepositions are semantically distinct and highly idiomatic. Spanish covers many spatial and temporal relationships using fewer prepositions, primarily en, a, and de.

English:

– I am at the airport.

– I am in the car.

– I am on the bus.

Spanish:

– Estoy en el aeropuerto.

– Estoy en el coche.

– Estoy en el autobús.

Error Path: Learners generalize in for enclosed spaces and on for surfaces, without understanding conventional usage.

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are among the most distinctive grammatical features of English. A phrasal verb consists of a base verb plus one or more particles (adverbs or prepositions) that modify its meaning in non-compositional ways.

Examples:

- give up = quit → dejar
- put up with = tolerate → tolerar / soportar
- look after = take care of → cuidar de
- run into = encounter unexpectedly → encontrarse con

Classification:

- Non-separable phrasal-prepositional verbs: to put up with
- Separable phrasal verbs: to turn on the light / to turn the light on

Instructional Implication: Learners must approach phrasal verbs as lexical units, not as verb + adverb combinations that can be directly translated.

5.3 Semantic and Pragmatic Contrasts

The acquisition of grammar involves understanding not only form but also meaning and use in communicative contexts. Spanish learners must recognize that structurally similar sentences may have different pragmatic values.

5.3.1. Expressions of Time and Aspect

English distinguishes between simple past and present perfect in ways that Spanish does not.

- I have already eaten. → Ya he comido. (similar)
- I have seen that movie yesterday. (incorrect in English)
- Spanish allows: Ya vi esa película ayer.

5.3.2 Expressions of Obligation and Suggestion

- You must study. → Debes estudiar. (obligation)
- You should study. → Deberías estudiar. (recommendation)
- You have to study. → Tienes que estudiar. (external obligation)

5.3.3 Translation Ambiguity

Certain English constructions do not have direct equivalents in Spanish.

- It is worth considering. → Vale la pena considerarlo.
- There is no point in arguing. → No tiene sentido discutir.

5.4 Error Typology and Cognitive Processing

Spanish-speaking learners exhibit predictable errors due to negative transfer.

TABLE 1. *Categories, errors, target forms and sources of interferences.*

Category	Learner Error	Target Form	Source of Interference
Auxiliary omission	She no like it	She does not like it	Spanish uses no without auxiliary
Subject omission	Is raining	It is raining	Spanish is pro-drop
Tense transfer	I have gone yesterday	I went yesterday	Spanish allows he ido ayer in some dialects
Prepositional calque	Married with	Married to	Spanish casado con
False cognate	Actually = Actualmente	Actually = en realidad	Lexical interference

5.5 Pedagogical Implications of Contrastive Grammar

While linguistic contrast provides theoretical understanding, its true relevance lies in how it informs second language pedagogy. The acquisition of English grammar by Spanish speakers does not occur in an abstract vacuum but in structured educational environments influenced by cognitive constraints, motivational factors, and instructional methodologies. Therefore, the results of contrastive analysis must be

operationalized in teaching strategies that explicitly address the needs of Spanish-speaking learners.

5.5.1. The Necessity of Contrastive Grammar in Instruction

Monolingual approaches that isolate English from the learners' native language may be useful in immersion contexts, but they often fail to address structural interference when the first language operates subconsciously. Contrastive grammar facilitates *metalinguistic awareness*, allowing learners to understand not only *how* English works, but *why* it works differently from Spanish. This awareness leads to faster acquisition, higher retention, and fewer fossilized errors.

Contrastive instruction should not consist of translation exercises alone; rather, it should systematically highlight correspondences and mismatches using guided discovery and inductive examples. For instance, teaching the English passive voice alongside Spanish *se* constructions helps students avoid literal translations and understand the pragmatic functions of each form.

Example of Contrastive Explanation in the Classroom:

TABLE 2. *Structures and Equivalents*

English Structure	Spanish Equivalent	Pedagogical Note
It is believed that…	Se cree que…	Promote functional equivalence rather than literal translation.
He was given a prize.	Le dieron un premio.	Teach English double-object passive as a marked feature absent in Spanish.

5.2 Teaching Strategies According to Grammatical Category

a) Auxiliaries and Negation

Spanish-speaking learners tend to omit auxiliaries due to transfer from Spanish, where *no* is simply placed before the verb. Therefore, teaching must emphasize that in English, auxiliaries are obligatory for negatives and questions.

Activity: sentence transformation drills: *He speaks English → He doesn't speak English → Does he speak English?* Learners internalize the auxiliary rule through contrastive transformation.

b) Subject Pronouns and Impersonal Structures

Awareness of English being a non-pro-drop language must be reinforced through constant use of subject pronouns, including dummy *it* and *there*.

Activity: weather report simulation:

It is raining, it is windy, there is a storm.

Contrast with Spanish: *Está lloviendo, hace viento, hay tormenta.* The teacher highlights the presence or absence of explicit subjects.

c) Present Perfect and Temporal Expressions

Learners frequently misuse the present perfect due to differences in temporal framing. Explicit contrastive teaching should compare timelines and discourse implications.

Activity: learners categorize sentences into *pretérite* vs *present perfect* based on contextual markers (*yesterday, two weeks ago, this week, yet, already, since*).

d) Phrasal Verbs

Given that phrasal verbs are absent in Spanish grammar and semantically non-transparent, they must be taught through thematic grouping and semantic fields rather than alphabetical lists.

Activity: Conceptual mapping

Cluster phrasal verbs with *up* (completion or increase), *out* (exhaustion or distribution), e.g.: *finish up, grow up, fill up*; *run out, hand out, figure out*.

e) Subjunctive and Modality

The subjunctive exists in both languages but behaves differently. In English, clausal triggers such as *suggest, recommend, insist, essential that* require bare subjunctive forms. In Spanish, the subjunctive is marked morphologically.

Activity: Students transform sentences using verbs of recommendation.

It is essential that she be ready.

Es esencial que esté lista.

Highlight morphological absence in English vs presence in Spanish.

5.5.3. Tailoring Grammar Teaching to Learning Styles

As outlined in the document's original sections on learning styles and multiple intelligences, grammar instruction must be adaptable to different cognitive profiles:

- Auditory Learners: benefit from repetition, dictations, and oral drills emphasizing auxiliary use and intonation in inversion.
- Visual Learners: respond to color-coded charts showing English fixed word order versus Spanish flexibility, or flowcharts for present perfect vs preterite.
- Kinesthetic Learners: engage through role-play of situations requiring modal verbs or causative structures (e.g., hairdresser:

  I'm having my hair cut).
- Logical Learners: appreciate structured comparison tables outlining syntactic rules and exception patterns.
- Social Learners: benefit from collaborative tasks such as peer c correction of contrastive errors.
- Solitary Learners: require detailed, self-paced reading materials with clear explanations and examples in both languages.

5.5.4. The Role of Error Awareness and Feedback

Error analysis is not a remediation tool but a predictive instrument. Spanish-speaking learners are statistically likely to produce certain errors due to negative transfer. By identifying these errors in advance, educators can design preventive instruction.

Predicted Errors:

- Omission of third-person *-s*: *she work*
- Misuse of *for* and *since*

– Literal translation of subjunctive triggers
– Avoidance of phrasal verbs
– Overuse of passive voice or complete avoidance

Corrective Feedback Strategy: Teachers should provide reformulative feedback that connects the erroneous structure to the learner's L1 origin.

Incorrect: She is married with a doctor → Correct: She is married to a doctor → Spanish uses "casado con," explaining the transfer.

6. DISCUSSION

The analysis confirms that Spanish-speaking learners of English face specific grammatical challenges predictable from structural divergence between the two languages. This supports the central claim of contrastive analysis: *difficulty in second language acquisition arises where there is a lack of correspondence between L1 and L2 forms, meanings, or uses.*

From a cognitive perspective, Spanish-speaking learners bring an internalized grammatical system shaped by inflection, agreement, and syntactic freedom. When confronted with English, a language that encodes grammatical relationships primarily through function words and position, they experience a paradigm shift in processing. Their mental grammar must transition from morphological encoding to syntactic encoding.

Furthermore, the persistence of errors in areas such as auxiliary usage, subject pronoun omission, word order, and phrasal verbs demonstrates that second language acquisition is not a process of mere accumulation of rules; it is a process of reprogramming grammatical expectations.

Pedagogically, this means that monolingual teaching approaches that ignore the learners' L1 actually overlook the most powerful tool for clarity: explicit contrast. When learners understand the *reason* behind a structure—its historical emergence, grammatical function, and difference from their own language—they internalize it more deeply.

The discussion also emphasizes that contrastive grammar is not limited to vocabulary or isolated grammatical rules; it is a multidimensional framework that integrates historical linguistics, syntax, morphology,

semantics, and pedagogy. Rather than treating grammar as a set of arbitrary rules to memorize, the contrastive approach reveals grammar as a logical system shaped by historical processes and cognitive efficiency.

Finally, the findings of this article reinforce the importance of applying contrastive linguistics within contemporary educational contexts. In an increasingly globalized world, where linguistic mobility is essential, understanding the interaction between native language structures and target language acquisition is indispensable for developing effective teaching models.

7. CONCLUSION

The contrastive analysis carried out in this study demonstrates that the grammatical relationship between English and Spanish is characterized by a unique duality: both languages share a common historical ancestry and considerable lexical overlap, while simultaneously diverging significantly in their grammatical systems. For Spanish-speaking learners of English, this duality presents both advantages and predictable areas of difficulty. The structural similarities facilitate initial comprehension and lexical acquisition, whereas the deeper morphosyntactic differences create systematic challenges in mastery, particularly in the domains of auxiliary use, tense and aspect, mood, inversion, prepositions, passive voice, and phrasal verbs.

One of the central conclusions of this analysis is that grammatical acquisition cannot be effectively addressed without acknowledging the influence of learners' native language. English grammar is not inherently more or less complex than Spanish; it is structured according to a different linguistic logic. English encodes grammatical meaning through syntax and auxiliary verbs, while Spanish encodes meaning primarily through morphological inflection. This difference requires learners to shift their internalized grammatical processing from a synthetic, inflection-driven system to an analytic, positional system. Where this shift is not made explicit in instruction, learners rely unconsciously on Spanish grammatical patterns, resulting in negative transfer and fossilization of errors.

The findings also highlight the importance of understanding historical linguistic processes in order to interpret present-day grammatical

phenomena. English lost its inflectional endings through contact with Old Norse and Norman French, leading to the development of a grammatical system that prioritizes fixed word order and auxiliary verbs. Spanish, in contrast, maintained a high degree of morphosyntactic continuity with Latin. Recognizing this historical divergence allows educators and learners to understand *why* English and Spanish behave differently, thus reducing the perception of arbitrary rules and supporting cognitive retention.

A further conclusion is that contrastive grammar is not merely a descriptive exercise but a predictive and pedagogical instrument. By identifying areas of convergence and divergence between English and Spanish, it becomes possible to anticipate learner errors before they occur, design preventive instructional strategies, and accelerate acquisition.

Examples of predictable divergences include:

- *Subject omission*: acceptable in Spanish, ungrammatical in English.
- *Present perfect vs preterite*: the distributional rules differ between the two languages.
- *Phrasal verbs*: absent in Spanish, essential in English, requiring lexical teaching.
- *Subjunctive*: morphologically rich in Spanish, syntactically triggered in English.
- *Inversion*: stylistically optional in Spanish, grammatically compulsory in English under certain conditions.

The pedagogical implications of this analysis are clear and direct. Teaching English grammar to Spanish-speaking learners must explicitly incorporate contrastive analysis, both to build on pre-existing linguistic knowledge and to correct erroneous assumptions arising from surface similarities. Rather than ignoring Spanish, effective instruction should strategically integrate it as a reference point to clarify structural differences. This approach fosters metalinguistic awareness, which in turn enhances cognitive processing, accuracy, and long-term retention.

Therefore, the ultimate conclusion of this article is that contrastive grammar must be reinstated as a core component of English language

instruction for Spanish speakers, not as a supplementary or remedial tool, but as an essential methodological principle grounded in linguistic science. Far from being an outdated approach, contrastive analysis aligns with current understandings of second language acquisition, cognitive linguistics, and applied pedagogy. It provides both theoretical coherence and practical effectiveness, making it uniquely suited to address the persistent grammatical challenges faced by learners.

Finally, it can be affirmed that the comparative study of English and Spanish grammar is not only an academic endeavor but a pedagogical necessity in a multilingual world. In recognizing both the shared heritage and structural divergence of these two global languages, learners and educators gain the clarity necessary to transform grammatical acquisition from a process of confusion and memorization into one of understanding, logic, and mastery.

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ONLINE REVIEWS WITH NEGATIVE VALENCE: THE POLYLOGAL NATURE OF FACEBOOK

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1. INTRODUCTION

The continuous evolution of technology and the emergence of the Web 2.0 have brought about massive changes in the dynamics of online service encounters (Márquez Reiter et al., 2015). An increasing number of companies currently use social networking sites to communicate with their customers and create a (sometimes synthetic) sense of closeness towards them (Pérez-Sabater, 2024). This phenomenon is exemplified in the review tab included on some accommodations' Facebook profiles, which serves as an alternative review platform where customers can evaluate their stay.

In the context of Facebook negative reviews, such interactions can easily give rise to conflict owing to the polylogal nature of Facebook, where reviewers, hoteliers and other customers, prior and prospective, may engage in potentially limitless exchanges in response to the initial review. This highlights the importance of studying polylogal conflict across platforms (Lorenzo-Dust et al., 2011), as many forms of online communication are inherently polylogal. Although prior research has examined polylogal conflict on platforms such as YouTube (Lorenzo-Dus et al., 2011; Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014), Facebook (Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2018) and Wikipedia (Khazraie and Talebzadeh, 2020), little attention has been devoted to polylogal conflict in service encounters, where participants tend to have a more fixed role. Therefore, the present study aims to address this

gap by examining how conflict unfolds in Peninsular Spanish and British English Facebook reviews.

To this end, the paper is structured as follows. The current section introduces the topic and outlines the theoretical foundations. Section 2 presents the main objectives of the study. Afterwards, section 3 describes the corpus and participants under study, as well as the methodological approach. In section 4, the results from the analyses are presented, followed by a discussion in section 5. Finally, section 6 presents the conclusions, along with the limitations encountered and potential venues for prospective research.

1.1. Impoliteness and conflict in online consumer reviews

Impoliteness and conflict are two concepts that are often intertwined in the study of pragmatics due to their disruptive implications (Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019). Even though impoliteness and conflict can be linked to some extent, they refer to different phenomena, and one is not always preceded by the other. In fact, impoliteness does not always escalate into conflict, and it only constitutes one of the possible perspectives from which conflict can be examined (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2018). However, what these two concepts share is their elusive nature, as scholars have struggled to provide unified and canonical definitions (Janicki, 2017). Nevertheless, as Janicki (2017) argues, this lack of consensus should not be regarded as a hindrance, but as an opportunity to compare perspectives and enrich research on impoliteness and conflict.

For the purpose of the present research, impoliteness is understood as "a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts" (Culpeper, 2010: 3233). In this regard, Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2010) identifies different factors that may trigger this negative attitude, that is, impoliteness: (1) the use of lexico-grammatical strategies or prosodic features in genres where they are not usually employed; (2) a mismatch between an individual's perceived norms and expectations within a specific genre and the actual norms and expectations governing such genre; (3) the use of strategies that exceed the limits established within a determined genre where some degree of impoliteness is typically expected.

However, as previously noted, conflict does not necessarily emerge whenever impoliteness is triggered; rather, it is the reaction to an impoliteness act that unfolds conflict (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2018; Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019). Furthermore, this reaction might become an impoliteness act in and of itself, thereby contributing to the escalation of conflict (Bousfield, 2007; Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019). There are other factors that influence the unfolding of conflict, such as the recipient's evaluation of the potentially conflictual event (Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014; Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019), the participants' relationship (Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019), the public or private nature of the interaction at hand (Haugh and Sinkeviciute, 2019), and additional contextual elements. As a result, prior research has concluded that both impoliteness and conflict emerge and are co-constructed in interaction (Dobs and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2013; Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014).

Moreover, certain settings are particularly conducive to conflict, with digital discourse standing out as a salient example. In online settings, a higher degree of anonymity and deindividuation can produce a sense of disinhibition among Internet users, which in turn often results in greater polarisation and hostility (Lapidot-Lefler and Barak, 2012; Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014; Vásquez, 2021, among others). Online reviews with negative valence exemplify this tendency, as they frequently constitute instances of conflict in their own right. These reviews are usually the reviewers' reaction to the mishap or accumulation of mishaps occurring before, during, or after the stay at the accommodation at hand. In fact, as Hernández-López (2025) argues, the conflict often originates during the stay, and online reviews represent an extension of this conflict. By extending such conflict into the digital sphere, reviewers might seek to gain visibility, attract the attention of previous and prospective customers, potentially influence their decisions (Vásquez, 2012; Virtanen, 2017; Hernández-López, 2019), and even gain their sympathy in order to position them as allies in the conflict.

Regarding travel reviews, customers have traditionally relied on specific review platforms such as TripAdvisor, Booking or Airbnb to vent and write their negative comments. However, as previously anticipated,

a growing number of companies now rely on social networking sites to engage with their customers. This shift has produced a paradigm change in the study of both online reviews and social networking sites, as will be discussed in the following sub-section.

1.2. Facebook and conflictual online reviews

Although Facebook was initially created in 2004 as a social networking site for Harvard students, its rapid and massive growth soon turned it into one of the most used platforms worldwide (Palomino-Manjón, 2018). Nowadays, Facebook is still one of the most popular social networking sites, partly because it has evolved from being a conventional social networking site for personal interaction into one that offers a wide range of tools to its users (Márquez Reiter et. al., 2015). In addition to its primary function as a platform for social interaction and information sharing among friends and acquaintances, Facebook also fosters other types of exchanges, such as service encounters.

Considering the social nature of Facebook (Maíz-Arévalo, 2019), many companies, including hotels and other accommodation providers, use this platform to reach a wider audience and to establish a closer connection with their customers (Márquez Reiter et. al., 2015; Palomino Manjón, 2018). Furthermore, Facebook has gone further by incorporating a review tab on some business profiles, thus providing customers with an alternative platform to post their evaluations. Likewise, service providers are able to respond to their customers' reviews. However, this communicative exchange is shaped by the platform's own features, mainly its polylogal nature, its degree of privacy, and its audience.

An important feature that differentiates Facebook from other review platforms is its polylogal nature, for any post can elicit a potentially infinite number of responses and participants, as pointed out by Márquez Reiter et al. (2015). This constitutes a perfect breeding ground for the unfolding of conflict, as not only service providers but also other customers are allowed to respond and establish alliances with other users with similar claims (Márquez Reiter et al., 2015). Moreover, conflict can remain open until it is resolved, abandoned by one of the parties, or deleted by a moderator.

The role of the moderator and the lower degree of privacy (Maíz-Arévalo, 2015) are other key features in shaping Facebook interactions. On the one hand, users are not allowed to use overtly aggressive language, since they risk being banned or expelled from the platform. On the other hand, the fact that Facebook users mainly employ their personal profiles to interact and share information leads to a lower degree of privacy and anonymity compared with other platforms, which can discourage aggressive behaviour and might influence the way conflict unfolds.

Another noteworthy feature concerns the audience of these Facebook review tabs, which pertain to the domain of public communication. This generally implies that any user with a Facebook account can have access to the exchanges occurring there, which might entail context collapse. In other words, users are unable to determine either the identity or the potential size of their audience (Georgakopoulou, 2017). Therefore, Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2018) argue that Facebook communication is riskier than face-to-face communication in that it can reach a wider and anonymous audience, which might affect participants' verbal behaviour and the strategies they perform in conflictual exchanges.

2. OBJECTIVES

The different communication channels available to Facebook users have triggered a myriad of studies in the field of pragmatics. These studies focus on users' status updates (Ilyas and Khushi, 2012), posts published by ordinary users (Vivas Márquez and Ridao Rodrigo, 2015) and politicians (Bronstein, 2013), facework (Maíz-Arévalo, 2019), and the analysis of cultural (Maíz-Arévalo and García-Gómez, 2013; Maíz-Arévalo, 2015) and age (Maíz-Arévalo, 2020) variables. However, there is a dearth of studies addressing service encounters, given that some of these functions, including online reviews, are still incipient. Furthermore, these few studies mainly concentrate on the analysis of interactions on some companies and institutions' Facebook walls (Márquez Reiter et al., 2015; Palomino Manjón, 2018; Bou-Franch, 2019; Olshtain and Treger, 2023).

In this context, the present study seeks to explore the polylogal nature of Facebook in online travel reviews and to examine how lingua-cultural differences shape the unfolding of conflict. More specifically, the aim of the study is twofold: on the one hand, to identify the conflict management strategies performed by reviewers, hoteliers and other customers in their responses to dissatisfied customers' reviews on Facebook, and, on the other, to analyse the impact of the participants' lingua-cultural background on the unfolding of conflict. To this aim, the study addresses the following research questions:

- 1. What strategies do Facebook reviewers, hoteliers and other customers perform to manage conflict across its three stages: beginnings, middles and ends?
- 2. To what extent do lingua-cultural differences influence the unfolding of conflict in online travel reviews posted on Facebook?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus and participants description

For the purpose of this study, 50 Facebook threads were collected. Each thread begins with a review with negative valence, defined as a review that contains "at least, one negative comment (even if the rest of the review includes positive comments as well)" (Hernández-López, 2022: 242). Importantly, all the reviews gathered had at least one response from another participant, either a hotelier or another customer. The resulting corpus rendered two datasets: the British dataset and the Spanish dataset, each one containing 25 threads. Each thread, understood here as a potential polylogal conflict, was gathered from different hotels based in the UK and Spain, respectively. One of the main difficulties during the data-gathering process lied in the fact that the use of Facebook as an alternative review platform is still less widespread compared to more established platforms such as TripAdvisor or Booking, particularly among hoteliers. As a result, the number of reviews with negative valence was limited.

Regarding the participants, the corpus includes 25 reviewers from each linguacultural background (47 turns in the British dataset and 50 in the Spanish dataset), 8 hoteliers in the British dataset (13 turns) and 12 hoteliers in the Spanish dataset (18 turns), as well as 21 customers in the British dataset (31 turns) and 16 customers in the Spanish dataset (23 turns). It is important to note that the participants' nationalities could not be determined with certainty. Consequently, this study adopts a linguacultural approach, based on the assumption that language serves as a proxy for cultural orientation, for it is shaped by and reflects cultural norms. Moreover, only the comments written by users based in the UK and Spain, respectively, were considered. While some participants may be non-native speakers, it is assumed that constant exposure to the target culture typically leads to adaptation to its communicative norms and expectations (Sánchez-Hernández, 2018).

Finally, even though Facebook's review tabs constitute a valuable source of publicly accessible data, several ethical considerations were addressed. Following Kozinets (2010), the participants' identities will not be disclosed, and all their names were removed from the examples provided. Additionally, as Graham and Hardaker (2017) observe, "people posting to public online forums can have no reasonable expectations that their behaviour will not be examined." Hence, texts posted on publicly accessible platforms can be freely used for research purposes without requiring the users' consent.

3.2. Analytical framework and procedure

After compiling the corpus, all data were coded following Dobs and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich's (2013) multilayered framework for polylogal conflict. This framework was selected because it accounts for the role of witnesses (i.e., other customers) rather than focusing merely on the face-threat initiator (i.e., reviewers) and the face-threat recipient (hoteliers) in a linear, dyadic fashion. In other words, this framework captures the polylogal nature of most forms of online interaction, allowing for the analysis of a potential infinite number of responses from different participants. Furthermore, the multilayered framework builds

on Bousfield (2007) to analyse conflict across its three stages: beginnings, middles and ends.

- • Beginnings: according to Culpeper et al. (2003), confrontation arises when disagreement occurs in interaction. This disagreement stems from what Bousfield (2007) terms an "offending situation", in this case, the mishap(s) that took place before, during or after the customers' stay. However, as Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2014) argue, it is the reaction to the offending situation that actually triggers conflict. In this study, the offending situation(s) triggering conflict were examined through the sources of complaint identified in the reviews, including building and facilities, cleanliness, food and drinks, furniture, money/price, overall quality, staff/service, and others.
- • Middles: the middle stage encompasses the responses to the opposition initiated by face-threat initiators, initial negative reviews in this case. At this stage, Facebook enables a potentially infinite number of responses from different participants. These responses can take different forms depending on the strategies deployed by the participants.

Dobs and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2013) build on Bousfield's (2007) framework and concur that the analytical process entails a series of decisions: first, whether to respond or not; if a participant responds, they can accept or deny opposition; if they deny it, they can either employ counter-strategies or compromise; and if they decide to use counter-strategies, these strategies can be either offensive or defensive. These possible choices apply to all participant types, as roles in conflict are fluid; face-threat recipients may become initiators and vice versa as the conflict unfolds (Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014). Regarding witnesses, the array of strategies they can use is similar, with some adaptations:

1. They can react to the other participants' comments (see example 5)[1].

[1] Example 5 was performed by a former reviewer that turns into a witness as conflict unfolds.

2. They can propose a compromise, although they cannot usually implement it on behalf of face-threat initiators and recipients.

3. They can corroborate opposition and align with one of the parties.

Although this model allows for a thorough analysis of conflict strategies across stages, three methodological challenges were addressed. The first one concerns the fluidity of roles, which was carefully considered when coding the data from middles. The second one is the offensive-defensive distinction, since, as argued by Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2014), both strategies can co-occur within the same turn or even within the same utterance (see example 6). To solve this challenge, utterances displaying multiple strategy types were coded under all relevant categories. Moreover, the possibility of side sequences (parallel exchanges emerging during conflict) was recognised and coded accordingly.

• Ends: according to Bousfield (2007), the final stage corresponds to the resolution of conflict, although, as Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2014) point out, conflict is not always discursively resolved. The strategies put forward by Bousfield (2007) and Dobs and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich's (2013) to end conflict are: submission to opponent, dominant third-party intervention, accept compromise, stand-off, and withdrawal.

Once the data were coded according to stage and strategy type, the quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. It is also important to mention that, following Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2010), a genre approach was adopted, considering both impoliteness1 and impoliteness2 notions.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Beginnings

This section starts with a general overview of the quantitative results pertaining to the first stage in the unfolding of conflict, that is, beginnings. Table 1 presents the targets of complaint in the reviews written in English and Spanish, including the number of tokens and their

corresponding ratios to establish the comparison between the two lingua-cultural backgrounds under analysis.

Table 1. Targets of complaint in beginnings

Targets of complaint	**British reviews**		**Spanish reviews**	
	Tokens	Ratio	Tokens	Ratio
Building and facilities	17	17.2%	6	8.8%
Cleanliness	22	22.2%	6	8.8.%
Food and drinks	6	6.1%	5	7.4%
Furniture	9	9.1%	2	2.9%
Money/Price	16	16.1%	6	8.8
Overall quality	6	6.1%	5	7.4%
Staff/Service	18	18.2%	36	53%
Others	5	5%	2	2.9%
Total	99	100%	68	100%

4.2. MIDDLES

This section presents the quantitative results concerned with the second stage of conflict, that is, middles. For the sake of clarity, three tables are provided, one for each of the participant groups under scrutiny: reviewers, hoteliers, and other customers, as polylogal conflict includes strategies performed by all three. Firstly, Table 2 shows the number of strategies employed by the reviewers in both datasets, along with their respective ratios.

TABLE 2. *Reviewers' strategies in middles*

Strategies	British reviews		Spanish reviews	
	Tokens	Ratio	Tokens	Ratio
React	5	17.9%	0	-
Defensive stance	5	17.9%	2	8%
Offensive stance	16	57%	23	92%
Propose a compromise	1	3.6%	0	-
Corroborate opposition	1	3.6%	0	-
Total	28	100	25	100

Having presented the quantitative results concerning the reviewers, Table 3 shows the number of strategies performed by the hoteliers in both datasets during the second stage of conflict, which differ from those used by the reviewers in Table 2.

TABLE 3. *Hoteliers' strategies in middles*

Strategies	**British reviews**		**Spanish reviews**	
	Tokens	Ratio	Tokens	Ratio
Accept opposition	7	18.9%	4	8%
Propose a compromise	10	27%	7	14%
Defensive stance	5	13.5%	26	52%
Offensive stance	0	-	1	2%
Silence/Private resolution	15	40.6%	12	24%
Total	37	100%	50	100%

Finally, the quantitative results concerning other customers in the middle stage of conflict are presented in Table 4. As Table 4 shows, no defensive strategies are employed by other customers, who in turn employ reactions (as the reviewers in Table 2) and refute opposition, even if rarely, in both datasets.

TABLE 4. *Other customers' strategies in middles*

Strategies	**British reviews**		**Spanish reviews**	
	Tokens	Ratio	Tokens	Ratio
React	8	24.2%	6	21.4%
Defensive stance	0	-	0	-
Offensive stance	8	24.2%	14	50%
Propose a compromise	2	6.1%	0	-
Corroborate opposition	14	42.4%	7	25%
Refute opposition	1	3.1%	1	3.6%
Total	33	100%	28	100%

4.3. ENDS

Lastly, Table 5 below presents the quantitative results pertaining to the final stage of conflict, namely, ends. In a similar pattern, this table shows the number of strategies intended to conclude the conflict in both datasets, together with their corresponding ratios.

TABLE 5. *Strategies in ends*

Strategies	**British reviews**		**Spanish reviews**	
	Tokens	Ratio	Tokens	Ratio
Submission/Assent	1	3.85%	4	16%
Dominant 3rd party intervention	0	-	0	-
Accept compromise	4	15.4%	2	8%
Stand-off	1	3.85%	0	-
Silence/Private resolution	20	76.9%	19	76%
Total	26	100	25	100

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. BEGINNINGS

As previously noted, the initial reviews posted by customers constitute the beginning (or extension into the digital sphere) of conflict in that they can be considered the opposition to the mishap(s) for which the hoteliers are held accountable. The results concerning these initial reviews show a clear tendency among the reviewers in the Spanish dataset to address their complaints and negative comments to the human and social aspect of their experience, that is, service providers. In contrast, the reviewers in the British dataset tend to distribute their complaints more evenly, focusing not only on the staff/service but also on other aspects of their stay such as cleanliness and facilities. Compare examples 1 and 2 below:

El personal demasiado frío, ninguna compensación por las molestias causadas.[2]

The staff is too cold, no compensation offered for the inconvenience.

We paid for breakfast but the breakfast room was horrid with food all over the floor!

Even though example 2 contains exclamation marks and the upgraders 'horrid' and 'all over the floor' to emphasise anger, it is the review in example 1 that has a more aggravating effect, as it is directly addressed to the staff. Although the reviews in the British dataset include a higher number of complaints and negative comments, the predominant focus on the staff/service in the Spanish reviews is potentially more disruptive and can have a stronger impact on the hoteliers' face and the accommodation's reputation. Moreover, according to Fernández-García and Sánchez-Morillas (2021), British speakers use more boosters than Spanish speakers to express disagreement in formal contexts, which is illustrated by example 2.

5.2. MIDDLES

The results obtained from the second stage of conflict, that is, middles, reveal important differences among the three participant groups under study in the way they unfold conflict. Firstly, it was observed that reviewers in both datasets predominantly resort to aggressive strategies in middles, that is, when responding to the hoteliers' replies, as in examples 3 and 4:

> …He mandado mi comentario para aconsejar a incautos, no para que usted me venga con milongas (y con prepotencias, director de hotel de tres estrellas, ¡qué miedo!)

I posted my comment to warn the unwary, not for you to come up with some lame excuses (and with such arrogance, a three-star hotel manager, how scary!).

[2] All the examples provided throughout the present paper appear as originally written, with no modifications or corrections. Additionally, the examples written in Spanish are followed by their corresponding translation into English.

You are despicable refusing to refund when I had cancelled and had no contact from you at all to say the booking was still open and i clearly didn't check in.

Examples 3 and 4 are very aggravating in terms of face concerns, as the hoteliers are portrayed as arrogant and despicable, respectively, which are undesirable attributes for service providers and can even result in financial costs for them (Orthaber and Márquez Reiter, 2011). Although offensive strategies are the preferred option in both datasets, it is again the reviewers in the British dataset who resort to a wider range of strategies, as illustrated by the reaction to another customer's comment in example 5:

> [Another customer's comment] Pubic hair.in the bathroom. [PICTURE]

[Initial reviewer's response] It's shocking x

Regarding the strategies employed by the hoteliers in the second stage, relevant differences emerge across participant groups and linguacultural backgrounds. While the reviewers show a preference for offensive strategies, the hoteliers in the Spanish dataset opt for defensive strategies (example 6), which also involve denying opposition, as discussed in section 3. On the other hand, the most common strategy in the British dataset is silence or private resolution, likely intended to bring the public conflict to an end and prevent further damage to both the accommodation and the hoteliers' reputation. This may be explained by the fact that Spanish speakers tend to express disagreement more frequently than British speakers, who are generally more inclined to adopt a conciliatory attitude in conflict (Fernández-García and Sánchez-Morillas, 2021).

- Estimado cliente, lamentamos su percepción de cómo han sucedido los hechos.
- Dear guest, we're sorry to hear about your perception of how events unfolded.

In Example 6, the hotelier apologises but immediately emphasises that the incident was only the reviewer's perception, not necessarily what actually occurred. Despite the preference for defensive strategies, the

hoteliers in the Spanish dataset also employ other strategies such as silence or private resolution, proposing a compromise and accepting opposition. Similarly, in the British dataset, proposing a compromise and accepting opposition are also common strategies.

Finally, third parties often intervene in polylogal conflict to align with one of the parties involved. In the context of Facebook reviews, these third parties, namely, other customers, both prior and prospective, frequently participate in the thread to express alignment with one of the other sides involved (Márquez Reiter et. al., 2015; Palomino Manjón, 2018; Olshtain and Treger, 2023). They typically align with the reviewers, as they are also customers and might empathise with their perspective. In this regard, while other customers in the British dataset predominantly corroborate opposition to support the reviewer, those in the Spanish dataset opt for offensive strategies to show anger towards the hoteliers. Compare examples 7 and 8, which are responses to initial reviews:

Dan largas y no dan la cara, ladrones.

- They make excuses and won't take responsibility, thieves.
- We must have stayed in the same room.
- Squeaky bed, chipped enamel bath, and dirty drinking glasses with wine rings.

The insult in example 7 is very aggravating, as the customer portrays the service providers as 'thieves' and untrustworthy people, which can seriously damage the accommodation's reputation. It seems that the reviewer in example 7 builds on the initial review to vent. In contrast, although the customer in example 8 makes some negative comments, they are not directed towards the hotelier but rather serve to corroborate opposition and align with the reviewer while also venting. Despite the more offensive orientation adopted by the customers in the Spanish dataset, offensive strategies and corroborating opposition, together with reactions, are common strategies among the customers in both datasets. Lastly, it is also worth noting that a few instances of other customers aligning with the hoteliers were also identified, although they were rare.

5.3. ENDS

Concerning the final stage of conflict, the patterns identified in both datasets for bringing the conflict to an end are similar. While the hoteliers under study show a preference for withdrawal or private resolution as a means of closing the public conflict, the reviewers more often opt for accepting compromise (example 9) and, interestingly, for submission or assent (example 10).

OK, thank you for helping reassure me.

thanks for the response. Just to clarify my review I was there for the Islington boxing club charity night and believe the catering was provided by them.

The reviewer in example 9 accepts the compromise offered by the hoteliers and expresses gratitude, whereas the reviewer in example 10 downplays the initial review and mitigates the blame directed towards the hotelier. However, as shown in Table 5, the most common resolution in Facebook polylogal reviews are withdrawals or private resolutions on the side of the hoteliers. Finally, no third-party interventions to close conflict were found in the comments under scrutiny.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The present paper has examined the conflict management strategies deployed by reviewers, hoteliers and other customers in their responses to dissatisfied customers' Facebook reviews written in British English and Peninsular Spanish. More specifically, it aimed to address the following research questions: (1) What strategies do Facebook reviewers, hoteliers and other customers perform to manage conflict across its three stages: beginnings, middles and ends? And (2) To what extent do lingua-cultural differences influence the unfolding of conflict in online travel reviews posted on Facebook?

Regarding the first question, the results suggest that the strategies employed by the participants are associated with, and constrained by, their interactional role within this type of service encounter. While reviewers show a preference for offensive strategies, hoteliers opt for defensive

strategies. This asymmetry may be explained by differences in motivation and communicative position. On the one hand, the reviewers who deliberately seek out Facebook as an alternative review platform are more likely to be strongly motivated to express dissatisfaction. On the other hand, hoteliers are usually employees that must meet the communicative requirements established by their company and maintain a professional stance, as Orthaber and Márquez Reiter (2011) point out. Concerning other customers, they usually adopt an offensive orientation and align with the reviewers, maybe because they share a similar perspective as customers. These results are in line with prior research (Márquez-Reiter et al., 2015; Palomino-Manjón, 2018; Olshtain and Treger, 2023).

When it comes to conflict resolution, reviewers and hoteliers show different preferences as well. While reviewers tend to accept compromise or express submission, hoteliers opt for silence or private resolutions, arguably to bring public conflict to an end and prevent further damage to their own reputation or the accommodation's.

With respect to the second question, even though the reviewers in both datasets show a preference for offensive strategies, those in the Spanish dataset show a more contentious orientation by performing a higher number of offensive strategies. Furthermore, the reviewers in the Spanish dataset tend to focus their complaints on the human or social part of their experience, that is, on service providers. In contrast, the reviewers in the British dataset employ more defensive strategies than their counterparts in the Spanish dataset and tend to focus on cleanliness and other aspects of the experience. These tendencies extend to hoteliers and other customers. While the hoteliers in the Spanish dataset are more prone to denying opposition, other customers in this dataset employ more offensive strategies to align with the reviewers. Conversely, the participants in the British dataset resort to more mitigated or less aggressive strategies such as silence or private resolution among hoteliers or corroborating opposition among other customers. Finally, it is worth mentioning that other customers' interventions are more common within the British dataset. Furthermore, they tend to align with the reviewers more often than their counterparts in the Spanish dataset.

Although this study contributes to filling a gap in the existing literature, by examining conflictual interactions in service encounters, where participant roles are more fixed, it is not without limitations. In addition to the limited number of reviews with negative valence posted on Facebook (see section 3.1.), the veracity of the information provided by the participants constitutes a further challenge, as Facebook neither verifies the authenticity of the reviews nor provides a mechanism to identify fake content. Hence, Facebook reviews is a terrain where researchers should tread carefully.

Future research could aim to identify and develop mechanisms for detecting fake or unreliable content on Facebook, including travel reviews. Additionally, larger corpora enabling the addition of other sociological variables such as gender or age could be compiled in order to explore how these factors shape conflict. Finally, comparative analyses across different review platforms could further illuminate platform-specific affordances and how these influence the dynamics of online polylogal conflict. These potential avenues for prospective research might provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of how online polylogal conflict unfolds.

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ENTRE *GENES* Y *JEANS*: ANÁLISIS MULTIMODAL Y CRÍTICO DEL ANUNCIO DE AMERICAN EAGLE CON SYDNEY SWEENEY

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

El pasado julio, la marca American Eagle, especializada en la venta de prendas vaqueras y ropa casual juvenil, presentó su nueva campaña publicitaria para la temporada de otoño, protagonizada por la actriz Sydney Sweeney. La elección de esta actriz, conocida por su papel en series de gran éxito y por su fuerte presencia mediática, buscada reforzar la imagen juvenil y atractiva de la marca. No obstante, esta campaña generó mucha polémica en redes sociales a raíz de su eslogan "*Sydney Sweeney has great jeans*". Aunque el juego de palabras pretendía destacar la calidad de los vaqueros, muchos usuarios interpretaron el lema como una reinterpretación de la expresión "*to have great genes*", lo que derivó en acusaciones de insensibilidad de la marca y en debates sobre una posible connotación eugenésica. Este anuncio evidenció los riesgos de la ambigüedad lingüística en la publicidad y la importancia de considerar los diferentes niveles de interpretación que pueden surgir en la comunicación de marca.

Además, dada la relevancia del discurso publicitario en la configuración de imaginarios sociales y en la manera en que este contribuye a modificar y construir nuestra visión del mundo, resulta pertinente analizar cómo el anuncio de American Eagle refuerza, de forma intencionada o no, ciertos valores y estereotipos tradicionales. En particular, la campaña reproduce la hegemonía del ideal de belleza femenina, centrado en el

prototipo de mujer blanca, rubia y de ojos azules, un modelo que históricamente ha dominado en la representación mediática occidental.

Por tanto, esta investigación propone una lectura integral del anuncio a partir del análisis sistémico-funcional del texto de la campaña, complementado con un análisis multimodal que permita examinar la interacción entre los distintos planos semióticos que lo componen. El objetivo es explorar cómo los elementos verbales y visuales se articulan para construir significado, y de qué manera dicha articulación contribuye a la representación de ciertos valores, ideologías y estereotipos presentes en la campaña.

2. OBJETIVOS

Tal y como hemos apuntado, el objetivo principal de este capítulo es examinar de manera detallada cómo la campaña de American Eagle distribuye el trabajo semiótico entre lengua e imagen para transmitir el mensaje publicitario deseado. En primer lugar, el estudio aborda el texto desde los parámetros del metadiscurso y los principios de la Lingüística Sistémico Funcional, con el fin de observar cómo las elecciones lingüísticas contribuyen a posicionar al espectador y organizar la estructura informativa del anuncio. De manera más específica, pretende analizar la transitividad del texto del anuncio, con el fin de desvelar la intencionalidad subyacente en los procesos expresados por el anuncio.

Seguidamente, este trabajo busca analizar la arquitectura multimodal del anuncio, prestando especial atención a la manera en que los recursos visuales interactúan con el componente verbal del eslogan y otros textos presentes en el anuncio. Este análisis permitirá comprender cómo texto e imagen se relacionan para generar significados específicos y orientar la interpretación del público.

Para concluir, el análisis se enmarca en su práctica discursiva y social, aplicando el modelo tridimensional de Fairclough. Este enfoque posibilita situar el texto publicitario dentro de las dinámicas de producción y consumo del discurso, así como identificar las relaciones ideológicas y de poder que subyacen a su creación y circulación.

La combinación de estas teorías y métodos de investigación permiten abordar el análisis del anuncio de American Eagle de manera integral, proporcionando una visión holística del anuncio, el contexto sociopolítico en el que se origina, y sus posibles interpretaciones en función de la audiencia.

3.MARCO TEÓRICO

3.1. Análisis Crítico del Discurso

El Análisis Crítico del Discurso centra su atención en las relaciones existentes entre el discurso y las estructuras sociales que lo moldean y son, a su vez, reproducidas por él (Wodak, 2022). Tal y como señala Hart (2014), el propósito fundamental del Análisis Crítico del Discurso es desvelar las propiedades ideológicas subyacentes en los textos y prácticas comunicativas, aquellas que con frecuencia se encuentran ocultas bajo una apariencia de neutralidad o transparencia discursiva.

Desde esta perspectiva, el discurso se entiende como una práctica social, lo que implica que el lenguaje no solo refleja la realidad, sino que contribuye activamente a configurarla. Fairclough (1995, 2003) propone un modelo tridimensional que articula tres niveles de análisis interrelacionados:

- El análisis textual, que se ocupa de los rasgos lingüísticos y visuales del discurso (léxico, gramática, modalidad, metáforas, imágenes, etc.);
- La práctica discursiva, que examina los procesos de producción, distribución y consumo de los textos, así como su interdiscursividad;
- La práctica social, donde se exploran las ideologías, relaciones de poder y formas de hegemonía que enmarcan y condicionan el discurso.

El Análisis Crítico del Discurso concibe el discurso como práctica social, con un modelo tridimensional: análisis del texto (rasgos lingüísticos y visuales), de la práctica discursiva (producción, distribución,

consumo; interdiscursividad) y de la práctica social (ideología, poder, hegemonía) (Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Dada la relevancia del discurso publicitario en la construcción y la perpetuación de valores y códigos culturales, el Análisis Crítico del Discurso se erige como un marco de investigación adecuado para el análisis de este trabajo.

3.2. Lingüística Sistémico Funcional

La Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional postula el lenguaje como sistema semiótico social organizado en tres metafunciones simultáneas: ideacional, interpersonal y textual. Estas metafunciones permiten representar la experiencia, establecer relaciones entre los participantes y organizar mensajes (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Dentro de este marco, el sistema de transitividad constituye una herramienta central para analizar cómo el lenguaje representa las experiencias (Cárcamo Morales, 2018). A través de la identificación de distintos tipos de procesos (como materiales, mentales, relacionales, verbales, conductuales y existenciales), es posible no solo describir la acción y los participantes en un texto, sino también inferir sus propósitos sociales y discursivos, es decir, cómo los hablantes o autores buscan influir, representar o negociar significados en contextos concretos. Este enfoque permite, por ejemplo, revelar las ideologías subyacentes, los roles de poder y las construcciones de identidad presentes en los textos, mostrando cómo la estructura lingüística se entrelaza con la función social del lenguaje.

3.3. Gramática visual

La gramática visual de Kress y van Leeuwen (1996) traslada las metafunciones de la Lingüística Sistémico Funcional al plano icónico. Así, la metafunción ideacional se refleja en cómo las imágenes representan personas, objetos y procesos, estructurando información sobre el mundo. La metafunción interpersonal se manifiesta en la relación que, en este caso, el anunciante establece con el espectador. Por otra parte, la metafunción textual se evidencia en la manera en que los elementos visuales se organizan para crear un mensaje coherente y comprensible. Este modelo de

investigación se ha aplicado de manera amplia al género de la publicidad (Friedman & Ron, 2017; Guo & Feng, 2017), dada la precisión con la que permite analizar contenido multimodal y extraer conclusiones sobre la interacción entre texto e imagen desde un punto de vista funcional.

4. METODOLOGÍA

En lo que a la metodología respecta, el análisis se ha desarrollado en varias fases complementarias y articuladas de manera secuencial, con el propósito de abordar el objeto de estudio desde una perspectiva integral.

En primer lugar, se procedió a la segmentación y codificación del discurso publicitario, con el objetivo de identificar, clasificar y describir los distintos elementos metadiscursivos presentes en el texto del anuncio, aplicando los principios de la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional. En el caso de este estudio, nos centramos en el concepto de transitividad, con el objetivo de analizar los procesos materiales y relacionales existentes en el anuncio y cómo contribuyen a la construcción de significado en el anuncio, así como a las posibles interpretaciones de mensajes de corte conservador.

En segundo lugar, se llevó a cabo un análisis visual centrado en los recursos compositivos de la imagen. Esta fase tuvo como finalidad explorar la interrelación entre los modos verbal y visual, considerando cómo sus elementos se complementan en la construcción del significado global. En este punto, se prestó especial atención a cuestiones como la mirada, la distancia social y la actitud, siguiendo las propuestas teóricas de Kress y van Leeuwen (1996).

Finalmente, se aplicó el modelo tridimensional de Fairclough (1995), que aborda el discurso desde tres niveles: el texto, la práctica discursiva y la práctica social. A través de este marco, el anuncio se analiza no solo como un producto lingüístico y visual, sino también como una práctica comunicativa situada, inscrita en un contexto sociocultural específico y vinculada a estructuras ideológicas más amplias.

Esta metodología integra el análisis textual, la dimensión semiótica y el contexto social, ofreciendo una aproximación integran al estudio del discurso publicitario, en la que los distintos niveles de análisis se

retroalimentan para construir una imagen específica y cómo puede ser susceptible de interpretaciones completamente contrarias.

5. RESULTADOS

5.2. Análisis de la transitividad del texto del anuncio

Basándonos en el concepto de transitividad de la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional, identificamos un proceso material en el lema "*Genes are passed down from parents to offspring",* representando una acción concreta de transferencia o herencia. La estructura pasiva del enunciado contribuye a la construcción de un tono objetivo e impersonal, característico del discurso científico, mientras que la presencia del gerundio en la frase "*often determining traits like hair color, personality, and even eye color*" refuerza el tono pseudocientífico, al sugerir una continuidad causal entre el proceso biológico y sus resultados observables.

Del mismo modo, en el cierre del anuncio se reconocen procesos relacionales en los lemas "*My jeans are blue*" y "*Sydney Sweeney has great jeans*". En ambos casos, la relación entre portador y atributo opera para construir significados de identidad y propiedad, respectivamente.

5.3. Análisis de la imagen siguiendo el modelo tridimensional de Fairclough

5.3.1. Análisis del texto

Tal y como se señaló en el análisis sistémico-funcional del anuncio protagonizado por Sydney Sweeney, destaca el uso de la voz pasiva en el enunciado "*Genes are passed down from parents to offspring*", empleada para expresar un proceso material involuntario mediante el cual los genes se transmiten de una generación a otra. Este recurso gramatical cumple una función ideacional relevante, ya que naturaliza la acción de heredar y sugiere que la transmisión genética es un proceso inevitable y universal, desvinculado de agentes o contextos específicos. De este modo, se refuerza discursivamente la noción de un legado biológico esencialista, que se extiende metafóricamente hacia la idea de continuidad cultural o simbólica.

Asimismo, el anuncio explota la homofonía entre genes y jeans como eje retórico central, estableciendo un juego lingüístico de doble sentido que combina la terminología científica con el léxico del consumo y la moda. Este pun se convierte en una estrategia de anclaje semántico que vincula el producto con un imaginario de herencia, autenticidad y pertenencia, sin adoptar explícitamente un discurso ideológico conservador o eugenésico. Sin embargo, la ambigüedad del mensaje permite lecturas múltiples: puede ser interpretado tanto como un recurso humorístico y creativo, como también como una alusión simbólica a la superioridad genética y estética. Esta polisemia constituye, precisamente, uno de los mecanismos de eficacia del discurso publicitario: ofrecer un espacio interpretativo flexible, en el que el espectador puede proyectar sus propios valores culturales e identitarios.

Por otra parte, el registro pseudocientífico del texto otorga al anuncio una apariencia de objetividad que enmascara su propósito comercial. Así, el discurso científico es recontextualizado como un recurso retórico, funcionando como fuente de autoridad simbólica que legitima la marca a través del lenguaje del conocimiento.

5.3.2. Práctica discursiva

En cuanto a la práctica discursiva, el anuncio se inscribe claramente dentro del género publicitario, caracterizado por su función persuasiva, apelativa y multimodal. Este tipo de discurso busca influir en las actitudes, emociones y comportamientos del público, promoviendo no solo el consumo del producto, sino también la adhesión simbólica a una identidad de marca.

El anuncio de Sydney Sweeney articula una interacción entre registros discursivos heterogéneos: el científico, el humorístico y el aspiracional. Esta combinación genera una intertextualidad estratégica, en la que el discurso de la ciencia es desplazado hacia un contexto comercial. La voz en off adopta el tono de un narrador educativo, lo que produce un efecto de credibilidad y autoridad, mientras que la imagen de la actriz introduce una dimensión afectiva y aspiracional. Este entrelazamiento de modos semióticos (verbal, visual y sonoro) refuerza la eficacia del

mensaje al activar múltiples niveles de persuasión: la racionalidad del conocimiento científico y la emocionalidad del deseo publicitario.

De este modo, la práctica discursiva del anuncio trasciende la mera promoción de un producto. La herencia genética se transforma, así, en una metáfora del estatus, la exclusividad y la autenticidad, configurando una retórica que vincula la biología con el valor social. Al mismo tiempo, el uso de una celebridad mediática como Sydney Sweeney actúa como dispositivo de legitimación, dado que su figura encarna un modelo de éxito, belleza y pertenencia cultural que amplifica el alcance del mensaje.

5.3.3. Práctica sociocultural

Para comprender el impacto simbólico del anuncio y las reacciones críticas que ha suscitado, es imprescindible situarlo dentro del contexto sociocultural estadounidense contemporáneo. La campaña fue difundida en un momento marcado por una fuerte polarización política y cultural, en el que se observa un resurgimiento de valores conservadores en amplios sectores de la sociedad. En este escenario, discursos relacionados con la tradición, la familia, la identidad nacional y la autenticidad americana han cobrado nueva relevancia, especialmente como respuesta al clima de cambio social y diversidad cultural.

La campaña de Sydney Sweeney se inscribe dentro de esta coyuntura y dialoga simbólicamente con el imaginario de lo "verdaderamente americano". Su estética (basada en colores cálidos, ambientación suburbana y una figura femenina que remite a la pureza y la tradición) evoca una versión idealizada del sueño americano, reinterpretada a través de un lenguaje publicitario contemporáneo. La elección de Sweeney, una actriz joven, blanca y de rasgos prototípicos del canon estadounidense, no es inocente: su imagen concilia lo tradicional con lo moderno, representando un postfeminismo mediático que combina independencia con conformidad estética.

En este sentido, el anuncio puede leerse como un producto cultural híbrido, que rearticula valores tradicionales dentro de un marco de consumo globalizado. La apelación a la genética y a la herencia no solo remite al discurso científico, sino también a nociones de pureza, linaje y pertenencia cultural, que históricamente han estado cargadas de

connotaciones ideológicas. Al situarse en este contexto, el anuncio no solo vende un producto, sino que también participa en la reproducción simbólica de jerarquías culturales y estéticas, legitimadas bajo la apariencia del humor y la ciencia.

5.4. ANÁLISIS DEL ANUNCIO DESDE LA GRAMÁTICA VISUAL

Siguiendo la gramática visual propuesta por Kress y Van Leeuwen (2006), este análisis se centra en el plano interactivo, es decir, en los mecanismos visuales que regulan la relación entre los participantes representados en la imagen y los espectadores que la observan. Desde esta perspectiva, se examinan tres dimensiones fundamentales: la mirada, la distancia social y la actitud, entendidas como estrategias semióticas que configuran la posición del espectador frente al discurso visual del anuncio.

En primer lugar, en relación con la mirada, el anuncio establece un vínculo inicial a través del canal auditivo, con la voz en off de Sydney Sweeney que introduce la narración antes de que aparezca su imagen en pantalla. Este recurso crea un primer nivel de conexión comunicativa, en el que la voz, cálida y modulada, produce un efecto de intimidad y confianza, preparando al espectador para el posterior encuentro visual. En los segundos finales del anuncio, este vínculo se intensifica mediante un primer plano de la actriz mirando directamente a cámara, Esta mirada frontal interpela directamente al espectador, rompiendo la barrera entre el mundo representado y el mundo real, y genera un efecto de involucramiento emocional, transformando al observador en un interlocutor activo dentro del discurso publicitario.

En segundo lugar, la distancia social se construye visualmente a través de la elección de planos cortos tanto del rostro de la actriz como del producto (los *jeans*). Estos encuadres sitúan al espectador en un espacio de proximidad íntima, propio de la comunicación interpersonal, que favorece la identificación con la figura representada. No obstante, el anuncio alterna momentos de mirada directa y ausencia de contacto ocular: cuando Sweeney no mira a cámara, el objeto se convierte en el foco de contemplación, configurando una "imagen de oferta" en la que el producto es ofrecido como información visual a evaluar. En cambio, cuando la actriz establece contacto visual, el discurso se desplaza hacia

una “imagen de demanda”, en la que el espectador es invitado a participar emocionalmente en la escena. Esta oscilación entre oferta y demanda crea un ritmo visual persuasivo, equilibrando la distancia contemplativa con la conexión afectiva.

Por último, en lo que respecta a la actitud, se observa un alto grado de implicación entre la actriz y la audiencia. La cámara adopta predominantemente un ángulo horizontal, lo que sugiere simetría y cercanía entre el sujeto representado y el espectador, evitando jerarquías visuales. Este encuadre comunica igualdad y accesibilidad, invitando a la audiencia a identificarse con la figura de Sweeney no como una celebridad inalcanzable, sino como un modelo de naturalidad y confianza. Su postura corporal refuerza la sensación de espontaneidad y autenticidad, cualidades asociadas al discurso de “belleza natural” que el anuncio busca proyectar.

En conjunto, estos tres parámetros interactivos construyen una escena comunicativa íntima y emocionalmente efectiva, donde la voz, la mirada y la proximidad visual convergen para intensificar el vínculo entre la celebridad y el espectador. A través de esta gramática visual, el anuncio traduce el mensaje verbal (centrado en la herencia genética y la autenticidad) en un discurso visual de cercanía y confianza, consolidando así la estrategia persuasiva de la campaña.

6. DISCUSIÓN

El análisis textual del anuncio de American Eagle protagonizado por Sydney Sweeney revela la intención de la marca de construir una narrativa en torno al producto como parte de un legado simbólico, estableciendo una analogía entre la herencia cultural y la herencia biológica. Esta estrategia discursiva se manifiesta a través del uso de un lenguaje pseudocientífico, que otorga al mensaje una apariencia de objetividad y rigor (Balatska, 2018) y que sugiere que los valores e ideales estadounidenses no solo se transmiten por vía social o cultural, sino que también se inscriben en el ámbito de lo biológico. En este sentido, la campaña desplaza el terreno del consumo hacia un espacio simbólico donde la compra del producto implica, implícitamente, la adhesión a un modelo identitario heredado, presentado como natural y deseable.

La inserción de un enunciado de apariencia científica sobre la herencia genética dentro de un contexto publicitario que privilegia rasgos fenotípicos asociados a imaginarios eurocéntricos de belleza genera un vínculo problemático entre el discurso biológico y el discurso del consumo. En este sentido, la campaña no solo vende un producto, sino que reproduce un modelo hegemónico de pertenencia y prestigio basado en la continuidad genética y estética de un ideal nacional.

Asimismo, el lema "*Sydney Sweeney has great jeans*" refuerza esta operación discursiva al establecer un alto grado de identificación entre la actriz y el mensaje publicitario. La elección de esta actriz por parte de la marca no es fortuita, sino que actúa como representación visual del mito del linaje y la pureza, asociando el producto con una forma de herencia cultural y biológica. En consecuencia, la campaña funciona no solo como un anuncio de moda, sino también como un dispositivo ideológico que legitima la persistencia de ciertos valores tradicionales en el imaginario mediático contemporáneo.

7. CONCLUSIONES

El estudio concluye que el anuncio de American Eagle protagonizado por Sydney Sweeney permite una lectura simbólicamente compleja, en la que se entrelazan valores tradicionales y conservadores con los códigos contemporáneos de la publicidad. Se observa una posible interpretación en la que el producto se asocia con nociones de herencia, pureza y continuidad genética.

Asimismo, el análisis sugiere que la selección de la figura de Sydney Sweeney no es fortuita, sino que responde a una estrategia discursiva cuidadosamente planificada. Su imagen amplifica el significado global del anuncio al encarnar un ideal de belleza normativo, asociado al estándar estético estadounidense. Esta elección opera de manera sutil pero efectiva, apelando a la idea de superioridad genética y reforzando un imaginario de distinción simbólica que el anuncio presenta bajo una apariencia lúdica.

Por otra parte, el anuncio se inserta en el contexto sociopolítico contemporáneo de Estados Unidos, caracterizado por una revalorización de

discursos de corte más conservador y por el retorno de narrativas que reivindican la tradición, la familia y la identidad biológica.

Atendiendo a estas consideraciones, este estudio ha cumplido el objetivo general de analizar cómo se distribuye el trabajo semiótico entre lenguaje e imagen en el anuncio. Se ha constatado que la voz en off pseudocientífica y el eslogan funcionan como anclajes discursivos destinados a orientar la interpretación hacia el producto, revestido de una aparente legitimidad científica. A su vez, la puesta en escena centrada en la celebridad dirige la atención del espectador hacia la corporalidad de la protagonista, reforzando así la relación entre herencia biológica, atractivo físico y valor simbólico del producto.

En relación con el primer objetivo específico, el análisis basado en la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional permitió describir los procesos materiales y relacionales presentes en el anuncio, los cuales construyen una narrativa en la que el legado genético y la transmisión biológica se erigen como metáforas centrales.

Respecto al segundo objetivo, se identificaron los elementos visuales más significativos que complementan el mensaje textual y amplían su carga semiótica. En esta línea, se reconocieron explícitamente la voz en off docente y despersonalizada: al enumerar rasgos fenotípicos y sincronizarse con planos visuales que los destacan, genera una lectura biologicista que multiplica el sentido del juego de palabras (*genes/jeans*) y habilita interpretaciones eugenésicas que no necesariamente fueron previstas por los productores del anuncio.

En síntesis, los hallazgos permiten concluir que la combinación estratégica del texto y la imagen genera un espacio interpretativo en el que el anuncio puede asociarse con valores conservadores y de identidad tradicional, a la vez que se reviste de un discurso contemporáneo de autonomía femenina y empoderamiento estético. La figura de Sydney Sweeney opera como mediadora de estas tensiones, encarnando simultáneamente el ideal de belleza hegemónico y la aspiración a una individualidad empoderada. Finalmente, se destaca que el contexto cultural y político condiciona las lecturas posibles del anuncio, posibilitando interpretaciones múltiples y, en ocasiones, contradictorias.

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IMPOLITENESS IN FEMALE POLITICAL DISCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL DEBATES IN THE USA AND RUSSIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

Televised political debates have become one of the most prominent formats for political content (Luginbühl, 2007). When participating in a face-to-face debate, politicians do not seek to cooperate or reach a consensus, as they do in other contexts, but rather focus on making an impression on the audience and discrediting their opponent, thereby neutralizing their persuasive potential. When confronting their adversaries, politicians violate politeness maxims, which in many cases are replaced by impoliteness, and resort to elements of verbal aggression. As a result, debates are rife with aggressive and impolite statements that include contempt (Culpeper, 1996), conversational violence tactics (Luginbühl, 2007), or face-threatening acts; even face-enhancing acts can become mechanisms of impoliteness and attack (Blas Arroyo, 2011; del Saz-Rubio, 2023; Fernández García, 2022).

In this study, we follow the definition of impoliteness as "a negative attitude towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts" (Culpeper, 2011, p. 23). In other words, it represents intentional or perceived face-threatening behaviors that lead to the loss of the interlocutor's social face or threaten it.

Withing political discourse, particularly in electoral debates, impoliteness performs several functions. Although it is mainly used to discredit opponents and attack their face (Blas Arroyo, 2001, 2011; Fernández García, 2015a, 2018; Luginhühl, 2007; Schubert, 2022),

different impoliteness strategies can help the speaker protect his/her own face (Schubert, 2022). Impoliteness is also a powerful tool for persuading the public (Fernández García, 2022; Fuentes Rodríguez, 2013; Harris, 2001; Wodak et al., 2021). Closely related to this function, it also plays a central role in entertaining the audience in televised debates (Culpeper, 2011; Schubert, 2022; Wodak et al., 2021).

It should be noted that the communicative style characteristic of political confrontation and the use of strategic rudeness are generally associated with masculine communicative traits (Lovenduski, 2012; Vesty, 2023). Women's speech, on the other hand, has traditionally been linked to a greater presence of indirectness, mitigation, and politeness strategies, which has led to it being considered more polite than men's speech (Holmes, 1995; Lakoff, 1973; Tannen, 1994). However, as some recent studies show (Brenes Peña, 2012; Fuentes Rodríguez, 2013; González Sanz, 2018), it is the type of discourse, interlocutors' role, and context that determine communication style, rather than the sex of the interlocutors. In this sense, by becoming active players in politics, women have been able to adapt their discourse to the context of constant confrontation. As a result, the differences in the use of impoliteness and other persuasion strategies by male and female politicians have diminished (Brenes Peña, 2012; Cameron & Shaw, 2016; Fuentes Rodríguez, 2013).

In addition to the context and the role of the interlocutors, another aspect that must be taken into account when analyzing (im)politeness is the sociocultural context. Since the emergence of politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), multiple studies have pointed out that sociocultural conventions play an important role in the use of (im)politeness and in the selection of specific strategies to achieve similar communicative goals (del Saz-Rubio, 2023; Kádár & Márquez-Reiter, 2015; Vladimirou & Fernández-Amaya, 2025, among others). Considering different sociopragmatic elements, Briz Gómez (2007) suggests differentiating between distancing cultures and rapprochement cultures. Thus, in rapprochement cultures, there are less mitigation, more enhancing strategies, more collaborative

interventions, more simultaneous speech, and more physical closeness when speaking.

As far as political discourse is concerned, there is variation not only in the selection of the concrete impoliteness strategies but also in the linguistic mechanisms employed to enact these strategies. Specifically, Shevchenko et al. (2021) observe that American politicians tend to use lexicalized markers with inherent negative meaning, whereas in Slavic contexts syntactic structures, such as rhetorical questions, are more prevalent. That said, irrespective of the sociocultural context, impoliteness constitutes an unmarked feature in political confrontations; that is, it does not belong to any specific culture or society, but functions as a discursive strategy common among contemporary political leaders (Peña-Jiménez & Shorokhova, 2025; Shevchenko et al., 2021).

2. OBJECTIVES

Based on these premises, the aim of this paper is to analyze and compare how female politicians from different communicative cultures use impoliteness strategies during electoral debates. To this end, we focus on the discourses of Kamala Harris (Democratic Party, USA) and Ksenia Sobchak (Civic Initiative, Russia). American culture, where privacy and individuality carry greater weight (Barros García & Terkourafi, 2014), is described as a distancing culture, so indirect speech acts and mitigation are more common, and speakers tend to express respectful distance (Fernández García, 2024). In Russian culture, on the other hand, there is a tendency toward closeness and a more direct communicative style, which allows speakers to reduce the interlocutor's freedom of action (Larina et al., 2017; Shorokhova, 2024).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data

The corpus comprises recordings and transcripts of televised election debates in the USA and Russia. The analysis of impoliteness in

an American female politician is bases on the debate between Kamala Harris (Democratic Party) and Donald Trump (Republican Party) that took place on September 10, 2024, and was broadcast by ABC News. It lasted approximately 105 minutes, comprising a total of about 17,000 words, including the moderators' interventions. 5,929 were spoken by K. Harris.

As for the selection of the Russian corpus, given that there were no female candidates in the last Russian presidential election (2024), I chose to study the 2018 election debates, in which Ksenia Sobchak (Civic Initiative) participated. Unlike the U.S. debate, the Russian debates involved seven candidates. It is essential to emphasize that the current president, Vladimir Putin, who was also in office at the time, abstained from participating. Both facts were reflected in the dynamics of the debates. Therefore, in this study, I analyze the debates held on February 28 and March 1, 6, and 14, 2018, on the Rossiya 1 channel. Its length is approximately 240 minutes or 30,000 words, of which 5,036 correspond to K. Sobchak.

To ensure a more convenient and systematic handling of the corpora, I worked with transcriptions of the debates. For the English corpus, I relied on the transcription available online on the ABC News website, which I revised manually. Regarding the Russian corpus, the free service *Speech2Text.ru* was used. After the automatic transcription, the correspondence between the transcribed text and the audio was verified. It must be stressed that, as a free application, *Speech2Text* presents certain limitations. The most significant one is its inability to recognize and transcribe overlapping speech involving more than two speakers. For this reason, when assessing the reliability of the written text, I ensured that each turn was complete and correctly attributed to the corresponding speaker. I transcribed manually all missing segments.

In both cases, the debates have characteristics that must be highlighted. In Russia, the debates have a rigid format, according to which each candidate has a limited amount of time to greet the audience, present his/her ideas, and conclude his/her discourse. In other words, the format does not provide for interaction between the

candidates, but it also does not prevent them from interrupting to ask questions, express disagreement, or interact in other ways with the speaker. Although the format of the U.S. debate is also regulated, there is more active interaction between the candidates: after each candidate's speech, the moderators allow time for the opponent to express his/her opinion or answer questions.

Another aspect that should be taken into consideration is that K. Harris represented the ruling party, whereas her opponent had previously held the presidency during the preceding term. In the case of the Russian debates, both K. Sobchak and the other candidates belong to the opposition; in other words, none of them has ever occupied the presidential office or any other governmental position. As recent studies show, this fact can influence the selection of impoliteness strategies (Blas Arroyo, 2011; Fernández García, 2018).

3.2. Analysis parameters

The analysis is based on the classification of impoliteness strategies proposed by Fernández García (2015a, 2015b, 2018, 2022). Drawing on recent studies (Blas Arroyo, 2001, 2011; Bousfield, 2008a; Culpeper, 1996), the author distinguishes between functional strategies, through which the speaker can damage the face of the opponent, and linguistic mechanisms, through which these attacks are carried out. There are four super-strategies, which in turn are composed of four strategies, that account for the action taken by the speaker to discredit and damage the opponent's face. These strategies are reproduced below with examples from our corpora:

1. To attach negative facts (projects, values, behaviors, etc.) to the adversary.

    a. To criticize (or show the failure of) his ideas, actions, etc.

> Harris: Donald Trump left us the worst unemployment since the Great Depression.
>
> Собчак: 10 сталинских шагов от грудининской тоже мало чем отличаются.

Sobchak: (The program) Stalin's 10 steps is not much different from Grudinin's.

b. To tell him that he is mistaken, to disagree, to contradict, etc.

[After Trump's statements on abortions, Harris contradicts him and underscores that he is mistaken, asserting that what is being said does not occur.]
Harris: … nowhere in America is a woman carrying a pregnancy to term and asking for abortion. That is not happening. It's insulting to the women of America.

Собчак: Титов совершенно неправильно сказал по поводу нового оборудования и нового вооружения.
Sobchak: Titov was completely wrong about the new equipment and new weapons.

c. To accuse him of ignorance, incompetence or inaction.

Harris: Donald Trump actually has no plan for you.

Собчак: Мне вообще интересно, откуда у господина Сурайкина сталинский опыт, учитывая, что ему 39 лет.
Sobchak: I am curious as to where Mr. Suraykin acquired his Stalinist experience, considering that he is 39 years old.

d. To criticize his discursive behavior.

Harris: … he talks about fictional characters like Hannibal Lecter. He will talk about windmills cause cancer. […] the one thing you will not hear from him talk about is you.

Собчак: Что вы вот устраиваете цирк здесь, Владимир Вольфович?!
Sobchak: Why are you turning this into a circus, Vladimir Volfovich?

2. To attack the credibility of the adversary.

a. To claim that he lacks credibility.

b. To accuse him of lying (being untruthful, etc.).

Harris: Yet again, I said it at the beginning of this debate, you're going to hear a bunch of lies coming from this fella. And this is another one.

Собчак: Вы говорите неправду! Вы врете!
Sobchak: You're not telling the truth! You're lying!

c. To accuse him of hiding the truth or concealing evil intentions.

Harris: … he is more interested in defending himself than looking out for you.

Собчак: Дорогие друзья, вот вы сами видите, что все эти храбрые мужчины борются не с Путиным.
Sobchak: Dear friends, as you can clearly see, these brave men are not fighting Putin.

d. To brand him as contradictory or incoherent, to highlight his contradictions and incoherencies.

Harris: Well, I think this is so rich coming from someone who has been prosecuted for national security crimes, economic crimes, election interference, has found liable for sexual assault…

Собчак: Да вы в администрации президента работаете. Вы вообще опомнитесь уже.
Sobchak: You're in Presidential Administration, for God's sake. Get a grip already!

3. To take distance from the adversary and to show his inferiority.

a. To make the differences that separate them manifest.

Harris: And when you look at his economic plan, it's all about tax breaks for the richest people. I am offering what I describe as an opportunity economy.

Собчак: … они борются со мной, я борюсь с Путиным.
Sobchak: … they are fighting me; I am fighting Putin.

b. To clearly show his isolation.

Harris: Donald Trump was fired by 81 million people.

c. To scorn him, to show indifference towards him.

Harris: I have talked with military leaders, some of whom worked with you. And they say you're a disgrace.

Собчак: … все, что он может помнить о том опыте, – это застывшую манную кашу в школе.

Sobchak: … all he can remember from that experience is the cold semolina porridge at school.

d. To mock him, to ridicule him.

Собчак: В вашем возрасте вредно так волноваться.
Sobchak: At your age, all this stress can't be good for you.

4. To invade the space of the adversary, to pose obstacles for him.

a. To reveal facts that make him feel uncomfortable.

Harris: He ended up selling American chips to China to help them improve and modernize their military, basically sold us out.

Собчак: За все эти бесконечные оскорбления и спектакли Владимир Вольфович очень много лет получает зарплату в миллион рублей.
Sobchak: And for all these endless insults and theatrical outbursts, Vladimir Volfovich has been receiving a million-ruble salary for many years.

b. To show the deficiencies of his arguments clearly.

Собчак: Кто-то на нас напал с того момента?
Sobchak: So, has anyone actually attacked us since then?

c. To urge (or to put pressure on) him to do (or not do) something.

Harris: Answer the question, would you veto…

Собчак: Замолчите, пожалуйста.
Sobchak: Please, stop talking.

d. To hinder him from expressing himself fluently.

Certain strategies appear without examples, since the candidates did not employ them. Moreover, there are no examples for strategy 4.4, for the reason that the main mechanism by which it is carried out is interruption. Depending on the situation, interruption serves to introduce any other impoliteness strategy or any comment, even harmless ones. Combined with an impoliteness strategy, its aim is to disrupt the speaker's reasoning and to hinder the fluent continuation of his/her speech.

The classification proposed by Fernández García (2015a, 2015b, 2018, 2022) considers how different impoliteness strategies affect the interlocutor's face or his/her rights and, therefore, is based on the theory of rapport management (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). From this perspective, strategies can damage the interlocutor's quality face, social identity face, or relational face. Thus, by telling their opponents that they are wrong, the speaker attacks their quality face, as their personal qualities are evaluated negatively. The social identity face is related to belonging to a group, whose recognition is claimed by the hearer, and is damaged if the attack is directed against a positive attribute of the group. The relational face refers to the person's desire to relate to others without impediments, so it is violated if their discursive behavior is criticized.

On the other hand, when interacting with other people, individuals demand certain sociality rights, namely equity rights and association rights (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Equity rights refer to an individual's expectations of being treated fairly and not being subjected to impositions. For instance, a speaker's equity rights are infringed upon when his/her discourse is interrupted, since this constitutes an intrusion into his/her personal space and autonomy. Association rights concern the individual's right to social relationships with others and to be treated in accordance with the type and degree of that relationship. In this regard, mocking or showing indifference towards the interlocutor denies him/her the recognition appropriate to the kind of social relationship he/she seek to sustain. In general terms, when superstrategies 3 and 4 are used, they primarily attack sociality rights, while also damaging the interlocutor's face.

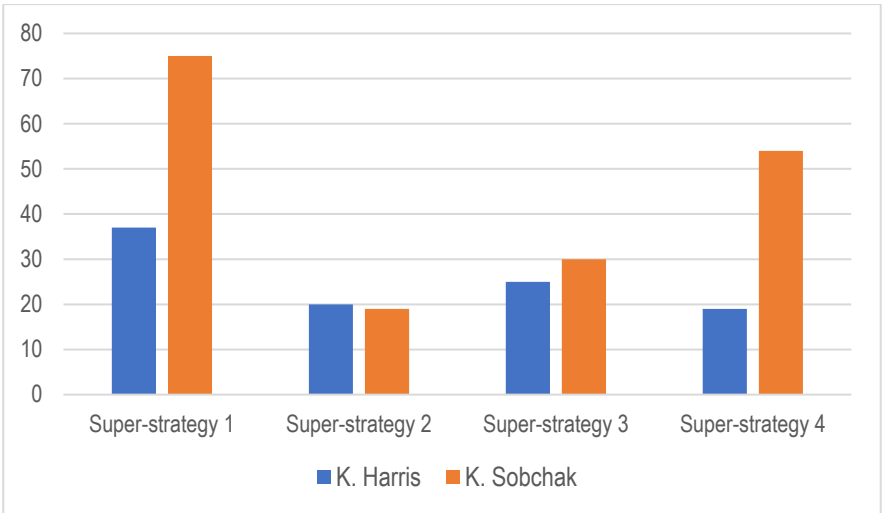
4. RESULTS

In the first phase of the study, a quantitative analysis was conducted. According to the overall results, the Russian presidential candidate's discourse contains almost twice as many impoliteness strategies as K. Harris's: while K. Sobchak used 178 strategies, Harris's discourse involved only 101 strategies. Since the corpora's size is

different, the normalized frequency was calculated, which allows us to make a proportional comparison: in the Russian politician's discourse, the frequency of impoliteness is 35.3 strategies per thousand words, compared to 17 in the English corpus.

In addition to frequency, there are differences in the selection of super-strategies. Figure 1 shows the distribution of each super-strategy.

FIGURE 1. *The distribution of super-strategies in the two corpora (in absolute terms)*



Source: Author's own elaboration

To begin with, both candidates gave preference to the first super-strategy, which involves associating negative facts, actions, and behaviors with the opponent. The second most frequently used super-strategy by K. Sobchak corresponds to the fourth type, allowing her to invade her adversaries' space, whereas K. Harris tends to distance herself from her opponent and to show his inferiority.

To check whether these differences are statistically significant, the chi-square test was applied. The results show a significant difference ($x^2(3)=8.664$, $p<0.05$) with greater divergences in super-strategies 1 and 4, which could indicate different sociocultural patterns.

The analysis of specific strategies reveals greater differences between the two politicians: thus, within the same super-strategy, K. Harris and K. Sobchak opted for different functional strategies that help them achieve their communicative goals. The distribution of strategies is presented in Table 1. In addition to the total number of occurrences, the absolute frequency and p-value are indicated.

TABLE 1. *Distribution of the impoliteness strategies in each corpus*

	Harris		**Sobchak**		
	n	%	n	%	p-value
Super-strategy 1					
1.1. To criticize ideas	17	16.8	8	4.5	0.0012
1.2. To tell him he is mistaken, to disagree	5	5	23	12.9	0.055
1.3. To accuse him of ignorance, incompetence	13	12.9	4	2.2	0.0010
1.4. To criticize his discursive behavior	2	2	40	22.5	<0.001
Super-strategy 2					
2.1. To claim that he lacks credibility	-	-	-	-	-
2.2. To accuse him of lying	9	8.9	12	6.7	-
2.3. To accuse him of hiding the truth	10	9.9	5	2.8	0.0246
2.4. To Brand him as contradictory or incoherent	1	1	2	1.1	-
Super-strategy 3					
3.1. To make the differences that separate them manifest	15	14.9	9	5.1	0.0098
3.2. To clearly show his isolation	6	5.9	-	-	0.0043
3.3. To scorn him	4	4	16	9	-
3.4. To mock him	-	-	5	2.8	-
Super-strategy 4					
4.1. To reveal facts that make him uncomfortable	13	12.9	9	5.1	0.0360
4.2. To show the deficiencies of his arguments clearly	-	-	5	2.8	-
4.3. To urge him to do something	2	2.0	5	2.8	-
4.4. To hinder him from expressing himself fluently	4	4.0	32	18	0.0015

Source: Author's own elaboration

As shown in Table 1, the most used impoliteness strategies by the two candidates are different. K. Harris resorted primarily to criticizing her opponent's ideas, which represents 16.8% of the total number of strategies used. The second most frequently used strategy was to

highlight the differences between herself and D. Trump (15.1%). Two strategies ranked third, namely accusing her opponent of ignorance, incompetence, or inaction (12.9%) and revealing facts that made him uncomfortable (12.9%). In K. Sobchak's speech, reactive strategies are more common, such as criticizing her opponents' discursive behavior (22.5%) or telling them they are wrong, disagreeing with them, or contradicting them (12.9%), which rank first and third, respectively. Secondly, the Russian presidential candidate preferred to use various linguistic mechanisms to prevent her opponents from expressing themselves fluently (18%).

After applying the chi-square test, it was found that six of these strategies (except for strategy 1.2 "To tell him he is mistaken, to disagree"), as well as 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 4.1, show statistically significant differences between the two corpora ($p<0.05$). The most notable are strategies 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, and 4.4, all with chi-square values above 10 ($p<0.01$); strategies 1.1 and 1.3 are the most frequently used by K. Harris, while 1.4 and 4.4 are the most common in K. Sobchak's discourse.

By criticizing the opponent's ideas or highlighting his/her failures, it is possible to attack the opponent's quality face. As mentioned before, this strategy is the most frequent in K. Harris' discourse. On some occasions, the U.S. presidential candidate combines it with other strategies, as in the following example, where, after betraying the failure of D. Trump's policies as president, she highlights the differences that separate them (1.3):

> Harris: Donald Trump left us the worst unemployment since the Great Depression. Donald Trump left us the worst public health epidemic in a century. Donald Trump left us the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War. And what we have done is clean up Donald Trump's mess.

In this example, which is clearly aimed at the public, K. Harris uses lexical repetition (the three attacks follow the same pattern) and explicitly names her opponent, thereby maximizing the damage to D. Trump's quality face. In addition, the use of strategy 1.3 allows her

to distance herself from her opponent and emphasize her own qualities in contrast to her opponent's failure.

Along with criticizing the opponent's ideas, accusations of ignorance, incompetence, and inaction are effective, accounting for 12.9% of the U.S. corpus. To discredit her adversary, K. Harris underlines D. Trump's weakness, since he was and is unable to impose a foreign policy that defends US interests:

> Harris: It is very well known that Donald Trump is weak and wrong on national security and foreign policy. It is well known that he admires dictators […] And it is absolutely well known that these dictators and autocrats are rooting for you to be president again because they're so clear, they can manipulate you with flattery and favors.

In the Russian corpus, both strategies are occasional (1.1: 4.5%, 1.3: 2.2%), which may be due to the fact that none of the debate participants had governed and, in Sobchak's opinion, could be elected president. Therefore, she focuses on criticizing their electoral programs or ideological foundations:

> Собчак: Здесь у нас вообще, посмотрите, 21 век, здесь передо мной стоит 4 сталиниста, 4 человека, которые считают, что Сталин был правильным правителем.
> Sobchak: Seriously, it's the 21st century – and I'm standing here in front of four Stalinist. Four people who believe Stalin was a good ruler.

Although this study does not undertake an analysis of the linguistic mechanism through which various impoliteness strategies are realized, these examples illustrate clear differences in the formulation of criticism: the U.S. candidate employes lexical items with explicit negative connotations, whereas the Russian candidate makes use of syntactic constructions accompanied by sarcasm that serve to indicate a critical stance.

Unlike Harris, Sobchak chooses to attack the relational face of her opponents who do not know how to behave discursively as the situation requires: this strategy accounts for 22.5% of the total number of impoliteness strategies used by her. Qualitative analysis of these criticisms allows us to associate them with the intention of protecting her own face: in most cases, it is a reaction to an attack on her

own face, often carried out as an interruption (strategy 4.4). Thus, in the following example, she condemns the rudeness and inappropriate behavior of a presidential candidate who did not allow her to express her ideas during her own turn to speak:

> Собчак: Вот этот человек хамит бесконечно только мне. Вот этот человек называет меня блядью и грязной ведьмой на вашей программе!
> Sobchak: This person constantly insults only me. This person calls me a bitch and a filthy witch on your show!

As a result, this impoliteness strategy allows her not only to seek the sympathy and support of the public, but also to discredit her opponents, highlighting that they lack the necessary qualities for the role they perform.

In the U.S. debate, there were virtually no interruptions, so when criticizing Trump's discursive behavior, Harris focuses on presenting her opponent as a person who lies, manipulates, and hides the truth and, therefore, lacks credibility:

> Harris: But I'm going to tell you all, in this debate tonight, you're going to hear from the same old, tired playbook, a bunch of lies, grievances and name-calling.

In other words, in Harris's speech, this strategy is not used as a reaction to a previous attack on her own face, but as a tactic of discrediting her opponent.

Owing to the debate formats, it was expected to observe more interruptions in Russian debate, which was confirmed by the quantitative analysis, The strategy 4.4 "To hinder him from expressing himself fluently" shows statistically significant differences between the two corpora ($p=0.0015$): while K. Sobchak resorted to this strategy 32 times (18%), only four interruptions were made by K. Harris. It should be noted that this strategy can be combined with others, such as accusations of lying (2.2), displays of contempt (3.3), mockery (3.4), requests for additional information (4.3), or contradictions (1.2). In fact, in Sobchak's discourse, almost 40% of the displays of disagreement and contradictions—the third most frequent strategy in the Russian corpus (12.9%)—occur as an interruption:

Сурайкин: Как только мы дали слабину, как только господин Медведев, либерал, пришёл в президенты, раздавили Ливию, социалистическую Ливию, зачем, чтобы опять забрать нефть. А знаете для чего, госпожа Собчак, забрать нефть? Чтобы обрушить мировые цены, чтобы и там качать бесплатно, и у нас забрать бесплатно.

Собчак: Ливия – это тоже территория России? Напомните мне, пожалуйста.

Сурайкин: Они ставили задачу, чтобы они могли обрушить цены на сырьё, нефть, газ, и у нас его тоже покупать за копейки.

Собчак: Может, просто пора научиться кроме нефти что-то самим делать?

Сурайкин: Да всё, всё мы делали в Советском Союзе.

Собчак: Где промышленность-то у нас построены?!

Suraykin: As soon as we showed weakness, as soon as Mr. Medvedev, a liberal, came to the presidency, they crushed Libya – socialist Libya. Why? To take the oil again. Do you know why they wanted the oil, Ms. Sobchak? To crush global prices, so they could pump for free there, and take it for free here.

Sobchak: Is Libya also Russian territory? Please, remind me.

Suraykin: They aimed to collapse the prices of raw materials – oil, gas – so they could buy it from us for pennies too.

Sobchak: Maybe it's just time to learn to do something ourselves besides oil?

Suraykin: We did everything in the Soviet Union.

Sobchak: So where is the industry we built?

In this example, K. Sobchak interrupts the speaker several times to urge him to answer her question, in the first place, and to contradict him and point out that he is wrong in wanting to base the Russian economy on the production and export of hydrocarbons. Consequently, Sobchak not only attacks her opponent's equity rights by preventing him from expressing himself fluently but also manages to damage his quality face.

Other strategies are less frequent and do not show as many differences in usage between the two corpora.

5. DISCUSSION

In this study, we have attempted to compare the use of impoliteness strategies in electoral debates by two female politicians from different cultures. According to the results obtained, impoliteness is frequent in the discourse of K. Harris and K. Sobchak. These data are in line with studies that highlight role, context, and discursive gender as determining factors for the use of (im)politeness (Brenes Peña, 2012; Fuentes Rodríguez, 2013; González Sanz, 2018). However, the analysis shows some significant differences in its use between the two corpora in general and in the selection of specific strategies in particular.

First, it should be emphasized that both women resort to impoliteness as a tool to discredit their opponents and, at the same time, persuade and entertain the public (Blas Arroyo, 2001; Fernández García, 2018; Schubert, 2022). Since these are televised debates, on many occasions, rather than addressing their opponents, the candidates channel their message to the audience. Hence, K. Sobchak's speech frequently includes the vocative "*друзья*" (friends), while K. Harris criticizes her opponent in the third person. In this way, impoliteness helps them to denigrate the social face of their adversaries and gain sympathy from the public. What differentiates the use of impoliteness between the two corpora is Sobchak's attempt to protect herself through various impoliteness strategies. Thus, the Russian politician resorts to impoliteness as a reaction to an attack on her own face. To defend herself, she not only expresses contradictions and criticizes discursive behavior but also accuses her opponents of lying.

As for the most widely used super-strategy, both politicians give preference to the first one, which allows them to associate their adversaries with negative facts (projects, values, behaviors, etc.). This result is predictable, given that it is the most powerful super-strategy for attacking the opponent's quality face and social identity face (Blas Arroyo, 2011; Culpeper, 2011; Fernández García, 2018). Criticism can focus on the ideas, values, behaviors, and actions of opponents: as Fernández García (2018) points out, "everything the

rival does and thinks is worthy of criticism" (p. 52). The main differences between the two politicians lie in the selection of functional strategies, which may be due to circumstances: D. Trump had been president of the U.S. and K. Harris is the candidate of the ruling party, while K. Sobchak and the other candidates for the Russian presidency had never governed. As a result, the U.S. politician strives to highlight her opponent's incompetence, inaction, or policy failures, while the Russian presidential candidate focuses on contradicting her opponents and criticizing their discourse in the debate itself. As recent studies show (Blas Arroyo, 2001, 2011; Bousfield, 2008b; Fernández García, 2015b, 2018; García-Pastor, 2008; Garrido Ardila, 2019; Luginbühl, 2007; Martínez Abellán, 2024; Peña-Jiménez & Shorokhova, 2025; Wodak et al., 2021), criticism and accusations are the main signs of impoliteness in televised debates in different cultures and languages.

As in Fernández García's study (2018), the super-strategy 4—politicians invading their opponents' space and creating obstacles— is the second most commonly used by K. Harris and K. Sobchak. However, in Harris's discourse, the obstacles are metaphorical in nature (Culpeper, 2011; Fernández García, 2018), as the U.S. presidential candidate chooses to reveal information that may be uncomfortable and compromising for Trump. The Russian politician, in turn, poses real obstacles: through interruptions, she hinders her opponents from expressing themselves fluently. Although interruptions are not always considered impolite, in a political confrontation they undermine the basic principles of normal turn-taking (Schegloff, 2007) and, in doing so, threaten the opponent's sociality rights (Fernández García, 2018) or his/her negative face (Culpeper, 2011). Moreover, in televised debates, participants feel greater pressure to compete with their rivals, which leads them to interrupt more frequently (Tymbay, 2022). Generally, interruptions are combined with other impoliteness strategies, such as displays of disagreement, accusations of lying, demands to do something, contempt, or mockery. In this manner, rather than appropriating the speaker's turn, interruptions serve

to disrupt adversary's reasoning and simultaneously convey a message to the audience (Tymbay, 2022). It is worth noting that, unlike the debates between Clinton and Trump (2016) and Biden and Trump (2020), where interruptions were frequent (Jamshaid & Tarar, 2025; Tymbay, 2021, 2022), in the debate between Harris and Trump, they are practically absent, which could be due to a more effective organization of the debate.

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have observed the similarities and differences in the impoliteness use by two female politicians from two different communicative cultures, namely K. Harris (USA) and K. Sobchak (Russia). The analysis carried out allows us to conclude that impoliteness plays an important role in electoral debate and that both politicians frequently resort to different strategies. However, there are some differences in its use between them: although at first glance it seems that the two politicians prefer the same super-strategies, the selection of specific functional strategies varies between the two corpora. It can also be highlighted that impoliteness is an ideal tool for politicians to discredit their opponents and persuade the public at the same time, but its use can also be justified by a participant's desire to safeguard his/her own face or repair the damage caused by his/her adversary's attack. In this sense, the first two functions are found in both corpora, while the third strategy is more common in K. Sobchak's discourse.

It is noteworthy that the findings of this study partially align with those of previous research, showing similar trends in the use of impoliteness in political context. However, due to the size of the corpora and the selection of only two women, it is difficult to conclude whether the differences observed are due to different cultural patterns or to the communicative styles of each woman. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to expand the study in the future to observe what specific linguistic mechanisms these politicians use to verbalize their attacks.

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AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE CHILDHOOD IN BIOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE (1750–1900): FROM A "DELICATE CHILD" TO A "CHARMING GIRL"

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1. INTRODUCTION

Childhood has long been characterized within the social sciences as the "forgotten category" (Frijhoff, 2012, p. 23) or as constituting the "silent" years of life (King, 2007, p. 389). Frequently conceptualized as adults "in pocket format" (Frijhoff, 2012, p. 22), children have historically been marginalized within scholarly discourse, their experiences subsumed under broader narratives that fail to recognize childhood as a distinct and meaningful life stage. Given this historical oversight, it is unsurprising that even less scholarly attention has been paid to the study of female childhood, especially within the context of eighteenth and nineteenth-century biographical narratives. While childhood is now widely acknowledged as a culturally and socially constructed category, the specific ways in which these constructs shaped the lives and identities of young girls during this period remain underexplored. Recently, however, there has been a surge of interest in childhood studies, particularly within social and historical disciplines, leading to renewed efforts to examine earlier historical periods and reassess biographical discourse (Kline, 2003; Botelho, 2014; Tisdall, 2016).

Although corpus linguistic methodologies have been widely applied to large datasets (Baker, 2006; O'Keeffe & McCarthy, 2024; Brookes et al., 2025; Wright, 2025), their use in the analysis of biographical discourse remains relatively limited, presenting a distinctive and underexplored area of study. Notable contributions include Conway's keyword-based analysis of online biographical sentences (2010), which shows

the potential of corpus tools to uncover patterns in life writing. Building on this, Bamman and Smith (2014) applied computational techniques to Wikipedia biographies, identifying abstract event classes and revealing significant gender biases, particularly the disproportionate emphasis on marriage and divorce in women's biographies compared to those of men. In this context, the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (henceforth, ODNB), which comprises over 63,000 biographical entries, offers a rich and authoritative resource for corpus-based inquiry. First published in print and online in 2004, the ODNB has expanded access to historical life writing, although its digital version currently requires subscription. As Warren observes, national biographical dictionaries such as the ODNB tell a two-faced story (2018): they serve both as repositories of historical fact and as historiographical artifacts themselves, reflecting the cultural and institutional processes through which historical memory is constructed.

With this in mind, this exploratory work focuses upon the representation of girlhood and its impact in biographical discourse. Through corpus approaches, the chapter seeks to uncover the attitudes and associations embedded in discourse. The analysis aims to contribute to this growing field by using a linguistic approach to explore the representation of female childhood in eighteenth and nineteenth-century biographical literature, with the goal of shedding light on how these narratives and societal conventions shape female identity in discourse.

1.1. Framing childhood

In this study, childhood is understood not as a natural or universally fixed category, but rather as "an interpretive frame for contextualising the early years of human life" (Evans, 2012, p. 5). Since the Medieval period, various conceptual systems have sought to delineate the human lifespan, often reflecting prevailing cultural and philosophical paradigms. By the late Middle Ages, a tripartite division of childhood emerged, segmenting the early years into seven-year intervals: *infantia* (infancy, ages 1–7), *pueritia* (childhood, ages 8–14), and *adolescentia* (adolescence, ages 15–21) (Kline, 2003). These stages reflect a historically contingent understanding of development, one that frequently

defines childhood in contrast to adulthood (Zhao, Lauster & Allan, 2012). The first author to successfully historicize the child -or, more accurately, attitudes toward the child- is often credited to be Philippe Ariès (1914–1984). According to the historian, childhood would have been a historical element intentionally overlooked by the historical actors until the early modern era and, as a result, it would have remained hidden from the historians themselves (Ariès, 1960). In contemporary international legal frameworks, childhood is formally recognized as encompassing the years up to eighteen, as codified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1990).

Historian J. H. Plumb famously described eighteenth-century Britain, particularly its latter half, as a "new world of children" (1982, p. 286), marked by a proliferation of child-oriented books, toys, schools, and services. Many of the attitudes and commodities Plumb identified were not exactly "new" but had been accessible primarily to a minority of wealthy boys, while enduring issues such as abuse, neglect, and child labour persisted (O'Malley, 2003). The increased cultural attention to children was less a product of newfound concern and more a reflection of Enlightenment ideals and the shifting priorities of a rising middle class. As childhood became symbolically linked to progress and social mobility, children were increasingly subjected to adult-driven efforts to educate, reform, and shape them according to emerging rationalist and moral frameworks.

When it comes to girlhood, the decision could be taken on whether to approach it from age or gender, both subject to social and institutional norms, ideals and factors that are themselves products of specific historical and cultural contexts. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), the term *girlhood* has been used from the mid-eighteenth century. It may be defined as "the state of being a girl; the time of life during which one is a girl. Also: girls collectively" (OED, n.d.), but this definition, as it happens with *childhood*, blurs the time limits or psychological developments, as well as the ideological and cultural that construct these terms (Reid-Walsh, 2011). As Karppinen-Kummunmäki states, it is impossible to get personal testimonies from girls prior to the acquisition of literacy and, thus, we must assume that girlhood

begins with the attribution of a gendered identity, when a child is first designated as a "girl" rather than simply a baby or a child (2020, p. 18). Besides, research offers no consensus regarding its chronological boundaries. Historians such as O'Dowd and Purvis have suggested that, in early modern English society, girlhood could span from infancy into the mid- or even late twenties (2018). Rather than treating girlhood as a fixed temporal category, this paper conceptualizes it as a gradual and socially mediated process. Girlhood thus could constitute a continuum of experiences marked by developmental milestones, shifting expectations and evolving skills.

2. CORPUS DESCRIPTION AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURES

The corpus used for this study consists of 3,874 biographical texts from the ODNB, all of which pertain to women described by its website as having "shaped British history" (n.d.). This corpus has been comprised by the team members of the Research Project FemChildLing (PID2020-117973GB-I00). To facilitate diachronic analysis, the corpus was divided into three fifty-year periods: 648 texts from 1750–1800, 1,194 from 1801–1850, and 2,032 from 1851–1900. The decision to analyse the tokens into 3 different sub-corpora was made to observe linguistic variation across historical periods in detail. The linguistic data amounts to a total of 2,826,482 tokens. A detailed breakdown of the corpus by sub-periods is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. *Number of entries and tokens per sub-corpora*

	1750-1800	1801-1850	1851-1900	Total
Entries	648	1,194	2,032	3,874
Tokens	351,805	515,037	1,959,640	2,826,482

Source: Own elaboration

A mixed-methods analysis was performed through a corpus-based approach using the Word Sketch and the Concordance tools of the software *SketchEngine* (Kilgarriff et al., 2004). The first part of the analysis was quantitative and examined the presence of childhood in the corpus' entries, both inside the same period and diachronically. To this end, a

set of keywords -*childhood*, *child*, *girlhood*, *girl*, *infant*, *infancy*, and *youth*- was manually selected as indicative of the thematic relevance and 'aboutness' of childhood and youth. The token *teen(s)* was discarded since there was only one instance in the whole corpus. First, the tool Word Sketch allowed us to retrieve token frequencies, perform a collocation analysis and extract the selected term's collocates and surrounding words, in order to analyse the main patterns of the term's grammatical and collocational behaviour and, through this, their associations. To determine whether the increase in the frequency of certain tokens across the three historical sub-corpora was statistically significant, a Chi-Square Test for Trend was performed using the statistical software R (v4.4.0; R Core Team, 2021). The test was applied to the raw token counts relative to the total number of words per period, allowing for the detection of a linear pattern across the ordered time intervals. Subsequently, the Concordance tool was used to contextualize these collocates, enabling a more nuanced interpretation of the discursive roles and attitudinal framings of childhood.

Finally, a qualitative interpretation of these results was carried out in close examination of the examples of the corpus. It must be noted that the examples cited here have been extracted directly from the corpus. The symbol "[…]" is used to indicate omitted portions of text, either to exclude irrelevant content or limit length. For reference and traceability, each sample is identified by a ID number composed of the biographee's year of birth followed by the initial letters of her name, e.g. the entry for Maria Edgeworth is designated as *1768-ME*.

3. RESULTS

3.1. CHILDHOOD

The keyword *childhood* serves as the primary focus of this search. Table 2 displays both the raw and relative frequency of the token across the three sub-corpora, displaying an increase in its presence towards the end of the nineteenth century. A Chi-Square Test for Trend was conducted to assess whether the increase in the frequency of the token *childhood* across the three historical sub-corpora was statistically

significant. The results reveal a significant upward trend ($X^2 = 18.684$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the presence of childhood in biographical entries increased meaningfully over time. This rise reflects a growing discursive emphasis on childhood during this period, which may coincide with broader cultural shifts and the increased availability of biographical detail concerning the biographee's early life and girlhood.

TABLE 2. *Number of raw and relative frequencies of the token childhood in the three subcorpora*

	1750-1800	1801-1850	1851-1900
Raw tokens	37	104	442
Relative frequency per million tokens	105.17	201.92	225.55

Source: Own elaboration

Regarding the adjectival collocates of *childhood*, there seems to be a general dichotomic view on childhood of the happy/unhappy childhood. This pattern is especially pronounced in entries from the first period (1750-1800), where *childhood* collocates *unhappy* (example 1), *difficult* (example 2), *unsettled* (3), *not tranquil* (4), and *happy* (5), each occurring only once. Although infrequent, these collocates point to a tension in the portrayal of early life, reflecting only idealized and troubled experiences and hinting at the selective but simplistic nature of biographical memory in shaping emotional narratives in this period.

(1) Maria Edgeworth's CHILDHOOD was UNHAPPY: she was neglected by her father, who was too much involved with his new wife, and she was deemed to be a difficult child. (1768-ME)

(2) […] she experienced a DIFFICULT CHILDHOOD: her mother showed her little affection […] (1750-FD)

(3) […] may have been the daughter of an improvident army officer, with whom she spent an UNSETTLED CHILDHOOD and whose death left her destitute […] (1759-CT)

(4) Despite this early celebrity, Elizabeth's CHILDHOOD was far from TRANQUIL. (1765-EB)

(5) Her devotion to her mother, 'the beautiful duchess', was the mainspring of her HAPPY CHILDHOOD […] (1785-HEG)

The range of adjectival collocates increases in the entries from 1801 to 1900, including other surrounding facts such as social status (*impoverished*, as in example (6) or *middle-class,* illustrated by (7)), familial circumstances (*motherless* (example 8)), place where the individual grew up (*country* (9), *London* (10), *peripatetic* (11)) or other emotional experiences besides the *happy/unhappy* dichotomy, as in occurrences (12), (13) or (14); albeit these two collocations grow stronger in these late entries. This is probably due to the fact that the sub-corpora are bigger in token size and to the possibility of collecting more information on the individual's life.

(6) The happiest years of her IMPOVERISHED CHILDHOOD were spent with her grandmother in an almshouse for widows […] (1820-JL)
(7) Her parents provided a MATERIALLY and EMOTIONALLY COMFORTABLE MIDDLE-CLASS CHILDHOOD. (1878-MEC)
(8) She later recounted the unhappiness of her MOTHERLESS CHILDHOOD […] (1822-ELL)
(9) Alongside grand connections ran a COUNTRY CHILDHOOD at Bourn in Cambridgeshire, which left her a sharp moralist against luxury but quite secular in outlook. (1824-MCS)
(10) Her poem 'The Streets' recalls her LONDON CHILDHOOD. (1812-EC)
(11) She had the PERIPATETIC CHILDHOOD that befalls a soldier's daughter, with frequently changing homes in comfortable suburban villas […] (1872-FGW)
(12) She had an ANXIOUS CHILDHOOD: her father had lost clients through becoming a Unitarian, the bailiff was a frequent caller, and both parents were often away attending political rallies. (1828-EM)
(13) […] *The Story of an African Farm* wrestles with her most PAINFUL CHILDHOOD and adolescent experiences. (1855-OEAS)
(14) Nevertheless Violet had a MAGICAL CHILDHOOD […] (1894-VT)

In 1851 to 1900 entries, there are 13 instances of *happy* collocating with *childhood*, often in relation to the families, houses and places the women grew up in, as illustrated by examples (15), (16) and (17).

(15) Mary spent a HAPPY CHILDHOOD at Kelly House–'filled with sunshine, green grass and blue skies' […] (1888-MEK)
(16) Isla had a HAPPY CHILDHOOD in Dumfriesshire where she was educated at home by a governess, and she remained close to her sister, Janet, all her life. (1855-IS)

(17) She had a HAPPY COUNTRY CHILDHOOD and later attributed her facility for writing in Scots to her upbringing in Forfarshire, the home of a rich and natural dialect. (1886-HBC)

Interestingly, the collocations in the entries from 1851 to 1900 also begin to associate women's childhoods with a degree of agency and interiority. For instance, childhood is linked to creative expression (example 18) and imaginative capacity (19), suggesting a shift toward recognizing the formative and active dimensions of early life. Moreover, some collocates reflect a perception of childhood as constrained or repressed, as illustrated in examples (20) and (21). These patterns seem to indicate a more complex emotional and psychological framing of girlhood in the later corpus, moving beyond passive descriptors toward a portrayal of childhood as both experienced and interpreted.

(18) Drawing upon her own CREATIVE CHILDHOOD, Casson cast herself in Dorset House's annual drama production […] (1881-EC)

(19) Music, literature, and nature study also featured prominently in a HAPPY, COMPANIONABLE, and IMAGINATIVE CHILDHOOD. (1883-BMC)

(20) She felt that she suffered from a REPRESSIVE CHILDHOOD. Her father, a Baptist and strict sabbatarian, believed that 'most forms of pleasure were wrong', and though she acquired a strong sense of duty and discipline she saw herself as unloved. (1886-AMH)

(21) After her RESTRICTED CHILDHOOD she wanted freedom for her family and herself. (1896-JMC)

Throughout the corpus, it is made evident the importance of affect and presence of family members or loved ones while growing up, as well as the implications of its existence/lack in the adult's personality and life. Whether the child had a good childhood or not, the entries relate these experiences to posterior repercussions, as in examples (22) or (23). Such patterns suggest that biographical narratives often frame childhood affect as a foundational element in the construction of adult identity.

(22) Constance had an UNHAPPY CHILDHOOD. A perhaps unnecessary operation at the age of three for tuberculosis of the hip left her an invalid for years; she suffered from headaches and rheumatism, and was extremely short-sighted; her moody, irascible father became paralysed in 1873; and two years later her mother died, having ruptured

herself by lifting him. Constance became a lifelong sceptic and atheist. (1861-CCG)

(23) Perhaps due to her TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD with its many bereavements, Ettie Grenfell had a hunger for admiration […] (1867-EAPG)

In many instances, the portrayal of childhood as either happy or unhappy is closely tied to the emotional environment in which the individual was raised, particularly the presence or absence of affective bonds and experiences of loneliness. This connection is evident in examples (24), (25), and (26), where the quality of early life is framed as a consequence of relational dynamics, which underscores the enduring impact of emotional deprivation or support on biographical construction.

(24) She experienced 'a fairly UNHAPPY CHILDHOOD '–'her step-father despised as much as the absent father was adored'. (1889-ITL)

(25) As the child of an elderly, distinguished father and a mature, academic mother, she had a somewhat SOLITARY CHILDHOOD, depending for close affection on her nanny. (1893-DJE)

(26) Benson spent an ISOLATED, LONELY, and SICKLY CHILDHOOD in the care of a succession of nannies, and she watched uncomprehendingly as her parents' marriage deteriorated because of her father's alcoholism and womanizing. (1892-SB)

Within the difficulties to define and limit the years of childhood, a recurrent collocate is *early*, which divides this complex age in smaller undefined periods. In none of the instances where *early childhood* appears do the entries specify the exact age range being referenced, which suggests that these mentions rely more on general impressions than on precise chronological data. Examples (27), (28), and (29), among others, illustrate this pattern.

(27) She was one of nine children, of whom one of the three daughters and three of the six sons died in EARLY CHILDHOOD. (1789-JDP)

(28) Her EARLY CHILDHOOD was overshadowed by the death of her father (before her birth) and beset by intermittent illness. (1823-JB)

(29) From her EARLIEST CHILDHOOD she invented stories to tell her sisters, and while at school wrote a historical tale about Lady Jane Grey. (1856-EWEG)

Lastly, table 3 comprises all adjectival collocations of *childhood* (used as a noun).

TABLE 3. *Adjectival collocations of childhood as noun per sub-corpora*

1750-1800	1801-1850	1851-1900		
	Lonely	Happy	Places (Oxford, Cambridge, Yorkshire)	Sociable
	Early	Early		Magical
Unhappy	Places (London)	Lonely	Restricted	Awful
Early	Country	Unhappy	Metropolitan	Carefree
Difficult	Peripatetic	Peripatetic	Painful	Insecure
Unsettled	Impoverished	Country	Middle-class	Traumatic
Happy	Motherless	Comfortable	Sheltered	Stimulating
Not tranquil	Anxious	Creative	Solitary	Misunderstood
	Happy	Imaginative	Idyllic	Harsh
	Comfortable	Repressive		Cloistered

Source: Own elaboration

In addition to functioning as a noun, *childhood* also appears in the corpus as a modifier of other nouns, typically evoking the period when the individual was a child. Examples include *childhood home* (9 instances), referring to the place where the woman grew up, and other frequent collocates such as *friend* (19 instances), *memory* (4), and *ambition* (4). While many of these constructions convey nostalgia or affection, as seen in examples (30), (31), and (32), others adopt a more neutral tone (examples 33 and 34), or even reflect negative memories (35 and 36).

(30) Anna Atkins was a sensitive photographer […] and sometimes in conjunction with Anne Dixon […], a CLOSE CHILDHOOD FRIEND, the wife of a vicar in Sussex. (1799-AA)

(31) Despite these difficulties, she remembered her CHILDHOOD HOME as happy until the time of her father's death when she was fourteen. (1880-LDG)

(32) Sheila Kaye-Smith (she never used her first name) grew up in east Sussex, and CHILDHOOD MEMORIES of summers spent with her younger sister, Selina, on local farms were to provide a fertile source of images for her novels set in the region. (1887-SKS)

(33) Owing to a serious CHILDHOOD ILLNESS her elementary education was interrupted and she was taught at home. (1863-RD)

(34) She fulfilled a CHILDHOOD AMBITION to be a big-game hunter […] (1895-DMFP)

(35) Mary Sheepshanks experienced her CHILDHOOD HOME in Anfield vicarage, Liverpool, as austere and joyless–she felt isolated and uncherished, causing her lifelong opposition to large families and total alienation from religion. (1872-MRS)

(36) Mabel enjoyed a very privileged upbringing and, while she never lacked any physical comforts, she recalled her CHILDHOOD YEARS as very lonely. (1890-DMBB)

3.2. CHILD

Across the three sub-periods, the keyword *child* gains increasing prominence, particularly in relation to the survival of family members and young children. In an era marked by limited medical technology and high mortality rates, death was a pervasive aspect of everyday life, even more so when it came to the growth of the younger members of the families. This reality is reflected in biographical discourse, where considerable attention is given to the amount of children and siblings, as seen in examples (37) and (38), birth order (39 and 40), gender (41 and 42) and the amount of surviving or dead kids (43 and 44).

(37) Cecilia Douglas was one of eight children. (1772-CD)

(38) Daisy was the sixth child of her mother, who was previously married to Henry Langley […] (1881-MMJA)

(39) Sara Sophia (1812–1899), author, the seventh and penultimate child of James Hennell (1782– 1816). (1812-SS)

(40) Coker, Frances [Fanny] (1767–1820), freed slave and domestic servant, was born on 26 August 1767 on Mountravers plantation, Nevis, in the West Indies, the first of five children of Black Polly […]. (1767-FC)

(41) Gilbert, Mary Ann (1776–1845), agronomist and promoter of allotments, was born […], the daughter and only child of Thomas Gilbert 1740–1782 and his wife, Ann née Cossum c.1749–1807. (1776-MAG)

(42) Cave [married name Altof], Bertha (1881–1951), campaigner for opening the legal profession to women, was born at Park Lodge, Sundridge, Kent, on 14 November 1881, the daughter and elder of two children of James Thomas Cave. (1881-BC)

(43) After four stillborn children, a daughter was born in 1794 and a son […], eventually first Baron Ormathwaite, in 1798. (1758-MBW)

(44) Louisa Sara Floyer (1830–1909), promoter of needlework in schools, was born at Salcombe Regis, Devon, on 9 November 1830, the elder daughter and eldest surviving child of the three children born to the Hon. Frederick John Shore. (1830-LSF)

Table 4 displays the frequency of the collocation *surviving child** in the three sub-corpora. The result of the Chi-Square Test for Trend approached significance ($X^2 = 3.6222$, df = 1, p = 0.057), which indicates a potential upward trend that did not reach conventional statistical significance. This near-threshold value may reflect emerging discursive patterns that warrant further investigation.

TABLE 4. *Number of raw and relative frequencies of the token surviving child* in the sub-corpora*

	1750-1800	**1801-1850**	**1851-1900**
Raw tokens	16	22	57
Relative frequency per million tokens	45.47	42.71	29.08

Source: Own elaboration

Interestingly enough, *child* most frequently collocates with adjectives that describe the girl's character, a pattern that becomes increasingly common across the three sub-periods. This trend may reflect both the growing availability of biographical detail and a heightened interest in portraying the emotional and psychological development of the individual. Notably, the only mention to character in the first sub-corpus is the following:

(45) A SERIOUS, LIVELY CHILD, HIGHLY INTELLIGENT but CONSTITUTIONALLY LITERAL-MINDED, Jane read widely and with discrimination in English and French. (1769-JHM)

The 1801-1850 sub-corpus contains only two adjectival collocates to *child,* used to describe the biographee, both referring to character (examples 46 and 47). Like example (45), these phrases combine multiple adjectives to construct more nuanced character portrayals.

(46) She was an INTELLIGENT and LIVELY CHILD. (1825-CAB)

(47) A LONELY but IMAGINATIVE CHILD, she was taught by a series of tutors […] (1815-AB)

Nonetheless, the 1851-1900 sub-corpus stands out for the number of occurrences of adjectival constructions with *child* that refer to the character of the girl (15 instances). Women are portrayed not only through their accomplishments but also through increasingly nuanced

depictions of personality. Some references to physical description are also encountered, as in (48) and (49). The most recurrent adjectival collocates of *child* include: *delicate* (7 occurrences), *intelligent* (2 instances), *precocious* (2), *vivacious* (1) *timid* (1), *athletic* (1), *enquiring* (1), and *considerate* (1), as illustrated in the following samples.

(48) A PRETTY, DARK-HAIRED, BROWN-EYED CHILD, VIVACIOUS and PRECOCIOUS, Pearl was educated intermittently in a few day and boarding-schools, and at home with governess and tutors, but mostly through voracious independent reading. (1867-PC)

(49) Growing up in Oxford, as 'a CHUBBY CHILD of five' she met Lewis Carroll […] (1865-EMA)

(50) Annie, as she was known, was a DELICATE CHILD, over-indulged and under-employed […] (1855-ART)

(51) An INTELLIGENT, STRONG-MINDED CHILD, eager to learn, frustrated at primary school, rebellious at Bolton secondary school […]. (1885-SSI)

(52) A PRECOCIOUS CHILD, Katharine Tynan could read by the age of three, and at five she was sent to a 'young ladies' school'. (1859-KT)

(53) Henrietta grew into a SHY and TIMID CHILD, isolated by her illness, educated by a series of much-loved governesses and tutors. (1884-HS)

(54) Hilda Clark was an ATHLETIC CHILD, a keen gymnast and an intrepid horsewoman. (1881-HC)

(55) Lopokova was a diminutive figure with the natural air of an EAGER, ENQUIRING CHILD which caused her to hold her head tilted up towards anyone with whom she was conversing. (1892-LVL)

(56) Winifred, a LIVELY, GENEROUS, and CONSIDERATE CHILD, learned to read so quickly that her elder brother Cuthbert lost half his fee for teaching her. (1875-WCC)

Curiously enough, alongside references to delicacy, the entries place considerable emphasis on the child's health and physical wellbeing, as in this period medical technology was not developed enough to cure many diseases (this occurs in relation to the mentions to survival in childhood). Between these afflictions that affected young girls, we encounter asthma, bone injuries, epilepsy or general illness that force the children to stay at home, as can be seen in the following examples.

(57) Evelyn was an imaginative, DELICATE CHILD, prone to asthma, but she learned early that 'the earliest statute imposed upon one another by children belonging to one family is that of daring'. (1881-EC)
(58) Henrietta was a DELICATE CHILD and a hip injured in infancy plagued her throughout her life. (1884-HS)
(59) Barker suffered from epilepsy and was a FRAIL CHILD, spending much of her youth housebound. (1895-CMB)
(60) A DELICATE CHILD, Applebee was educated at home, and was taught Latin and Greek by a clergyman living nearby. (1873-CMKA)

3.3. GIRL(HOOD)

In this corpus, *girl* and *girlhood* seem to refer to posterior years than previous keywords such as a *child* and *childhood*. They may imply a more adult-like phrase since it is more frequent to find them collocating with roles in work, society, activities, physical aspect and interpersonal relations. First, in the 1751-1800 sub-corpus, there is a strong connection of the construction *as a girl*, used as an age limit of undefined youth, with occupational roles, as seen in examples (61) and (62). Similar constructions are also encountered in later periods (63 and 64), often accompanied by *young* to remark the early stages of life and evoke a sense of innocence or inexperience (65).

(61) She worked AS A GIRL in local ragged schools in Bonchurch and Stoke Newington. (1793-EH)
(62) AS A YOUNG GIRL Margaret was boarded out. Her carers were not always well chosen and at one time she became quite seriously mentally disturbed. (1758-MBW)
(63) Susan Durant became interested in sculpture when spending a winter in Rome with her parents AS A YOUNG GIRL, and decided to adopt it as a profession. (1827-SDD)
(64) […] Alice Gray Jones had been active in the Sunday school movement AS A YOUNG GIRL […] (1852-AGJ)
(65) AS A YOUNG GIRL, she participated in county society events: she and her sister Harriet were belles at the hunt and county balls of Northumberland. (1828-JEB)

The idea of the *young girl* is commonly associated with ideals of aspect and physical beauty and, hence, it is no surprise to encounter in the entries numerous associations of youth with beauty (66), delicacy (67)

and slimness (68). As with *child*, references to character and personal tastes persist across all three periods (69), though they appear more prominently in the 1851–1900 subcorpus (70).

(66) She was a TALL, GOOD-LOOKING GIRL, APPARENTLY RELIGIOUS, but VIVACIOUS and SUSCEPTIBLE, and fond of fashion and amusements. (1754-GE)

(67) Nathaniel P. Willis described her as 'a BEAUTIFUL GIRL, DELICATE, GENTLE, and PENSIVE', looking as if she 'knew she was a poet's child'. (1825-AAP)

(68) Late in 1829, now a SLIM and CHARMING GIRL, she joined the Bruny Island mission, where she married Wooraddy, a local Aborigine. (1812-T)

(69) Her schoolfellows later remembered her as a SERIOUS, CLEVER GIRL, but a SHY and SENSITIVE ONE, who hated performing in public, and who often ran out of the room in tears. (1819-ME)

(70) Enid Bagnold was a TOMBOYISH, DRAMATIC, OUTDOOR, BEAUTIFUL GIRL who soon escaped the conventionally respectable life of her parents […] (1889-EAB)

Meanwhile, *girlhood* is treated as a period of time or phase, and marks the duration or limit of the individual's life experiences, separate from younger ages or infancy, for instance. Thus, it often collocates with temporal markers such as *during* (71 and 72), *in* (73) or *from* (74).

(71) Sarah Stickney's family were in comfortable circumstances DURING HER GIRLHOOD […] (1799-SE)

(72) As an infant and DURING HER GIRLHOOD she modelled for her father […] (1843-LMB)

(73) IN GIRLHOOD Helena travelled widely within Europe, the Near East, and North America. (1887-HRW)

(74) FROM HER GIRLHOOD apprenticeship in Leeds she showed great professional discipline and determination. (1852-JAR)

As its definition advanced, *girlhood* is also used for the collective of girls, or else the model or ideal of the girl. This usage appears in two instances within the 1851 to 1900 sub-corpus (examples 75 and 76).

(75) Rather, Rachel McMillan's interest for modern times must be the way in which she emerged from a traditional and sheltered background of HELPFUL VICTORIAN GIRLHOOD to pursue a career in the

new forms of social and health-care work that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. (1859-RM)

(76) […] Taylor was as unostentatiously dressed off-screen as she was wont to appear in front of the cameras, wearing a 'simple cotton costume' and appearing every inch 'the embodiment of CHARMING, UNSPOILT, BRITISH GIRLHOOD'. (1894-ALT)

3.4. INFANT

The term *infant* generally describes the earliest years of childhood, from birth through the first years of life. Throughout the corpus, *infant* seems to be more neutral, often as a mitigator when discussing the death of children. It could be argued to be less emotionally loaded than previous terms of childhood. Because it is mainly used to talk about death, it is not so commonly used to talk about the individual's childhood, as in (77), but about family members (example 78), institutional settings such as *infant gardens* or *infant schools*, and broader themes of health (79), mortality (80), and education (81)

(77) Her father died when she was an INFANT […] (1789-SB)

(78) Although she had now borne seven children, this was the first INFANT DEATH. (1762-EPS)

(79) She was for twenty years the honorary secretary of the pioneering INFANT WELFARE centre opened there […] (1884-CC)

(80) In the book she lamented the high rate of INFANT MORTALITY […] (1854-CCO)

(81) […] Elizabeth moved to Hampstead, where she continued to write about INFANT METHODOLOGY, both separately and with Charles. (1793-EM)

Curiously enough, the term is only modified by an adjective *-fragile-* in one occasion (1751-1800 sub-corpus), in relation to the frail health of a child (82).

(82) She assisted Godwin in notifying friends of Wollstonecraft's death and nursed the FRAGILE INFANT Mary Godwin back to health in the first weeks of her life. (1766-EF)

3.4. YOUTH

The term *youth* appears with increasing frequency across the three subcorpora, an upward trend that is statistically significant ($p < 0.005$). *Youth* is majorly referred to as the time period between childhood and adulthood, as the lasts steps of childhood. In biographical texts, this meaning is reinforced by its frequent use within time expressions such as *in her youth*, *during her youth*, or *from early youth*, often marking the temporal boundaries of actions or descriptions, as illustrated by (83) and (84).

(83) An arresting figure IN HER YOUTH, she came to look outmoded, even rather stern, but she remained both generous and respected […] (1811-ASB)

(84) Her wide education gave her a good knowledge of languages and the arts; IN HER YOUTH she was also an enthusiast for horse-racing. (1883-DRAT)

While being used as a temporal marker, *youth* is frequently associated with notion of ignorance and inexperience that justify certain actions. These negative connotations emerge in relation to education (example 86), intellectual capacity (98), and even within the context of monarchy (88).

(85) The senate of the university sought to prevent her presenting her thesis 'De merocele, vel, Hernia crurati' […] on grounds of her YOUTH, but Lord Buchan pointed out that the regulations did not specify any age limitations, and she was allowed to proceed. (1799-JB)

(86) Her character was always firm; but she was, IN HER YOUTH, in need of intellectual guidance. (1857-MFD)

(87) It now became necessary that the princess royal be treated as an adult, despite her YOUTH. (1819-V)

As it happened with the associations of *girl,* the moment of being a woman "in her youth" is often associated with the ideals of beauty and physical attractiveness, present in all sub-periods. It is worthy to notice, as examples display (88 to 91), that this physical description of youth is generally accompanied by a comparison to later appearance in adulthood, whether beauty was maintained or perverted.

(88) Although she was evidently lithe and sparkling IN YOUTH, verbal accounts of Germaine de Staël's later appearance […] vary so radically as to defy firm description. (1766-GSH)

(89) 'Very beautiful IN HER YOUTH', she retained 'in more advanced years…a charming smile and an expression in her blue eyes which in her earlier days might have been called "playful mischief"'. (1803-TL)

(90) Pat Washington was a small, strikingly attractive woman–in old age as well as IN YOUTH. (1892-CMBW)

(91) A sturdy, vigorous figure with opaque brown eyes, strong features, and fine bones, she was not indifferent to fashion IN HER YOUTH but latterly dressed always in a long skirt, stiff shirt, heavy woollen stockings, boots, and a variety of old-fashioned hats. (1856-AMAHR)

Nonetheless, *youth* also appears with some positive personality traits related to intellect, achievements, hobbies and abilities (examples 92, 93 and 94), which particularly relevant considering the nature of these texts which describe "significant" women in British history.

(92) Having spent some time in France, at Boulogne, DURING HER YOUTH, she could read and write French well. Her main interests were literature, history, religion, education, and languages; she tried to teach herself Italian, Latin, and German. (1752-AP)

(93) She apparently 'devoured' books IN HER YOUTH, working her way through all the novels available (including many usually deemed 'unsuitable' for children) […] (1841-CJH)

(94) This was her longest story and the one which in later life she considered to be 'the greatest literary achievement' OF HER YOUTH. (1881-MMJA)

4. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, this exploratory study has traced the lexical and discursive representation of female childhood, revealing a gradual deepening in the portrayal of this life stage. While childhood remains a relatively marginal component in most entries, often condensed into complex but limited structures, its emotional and descriptive depth appears to grow over time. This may reflect both increased access to biographical detail and a cultural shift toward valuing the formative experiences of women.

A recurrent dichotomy emerges between the happy/unhappy childhoods, which seem to be frequently framed in relation to their perceived impact on adult life. Lexical choices such as *child*, *girl*, *infant*, and *youth* reveal distinct emotional and social connotations: *child* is frequently tied to fragility, character traits and survival; *girl* and *girlhood* evoke aesthetic ideals and social roles; *infant* serves as a neutral, often euphemistic term in contexts of mortality; and *youth* is used both to mark temporal boundaries and to frame narratives of inexperience, beauty, and early achievement.

These recurrent patterns suggest that biographical writing not only reflects but actively constructs cultural understandings of female development. This study contributes to ongoing efforts to reassess historical discourse by applying corpus linguistic methods to a traditionally underexplored domain, female childhood in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century life writing. It also supports the view of childhood as an interpretive frame (Evans, 2012), shaped by cultural and institutional forces and often gendered in its representation.

Discussing limitations, this kind of work remains difficult to automate, as it requires manual verification to determine whether lexical items refer to the individual's childhood or to external contexts. Future research could expand this analysis by exploring additional collocational patterns, incorporating broader semantic fields, and comparing dictionaries from other cultural background. Such comparative work would offer valuable insights into how childhood and female development are differently conceptualized across historical and national contexts.

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ANALYSIS OF METADISCOURSE IN BRITISH NEWSPAPERS ABOUT THE OVERTOURISM PROTESTS IN THE CANARY ISLANDS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, demonstrations against mass tourism have been taking place across several European countries, particularly in those most severely impacted by the current touristic model. Spain has become a focal point of this phenomenon, with some of the most affected areas being Barcelona, Andalusia, and the Balearic and Canary Islands (Carballo et al., 2019; García-Buades et al., 2022; Muler Gonzalez et al., 2018; Veríssimo et al., 2020a). In these regions, locals and activist organisations have voiced their growing concern around the consequences of mass tourism on their socioeconomic landscape. Some of these concerns are housing affordability, environmental degradation and a strain on public services, among others.

These protests have attracted widespread attention, not only from national media, but across major international news outlets. Coverage has often highlighted both the economic dependence of these regions on tourism and the growing social tensions that arise in this context (Betancor Nuez, 2025; Sánchez-Bayón & Daumann, 2025; Veríssimo et al., 2020b).

The main focus of this study is to examine how these protests have been presented in international media. More specifically, we analyse the way in which the British press has portrayed the demonstrations that have taken place in the Canary Islands. This case is particularly relevant, as British tourism constitutes one of the archipelago's most important sources of revenue (Hernández Martín, n.d.; Padrón & Godenau, n.d.). By exploring coverage across a range of British newspapers, we aim to shed light on the narratives constructed around these protests by each outlet and how they could impact the British audience's perception of the islands differently.

In the present work, we analyse a corpus of 40 British news articles to analyse how interactional resources are used to frame the issue, focusing specifically on the use of hedges and boosters. In doing so, we aim to explore the metadiscursive function of these elements and the ways in which they serve to either mitigate or strengthen propositional content.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this paper is to analyse how the Canary Islands are represented in British newspapers and how linguistic choices contribute to the evaluative framing of these representations. The corpus includes a wide range of news reports, but particular attention is paid to coverage of the recent overtourism protests, which have become a defining topic in international reporting on the region amid a global overtourism rejection. These protests provide an especially revealing case for examining how British media frames social tensions, activism and public opinion in relation to a popular tourist destination.

This study therefore aims to determine whether the coverage of these events tends to construct predominantly positive, negative or neutral representations of the islands and to explore how these orientations may vary between newspapers with different editorial perspectives. Beyond identifying evaluative tendencies, the research also seeks to uncover the linguistic mechanisms through which newspapers encode stance and positioning. Special attention is paid to the metafunctions in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), especially the interpersonal metafunction, which

encompasses stance, modality and appraisal, as well as rhetorical devices such as boosters and hedges, that either reinforce or soften claims.

Another objective of this research is to demonstrate the value of combining corpus linguistics with close reading. While corpus methods identify recurring patterns of language use across a large body of texts, together with close reading and the use of theoretical tools to interpret these patterns in terms of meaning, function and context provided by the SFL framework, the study aims not only to contribute to the understanding of British media discourse on the Canary Islands but also highlight the methodological potential of linguistic analysis in the study of news and public debate.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus description

The study is based on a corpus of 40 news articles concerning the Canary Islands collected from five different popular British newspapers: *The Independent, BBC, Express, The Times* and *The Guardian*, with 8 articles of similar extensions from each. Specifically, the corpus has a total of 27078 words, and by order of previous mention of the newspapers, each subcorpus has 4514, 6443, 1679, 8212 and 6230 words respectively. These texts cover different kinds of events and issues but place special emphasis on recent protests against overtourism. Focusing on this specific theme makes it possible to investigate how newspapers portray both the islands as a space, and the local population as actors responding to social and environmental pressures.

3.2. Corpus Linguistics and Close reading

The methodology combines corpus linguistic techniques such as keyword analysis, collocation analysis, or frequency count to identify lexical and grammatical patterns that reveal evaluative tendencies across the newspapers. These quantitative results are complemented by a qualitative analysis carried out through a close reading of selected excerpts, in order to examine how stance and evaluation are constructed at the level of discourse. That said, to be able to undertake the close reading analysis

in a manageable way, the corpus has been kept modest in terms of number of words, and therefore it will be normalised per a thousand words to provide more interpretable figures. In addition, another reason for this normalisation is the irregular number of words in each subcorpus, as the different newspapers regularly write articles of different extensions, so in order to provide reliable data, these must be taken into account.

3.3. Systemic functional linguistics

SFL, as introduced by Halliday and developed further by Banks, conceptualises language as a network of choices that speakers or writers navigate in order to construct meaning:

> At each point in the system the steps which follow are obligatory. You cannot choose indicative without choosing between declarative and interrogative; it must be one or the other. So in creating language we move through the system […], and the final choice that is made […] is the choice of the individual words that make up our message (Banks, 2019, p. 2).

This view positions linguistic production as inherently functional and context-dependent, which is particularly relevant when reporting socially charged events such as protests or tourism debates.

As explained by Halliday, (1985); Vande Kopple, (1985) a central principle of SFL is that meaning is simultaneously organised across three metafunctions, which in a summarised and simplified manner come to be: the ideational, representing experience; the interpersonal, involving the relationships between the participants, stance and evaluation; and the textual metafunction, which concerns the organisation of information. Of these, the interpersonal metafunction is especially significant for this study, as it encompasses mood, modality, appraisal and evaluative language. Through this lens, features such as boosters and hedges, among others, can be analysed as strategies that journalists employ to strengthen certainty, project authority, or adopt caution.

Finally, in the SFL framework, context is crucial, divided into field, tenor and mode, providing a way to situate media discourse within its broader communicative environment, showing how different newspapers adapt evaluative strategies depending on their target audience, readership and institutional voice:

> Field is the ongoing activity of which the language is a part. Tenor is the relationship between the person who is communicating and those he is communicating with. Mode is the form through which the message is communicated, that is, basically, spoken or written (Banks, 2019, p. 5)

By combining the broad quantitative reach of corpus linguistics with the nuanced, meaning-focused perspective of close reading and the SFL framework, the methodology enables a comprehensive analysis of how the Canary Islands, and especially the overtourism protests are discursively framed in the British press.

3.4. METADISCOURSE

Regarding metadiscourse, Hyland (2005) notes that the idea was first introduced by Zelig Harris in 1959, who described it as a way of interpreting language in context, showing how writers and speakers help guide reader's or listener's understanding of a text. Since then, many scholars have expanded on the concept, including Williams (1981), Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1989), as well as more recent researchers such as Alonso-Almeida (2012, 2015) Hyland (2005, 2010, 2012) and Álvarez-Gil (2017, 2024) which have continued to develop the field, demonstrating the wide scholarly interest in the subject.

That said, the complexity of metadiscourse is evident in Hyland & Tse (2004; Ifantidou, 2005), who view that the term has often been used loosely serving as an "[…] umbrella term, which covers a quite disparate range of data." Ifantidou, (2005, p. 1326). Due to this, and despite the considerable research devoted to the subject, scholars still disagree on a precise definition and hence, for this study, Hyland's (2005) framework and taxonomy will be adopted:

> Essentially metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating. Language is always a consequence of interaction, of the differences between people which are expressed verbally, and metadiscourse options are the ways we articulate and construct these interactions. This, then, is a dynamic view of language as metadiscourse stresses the fact that, as we speak or write, we negotiate with others, making decisions about the kind of effects we are having on our listeners or readers (2005, p. 3).

4. RESULTS

4.1. CORPUS ANALYSIS

In this section, we will introduce the quantitative analysis of this research project. After, we will present the outcomes of a further qualitative analysis. 4.1.1. Boosters

In terms of booster use, utilising *Lancsbox X*, when the boosters command is introduced, we obtain a total of 31 hits, divided per newspaper as can be seen in the table below. It is interesting to notice that almost half of all hits are from *The Times*, hinting that the newspaper could be particularly sensationalist and might make use of this linguistic resource to further catch the reader's attention. On the opposite side of the spectrum, *Express* and *The Independent* have only one and two examples respectively, revealing the complete opposite, as it may be that these pieces of news transmit the information more objectively.

TABLE 1. *Booster command results in Lancsbox.*

Newspaper	Hits	Normalised per 1000 tokens	Texts
Whole corpus	31	1.14	14/40
BBC	7	1.09	3/8
Express	1	0.6	1/8
The Guardian	7	1.12	4/8
The Times	14	1.7	4/8
The Independent	2	0.44	2/8

Source: self creation

When looking at the normalised data in the table above, *The Times* is still the newspaper with the most tokens, followed by *The Guardian* and *The Times* with similar numbers. The only notable difference compared to the non-normalised data is that it is not *Express* but *The Independent* that has the lower use of boosters in proportion, which is extremely low for both newspapers.

Specifically, when looking at the specific boosters that are present, we can see in the following table that the most common booster is the

adverb *very*, representing 20 of the 31 boosters, therefore representing around 65% of all booster hits, followed by *completely* and *absolutely* with three instances each. However, observing the table below, what is clear is that *The Times* is not only the newspaper with the most hits as was mentioned before, but also the one that has the most variation, with six different booster cases.

TABLE 2. *Specific booster examples in the corpora.*

	Adverbs and Instances							
	Very	**Completely**	**Absolutely**	**Perfectly**	**Totally**	**Extremely**	**Highly**	**Strongly**
Whole corpus	20	3	3	1	1	1	1	1
The Independent	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Express	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BBC	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Times	7	1	3	0	0	1	1	1
The Guardian	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0

Source: self creation

Nevertheless, it must be noted that, when searching for boosters, Lancsbox seeks only for specific terms, which are the following: *absolutely, altogether, completely, enormously, entirely, extremely, fully, greatly, highly, intensely, perfectly, strongly, thoroughly, totally, utterly* and *very*. Keeping this in mind, it is obvious that not all boosters have really been included in this search, and therefore, to continue to properly investigate their use, a manual search took place with all adjectives and adverbs ending in *-ly* and eliminating the afore-mentioned ones to reveal the following:

TABLE 3. *Results of adverbs and adjectives ending in -ly excluding the aforementioned.*

Newspaper	**Hits**	**Normalised per 1000 tokens**	**Texts**
Whole corpus	221	8.16	38/40
BBC	40	6.21	8/8
Express	14	8.34	7/8

The Guardian	45	7.22	8/8
The Times	83	10.1	8/8
The Independent	40	8.86	7/8

Source: self creation

The table above shows a considerable number of adverbs and adjectives ending in *ly*, which all function as potential boosters. It is clear that these are very common in all newspapers, but especially once again in *The Times*, opposite to the *BBC* that has the lowest proportion of all the newspapers even though they are present in all their articles. Continuing with the research, a careful individual analysis of the data presented above was clearly necessary to determine whether these particles acted as boosters or not, which is presented in the table below in addition to other boosters such as superlatives in the next table.

TABLE 4. *Boosters ending in -ly present in the corpora excluding the afore-mentioned.*

	Boosters ending in -ly		
Newspaper	**Hits**	**Normalised per 1000 tokens**	**Texts**
Whole corpus	142	5.24	38/40
BBC	26	4.04	8/8
Express	9	5.36	7/8
The Guardian	31	4.98	8/8
The Times	52	6.33	8/8
The Independent	24	5.32	7/8

Source: self creation

When looking at the data presented in Table 4, we can find that as it was expected, the number of boosters present is actually much greater than when utilising the booster quick search. Another unsurprising fact is that once again *The Times* has the most hits among both non-normalised and normalised figures, with boosters present in all its texts. Followingly is a somewhat significant drop with *Express*, that with only 9 boosters present and in only seven of its texts, obtains the second highest ratio of use per 1000 tokens, followed very closely by *The Independent* and succeeded by *The Guardian* and *BBC,* which continues to have the lowest number of boosters, possibly suggesting a more objective tone to the pieces of news it presents.

In addition, in Table 5, when looking at the boosters composed of the superlatives *best, most, never* and adjectives ending in *-est*, it reveals clear differences in usage between outlets. Overall, the most common form is the grammatical *-est* ending, which occurs 70 times in the whole corpus and appears in 26 out of the 40 texts, making it the highest normalised frequency of 2.59 per 1000 tokens. However, the distribution of forms varies across sources. *The Times* and *Express* make frequent use of lexical superlatives such as *best* and *most*, suggesting a more emphatic style. In contrast, *The Guardian* and *The Independent* rely more heavily on the *-est* endings, which may reflect a subtler or more formal tone. The BBC falls between these extremes, with moderate use of each form. These patterns could indicate that while all the analysed newspapers employ superlatives, their stylistic preferences differ, as some prioritise direct evaluative terms while other prefer grammatical constructions.

TABLE 5. *Superlative boosters.*

	Superlatives											
	Hits				Normalised per 1000 tokens				Texts out of 40			
	Best	most	never	-est	best	most	never	-est	best	Most	never	-est
Whole corpus	18	27	8	70	0.66	1	0.3	2.59	18	15	6	26
BBC	2	6	4	13	0.31	0.93	0.62	2.02	2	2	3	5
Express	4	4	0	2	2.38	2.38	0	1.19	1	4	0	1
The Guardian	0	4	3	11	0	0.64	0.48	1.77	0	2	2	7
The Times	12	12	1	19	1.46	1.46	0.12	1.1	3	6	1	7
The Independent	0	1	0	11	0	0.22	0	2.44	0	1	0	4

Furthermore, when searching for different kinds of boosters, it was thought that modal verbs could be useful, as they may also have this function. However, after having analysed them, no instances of boosting modals were found, as most of them expressed dynamic or deontic modality rather than epistemic modality.

Finally, to end this section on boosters in the corpus analysis, it must be said that there are many kinds of boosters, but it has been chosen for this study to research only the types mentioned above, as the rest have been deemed to be less relevant for the present research. The same methodology has been followed with the next section on hedges.

4.1.2. Hedges

4.1.2.1. Modals

When it comes to the analysis of modals, we performed a modals search on *Lancsbox*, which gave us the following results:

TABLE 6. *Modals per subcorpora.*

Newspaper	Hits	(normalised per 1000 tokens)	Texts
Whole corpus	157	5.79	34/40
BBC	32	4.97	6/8
Express	9	5.36	5/8
The Guardian	41	6.58	8/8
The Times	50	6.09	8/8
The Independent	25	5.54	7/8

Source: self creation

From a global perspective, *The Times* and *The Guardian* are more prone to the use of modals in their articles and can be found across all 16 articles, with a total of 50 and 41 instances respectively. The *BBC* and *The Independent* use modal verbs more moderately. The presence of modal verbs in *Express* is scant. However, their relative frequency is high, surpassing the *BBC*.

TABLE 7. *Modal hedges.*

Newspaper	Hits	(normalised per 1000 tokens)	Texts
Whole corpus	15	0.53	9
BBC	0	0	0
Express	1	0.6	1
The Guardian	4	0.64	2
The Times	7	0.85	3
The Independent	3	0.66	3

Source: self creation

A closer analysis of the modals reveals that hedges are mostly present in *The Times*, followed by *The Guardian*. It is worth noting that the *BBC* does not use modals as a hedging strategy, but rather as markers of obligation, necessity or possibility, which results in a more nuanced presentation of the events.

Some examples of the use of modals as hedges in *The Times*:

(1) I *wouldn't* mind a tourist tax.
(2) Holidaying in the Canary Islands? The locals *may* not like you.
(3) He said: "There's a perfect amount of people – the islands *could* even take more to be honest".

4.1.2. Adjectives

Adjectives are not the most prominent resources when it comes to hedging propositional content, as the only adjective that functions as a hedge in the corpus is *possible*, which appears twice in *The Independent*.

TABLE 8. *Adjectival hedges.*

Newspaper	Hits	(normalised per 1000 tokens)	Texts
Whole corpus	2	0	2
BBC	0	0	0
Express	0	0	0
The Guardian	0	0	0
The Times	0	0	0
The Independent	2	0.44	2

4.1.3. Adverbs ending in -*ly* acting as hedges

When it comes to adverbs ending in *–ly* acting as hedges, we have found a total amount of 14 occurrences across the entire corpus. It is worth noting that *The Independent* is more prone to using adverbs as hedges, while the rest of newspapers almost do not use them. *Express* has the second highest normalised frequency of adverbs as hedges.

TABLE 9. *Adverbs ending in -ly acting as hedges.*

Newspaper	Hits	(normalised per 1000 tokens)	Texts
Whole corpus	14	0.52	10
BBC	2	0.31	2
Express	2	1.19	2
The Guardian	1	0.16	1
The Times	2	0.24	1
The Independent	7	1.55	4

Source: self creation

Orally, it is common to employ adverbs ending in -*ly* as hedges to mitigate possible negative messages, but in the case of these corpora, when searching in each of them, only one single case is identified in *The Guardian*:

(4) "Well, I'm sorry to say that it's *probably* some lurid nonsense […]"

It is evident in the example above, that the speaker, being this a direct quotation of spoken language, utilises *probably* to try to decrease the possible negative effect of their statement. This example also ties with the following subsection of interjections, due to the case of *well*.

4.1.4. Interjections

As mentioned, the case of *well* in example 4 is another kind of hedge, as it mitigates the speaker's opinion. There are another two examples from *The Times*:

(5) "[…] but, *well*, you get the picture"

(6) "*Well*, they did pancakes, salads […]"

In addition, there are a few other interjections such as:

(7) "*Sorry*, I don't make the rules."

In a case from *The Guardian*, as well as one case of the use of *oh:*

(8) "*Oh*, fine. I don't care about […]"

These are all the interjections present in the corpus, which was to be expected due to the expository nature of pieces of news, since they typically aim for a more formal and objective tone, and hence the use of interjections is naturally limited compared to conversational genres. Their occurrence here, though rare, highlights moments where the writer or quoted speaker momentarily shifts into a more informal or expressive register, often to convey attitude or soften the impact of a statement, which end up being reflected in these pieces of news as hedging devices.

4.2. Close reading analysis

Although we have mainly analysed the frequency of those adverbs ending in *–ly*, it is worth noting that we have found some instances where adverbs that did not end in *–ly* were used as hedges. Among the adverbs that we found were *perhaps*, *almost* and *about*.

(9) And *perhaps* even one with a kids' club so, you know, we could actually have a holiday?

(10) The low stone walls act as barriers against the wind, while the vines are buried in hand-dug conical holes known as hoyos and are *almost* completely covered in ash-rich dirt that helps them retain moisture.

(11) Dotted in the Atlantic, *about* 850 miles southwest of mainland Spain, the eight sun-baked Canary Islands often feel like their own spectacular, volcanic world.

In example 9 we can see the only instance of the adverb *perhaps* in the corpus. Its function here is unmistakably that of a hedge, as the speaker avoids direct commitment to the suggestion and instead frames it as a tentative possibility. In example 10, *almost* precedes the adverb

completely and mitigates the absolute force of the latter, rather than representing the vines as being entirely buried, the writer introduces nuance and softens the claim. In this way, *almost* also functions as a hedge, modifying the statement so that it does not appear overly categorical. Finally, in example 11, a different case is visible, as the use of *about* introduces an approximation in relation to distance, and while this does not hedge an attitude or evaluation in the same sense as the previous examples, it does serve to avoid over-precision by signalling that the figure should be taken as an estimate. For this reason, *about* may be described more accurately as an approximator rather than a proper hedge, even if it shares with hedges the pragmatic function of hedges by softening the degree of certainty expressed. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the structure *it is* + *adjective* + *that*, which is common in hedging, is not present whatsoever across the 40 articles.

5. DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of boosters and hedges across the selected corpus reveals several important tendencies that help illuminate stylistic and rhetorical choices in British newspapers. One of the most striking findings concerns the distribution of boosters, as *The Times* consistently emerges as the newspaper with both the highest frequency and the greatest variety of boosters, particularly in the form of intensifying adverbs such as *very*, as well as a wider range of emphatic markers. These patterns suggests that *The Times* may adopt a more expressive and evaluative stance, which could be linked to the need to attract reader's attention through heightened rhetoric. By contrast, outlets such as the *BBC* and *The Independent* display more restrained use of boosters, with the *BBC* especially standing out for its relatively objective tone and avoidance of emphatic language. This divergence aligns with the *BBC*'s institutional role as a public broadcaster, where naturality is expected, and helps explain the lower booster frequency observed.

When the analysis is extended to adverbs ending in *-ly*, it becomes clear that many potential boosters were overlooked by the initial corpus tool search. The subsequent manual analysis uncovered a much larger set of

candidates, again reinforcing the prominence of *The Times* using these forms, while *Express*, despite a low absolute count, shows a relatively high frequency once normalised. Such findings highlight not only the methodological importance of combining automated and manual approaches, but also the stylistic differences across outlets. Similarly, the use of superlatives varied markedly, with *The Times* and *Express* preferring lexical items such as *best* and *most*, while *The Guardian* and *The Independent* relied more heavily on grammatical *-est* forms.

In terms of hedging strategies, the findings are equally revealing. Modal verbs were the most frequent hedge type, particularly in *The Times* and *The Guardian*, where they often appeared in contexts that conveyed possibility or limited commitment, as in *may* or *could*. Interestingly, the *BBC* employed modals less as hedging devices and more in their deontic or dynamic senses, which again supports the interpretation that its style prioritises factuality over stance. Adjectives functioning as hedges were scarce, with *possible* appearing only twice and both in *The Independent*. Oppositely, adverbs ending in *-ly* were somewhat more common, such as probably*,* which is used in spoken quotations to mitigate negative statements. Here again, the corpus suggests that hedging though adverbs is more typical of spoken or conversational registers that written expository texts.

The analysis of interjections further highlighted this fact, as forms such as *well, sorry* and *oh* occurred only rarely and always in quoted speech rather than in the expository or narrative elements. Their role was mainly to soften evaluations or express hesitation, acting as hedges. However, their limited presence reflects the formal and expository nature of news once again, where personal or conversational markers are generally avoided (Boudana, 2011; Messagi Júnior, 2022; Stenvall, 2008).

Finally, these findings come to say that hedging in news discourse is more constrained than boosting, but remains present in contexts where evaluation, stance or reported speech are relevant. These results also indicate a clear tension in news discourse between objectivity and rhetorical engagement, as the analysed newspapers appear to differ in how they balance the amplification and dramatisation of boosters and the

softening and mitigation of hedges, which point at underlying fixed institutional identities or specific readership expectations.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study analysed how the British press has represented the overtourism protests in the Canary Islands, with a focus on the evaluative role of boosters and hedges. The findings show that boosters are far more frequent than hedges, suggesting that news outlets often prefer emphatic strategies over cautious or mitigated language when reporting on these events. *The Times* stood out for its heavy use and variety of boosters, which points to a more dramatic and sensationalist style, while the *BBC* consistently avoided strong evaluative markers, aligning with its institutional role of impartiality. Other newspapers, such as *The Guardian* and *The Independent,* occupied more intermediate positions.

Hedges appeared much less frequently, and their distribution was particular, as modal verbs were the most common form, especially in *The Times* and *The Guardian*, but other devices such as adverbs and interjections occurred only rarely and mostly in quoted speech. This reflects the expository nature of news writing, where hedging is not part of the journalist's objective voice but rather tied to the subjective perspectives of those being reported.

Overall, the results suggest that British newspapers construct the Canary Islands' protest though different rhetorical lenses, balancing objectivity with emphasis, in line with their individual institutional identities, shaping how British audiences will perceive the social tensions in the Canary Islands depending on the source of information differently.

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QUEER MEANING AND CODED INTIMACY: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL LANGUAGE IN ELTON JOHN'S SONGS

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Elton John is an especially productive case for investigating how popular lyrics encode identity, intimacy and cultural constraint. Few artists combine comparable commercial reach, cross-generational visibility and stylistic durability with a public life that intersects so directly with changing norms around sexuality. From his emergence at the turn of the 1970s to his sustained global prominence in the twenty-first century, Elton John has addressed mass audiences in multiple media (studio recordings, stadium tours, film and musical theatre), while cultivating a star persona that is at the same time exuberant, virtuosic and carefully managed (Eltonjohn.com, 2025). This combination of mainstream centrality and long historical span makes his repertoire an ideal site for asking how language in popular songs can both circulate widely and carry layered (at times veiled) meanings about desire, relationships and self-presentation. In short, he is not simply one successful figure among many; he is a reference point in Anglophone popular culture whose songs saturate radio playlists, public events and domestic listening, giving their linguistic textures unusual social reach and interpretability.

Elton John's lyrics (most often authored in collaboration with Bernie Taupin) are also a particularly rich object for analysis because they reconcile two pressures that define mainstream pop: the need for broad legibility and the need for expressive nuance. On the one hand, the songs must be instantly graspable: memorable hooks, quotable lines and accessible narratives that support chart success and live

performance. On the other, they frequently mobilise subtle interpersonal resources (choices of person reference, terms of address, tonal stance and affective lexis) that invite multiple readings (Rojek, C., 2011). This duality is not incidental. For artists who came to prominence when homosexuality was widely stigmatised and queer lives were rarely named in the mainstream, indirection was often the condition of possibility for reaching large audiences. In that cultural context, "you" can do significant work: it sustains a universal address while keeping partner gender unspecified; it enables intimate address without explicit disclosure; it preserves a public-facing neutrality compatible with radio formats, label expectations and market norms. Such linguistic strategies do not function as a secret code; rather, they are ordinary resources of English (pronouns, modality, appraisal, metaphor) deployed in patterned ways that balance self-expression with cultural constraint (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Martin & White, 2005).

The present article approaches these issues with a linguistically grounded, empirically cautious programme based on the notion of context as defined by M.A.K. Halliday (1985). It treats "queer meaning" not as a stable essence secreted in the text but as a set of interpretative affordances licensed by patterned linguistic choices under specific historical conditions. It attends to the ordinary mechanics by which lyrics open or narrow interpretative space: the distribution of deictic choices; the calibration of commitment through modality (hedging, softening, volition, obligation); the selection of affective vocabulary that tilts towards tenderness, vulnerability, longing or resilience; and the textual packaging that foregrounds or backgrounds participants and experiences. It also recognises the temporal dimension: what reads as broadly "universal" in one period may, in retrospect or under altered public norms, become legible as queer intimacy, especially when viewed across a body of work rather than a single track.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this paper is to examine how linguistic analysis and particularly the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics can serve

as a means of uncovering hidden or layered meanings in popular culture. Song lyrics provide a particularly rich site for this kind of study, as they not only convey personal experiences and emotions but also reflect the social and cultural contexts in which they are produced. By analysing the ways in which language encodes relationships, stance and affect, this research seeks to demonstrate how linguistics can shed light on aspects of identity that might remain unspoken or indirect.

Elton John's lyrics are taken here as a central case study because of his dual significance: as one of the UK's most popularly celebrated musicians and as a figure of great importance to the queer community. When he began his career in the late 1960s and 1970s, homosexuality was not widely accepted, and queer identities were rarely represented openly in mainstream music. Like other artists of his era, such as Freddie Mercury and Prince, Elton John negotiated these constraints through creative strategies in his art. The study hence aims to explore how his language choices: pronouns, terms of address, tone and affective expressions, might suggest relational meanings that were less visible at the time but have become more significant in retrospect.

More broadly, the objective is to show that linguistic approaches like SFL are not confined to abstract or purely structural studies of language, but are powerful tools for cultural analysis. By paying attention to the interpersonal and contextual dimensions of language, it becomes possible to uncover how identity, desire and social roles are encoded in texts, including those of popular culture. In this way, the paper seeks to bridge linguistic and cultural studies, demonstrating how language functions both as a personal resource for self-expression and as a social practice shaped by historical conditions.

3.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As it has been mentioned before, this study aims to analyse how Elton John may have indirectly referred to men in his lyrics before publicly coming out, and in this line, the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework has been chosen to serve as a guide. This is because SFL views language as a resource for meaning-making rather than merely a

set of syntactic rules, emphasizing how linguistic choices are shaped by social and communicative contexts (Banks, 2019; Halliday, 1961). This makes it particularly suitable for analysing subtle, context-dependent meaning in song lyrics.

SFL conceptualises language as a network of choices, where speakers navigate interconnected grammatical and lexical options to construct meaning. As Banks explains:

> At each point in the system the steps which follow are obligatory. You cannot choose indicative without choosing between declarative and interrogative; it must be one or the other. So in creating language we move through the system […], and the final choice that is made […] is the choice of the individual words that make up our message (Banks, 2019, p. 2).

In the case of this paper, in Elthon John's songs, choices in the use of pronouns, terms of address and evaluative language can encode hidden or indirect references to male partners or desires.

In addition, Halliday's (1985) framework organizes meaning into three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual. For this study, the interpersonal metafunction is especially important, as it governs how speakers express stance, evaluation and relationships with others. In Elton John's lyrics, the interpersonal choices such as the way he refers to other people, the tone he uses and the affective language he employs could create subtle, layered meanings that hint at romantic or emotional attraction.

The ideational metafunction identifies participants and actions in the lyrics, showing who is involved and what experiences or relationships are being represented. The textual metafunction organizes information within and across clauses, guiding listener focus and shaping how the lyrics are interpreted (Banks, 2019). Altogether, the exploration of these metafunctions allow for a multi-layered analysis of meaning, revealing both explicit content and potential hidden subtext.

Another crucial aspect of analysis of SFL is context and register, as meaning in language is inseparable from context, and Banks divides into field, tenor and mode, which each correspond to the three metafunctions beforementioned:

> Field is the ongoing activity of which the language is a part. Tenor is the relationship between the person who is communicating and those he is communicating with. Mode is the form through which the message is communicated, that is, basically, spoken or written (Banks, 2019, p. 5)

By examining the three metafunctions, context and register, together with the greater framework, this study can systematically explore how Elton John's linguistic choices, and particularly his interpersonal strategies could encode subtle relational meanings. This approach helps uncover how lyrics may indirectly reference men, reflecting social and personal constraints of the time while conveying nuances emotional and relational experiences.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. CORPUS DESCRIPTION

The corpus consists of 25 songs by Elton John, sampled to cover three commercially and culturally distinct periods: the 1970s (16 texts), the 1980s (5 texts), and the 1990s–2020s (4 texts). Selection criteria considered (a) single and album sales, (b) online plays and (c), music poll rankings (Wade, 2025; Official Charts, 2025; Spotify, 2025). Lyrics were sourced from established catalogues and cross-checked against official releases. Spelling and punctuation were lightly normalised (e.g., standardising contractions) while preserving lexis and lineation.

For corpus analytics, texts were treated as plain-text files and aggregated both as a whole and by decade into three subcorpora. *Lancsbox* (Brezina & Platt, 2025) identified 7557 tokens in the whole corpus (5338 in the 70s subcorpus, 1218 in the 80s subcorpus and 1001 tokens in the subcorpus that represents John's lyrics since the 90s until today).

For qualitative reading, songs were also handled individually to retain song-level discourse dynamics. Following *IRaMuTeQ* (Ratinaud, 2025) conventions, the 25 texts were segmented into 195 textual segments (TS); 137 TS were successfully classified (utilisation 70.26%). The software identified 7189 occurrences, comprising 914 lemmas, 655 active forms and 259 supplementary forms.

4.2. Tools and materials

This study combined two complementary tools to capture both distributional patterns and local meanings in the lyrics. *IRaMuTeQ* (Ratinaud, 2025) was used for lexical-statistical exploration. It generated the descending hierarchical classification (CHD), χ^2-based keywords, and co-occurrence structures, and it produced factorial correspondence analyses (FCA) from which we derived class partitions, dendrograms and a word-cloud of high-frequency forms. To probe the interpersonal workings of the texts in context, we then turned to *LancsBox* (Brezina & Platt, 2025) and its sub tools KWIC, Collocations and GraphColl. This allowed us to compute keyword and keyness profiles for each subcorpus against the whole corpus, track pronoun distributions with normalised frequencies, read concordance lines for mood, modality and appraisal, and visualise collocational networks within a ±5-word span. Categories for close reading were taken from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), with particular attention to interpersonal systems (mood, modality and appraisal).

4.3. Procedure and data treatment

The analysis followed a staged workflow, moving from corpus construction to exploratory partitioning and, finally, interpretative synthesis. First, the corpus was compile, depurated and normalised. For corpus analytics, texts were saved as plain-text files and aggregated both as a whole and by decade into three subcorpora. *LancsBox* identified 7,557 tokens in total (1970s: 5,338; 1980s: 1,218; 1990s–present: 1,001). In parallel, to support qualitative reading, songs were also analysed individually to retain song-level discourse dynamics.

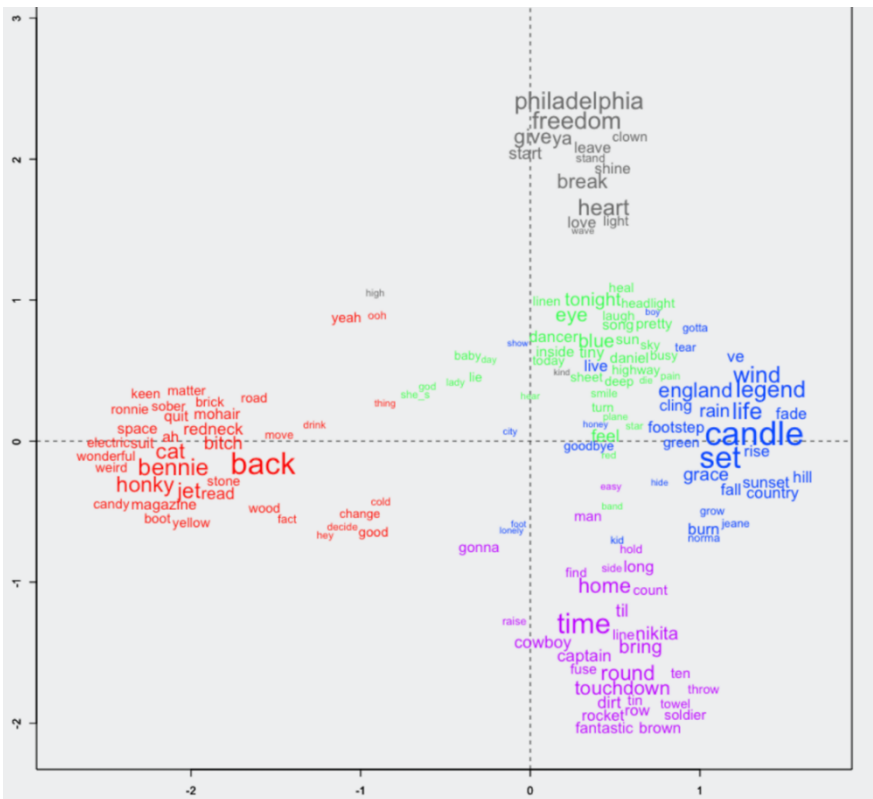
The texts were after being tokenised; for *IRaMuTeQ* they were segmented into 195 textual segments (TS), and for *LancsBox* they were lemmatised for concordance and collocation work. *IRaMuTeQ* then registered 7189 occurrences, comprising 914 lemmas, 655 active forms, and 259 supplementary forms. Guided by these partitions, targeted queries were issued in *LancsBox*. Finally, close readings were conducted, prompted by the concordances found in *Lancsbox*. For each song, interpersonal choices for intimacy and ambiguity were explored and observations were noted diachronically to identify continuities and shifts across periods.

5. RESULTS

5.1. IRAMUTEQ

The final corpus comprises 25 texts that were segmented into 195 textual segments (TS); out of which 137 were successfully classified (utilisation 70.26%). The software identified 7,189 occurrences, comprising 914 lemmas, 655 active forms and 259 supplementary forms. After corpus compilation and cleaning, Factorial Correspondence Analysis (FCA) in IRaMuTeQ projected the words-by-classes table onto a Cartesian plane where proximity indicates above-chance co-occurrence and distance signals lexical contrast.

FIGURE 1. *Factorial Correspondence Analysis (FCA).*



Source: *IRaMuTeQ*

The resulting map, as shown in Figure 1, organises the lexicon into five colour-coded semantic fields whose positions reveal how they relate to one another in the corpus. The Green class sits at the interpersonal core, gathering terms of address and feeling such as “baby,” “lady,” “feel,” “smile” and “heal”; this cluster provides the relational frame through which most lyrics speak to an implied addressee. Closest to this hub lies the Grey class, which carries a discourse of freedom and movement (“freedom,” “start,” “leave,” “stand,” “break,” “light,” “wave,” “Philadelphia”). Its adjacency to Green indicates that expressions of affect are frequently coupled with narratives of departure, renewal or release, so that feeling and motion form a mutually reinforcing pair. The Blue class supplies the scenic setting (“rain,” “sunset,” “wind,” “England,” “hill,” “country,” “city,” “rise,” “fall,” “fade,” “life”) against which that interpersonal exchange unfolds. Its broad spread across the plane suggests that landscape and temporality are drawn on flexibly to situate intimacy in recognisable places, weather and times, while keeping partner gender unmarked.

Below these clusters, the Purple class contributes a vocabulary of pace and propulsion (“hold,” “count,” “long,” “gonna,” “’til,” “raise,” “time,” “bring,” “fuse,” “touchdown,” “round,” “throw,” “rocket”). This set interacts with Blue by converting static scenes into kinetic ones, intensifying or accelerating the interpersonal script without altering its openness. By contrast, the Red class forms a more colloquial and concrete pole, mixing proper names, materials, slang, clothing and everyday motion (“Ronnie,” “Bennie,” “wood,” “brick,” “mohair,” “bitch,” “honky,” “suit,” “boot”), along with interjections such as “hey,” “yeah” and “ooh.” Its relative separation from the Green–Grey–Blue–Purple nexus marks a stylistic layer of character detail and register play that colours scenes and voices but does not anchor the central address–feeling dynamic. Read together, the classes depict a system in which interpersonal address (Green) is animated by freedom and movement (Grey), staged through landscape and time (Blue), energised by tempo (Purple), and textured by colloquial naming and material detail (Red).

5.2. LANCSBOX

To begin the second part of the corpus analysis, the *LancsBox* KWIC tool is employed in order to discover the specific data that is unidentifiable in *IRaMuTeQ*. Before continuing with specific collocation searches, it is relevant to note that when searching for the total term list for the whole corpus ordered by frequency, the first most used word is "the" with 348 occurrences, which is to be expected, being this the most important function word; but the second and third are "I" and "you" with 320 and 230 instances respectively. Especially with the case of "you," this could be a very clear indicator of Elton John using this genderless pronoun to refer to his lovers in the different songs without ever letting know their gender. This idea is reinforced further by the fact that the first gendered pronoun does not appear until the 59th position ("she"), followed by "her" in the 132nd, "his" in the 22nd, "he" in the 269th and "him" in the 640th.

Firstly, the pronouns present in the corpus have been divided in the following table per subcorpus as well as to properly identify the differences between the decades.

Pronouns are present in 22 out of the 25 texts: 16 from the 1970s, 4 from the 1980s and 4 from the 1990s onwards. Table 1 presents the frequencies and normalised values of pronouns across these periods. Across the whole corpus, the most frequent pronouns are "I" (normalised 42.34) and "you" (30.44), showing a strong first-second person orientation. Neutral pronouns such as "it" (18.79), "me" (11.38) and "your" (11.12) are also relatively common. By contrast, gendered pronouns appear at much lower frequencies, as the feminine forms "she" (3.18) and "her" (1.46) are somewhat more common than the masculine forms "he" (0.53), "his" (0.79) and "him" (0.13).

In the 1970s subcorpus of 16 texts, the dominant pronouns are "I" (44.40) and "you" (26.41), followed by "it" (15.92), "me" (12.74), and "your" (11.81). Both feminine and masculine pronouns occur, though sparingly. Feminine pronouns are more frequent overall with "she" (4.31) and "her" (1.50) compared to the masculine forms "he" (0.75), "his" (1.12) and "him" (0.19). In the 1980s subcorpus, pronouns appear

in four of the texts where "you" (40.96) becomes slightly more frequent than "I" (31.97), with "it" (26.97) also appearing at a relatively high rate. Masculine pronouns are quite more visible here ("he," 10.68) than feminine ones, which remain limited ("she," 0.82; "her," 1.64).

TABLE 1. *Pronoun frequencies per subcorpus*

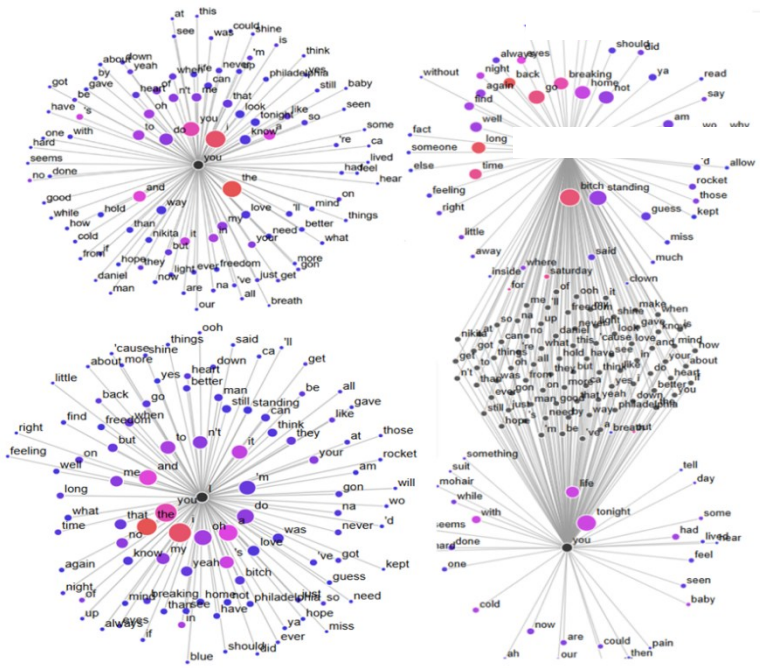
Whole Corpus				70s				80s				90s and onwards			
Value	Frequency	Normalised	Texts	Value	Frequency	Normalised	Texts	Value	Frequency	Normalised	Texts	Value	Frequency	Normalised	Texts
i	320	42.34	22	i	237	44.40	16	i	51	41.87	4	you	41	40.96	4
you	230	30.44	22	you	141	26.41	14	you	48	39.40	4	i	32	31.97	2
it	142	18.79	23	it	85	15.92	15	it	30	24.65	4	it	27	26.97	4
my	93	12.31	18	my	75	14.05	14	my	13	10.68	3	your	16	15.98	1
me	86	11.38	21	me	68	12.74	13	me	9	7.39	4	me	9	8.99	4
your	84	11.12	18	your	63	11.81	14	's	7	5.75	2	's	8	7.99	2
they	50	6.62	13	they	39	7.31	10	they	6	4.93	1	we	7	6.99	2
's	35	4.62	9	we	25	4.68	7	your	5	4.10	3	our	5	4.99	1
we	34	4.50	11	she	23	4.31	4	all	3	2.46	1	my	5	4.99	1
she	24	3.18	5	's	20	3.75	5	our	2	1.64	2	they	5	4.99	2
us	14	1.85	7	us	11	2.06	5	we	2	1.64	2	us	3	2.99	2
her	11	1.46	7	her	8	1.50	4	itself	2	1.64	1	itself	2	2.00	1
our	10	1.32	6	them	7	1.31	3	her	2	1.64	2	all	1	1.00	1
all	9	1.19	7	ya	6	1.12	1	she	1	0.82	1	yours	1	1.00	1
them	7	0.93	3	his	6	1.12	3					ya	1	1.00	1
ya	7	0.93	2	all	5	0.94	5					her	1	1.00	1
his	6	0.79	3	myself	4	0.75	1								
myself	4	0.53	1	he	4	0.75	2								
itself	4	0.53	2	our	3	0.56	3								
he	4	0.53	2	'em	2	0.37	1								
'em	2	0.26	1	urselve	2	0.37	1								
ourselves	2	0.26	1	yoursel	2	0.37	1								
yourself	2	0.26	1	its	1	0.19	1								
its	1	0.13	1	such	1	0.19	1								
such	1	0.13	1	their	1	0.19	1								
yours	1	0.13	1	him	1	0.19	1								
their	1	0.13	1												
him	1	0.13	1												

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on data provided by *Lancsbox X*

In the 1990s and onwards subcorpus, with apparition of pronouns in 4 texts too, "you" (40.96) becomes slightly more frequent than "I" (31.97), with "it" (26.97) also remaining prominent. Gendered pronouns are rare in this period: there is a single instance of "her," while masculine pronouns are absent. Taken together, the results show that while first and second person pronouns dominate across all decades, the balance of gendered third person pronouns varies. Feminine forms are somewhat more common in the 1970s, masculine forms peak in 1980s and both categories are minimal in the 1990s onwards. Neutral pronouns such as "I," "you" and "it" remain consistently central to Elton John's lyrics across all three decades.

The next step in this corpus analysis was to see whether, when using the GraphColl tool and entering a pronoun such as "she," the words and particles utilized together with it in highest frequency could reveal something about John's subtle or not use of gendered and ungendered pronouns. These results are shown in the graphs below.

GRAPH 1. *GraphColl collocations for "you" and "I".*

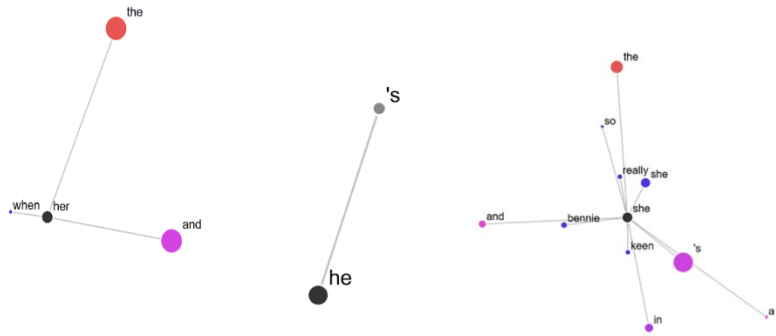


Source: *Lancsbox* X.

In Graph 1 it can be seen that the most relevant collocations for the present study are "I," and "you," with 27 instances of "love" as well. The most common collocation with "I," is its counter-partner "you." The second most important collocation for this research is "love" again, with 39 occurrences, which matches the data from graph I when searching for the collocation of "you" and "I" together. Here it is visible that "you" and "I" share crucial collocates which are commonly related to love, such as "look," "freedom," "breath," "need," "man," "good," "hope," "hold," "light" or "shine," among others.

No further information is provided when searching for collocates of gendered pronouns. Graph 2 is only displayed below as a proof of their scarcity.

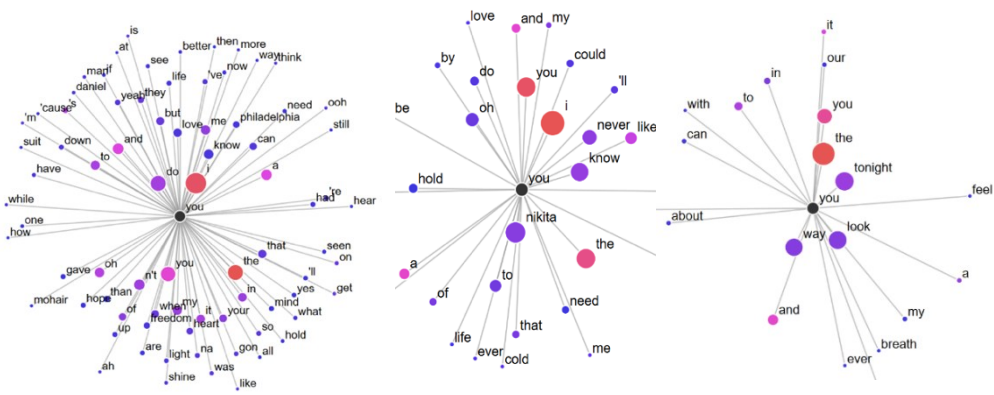
GRAPH 2. *Collocates of gendered pronouns.*



Source: *Lancsbox* X.

A few collocates appear with female-gendered pronouns, but prove to be content-irrelevant, as they are only function words in a narrative context, like in the case of "her" and "I," and "I" and "she." Finally, to complete the corpus analysis on LancsBox, the collocations of what has been proven to be the most important word in this research project: "you," are inspected by subcorpus in order to identify whether its collocations differ.

GRAPH 3. *I-You collocates by decade.*



Source: *Lancsbox* X.

First of all, it must be noted that the number of collocates and their variation between subcorpora is not relevant for the present study, as their size differs, and hence the importance lies in whether the main collocations vary or not. That said, in graph 3, from the 70s, "you" most frequently collocates with items such as "do," "know," "what," "your," "me," "love" and "how," showing a wide variety of contexts of use. In the 80s, the main collocations include "Nikita," "never," "know," "could," "need," "hold" and "love," indicating that "you" often appears in connection with emotional vocabulary and with specific proper nouns in the 80s subcorpus as it was mentioned earlier. Finally, in the 90s and onwards subcorpus shown in graph 3, "you" is closely associated with items such as "tonight," "way," "look," "feel," "my" and "breath," placing it in contexts related to intimacy, affect and personal experience. All in all, these results highlight that while "you" remains a central pronoun across all three periods, the words that associate with it could, as it was expected, reveal hidden information in its metadiscourse, which must be solved through context, for which close reading is necessary, and is shown in the next section.

5.3. Close reading

SFL-guided readings across representative tracks indicate a stable stylistic economy of coded intimacy in which interpersonal choices do most of the meaning work while ideational and textual resources organise that intimacy and control its visibility.

(1) Hold me closer, tiny dancer.
(2) Rocket man, burning out his fuse up here alone.
(3) Do you still feel the pain?

In early-1970s ballads, the mood system is overwhelmingly declarative such as in examples (1) and (2), with interrogatives used sparingly as alignment moves (3). Modality regularly attenuates commitment so that desire can be voiced without categorical disclosure.

(4) I think it's gonna be a long, long time.
(5) If I was a sculptor, but then again, no.
(6) I don't have much money, but if I did…

In *Rocket Man* (1972), (4) signals belief rather than certainty. In *Your Song* (1970), hedging appears as self-repair and conditionality, as examples (5) and (6) both voice desire while avoiding categorical assertions. Once again, *Your Song* (1970) centres a direct I↔you pair and repeatedly softens assertions through conditional, hedged formulations and first-person epistemic stance, keeping the addressee intimate but ungendered.

(7) I hope you don't mind.
(8) How wonderful life is while you're in the world.
(9) I know it's not much.

In addition, phrases such as (7) and (8) maintain intimacy through an unmarked "you", letting the song feel personal yet universally addressable. The epistemic stance is consistently first-person and modest (9) which further softens claims and keeps the focus on feeling rather than identification.

Third-person gendering in Elton John's early work appears mainly in narration, not in direct love address. *Daniel* (1972) follows a male character from a storyteller's distance:

(10) Daniel is travelling tonight on a plane.
(11) I can see Daniel waving goodbye.

Examples (10) and (11) are third-person lines that report what he does and how he appears, rather than constructing an I↔you romance script. This distribution (second person for intimacy and third person for story) supports the claim that early success rested on keeping the addressee unspecified, reserving gendered reference for narrative frames. Appraisal choices reinforce this pattern. Affect is foregrounded while Judgement of behaviour is kept in the background.

(12) I hope you don't mind.
(13) It's sad, so sad.

In *Your Song* (1970), modest first-person stance and phrases like (12) present vulnerability and tenderness without moralising. *Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word* (1976) centres sadness and helplessness (12; 13) again privileging emotional states over blame or praise. Across these songs, the lyrics keep intimacy in the I/you channel and shift

gendered references to third-person narration, while the evaluative load falls on longing, vulnerability and tenderness, not on labelling conduct.

The textual and ideational planes organise intimacy so that it remains broadly legible, chiefly by placing feelings in landscape and journey frames and by converting description into motion. In *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* (1973), the stance toward the relationship is built against an itinerary of leaving and returning: the singer wants to go "back to the" countryside and away from the "Yellow Brick Road," a to-and-from logic that situates emotion in place and travel. *Philadelphia Freedom* (1975) tightens the link between feeling and movement by pairing a location with a vocabulary of release (words such as "freedom," "stand," and "shine") which map an empowerment arc onto a city that is historically emblematic in U.S. queer history. *Candle in the Wind* (1973/1997) frames tenderness in public time and weather, linking grief to images of a "candle" whose flame is shaken by the "wind" and to the temporal markers of remembrance:

(14) Goodbye, Norma Jean.

Such as example (14), so that private affect is voiced in a shared commemorative register. The tempo/propulsion field performs a complementary role.

(15) I think it's gonna be a long, long time.
(16) I'm gonna be

In *Rocket Man* (1972), space-travel lexis and future-oriented verbs (15;16) create distance and drift around the I↔you axis. Because of that distance, the song suggests intimacy without stating it plainly or naming the relationship directly.

(17) Get about as oiled as a diesel train.
(18) Get a little action in.

Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting (1973) intensifies stance through kinetic imperatives and action verbs (17;18) energising the voice without introducing gendered reference. Across these songs, theme–rheme choices repeatedly place "I" or "you" at the start of clauses:

(19) I think it's gonna…

(20) You can tell everybody…

(19;20) so that the interpersonal relation stays textually prominent while scenic and kinetic elements circulate as supporting frames. The result is a discourse that feels intimate and immediate, yet travels easily across audiences because the staging is universal: weather, roads, cities, night-time, speed, and time itself.

From the mid-1980s onward, the lyrics adapt, rather than abandon, the earlier interpersonal pattern. The songs still centre a tight I↔you exchange, but the tone shifts between resilience and open self-assertion.

(21) I'm still standing […]better than I ever did.
(22) Maybe that's why…
(23) Should have known.
(24) Nikita, you'll never know.

In *I'm Still Standing* (1983) the voice is declarative and intensified, repeatedly asserting recovery and agency (21), a classic case of graduation (greater force/focus) in SFL terms. *I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues* (1983) keeps the interpersonal address yet hedges commitment through epistemic and deontic modality: lines such as (22) and (23) register uncertainty and obligation rather than blunt claims, so intimacy is voiced without closing interpretive options. "Nikita" (1985) exemplifies addressee indeterminacy. The lyric addresses Nikita directly (24) but never marks grammatical gender in English; the name alone carries cultural gender cues while the text itself remains neutral. This choice preserved the broad radio-friendly legibility that rewarded unmarked second-person address, even as the video offered a specific storyline. Even when the topic is public image or personal repair, the songs keep the address tightly dyadic (spoken from an "I" to a "you"). In *I'm Still Standing* (1983) the refrain "I'm still standing" asserts resilience, but the surrounding lines speak to a specific addressee, casting recovery as something declared in someone's hearing rather than to a faceless crowd.

(25) It's no sacrifice.
(26) It's a human sign.
(27) Can you feel… tonight?
(28) Something about the way…

Sacrifice (1989/1990) lowers force through softened epistemics (25;26), letting duty and desire be weighed without moral blame. *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* (1994) uses interrogatives as alignment moves that invite the addressee into shared affect instead of naming a partner. *Something About the Way You Look Tonight* (1997) intensifies Appreciation (28) to warm the interpersonal stance while still avoiding gender-specific wording. Across these later periods, then, the hallmark remains a close I/you channel, supported by modal calibration (degrees of certainty, volition, and obligation) and a rich affect vocabulary. The effect is consistent with the earlier style: intimacy that feels immediate and radio-legible, yet ungendered in the text, adapted to new musical settings and cultural climates.

The FCA classes help explain how this works systemically. The Green hub (address + feelings) is the gravitational centre of the repertoire and is the foundation for the close readings above *(Your Song, The One, I Guess That's Why…*). The Grey field (freedom/movement) links that foundation to ideas of departure and renewal *(Philadelphia Freedom, I'm Still Standing*). The Blue field (landscape) supplies neutral, highly portable layout (*Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, Candle in the Wind, Rocket Man*), enabling intimacy to be rendered publicly acceptable in a specific scenario. The Purple field (speed/tempo) energises this layout and often carries the intensification load *(Rocket Man, Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting*). The Red field (proper names, materials, slang, clothing) adds character texture *(Bennie and the Jets, Honky Cat*) relatable to John's star persona, but typically sits off-centre relative to the I/you frame, underscoring that colloquial colouring supports rather than determines the interpersonal script.

6. DISCUSSIONS

The evidence from all methods and periods points to a single mechanism. Elton John's songs keep intimacy publicly legible by maintaining a stable I–you address and by surrounding it with linguistic choices that preserve indeterminacy. *LancsBox* counts show that first and second person forms dominate, while gendered third person pronouns are comparatively rare. After function words, the most frequent content words are I and you, whereas she and he appear much lower in the frequency

list. Close readings clarify the effect of this distribution. Early ballads such as *Your Song* rely on conditional phrasing and first-person epistemic markers, for example "If I was a sculptor, but then again, no […]" and "I think" which soften commitment and keep intimacy in an ungendered channel. When gender appears, it is typically narratorial rather than romantic, as in "Daniel." In later decades the template is adapted rather than replaced. *I'm Still Standing* intensifies expression to voice resilience. *I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues* calibrates stance with epistemic and deontic modality. *Nikita* addresses a named figure without marking grammatical gender in the lyrics. *Sacrifice*, *Can You Feel the Love Tonight*, and *Something About the Way You Look Tonight* reinforce affect while avoiding gender specification.

IRaMuTeQ's FCA explains how these effects are organised. The Green class, which combines address and feelings, serves as a foundation for the repertoire. The Grey class links that centre to narratives of departure and renewal. The Blue class supplies landscape and time as portable staging. The Purple class adds propulsion and pace. The Red class provides character texture through names, materials and colloquial items. These classes align with the song analyses. Address drives meaning, scenery and movement organise it, tempo energises it, and colloquial detail enriches it without displacing the interpersonal core.

These patterns should not be read as biographical confessions. The "Elton John" voice is a performed brand voice that is co-written, arranged and staged across media. In this setting, queer meaning is best treated as an interpretative possibility created by textual patterning within particular historical conditions. The pattern persists as the industry shifts from radio and albums to video, soundtracks and streaming. The pronoun economy remains stable, modality continues to hedge or amplify commitment, and appraisal remains weighted toward affect with little judgement. The reduction of gendered third person forms coincides with greater public acceptance. Even so, the lyrics continue to avoid specification in the 90s and later periods, which suggests that ambiguity functions as a durable stylistic resource rather than a temporary defensive tactic. The study is limited by the modest corpus size, the use of circulating lyric versions, and the inevitable gap that always separates textual cues from audience interpretation. Despite these limits, the agreement

between statistical patterns, concordance evidence and close readings supports the conclusion that Elton John's catalogue is a clear example of how mainstream lyrics manage identity work under constraint.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The study set three aims. The first was to show that an SFL based approach can reveal layered meanings in popular lyrics. The second was to test, through Elton John's repertoire, how indirect strategies signal relational meanings when stigma is present and how those strategies shift over time. The third was to demonstrate that SFL can connect linguistic analysis to cultural interpretation. The findings meet these aims. Combining *IRaMuTeQ* and *LancsBox* with SFL categories uncovered a consistent toolkit. The I–you dyad, modal hedging and calibration, and an appraisal lexicon rich in affect produce interpretative openness beyond literal denotation. Song analyses showed how unmarked second person address, selective third person narration and tonal mitigation enable intimacy without explicit disclosure in early work and continue to function in later decades. The FCA classes clarified how freedom and movement, landscape and time, and tempo provide the scaffolding that supports the interpersonal centre.

Together, the corpus patterns and close readings show that Elton John's lyrics keep the addressee ungendered in the text while remaining easy to recognise and to circulate in mainstream settings. This balance makes queer legible interpretations available without insisting on a single reading. The configuration that emerges is consistent across periods. Address holds the centre, scenery and movement supply the frame, tempo provides energy, and colloquial detail adds colour. This framework offers a portable model for analysing other long running popular repertoires.

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LA ADAPTACIÓN DE TEXTOS JURÍDICOS A TRAVÉS DE LA LECTURA FÁCIL PARA FOMENTAR LA ACCESIBILIDAD: METODOLOGÍA DE ADAPTACIÓN Y DE TRADUCCIÓN AL INGLÉS

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La adaptación a la lectura fácil (LF) de textos jurídicos está adquiriendo una importancia creciente como estrategia traductológica orientada a la accesibilidad del discurso legal. Esta tendencia se enmarca en un contexto de mayor sensibilización social hacia la comunicación clara (Jiménez Hurtado *et al*., 2012) y hacia el reconocimiento de su capacidad para mejorar la calidad de vida en sociedad (Cucatto, 2018). No obstante, la complejidad del lenguaje jurídico, que dista en gran medida del uso habitual de la lengua, puede constituir una barrera significativa para la comprensión (Alcaraz Varó *et al.,* 2014).

Dicha complejidad suele afectar sobremanera a los colectivos tradicionalmente más vulnerables ante el lenguaje especializado (Segovia, 2021), entre los que se encuentran las personas con discapacidad intelectual, con trastornos del espectro autista u otras dificultades del desarrollo. Sin embargo, su alcance es mucho más amplio (Macías, 2013): la opacidad lingüística, unida a la complejidad inherente del sistema de la justicia, puede obstaculizar el acceso efectivo a los derechos e información de la ciudadanía general, derivando en una forma de desigualdad estructural o discriminación (Valverde et al., 2024).

Esta constatación remite directamente a dos conceptos fundamentales del derecho con profundas implicaciones sociales: la igualdad formal y la igualdad real (Rodríguez y Camacho, 2014). La primera se limita a

garantizar un reconocimiento jurídico abstracto, mientras que la segunda exige condiciones efectivas para el ejercicio de los derechos. La distinción entre ambas nociones encuentra un paralelismo evidente en el plano comunicativo: un texto jurídico puede cumplir su función formal de transmitir información (y, por tanto, satisfacer la igualdad formal), pero si el mensaje no es comprendido por su destinatario, la igualdad real no se materializa y el acto comunicativo queda incompleto (González, 2020). En consecuencia, lograr la accesibilidad del discurso jurídico se convierte en una condición esencial para su eficacia social (Velar, 2021).

Esta accesibilidad es de hecho la pieza clave para comprender la utilidad social de toda adaptación del discurso jurídico. Se trata de un concepto holístico que abarca todos los ámbitos de la vida en sociedad, y uno de los más significativos es, sin duda, la comunicación escrita. En este sentido, se habla de accesibilidad de la información, o simplemente de accesibilidad textual o lingüística, entendida como la capacidad de un texto para cumplir eficazmente con el propósito para la que fue creado.

En la traductología, existe un enfoque que prioriza precisamente el éxito del propósito (o *skopos*) en todo proceso de traducción: el funcionalismo. Tal y como sostiene Marnpae (2015), desde este enfoque, la traducción no se plantea como una aspiración a la equivalencia literal, sino a la utilidad comunicativa: a cumplir, en definitiva, con los fines para los que fue creada. En el ámbito jurídico, esta perspectiva permite considerar la traducción y la adaptación como instrumentos al servicio no solo de la eficacia comunicativa, sino también de la igualdad real mensaje (Axat, 2023). Así entendido, el traductor actúa como mediador y garante de accesibilidad, al garantizar que el mensaje jurídico sea efectivamente comprendido y, por ende, que se materialice su función social y democrática.

En línea con ese foco sobre el *skopos* y la igualdad real, cabría mencionar dos métodos de adaptación de textos: la LF (lectura fácil) y el lenguaje claro. Estos destacan hoy en día por ser frecuentemente utilizados en pro de la claridad informativa y la justicia social, dicho de otro modo, por priorizar el propósito comunicativo y social que puede revestir la traducción. No obstante, la elección de uno u otro enfoque dependerá,

en gran medida, del tipo de receptor al que se dirija el mensaje y del grado de adaptación que necesite para acceder al contenido.

El lenguaje claro persigue mejorar la accesibilidad de la comunicación para toda la población, especialmente en el ámbito de los servicios públicos. Promueve un estilo transparente y elimina la complejidad innecesaria, sin renunciar a la precisión ni al rigor (González Ruiz, 2021).

No obstante, la LF implica un nivel de simplificación más profundo, que trasciende la superficie lingüística del texto para actuar también sobre las barreras cognitivas, culturales y del desarrollo. Ningún texto en LF puede contentarse con ser legible y coherente, sino que debe ser también cognitivamente asequible para los perfiles de usuarios a los que se dirige. Esto requiere atender a factores como la carga cognitiva, el uso de estructuras sintácticas simples, un léxico claro y la inclusión de apoyos visuales que faciliten la comprensión y asimilación del contenido (Instituto Lectura Fácil y FEMP, 2017).

Por ello, se aplica principalmente por y para colectivos en riesgo de exclusión o con mayores necesidades de apoyo cognitivo (Da Cunha y Escobar, 2021), como son las personas con divergencias intelectuales o de aprendizaje. Esto no significa, no obstante, que no resulte de utilidad para toda la sociedad, pues la LF responde a una lógica de accesibilidad universal: aquello que hace accesible un texto para unos pocos termina mejorando la comunicación de todos.

Por ello, se pueden identificar dos perfiles de beneficiarios de la LF: en primer lugar, aquellos para los que la LF es una necesidad, como las personas con discapacidad intelectual o divergencias cognitivas. Sin un enfoque que vuelva la información accesible en base a sus necesidades, con frecuencia se ven privados del acceso a información esencial y, por tanto, de la participación efectiva en sociedad. En este primer perfil encajan también los colectivos migrantes, para los que la LF puede actuar como un instrumento de integración y empoderamiento, al facilitar la comprensión de textos administrativos o jurídicos en contextos donde la barrera cultural o lingüística resulta determinante.

En cambio, para el segundo perfil, la población general, la LF funciona sobre todo como un recurso de apoyo, una herramienta que, en un

entorno saturado de información, contribuye a una comunicación más clara y eficaz y, por tanto, a una ciudadanía mejor informada (Orero, 2007). Así, la LF se erige como una de las estrategias más eficaces para materializar el principio de accesibilidad cognitiva en el discurso jurídico (Navarro y Cuadrado, 2022).

Con el fin de pasar del plano teórico al práctico y analizar cómo se concreta la LF en la práctica, cabe señalar que en España dicha aplicación se rige por un único marco normativo de referencia: la norma UNE 153101:2018 EX, que opera como estándar técnico para la elaboración y validación de textos en LF, y en donde se define la LF de la siguiente manera: Método que recoge un conjunto de pautas y recomendaciones relativas a la redacción de textos al diseño y maquetación de documentos y a la validación de la comprensibilidad de los mismos, destinado a hacer accesible la información a las personas con dificultades de comprensión lectora.

Tal y como sostienen Jiménez y Medina (2022), en esta norma se recogen directrices aplicables a distintos niveles: formato (tipografía, márgenes, colores), contenido (simplificación sintáctica y léxica), uso de apoyos visuales (fotografías o pictogramas) y elementos paratextuales (glosarios, títulos o resúmenes). Sin embargo, su amplitud conceptual (virtud y limitación a la vez) deja margen a la interpretación y exige un criterio profesional sólido para adaptar las pautas a cada contexto comunicativo. Por ello, el traductor, como profesional formado en el análisis del lenguaje y sus contextos, parece especialmente capacitado para desempeñar el papel emergente de técnico adaptador en accesibilidad (Navarro y Cuadrado, 2022).

Cabe asimismo destacar que, desde una perspectiva traductológica, la LF se ha aplicado mayoritariamente en contextos intralingüísticos (Maaß y Hansen-Schirra, 2022), es decir, como una reformulación dentro de una misma lengua y, con frecuencia, también dentro de una misma cultura. Sin embargo, su potencial trasciende ese ámbito. Como señalan Reguera y Girón (2021), la LF puede concebirse asimismo en términos interlingüísticos, ya sea para traducir un texto estándar en una lengua A a un texto en LF en una lengua B, o para adaptar un texto ya simplificado en una lengua A a otro en LF en una lengua B. Esto cobra sentido en la medida en que las barreras a la comprensión de un mensaje

no siempre son únicamente cognitivas (Santaemilia, 2010), sino también culturales y sociales. Superarlas requiere, en ocasiones, ir más allá del plano intralingüístico.

En esta línea, Navarro y Cuadrado (2022) subrayan la pertinencia de las adaptaciones interlingüísticas en sectores como el turismo o la museística, donde confluyen dimensiones lingüísticas, culturales y semióticas. Del mismo modo, en el ámbito jurídico estas mismas consideraciones resultan pertinentes, puesto que el derecho vertebra la vida en sociedad y plantea requerimientos comunicativos específicos. En tales contextos, la traducción a LF no solo implica un trasvase lingüístico, sino también cultural y semiótico, dado que estos textos suelen ser multimodales y combinan texto, imagen y elementos paratextuales (Reguera y Girón, 2021).

El caso práctico presentado en este trabajo se sitúa en la intersección entre los planos intralingüístico e interlingüístico. En la primera vertiente, se adapta un texto jurídico de Envera para hacerlo accesible a personas con discapacidad dentro de la misma lengua y cultura; en la segunda, se plantea un supuesto hipotético de traducción simulada a otra lengua, con el fin de explorar cómo podría aplicarse la LF en contextos interlingüísticos, por ejemplo, ante usuarios migrantes.

En un mundo crecientemente diverso, este doble enfoque invita a repensar cómo hacer que el principio de accesibilidad trascienda las fronteras lingüísticas y culturales, para avanzar hacia una comunicación jurídica más universal e inclusiva. De este trabajo derivan dos herramientas metodológicas presentadas más adelante, orientadas a sistematizar la adaptación del discurso jurídico a LF en los planos intra e interlingüístico.

2. OBJETIVOS

El presente estudio ha tenido por objetivo el desarrollo de una metodología para la adaptación y traducción a la LF de textos jurídicos, tomando como caso práctico la adaptación a la LF del Reglamento Interno del Centro de Formación de la Fundación Envera. Esta ONG, fundada por trabajadores de Iberia con familiares con discapacidad intelectual, tiene como misión acompañar a estas personas en su ciclo vital, fomentando su autonomía y participación social.

A partir de esta experiencia aplicada, se han diseñado dos herramientas que permiten sistematizar el proceso de adaptación y traducción en contextos jurídicos: la primera centrada en la adaptación intralingüística a la LF y la segunda orientada a su transferencia al inglés. Ambas nacen de la constatación de una laguna metodológica: si bien existen orientaciones generales, como las recogidas en la norma UNE 153101, estas no siempre permiten afrontar las complejidades específicas del discurso jurídico, el cual exige precisión terminológica, coherencia formal y atención a las convenciones propias del género normativo.

En este estudio se aspira a sentar las bases de un enfoque más específico para los textos jurídicos. Además, se busca incorporar una dimensión traductológica hasta ahora poco explorada: la de trasladar al inglés texto jurídicos adaptados a la LF en español, sin perder los principios de claridad y accesibilidad, y sin desatender las especificidades conceptuales, culturales y pragmáticas del sistema jurídico español.

Mas allá de facilitar la comprensión para personas con dificultades cognitivas o para extranjeros, esta propuesta parte una convicción más amplia: la de que el acceso a textos claros y comprensibles beneficia al conjunto de la ciudadanía. El lenguaje jurídico no debería ser un código opaco reservado a especialistas. Hacerlo accesible es, en última instancia, una cuestión de justicia lingüística.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio se centra en el desarrollo de herramientas metodológicas para la adaptación intra e interlingüística del discurso jurídico a la lectura fácil, a partir de un caso práctico: la adaptación del Reglamento de Régimen Interno del Departamento de Formación de la Fundación Envera. Este texto se seleccionó tanto por su carácter jurídico, de interés académico, como por la necesidad de hacer su contenido accesible para los usuarios del centro educativo de Envera.

Por razones de confidencialidad, el reglamento no se reproduce en este artículo, si bien se describen algunos de los principales procesos de adaptación y se presentan las metodologías derivadas.

A guisa de síntesis, el caso práctico y la investigación asociada se han desarrollado en los siguientes pasos:

- negociación con Envera y selección del texto adaptable;
- adaptación intralingüística a la LF del documento;
- análisis de las dificultades y de las soluciones encontradas;
- comparación de las estrategias empleadas con la versión resumida de las pautas de la norma UNE (resumen elaborado por Plena Inclusión[3]);
- elaboración de una metodología, ajustando las pautas de la norma UNE a los textos jurídicos;
- adaptación interlingüística al inglés del texto en español ya adaptado a la LF;
- análisis de las estrategias empleadas; y
- elaboración de una metodología para la adaptación interlingüística en LF de textos jurídicos desde el español al inglés.

En aras de mayor claridad, se detallan a continuación cómo se ha desarrollado el proceso paso por paso.

En primer lugar, se ha planteado la adaptación intralingüística del texto desde el enfoque funcionalista de la traducción. Por ello, se han aplicado, cuando se ha estimado conveniente, las directrices recogidas en el *Resumen de pautas de lectura fácil* de Plena Inclusión (2022)[4]. Este documento sintetiza de manera clara y operativa los principios de la norma UNE sobre LF.

Ahora bien, la aplicación de las pautas ha estado siempre condicionada por las particularidades del texto analizado. En consecuencia, no se han

[3] Federación española que agrupa a numerosas asociaciones dedicadas a la defensa de los derechos y del bienestar de las personas con discapacidad intelectual. Se trata del principal referente en España en materia de accesibilidad cognitiva y lectura fácil. Véase http://bit.ly/4op8RK2.

[4] Véase bit.ly/47fViXD.

seguido de manera estricta cuando su cumplimiento absoluto no eliminaba los obstáculos a la comprensión o podía comprometer el rigor jurídico del documento, por ejemplo, al omitir siglas o terminología imprescindible, inducir imprecisiones o generalizar en exceso el discurso. A continuación, se presentan ejemplos de decisiones deliberadas que se apartan de las directrices de la norma UNE.

En el Reglamento de Envera se menciona un conjunto de documentos que los usuarios deben recibir y comprender antes de su matriculación en el centro educativo. El fragmento de origen menciona textualmente los siguientes documentos: «Reglamento de Régimen Interno, Manifiesto de haber recibido el Reglamento de Régimen Interno y Autorización de toma y publicación de imágenes», cuya lectura y confirmación de comprensión deben ser acreditadas por el usuario.

De haberse aplicado la norma UNE de manera literal, estos títulos deberían haberse simplificado para reflejar únicamente su contenido o función. No obstante, en la adaptación a LF se han conservado los títulos originales, acompañados de breves explicaciones aclaratorias. Esta decisión se justifica por la necesidad de que los usuarios puedan identificar inequívocamente los documentos tanto en el momento de su entrega como en su uso real, evitando confusiones que podrían derivarse de una simplificación excesiva y preservando, al mismo tiempo, la precisión y el rigor jurídico del texto.

De manera análoga, en el plano sintáctico se han aplicado estrategias de adaptación que se apartan de las pautas de la norma UNE. El Reglamento de Envera hace un uso frecuente del modo imperativo, y en la adaptación a LF se ha optado por conservarlo en la mayoría de los casos, ya que, en textos jurídicos, refuerza el carácter normativo del mensaje y aclara que determinadas acciones no son opcionales. Por ejemplo, en este fragmento del texto ya adaptado a la LF: «Si quieres dejar de ir a clases, debes solicitar una baja voluntaria», el imperativo aporta claridad y subraya que esta es la única vía legalmente prevista para interrumpir la asistencia, evitando ambigüedades o posibles interpretaciones erróneas por parte del lector.

A partir de esta primera fase práctica, ha sido posible determinar qué estrategias recogidas en la norma UNE resultan efectivas para superar los principales obstáculos comunicativos del texto jurídico de Envera (las cuales, por extensión, podrían considerarse extrapolables a otros textos jurídicos similares, aunque siempre con reservas dada la limitación de basarse en una única experiencia) y se ha podido dilucidar también qué estrategias, por el contrario, muestran limitaciones en este ámbito. Asimismo, se han identificado dificultades de comprensión no contempladas en la norma.

A través de este análisis, se concretan los aspectos que conviene priorizar al adaptar documentos jurídicos a la LF. No obstante, las conclusiones del mismo no pueden considerarse universalmente aplicables a todos los textos jurídicos, ya que cada proceso de adaptación requiere un examen detallado del contexto comunicativo y de las necesidades concretas del público destinatario.

La siguiente fase del caso práctico consiste en la adaptación interlingüística al inglés, con el fin de elaborar un texto no solo accesible desde el punto de vista cognitivo, sino también adecuado para un público con perfiles socioculturales y lingüísticos distintos, propios de un entorno cultural diferente.

En un primer momento se valoró la posibilidad de traducir directamente el texto original al inglés y proceder después a su adaptación a la LF; sin embargo, esta opción se descartó por considerarse poco eficiente y conceptualmente incoherente con los objetivos del proyecto. Traducir desde el texto de origen habría supuesto duplicar el proceso de simplificación y reorganización del contenido, con el consiguiente riesgo de redundancias e inconsistencias metodológicas. En cambio, partir del texto ya adaptado a la LF en la lengua de origen se reveló como una estrategia más operativa y coherente: si el texto ha sido simplificado conforme a criterios adecuados al contexto jurídico y comunicativo, dicha claridad estructural facilita una traducción fiel a su función accesible.

Además, cuando el público destinatario de la versión inglesa presenta características cognitivas o necesidades de comprensión similares a las del público hispanohablante, traducir el texto ya adaptado contribuye a

mantener un nivel de accesibilidad equivalente. De este modo, el proceso interlingüístico parte de una base metodológica más sólida y funcionalmente coherente con el propósito inclusivo de la LF.

Ahora bien, esta fase no puede limitarse a una mera traslación lingüística: requiere atender a la trayectoria vital y al contexto sociocultural del destinatario. Adaptar a la LF implica anticiparse a posibles dificultades derivadas de diferencias culturales o institucionales, como el motivo de residencia en España, el grado de familiarización con el entorno jurídico o la ausencia de equivalencias directas entre los sistemas administrativos de ambos países. En tales casos, resulta necesario introducir aclaraciones o equivalencias funcionales que faciliten la comprensión del texto traducido.

Así, en el texto adaptado al inglés se ha decidido, por ejemplo, mencionar tanto *identity card* como *passport* para explicar el concepto de «DNI», dado que este último será, previsiblemente, el documento que las personas extranjeras deban presentar.

Como segundo ejemplo de las estrategias aplicadas, y retomando el caso de los tres documentos mencionados en el reglamento, en la adaptación al inglés se han mantenido los títulos originales en español, acompañados de su traducción entre paréntesis: «Reglamento de Régimen Interno (our internal rules)». Cabe destacar de paso que, si bien las pautas de la LF desaconsejan el uso de paréntesis o comillas, se ha considerado un recurso pertinente para distinguir con claridad la denominación original de su equivalente en inglés.

Asimismo, se han conservado en español diversos términos y expresiones especialmente relevantes para el usuario migrante. Esta decisión obedece a una necesidad práctica: el destinatario recibirá esos documentos en español y, si solo se ofreciera la versión traducida, podría no reconocerlos al tenerlos delante.

Por ese mismo razonamiento, se han mantenido palabras como «autorización» o «amonestación» en español, acompañadas siempre de una traducción aproximada o de una breve explicación en inglés, de modo que el alumno pueda identificarlas y comprenderlas cuando las oiga o lea en el centro.

De este modo, la traducción interlingüística adquiere también una dimensión pedagógica y social, orientada a la inclusión. A través de la adaptación al inglés en LF no solo se busca facilitar la comprensión, sino también promover el aprendizaje y la integración lingüística y cultural del destinatario. Este enfoque, que se aparta de las recomendaciones de la norma UNE 153101 (limitada al ámbito intralingüístico), pone de relieve el valor integrador de la LF como herramienta para fomentar la accesibilidad comunicativa en contextos plurilingües.

En conjunto, estas decisiones (así como otras que no se detallan aquí en aras de concisión) evidencian que la LF, en su vertiente interlingüística, no se limita a simplificar el lenguaje. Implica, más bien, construir un texto funcionalmente equivalente, sensible a las particularidades culturales, cognitivas y contextuales del público meta.

Finalmente, tras analizar las estrategias empleadas en esta adaptación interlingüística, se ha elaborado una herramienta metodológica para la adaptación interlingüística de textos jurídicos previamente adaptados intralingüísticamente a la LF (presentada en el siguiente apartado). Con ello, se ha buscado complementar la metodología desarrollada en la fase anterior (la intralingüística) y facilitar una transferencia más eficaz del fondo y la forma de los textos jurídicos hacia contextos multiculturales y públicos angloparlantes.

4. RESULTADOS

A partir del caso práctico, se han desarrollado dos herramientas metodológicas complementarias: la primera, destinada a guiar la adaptación intralingüística del discurso jurídico, y la segunda, orientada a su traducción interlingüística al inglés:

1. Guía de evaluación de estrategias para adaptar textos jurídicos a la LF.

2. Lista de verificación de obstáculos socioculturales para traducir textos jurídicos en LF hacia el inglés.

La guía que se presenta en las siguientes páginas en primer lugar está dirigida a traductores y adaptadores que trabajen con textos jurídicos,

con el objetivo de simplificar el mensaje y ajustarlo a las necesidades de un público con dificultades de comprensión o de cognición. Su finalidad es facilitar la detección de las barreras derivadas del propio lenguaje jurídico y promover una reflexión crítica sobre la idoneidad de las estrategias de LF aplicables a este tipo de textos.

Se organiza en distintas categorías, que funcionan como un itinerario de análisis: permite comenzar por los aspectos más generales e ir afinando progresivamente el enfoque de adaptación en función del contexto y las particularidades del texto de partida.

Además, en cada categoría, se ofrecen recomendaciones sobre la aplicación de la LF en contextos jurídicos, basadas en las estrategias extraídas del estudio de campo (la adaptación del Reglamento Interno de Envera), con el fin de ofrecer una herramienta metodológica que oriente la adaptación del lenguaje jurídico a un formato verdaderamente accesible.

4.1. Guía de evaluación de estrategias para la adaptación intralingüística a la LF

FIGURA 1. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación del contenido.*

Rasgos comunes del discurso jurídico que socavan la comprensión	Estrategia sugerida
1. Selección y organización del contenido	
Alta densidad informativa, no siempre dirigida a un solo perfil de lector.	Selecciona la información relevante para el usuario final. Es mejor prescindir de datos secundarios o sin efecto práctico directo.
Mención de artículos o normativas, y cita directa de fragmentos legislativos.	Evita las referencias a normativas que pueden abrumar al usuario. Opta por explicar el mensaje sin referencias a la normativa, salvo que sea muy necesario.
Alto grado de elisión informativa, por presuponer su conocimiento por parte del lector. Se da por hecho que el lector conoce el contexto jurídico.	Añade y explica la información implícita en el texto original, para evitar que el lector deba hacer inferencias. Si es necesario, explica también el contexto en que se imbrica esa información.

FIGURA 2. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación léxica y terminológica.*

2. Léxico y terminología	
Abundancia de arcaísmos y latinismos.	Reemplaza los términos arcaicos y aforismos latinos por vocabulario corriente, a menos que el usuario deba conocerlos para manejarlos en su vida real; en ese caso, es mejor añadir una explicación.
Alta densidad terminológica propia del campo jurídico. Abundancia de siglas, acrónimos y abreviaturas específicos del ámbito jurídico.	Prescinde de los tecnicismos innecesarios. Si pueden tener cierta relevancia, sustitúyelos por términos más accesibles, siempre que ello no altere las implicaciones jurídicas. Si son imprescindibles (por su relevancia práctica o presencia en la vida del usuario), consérvalos y explícalos: - Con sinónimos en el texto. - Con una breve explicación. - Con una glosa a la derecha del texto. Aplicable a siglas y acrónimos.

FIGURA 3. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación de la sintaxis y el estilo (pt. 1).*

3. Sintaxis, gramática y estilo	
Abundancia de negaciones y dobles negaciones.	Favorece la enunciación afirmativa, especialmente para formular obligaciones (debes hacer...), salvo en aquellos cuando una negación breve sea más sencilla, incluso si es doble (no pegues a nadie).
Acumulación de la palabras o expresiones sinónimas (dobletes y tripletes).	Simplifica los dobletes y tripletes con un único término que recoja todo su significado (otorgar y consentir > aceptar).
Abundancia de oraciones y tiempos verbales compuestos, entre ellos, condicionales para expresar la idea de posibilidad.	Prioriza el uso del futuro simple y de oraciones condicionales simples para expresar relaciones causa-efecto, preservando siempre la simplicidad. Evita los tiempos condicionales y expresa la idea de posibilidad mediante adverbios sencillos (quizá, tal vez) o una perífrasis verbal sencilla (con poder o deber).

FIGURA 4. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación de la sintaxis y el estilo (pt. 2).*

Abundancia de oraciones pasivas.	Sustituye las oraciones pasivas por activas, pero evitando sujetos «abstractos» que podrían generar confusión (Administración) cuando no sea relevante para el destinatario.
Tendencia a la nominalización de la información.	Evita las estructuras excesivamente nominalizadas y favorece el empleo de verbos activos.
Formulación de obligaciones de forma impersonal (*se deberá acudir a…*).	Usa el imperativo para marcar las obligaciones de forma clara para el lector.

FIGURA 5. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación de la sintaxis y el estilo (pt. 3).*

Abundancia de locuciones prepositivas y conjuntivas (*sin perjuicio de, en virtud de, con arreglo a,* etc.).	Evita las locuciones y sustitúyelas por preposiciones o conjunciones sencillas (por, debido a, para, como, etc.).
Elisión del sujeto y abundancia de oraciones impersonales.	Explicita el sujeto siempre que sea posible y dirígete al lector directamente; evita el tratamiento de cortesía con «usted» para favorecer una mayor cercanía con el lector.

FIGURA 6. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación de la sintaxis y el estilo (pt. 4).*

Tendencia a la nominalización de oraciones.	Sustituye las nominalizaciones por verbos activos;
Oraciones largas, con elisión del sujeto o construcciones impersonales): infinitivos, subordinadas y gerundios (cuyo sujeto implícito a veces no se corresponde con el de la oración principal). Por ejemplo: *el alumno debe abonar esta cantidad, estando la entidad en obligación de devolvérsela pasados tres meses).*	Evita las subordinaciones. Formula oraciones breves y con punto final, pero evitando excederse, lo que podría dar lugar a un estilo entrecortado. Para evitarlo, opta por coordinaciones simples (y, pero, o) o conectores corrientes y claros (pero, además, por ejemplo).

FIGURA 7. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación ortotipográfica (pt. 1).*

4. Ortotipografía	
Tendencia a abusar de las mayúsculas.	Evita las mayúsculas ya que dificultan la lectura. Incluso en los títulos es mejor optar por otras estrategias de resalte, como la negrita o los colores fuertes, o simplemente se pueden añadir espacios. so flexible de negrita para resaltar información importante, no solo para términos de glosario.
Tendencia a abusar de la negrita para resaltar información o nombres de instrumentos legislativos.	Partiendo de la base de que es preferible omitir los nombres de normativas a menos que sean esenciales, es preferible no abusar de la negrita y usarla exclusivamente para resaltar la terminología importante, las palabras que se expliquen en glosas o información importante, que en cierto modo anuncia el contenido que se sigue (a modo de epígrafe).

FIGURA 8. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación ortotipográfica (pt. 2).*

Tendencia a incluir muchos subapartados. Epígrafes y títulos cuya formulación no permite intuir claramente el contenido que se sigue. Frecuente aparición de terminología especializada en dichos epígrafes.	Evita concatenar subapartados, sobre todo, mejor no crear más de dos niveles (solo título y subtítulos). Redacta los epígrafes de forma clara con oraciones activas y sencillas. Es preferible que se dirijan directamente al lector a través de la segunda persona del singular e incluso a través de preguntas al destinatario: «¿Cómo debes rellenar el formulario?». Evita incluir términos especializados en los títulos. Explicarlos en el texto posterior mejor.

FIGURA 9. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación ortotipográfica (pt. 3).*

Uso de una gran diversidad de signos de puntuación.	Termina cada frase con punto final preferentemente. Evita el punto y coma, los paréntesis o cualquier otro signo de puntuación diferente al punto y a la coma.
Abundancia de enumeraciones largas y ejemplos.	Usa tablas para enumeraciones de más de 3 elementos; también con solo dos elementos cuando estos presentan una relación dicotómica relevante. No obstante, evita abusar de las tablas. Si es necesario, se puede organizar la información en oraciones dispuestas una debajo de otra con saltos de línea.

FIGURA 10. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación macrotextual (pt. 1).*

5. Estructura y organización macrotextual	
Tendencia a colmar la página de texto.	Deja márgenes amplios a los cuatro lados. Mantén la página diáfana: el texto debe ir a la izquierda sin justificar, dejando margen mucho más amplio a la derecha (el texto debería extenderse solo un poco más allá de la mitad de la hoja).
Abundancia de párrafos muy extensos.	Reestructura el texto en párrafos más cortos y secciones claras para mejorar la legibilidad. Nueva línea por cada inicio de oración.
Monotonía visual; abundancia de bloques de texto sin resaltes visuales.	Creación de tablas o esquemas visuales para clarificar información densa.

Para complementar la aplicación crítica de las pautas de LF y dar un paso más hacia el plano interlingüístico, se ha desarrollado una segunda herramienta: la lista de verificación de obstáculos socioculturales. Su elaboración responde a la constatación de que las principales dificultades ya no se encuentran tanto en el plano lingüístico, sino en el sociocultural.

FIGURA 11. *Guía de evaluación; adaptación macrotextual (pt. 2).*

Ausencia de glosarios u otros recursos de apoyo para comprender la terminología jurídica, ya que se suele presumir conocida.	Sopesa el valor de incluir un glosario: proveer una tabla de terminología jurídica, desprovista de su contexto, puede abrumar al lector, aunque se expliquen los términos con claridad. Si decides incluirlo, cíñete a los términos realmente imprescindibles. Cuanto más breve, más fácil será recordarlos y entenderlos para el usuario.
Ausencia de imágenes a excepción de logotipos o emblemas de instituciones, autoridades o entidades oficiales.	Uso de imágenes o pictogramas como apoyo a la comprensión y para mantener la atención del lector.

Esta observación se apoya en la notable convergencia metodológica entre la LF y su equivalente en inglés, el método *Easy to Read*[5]. Ambas se basan en principios universales de simplificación cognitiva, lo que facilita la transferencia directa de estrategias entre el español y el inglés. A diferencia de otras combinaciones lingüísticas con mayores divergencias discursivas o gramaticales, la proximidad estructural y cultural entre ambas lenguas permite aplicar criterios análogos sin necesidad de elaborar una nueva guía intralingüística.

En las páginas que siguen, se presenta de manera detallada la lista de verificación mencionada, acompañadas de las respectivas recomendaciones, a fin de ofrecer al traductor un marco de apoyo flexible y adaptativo, orientado a mejorar la calidad y coherencia de las traducciones jurídicas en LF.

4.2. Lista de detección de obstáculos socioculturales

1. Diferencias entre sistemas jurídicos, que pueden exigir adaptaciones en la vida del usuario

¿En el texto se mencionan conceptos, procedimientos o instituciones propios del contexto español que no tienen un equivalente claro en el

[5] Véase http://bit.ly/4o03IZn.

sistema del lector? En tal caso, ¿es más conveniente explicarlos o buscar analogías funcionales del sistema del lector?

2. Desconocimiento del contexto jurídico de llegada

¿El destinatario está familiarizado con las situaciones en las que se aplicará el texto (por ejemplo, vida en un centro educativo, normativa interna, interacciones con la administración)? ¿Debe añadirse una explicación contextual o un ejemplo que facilite su comprensión?

3. Contenido no destinado al perfil del lector

¿El texto parte de supuestos que no se ajustan a la trayectoria o necesidades del lector (por ejemplo, nacionalidad, estatus migratorio, tipo de documentación disponible)? ¿Es preciso proponer formularios adicionales o vías paralelas de actuación que se ajusten a las necesidades del lector?

4. Utilidad de conocer los términos originales en español

¿El lector encontrará el término en español en la vida real (por ejemplo, en un cartel o documento oficial)? En tal caso, ¿conviene incluirlo traducido y acompañado de una glosa o mejor explicarlo?

5. Variabilidad en el lingüístico en inglés y en los conocimientos socioculturales del lector

¿El texto adaptado y traducido se dirigirá a un anglófono nativo o a una persona con ciertos conocimientos del inglés? ¿Es necesario simplificar al máximo el lenguaje? ¿Se pueden incluir ejemplos de instituciones o conceptos de países anglófonos, o mejor optar por ejemplos universales?

4.2.1. Recomendaciones prácticas

– Uso de paréntesis explicativos: Siempre que se incluyan términos en la lengua de origen, es recomendable que el término original aparezca entre paréntesis, seguido de una breve explicación funcional en la lengua de destino; por ejemplo: DNI (Documento Nacional de Identidad – *Spanish ID card*)).

– Mayor explicitación conceptual mediante ejemplos y glosas: Al tener como destinatario personas ajenas a la lengua y la cultura españolas, es conveniente incluir un mayor número de glosas, ejemplos y explicaciones contextualizadas que en los textos dirigidos a hispanohablantes familiarizados con la cultura española. Los conceptos clave deberían siempre explicarse, ya sea mediante glosas a la derecha del texto, con ejemplos o reformulaciones.

– Uso estratégico del formato visual: Se recomienda incluir elementos gráficos o tipográficos como negritas, viñetas, tablas o colores suaves. Esto ayuda a jerarquizar la información y guiar la lectura.

– Adaptación visual al idioma meta: Dado que el inglés es una lengua con una formulación más condensada y escueta que el español, en las traducciones, el texto suele ocupar menos espacio, lo que puede modificar el equilibrio visual del documento. Es recomendable revisar la maquetación final para garantizar su legibilidad y accesibilidad.

– Eliminación de falsos amigos o calcos léxicos: Es recomendable revisar la redacción del texto para cerciorarse de que ciertos términos no se han traducido al inglés por la palabra más cercana (y, generalmente, de raíz latina), ya que estas opciones no siempre gozan en la cultura de origen de la misma claridad que en la cultura meta. Se debe naturalizar el estilo y optar por los giros y términos más corrientes en la cultura y lengua de origen del lector.

5. DISCUSIÓN

La presente investigación parte de una problemática clara: las pautas de la norma UNE 153101:2018 EX resultan excesivamente generales para orientar la adaptación de textos jurídicos a la LF. Aunque esta norma constituye un referente valioso en materia de accesibilidad, su carácter abierto dificulta su aplicación en contextos altamente especializados, como el del lenguaje jurídico, donde la precisión, coherencia y formalidad son determinantes. Además, la norma no contempla el ámbito interlingüístico, pese a que la accesibilidad jurídica no se limita a las

fronteras lingüísticas y requiere también superar barreras culturales y cognitivas.

En este contexto, las herramientas metodológicas elaboradas en este trabajo buscan complementar las orientaciones de la norma UNE y las guías de Plena Inclusión, aportando criterios más específicos para el ámbito jurídico.

No obstante, ambas propuestas deben entenderse como guías flexibles. Dado que cada texto jurídico plantea retos únicos, estas pautas no deben aplicarse de forma mecánica ni sustituir el juicio profesional del traductor o adaptador, sino servir de apoyo para una toma de decisiones más informada y coherente con el propósito comunicativo de cada caso.

5.1. Limitaciones del estudio

El alcance exploratorio de este trabajo conlleva algunas limitaciones. La muestra analizada, un único texto de Envera, impide generalizar los resultados a otros géneros jurídicos. El tiempo disponible limitó la realización de pruebas empíricas con usuarios finales, así como la validación de la traducción al inglés con destinatarios reales de otra cultura jurídica. Además, el carácter incipiente de la accesibilidad jurídica en LF ha requerido basar las herramientas en la observación cualitativa de un único caso, más que en datos cuantitativos, lo que sugiere la necesidad de futuras validaciones más estructuradas.

5.2. Perspectivas futuras

Las conclusiones de este estudio abren diversas líneas de investigación y de acción. En primer lugar, convendría ampliar la muestra a otros tipos de documentos jurídicos y administrativos, con el fin de afinar las pautas metodológicas y valorar su aplicabilidad transversal.

En segundo lugar, sería deseable validar empíricamente las herramientas mediante la participación de usuarios con diferentes perfiles cognitivos y socioculturales, a fin de medir la eficacia real de las adaptaciones propuestas y ajustar los criterios a las necesidades de cada grupo.

En tercer lugar, se abre la posibilidad de profundizar en la dimensión interlingüística e intercultural de la LF, un ámbito aún escasamente

explorado. Integrar esta perspectiva permitiría desarrollar protocolos de traducción adaptados a contextos multiculturales y a sistemas jurídicos diversos, contribuyendo así a la construcción de una verdadera accesibilidad jurídica global.

Finalmente, sería conveniente promover la profesionalización del perfil del traductor-adaptador en accesibilidad, impulsando su reconocimiento institucional y su formación específica. Este perfil, a caballo entre la traducción, la lingüística aplicada y la mediación social, podría desempeñar un papel clave en la democratización del lenguaje jurídico y en la garantía efectiva del derecho a comprender.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Los textos jurídicos figuran entre los más complejos del panorama comunicativo: su densidad terminológica, su estructura técnica y su formalismo extremo los alejan de buena parte de la ciudadanía, aun cuando sus contenidos la afectan directamente. Comprenderlos no debería ser un privilegio, sino un derecho ligado a la justicia lingüística y a la participación plena en la vida social y política.

Garantizar su accesibilidad exige ir más allá del plano lingüístico y atender también a los factores socioculturales. Desde una perspectiva funcionalista, el foco debe situarse en el destinatario, su contexto y el propósito comunicativo, de modo que cada decisión responda a sus necesidades reales y cognitivas. En este marco, la fidelidad se entiende no en términos lingüísticos o literales, sino funcionales: lo prioritario es garantizar la utilidad y la plena comprensión del mensaje por parte del destinatario. En este sentido, la LF constituye una herramienta clave para eliminar barreras y asegurar la accesibilidad textual para los colectivos más vulnerables.

Sin embargo, pese a la existencia de una norma UNE sobre LF, existe una importante laguna metodológica en la adaptación de textos jurídicos: no se han desarrollado orientaciones específicas que permitan afrontar sus particularidades estructurales, terminológicas y discursivas. Este vacío se traduce, en la práctica, en una falta de herramientas

operativas para abordar textos del ámbito legal con el rigor y la precisión que exigen tanto el derecho como la accesibilidad.

Uno de los objetivos del presente trabajo ha sido precisamente contribuir a sistematizar esta intervención mediante la elaboración de dos herramientas complementarias: una para guiar la adaptación intralingüística del discurso jurídico y otra para su posterior traducción al inglés.

Gracias a la colaboración con Envera y la adaptación de su reglamento interno como caso práctico real, se ha alcanzado también el segundo objetivo del trabajo: contribuir a la inclusión y participación de colectivos vulnerables, como son las personas con discapacidad intelectual a las que atiende Envera. Este es un ejemplo tangible de cómo la adaptación de textos jurídicos puede generar un impacto real, favoreciendo la autonomía de los destinatarios. No obstante, tanto la adaptación como las herramientas desarrolladas trascienden el ámbito de la discapacidad: redundan en un beneficio social amplio, pues todo avance en claridad comunicativa contribuye al bienestar colectivo.

Garantizar la accesibilidad cognitiva de textos jurídicos no es solo una cuestión técnica: es una cuestión de justicia social. Democratizar el lenguaje del derecho implica reconocer que, mientras no se tomen medidas efectivas para aplicar garantizar la accesibilidad textual, la igualdad real seguirá siendo una promesa vacía: una justicia formal, pero no material. Solo si la información es comprensible para todos, el derecho se convierte en una herramienta de empoderamiento real.

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EVOLUCIÓN DEL DISCURSO ACADÉMICO EN ABSTRACTS DE TESIS DOCTORALES EN INGLÉS: COMPARATIVA PRE Y POST ADOPCIÓN DE MODELOS DE LENGUAJE DE GRAN ESCALA

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En los últimos años, la escritura académica ha experimentado una importante transformación, impulsada por el desarrollo y la rápida adopción de modelos de lenguaje de gran escala (Large Language Models en inglés, LLMs por sus siglas). Estas herramientas, capaces de generar texto coherente y estilísticamente adecuado en distintos idiomas, están revolucionando la forma en la que se produce y se transmite el conocimiento en el ámbito universitario.

Más allá de su utilidad práctica para redactar en lenguas como el inglés, los LLMs introducen cambios sustanciales en dimensiones clave del discurso académico, como la organización textual, el estilo retórico o el grado de estandarización. En este contexto, los resúmenes o *abstracts* de tesis doctorales en inglés representan un objeto de análisis especialmente relevante. Estos textos, concebidos para proyectar resultados de investigación en el ámbito internacional, son susceptibles de ser modificados por procesos de automatización que influyan en su tono, claridad y estructura.

El presente capítulo se propone examinar, desde una perspectiva interdisciplinar, el potencial impacto del uso de modelos de lenguaje de gran escala en la redacción de *abstracts* de tesis doctorales escritas en lengua inglesa. A través de un análisis comparativo de resúmenes producidos antes y después de la generalización de estas tecnologías, se pretende

aportar evidencias empíricas sobre transformaciones que podrían estar ocurriendo en la escritura académica contemporánea.

2. OBJETIVOS

El objetivo principal de este estudio es analizar si el uso de modelos de lenguaje de gran escala (LLMs) ha introducido cambios reconocibles en los *abstracts* redactados en inglés de tesis doctorales defendidas en universidades españolas. En particular, se pretende identificar posibles transformaciones relacionadas con la estandarización discursiva, la pérdida de voz autoral y la homogeneidad estilística de estos textos, considerando el papel creciente que desempeñan las herramientas de inteligencia artificial en la producción escrita académica.

3. MARCO TEÓRICO

El desarrollo y expansión de la inteligencia artificial (IA) ha supuesto una transformación significativa en numerosos ámbitos de la actividad humana, gracias a su capacidad para ejecutar tareas que anteriormente se consideraban exclusivas del juicio y la intervención humanos. En particular, los avances en IA han permitido que las máquinas aprendan de los datos, tomen decisiones y adquieran conocimiento a partir de la experiencia, replicando de esta forma procesos cognitivos característicos de los seres humanos (Routhier, 2018; Duan y Dwivedi, 2019, cit. en García Sánchez, 2023).

Aunque la popularización del uso de la IA se ha visto intensificada tras la pandemia de COVID-19, es fundamental señalar que sus orígenes se remontan a varias décadas atrás. No obstante, el auge reciente de la inteligencia artificial generativa, con herramientas como ChatGPT, Gemini o DeepSeek, ha marcado un punto de inflexión, especialmente desde finales de 2022 y a lo largo de 2023, periodo en el que su uso y visibilidad se han multiplicado exponencialmente tanto en contextos sociales como académicos.

En las últimas décadas, uno de los avances más significativos en el campo de la inteligencia artificial ha tenido lugar en el ámbito del

procesamiento del lenguaje natural (Natural Language Processing en inglés, NLP por sus siglas). Esta área ha permitido el desarrollo de tecnologías capaces de comprender, interpretar y generar lenguaje humano, lo que ha abierto nuevas posibilidades en la interacción entre personas y máquinas.

Fruto de estos avances han emergido los LLMs, definidos por Chang *et al.* (2024) como modelos computacionales con capacidad para entender y producir lenguaje humano de forma coherente y contextualizada. Estas herramientas, cada vez más accesibles y fáciles de utilizar, están transformando profundamente las formas en las que nos comunicamos, escribimos y accedemos al conocimiento.

No obstante, el uso masivo de los LLMs también ha suscitado numerosos interrogantes, tanto técnicos como éticos. Entre ellos, destacan las preocupaciones relacionadas con los sesgos algorítmicos, la protección de datos personales, la autoría textual o el posible desplazamiento del juicio humano en tareas complejas. Estas cuestiones resultan especialmente relevantes cuando se analizan sus implicaciones en la producción de textos académicos, como los *abstracts* de tesis doctorales.

Dentro del ámbito de la escritura académica, resulta especialmente pertinente detenerse en el estudio del lenguaje utilizado en las tesis doctorales, dado su papel clave en la proyección y legitimación del conocimiento científico. A pesar de su relevancia, la investigación centrada en el análisis lingüístico de estos textos aún representa un campo en vías de consolidación, con escasa tradición respecto a otros géneros académicos.

No obstante, en los últimos años han emergido trabajos que abordan esta línea desde enfoques diversos, entre ellos el análisis metadiscursivo, como punto de partida para examinar cómo los autores construyen y organizan sus textos. Estudios como los de Álvarez-Gil (2024), Castro Azuara y Sánchez Camargo (2016) o Jara Solar (2021) han contribuido a perfilar esta perspectiva, lo que ha puesto de relieve la importancia de las estrategias retóricas y estructurales en la configuración del discurso académico.

Como señalan Osorio y Añez (2017), el discurso académico se manifiesta a partir de macro y microestructuras, ambas influidas tanto por el

estilo personal del autor como por el tipo de conocimiento que se desea transmitir. Asimismo, es importante recordar que la tesis doctoral constituye uno de los géneros discursivos fundamentales dentro del entorno académico, al estar vinculada a procesos de evaluación, certificación y circulación del conocimiento especializado. Por ello, examinar cómo se construyen estos textos resulta esencial para comprender las transformaciones que actualmente están teniendo lugar en la escritura académica, especialmente en un contexto de creciente automatización.

4. METODOLOGÍA

Para el desarrollo de este estudio se ha empleado el software de lingüística de corpus *#Lancsbox X*, diseñado por Brezina y Platt (2025). Esta herramienta permite llevar a cabo análisis cuantitativos sobre grandes volúmenes de texto, y resulta especialmente eficaz para detectar patrones léxicos, estructuras gramaticales y el uso de conectores en textos académicos.

El corpus analizado está compuesto por *abstracts* redactados en inglés y pertenecientes a tesis doctorales defendidas en universidades españolas. Con el fin de comparar textos producidos antes y después de la generalización de LLMs, se han conformado dos subconjuntos: el primero incluye 25 *abstracts* correspondientes al año 2022 (previo a la popularización de estas herramientas), y el segundo recoge 31 *abstracts* del año 2024, cuando ya se ha extendido ampliamente su uso. Ambos corpus presentan una media aproximada de 14.000 tokens, lo que permite una comparación equilibrada entre conjuntos.

El análisis se ha llevado a cabo de forma mixta. Por un lado, se ha aplicado un enfoque cuantitativo mediante el uso de *#Lancsbox X* para identificar la frecuencia y distribución de determinados elementos lingüísticos. Por otro, este análisis ha sido complementado con una evaluación cualitativa basada en la inspección visual e interpretación contextual de los resultados. Esta doble perspectiva ha permitido no solo identificar con qué frecuencia aparece un determinado patrón lingüístico, sino también en qué tipo de contexto se produce y con qué función discursiva. Finalmente, se han examinado las expresiones recurrentes

mediante el análisis de concordancias, considerando siete palabras a la izquierda y siete a la derecha del ítem seleccionado.

5. RESULTADOS Y DISCUSIÓN

5.1. USO DE CONECTORES DISCURSIVOS

Uno de los primeros hallazgos del análisis comparativo entre los corpus de 2022 y 2024 se refiere al uso de conectores discursivos en los *abstracts* en inglés. A continuación, se presenta la Tabla 1 con algunos de los elementos que han mostrado mayores diferencias o similitudes de frecuencia entre ambos corpus:

TABLA 1. *Frecuencia total y relativa de conectores en abstracts de 2022 y 2024*

Conector	Abstracts 2022 (frecuencia)	Abstracts 2024 (frecuencia)
Also	13 (2330.34)	21 (1444.69)
Such as	14 (988.63)	24 (2651.07)
Finally	11 (968.63)	11 (1061.07)
Although	9 (617.15)	4 (282.47)
In addition	8 (564.93)	11 (756.74)
However	6 (423.70)	7 (481.56)
Thus	5 (350.68)	12 (825.54)
Furthermore	3 (211.85)	4 (275.18)
Therefore	3 (211.85)	10 (687.95)
In contrast	0 (0)	5 (343.97)

Fuente: elaboración propia

Los resultados muestran variaciones significativas en el uso de ciertos conectores entre los dos periodos analizados. Por ejemplo, el conector *also* presenta una mayor frecuencia en los *abstracts* de 2022, lo que podría estar relacionado con una escritura más espontánea o menos controlada, posiblemente reflejo de una menor intervención automatizada.

Por otro lado, conectores como *such as* aparecen con mayor frecuencia en los textos de 2024. Dado que esta expresión es habitual en redacciones formales y técnicas para introducir ejemplos, su incremento puede interpretarse como un indicio de mayor estandarización y formalización textual. Este patrón también se observa con conectores típicos del

discurso académico más estructurado, como *thus, therefore, however* o *in contrast*, cuya presencia aumenta notablemente en los *abstracts* de 2024.

Estos cambios podrían sugerir una tendencia hacia estilos más normativos y predecibles, probablemente asociados al uso de LLMs. Por tanto, los datos apuntan a una posible influencia de los LLMs en la selección y frecuencia de recursos cohesivos, lo que alinea los textos con convenciones discursivas más marcadas del inglés académico.

Además del análisis cuantitativo, se ha examinado cómo se integran los conectores en el discurso académico. A continuación, se presentan algunos ejemplos representativos que ilustran ciertas diferencias en el estilo y la adecuación discursiva entre los *abstracts* de 2022 y 2024.

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2022

1. exposure to legal and illegal drugs), and **also** allows stimulating protective factors and health promoters
2. longer periods and had more frequent complications **such as** gingivitis, caries, mucosal ulcers and recurrent debonding
3. to the continuous contributions of African dust. **Finally,** in this work, a radiological characterization of
4. the determining factors in investment in cooperatives, **although** its control and, there-fore, voting rights
5. into a system that provides multiple advantages **in addition to** weight savings, insulation, pipe routing, welding
6. the most relevant of all these gases. **Thus,** it is mandatory to promote the energy
7. disconnected from the scientific and academic community. **Therefore,** this thesis has a descriptive objective together

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2024

1. and speed of labor (6.3%) but is **also** associated with the highest volume of unassisted

2. of rot holes in which syrphid larvae, **such as** those of M. crabroniformis, inhabit. In chapter
3. analyses how the internal elite has changed. **Finally,** the final chapter details the conclusions.
4. independently of metallic state of these proteins **although** this interaction was stronger when only one
5. first-year students in health sciences courses. **In addition**, the teachers participating in the CPA learned
6. subsequently, the materials underwent an injection process, **thus** validating the transferability of the results on
7. in the use of plastic materials and **therefore** the waste generated. It has meant that

Estos ejemplos reflejan algunas de las tendencias mencionadas con anterioridad. En los de 2022, se observan usos más forzados o menos ajustados a las convenciones del inglés académico, mientras, que en los de 2024, se aprecia una mayor integración estructural y un estilo más limpio y normativo.

5.2. ESTRUCTURAS IMPERSONALES Y USO DE LA VOZ PASIVA

Otro aspecto analizado en el presente estudio es el uso de estructuras impersonales, en concreto, la voz pasiva, rasgo característico de la escritura académica en inglés por su capacidad para focalizar la acción más que al agente. En los *abstracts* de 2022, se registraron 239 ocurrencias de estructuras pasivas, mientras que, en 2024, esta cifra aumentó ligeramente hasta las 267 apariciones (véase Tabla 2). A pesar de que la diferencia numérica no es significativa, resulta pertinente observar algunos ejemplos representativos para evaluar si el tipo de empleo se mantiene constante o si refleja cambios estilísticos relevantes.

TABLA 2. *Frecuencia total y relativa de voz pasiva en abstracts de 2022 y 2024*

Tipo de estructura	Abstracts 2022	Abstracts 2024
Passive structures	239 (16877,34)	267 (18368,19)

Fuente: elaboración propia.

El análisis de las estructuras impersonales revela una presencia constante de formas pasivas en ambos conjuntos de datos. En los *abstracts* de 2022 ya se detectan construcciones como *be taken into account* o *It is identified that*, que responden a fórmulas habituales en textos académicos, aunque con cierta tendencia a la repetición o a usos más marcados.

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2022

1. Be taken into account for its measurement. **It is identified** that housing and labor policies are
2. In exchange remittances (EM). This thesis **is focused** in exploring the roles of the IEM.
3. The poetry of the author under study **is highlighted**. Also highlighted is the influence that more

En estos casos, se recurre con frecuencia a estructuras como *It is...* o *is highlighted*, que, si bien no son incorrectas, pueden resultar reiterativas o menos naturales desde el punto de vista estilístico. En el ejemplo (6), por ejemplo, se emplea *this thesis is focused* en lugar de una forma activa como *this thesis focuses*, lo que puede reflejar una preferencia por fórmulas más impersonales.

En los textos de 2024, las construcciones pasivas se mantienen. Sin embargo, se diversifican y muestran un uso más sistemático, alineado con convenciones propias del inglés académico estandarizado.

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2024

1. Work carried out with secondary school teachers **has revealed** to improve their willingness and motivation to...
2. A single lung transplant. Anterior mediastinal fat **was assessed** using a novel formula in a chest...

3. This financing technique **is based** on the idea of solidarity which, in...

Aquí, expresiones como *was assessed*, *is based* o *has revealed* se emplean con mayor precisión estilística y con un encaje discursivo más natural. Estas formas, más integradas en estructuras complejas, podrían apuntar a una mayor sistematicidad en el uso de la pasiva.

5.3. VOZ AUTORAL: USO DE PRONOMBRES PERSONALES

La presencia de voz autoral ha sido analizada mediante el uso de los pronombres personales *we*, *our* y *us*, ya que constituyen marcadores explícitos de implicación directa del autor en el texto. En el corpus de 2022, se observa una presencia significativa de estas formas, lo que sugiere un estilo más implicado y activo, en el que el autor o los investigadores se sitúan como protagonistas del proceso investigativo.

La comparación cuantitativa se presenta en la Tabla 3:

TABLA 3. *Frecuencia absoluta y relativa de pronombres en primera persona en abstracts de 2022 y 2024.*

Pronombre	Abstracts 2022 (frecuencia)	Abstracts 2024 (frecuencia)
we	44 (3107,13)	25 (1719,87)
our	39 (2704,04)	10 (687,95)
us	12 (847,40)	6 (412,77)

Fuente: elaboración propia

En 2024, las ocurrencias disminuyen de forma clara: *we* baja de 44 a 25 apariciones, *our* se reduce a una cuarta parte (de 39 a 10), y *us* desciende de 12 a solo 6. Este descenso sugiere una pérdida de la voz activa del autor, lo que refuerza la hipótesis de una escritura más impersonal, posiblemente automatizada.

Este cambio puede estar relacionado con el uso creciente de modelos de lenguaje, que tienden a favorecer un estilo más objetivo y neutral, que minimiza la implicación personal del autor en favor de una voz académica institucionalizada y homogénea.

Además del recuento cuantitativo, se ha realizado un análisis cualitativo del uso de pronombres personales en ambos corpus para observar cómo se construye la voz autoral. En los *abstracts* de 2022, es habitual encontrar construcciones en las que el autor o los investigadores se sitúan explícitamente en el centro del discurso académico, empleando fórmulas directas e implicadas.

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2022

1. First chapter, through some texts by Cervantes, **we** will explore the legitimacy of the <<literary
2. Been possible to find one pattern in **our** study in which to rule out PE.
3. The region. These determinations, in turn, allowed *us* to investigate the behavior of the nationalities.

Estos fragmentos muestran un estilo más activo, en el que se expresa de manera explícita la acción del equipo investigador (*we will explore, our study, allowed us to investigate*), lo que refuerza la presencia del autor como sujeto epistémico del texto.

En cambio, en los *abstracts* de 2024, aunque también aparecen pronombres personales, su uso resulta más institucional, menos protagonista o más impersonal, lo que implica una narrativa menos centrada en el sujeto autor.

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2024

1. digital practice in a transnational context. Therefore, **we** focus on the so-called yang wageapang.
2. introduced the so-called sustainability factor into **our** legal system, the aim of which was...
3. and mainstreamed well-being society has deprived **us** of. The approaches to these great cultures...

En el ejemplo (24), el uso de *we* aparece vinculado a un enfoque general, no tanto a una acción investigadora directa. En (25), la expresión *our legal system* no alude a una experiencia investigadora sino a un

marco institucional. Finalmente, en (26), *us* parece referirse al colectivo social más que al autor como agente de la investigación.

En conjunto, estos usos sugieren que, aunque los pronombres personales siguen presentes, en 2024 se tiende a una voz más impersonal y distante. Esto refuerza la hipótesis de que el uso de herramientas automatizadas, como los LLMs, podría estar contribuyendo a reducir las marcas explícitas de subjetividad autoral, lo que favorece a un tono más estandarizado y objetivo.

5.4. RIQUEZA LÉXICA Y VARIACIÓN ESTILÍSTICA

Se ha identificado en el corpus de 2022 una mayor libertad expresiva en comparación con el de 2024. En estos textos, el léxico académico convive con registros más personales, expresiones coloquiales, fórmulas narrativas e incluso una marcada voz autoral. Este fenómeno se refleja en la mezcla de tecnicismos, marcas subjetivas y estructuras poco habituales en la redacción académica convencional.

A continuación, se recogen varios ejemplos representativos:

Ejemplos de *abstracts* 2022

1. Institutionalized in the norms of intellectual property, **we** selected texts for our study that are framed...
2. Either of these languages. **The thesis ends with** a study of the implications of Artificial...
3. The service of the aforementioned diglossic interest. **The thesis ends with** the study of the implications of Artificial...
4. Of publications. In this way, **we will go through** the seven academic articles that compose it.
5. Possessors of material goods: **this research tries to account** for the loss of interpretive competence.
6. If sometimes there is one. **It is quite likely** that, both nowadays and historically, claims indicate...

7. Where imagination and linguistic recreation entertain themselves. **In my case it happens with hand, feet, nose**, etc.

8. In the law. In the first chapter, through some texts by Cervantes, we will explore the...

Estos ejemplos evidencian el uso de fórmulas como *we selected texts, we will go through* o *the thesis ends with*, en las que la presencia del autor se hace explícita, lo que refuerza una narrativa personal del proceso investigador. Además, algunas expresiones, como la del ejemplo (33), con un tono casi coloquial (*in my case it happens with hand, feet, nose…*), se alejan notablemente del registro formal esperable en un resumen de tesis.

En resumen, los textos de 2022 presentan mayor variación estilística, con presencia de oralidad, híbridos discursivos y una voz autoral más marcada, lo que sugiere menor intervención de procesos de estandarización o automatización textual.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Los datos analizados a lo largo del capítulo permiten observar una tendencia hacia la estandarización discursiva en los *abstracts* de 2024. Uno de los indicios se encuentra en el uso de conectores. Frente a la dispersión y variedad que se observa en los textos de 2022, los de 2024 tienden a emplear conectores más formales, estructuradores y previsibles. Esta regularidad podría estar relacionada con una mayor intervención de modelos de lenguaje automatizados o, al menos, con un estilo más ajustado a patrones y plantillas preestablecidas.

Asimismo, se aprecia un aumento en el uso de estructuras pasivas, aunque no especialmente significativo desde el punto de vista cuantitativo. Sin embargo, cualitativamente, estas formas se integran en los textos de manera más sistemática, con un tono más objetivo, lo que también contribuye a una redacción más despersonalizada.

En cuanto a la voz autoral, el descenso en el uso de pronombres personales como *we, our* o *us* es notorio en los textos de 2024. Frente a un estilo más personal e implicado en los abstracts de 2022, donde los

autores se posicionan como agentes activos del discurso, los textos más recientes se acercan a una voz más institucional e impersonal. Este cambio refuerza la hipótesis de una pérdida progresiva de marcas subjetivas a favor de un discurso más neutro.

En conjunto, los *abstracts* de 2022 presentan mayor riqueza léxica y variación estilística, incluyendo incluso formas coloquiales o narrativas. En cambio, los de 2024 muestran una tendencia a la homogeneización discursiva, lo que podría interpretarse como un paso hacia una escritura más automatizada, especialmente si se tiene en cuenta la creciente disponibilidad y uso de herramientas basadas en modelos de lenguaje de gran escala (LLMs).

Por tanto, más que una transformación abrupta, lo que se percibe es una transición gradual hacia un discurso académico más uniforme, con menos espacio para la huella individual del autor y más ajustado a normas, plantillas y patrones repetitivos.

Además de la estandarización discursiva observada en el uso de conectores, las diferencias en la construcción sintáctica y la expresión de la voz autoral refuerzan la hipótesis de una transformación del estilo académico en los últimos años.

En los *abstracts* de 2022, encontramos estructuras como *we will explore*..., que aún dejan ver una presencia del autor en el texto. Este tipo de construcciones, que expresan de forma explícita la agencia del autor, contrastan con las formas predominantes en los *abstracts* de 2024, donde abundan expresiones más impersonales, neutras y propias del registro académico institucional.

Este cambio apunta hacia un estilo más impersonal, más ajustado a convenciones académicas del inglés escrito y, muy probablemente, influido por el uso de herramientas automatizadas como los LLMs, que tienden a evitar la voz subjetiva en favor de una mayor neutralidad. Así, se observa una clara disminución en el uso de la primera persona del plural. Mientras que en 2022 aparecen con relativa frecuencia formas como *we, our* y *us,* en los textos de 2024 su presencia es mucho más residual.

Esta caída en las marcas de voz autoral sugiere que los textos más recientes favorecen construcciones genéricas, neutras y sin implicación subjetiva del autor, lo que contribuye a una creciente sensación de uniformidad estilística.

En conjunto, los resultados apuntan a que el uso creciente de modelos de lenguaje podría estar contribuyendo no solo a una simplificación estructural de los textos académicos, sino también a una progresiva despersonalización del discurso.

Uno de los contrastes más evidentes entre ambos corpus es la libertad expresiva que caracteriza a los *abstracts* de 2022. En estos textos se combinan tecnicismos propios del discurso académico con fórmulas más informales o incluso narrativas, como en las expresiones *we will go through* o *the thesis ends with...,* lo que refleja un estilo más personal, con mayor presencia del autor y una menor rigidez estructural.

En conjunto, los hallazgos sugieren que la automatización en la redacción académica no solo afecta a la eficiencia del proceso, sino también al tipo de discurso que se produce: uno más normativo, menos autorreferencial y con menor variación estilística. Esta transición discursiva representa un cambio profundo en la manera en la que se comunica la investigación en entornos académicos globalizados.

En suma, el análisis comparativo de los *abstracts* de 2022 y 2024 permite identificar algunos cambios estilísticos relevantes, aunque no radicales. Los textos más recientes (2024) se caracterizan por una mayor estandarización discursiva, una frecuencia más elevada de estructuras pasivas e impersonales, una menor presencia de voz autoral y una disminución de la expresividad individual. Todo ello se traduce en un estilo más homogéneo y predecible, especialmente en el uso de conectores y estructuras gramaticales.

Estos rasgos coinciden con las características que cabría esperar de una redacción asistida por modelos de lenguaje como los LLMs. Si bien no puede establecerse una relación causal directa, los patrones detectados sugieren una posible influencia de estas herramientas en la escritura académica reciente, especialmente en contextos donde prima la

proyección internacional, la eficiencia y la adecuación a normas formales del discurso científico en inglés.

Por tanto, más que transformaciones radicales, lo que se observa es una transición discursiva paulatina, que plantea interrogantes clave sobre el futuro de la escritura académica y el papel de la autoría en la era de la automatización lingüística.

Si bien los resultados del análisis apuntan a una posible evolución estilística entre los *abstracts* de 2022 y los de 2024, con una mayor estandarización, menor expresividad autoral, mayor frecuencia de estructuras impersonales y conectores normativos, no puede afirmarse con certeza que estos cambios se deban exclusivamente al uso de LLMs.

Es importante recordar que estas herramientas se nutren del lenguaje humano ya existente, por lo que podrían simplemente amplificar tendencias discursivas ya en curso hacia un estilo más formal, objetivo y ajustado a las convenciones del discurso académico internacional.

Además, debe tenerse en cuenta que el uso masivo de los LLMs es relativamente reciente, con una adopción más visible a partir de finales de 2022. Muchas de las tesis defendidas en 2024 pueden haberse redactado con anterioridad a esa fecha, en un momento en el que la popularización de estas herramientas aún era incipiente. Igualmente, no puede descartarse que parte del estudiantado aún no tuviera suficiente familiaridad técnica o confianza para emplearlas en tareas de redacción académica.

En consecuencia, los cambios identificados en los *abstracts* de 2024 podrían reflejar un fenómeno multifactorial, en el que confluyen dinámicas de internacionalización del conocimiento, exigencias formales de los programas de doctorado, y posiblemente, una incipiente influencia de herramientas automatizadas, pero sin que ello implique una causalidad directa y única.

De cara a futuras investigaciones, una línea interesante podría ser ampliar el corpus, dado que el analizado en este estudio sigue siendo considerablemente reducido. Asimismo, convendría ampliar el rango temporal de las tesis, ya que resulta previsible que el uso de los LLMs

continúe normalizándose con el tiempo, lo que podría incidir en la escritura académica de manera progresiva.

Otra vía relevante sería explorar otros apartados de las tesis, como la introducción, la metodología o las conclusiones, con el fin de detectar si los posibles patrones de redacción asistida por modelos de lenguaje se reproducen también fuera del *abstract*. En este sentido, identificar patrones comunes o divergentes en distintas secciones permitiría obtener una visión más completa del impacto de estas herramientas en la escritura académica

Por otro lado, aunque inicialmente se contempló la posibilidad de analizar diferencias según el área disciplinar, los resultados no evidenciaron variaciones relevantes entre los dos corpus generales. Esto llevó a descartar un enfoque por disciplinas en favor de un análisis global. No obstante, observar variaciones en el discurso según áreas de conocimiento podría ser una línea de investigación fructífera, especialmente si se dispone de un corpus más amplio.

En definitiva, el análisis de un corpus más extenso y con un mayor rango temporal, así como la incorporación de otras secciones textuales y una posible categorización por disciplinas, podrían enriquecer los hallazgos y aportar una comprensión más profunda sobre la evolución reciente de los estilos académicos y la eventual influencia de los LLMs en ellos.

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ENHANCING CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS COMPETENCIES THROUGH GENERATIVE AI: A CASE STUDY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a fundamental approach used to examine and interpret textual and spoken interactions within social contexts, which reveals underlying ideologies, power structures, and social inequalities (Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 2008). According to He (2017), Discourse Analysis is a qualitative research approach focused on the study of language in use, which explores how texts and spoken interactions construct meaning within social, political, and cultural contexts. In other words, discourse analysis investigates how language is employed to perform actions, establish relationships, exercise power, and shape identities. It involves the study of structures, patterns, and functions of discourse, such as coherence, turn-taking, modality, and narrative strategies to reveal implicit ideological postures in communication.

In this context, developing competencies in CDA equips learners with the ability to critically assess discourse, which enhances their reflective and interpretative skills. Accordingly, the major aim of CDA is to "to unmask ideologically permeated and often obscured structures of power, political control, and dominance, as well as strategies of discriminatory inclusion and exclusion in language in use" (Wodak, 1992, p.8). In this regard, it is worth noting that recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have opened new possibilities for enhancing these critical competencies among learners.

Generative AI provides students with immediate, detailed, and constructive feedback. This facilitates deeper engagement and critical reflection on their discursive practices (Otaki, 2023). For this reason, the integration of generative AI in higher education settings represents a significant innovation. Certainly, the use of generative AI requires the development of new competencies and the redefinition of learning outcomes. Additionally, AI tools promote metacognitive development and improve overall communicative competence among learners. In this respect, Singh et al. (2025) assert that students who utilize AI can develop metacognitive strategies, such as self-evaluation, planning, and awareness of learning goals.

Previous research has highlighted the potential of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to promote key academic skills, including critical thinking, reflection, and textual analysis, particularly in language education contexts. These tools provide dynamic and personalized feedback, foster dialogic engagement, and support learners in articulating more coherent and well-reasoned arguments. Moreover, students often report increased motivation and autonomy when interacting with AI; particularly, they appreciate its immediacy, accessibility, and capacity to scaffold complex cognitive tasks. Given these pedagogical benefits, the present study aimed to examine the impact of generative AI on the development of CDA competencies among EFL students in higher education. Specifically, it investigates how AI-mediated learning environments facilitate the interpretation, critique, and construction of discourse, as well as learners' ability to identify power relations, ideologies, and communicative intentions embedded in texts. By focusing on CDA, a key component of critical literacy, this study contributes to understanding how generative AI can enhance analytical and metacognitive awareness in academic discourse practices.

1.1. Previous Studies

Some recent studies have been conducted concerning the influence of AI in developing critical skills in EFL education. Research conducted by Suh et al. (2025) aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of generative AI, specifically ChatGPT, to enhance critical thinking and

argumentative writing skills among second language (L2) learners. Ten university students were randomly assigned to either a control group, which used ChatGPT freely, or an experimental group that followed the ChatGPT Guideline for Critical Argumentative Writing (CGCAW), a structured framework based on the Paul-Elder Critical Thinking Model and Hattie & Timperley's feedback model. The participants wrote an argumentative essay on social media, which was evaluated by ChatGPT, Grammarly, and a writing instructor using different criteria. The findings revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in clarity, logical coherence, and use of evidence, as evaluated by ChatGPT. However, the control group received higher scores from Grammarly and the course instructor, particularly in language mechanics and thesis articulation. These results suggest that AI guidance supports critical aspects of writing, and it hinders fluency and clarity in overall composition.

The study by Premkumar et al. (2024) explored how generative AI tools like ChatGPT influence the writing processes of second language learners by focusing on the development of authorial agency and critical thinking. The research centered on a case study of a single doctoral student who used ChatGPT throughout the composition of a complex academic text. Through the collection of ChatGPT interaction logs, written drafts, and qualitative interviews, the study adopted a discourse analytic and interpretive approach to examine how the participants engaged with AI-generated suggestions. The main findings indicated that the student maintained a strong sense of authorship, selectively accepting or rejecting ChatGPT's input while reflecting critically on the appropriateness and accuracy of the generated content. The tool served primarily as a cognitive partner, which helped the student clarify arguments, enhance coherence, and refine language.

Qian (2025) carried out a study to provide a comprehensive overview of how generative AI has been pedagogically applied in higher education since the launch of ChatGPT. It employed a systematic literature review methodology that involved the analysis of 60 peer-reviewed journal articles published between November 2022 and October 2023. The selection focused on studies indexed in major databases that

explicitly addressed the educational use of GenAI tools in university contexts. The review identified key themes regarding the educational application of AI, which included enhanced creativity, critical thinking, personalized feedback, and student engagement. It also categorized pedagogical uses into four main areas: knowledge acquisition, knowledge application, academic skill development, and affective engagement. Despite promising innovations, the study revealed some tensions such as concerns over academic integrity, dependency on AI, and challenges to assess AI-assisted work.

Cong-Lem et al. (2025) examined the effectiveness of a short-term, experiential learning intervention that used ChatGPT to enhance critical thinking skills among EFL learners. Conducted in a South Korean university, the study involved 58 undergraduate students who were enrolled in English communication courses. The participants were divided into an experimental group that engaged with ChatGPT through structured critical thinking tasks and a control group that followed traditional instruction without AI integration. A mixed-methods design was employed, including pre- and post-intervention assessments based on the Cornell Critical Thinking Test Level X and reflective journal entries. The intervention emphasized Paul and Elder's critical thinking framework and encouraged learners to analyze, evaluate, and generate arguments through interaction with the AI tool. The results showed a statistically significant improvement in critical thinking scores for the experimental group, particularly in evaluation and inference. Qualitative data from student reflections supported these findings. Certainly, increased awareness of reasoning strategies and greater engagement with argumentative structure were evident in this study. The research concluded that integrating generative AI in EFL contexts, when guided by explicit critical thinking models, can foster metacognitive awareness and critical discourse competencies.

Susanto et al. (2025) explored EFL students' perceptions of using ChatGPT to enhance critical thinking skills and the challenges encountered during its integration. Thirty English education students from four Indonesian universities participated in this study. Data collection involved questionnaires and follow-up interviews with five volunteers.

The survey focused on five critical thinking components: analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation. Quantitative results revealed predominantly positive perceptions of ChatGPT's impact, particularly in idea generation for writing and speaking tasks, grammatical analysis, vocabulary refinement, and problem-solving. However, concerns emerged regarding overreliance and occasional inaccuracies in ChatGPT's responses. Interview data confirmed that students appreciated ChatGPT because it promoted interaction and time-saving. Additionally, the participants admitted to depending heavily on the tool, which affected their independent critical thinking. Some noted the need to evaluate ChatGPT's feedback critically due to contextual inaccuracies. The study concludes that while ChatGPT can effectively support critical thinking development in EFL settings, its implementation should involve activities that encourage critical evaluation, cross-checking of AI-generated content, and promoting digital literacy.

2. OBJETIVES

- To determine how generative AI influences critical discourse analysis competencies among EFL learners in higher education.
- To explore students' perceptions of the use of AI as a tool to enhance their competencies in discourse analysis.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

The present study was carried out at a private university located in southern Ecuador. The participants consisted of 52 undergraduate students enrolled in an online Discourse Analysis course, which forms part of the curriculum in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program. The course was delivered through a virtual learning environment during the academic term in which the study took place. All participants demonstrated English language proficiency ranging from B1 (intermediate) to B2 (upper-intermediate) levels, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

(CEFR). This range of proficiency ensured that students possessed the necessary linguistic competence to engage with academic content and critically analyze discourse in English. The group represented a typical cohort of pre-service English language teachers in the institution, which provided a relevant context to examine the integration of generative AI tools in the development of critical discourse analysis competencies.

3.2. Instruments

To gather data for this study, three instruments were employed at different stages of the research process: a diagnostic questionnaire, a perceptions questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. Before their application, both questionnaires were subjected to a pilot testing phase with a separate group of students from the same academic program. This preliminary testing helped to refine the items for clarity and coherence and contributed to establishing the instruments' validity and reliability.

- A diagnostic questionnaire was administered to assess students' prior experiences with the use of AI tools, particularly about discourse analysis tasks. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice and Likert-scale items that explored students' familiarity with generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT), their frequency of use, and their perceived confidence in applying AI to support critical analysis. This instrument served to establish a baseline to understand learners' technological knowledge and previous exposure to AI-assisted learning.

- Upon course completion, students responded to a perceptions questionnaire designed to evaluate their views on the role and effectiveness of generative AI to enhance their critical discourse analysis skills. This instrument included both closed-ended items, using a 5-point Likert scale, and open-ended questions to capture quantitative trends and qualitative reflections regarding engagement, learning outcomes, and perceived challenges.

- To gain additional information about students' experiences, a small sample of participants were invited to participate in

semi-structured interviews. These interviews enabled an in-depth exploration of students' perceptions, including their interactions with AI tools, the extent to which those tools supported their analytical thinking, and any concerns or limitations they encountered. The flexible structure of the interviews enabled follow-up questions based on participants' responses, which ensured the collection of rich, reflective data to complement the questionnaire findings.

3.3. Procedure

The study was conducted over a 16-week academic term and was structured into three main phases: diagnostic, intervention, and post-intervention. In the first phase, students completed a diagnostic questionnaire aimed to identify their prior experiences with AI, particularly about CDA tasks. This instrument collected data about their familiarity with AI tools, frequency of use, and perceived confidence in applying these technologies to support critical textual interpretation. The second phase involved a structured intervention in which participants used the Gemini AI tool to complete six course assignments. These assignments were integrated into the Discourse Analysis curriculum and focused on the critical examination of contemporary social issues, including media bias, gender representation, political rhetoric, and institutional discourse. For each task, students were required to interact with Gemini AI to generate insights, formulate critical arguments, and evaluate the discursive elements of various texts. The use of the AI tool was guided by in-class discussions and modeling activities that emphasized Fairclough's multidimensional framework and principles of critical literacy. This phase fostered students' analytical reasoning, interpretative depth, and awareness of ideologies embedded in discourse. In the final phase, students responded to a perceptions questionnaire designed to assess their experiences using AI throughout the course, focusing on its perceived usefulness, challenges, and impact on their learning. Additionally, a small sample of participants took part in semi-structured interviews to provide more specific reflections on how the integration of

Gemini AI influenced their engagement with CDA, promoted metacognitive awareness, and shaped their views on AI-assisted learning.

4. RESULTS

This section presents the quantitative results of the diagnostic and perception surveys, as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1. *Diagnostic survey*

Statements	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
I feel confident constructing coherent arguments in English.	35.00%	17.00%	21.00%	27.00%	0.00%
I can effectively link my ideas cohesively in English texts.	35.00%	15.00%	25.00%	25.00%	0.00%
Maintaining coherence throughout an essay in English is easy for me.	39.00%	17.00%	23.00%	21.00%	0.00%
I can clearly express my opinions adapted to specific contexts.	37.00%	19.00%	23.00%	21.00%	0.00%
I am proficient in using varied sentence structures in my arguments.	35.00%	17.00%	25.00%	23.00%	0.00%
Choosing appropriate vocabulary for my arguments is easy for me.	33.00%	15.00%	25.00%	27.00%	0.00%
I regularly use connectors and transitional phrases effectively in my writing.	29.00%	18.00%	27.00%	26.00%	0.00%
I feel comfortable writing structured opinions in English.	33.00%	17.00%	25.00%	25.00%	0.00%
I am confident in my ability to support my arguments with relevant evidence.	27.00%	15.00%	27.00%	31.00%	0.00%
Writing coherent English essays is one of my strengths.	25.00%	21.00%	23.00%	31.00%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration

TABLE 2. *Post-intervention questionnaire*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Generative AI significantly improved my argumentation skills.	54.00%	23.00%	13.00%	10.00%	0.00%

Generative AI enhanced my ability to clearly present evidence and reasoning.	58.00%	25.00%	10.00%	6.00%	0.00%
Using generative AI improved the cohesion between my sentences.	58.00%	27.00%	9.00%	6.00%	0.00%
Generative AI helped me select more effective connectors and transitional phrases.	62.00%	21.00%	11.00%	6.00%	0.00%
My essays became more coherent after using generative AI.	57.00%	23.00%	14.00%	6.00%	0.00%
Generative AI supported me in maintaining a consistent central idea in my writing.	54.00%	23.00%	17.00%	6.00%	0.00%
With generative AI, I can better adapt my writing to different contexts and topics.	64.00%	23.00%	7.00%	6.00%	0.00%
Generative AI increased my confidence in expressing structured and relevant opinions.	56.00%	29.00%	9.00%	6.00%	0.00%
My writing skills improved due to the use of generative AI.	58.00%	27.00%	9.00%	6.00%	0.00%
I recommend incorporating generative AI tools into Discourse Analysis courses for other students.	75.00%	15.00%	6.00%	4.00%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration

TABLE 3. Results of the interview

Aspect	Exceprts
Argument construction	"I feel quite confident when I have to construct arguments in English. Once I know my point of view, it's easy for me to organize my ideas and make them coherent."
Supporting ideas	"Sometimes I find it hard to support my ideas with clear examples or evidence. I know what I want to say, but I'm not sure how to back it up properly."
Vocabulary use	"I try to choose the right words when I write, but I'm not always sure if they are appropriate for the context. That makes me doubt myself sometimes."
The importance of connectors	"I know that using connectors helps my writing flow better, but I often forget to include them or repeat the same ones too much."
Skills development	"I think I've improved in writing structured opinions, but I still need more practice to feel completely comfortable writing essays in English."

Source: Own elaboration

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the diagnostic survey indicate that students showed moderate confidence with respect to the key aspects of argumentative writing in English. Certainly, 35% of learners strongly agreed that they feel confident to construct coherent arguments, while a similar percentage (35%) also strongly agreed on their ability to link ideas cohesively. Confidence to maintain coherence throughout an essay was slightly higher since 39% of participants expressed strong agreement. Additionally, 37% of them strongly agreed that they could clearly express their opinions adapted to context. However, around a quarter of respondents (23–27%) selected neutral for several of these items, which suggests partial uncertainty in these aspects.

Despite some strengths, only 29% of students strongly agreed they regularly use connectors and transitional phrases effectively, while 27% expressed strong confidence to support their arguments with evidence. Furthermore, 31% disagreed that writing coherent essays is one of their strengths, and 27% disagreed with feeling confident in vocabulary selection. These findings suggest a need for targeted instruction in argumentative cohesion and lexical precision, as a significant portion of learners either lacked confidence or remained neutral in their self-assessment.

As for the students' perceptions, 54% strongly agreed, 23% agreed, 13% were neutral, and 10% disagreed that generative AI improved their argumentation skills. These findings show that most learners found generative AI helpful to improve how they construct and support arguments in their EFL writing process. These results align with Zhang et al. (2025), who demonstrated that AI chatbots enhance students' ability to construct logical, layered arguments by offering simulated dialogues and immediate feedback. Similarly, Mekheimer (2025) found that learners engaged with AI tools showed improved argumentation structures, which include stronger thesis development, particularly in EFL contexts where cognitive load is usually high.

A total of 58% of respondents strongly agreed and 25% agreed that the use of generative AI contributed positively to their ability to critically analyze discourse, while 10% remained neutral and 6% disagreed.

These results suggest that there was a favorable perception of AI as a supportive tool to develop critical thinking skills, particularly about the construction and evaluation of arguments. The findings resonate with Chanpradit (2025), who reported that generative AI enhances learners' ability to substantiate claims with evidence by providing structured prompts and elaborative scaffolds that guide the reasoning process. In this study, students similarly benefited from AI-generated suggestions that encouraged them to justify their interpretations with textual references and critically assess language choices within discourse. Additionally, Ghafouri and Hassaskhah (2024) found that AI-based tools like ChatGPT assist students in building well-reasoned arguments by reinforcing cause-and-effect structures, especially in academic writing assignments. This aligns with participants' reflections in the current study, which emphasized how the AI tool helped them organize their ideas logically, recognize discursive strategies, and improve the coherence and depth of their analyses.

The results also revealed that 58% of participants strongly agreed and 27% agreed that there was an improvement in sentence cohesion because of the use of generative AI. These findings suggest that AI tools play a significant role since they help learners produce more connected and coherent writing. One possible explanation is that AI-generated feedback draws attention to structural elements such as linking words, transitional phrases, and referential consistency, thereby promoting awareness of textual flow. These results align with Ironsi and Ironsi (2025), who observed that generative AI feedback enhances learners' control over grammatical cohesion, appropriate use of connectors, and narrative continuity. Students in the present study similarly reported that AI suggestions helped them identify gaps in cohesion and apply clearer transitions across sentences. Rizkiani et al. (2024) further support this by demonstrating that students who use AI tools frequently develop smoother transitions between ideas, often incorporating a wider range of cohesive devices such as conjunctions, adverbials, and substitution structures. In this context, AI constituted a mechanism to refine the clarity and fluency of learners' academic writing.

Additionally, 62% of students strongly agreed and 21% agreed that generative AI improved their use of connectors and transitions. On the other hand, 11% had a neutral opinion, and 6% disagreed with this aspect. These findings indicate that AI tools played a significant role in enhancing learners' writing skills, particularly in organizing ideas coherently and signaling relationships between clauses and paragraphs in discourse analysis. As noted by Hongqiao and Jing (2025), generative AI platforms like ChatGPT offer exposure to a wide variety of cohesive devices, which enables learners to move beyond basic linking words such as "and", "but", and "because", and instead apply more varied discourse markers such as "in contrast", "moreover", and "consequently". These lexical choices are essential to create flow and clarity in academic texts. Similarly, Kulaksız (2024) found that feedback from AI tools allows learners to refine transitions based on the rhetorical structure of their writing. This not only improves logical progression but also minimizes redundancy and overuse of simple conjunctions, which are common issues among EFL writers.

It is necessary to mention that a total of 57% of students strongly agreed and 23% agreed that their essays became more coherent after using generative AI, which results in an 80% positive perception. Besides, 14% of participants had a neutral view and 6% strongly disagreed with this aspect. This suggests that most learners recognized the contribution of AI to organize and sustain meaning across entire texts. Certainly, thematic coherence is a particularly challenging aspect of academic writing for EFL students, who often find it difficult to maintain unity and progression. Besides, Jasim and Musa (2024) found that AI tools help address this issue through suggestions that reinforce topic sentences, support idea elaboration, and signal paragraph relationships. Moreover, the nature of AI-generated feedback allows students to detect and correct breaks in coherence before submitting their final drafts. Similarly, Mleiki (2024) asserts that writing sessions supported by AI help reduce structural fragmentation and improve the organization of student essays.

Moreover, 54% of students strongly agreed and 23% agreed that generative AI supported them to maintain a consistent central idea throughout their writing, while 17% were neutral and only 6% disagreed. These

results indicate that most participants (77%) perceived AI tools as beneficial to sustain thematic focus, a key indicator of academic coherence. It is necessary to mention that maintaining a central idea is often difficult for EFL learners, who may unintentionally shift topics or include irrelevant information due to limited lexical knowledge. Suarez et al. (2025) observed that AI tools provide real-time feedback on content relevance, which allows learners to revise and align their supporting details with the main argument. This functionality promotes stronger cohesion across the essay. Similarly, Chanpradit (2025) emphasized that AI-generated prompts act as cognitive scaffolds that encourage students to remain attached to their thesis while expanding ideas logically.

Additionally, 64% of students strongly agreed and 23% agreed that generative AI helped them adapt their writing to different contexts and topics. Besides, 7% had a neutral opinion and 6% disagreed. These positive results evidence that students perceived generative AI as a facilitator of audience awareness and genre adaptability. In EFL contexts, where students often struggle to shift between formal academic tones, casual reflections, and topic-specific vocabulary, such adaptability is critical. In this respect, Jasim and Musa (2024) noted that AI platforms such as ChatGPT guide learners when they need to modulate their tone, adjust lexical choices, and structure their writing appropriately depending on the communicative situation. This ability to shift registers contributes to the development of pragmatic competence. Moreover, Chanpradit (2025) emphasized that by generating model texts across genres, AI tools expose students to a range of discourse conventions, which enables them to internalize stylistic and organizational norms relevant to different writing tasks.

Furthermore, 64% of students strongly agreed and 23% agreed that generative AI enhanced their ability to adapt writing to different contexts and topics. These findings suggest that learners actively experienced the versatility of AI as a guide in the writing process. In EFL instruction, the ability to shift between registers, styles, and genres is a characteristic of higher-level proficiency; however, it remains a common challenge for learners. Ghafouri and Hassaskhah (2024) emphasize that AI tools offer customizable prompts that allow students to simulate writing for different audiences, thereby improving their control over tone, formality, and

structure. Similarly, Jasim and Musa (2024) found that students who use AI tools demonstrated greater genre flexibility, showing improved organization across narrative, expository, and argumentative writing. These findings suggest that AI is an essential tool in linguistic production, and it plays a vital instructional role in discourse appropriateness.

Interestingly, a combined 85% of students (56% strongly agreed and 29% agreed) reported increased confidence in their writing because of using generative AI. This positive perception highlights the emotional benefits that these tools offer beyond linguistic support. Writing in a second language often induces anxiety and self-doubt due to fears of making mistakes or failing to express ideas clearly. Generative AI addresses these affective barriers by creating a low-pressure environment where learners can experiment with language, revise drafts, and receive instant feedback. Ironsi and Ironsi (2025) emphasize that such an environment reduces the affective filter, which constitutes a key concept in second language acquisition. Similarly, Rizkiani et al. (2024) further observed that students became more confident and autonomous writers when AI systems provided targeted suggestions that helped them clarify their opinions, refine their arguments, and express themselves more effectively.

In addition, 58% of students strongly agreed and 27% agreed that their writing skills improved with generative AI. These positive findings suggest that learners experienced improvements across multiple dimensions of writing performance, especially in higher-order writing competencies. The results likely reflect enhanced fluency, lexical sophistication, and structural coherence, which are important indicators of writing proficiency in EFL contexts. Hongqiao and Jing (2025) manifested that consistent engagement with AI writing tools promotes development in syntactic complexity, vocabulary diversity, and cohesion between ideas, as learners are exposed to model texts and constructive feedback. In support of this, Ironsi and Ironsi (2025) provided empirical evidence that showed statistically significant gains in students' writing scores when AI-assisted revision was integrated into formative assessment practices. Their study found that students who regularly revised their drafts using AI feedback outperformed their peers in aspects such as organization, clarity, and argument strength.

It is important to note that 75% of students strongly agreed and an additional 15% agreed that generative AI tools should be incorporated into Discourse Analysis courses. This high level of support reflects students' satisfaction with the tool's functionality. The results suggest that learners perceive generative AI as more than a writing assistant; they see it as an educational partner that enhances their autonomy, engagement, and academic success. Wang (2024) found that students value generative AI for its immediate responsiveness and adaptability to individual learning needs, making it an ideal tool for self-directed learning environments. The ability to seek feedback, clarify doubts, and receive writing models on demand empowers learners to take greater control of their academic development. Similarly, Chanpradit (2025) emphasized that discourse-based courses, where the focus is on genre awareness, rhetorical moves, and dialogic construction of meaning, benefit significantly from the integration of AI tools. These tools offer learners scaffolded support for navigating complex textual structures and discourse conventions, enabling them to internalize academic writing norms more effectively.

Concerning the results of the interview, learners expressed diverse perspectives on their writing abilities. They showed confidence in argument construction and noted that once their viewpoint was clear, organizing ideas became relatively easy. However, challenges were evident in supporting those ideas with clear examples or evidence, as participants often struggled to properly develop and justify their points. In terms of vocabulary use, learners expressed uncertainty about whether their word choices were contextually appropriate, which sometimes led to self-doubt. Finally, while they acknowledged the importance of connectors to improve flow and coherence, they admitted to either forgetting to use them or relying too heavily on the same ones.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the integration of generative AI tools positively impacted learners' discursive abilities, particularly in argumentation, evidence presentation, and textual cohesion. Most students reported improved clarity and structure in their writing, with a high level

of satisfaction with AI-assisted support. These results confirm the potential of AI to serve as a formative aid to help complex discourse skills within EFL contexts.

The post-intervention data shows an increase in learners' confidence regarding their writing abilities. The majority of participants affirmed that tasks based on AI helped them better organize ideas, express structured opinions, and maintain central arguments throughout their texts. This suggests that, beyond enhancing writing outcomes, generative AI fosters a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy in learners, which are critical for sustained academic growth.

The high levels of agreement in the perceptions survey, especially regarding improvements in sentence cohesion, connector use, and contextual adaptation, align closely with the areas of initial weakness identified in the diagnostic phase. This alignment confirms that the use of generative AI addressed students' core writing limitations, particularly those related to textual organization and discursive clarity.

The use of generative AI tools not only supported students to improve their writing skills but also encouraged deeper engagement with discourse analysis tasks. By providing immediate, context-sensitive feedback, AI facilitated reflective practices, which helped learners to analyze textual features more critically and consider the social and ideological implications embedded in discourse, a core objective of Critical CDA.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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RECONOCIMIENTO Y ANÁLISIS DE ESTRUCTURAS DISCURSIVAS EN RECETAS DE COCINA A TRAVÉS DE *LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS*: CARACTERIZACIÓN COMPUTACIONAL DEL GÉNERO INSTRUCTIVO

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Las recetas culinarias, a menudo percibidas como simples listas de instrucciones para la preparación de platos, constituyen en realidad un género textual con una profunda dimensión histórica, cultural y discursiva (Wall, 2016). Lejos de su aparente simplicidad funcional, estos textos han evolucionado a lo largo de los siglos desde formatos restringidos y especializados —como los utilizados por cocineros de casas reales o grandes establecimientos— hasta convertirse en documentos ampliamente accesibles que circulan en soportes digitales, redes sociales y plataformas multimedia. Su valor excede lo meramente práctico, pues también actúan como reflejo de los contextos sociales, ideológicos y tecnológicos de cada época (Rossato, 2021).

Desde los recetarios manuscritos medievales hasta las recetas contemporáneas generadas o difundidas en línea, la forma y el contenido de este género han sufrido importantes transformaciones estructurales. Este estudio se centra en dicha evolución, con especial atención a la estructura discursiva interna de las recetas, entendida como la organización funcional de sus distintas secciones (título, ingredientes, preparación, aplicación, conservación, eficacia, fuente y observaciones), según la propuesta de Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020).

En este contexto, la presente investigación propone analizar la capacidad de diversos modelos de lenguaje basados en inteligencia artificial

—concretamente ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Grok, Llama y Qwen— para identificar y clasificar automáticamente las secciones de una receta en función de dicha estructura discursiva. A través de la técnica del *zero-shot prompting*, se evaluará la precisión con la que cada uno de estos modelos reconoce los componentes estructurales de un conjunto de recetas representativas. Así, este estudio no solo aporta una contribución al análisis del género instructivo culinario, sino que también evalúa el rendimiento de los grandes modelos de lenguaje en tareas de segmentación textual y reconocimiento discursivo.

2. OBJETIVOS

El presente estudio tiene como finalidad principal analizar la capacidad de los *Large Language Models* (LLMs) para reconocer y clasificar las distintas secciones que configuran la estructura discursiva del género de la receta culinaria, conforme a la propuesta tipológica establecida por Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020). Esta estructura incluye ocho componentes fundamentales: Título, Ingredientes, Preparación, Aplicación, Almacenaje, Eficacia, Fuente e Información adicional.

A través de un enfoque de evaluación comparada entre distintos modelos de lenguaje —ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Grok, Llama y Qwen—, se persigue determinar hasta qué punto estas herramientas son capaces de interpretar de manera autónoma (*zero-shot*) los límites y funciones discursivas de cada sección de una receta, sin entrenamiento específico previo ni ejemplos contextualizados.

Los objetivos específicos de este estudio son, en primer lugar, examinar la exhaustividad con la que los modelos identifican los elementos estructurales esperables en cada receta, prestando especial atención a la presencia o ausencia de secciones clave. En segundo lugar, se pretende evaluar la precisión en la clasificación funcional de cada apartado, particularmente en aquellos segmentos discursivos que presentan una menor explicitud estructural o semántica, como son las secciones de Almacenaje y Eficacia, que suelen ocupar posiciones periféricas en el texto y adoptar formulaciones más implícitas (Alonso-Almeida, 2013; Alonso-Almeida & Álvarez-Gil, 2020).

Esta investigación busca, por tanto, ofrecer una primera aproximación crítica a las competencias discursivas de los LLMs en relación con géneros instructivos complejos, explorando sus posibilidades y limitaciones en tareas de análisis estructural automatizado dentro del campo de la lingüística aplicada y la ingeniería del lenguaje.

3. LA RECETA COMO GÉNERO TEXTUAL

Las recetas culinarias, lejos de constituir simples listas de instrucciones, forman parte de un género textual con una profunda tradición literaria, cultural y social. Desde los recetarios medievales destinados a cocineros profesionales hasta las recetas digitales que circulan hoy en redes sociales y plataformas web, este género ha demostrado una notable adaptabilidad, manteniendo ciertos rasgos estructurales esenciales y modificando otros en función del contexto histórico, comunicativo y tecnológico (Alonso-Almeida, 2008, 2013; Alonso-Almeida & Álvarez-Gil, 2020; Taavitsainen, 2001).

Una receta puede definirse, en sentido amplio, como un texto diseñado para proporcionar "instrucciones sobre cómo preparar medicina, un plato o alguna utilidad doméstica como tinta" (Taavitsainen, 2001, p. 86). De acuerdo con Biber y Conrad (2019), un texto es cualquier manifestación de lenguaje natural utilizada con fines comunicativos, ya sea oral o escrita. Este carácter versátil y situacional del texto ha sido subrayado también por Halliday y Matthiessen (2014), quienes señalan que los textos cambian sistemáticamente en función de los factores contextuales, lo que también aplica a las recetas.

Numerosos estudios coinciden en que para comprender la evolución de las recetas es fundamental considerar tres conceptos clave: género, tipo de texto y registro (Taavitsainen, 2001; Alonso-Almeida, 2008, 2013; Alonso-Almeida & Álvarez-Gil, 2020).

El género se define por sus funciones sociales, rasgos externos y convenciones discursivas, moldeadas culturalmente. Martin (2009, p. 12) lo describe como una "configuración recurrente de significados", orientada a un propósito comunicativo específico y construida socialmente. Esta perspectiva concibe el género como una unidad organizada en

etapas que persigue objetivos concretos y se desarrolla dentro de contextos sociales determinados.

Alonso-Almeida (2008, 2013) insiste en la dimensión cultural del género, entendida como una construcción social que refleja las prácticas discursivas de una comunidad en un periodo histórico determinado. En este sentido, los géneros evolucionan para adaptarse a nuevas formas de pensar, nuevas necesidades comunicativas y nuevos soportes textuales. Así, aunque las recetas siguen siendo un género reconocible, su forma y funciones se han modificado con el tiempo.

El tipo de texto se basa en criterios lingüísticos internos, como el uso de determinadas formas verbales, estructuras sintácticas o marcadores temporales (Alonso-Almeida, 2008). A diferencia del género, que responde a convenciones sociales, el tipo de texto se define por su configuración gramatical. Un mismo género puede englobar distintos tipos textuales. Por ejemplo, las recetas suelen ser textos instructivos, pero también pueden adquirir rasgos de tipo expositivo o descriptivo dependiendo del contexto o del medio en el que se difunden.

El registro se refiere al uso del lenguaje en situaciones comunicativas específicas, lo que incluye las elecciones léxicas y gramaticales que realiza el hablante en función del propósito del texto, del canal utilizado y del rol social de los interlocutores (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Biber & Conrad, 2019). Según Alonso-Almeida (2008, 2013), el registro no distingue entre tipos de géneros dentro de un mismo campo, sino que agrupa textos que comparten características lingüísticas y contextuales. Así, las recetas culinarias, médicas o farmacéuticas pueden pertenecer al mismo registro instructivo, aunque sus géneros particulares difieran.

Uno de los rasgos más relevantes de las recetas como género textual es su organización en fases o secciones funcionales. Diversos estudios han propuesto modelos estructurales para describir estas fases. Taavitsainen (2001), por ejemplo, identifica rúbrica o título, indicaciones de uso, ingredientes, preparación, aplicación, dosificación y eficacia. Alonso-Almeida (2008) sistematiza estas fases en seis componentes principales: título, ingredientes, preparación, aplicación, almacenamiento y

eficacia. Más recientemente, Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020) han ampliado este modelo, incluyendo también las secciones de fuente y de información adicional. Su propuesta se representa así:

(Título) ^ Ingredientes ^ (Preparación) ^ (Aplicación) ^ (Almacenaje) ^ (Eficacia) ^ (Referencia de Fuente) ^ (Información adicional)

En esta notación, los signos indican: orden fijo (^), fases (paréntesis), y orden flexible (*). La estructura refleja el carácter híbrido y funcional del género, que puede adaptarse según el contexto sin perder su coherencia estructural. Para que una receta cumpla eficazmente su función instructiva, es deseable que estas fases aparezcan de forma clara y secuencial (Alonso-Almeida, 2013).

4. LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS

Los *Large Language Models* (LLMs), constituyen una de las innovaciones más significativas en el campo de la inteligencia artificial y el procesamiento del lenguaje natural (PLN o NLP por sus siglas en inglés). Se trata de sistemas entrenados con volúmenes masivos de datos textuales, habitualmente extraídos de internet, como artículos académicos, literatura, páginas web, redes sociales y otros repositorios lingüísticos disponibles públicamente. Esta magnitud de exposición textual permite a los LLMs adquirir una competencia estadística que los faculta para generar, clasificar y analizar texto con un alto grado de fluidez y coherencia (Shanahan et al., 2023; Yigit & Bayraktar, 2025)

Según Naveed et al. (2023), los LLMs se basan en arquitecturas de redes neuronales profundas, especialmente en la arquitectura de transformadores (*transformers*), que ha revolucionado el campo desde su introducción en 2017. Esta arquitectura permite capturar relaciones complejas entre *tokens* dentro de un texto, modelando dependencias de largo alcance y facilitando tareas como la generación de texto, la traducción automática, el resumen y la clasificación semántica. El aprendizaje de estos modelos se realiza mediante técnicas de pre-entrenamiento no supervisado, a partir de la predicción de la siguiente palabra o *token* en

una secuencia, utilizando funciones de probabilidad condicional y ajustes de millones —o incluso billones— de parámetros.

Desde el lanzamiento de GPT-1 en 2018, el desarrollo de LLMs ha seguido una trayectoria exponencial. GPT-2 (2019) y, especialmente, GPT-3 (2020) marcaron hitos importantes, con GPT-3 alcanzando los 175 mil millones de parámetros y ofreciendo la posibilidad de ejecutar tareas con entrenamiento mínimo (*few-shot*) o incluso sin entrenamiento (*zero-shot*). Esta característica introdujo una flexibilidad sin precedentes, permitiendo que los modelos se adaptaran a una amplia gama de tareas lingüísticas sin necesidad de personalización explícita (Chang et al., 2024).

GPT-4, la versión más avanzada de la familia GPT en el momento de esta investigación, ha introducido capacidades multimodales, como la interpretación de imágenes además del texto, y ha demostrado un rendimiento superior en evaluaciones estandarizadas, incluyendo exámenes médicos de licencia en los Estados Unidos (Thirunavukarasu et al., 2023). Otros modelos recientes, como Gemini Ultra, Qwen, DeepSeek o LLaMA 3, también han ampliado las capacidades de comprensión, generación y razonamiento contextual de los LLMs.

Las aplicaciones prácticas de estos modelos son numerosas y variadas. En el campo de la educación, la atención médica o la atención al cliente, los LLMs permiten desarrollar chatbots conversacionales y asistentes virtuales capaces de generar respuestas coherentes, personalizadas y sensibles al contexto. ChatGPT, por ejemplo, ha demostrado una capacidad de interacción cercana a la humana, facilitando tareas como la redacción de textos, la resolución de dudas y la tutoría académica (Thirunavukarasu et al., 2023; Yigit & Bayraktar, 2025).

No obstante, a pesar de sus impresionantes avances, los LLMs presentan limitaciones significativas. Una de las más discutidas en la literatura científica es la tendencia a generar alucinaciones, es decir, contenidos que parecen verosímiles pero que son incorrectos, inventados o irrelevantes. Este fenómeno se manifiesta particularmente en la generación de citas o referencias académicas, donde versiones anteriores como GPT-3.5 ofrecían una baja fiabilidad al no contar con acceso a fuentes

en línea. Aunque GPT-4 y otros modelos recientes han mejorado la precisión gracias al acceso a bases de datos actualizadas y a funciones de búsqueda web, la calidad de las referencias generadas sigue siendo un área crítica, especialmente en contextos académicos o científicos (Demszky et al., 2023; Gorenshtein et al., 2025)

Además, otro desafío inherente a los LLMs es su tendencia a generar contenido gramaticalmente correcto pero semánticamente vacío o poco útil. Por ejemplo, se han documentado casos en los que los modelos ofrecen consejos plausibles pero inapropiados sobre temas sensibles, como el manejo del estrés en estudiantes universitarios, lo que plantea cuestiones éticas y funcionales respecto a su uso en entornos reales (Gorenshtein et al.).

En este marco, la presente investigación adopta un enfoque exploratorio para evaluar la capacidad de varios LLMs (GPT, DeepSeek, Qwen, LLaMA y Grok) para identificar estructuras discursivas complejas en un género textual particular: la receta culinaria. El estudio no solo explora el potencial analítico de estos modelos en tareas de clasificación estructural, sino que también pone a prueba su rendimiento en un ámbito que combina conocimiento técnico, claridad expositiva y convenciones retóricas específicas.

5. DESCRIPCIÓN DEL CORPUS Y METODOLOGÍA

La metodología de este estudio combina el análisis discursivo con el uso de LLMs para la clasificación automática de recetas culinarias en función de su estructura textual. El corpus utilizado, denominado CERC (*Contemporary English Recipes Corpus*), está compuesto por recetas originales en lengua inglesa procedentes de cuatro plataformas digitales ampliamente reconocidas: *BBC Good Food, AllRecipes, Cookidoo* y *SimplyRecipes*. Se seleccionó una receta representativa de cada fuente, garantizando una extensión comparable (entre 354 y 499 *tokens*), pero con variaciones en el formato textual.

Estas recetas se introdujeron, sin edición ni adaptación alguna, en cinco modelos de lenguaje distintos: GPT-4.0 (OpenAI), LLaMA 3 (Meta AI), DeepSeek-V3, Qwen y Grok (xAI). Todos los modelos utilizados

presentan arquitecturas basadas en transformadores y han sido entrenados con volúmenes masivos de datos. Sin embargo, presentan diferencias sustanciales en términos de tamaño, propósito, mecanismos de atención y especialización funcional. Por ejemplo, mientras GPT-4.0 y LLaMA se orientan a tareas generales de generación y comprensión textual, DeepSeek y Qwen destacan por su rendimiento en tareas de razonamiento lógico y codificación. Grok, por su parte, enfatiza la interacción social en tiempo real y el análisis contextual (Naveed et al., 2023).

La técnica empleada fue el *zero-shot prompting*, una estrategia de *prompt engineering* que permite evaluar la capacidad del modelo sin entrenamiento previo ni ejemplos. Se utilizó un *prompt* estandarizado que instaba al modelo a clasificar la receta en función de las ocho secciones discursivas propuestas por Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020).

A continuación se muestra el *zero-shot prompt* diseñado para llevar a cabo el análisis de la manera más eficiente y en igualdad de condiciones en todos los modelos de lenguaje seleccionados:

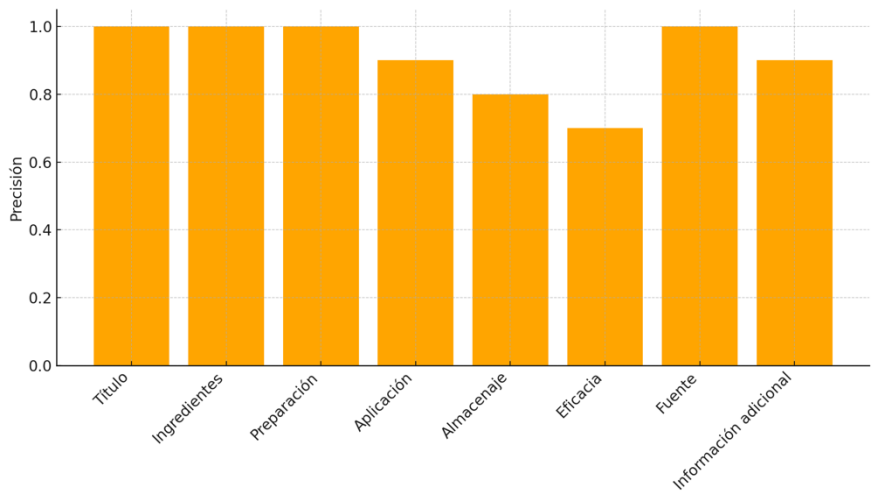
> You are a linguistic and textual analysis model specialized in genre structure. Your task is to classify each of the following culinary recipes according to the following eight-part discourse structure proposed by Alonso-Almeida and Álvarez-Gil (2020):
>
> *(1)Title*
> *(2)Ingredients*
> *(3)Preparation*
> *(4)Application*
> *(5)Storage*
> *(6)Efficacy*
> *(7)Source Reference*
> *(8) Additional Information*
>
> *For each recipe, extract and assign each section according to the structure above.*
>
> *If a section is not explicitly present, mark it as "Not provided." If a section is implicit, identify it and justify your interpretation in parentheses.*
> *Use a clear and labeled format. Do not paraphrase or rewrite the recipes — just classify and annotate as requested.*

Una vez obtenidas las respuestas de los LLMs, se procedió a su análisis manual mediante una rúbrica evaluativa, centrada en cuatro criterios: (1) exhaustividad (inclusión de todas las secciones), (2) precisión (asignación adecuada del contenido), (3) coherencia funcional (correspondencia entre contenido y función de cada sección) y (4) consistencia interna del modelo (homogeneidad en el tratamiento discursivo).

6. RESULTADOS

En esta sección se presentan los resultados obtenidos tras aplicar el *zero-shot prompt* a los cinco modelos de lenguaje previamente definidos (GPT 4.o, LLaMA 3, Qwen, DeepSeek y Grok) para clasificar cuatro recetas contemporáneas de acuerdo con la estructura discursiva propuesta por Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020). Esta estructura contempla ocho secciones: (1) *Title*, (2) *Ingredients*, (3) *Preparation*, (4) *Application*, (5) *Storage*, (6) *Efficacy*, (7) *Source Reference*, (8) *Additional Information*. A continuación, se analiza el desempeño de cada modelo.

GRÁFICO 1. *Resultados de GPT-4.*

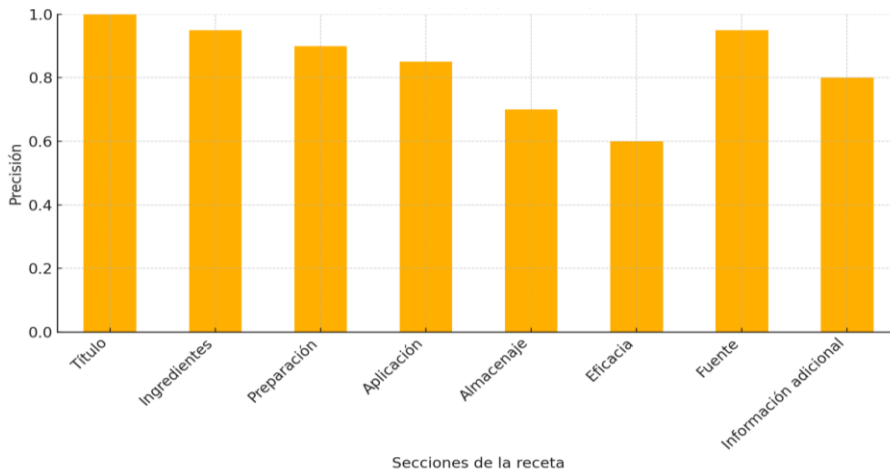


Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial

Como muestra el Gráfico 1, GPT 4.o mostró una alta precisión en la identificación de las secciones más explícitas, como Título,

Ingredientes y Preparación. Sin embargo, presentó dificultades en las secciones menos evidentes, especialmente Almacenaje y Eficacia, que fueron etiquetadas como "Not provided" en la mayoría de los casos. La sección de Aplicación, cuando aparecía de forma implícita (por ejemplo, en instrucciones como "serve"), no siempre fue reconocida como tal, lo que refleja una interpretación más literal del discurso. Aun así, su consistencia general fue alta.

GRÁFICO 2. *Resultados de LLaMA 3*



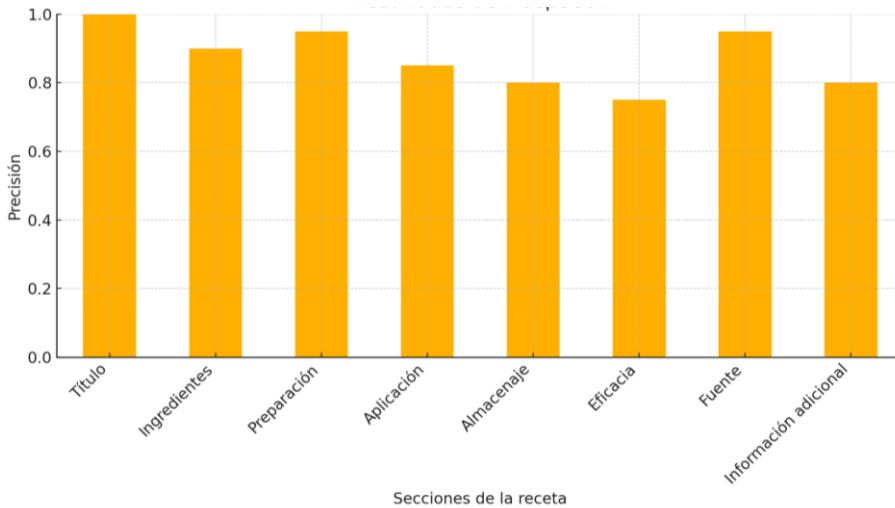
Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial

Por su parte, el Gráfico 2 indica que LLaMA 3 ofreció resultados similares a los de GPT 4.o, con una leve mejora en el reconocimiento de secciones implícitas como Aplicación y Almacenaje. Aun así, la sección de Eficacia sigue sin ser identificada en ninguna de las recetas. LLaMA mostró una interpretación algo más flexible del texto, lo que permitió una clasificación más rica en algunos casos, aunque sin alcanzar una cobertura completa de la estructura.

DeepSeek destacó, de acuerdo con el Gráfico 3, por su excelente identificación de las secciones de Ingredientes y Preparación, y mostró una adecuada segmentación del contenido. Además, fue capaz de reconocer información adicional y fuente incluso cuando estaba implícita. No obstante, como en los casos anteriores, el modelo no logró identificar

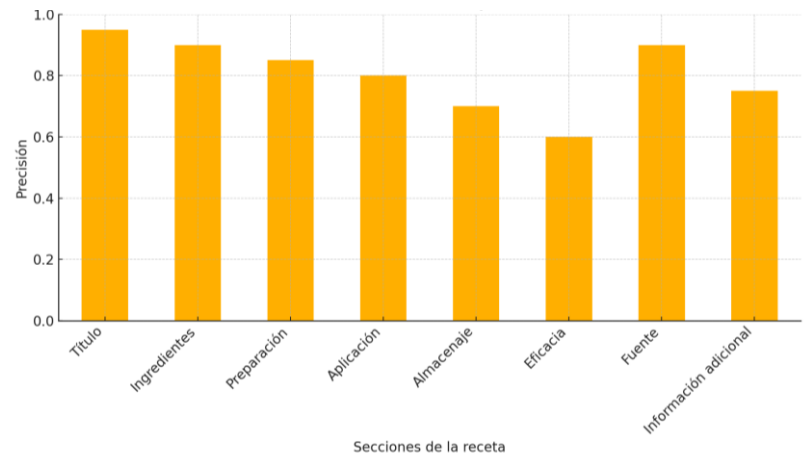
eficazmente las secciones de Eficacia y solo detectó Almacenaje cuando esta información aparecía de forma explícita. A pesar de estas limitaciones, la consistencia funcional de sus resultados fue notable.

GRÁFICO 3. *Resultados de DeepSeek.*



Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial.

GRÁFICA 4. *Resultados de Qwen*



Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial.

Qwen también presentó una fuerte capacidad de análisis en Ingredientes y Preparación, como indica el Gráfico 4, pero mostró vacíos importantes en las secciones de Aplicación, Almacenaje, Eficacia e Información adicional. En varios casos, el modelo no fue capaz de detectar fragmentos implícitos o interpretar elementos contextuales, lo que sugiere una menor flexibilidad interpretativa. Esta carencia limita su utilidad en tareas que requieren inferencia discursiva.

GRÁFICO 5. *Resultados de Grok.*



Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial.

Finalmente, el gráfico 5 señala que Grok demostró un rendimiento global comparable al de DeepSeek. Fue capaz de identificar correctamente las secciones más estructuradas (Título, Ingredientes, Preparación) y, en algunos casos, interpretó correctamente fragmentos implícitos como Aplicación o Fuente. No obstante, la sección de Eficacia continuó siendo un punto débil. En cuanto a Información adicional, el modelo logró detectarla parcialmente cuando estaba claramente separada del cuerpo de la receta.

De forma global, todos los modelos analizaron con precisión las secciones más visibles del género, pero presentaron carencias significativas en

las secciones periféricas y menos marcadas discursivamente. La capacidad de inferencia y la sensibilidad a la estructura implícita parecen ser los factores diferenciales en el rendimiento. Grok y DeepSeek se mostraron algo más competentes en estos aspectos, mientras que GPT 4.o y LLaMA 3 destacan por su consistencia en las secciones centrales. Qwen, aunque competente en lo estructural, evidenció mayores dificultades en las zonas liminales del texto instructivo.

Los resultados sugieren que, si bien los LLM pueden ser herramientas eficaces para la clasificación estructural de recetas, su rendimiento varía según la complejidad discursiva y la necesidad de inferencias implícitas.

7. DISCUSIÓN

En esta sección se interpretan y discuten los resultados obtenidos por los cinco modelos de lenguaje evaluados (ChatGPT-4.o, DeepSeek-V3, LLaMA 3.1, Qwen 3 y Grok 3) en la clasificación de recetas culinarias conforme a la estructura discursiva propuesta por Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020). La evaluación se llevó a cabo utilizando un *zero-shot prompt* estandarizado y una rúbrica analítica basada en cuatro criterios: exhaustividad, precisión, consistencia interna y coherencia funcional.

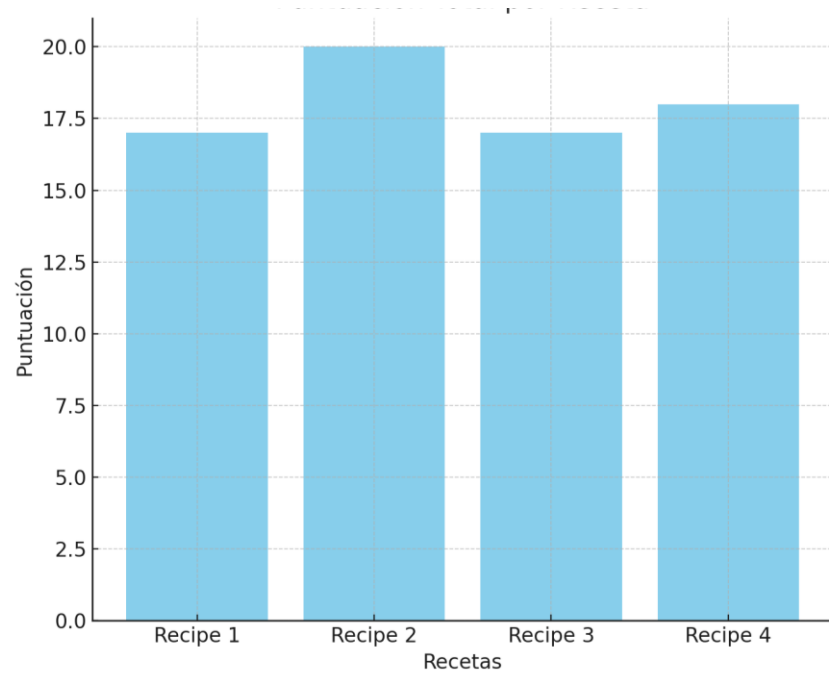
Como muestran las Gráficas 1 a 5, los modelos presentaron un rendimiento notablemente alto en las secciones más explícitas: Título, Ingredientes y Preparación, con puntuaciones cercanas al 100 % en todos los casos. Estas secciones son fáciles de detectar debido a su presentación clara y convencional en las recetas. En cambio, las secciones Almacenaje, Eficacia, Aplicación e Información adicional representaron un mayor desafío para todos los modelos.

En particular, GPT-4.o y DeepSeek-V3 lograron identificar con mayor coherencia las secciones implícitas como “Aplicación” y, en menor medida, “Información adicional”, lo que les permitió alcanzar una mayor puntuación general. No obstante, ambos modelos fallaron sistemáticamente en la detección explícita de “Eficacia”, y solo en un caso reconocieron el “Almacenaje”, lo cual muestra que estas categorías siguen siendo difíciles de inferir, incluso para modelos avanzados.

LLaMA 3.1 y Grok 3, en cambio, mostraron un rendimiento inferior, particularmente en las categorías menos evidentes. LLaMA presentó mayor dificultad para mantener la consistencia interna en la segmentación, mientras que Grok, orientado a la interacción conversacional y el análisis en tiempo real, mostró limitaciones en tareas estructurales más estáticas como la clasificación textual.

Qwen 3 se situó en un punto intermedio. Su desempeño fue estable en secciones evidentes y razonable en "Aplicación" e "Información adicional", aunque mostró menor precisión al clasificar "Almacenaje" y "Eficacia". Su rendimiento, aunque más consistente que el de LLaMA y Grok, no alcanzó los niveles de exhaustividad ni de coherencia de ChatGPT o DeepSeek.

GRÁFICA 6. *Puntuación total por Receta.*



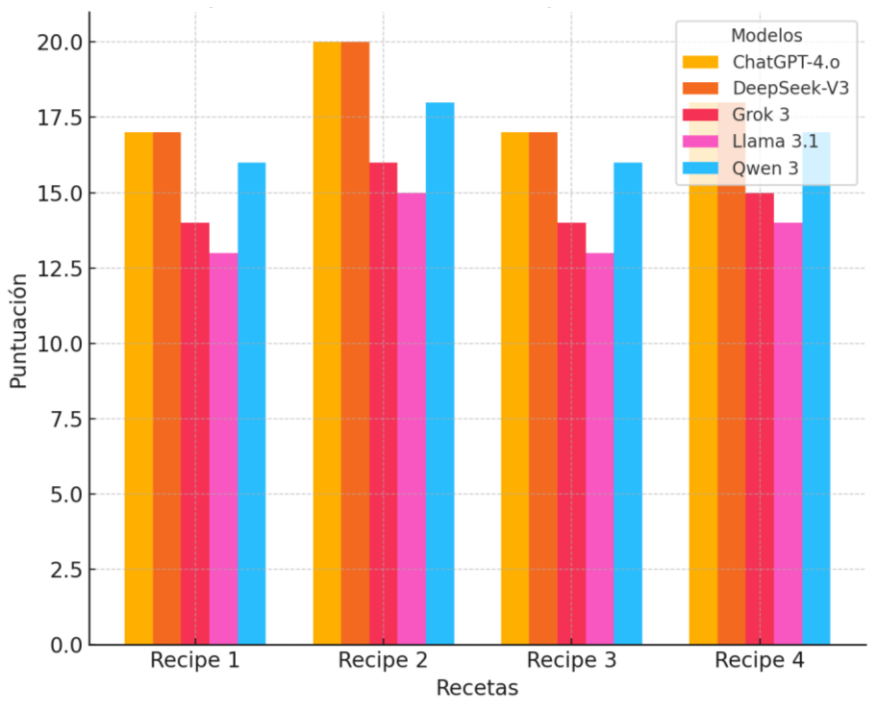
Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial.

La rúbrica aplicada permitió valorar de manera objetiva la alineación de las recetas con el modelo estructural propuesto. Como muestra la

Gráfica 6 (Puntuación total por receta), la receta 2 (*Ultimate Roast Potatoes*) alcanzó la mejor puntuación global (20/32), seguida por la receta 4 (18/32), mientras que las recetas 1 y 3 obtuvieron una puntuación de 17/32.

En la Gráfica 7 (Comparación de resultados por modelo), se observa que GPT-4.o y DeepSeek-V3 lideran en puntuación total, alcanzando el máximo en la receta 2. Estos modelos obtuvieron puntuaciones consistentes en las cuatro recetas, con buenos niveles de precisión y coherencia funcional, lo que indica una capacidad robusta para interpretar la estructura de las recetas en distintos contextos y formatos.

GRÁFICA 7. *Comparación de Resultados por modelo de LLM.*



Fuente: elaboración propia asistida por Inteligencia Artificial

Por otro lado, LLaMA 3.1 y Grok 3 mostraron menor rendimiento, en parte debido a una menor exhaustividad y a errores en la identificación funcional de secciones menos explícitas. Qwen 3, si bien logró puntajes

intermedios, mostró una segmentación aceptable en las recetas 2 y 4, aunque fue menos preciso en las otras dos.

Estos resultados reflejan una tendencia clara: los modelos LLM actuales son altamente eficaces en tareas de clasificación textual cuando las secciones son explícitas y tienen etiquetas convencionales. Sin embargo, su rendimiento disminuye cuando deben inferir o reconstruir secciones implícitas, como "Aplicación", "Almacenaje" o "Eficacia", especialmente si estas no están formalmente marcadas.

Además, se observa que incluso los modelos más avanzados aún dependen en gran medida de la forma superficial del texto, lo cual limita su capacidad para captar la funcionalidad discursiva completa de los géneros especializados como la receta culinaria. Esta carencia plantea desafíos importantes para su aplicación en contextos donde se requiere una lectura más profunda y funcional del texto.

8. CONCLUSIONES

Este estudio ha tenido como objetivo principal evaluar la capacidad de los LLMs para clasificar recetas culinarias según la estructura discursiva propuesta por Alonso-Almeida y Álvarez-Gil (2020). A través de la aplicación de un *zero-shot prompt* y una rúbrica basada en cuatro criterios —exhaustividad, precisión, consistencia interna y coherencia funcional— se analizaron cinco modelos: ChatGPT-4.o, DeepSeek-V3, Qwen 3, LLaMA 3.1 y Grok 3.

En relación con el primer objetivo, se observa que los modelos más avanzados como ChatGPT-4.o y DeepSeek-V3 logran identificar con éxito las secciones más explícitas de las recetas, como Título, Ingredientes y Preparación. No obstante, todos los modelos presentaron dificultades al abordar secciones más implícitas o menos frecuentes como Almacenaje y Eficacia, cuya ausencia o ambigüedad afectó la puntuación total de cada receta. Esto indica que la exhaustividad sigue siendo un reto, especialmente cuando la estructura del texto no delimita claramente estas partes.

Respecto al segundo objetivo, centrado en la precisión, los resultados muestran que si bien los LLMs logran clasificar con relativa fidelidad las secciones evidentes, cometen errores o muestran imprecisiones en categorías como Fuente o Información adicional, que suelen integrarse de forma implícita en los metadatos del texto o en encabezamientos no estandarizados. Estas imprecisiones afectan también la coherencia funcional, ya que no siempre permiten una navegación clara y práctica por las distintas secciones de la receta.

Por otro lado, modelos como Grok 3 y LLaMA 3.1 mostraron un rendimiento más limitado. En general, tuvieron dificultades tanto en la identificación de apartados complejos como en la segmentación coherente del texto. En estos casos, se observó una tendencia a agrupar o confundir secciones discursivas distintas, lo cual impactó negativamente en la consistencia interna del análisis.

Qwen 3, por su parte, ofreció un rendimiento intermedio: aunque clasifica correctamente muchas secciones básicas, presenta cierta inestabilidad en la delimitación de Aplicación e Información adicional, y en ocasiones mezcla categorías que deberían estar separadas.

Además, este estudio ha puesto de relieve cómo la digitalización y el formato interactivo de las recetas contemporáneas (con vídeos, enlaces y recursos multimedia) desafían la rigidez de los modelos discursivos tradicionales. A pesar de ello, la estructura clásica sigue siendo operativa como marco de referencia para el análisis lingüístico, y los LLMs muestran signos claros de adaptación progresiva a estos nuevos formatos híbridos.

En resumen, los resultados señalan que los LLMs avanzados ya pueden segmentar y clasificar eficazmente textos instruccionales complejos como las recetas culinarias, especialmente cuando estas siguen una estructura clara. No obstante, aún existe margen de mejora. Las secciones implícitas, ambiguas o culturalmente determinadas siguen representando un desafío. Futuros trabajos podrían centrarse en refinar el diseño de prompts, en el desarrollo de sistemas de aprendizaje por refuerzo o en el uso de corpus anotados para mejorar la capacidad interpretativa de estos modelos.

9. AGRADECIMIENTOS Y APOYOS

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A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON: SPANISH, MEXICAN, AND HONDURAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' VIEWS ON ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is an essential component of effective oral communication, and it has inevitably been one of the most common and complex problems for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students worldwide. In modern language teaching methodologies, in which grammatical structures and lexis development typically hold a primary position, pronunciation is generally relegated to a secondary role, despite its significant contribution to three key areas of communication: linguistic intelligibility (the capacity to be understood), speaker confidence (the belief in one's ability to communicate effectively and express oneself clearly), and sociolinguistic judgment (the way speakers are evaluated within social and working environments). This knowledge gap is especially with regard to the complex nature of students' perceptions of pronunciation; these perceptions are founded upon a conflicting tension between a legitimate desire to improve and an inevitably inaccurate conception

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of what is possible and what are suitable benchmarks in an age where English is used as a global lingua franca.

This problem is further complicated when the changing nature of English pronunciation norms is considered. Conventional approaches favoring native-speaker standards (typically British, Australian, or American general accents) are increasingly challenged by the reality of English as a global language, where mutual intelligibility rather than accent purity governs successful communication (Kubota, 2012). This paradigm shift has created a disconnect between learners' deeply ingrained ideas of "correct" pronunciation and the actual communicative demands of global communication. Furthermore, the dissemination of English varieties through digital media and international education has led to unprecedented accent diversity, confusing many learners about whom to model themselves after and how to prioritize their pronunciation (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015).

Three fundamental notions must be fully understood: perception, pronunciation, and intelligibility. Perception is a term employed to refer to the dynamic mental process through which people structure, interpret, and make sense of stimuli from the environment. This complex mental process transforms raw sensory data into meaningful experiences by combining new information with previous knowledge, memories, expectations, and cultural histories (Stevens, 2005). Perception, rather than the passive reception of information, entails considerable interpretation, pattern recognition, and selective listening, leading to subjective experiences that often diverge from objective reality. According to Luria (1994), “the integral perception of the object arises as a result of a complex analytical-synthetic work, which highlights some essential features and keeps others that are not essential inhibited and combines the perceived details into a conscious whole” (p. 60). Burn (2010) established that:

> Perception is the process by which individuals register and evaluate information detected from the internal or external environment, consciously or unconsciously. For a stimulus to be perceived, information about it must first be detected and then undergo processing. An important aspect of perception is that the resulting representation of reality differs from reality itself; individuals sample information and then form representations about the world and their situation in it. (p. 459)

English pronunciation is the unity of speech sounds, stress, rhythm, and intonation to express meaning in spoken English. Effectiveness in communication and intelligibility is achieved through the integration of suprasegmental features (such as stress, timing, and pitch variation) and segmental aspects (including single vowels and consonants) (Carley & Mees, 2024). Global English varieties have phonological conventions but are mutually intelligible, with very different pronunciation forms compared to native accents, such as British or American English, regional varieties, and non-native varieties. Correct pronunciation involves more than the proper articulation of sounds; it also involves the appropriate use of prosodic features that signal attitude, meaning, grammatical structure, and allied speech phenomena such as linking and reduction. Though target pronunciation norms may differ, improved pronunciation in a language facilitates communication, decreases miscommunication, and promotes social integration (Derwing & Munro, 2015). Language acquisition through learning pronunciation leads to improved communication, reduced misunderstandings, and enhanced social integration. However, target pronunciation norms may differ, with native-like precision or functional intelligibility for global purposes. English pronunciation encompasses phonetics, phonology, and sociolinguistics to understand how English sounds function when listening to the language and how they are produced. Therefore, Cruttenden (2008) enunciates the following:

> The term 'pronunciation' covers both phonetics and phonemics. Moreover, it also encompasses the prosody of English, i.e., the 'suprasegmentals' which operate on longer stretches of utterances than sounds or phonemes. Prosody deals with how words and sentences are accented and how pitch, loudness, and length work to produce rhythm and intonation. (p. 4)

When talking about English pronunciation, O'Connor (1980) mentioned that

> …there are as many different kinds of English as there are speakers of it; no two people speak exactly alike; we can always hear differences between them; and the pronunciation of English varies a great deal in different geographical areas. (p. 5)

Indeed, what matters is intelligibility. This term refers to the extent to which a listener comprehends a speaker's oral message in a specific communicative context. It represents the fundamental criterion for successful spoken interaction, emphasizing functional comprehension rather than accent purity or grammatical perfection. In simple words, it is an 'accepted' and understandable pronunciation. In this sense, Kenworthy (1987) indicated:

> Intelligibility is being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation. So, it is the same as 'understandability.' […] the more words a listener is able to identify accurately when said by a particular speaker, the more intelligible that speaker is. Since the words are made up of sounds, it seems that what we are talking about is the issue of the equivalence of sounds. If the foreign speaker substitutes one sound or feature of pronunciation for another, and the result is that the listener hears a different word or phrase from the one the speaker was aiming to say, we say that the foreigner's speech is unintelligible. Likewise, if the foreign speaker substitutes a sound in a particular word, but the word is nonetheless understood, then we say the speech is intelligible. (p. 13)

1.1. Literature review

Research has made English pronunciation analysis its primary focus, as studies on the pronunciation attitudes of foreign language English students reveal various methods and different sociolinguistic environments. Bakoko et al. (2023) analyzed the attitudes of Buddhist and Muslim EFL students toward their English pronunciation proficiency, which expanded on earlier research in language attitudes. With a mixed-methodology approach, the study distributed questionnaires to 60 undergraduate students at a university in southern Thailand and assessed their pronunciation through standardized means. Quantitative results indicated that both groups had moderately positive attitudes towards pronunciation capacity while being cognizant of fine-grained perceptions about language learning. Their cultural background influences EFL students' self-perception of their pronunciation ability. Through his research, Kang (2014) investigated how students viewed and anticipated their pronunciation abilities. The study evaluated six countries, comprising 617 participants from the United States and New Zealand as part of the Inner Circle, South Africa and Pakistan as part of the Outer Circle, and Japan and South Korea, which belong to the Expanding Circle. A

questionnaire was applied as a tool to collect data. Findings reveal significant differences among learners in the three circles of countries regarding the need and desire for students' pronunciation improvement and expectations. As might be expected, students' dissatisfaction with their pronunciation instruction was apparent in all three circles.

Furthermore, Zafary (2021) investigated Afghan EFL students' attitudes toward English pronunciation by analyzing four key factors: positivity and perceived importance, as well as learning enthusiasm and difficulty level. The researcher distributed a Likert-scale questionnaire to 100 English students enrolled at Takhar University. Students demonstrate positive attitudes and strong motivation toward pronunciation practice, yet they simultaneously perceive it as a challenging aspect of language acquisition. The research revealed contradictory learning experiences: although students find studying English pronunciation very enjoyable, they also believe it to be a difficult ability to acquire. Buangam et al. (2018) researched the relationship between self-reported pronunciation abilities and the practical performance of advanced university learners from Northeast Thailand. This study selected ten students from a class of twenty-nine through a random sampling methodology before gathering interview and observational data. Findings highlight the considerable influence of self-perception on pronunciation development, revealing that learners' confidence levels, often affected by sociolinguistic anxiety, substantially impacted their classroom performance and progress.

Similarly, Prado Aviña (2024) investigated the attitudes of EFL learners at different proficiency levels (beginner to upper-intermediate) at the University of Guanajuato toward acquiring native-like English pronunciation in a classroom context with native-speaking instructors. Throughout a qualitative paradigm, a semi-structured interview was used to gather information from four female students. The results reveal a tension between students' desire for native-like proficiency and the practical obstacles they encounter when attempting to reach this goal without full immersion in an English-speaking environment. Also, Santos Díaz et al. (2024) explored pronunciation practice, teaching, and learning English as a foreign language in a Spanish classroom. To develop the study, they work with a sample of 494 students and 127

teachers. The data were collected through questionnaires from students in the pre-university stage and the university stage in Spain. Students were asked if they could discern the difference between a non-native English speaker model and understandable and comprehensible pronunciation; the results showed that students either did not perceive any differences or reported that both models had distinct qualities.

In Canada, Derwing and Rossiter (2002) examined the perceptions of 100 adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners from 19 distinct L1 backgrounds through questionnaire responses. The data revealed a significant disconnect between learners' self-reported difficulties (particularly with suprasegmental features), their awareness of accent management, and their approaches to communication breakdowns, highlighting important gaps in contemporary pronunciation pedagogy. Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012) examined the factors that influence English pronunciation learning among EFL students in a study focused on learner-centered perceptions. Drawing from a range of classroom contexts, the research emphasized how attitudes, motivation, exposure, and the quality of instruction shape students' pronunciation development. Learners identified key variables such as the importance of intelligibility over native-like accuracy, the role of self-confidence, and the presence or absence of explicit instruction. The study also highlighted how psychological and environmental factors, including teachers' own pronunciation, affect students' willingness to engage in pronunciation practice. Findings revealed that positive attitudes and supportive learning environments foster better outcomes, while lack of focused instruction often leads to stagnation. The author concluded that teaching pronunciation effectively requires both pedagogical awareness and the active involvement of learners in setting realistic goals aligned with communicative needs. Tokumoto and Shibata (2011) conducted a study on Asian university students who evaluated their L1-accented English speech, using participants from Korea, Japan, and Malaysia. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The findings confirmed significant cultural differences, as Malaysian students strongly endorsed their local variety of English, whereas Japanese and Korean students showed a preference for native English speech. All participants judged Japanese-

accented English as the most undesirable pronunciation; however, Japanese students expressed the most negative opinions among the three groups studied.

1.2. Research justification

This research examines EFL learners' perceptions of English pronunciation, being significant due to the important motivational factors involved. Pronunciation is an important but often overlooked part of language skills that has a detrimental impact on how successfully students communicate in English. Grammar and vocabulary development research has dominated the discipline; nonetheless, pronunciation remains a significant issue for students, reducing their ability to be understood and their confidence in speaking English. This study addresses a gap by examining student attitudes toward pronunciation learning, as these attitudes provide essential insights into the psychological and social aspects of pronunciation development. The expanding global use of English has made traditional definitions of "accurate" pronunciation more challenging to determine. Students in modern times hear multiple English accents through their media consumption, educational institutions, and cross-cultural exchanges, which produces confusion regarding their target model choice. Academic institutions often expect their students to emulate native speech, although reports suggest it is more important to be understood than to perfect an accent. This research reveals how students handle multiple pronunciation standards and identifies the degree to which their pronunciation targets realistic conversation abilities.

Instructional inconsistency in pronunciation is a common issue in English as a Foreign Language classrooms because teachers often receive insufficient phonetic training and lack specific pedagogical guidelines. The research examined how instruction can align with learners by assessing their self-perceptions, as well as evaluating their motivations and frustrations. Understanding what motivates learners to avoid native-like models when dealing with accent variations enables educators to develop educational practices that support all learners. The societal consequences of pronunciation in language learning cannot be ignored, as they are significant. Non-native speakers often encounter

discrimination from native speakers in school, the workplace, and during social encounters due to accent bias (de Pietro, 2022). This study provides fundamental knowledge about pronunciation targets driven by individual and societal factors while offering guidance for combating linguistic insecurity and ensuring fair communication practices.

Given these factors, this research contributes to theory and practice by bridging the gap between learners' perceptions and instructional approaches. It demands an innovative approach to pronunciation education that prioritizes functional intelligibility, student autonomy, and respect for language diversity in an increasingly interconnected world. As a result, it is vital to investigate EFL learners' views regarding pronunciation by examining their responses to self-evaluation, accent preferences, and perceived difficulties.

2. OBJECTIVE

This study aims to examine EFL learners' perceptions of English pronunciation, focusing on their awareness of pronunciation challenges, attitudes toward different pronunciation models (native-like vs. intelligibility-focused), and the influence of their learning experiences on these perceptions.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was a quantitative descriptive research. It used a quantitative approach because it "involves studies that make use of statistical analyses to obtain their findings" (Marczyk et al., 2005, p. 17). It was a descriptive study because, according to Singh (2006), "descriptive research is concerned with the present and attempts to determine the status of the phenomenon under investigation" (p. 104). The respondents under investigation were 180 university students: 25 Spanish students from the *Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca*, 66 Mexican students from the *Universidad Veracruzana*, and 89 Honduran students from the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras*. Data were collected employing a questionnaire containing 10 items based on a scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.' The questionnaire was designed

by Kang (2014) using Derwing's (2003) accent questionnaire as a model, which focuses on how adults perceive English pronunciation. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. To do this, the questionnaire was administered through a Google Form sent via email, and an Excel spreadsheet was exported and imported into SPSS for descriptive analysis.

4. RESULTS

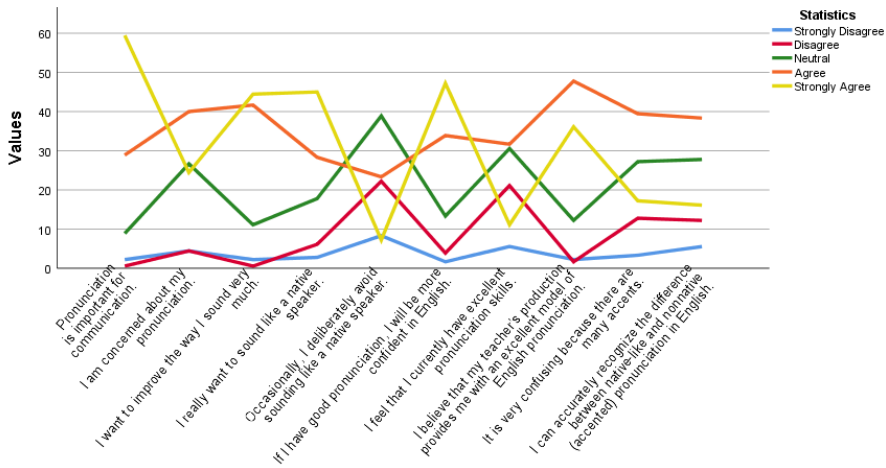
As shown in Figure 1, the survey results have some important information about English as a Foreign Language university students' perceptions and attitudes towards English pronunciation. Most students, 88.3%, believe pronunciation is crucial for successful English communication. This indicates the importance of pronunciation in academic and real-world interactions. Despite this recognition, 64.4% of students reported concern about their pronunciation, revealing a significant level of self-doubt and anxiety related to their spoken performance. This is further emphasized by the fact that 51.7% of respondents do not feel confident in their current pronunciation abilities, highlighting a critical gap between learners' communicative goals and self-perceived pronunciation competence.

Students have a strong desire to improve their English pronunciation abilities: 86.1% of the students wish to improve their pronunciation, and 44.4% of them strongly desire to do so. The results reveal a complex interrelation between students who aim to achieve native-speaker pronunciation competence and those who rejected that goal: 73.3% of them wish to speak like native English speakers, but 30.6% consciously avoid using native speakers' pronunciation patterns. Moreover, the interrelation between confidence and pronunciation is clear, as 81.1% think better pronunciation would make them more confident in English.

The influence of educators' pronunciation is notable, as 83.9% of participants consider their teachers' pronunciation to be their primary model, emphasizing the importance of instructor speech in shaping learner English pronunciation expectations and targets. However, the findings also expose areas of confusion: 56.6% of students find the variety of English

accents confusing, which may reflect a mismatch between classroom exposure and the linguistic realities of global English usage. Additionally, only 54.4% of learners feel confident about discerning between native and non-native pronunciation. The results show that students are highly concerned with pronunciation and have complex problems with different accents, self-assessment, and their own learning goals.

FIGURE 1. *Students' Perception of English Pronunciation*



Results, presented in Table 1, indicate that Spanish university students value English pronunciation as a priority component of communication, with 96% of the students' responses (agree and strongly agree) indicating that pronunciation is essential for effective communication. This strong consensus is accompanied by high motivation, as 92% of respondents are motivated to improve their English pronunciation. Notably, 88% of students desire to sound like native speakers, which indicates a high preference for native-like pronunciation patterns. However, this desire co-exists with some ambivalence, as 44% of the students admit they sometimes avoid native-like pronunciation, perhaps due to identity issues or perceived unattainability of this level.

Students demonstrated different degrees of confidence in their current pronunciation competencies. While 44% of the students viewed

themselves as having proficient pronunciation skills, a significant 32% of respondents questioned this perception, indicating a high level of awareness of pronunciation challenges. The influence of teachers was revealed to be particularly profound, with 96% of students agreeing that their teachers provided good native-like models for pronunciation. This finding suggests that English teachers have a significant impact on their students' attitudes and aspirations regarding pronunciation.

The findings also highlight several discrepancies in student attitudes. In particular, 88% linked good pronunciation with increased confidence in speaking English, suggesting a strong psychological dimension to pronunciation learning. On the other hand, nearly half of the respondents (48%) found the existence of a variety of English accents confusing, despite 72% of the respondents being confident in their ability to distinguish between native and non-native accents.

TABLE 1. *Spanish University Students' Perception of English Pronunciation*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Pronunciation is important for communication.	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	40.0%	56.0%
I am concerned about my pronunciation.	4.0%	0.0%	36.0%	40.0%	20.0%
I want to improve my voice quality significantly.	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	52.0%	40.0%
I really want to sound like a native speaker.	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	20.0%	68.0%
Occasionally, I deliberately avoid sounding like a native speaker.	24.0%	20.0%	24.0%	28.0%	4.0%
If I have good pronunciation, I will be more confident in English.	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	28.0%	60.0%
I feel that I currently have excellent pronunciation skills.	4.0%	28.0%	24.0%	32.0%	12.0%
I believe that my teacher's production provides me with an excellent model of English pronunciation.	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	48.0%	48.0%
It is very confusing because there are many accents.	0.0%	28.0%	24.0%	44.0%	4.0%
I can accurately recognize the difference between native-like and non-native (accented) pronunciation in English.	0.0%	8.0%	20.0%	52.0%	20.0%

Table 2 provides valuable insights into the perceptions of Mexican university students regarding English pronunciation. Most respondents (81.8%) recognized the importance of pronunciation for effective communication; thereby, half of all students strongly agreed with this statement. This positive attitude is corroborated by high motivation toward improving their English pronunciation, with 83.3% of the students indicating that they want to improve their pronunciation (agree and strongly agree responses). Notably, 77.2% of students aim to sound native-like, indicating a strong preference for native pronunciation patterns. However, this aspiration coexists with some contradictory issues, as 30.3% of students report sometimes avoiding native-like pronunciation, possibly indicating concerns about identity or pragmatic challenges in achieving this ideal.

Students expressed relatively low confidence in their current pronunciation skills, with only 30.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they have excellent pronunciation abilities, compared to 42.4% who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. This self-awareness of pronunciation difficulties can be an important factor contributing to high levels of anxiety reported, since 68.2% of students expressed some level of concern about their pronunciation competence. The role of teachers emerged as particularly important, with 83.3% of students agreeing that their instructors provided excellent pronunciation models, highlighting the noteworthy influence teachers have on students' pronunciation perceptions and learning.

The data obtained reveal some noteworthy contradictions. While 75.8% of students believed that good pronunciation would increase their confidence in using English, many reported difficulties with recognizing accents and comprehending them. Only 28.8% felt confident in distinguishing between native and non-native accents, and 51.5% found the existence of multiple English accents confusing.

TABLE 2. *Mexican University Students' Perception of English Pronunciation*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Pronunciation is important for communication.	6.1%	0.0%	12.1%	31.8%	50.0%
I am concerned about my pronunciation.	4.5%	9.1%	18.2%	39.4%	28.8%
I want to improve the way I sound very much.	3.0%	1.5%	12.1%	43.9%	39.4%
I really want to sound like a native speaker.	3.0%	4.5%	15.2%	34.8%	42.4%
Occasionally, I deliberately avoid sounding like a native speaker.	10.6%	19.7%	43.9%	21.2%	4.5%
If I have good pronunciation, I will be more confident in English.	3.0%	7.6%	13.6%	37.9%	37.9%
I feel that I currently have excellent pronunciation skills.	12.1%	30.3%	27.3%	25.8%	4.5%
I believe that my teacher's production provides me with an excellent model of English pronunciation.	6.1%	1.5%	9.1%	50.0%	33.3%
It is very confusing because there are many accents.	7.6%	12.1%	28.8%	39.4%	12.1%
I can accurately recognize the difference between native-like and non-native (accented) pronunciation in English.	13.6%	27.3%	30.3%	21.2%	7.6%

Table 3 presents the study findings, which indicate that English pronunciation is accorded high importance by Honduran university students, with 91% (67.4% strongly agreeing and 23.6% agreeing) recognizing its importance in effective communication. This high importance is aligned with their high interest in improving their pronunciation, as 86.5% had this intention. Importantly, 66.2% of the participants strive towards acquiring the native speaker's accent. Nevertheless, this ambition is accompanied by grave reservations; 26.9% stated that they sometimes avoid native-like pronunciation, hinting at complex identity issues or a pragmatic acknowledgment of the goal's feasibility.

Students demonstrate a moderate self-evaluation of their pronunciation ability, with 51.7% claiming to have a good or excellent ability, and 13.5% openly admitting to a weakness. Such relative confidence could be a result of their positive attitude toward teaching models; 80.9% of them support their teachers' pronunciation as a model-like one. Nevertheless, the findings identify an important discrepancy between

students' desires and perceptual abilities. While 68.5% feel capable of distinguishing native from non-native accents, 62.9% simultaneously find multiple English accents confusing, highlighting a gap between their confidence and actual accent comprehension.

There are three key pedagogical conclusions at the forefront: Firstly, Honduran students' strong native-speaker orientation (66.2%) suggests this ideal retains its influence despite international '*Englishes*' frameworks. Secondly, the strong correlation between pronunciation and confidence (83.2% agreement) demonstrates the psychological importance of pronunciation in language learning. Thirdly, most respondents faced accent confusion (62.9%); this suggests the need for systematic exposure to English varieties.

TABLE 3. *Honduran University Students' Perception of English Pronunciation*

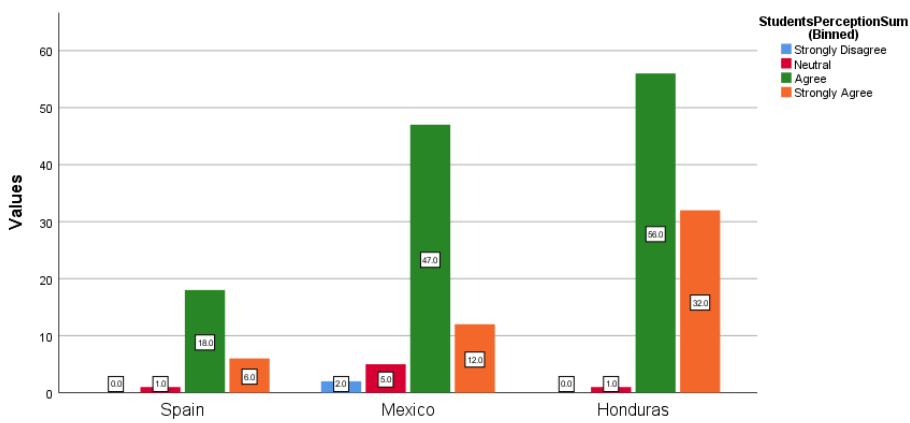
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Pronunciation is important for communication.	0.0%	1.1%	7.9%	23.6%	67.4%
I am concerned about my pronunciation.	4.5%	2.2%	30.3%	40.4%	22.5%
I want to improve the way I sound very much.	2.2%	0.0%	11.2%	37.1%	49.4%
I really want to sound like a native speaker.	3.4%	7.9%	22.5%	25.8%	40.4%
Occasionally, I deliberately avoid sounding like a native speaker.	2.2%	24.7%	39.3%	23.6%	10.1%
If I have good pronunciation, I will be more confident in English.	1.1%	1.1%	14.6%	32.6%	50.6%
I feel that I currently have excellent pronunciation skills.	1.1%	12.4%	34.8%	36.0%	15.7%
I believe that my teacher's production provides me with an excellent model of English pronunciation.	0.0%	1.1%	18.0%	46.1%	34.8%
It is very confusing because there are many accents.	1.1%	9.0%	27.0%	38.2%	24.7%
I can accurately recognize the difference between native-like and non-native (accented) pronunciation in English.	1.1%	2.2%	28.1%	47.2%	21.3%

Figure 2 provides valuable insights into the students' perceptions of English pronunciation across three Spanish-speaking nations. Most students from Spain, Mexico, and Honduras had a positive perception of

pronunciation, as more than 89% of all three countries chose either 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree.' This high level of consensus highlights the universal importance that students attach to pronunciation in their English language learning process. However, evident regional differences emerged in the intensity of these perceptions. Honduran students showed the most enthusiastic agreement, with 36% choosing 'Strongly Agree'. This represents a significantly larger percentage than the responses from Mexican (18.2%) and Spanish (24%) students. Spanish students provided more modest answers, with 72% choosing 'Agree', compared to Honduran students at 62.9% and Mexican students at 71.2%.

The gathered data also demonstrates minimal disagreement across the three nations, with general disagreement ('Strongly Disagree' or 'Neutral') being the exception. Disagreement was most prominent in Mexico, at 10.6%, while Spain and Honduras, together, accounted for less than 4%. The perceptible agreement suggests that pronunciation is firmly embraced as an essential aspect of English language acquisition among these three groups of students. The variations observed in response intensity among nations indicate disparities in instructional approach, cultural attitude toward language acquisition, or degrees of exposure to the English language.

FIGURE 2. *Students' Perception of English Pronunciation per Country*



5. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the perception of English pronunciation among English as a Foreign Language learners, with an emphasis on their awareness of pronunciation issues, attitudes toward distinct pronunciation models (native-like vs. intelligibility-oriented), and the influence of their learning experience. Findings indicate that some key points support and complement existing literature, while also highlighting significant pedagogical implications.

The results demonstrate that students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from Spain, Mexico, and Honduras place a high value on pronunciation, with more than 88% of the participants showing agreement or strong agreement on its vital function in easing effective communication. This aligns with previous research (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Kang, 2014), which highlights pronunciation as a crucial yet often neglected aspect of language learning. Despite this recognition, students demonstrated a significant awareness of their pronunciation deficiencies, with only a limited percentage (25.6%) expressing strong confidence in their current pronunciation skills. The gap between the awareness of pronunciation and perceived ability indicates an instructional shortfall that needs to be filled, possibly through enhanced feedback and focused opportunities for practice.

A notable finding was the strong preference for native-like pronunciation (66.2%–88% across the three countries' samples), consistent with studies by Tokumoto and Shibata (2011) and Prado Aviña (2024), which highlight the enduring influence of native-speaker ideals. However, the findings also demonstrated ambivalence, with a considerable proportion of learners (30.6%) reporting occasional avoidance of native-like speech. This tension can be caused by identification issues (Bakoko et al., 2023) or the difficulty of attaining such a standard (Zafary, 2021). The results echo studies like Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012), in which students desired native-like speech yet could not accurately identify native accents, suggesting that idealized aspirations may not align with perceptual realities.

Teachers were regarded as important figures, with 80.9%–96% of students affirming that their teachers were good models of pronunciation. This illustrates the need for teacher training in teaching pronunciation methodologies, particularly considering students' reported confusion regarding the accent varieties (48%–62.9%). The inability to deal with variations of English as a feature of international English use (Jenkins, 2000) represents a curriculum deficit. Santos Díaz et al. (2024) also reported that it is challenging for students to differentiate between comprehensible and native-like models; therefore, there is a necessity for exposure to varied accents in educational settings.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the perceptions and expectations of EFL learners regarding English pronunciation, revealing several critical issues. The participants universally recognized the significance of pronunciation in facilitating effective communication; however, a considerable discrepancy existed between their goals and their self-evaluated capabilities. Although many students expressed a strong aspiration to attain native-like pronunciation, a notable proportion admitted to avoiding such speech patterns, indicating an intrinsic contradiction between their aspirational goals and personal or cultural identities. The influence of teachers' pronunciation emerged as a predominant characteristic, as students exhibited a strong dependence on professors' pronunciation models to achieve their goals. Nevertheless, there was considerable uncertainty about the variety of English accents, reflecting the disparity between classroom practices and the reality of English usage in the globalized world.

The study was based on self-report data, which may fail to reflect learners' objective ability to pronounce or the sophistication of their perception. The sample participants, although from three different countries, consisted only of university students, which potentially restricted the generalizability of the results to other age groups or educational contexts. Additionally, the study's cross-sectional design limited the possibility of considering how students' perceptions can change over time with

continued language exposure or instruction. Also, a qualitative approach with greater depth may have led to a deeper understanding of the reasons underlying learners' decisions and tendencies to avoid certain behaviors.

Classroom practices should integrate regular opportunities for learners to engage with multiple English accents through authentic listening materials. Pronunciation teaching could benefit from a dual focus on segmental and suprasegmental features, with special attention paid to the elements most crucial for intelligibility. Teachers should create supportive environments where learners can develop realistic self-assessments of their pronunciation skills. Incorporating reflective activities and peer feedback could help bridge the gap between learners' perceptions and their actual pronunciation abilities. This research proposes that teaching pronunciation must be integrated with other language skills to demonstrate its communicative value in suitable contexts.

Future studies could expand this inquiry by examining pronunciation perceptions across different proficiency levels and age groups. Comparative research between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts may reveal how the learning environment influences pronunciation attitudes. Qualitative investigations could provide a deeper understanding of the emotional and identity-related factors that shape learners' pronunciation goals. Experimental studies examining the effectiveness of various pronunciation teaching approaches would provide valuable evidence to inform pedagogical practice. There is also a need for more research on the relationship between teachers' pronunciation models and students' changing perspectives and pronunciation competencies.

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ENDONORMATIVE STANDARDS AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION: EVIDENCE FROM SPAIN, MEXICO, AND HONDURAS

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the global prominence of English has triggered intense debate over its legitimacy, ownership, and standards in diverse educational and sociocultural contexts. As English increasingly functions as a *lingua franca*, a tension has emerged between traditional exonormative models —centered on native-speaker norms— and the growing recognition of localized English varieties as legitimate. While English remains a key skill and vehicle for international discourse, the variety taught and promoted continues to raise questions within sociolinguistics, pedagogy, and intercultural communication.

A central concept in this debate is *endonormativity*, the recognition of locally grounded Englishes as valid, independent from native-speaker norms. Unlike exonormative approaches, which replicate external pronunciation and grammar standards (e.g., General American or Received Pronunciation), endonormative models emphasize intelligibility,

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contextual relevance, and identity. Although examined in contexts such as the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and Europe (Deuber, 2013; Imm, 2016; van den Doel & Quené, 2013), their perception in EFL-dominant regions, including Spain and Latin America remains underexplored.

This issue gains relevance in academic settings, where English serves not only as a subject but also as a gateway to knowledge, mobility, and symbolic capital. Students often engage with native-centric norms via textbooks, tests, and media, while at the same time developing hybrid linguistic practices. The disconnect between institutional models and learners' identities can affect motivation, confidence, and learning outcomes. As Chen and Le (2019) note, a lack of self-recognition in the target language can hinder appropriation and sustained engagement.

Endonormative perspectives also intersect with broader intercultural education frameworks. Rodríguez-García (2010) argues that language attitudes often align with models of diversity management —assimilationism, multiculturalism, or interculturalism— which shape how agency and legitimacy are constructed. A pluralist-intercultural stance validates diverse Englishes and local forms, while an assimilationist logic reinforces deficit-based comparisons with native norms. These paradigms influence how English is taught, evaluated, and internalized in multilingual contexts.

This study presents a comparative, empirical investigation of university students from Spain, Mexico, and Honduras. It examines how students perceive English as an international language (EIL) and their attitudes toward endonormative pronunciation and usage. It also examines how these views intersect with national intercultural discourses and the symbolic positioning of English. Building on research in ownership, intelligibility, and critical awareness, the study offers a regional perspective that remains underrepresented in global scholarship.

A total of 134 students from Education and Humanities programs participated by completing a Likert-scale questionnaire. The instrument addressed five thematic dimensions: (1) appreciation of English as an international language (EIL), (2) its use in local contexts, (3) the influence of local content in English language learning, (4) the acceptance

of local and endonormative variants, and (5) the evaluation of intercultural teaching practices in English education. The findings reveal substantial cross-national variation shaped by educational practices and diversity discourses. These insights are relevant for the design of English language policies in both Latin American and European contexts, as well as for global debates on the evolution of English in education.

This chapter situates its analysis within the field of English as an International Language (EIL) and aligns it with critical perspectives on language legitimacy. It aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how learners in peripheral yet globally engaged contexts perceive, negotiate, and claim ownership of the English language. The objective is twofold: to challenge assumptions of native norm superiority and to advocate for pedagogical models that are inclusive, context-sensitive, and grounded in learners' identities.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. English Language Teaching and Intercultural Competence

Over the past two decades, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has emerged as a key goal in English language teaching (ELT), particularly in multilingual and globalized contexts. Byram's framework (1997 & 2020) expanded the notion of communicative competence beyond linguistic accuracy to include critical attitudes, cultural awareness, and the ability to interact with others. The five dimensions he proposed —*savoir-être* (attitudes), *savoirs* (knowledge), *savoir-comprendre* (interpreting and relating), *savoir-faire* (interaction skills), and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness)— now underpin interculturally oriented curricula.

Despite its theoretical influence, ICC often remains superficially implemented in EFL settings. As Chen and Le (2019) argue, culture is still frequently taught as a static representation of the "target culture," usually Anglo-American, reinforcing monocultural and mononormative understandings of English. This narrows learners' exposure to diverse English-speaking contexts and marginalizes their own cultural and linguistic identities.

Kafle (2013) notes that such limitations are often reinforced by teachers' implicit ideologies, which unconsciously prioritize native speaker norms. These ideologies, shaped by training, materials, and assessment practices, perpetuate hierarchical views of language and hinder the development of learners' intercultural competence (Schneider, 2007). Teacher education thus plays a crucial role in equipping future educators with the tools to question these assumptions and foster a more pluralistic understanding of English.

This issue is especially relevant in EFL contexts such as Spain and Latin America, where English is often associated with social mobility, global access, and symbolic capital. Here, pedagogical models are not neutral: they validate or suppress learners' voices. Rodríguez-García (2010) points out that how interculturality is conceptualized —whether as compensatory, pluralist, or assimilationist— shapes how languages and cultures are valued in the classroom. Pluralist models that embrace multilingualism and fluid identity negotiation tend to validate non-native English uses; in contrast, assimilationist models often frame learners through a deficit lens, measuring them against native-speaker norms.

Given English's global role, interculturality must function not as an isolated goal but as a foundational principle embedded across *syllabi*, classroom discourse, and assessment. Matsuda (2020) emphasizes the importance of portraying English as a dynamic, globally used language rather than a fixed system tied to any single national culture. Phan (2008) echoes this by calling for a critical examination of the ideologies behind native speakerism, especially in postcolonial and Global South settings.

Thus, intercultural competence in ELT involves more than knowledge of other cultures —it entails the ability to engage in communication with awareness, adaptability, and reflexivity. It empowers learners to negotiate meaning, confront stereotypes, and assert legitimacy as English users. As Canagarajah (2013) warns, learners who cannot see themselves in the language are at risk of becoming linguistically insecure and disengaged. A shift toward pedagogies grounded in negotiation, critical reflection, and local voice is essential to align ELT with the pluricentric and global realities of English today.

This study aims to examine EFL learners' perceptions of English pronunciation, focusing on their awareness of pronunciation challenges, attitudes toward different pronunciation models (native-like vs. intelligibility-focused), and the influence of their learning experiences on these perceptions.

2.2. English as an International Language (EIL) and Endonormativity

The evolving paradigm of English as an International Language (EIL) highlights the tension between linguistic legitimacy and global diversity. EIL reconceptualizes English not as the exclusive property of native speakers, but as a shared communicative resource shaped by sociolinguistic diversity and appropriated by users across contexts. As Hino (2012) argues, EIL promotes a pluralist perspective grounded in localized norms, intercultural intelligibility, and speaker agency over native-speaker conformity.

Within this paradigm, endonormativity plays a critical role. It refers to the adoption of locally accepted norms as standards of correctness within a speech community, moving away from deference to external native models. Schneider's Dynamic Model (2007) introduced the notion of "endonormative stabilization" as a key phase in the development of local Englishes. Studies by Low and Kuang (2016) or Imelwaty et al. (2019) demonstrate this process in postcolonial Asian contexts such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, where local Englishes are increasingly legitimized in education, governance, and media.

In Latin America or Spain, however, the democratization of English remains limited (Mar-Molinero, 2000). English is rarely linked to local identity or internal norm development. Instead, its use is governed by exonormative models —mainly British or American— especially in high-stakes domains like education and assessment. These contexts pose clear obstacles to endonormative pedagogy, which must confront ideologies of linguistic inferiority and institutional resistance to change. As our study shows, many students internalize native-speaker ideals while lacking exposure to actual native varieties —a contradiction that points a gap between desire for authenticity and curricular practice.

Historical and geopolitical conditions also shape the feasibility of endonormative shifts. Banjo (1993), in his seminal proposal for Nigeria, advocated for a local standard of English based on intelligibility and communicative efficacy, arguing that its institutional use warranted legitimacy. Similarly, Deuber (2013) identified endonormative tendencies in Caribbean Englishes, where student beliefs and curricular developments collectively reconfigure notions of linguistic correctness.

Despite such promising developments, endonormative frameworks remain marginal, especially in Expanding Circle contexts. Van den Doel and Quené (2013) note that efforts to establish European English norms face resistance due to entrenched native-speaker ideologies and institutional preference for British and American standards. Learners are often assessed against external models, even as their communicative realities become increasingly global and intercultural. This disconnection renders traditional norms inadequate for contemporary communicative needs.

The gap between linguistic practice and evaluation standards calls for a rethinking of legitimacy in ELT. Endonormative approaches offer a more equitable alternative by validating learners' identities and promoting agency. Rather than reinforcing dependency on foreign norms, they encourage ownership and relevance. As Matsuda (2012) reminds us, language teaching is never neutral —choices about what counts as valid directly shape learners' sense of belonging in global discourse.

Integrating endonormativity into the EIL framework thus requires both pedagogical reorientation and ideological commitment. It is not simply about including alternative varieties, but about affirming learners' right to use and shape English in ways that reflect their context, identity, and communicative goals. Such a shift is essential for advancing linguistic justice in a truly internationalized educational landscape.

2.3. Culture, Appropriation, and Linguistic Negotiation in the Classroom

The classroom is more than a site for language instruction —it is a space of cultural negotiation and identity construction. In EFL contexts, students often experience tension between their local identities and

dominant cultural models embedded in textbooks, curricula, and classroom discourse. This dissonance becomes particularly evident when English is framed not as a pluricultural tool but as a gatekeeper of global —typically Western— standards (Deardorff, 2006).

Chen and Le (2019) show how cultural content in EFL materials often reinforces monocultural, Anglo-centric ideologies, presenting culture as a set of superficial facts while sidelining learners' lived experiences. This lack of representation may foster alienation and undermine learners' agency. For intercultural learning to be meaningful, students must reflect critically not only on target cultures but also on their own, creating dialogic spaces where meaning is actively constructed.

Such negotiation aligns with what Rodríguez-García (2010) calls a pluralist model of interculturality, where learners are not passive consumers of cultural knowledge but agents who appropriate, adapt, and sometimes resist the content they engage with. This process of symbolic appropriation allows students to articulate hybrid, localized identities by reworking global linguistic and cultural resources in context-sensitive ways.

Examples of this include creatively reinterpreting idiomatic expressions, blending English with local linguistic elements, or selectively adopting pronunciation traits aligned with one's self-image. Phan (2008) emphasizes that learners bring to the classroom preexisting ideologies of language, identity, and power —shaped by educational discourse, globalization, colonial legacies, and local prestige hierarchies— that influence how they engage with English.

Conventional EFL pedagogies often suppress these subjectivities by portraying language learning as a linear trajectory toward native-like competence. This framing marginalizes intelligible and socially effective forms of expression that deviate from external norms. In contrast, a pedagogy of negotiation centers on learners' right to appropriate English in ways that reflect their realities and communicative goals.

Kafle (2013) and Marlina (2017) support this view, calling for pedagogies that recognize and legitimize learners' voices and the diverse Englishes they encounter or produce. This shift does not entail abandoning standards, but rather rethinking what, and whose, standards are

upheld. Emphasizing intelligibility, audience awareness, and rhetorical appropriateness over native-like accuracy supports the development of empowered, reflective language users.

Under this lens, the classroom becomes a site where endonormativity and interculturality converge. Language acquisition is reframed not as imitation, but as an act of self-positioning: learners articulate who they are, how they relate to others, and what forms of English they claim as their own (Monfared & Khatib, 2018). This approach aligns with a broader vision of ELT as a critical, ethically engaged practice that prepares learners not only to speak English, but to speak through it in ways that are meaningful, legitimate, and socially grounded (Sharifian, 2017).

3. OBJECTIVES

This study examines the attitudes and perceptions of university students in three Spanish-speaking countries —Spain, Mexico, and Honduras— regarding the legitimacy, appropriateness, and pedagogical desirability of English varieties that deviate from traditional native-speaker norms. The ultimate aim is to better understand how cultural models of language learning shape students' views on the ownership and use of English in educational settings.

Four specific objectives guide this investigation:

To explore learners' conceptualizations of English as a global language, focusing on whether they perceive it as a culturally neutral tool for international communication or as intrinsically linked to native-speaker norms and cultural values.

To evaluate students' awareness of linguistic diversity within English, including their familiarity with and acceptance of different global varieties, particularly those not modeled on Anglo-American standards.

To assess the degree of symbolic appropriation of English by learners, analyzing whether and how students claim legitimacy over non-native forms of English that align with their local identities and communicative needs.

To investigate the correlation between learners' intercultural frameworks and their openness to endonormative models, identifying how dominant models of interculturality in their national contexts (e.g., pluralist vs. assimilationist) influence their acceptance of localized Englishes.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

The present study employs a quantitative, comparative, and cross-sectional research design, with the objective of exploring students' perceptions regarding English varieties and endonormative models across three distinct national contexts, Spain, Mexico, and Honduras. The primary objective of this study is to examine how these perceptions are influenced by cultural attitudes toward language ownership, interculturality, and educational ideologies. The research employs a non-experimental, descriptive framework, emphasizing a comparative analysis of data collected through a standardized questionnaire.

This methodological approach was selected to obtain quantifiable indicators of students' attitudes and beliefs while facilitating inter-group comparisons. While qualitative perspectives on language ideologies are valuable, the objective of this phase was to establish empirical baselines that could inform further pedagogical and theoretical developments related to English as an International Language (EIL) and the acceptance of endonormative standards.

4.2. Participants

The sample consisted of 134 undergraduate students enrolled in education and language-related degrees at three higher education institutions:

- Spain: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca (n = 26)
- Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana (n = 66)
- Honduras: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (n = 42)

Participants were selected using a non-probabilistic convenience sampling method, with the criterion that they had all received formal instruction in English as a foreign language and had reached at least a B1 level of competence according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). While the sample is not representative of the entire student population in each country, it offers valuable insights into the attitudes of future educators and language professionals.

4.3. Instruments and Procedure

Data collection was conducted through a Likert-type questionnaire composed of 25 items, distributed across five thematic blocks:

- Appreciation of English as an international language (EIL)
- Use of English in local contexts
- Influence of local content on English language learning
- Acceptance of local linguistic and endonormative variants
- Assessment of intercultural teaching methodologies in English language learning

The measurement of each item was conducted using a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The administration of the questionnaire occurred online, and items were presented in the participants' native language (Spanish). To ensure semantic equivalence and cultural relevance, a meticulous process of translation and back-translation was undertaken. The statistical analysis of the responses included descriptive statistics and comparative analyses using ANOVA and t-tests to identify significant differences between the three groups.

The instrument's structure was designed to capture both explicit attitudes, such as declared preferences or value judgments, and implicit ideologies, including underlying beliefs about language legitimacy, cultural ownership, or identity. Furthermore, the questionnaire's design enabled the identification of cross-cultural patterns that correlate with national discourses on interculturality and language education.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Global Results

The comprehensive analysis of the 134 student responses revealed a nuanced attitudinal landscape regarding the role of English as an international language (EIL) and the legitimacy of endonormative and intercultural models. While there is broad recognition of English as a global communicative tool, students' views remain shaped by native-speaker ideologies, unequal exposure to linguistic diversity, and varying degrees of symbolic ownership. The results in Table 1 synthesize the most representative response patterns across the five thematic blocks.

TABLE 1. *Average Scores by Thematic Block and Country*

Thematic block	Global	Spain	Mexico	Honduras
1. Appreciation of English as an International Language (EIL)	86.83	84.08	91.11	85.30
2. Use of English in Local Contexts	73.78	68.54	78.63	74.26
3. Influence of Local Content on English Language Learning	78.36	76.45	84.17	74.45
4. Acceptance of Local Linguistic and Endonormative Variants	74.82	71.36	78.44	74.58
5. Assessment of Intercultural Teaching Methodologies in English Language Learning	70.36	68.21	73.97	69.44

In the first thematic block, focused on the appreciation of English as a global language, responses reflected a strong instrumental view. Over 86% of participants agreed that English is essential for international communication. However, only 44.6% endorsed the idea of English as culturally neutral, while 36.2% associated it with Anglo-American values. This highlights the coexistence of a pragmatic global view with enduring symbolic links to native-speaker cultures.

The second block addressed the use of English in local contexts. Most respondents acknowledged its adaptability to local needs: 71.6% agreed it can reflect local identities, and 67.2% believed speakers should creatively adapt it. Still, only 49.2% felt personally authorized to do so, revealing a gap between ideological openness and self-legitimation.

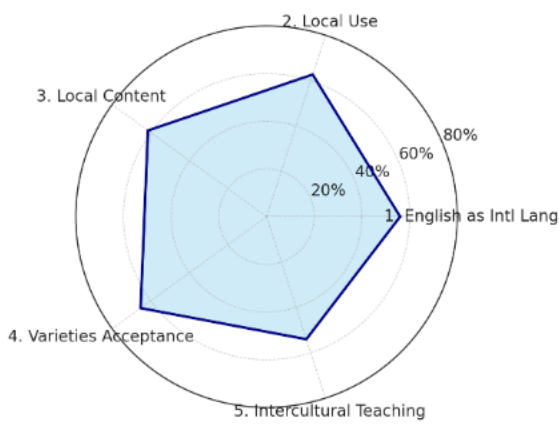
In the third block, on local content in language learning, 78.4% supported culturally relevant topics and materials, and 64.2% believed local content enhances engagement. Yet only 41.8% reported that their instructors regularly included such content, exposing a disconnect between expectations and practice.

In the fourth block, 69.1% affirmed the validity of different English varieties, but just 38.7% felt these are socially accepted. Moreover, 61.4% noted that non-native accents are still viewed as less prestigious, reinforcing hierarchical norms. This suggests openness to diversity coexists with the influence of dominant standards.

Finally, in the fifth block, 74.6% agreed English instruction should adapt to learners' cultural backgrounds, and 72.9% supported the inclusion of critical reflection and intercultural competence. Yet only 33.5% had experienced such practices themselves —highlighting the need for greater teacher preparation and pedagogical reform.

Overall, the results show a broad willingness to embrace more inclusive and context-sensitive English teaching, while also revealing persistent limitations linked to internalized norms and institutional practices. The gap between theoretical endorsement of endonormativity and personal appropriation reflects linguistic insecurity requiring targeted curricular and pedagogical responses. As illustrated in Figure 1, these patterns mirror wider tensions between global legitimacy and local agency.

FIGURE 1. *Global Attitudinal Profile by Thematic Block*



5.2. Results by Country

5.2.1. Spain

The results from the Spanish cohort (n = 26) reflect a generally positive but nuanced perception of English as a global language. A full 100% of respondents agreed that English is essential for accessing global knowledge and communication, underscoring its instrumental value. However, only 69.8% supported the idea that English should be taught uniformly across contexts, and just 61.5% recognized its evolving nature depending on users —suggesting a lingering attachment to fixed instructional models.

In terms of localized use, Spanish students reported moderately high levels of symbolic comfort: 71.8% believed that English can be adapted to reflect local realities, and 71.8% also agreed that the English they learn in their institutions responds to their local context. Still, only 71.8% felt comfortable using English in local situations, and the same percentage endorsed creative incorporation of cultural elements. This consistency suggests a stable but moderate inclination toward contextual adaptation.

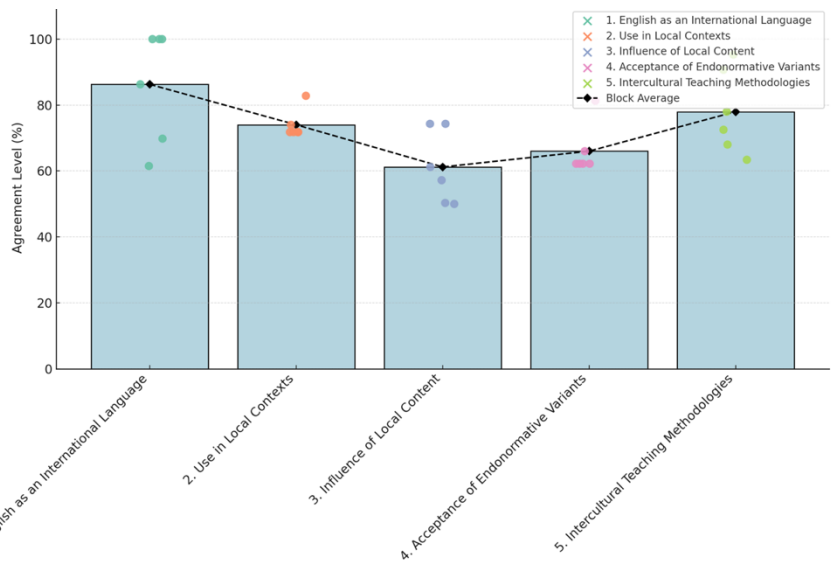
When asked about the cultural content of their English instruction, students in Spain showed ambivalence. While 74.3% expressed interest in learning about cultures of English-speaking countries, only 50.0% reported that their classes include local cultural examples. Notably, 57.2% would prefer more representation of their own culture, and 50.3% agreed that cultural references should include local perspectives. These results point to a gap between learner expectations and instructional materials.

On questions of endonormative legitimacy, 62.2% of Spanish respondents agreed that local varieties of English are valid, and the same percentage supported the idea that regions should develop their own norms. However, the perception of personal legitimacy remains partial: while 81.3% endorsed teaching diverse varieties in education, only 62.2% affirmed that their own way of speaking English reflects their identity.

Finally, intercultural methodologies received strong conceptual support. An overwhelming 95.3% agreed that English teaching should

adapt to cultural contexts, and 90.7% supported evaluating communication rather than native-like accuracy. Nevertheless, only 63.4% felt that their materials reflected cultural diversity, and 68.0% supported adapting curricula to local needs. These findings suggest that while Spanish students value inclusivity and flexibility, curricular practices may lag behind attitudinal openness. As shown in Figure 2, their responses reveal a pedagogical scenario that is open to endonormativity but still transitioning in terms of symbolic self-legitimation.

FIGURE 2. *Item-level and Average Agreement by Thematic Block – Spain*



5.2.2. Mexico

The Mexican sample (n = 66) exhibited a strong instrumental perception of English, with 100% of participants affirming its importance for accessing global knowledge and communication. Despite this consensus, only 68.7% believed English should be taught the same way regardless of context, and 82.4% acknowledged that English evolves depending on its users —suggesting an openness to adaptive and localized forms.

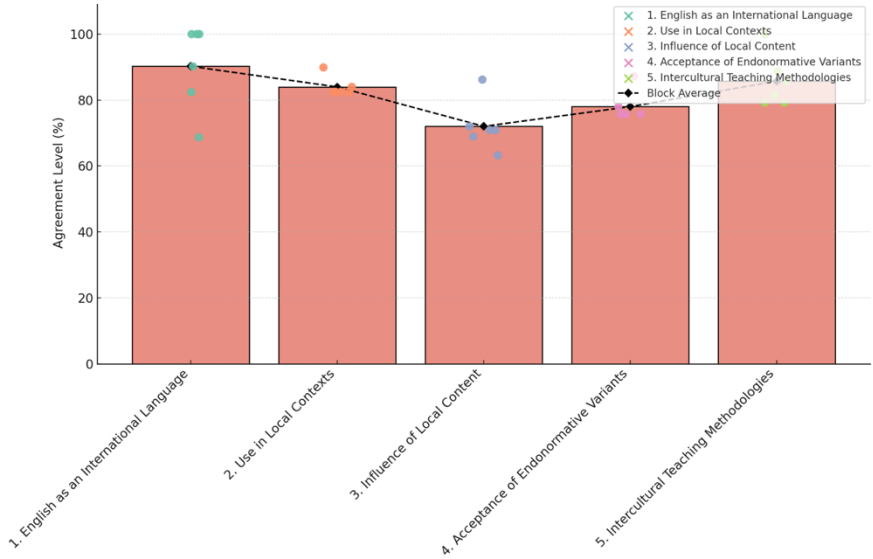
Attitudes toward the use of English in local contexts were notably positive. A high 89.9% agreed that English can be adapted to reflect local realities, and the same proportion affirmed that they feel comfortable using English in their own environments. Likewise, 82.5% supported incorporating cultural elements into English, and 82.5% also felt that the English they learn corresponds to their local context. These consistently high values indicate a robust tendency toward contextual flexibility and cultural integration.

Regarding cultural content, Mexican students demonstrated a distinct preference for more localized material. While 86.2% expressed enjoyment of English-language cultural products, such as music and film, 70.9% favored the inclusion of their own cultural references in class, and 68.9% valued learning about Anglophone cultures. Only 63.2% reported encountering diverse cultural examples in their instruction, and just 70.9% felt that these references extended beyond the Anglo-American focus —revealing a latent desire for broader representation.

The acceptance of endonormative variants was remarkably strong. Across all five related items, 75.7% of students expressed agreement —whether regarding the legitimacy of local forms, the right of regions to define their own norms, or the reflective nature of their own English use. Additionally, 87.2% supported the incorporation of diverse varieties in education. These figures reveal a widespread embrace of linguistic plurality and symbolic agency.

Finally, intercultural pedagogies found significant endorsement. All participants (100%) believed English instruction should adapt to students' cultural contexts, and 79.2% agreed that exams should prioritize communicative competence. Likewise, 81.5% advocated for culturally responsive curricula, and 79.2% supported the use of more inclusive materials. These figures confirm a strong alignment with pedagogical flexibility and critical cultural engagement. As shown in ***Figure 3***, Mexican students stand out for their consistently high levels of openness to localized, intercultural, and endonormative approaches in English education.

FIGURE 3. *Item-level and Average Agreement by Thematic Block – Mexico*



5.2.3. Honduras

The responses from the Honduran cohort (n = 42) reflect a more reserved and heterogeneous stance toward English as an international language (EIL). While 95.0% of participants recognized its instrumental global value, only 58.6% believed it should be taught uniformly, and 86.5% acknowledged that English evolves depending on its users. These figures suggest a tension between functional utility and prescriptive instructional models.

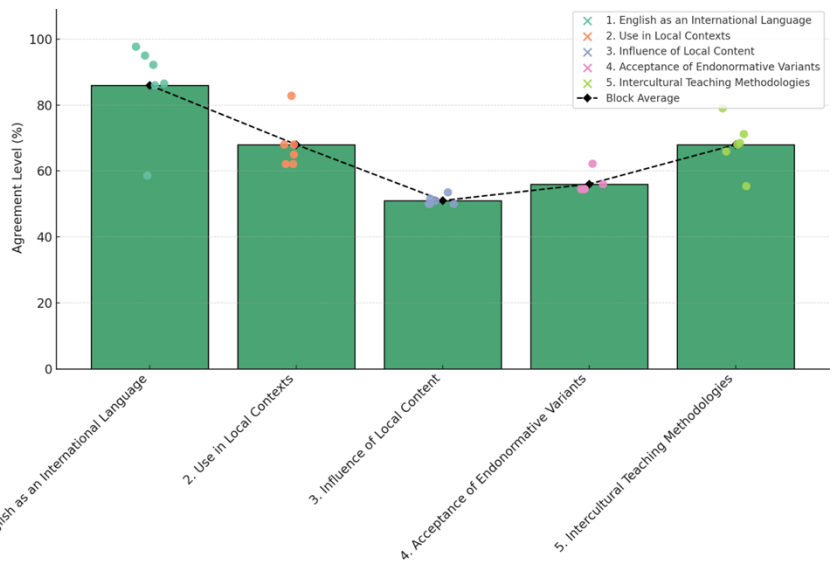
When it comes to local use, Honduran students showed slightly lower levels of symbolic comfort compared to other groups. 68.0% felt at ease using English in local contexts, and only 65.0% believed English could be adapted to reflect local realities. Although 82.8% supported the creative integration of cultural elements, only 62.1% felt that their learning experiences reflected local realities —indicating a cautious but emerging openness to contextual adaptation.

Cultural content in English instruction was met with ambivalence. Half of the students (50.0%) reported exposure to cultural references beyond

the Anglo-American core, and just 50.0% considered such representations to be relevant. Interest in learning about Anglophone cultures was moderate (51.6%), and the desire to see more local examples stood at 50.0%, revealing a relatively neutral cultural stance. Compared to the other two countries, these figures suggest a more limited drive toward culturally contextualized pedagogy.

Perceptions of endonormativity also reflected a conservative profile. Only 54.5% endorsed the legitimacy of local English variants, and the same proportion agreed that regions should develop their own standards. A relatively low 62.2% felt that their way of speaking English reflected their identity, and 62.2% also supported the inclusion of diverse Englishes in educational settings. While not rejecting plurality outright, these figures indicate cautious acceptance rather than strong symbolic ownership.

FIGURE 4. *Item-level and Average Agreement by Thematic Block - Honduras*



Intercultural teaching approaches were somewhat more positively received. 79.0% agreed that English instruction should adapt to cultural contexts, and 65.9% endorsed communicative evaluation over native-like norms. Nevertheless, only 55.4% felt that teaching materials reflected cultural diversity, and 68.5% supported adapting curricula to local cultures. As shown in ***Figure 4***, these figures point to a pedagogical environment

that, while beginning to acknowledge interculturality, remains influenced by assimilationist norms and institutional conservatism.

5.3. Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis across the three national contexts reveals both convergences and notable divergences in students' attitudes toward English as an international language (EIL) and their alignment with endonormative and intercultural pedagogical perspectives. While all three cohorts overwhelmingly recognized the global communicative value of English (100% in Spain and Mexico, 95.0% in Honduras), their views on its cultural neutrality, adaptability, and symbolic ownership varied significantly.

Spanish students displayed a moderate inclination toward pedagogical reform. While 69.8% agreed with standardized teaching models, a lower 61.5% acknowledged the evolving nature of English, indicating some persistence of traditional instructional frameworks. In contrast, Mexican students were the most adaptive, with 82.4% recognizing the dynamic nature of English and showing the highest endorsement across most items related to symbolic appropriation and local adaptability. Honduran students presented a more ambivalent profile: although 86.5% recognized English as evolving, only 58.6% agreed with uniform instructional models, revealing mixed attitudes between normativity and flexibility.

Symbolic appropriation also differed notably. Mexican students consistently scored highest in their affirmation of the right to adapt English to local needs and reflect personal identity through language use, with nearly 90% agreement in several items. Spanish students endorsed these ideas at slightly lower levels (around 62%), while Honduran students showed the least empowerment, with figures generally in the mid-50s. These patterns suggest that pluralist or hybrid educational narratives in Mexico may foster greater linguistic agency, while more assimilationist traditions in Honduras may inhibit it.

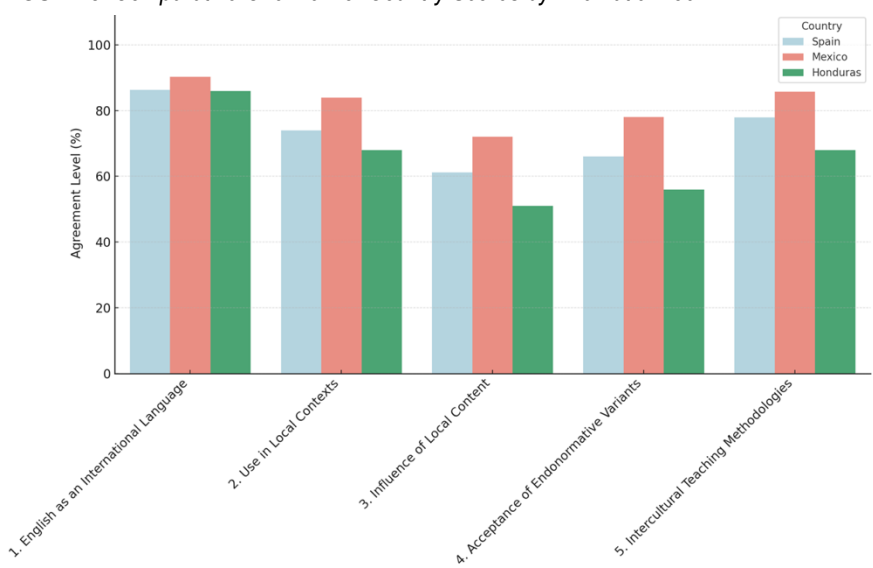
Cultural integration within English teaching was perceived as insufficient across all three groups. However, Mexican students expressed the strongest preference for including local content (70.9%), while Spanish

and Honduran students remained closer to 50%. Interestingly, although Spanish students reported higher exposure to cultural diversity in their materials (74.3% interested in Anglophone cultures), they also showed the widest gap between their expectations and classroom realities. Honduran students were the least likely to report meaningful integration of local culture in their instruction.

Intercultural pedagogy received high conceptual endorsement in all three contexts. Mexican respondents unanimously supported culturally adaptive teaching (100%), followed closely by Spanish (95.3%) and Honduran (79.0%) cohorts. Yet this theoretical alignment was not matched by instructional practice: in all three countries, fewer students felt that their learning materials reflected cultural diversity or critical perspectives — revealing a disconnect between ideology and implementation.

As summarized in Figure 5, the data show that although Spanish, Mexican, and Honduran students share an instrumental view of English, their alignment with endonormative and intercultural principles differs considerably. These differences reflect the influence of distinct educational models, teacher practices, and sociocultural narratives. They also underscore the importance of contextually grounded pedagogical reform to enable students not only to use English globally, but to claim it locally.

FIGURE 5. *Comparative Overview of Country Scores by Thematic Block*



6. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that students' perceptions of English are influenced by more than its communicative function; they are shaped by the symbolic, ideological, and pedagogical frameworks in which the language is embedded. While the global utility of English is largely uncontested, learners' responses reveal significant variation in how they position themselves in relation to its norms, uses, and ownership.

Rather than emphasizing surface-level percentages, the disparities between Spain, Mexico, and Honduras mirror profound intercultural orientations and institutional paradigms. For instance, Spanish students demonstrated a relatively open stance toward linguistic variation; however, they exhibited limitations in symbolic self-legitimation. This ambivalence suggests that exposure to diversity —through policy or curriculum— is insufficient unless accompanied by critical pedagogical mediation. As the CEFR in its Companion Volume (2020) emphasizes, intercultural awareness is not only a matter of content but also of identity negotiation. The persistence of native-like aspirations among Spanish learners, despite their support for intelligibility, illustrates the tension between institutional pluralism and internalized prestige norms.

In Mexico, students demonstrated a greater propensity to employ English in a creative and flexible manner, despite operating within systems that predominantly adhere to the standards of native speakers. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of "compensatory pluralism" proposed by Chen and Le (2019), which posits that hybrid practices tend to thrive at the periphery of conventional educational curricula. In this context, symbolic empowerment appears to emerge not from top-down models but from lived linguistic realities, including transborder contact, local Englishes, and bicultural environments. Conversely, educational systems that are less standardized may, paradoxically, allow for greater bottom-up negotiation of norms.

Conversely, the Honduran case exemplifies a more pronounced adherence to conventional models of English acquisition. The lower levels of symbolic ownership and personal legitimacy suggest that English is still framed as an external norm to be mastered, rather than adapted to

suit local needs. The role of English as a vehicle of socioeconomic mobility may reinforce this stance, promoting convergence over creativity. Rodríguez-García's (2010) concept of assimilationist-compensatory interculturality offers a theoretical framework that facilitates a nuanced understanding of how students may concurrently accept pluralistic rhetoric and adhere to deeply normative expectations.

A transversal insight across all contexts is the fragility of symbolic appropriation. The majority of students expressed support for the notion that the English language is subject to influence by its users. However, a significantly smaller proportion of students reported feeling empowered to contribute to this evolution. This phenomenon does not indicate a deficiency in ideological openness; rather, it underscores a limitation in the discursive space available within educational settings. It is possible for students to intellectually accept the legitimacy of local Englishes; however, they may lack the pedagogical support necessary to enact this legitimacy in practice. As Zacharias (2013) contends, the absence of affirmation from teachers, materials, and institutions hinders the translation of awareness into agency.

Teachers, therefore, occupy a critical position. Across national borders, students indicated a propensity to incorporate local culture and to acquire knowledge about diverse forms of English. However, they seldom encountered consistent support from their instructors. This disconnection underscores the necessity for teacher education to transcend the confines of methodological competence and evolve towards ideological reflexivity. In accordance with Hino's (2018) assertion, the cultivation of endonormative practices entails the validation of learners' identities and the facilitation of diversity —rather than merely presenting students with novel models, it involves engaging them in critical reflection on language, power, and belonging.

The study also points to the coexistence of contradictory goals: communicative clarity and native-likeness. While there was a general consensus in favor of intelligibility, there was also a persistent desire to emulate native norms. This duality is indicative of the profound entrenchment of conventional ideologies in academic assessment, classroom discourse, and institutional standards. It is not that learners reject

pluricentric Englishes; it is simply that they are not invited to inhabit them. As Scales et al. (2006) posit, the native speaker persists in functioning as an imagined ideal, even when learners intellectually recognize its limited applicability.

Beyond the individual attitudes of the subjects, a pattern of symbolic positioning emerges, shaped by the educational culture of each country. Spain exemplifies a form of globalizing pluralism, characterized by structural support yet with partial individual appropriation. Despite the prevalence of institutional conservatism, Mexico exhibits characteristics of grassroots hybridity and high symbolic engagement. Meanwhile, Honduras has exhibited a circumspect approach to intercultural concepts, concurrently upholding a conventional perspective on English that is anchored in standardization and ambition (Rieckmann & Muñoz, 2024).

These findings underscore the notion that pedagogical reform must extend beyond the scope of curricular reform. The promotion of endonormativity necessitates more than the mere revision of educational materials or the incorporation of new textbook content; rather, it demands a fundamental reorientation of classroom practices. This reorientation should prioritize dialogic learning, intercultural reflection, and critical agency. The objective of this initiative is to equip educators with the necessary skills to acknowledge and address the linguistic identities of students, rather than merely evaluating their deviation from a presumed standard.

In order for English to function as a truly international language, it must be taught as a space of participation rather than prescription (Kafle, 2013). This transition, from replication to appropriation, involves acknowledging learners as co-constructors of meaning, capable of shaping the language they are acquiring. The cultivation of critical language awareness, in conjunction with metacognitive strategies, has the potential to bridge the gap between ideological endorsement and practical confidence in students.

In essence, the cultivation of symbolic ownership of English cannot be solely attributed to individual effort; rather, it is a matter of institutional and cultural significance. Absent deliberate assistance from educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers, students will persist in a marginal

role within the language they are expected to master. The cultivation of endonormative pedagogies is contingent upon the challenging of existing hierarchies and the expansion of the symbolic space of the classroom.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined how university students in Spain, Mexico, and Honduras perceive English as an international language (EIL) and their alignment with endonormative principles. A 25-item questionnaire was utilized to assess not only learners' conceptualizations of English and its pedagogical models, but also their sense of symbolic legitimacy in appropriating the language.

While all groups acknowledged the communicative value of English, their attitudes toward ownership and adaptation varied. Spanish students, situated within a policy environment that is conducive to interculturality, have been exposed to a variety of models, yet their adoption of these models remains limited. Mexican students, operating within a more hybrid and bottom-up framework, exhibited the highest symbolic agency, even in the absence of explicit curricular encouragement. Honduran students, influenced by assimilationist frameworks, demonstrated a strong adherence to external norms and exhibited the lowest levels of personal legitimation.

The persistence of ideologies held by native speakers and the scarcity of pluralistic models in instructional materials contribute to a discrepancy between ideological openness and personal agency. This discrepancy is not merely a matter of curriculum; it is also symbolic. Learners may intellectually accept linguistic diversity without feeling empowered to act upon it.

From a pedagogical standpoint, this necessitates a rethinking of English language education —one that validates local voice, fosters critical awareness, and repositions learners as legitimate users. It is imperative that educators possess the capacity to challenge prevailing norms, diversify instructional materials, and cultivate reflective learning environments.

Subsequent research endeavors could further explore this inquiry by employing qualitative methodologies, encompassing the examination of teacher beliefs, institutional policies, and classroom discourse. This study underscores the necessity to reconceive English education not only as a matter of access, but also as a matter of ownership and participation in a pluralistic world.

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SECCION II.

LITERATURE AND LITERARY STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

TEXTS AND SCREENS: TEACHING AMERICAN LITERATURE WITH CONTEMPORARY REFERENCES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The following book chapter presents the development and implementation (as well as preliminary results) of an innovation project developed in the subject *Literatura norteamericana I: siglos XVII a XIX* (American Literature I: 17th-19th centuries) in the undergraduate degree in English (*Grado en Estudios Ingleses: lengua, literatura y cultura*) at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain, carried out during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Given the peculiarities of the UNED, a public university using a hybrid model (online teaching combined with face-to-face tutorial sessions at the UNED branches, or *centros asociados*), and its students (who come from different personal and academic backgrounds and may study part- or full-time), it can be challenging to promote student participation. Consequently, in order to boost the students' participation and promote active learning in virtual educational environments, the teaching team (*equipo docente*) of the subject, with the invaluable help of a PhD student who serves as a teaching assistant, designed and implemented an innovation project that made use of audiovisual materials (short videos written and produced by the teaching team and the teaching assistant) as pedagogical tools to enrich the learning and teaching processes of the subject.

Far from being video lectures to further elaborate on the subject, these videos were purposefully designed to be short, so that watching them did not require much time on the part of the students. Also, they broach issues (such as the correct spelling of Puritan, the daily life in colonial America, the lack of drama in the period, or the relationship between self-help books and the works by Mark Twain, among others).

The motivation behind this innovation project is our conviction that literature does not exist in a void and that the thorough knowledge of the historical, political, social and literary context is key to learning to appreciate and interpret the literary texts studied in this course. The challenge to be met is how to tackle the American literature of this extensive period in an accessible and interesting manner.

Of course, the use of videos at university teaching is far from being new, but the integration of videos in Literature undergraduate courses still offers many possibilities that have been scarcely explored. Each video has been carefully created so as to highlight certain issues or evoke the historical context of the works studied in the subject.

Literatura Norteamericana I is an annual subject – the first semester is devoted to 12 units illustrating the literature of the 17th and 18th centuries whereas the second semester covers the literature of the 19th century in 12 units. While this innovation project was developed in the second semester, the videos produced covered both the contents of the first and second semesters.

The resulting videos were:

1. “America B.S. (Before John Smith)”
2. “Life if Puritan New England”
3. “Benjamin Franklin and Self-help Books”
4. “Puritans, Pilgrims…”
5. “American Theater”
6. “Mark Twain and American Humor”
7. “Native Americans in Early American Literature”

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. Course context and pedagogical framework

Literatura Norteamericana I: siglos XVII a XIX is a compulsory, year-long subject at UNED, designed for second-year undergraduate students majoring in English Studies. With a weight of 10 ECTS credits, it reflects a hybrid teaching model that prioritizes flexibility while providing structured academic guidance by combining independent study with interaction through the university's digital platforms and the support of UNED tutors in the *centros asociados*. Students from a variety of backgrounds are enrolled in this course, and they frequently juggle their studies with obligations to their families and jobs. Additionally, they are usually older than 19, which is the typical age for second-year undergraduate students. This diversity, which is a feature of distance learning, influences how students interact with the materials and influences their participation in optional learning activities.

Because of the wide range of literary periods covered (from early American texts and the Enlightenment to Romanticism, Realism, and Naturalism), the syllabus must inevitably limit treatment of certain subjects. As course designers, we identified this gap as an opportunity to integrate new materials that support student learning beyond the core syllabus.

Although students already have access to supplementary resources (e.g., radio segments, PowerPoint presentations, or Genially materials), these are scattered across units and vary in format and depth. The videos that were developed as a result of this project were intended to help students understand the historical and cultural context of 17th-19th-century America in a more effective manner. This is in line with findings that students are aided by the use of materials that create meaningful connections, are interesting according to their own preferences, and create cultural proximity (Pasaribu et al., 2023, pp. 348–349). By including these resources in the curriculum, students will be more engaged and have a better comprehension of the American literary panorama as well.

2.2. Goals of the teaching innovation proposal

This teaching innovation project is living proof of the UNED's institutional commitment to adapt its methodologies to the pedagogical challenges of digitally mediated learning and to the evolving expectations of students in increasingly complex educational settings. Aware of the specific demands posed by literary analysis in distance education, the teaching team sought to enrich the course experience through carefully designed audiovisual materials that would complement the syllabus.

We approached this innovation project as a response to students' learning needs, aiming not simply to diversify course content, but to provide accessible, substantive multimedia resources that could deepen their understanding of the subject. In this context, the proposal aimed to promote a more contextualized, interdisciplinary, and critically engaged approach to American literature. Specifically, the innovation project sought to: (1) contextualize literary texts within their historical and social frameworks, (2) foster interdisciplinary connections between literature, history, and culture, (3) encourage the students' interest and critical reflection, and (4) help visualize the social and ideological dynamics of the 17th to 19th centuries.

With these objectives in mind, the videos were conceived as interpretative tools rather than passive content, capable of activating historical empathy and enhancing literary analysis. The teaching team integrated these materials into the course with the expectation of improving students' understanding of the respective historical and literary contexts, strengthening students' ability to relate literature and society, and cultivating or improving their analytical and critical skills. Ultimately, the innovation project aimed to support students in developing a more informed and reflective perspective on the texts studied, which recognizes literature's role as a cultural product shaped by and responsive to its historical moment.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description and pedagogical features of the videos

The audiovisual materials created for this project consist of seven short videos, each designed to highlight a specific cultural or literary element

from the syllabus. Conceived as brief, focused interventions, they serve as complementary tools to enrich student engagement. Their duration ranges from three to eleven minutes, with most of them being under ten minutes so as to enhance accessibility and minimize cognitive load in asynchronous settings, in line with research showing better retention and sustained attention in formats under six minutes (Guo et al., 2014, p. 44).

The videos were scripted, recorded, and edited by the teaching staff and the teaching assistant, using narrated PowerPoint slides, instructor voiceovers, period illustrations, quotations, timelines, and visual references from popular culture. This ensured thematic coherence and pedagogical control. Students could access the videos through a dedicated tab on the virtual platform and were encouraged to watch them in connection with the 24 teaching units.

Pedagogically, the videos serve multiple purposes: they complement key course content, present it from original perspectives, and stimulate interest through surprise, contemporary relevance, or lighthearted tone. As Beach et al. (2016, p. 8) observe, helping students connect literature with their lives is central to reader-response pedagogy. This strategy sparks curiosity, reinforces retention, and promotes autonomous learning.

The videos were also informed by sociocultural learning theories, which frame literary learning environments as communities of interpretive practice where meaning is constructed in relation to shared cultural and social frameworks rather than derived solely from individual response (Beach et al., 2016, pp. 6–7), and by the notion of what Beach et al. (2016, p. 10) call "constructing text worlds" – mental representations of a text's social and historical reality – based on students' own cultural knowledge. To this end, the videos contextualize literary material, challenge assumptions, and adopt a direct, sometimes informal register to reduce the perceived distance between students and early American literature.

A good example is "America B.S. (Before John Smith)," a 4-minute-long video which dissipates the widespread belief that American literature begins with the writings of John Smith. While, due to a principle of selection and time constraints, the syllabus for our subject does begin with the works by Captain John Smith, in this video students are

introduced to the Spanish colonial narratives by Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá, which were written several decades before the arrival of the Jamestown party. We believe that for our students, most of whom are Spanish nationals, this video will be particularly resonant, as it explores the Spanish roots of the present-day United States, and which are more often than not ignored in most histories of American colonial literature.

> "Life in Puritan New England" deconstructs stereotypical images of the Puritans, laying out facts about literacy, gender roles, law, and social practices, including fascinating examples. One such example was the list of historical Puritan names, drawn from the Bible, such as Humiliation or No-merit. The use of an AI-generated image to depict popular ideas of "Puritan" and contrast them with actual images of Puritan clothing and life served as a perfect lesson for students to visualize the gulf between myth and history. Similarly, the video "Puritans, Pilgrims…" clarifies common terminological confusions around Puritans, Separatists, and the so-called Pilgrim Fathers.

Designed to develop historical awareness and interpretive depth, the longest video, "Benjamin Franklin and Self-help Books" (11 minutes), follows a documentary-like structure tracing Franklin's legacy through the history of self-help literature. It connects him with self-help authors like Orison Swett Marden or Dale Carnegie, and with contemporary figures such as Steve Jobs or Michelle Obama. The invitation to explore how cultural narratives of self-making evolve over time encourages students to reinterpret American foundational values and to build an internal model of the textual world Franklin inhabits, shaped by the video's associations.

> "American Theater," a 6-minute video, responds to a common question from students: why is drama absent from the syllabus? It outlines theatrical activity in colonial America and the early Republic, addressing European influences and the social concerns explored in 19th-century melodramas and historical plays. Figures such as William Dunlap and John Howard Payne are introduced alongside popular genres like Burlesque. The video addresses students' curiosity directly and creates a tone of responsiveness, thus reinforcing the perception of the course as dynamic and adaptable.

Humor as a national mode of critique is the subject of "Mark Twain and American Humor," a 10-minute video that combines literary commentary with scenes from *The Simpsons* or *The Big Bang Theory*, whose

dialogues are transcribed and unpacked onscreen. This didactic element (drawing on popular media with strong cultural familiarity in Spain) helps bridge geographical and generational gaps. The video illustrates how Twain's work anticipated key elements of American satire: irony, resistance to hierarchy, and ethical subversion. Bart Simpson and Huck Finn are shown as heirs to the "bad boy" archetype, whereas Sheldon Cooper's obsession with rules is used to explore the absurdity of bureaucratic logic and the combination of meritocratic pride, intellectual elitism and entitlement that underpins the rigid American social hierarchies, often ridiculed through humor.

> "Native Americans in Early American Literature" critiques canonical portrayals of Native figures. It distinguishes between historical individuals (such as Pocahontas, or the Native captors described in Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative) and fictional representations like Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper or Queequeg in *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville, the latter often misidentified as Native American. The video underscores curious, overlooked aspects, such as the ritualized nature of John Smith's rescue by Pocahontas, and the multilingual fluency of many Native individuals in tribal, regional, and colonial languages, in contrast to their depiction in literature and movies as simplified or broken English. Again, this layered presentation invites students to construct "text worlds" that acknowledge the cultural sophistication of Native presence in American letters (Beach et al., 2016, p. 10).

All the seven videos close with suggested readings, allowing students to explore the topics independently. Their style is deliberately eclectic – combining academic commentary with cultural storytelling – and each opens a different window onto the course's historical and literary contexts. They follow the thematic sequence of the 24 teaching units and address topics students will encounter across the year. Instead of acting as self-contained lessons, the videos function as bridges: between past and present, canonical texts and overlooked voices, academic discourse and informal curiosity.

Can a three-minute video truly change how a student approaches early American literature? Perhaps not alone, but it can offer a new perspective, reframe a topic, or invite deeper inquiry that often drives true learning. These short-format resources aim to do just that: to promote literary

understanding by making abstract ideas visible and activating students' prior knowledge in ways that connect directly to the studied texts.

3.2. Criteria for the creation of the videos

In the literature classroom, we constantly face a daunting challenge – to make students find meaningful connections in the texts, authors and cultural contexts they study, which students usually see as too remote from their present-day reality. One of the strategies that we have implemented in *Literatura Norteamericana I* is the creation of audiovisual materials that complement the syllabus. The reasons and motivations that constitute the criteria for the topics for the videos are the following ones:

1. Complementing the syllabus – what is not covered in the two textbooks. One of the main reasons for the creation of these videos is the need to approach aspects that, due to time limitations (mostly) or other considerations, are not covered in the two textbooks of the subject, *American Literature to 1900* (Gibert 2009a) and *A Study Guide for American Literature to 1900* (Gibert 2009b).
2. Address some aspects that may cause confusion. Another of our motivations has been to offer more detailed explanations on aspects in the syllabus that routinely cause confusion among the students. During the years teaching this subject, we have found, in the virtual platforms, by email or in the exams themselves, some questions that, year after year, cause confusion. A salient case is the capitalization of the word "Puritan" (a key concept in our subject). American Puritans need a capital P, but often students fail to capitalize the word Puritan (following the practice to refer to puritans in England).
3. Provide answers to questions that students previously asked. The previous year, a student wondered in the forums why we did not cover American drama in this subject. The answer was rather obvious for us – there was no American drama in Puritan America, and for centuries theater had a bad reputation that it took time to shake off. What is more, the quality of the emergent American drama was unequal and not worth

studying. However, last year we replied to the student's question and this year, should new students have the same doubt, we created the corresponding video. Thanks to these criteria, we can address students' real needs as well as making learning a collective and accumulative process.

4. Connect literature and contemporary culture. One of the main difficulties that our students perceive in tackling the subject is the perception of distance between our current times and the studied periods. These texts are the product of values, references, and circumstances that we perceive as alien today, creating an affective and cognitive barrier. To redress this, we established links between literature and popular contemporary culture, including references to *The Simpsons* or *The Big Bang Theory.*
5. Reply to students' questions and doubts about the 24 course units expressed in the forums and in private email exchanges. Students' participation in the virtual forums is an invaluable asset to detect the issues that students have more difficulties with. These questions, asked in the interaction among students, help us see gaps in the understanding of certain topics. Other questions were asked by email. With these starting points, we made videos addressing these questions.
6. Explore what daily life was like in the 17th-19th centuries. Students especially valued that these videos covered some aspects of the daily life of American colonists and citizens during these periods. This cultural dimension of literature allows students to better understand how these texts were produced in a given context.

4. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND PERCEIVED IMPACT

Although participation in the satisfaction questionnaire was limited – only 11 responses were received out of an estimated 389 students enrolled (UNED, 2025) – the data nonetheless offers valuable insight into how the audiovisual materials were perceived by the subset of students who interacted with them. These results must be interpreted cautiously and as an exploratory sample, but they allow us to reflect critically on the reception

of the innovation project and on the broader pedagogical dynamics at play in distance learning environments such as the one offered by UNED.

Students were first asked whether they had watched the videos. All the participants in the survey had seen at least one video, and eight out of eleven (73%) said they had seen most or all of them. Therefore, despite the small size of our sample, those who watched the videos denoted a certain level of interest. It is our belief that these answers point to the existence of a small, engaged group of students who found the videos worth returning to. This is significant in a course where student motivation and initiative are essential components of autonomous learning, as it is a year-long subject with a demanding workload.

The second and third questions evaluated the interest and pedagogical effectiveness of the videos using a 1-to-5 Likert scale. In terms of interest, 7 students gave the maximum score (5), and 4 students gave a 4. Regarding their usefulness in understanding course content, 6 students gave a 5, 4 gave a 4, and only 1 selected a 3. These responses support the idea that short, carefully designed audiovisual resources (particularly those created to contextualize literary texts within their historical and cultural frameworks) can help students grasp complex material in asynchronous learning settings (Guo et al., 2014; Kay, 2012, pp. 823–824), with the latter offering a comprehensive review of studies on the pedagogical impact of video resources. Because of their potential to activate prior knowledge and focus on culturally or emotionally relevant themes, these videos had been well accepted so far – in fact, students tend to struggle when confronted with distant or foreign literary content (Pasaribu et al., 2023, p. 349). Does such a tool enhance comprehension or affective bonds to the subject? Although the size of our sample is insufficient to settle this question definitively, the responses would indicate a positive change in both directions.

The fourth question asked whether students considered the videos a useful addition to the course. The responses were overwhelmingly affirmative. All respondents selected the option indicating that the videos had been a "good contribution" to the subject. From the perspective of course design, this is particularly relevant. One of the initial goals of the innovation project was to create content that would not duplicate but rather enrich the

existing textual materials by connecting them with historical, cultural, and ideological dynamics. The positive reception in this regard suggests that the videos fulfilled that objective for those who watched them.

The fifth and final question focused on students' preferences regarding future use of audiovisual materials in the course. All respondents expressed the desire to see similar videos included in future iterations of the course. This outcome reflects global evidence that students in higher education increasingly prefer mixed-modality learning environments that combine visual, audio, and text-based materials (Child et al., 2023), highlighting the valuable role that audiovisual tools can play in how our students access and process academic content. Specifically, motivation and comprehension improve when learners engage with multimodal materials, especially when those materials help connect textual content with students' personal contexts (Pasaribu et al., 2023, p. 350).

Yet, the most pressing issue raised by the questionnaire is not the content of the responses, but the sheer lack of them. Eleven responses out of nearly four hundred enrolled students represent a participation rate of under 3%. This low figure must be addressed, not only to understand the limits of the data but also to reflect on the structural conditions of teaching and learning in a distance education institution like UNED. As cited in Tait (2014, p. 13), Street (2010) identified several factors that contribute to students dropping out of online education, such as time pressure, self-management, family responsibilities, and lack of logistical or technical support. Participation may have been low because the survey was voluntary and anonymous and there was no way to associate it with a student's grade or a course requirement. Also, these figures are in line with the low students' participation in similar innovation projects carried out at the UNED in the same academic year (Arroyo Vázquez et al., 2025, 235).

One interesting lack of response concerned the discussion forum designed for the materials: there were explicit invitations and reminders, but no comments or questions were ever submitted. Although we were disappointed at first, the silence was actually in line with what the literature had painted on online learning forums. As Du et al. (2022) demonstrate, over 82% of forum participation in their sample was

linked to mandatory tasks, indicating that students are more likely to engage when participation is tied to assessment or other required activities (p. 6), neither of which applied in this case. Notably, the structure of UNED courses (which are centered on flexibility and student autonomy) may also limit spontaneous interaction unless clearly framed within evaluative or highly guided activities.

From an institutional point of view, the low response rate raises questions about how innovation operates in settings where participation is optional and not always prioritized. Still, we must not lose sight of what these results do indicate. Among the students who responded, the feedback showed that the materials helped clarify historical contexts, connect literary texts to their cultural frameworks, and support critical engagement. It is also relevant to note that this was the first year in which such videos were incorporated into the course, and that they were introduced after the second semester had already begun – factors that may have affected their visibility and the extent to which students integrated them into their study routines. Despite these limitations, the data offers a modest but meaningful indication that well-designed, historically grounded audiovisual content can enrich the teaching of American literature, even (perhaps especially) when delivered through a screen. Though the sample is small, it suggests that when students do engage with such resources, the impact on their understanding and learning experience can be tangible and worthwhile.

5. DISCUSSION

The proposal we have outlined above in *Literatura Norteamericana I: siglos XVII a XIX* adds audiovisual materials to the rest of components of the subject (textbooks, self-assessment texts, extra resources, etc.) so as to improve the comprehension and contextualization of the literary texts studied in this annual subject. This initiative is the result of the perceived need to bring American literature closer to our students, by making it easier the connection between these canonical works and contemporary cultural references which are closer to the students' personal and academic experience and their usual visual language.

One of the main aims is to provide students with strategies that help them visualize and understand these historical, social, and cultural texts (alongside their respective contexts) from new perspectives. At the same time, these videos shed light on topics that, while relevant and enriching to their global comprehension of the subject, cannot always be studied in class given the time pressure of the academic year.

Thanks to these videos, students had the chance to discover issues that go beyond our syllabus, such as American drama or Native Americans. These new approaches and perspectives broaden our students' horizons in a significant and positive manner, at the same time that they contribute to a critical vision in regard to American literature, which is a must in their condition of future experts on English Studies.

As we are aware of the need for students' feedback, we opened forum threads to allow them to give their opinion and, given the lack of success of this initiative (which we may attribute to students' shyness), we conducted an anonymous online survey. Despite the limited sample that responded to the survey, we are satisfied with the results, which showed an excellent opinion regarding the incorporation of these videos.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In our assessment of the impact and usefulness of these videos in the teaching of American literature, we believe that the use of these videos as a didactic resource had a positive impact on our students' learning process. The motivation for this innovation project was to offer students a dynamic, accessible and complementary tool to tackle the learning of the literary texts of the subject. In our consideration, the goals that we outlined when we first decided to embark on this innovation project have been successfully met, both when it comes to the understanding of the contents as well as the consolidation of the autonomous learning on the part of the students.

The videos have allowed us to present in a clear and succinct manner some aspects that are not usually covered in textbooks and manuals. Thanks to this audiovisual format, students could check out the videos at their own pace, which is one of the key features of UNED. This,

however, is especially welcome in a subject that, given its very broad scope and its numerous units (24), can be quite demanding for the students, who are enrolled in their second year.

Although the feedback provided by the students has been scant, the response we did receive was generally positive. Students have valued favorably the usefulness of the videos. Also, in some cases students have suggested new topics for future videos, which open new possibilities in future years, as this will allow us to adapt the resources to the real needs or curiosity of the students.

In future years, we plan to continue creating new videos regarding topics that the instructors consider worth pursuing or that the students suggest. The creation of these new videos will continue to be guided by the principles of clarity, academic rigor and accessibility, so as to connect the literary content with the interests and concerns of our current students.

Moreover, we plan to open a YouTube channel to further spread these videos. This decision is motivated by our desire to share useful teaching resources but also to allow any viewer worldwide to access quality materials. We consider that they may be useful in a national (as this subject is a compulsory one in all the English Studies syllabi in Spanish universities) and international context, and not only for undergraduate students but for anyone interested in the literature of this period.

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MEMORY, REPRESSION AND IDENTITY: A PSYCHOANALYTIC AND QUEER READING OF *THE BINDING*

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1. INTRODUCTION TO *THE BINDING*

This paper offers an interdisciplinary analysis of Bridget Collins's *The Binding* through the combined lenses of psychoanalytic theory, trauma studies and queer theory. This best-seller, which has resonated with both adolescent and adult audiences, invites introspection into what it means to forget and whether oblivion provides relief or erasure of the self. Distinguished by its powerful narrative and richly imagined world, the novel captivates readers not merely through suspense but through its thematic and emotional complexity. Its central premise —books that serve as repositories for individuals' most traumatic memories— raises profound philosophical and ethical questions related to the construction of identity, the mechanisms and consequences of repression, and tensions between personal autonomy and societal control. It positions forgetting as a paradoxical process: at once a form of liberation from constraints and a violation of the self.

The novel is set in an alternate world where books not only tell stories but contain memories deliberately removed and bound into their pages. The story begins with a young protagonist, Emmett Farmer, sent away from his family to begin an apprenticeship in bookbinding under Seredith, a reclusive binder who instructs him in delicate and meticulous tasks. He gradually discovers the secret behind Seredith's binding and understands that the formula to transform people's traumas into bound stories requires a magical power only Seredith possesses. In this world, books serve as the means through which painful memories or

secrets are extracted and erased. However, books are both a medium to relieve tormented souls and a dangerous device, as reading one's bound story causes the void left by the erased memory to be refilled in a disturbing and fragmented way, unleashing emotional and psychological conflict. Emmett later discovers a book bearing his name hidden in a locked storeroom to which only Seredith has access. In doing so, he uncovers the truth about his own past, which had been deliberately erased, and a series of plot twists are revealed. Later, the arrival of Lord Lucian Darnay, obsessed with controlling the bindings to dominate society, causes Emmett to recall various episodes of his life, costing him days of strange visions and physical discomfort —the Binder's Disease. He learns that he, too, has the rare talent of binding people's memories into books. Part Two reveals the aftermath of Emmett's re-encounter with his erased memories. It uncovers his experience of rejection and isolation following his strict upbringing and his coming out as gay within an unaccepting society. It exposes the psychological consequences of his binding, his struggle to restore his sense of self and the emotional toll of binding new clients' dark secrets and traumas. In Part Three, following Seredith's death, all the bound volumes are entrusted to her son, who extracts bound stories from willing or unwilling individuals and exploits them as novels bought by an audience hungry for raw human experiences.

This paper presents a critical analysis of *The Binding* through the dual lenses of psychoanalytic theory and queer theory —two frameworks that offer a strong foundation for interpreting the novel's intricate characterisation, narrative structure, and symbolic architecture. Psychoanalysis enables the exploration of the novel's treatment of memory, repression, and trauma, particularly in relation to the act of binding itself as a metaphorical and literal excision of identity. Trauma studies, as an extension of psychoanalytic thought, provide a conceptual bridge that links the mechanisms of repression and trauma with the experiences of marginalised identities, particularly queer ones, offering a means to explore their psychological complexity. Meanwhile, queer theory offers insight into the subversion of normative structures of desire, gender, and subjectivity, positioning the novel as a means of resistance to conventional

narratives of sexuality and identity. Through these theoretical prisms, this study seeks to illuminate the latent tensions, desires, and ideological undercurrents that animate Collins' text, arguing that *The Binding* not only narrates a fantastical tale but also serves as a powerful allegory about the struggle for self-definition amidst societal constraint.

2. BOOKS AS SYMBOLS: MEMORY, IDENTITY AND REPRESSION

The Swiss psychiatrist, psychotherapist, and psychologist, Carl Jung (1956), highlights that psychological interpretation is valuable in two ways: it helps us better understand dreams, fantasies, and art, and it also supports the idea that myths and legends reflect shared human experiences. In this sense, interpreting the novel's symbolic motifs can shed light on the characters' inner psychological states and the collective patterns of society, uncovering deeper structures of meaning that link personal experiences to universal human concerns. *The Binding* includes a number of symbols which deepen its thematic complexity while contributing to the exploration of queer identity, traumatic experiences or power imbalances. These include plants and herbs, which evoke wisdom, healing and natural cycles; horses, which represent freedom or power; mirrors, which symbolise self-reflection and fragmented identity; and darkness, which embodies repression, the unconscious, or fear. However, central to the novel's symbolic framework are books and the meaning behind them. The book symbolises the contrast between hidden, secret knowledge (esoteric) and openly accessible knowledge (exoteric), which suggests that communication can both reveal and conceal truths —offering insight but also danger or harm, as a double-edge sword (Cirlot, 1971)

In *The Binding*, books are far more than mere vessels of narrative. They serve as profound symbolic devices that underscore the novel's central themes of memory, identity, and repression. The act of binding, in both its literal and metaphorical forms, becomes a powerful means for the extraction of an individual's dark or traumatic memories, which are transformed into written texts and erased. This process resembles that of

psychoanalysis. The Austrian neurologist, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), is widely recognised as the foundational figure who formulated the core principles of this therapeutic practice in the late nineteenth century. This therapeutic practice treats mental disorders by examining the interplay between the conscious and the unconscious elements in the patient's mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind. Although this form of therapy has long been regarded as limited in its efficacy and criticised for methodological inconsistencies and biases, Freud's work continues to exert a significant influence on contemporary culture (Barry, 1995). In literature, psychoanalysis is a form of literary criticism that employs the techniques of this therapeutic method when interpreting literary works. As proponents of psychoanalytic theory assert, there exists an intrinsic connection between literature and the human psyche, with literary texts often serving as a reflection or manifestation of unconscious desires, anxieties, and psychological conflicts.

The technique of psychoanalysis itself is mirrored in the way Seredith "binds" people. She sits with them and lets them ease their soul by talking about their painful experiences. De Havilland —an aristocratic figure who is deeply involved in the exploitation of binding for personal and social advantage— claims that binders are "doctors of the soul". They listen and wait until memories come out and then capture them. This echoes the traditional method of psychoanalysis, which aims at getting the patient to talk freely about their experiences and emotions in order to bring the repressed fears and traumatic experiences to the surface level of the conscious part of the mind. In both the book and the real technique, fears, desires or inner battles are brought to light. They are unearthed to become part of the conscious half of the mind. Although both try to alleviate the distress of the human mind, a difference can be found. In the novel, these repressed fears become visible to be hidden again outside of the subject's mind, while in psychoanalysis the objective is helping the patient regain lost parts of the self so that these stop being a trauma or a repressed feeling.

At its metaphorical level, the act of binding refers to the social and emotional mechanisms through which people suppress or conceal parts of their identity deemed unacceptable by sociocultural norms. In this sense,

trauma and repression are encoded into the novel's narrative structure and language. The book evolves from a passive object into a method of psychological intervention, social control, and, paradoxically, potential liberation. From the lenses of trauma studies and psychoanalysis, putting trauma into words is a step towards healing. For Emmet, whose sexuality is in conflict with societal and family expectations, binding his memories and desires serves as a means of liberation but it also becomes a form of repression, mimicking the psychological trauma of denial and shame. Just as Emmett's bound story serves to hide and repress a crucial part of his identity, in psychoanalytic therapy, the patient "cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him, and what he cannot remember may be precisely the essential part of it" (Freud, 1920, p. 18-19). However, as Freudian psychoanalysis and trauma studies suggest, even if the patient cannot consciously recall the traumatic event, "reproductions" of the experience may emerge in dreams (Freud, 1920, p. 19), as reflected in the dreams depicted within the novel. Thus, the act of binding itself mirrors the nature and process of trauma, which, in traditional trauma studies and Freudian psychoanalysis, is considered to divide the psyche, affect memory and lead to a "level of fright [that] destroys the mind's ability to comprehend it and linguistically code it" (Balaev, 2018, p. 363). In the novel, individuals who have been bound are stripped of their ability to remember and articulate their traumatic experiences; the binding process alters their memory and fragments their sense of self, resulting in an incomplete or fractured identity. Books become symbols for this silenced memory, holding the trauma that the psyche can no longer process or narrate.

The idea of a bound book is in itself suppressed in the novel's fantasy world —forbidden and hidden in a locked room. Books embody the repressed emotions that Freud identified with the unconscious; the portion of the mind of which we are not aware. The unconscious refers to "the repressed contents which have been denied access to the pre-conscious-conscious system by the operation of repression [...] Its 'contents' are 'representatives' of the instincts" (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1988, p. 474). The unconscious part of our minds, just like a bound book, contains the deepest feelings and thoughts which remain hidden

so as not to disturb the conscious part. The characters in the novel seek to conceal their inner torments in order to preserve their peace of mind. By consigning their darkest secrets to the unconscious, the conscious self is momentarily freed and able to experience joy but at the cost of losing a vital part of their identity. This is the Freudian idea of repression, 'forgetting' or 'ignoring' unresolved inner conflict. These hidden stories are of the most disturbing and harmful kind. This is why they are expressed in symbolic language for Freud —through the symbol of books for Collins. In the novel's alternate world, the locked room where books are hidden is akin to the cryptic imagery of Freudian analysis. They serve to shield the conscious mind from the traumatic content of the unconscious, helping both Emmett and Lucian to live without succumbing to psychological torment.

In Chinese symbolism, a book is believed to have the power to protect against or repel evil spirits. In other words, books are seen not just as sources of knowledge but also as objects with protective, almost magical qualities (Beaumont, 1949). In the novel, books adopt this power to protect the bound individual from their traumatic experiences but townspeople also consider them evil, as they contain dark secrets and painful nightmares that characters want to hide from society. This idea is illustrated by the following quote from the novel:

> I turned back to Ma. I couldn't put it into words: the swift change of subject if someone ever mentioned a book, the shiver of distaste at the word, the look on their faces. [...] 'Emmett,' he said, 'don't ever let me see you with a book again. You understand?'[...]. No one had ever explained why books were shameful. (Collins, 2018, p. 17).

Books epitomise the darkest passions and unfulfilled needs and wishes that have no place among the obsolete standards of the unaccepting society of *The Binding*. They are witnesses to an individual's concealed past experiences and as such, they are powerful instruments for the exertion of power and dominance over society. Those memories associated with trauma, shame and unacceptable desires can be removed from public consciousness. This mirrors the mechanisms of censorship and repression of our society and shows that those in power can decide which stories are true, which are altered and which are silenced.

Likewise, possessing access to this hidden knowledge serves as a potent instrument for controlling certain individuals, thereby reinforcing existing social hierarchies. Additionally, the sale of books as objects for entertainment can be interpreted as a critique of how personal or traumatic narratives are commodified in our society and transformed into products for public consumption. The Guardian (2019) highlighted the novel as an example of how "even our memories can be colonised", emphasising the story's critique of external control over personal identity and psychological autonomy.

3. BETWEEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND DREAMS: UNVEILING THE UNCONSCIOUS

The Binding constantly shows a battle between what the characters remember and what has been erased from their minds, tracing the space between the part that is aware and the part that is metaphorically asleep or secretly hidden. Emmett and Lucian struggle to live due to the ongoing reminiscences that come to their minds —those that they cannot fully remember or understand. Both characters' memories have been frequently erased by order of their respective families. They believe they are complete when in reality, they lack a part of their memories —of their identity— and they discover this when they read their own secret bound stories. In Emmett Farmer's words:

> That numbness [when you are bound] would take part of yourself away (Collins, 2018, p. 84).

A vacuum is left inside bound characters. As Psychoanalysis theory posits, individuals are complex selves composed of two conflicting halves —the conscious and the unconscious mind. Emmet and Lucian do not fully identify with themselves until they discover what their secret passions and desires were. As Freud suggested, the unconscious influences our conscious strongly. Emmet and Lucian both act in a way that is affected by what their bound stories conceal. This is related to the idea defended by psychoanalytic theorists that human behaviour is largely deterministic, shaped by unconscious drives and repressed experiences rather than free will. Neither Emmet and Lucian have free

will; their conduct is motivated by the force of their unconscious and their emotions are heavily influenced by the memories that have been forcibly erased from their conscious mind. However, in separating trauma and past experiences from the individual, the process of binding is also erasing part of the person's identity, which is inextricably shaped by memories. The novel illustrates how the unconscious controls the conscious, showing that even bound memories have power over the self. This could also suggest that any repression and erasure of memories also eliminates the power of the individual to resist social norms and risks becoming no one at all.

A concept which is closely linked with psychoanalytic theory and the notion of the unconscious is that of dream work, which refers to the mental process through which the unconscious mind transforms latent thoughts into dream images. The origins of this connection can be attributed to Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, first published in 1900. The theories he discussed are employed in psychoanalytic criticism to uncover the hidden, unconscious desires, fears, and conflicts that shape both literature and the human psyche. Emmet has a number of dreams while he is recovering from the severe and mysterious illness that caused him to stop working in the fields. He describes his nightmares:

> They were rarer now, and they changed. The formless black terrors had sharpened into clear dreams, full of sunlight but they were just as bad. Ever since that day, the fear had a face: Lucian Darnay. [...] I didn't know what I was frightened of but whatever it was, it lived in Seredith's locked room. (Collins, 2018, p. 41).

Freudian dream interpretation argues that our wishes are expressed in the form of dreams, which might be distorted in a process of censorship. Emmett had a romantic relationship with Lucian, but both were unwillingly bound by their parents, who considered that their homosexuality was a shame for the family. A romance between two individuals from different social strata was also completely inconceivable for the families. The characters do not recognise each other after they were bound but Emmett suffers from nightmares containing the image of Lucian. These nightmares are a representation of his fears for being shamed by his family —and the traumatic experience of being forcibly bound.

Freudian theory proposes that dreams serve as messages that the unconscious sends to display our unfulfilled or repressed desires —such as Emmett's yearning for a relationship with Lucian. His fears and secret passions appear in his nightmares but they were censored by his family and bound by Seredith.

We can also observe the power of the unconscious at work in the figure of the author, whose creative output may have revealed her deepest desires and traumatic experiences. When writing *The Binding*, Collins had a wish: to help people in need. In an interview with William Morrow and Company (2019), she explained that she came up with the idea for the book when she was volunteering for the Samaritans. She offered emotional support to callers who were going through painful situations. Terribly affected by the callers' experiences, Collins wanted to help people and offer them a solution but she was unable to do so merely by means of a telephone line. Additionally, she had just completed a course on bookbinding where she learned expert vocabulary and handcrafting techniques. The author's creative output —*The Binding* itself— could also be interpreted as the unconscious' powerful control over Collin's conscious part of her mind. As a result of the activities carried out while she was awake, Collins' unconscious mind worked to provide her with this incredibly captivating world where suffering could be removed. Collins transformed her unfulfilled desire of helping people in pain into a book, which is at once the symbol of her desires and the symbolic means through which characters' torments are erased.

4. NEGOTIATING QUEER IMPULSE, OBEDIENCE AND ALIENATION

Major Freudian concepts include those of the ego, superego and id—representing the three components of the psyche and corresponding to consciousness, conscience and the unconscious (Freud, 1900). In psychoanalysis, the mind is conceptualised as a complex interplay between conscious and unconscious processes, with the latter exerting a strong influence on an individual's behaviour, emotions or expression.

In *The Binding*, these can be mapped onto Emmett and Lucian's repressed queer desire and instinctual love (id), the societal condemnation embodied in the act of binding (superego), and Emmett's journey towards reconciling personal desire with social expectations (ego). Another possible interpretation aligns the Freudian tripartite model with specific characters: Emmett and Lucian represent the id, driven by instinctual, repressed queer desire; Seredith, as the wise and morally grounded binder, embodies the ego, which mediates between impulse and restraint; and Emmett and Lucian's family symbolise the superego, controlling the reality and enforcing societal norms, repression, and the moral law through condemnation and the use of binding. They act as judges and suppress the natural impulses and desires of the id, whose function is to please and fulfil biological needs and its hunger for satisfaction and amusement. As Dobie (2014) explains, the id attempts to follow its desires "without any concern for law, customs, or values [...] without heeding normal restraints, taboos or consequences." while the ego "mediates between our inner selves and the outer world" (p. 3). The ego —Seredith— tames these young men's desires to fit into societal norms. Emmett and Lucian view their sexuality as immoral and shameful, prompting their minds to find a censor to shield them from anguish in an unaccepting society —embodied here by their families and the binder. The families act in conformity with the standards and values of their individual personality, as it is expected from the superego, which acts against the instincts of the id and hides these in the unconscious: the books.

From a queer theory perspective, this relationship between the id, ego and superego mirrors how external power relations and structures become internalised in society, causing individuals to repress same-sex desires in order to conform to heteronormativity. Thus, the individual's inner superego voice internalises authority and shapes how individuals see their own identity. This repression of queer desire creates psychic conflict, as Emmett and Lucian's sexual desires clash with their families' prohibitions, producing shame, guilt and anxiety. The ego mediates and negotiates between the id's instinctual desires and the superego's societal constraints or external rigidity but the superego's authoritative voice seems to be stronger. Queer theory interpretation allows

us to read Emmett's journey as a critique of rigid identities and the oppressive mechanisms that strengthen them.

Through binding, the id is alienated and pushed into a trance-like state, detached from reality, as the ego and superego impose their dominance. This is related to the concepts of otherness and alienation of the self. According to Jacques Lacan, the famous French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist, this alienation aligns with the concept of the divided self, where erased memories and repressed desires become the Other. From a Lacanian perspective, the Other plays a significant role in shaping an individual's identity and their understanding of their place in society. This otherness is a source of both, alienation from the self, and desire for recognition in a dominating society. In literary theory, the Other is understood as the one who is different, excluded, dominated or marginalised —the alienated figure. One example of this power dynamic occurs after Seredith's death, when Emmett is instructed to erase the traumatic memories of a maid raped by Mr Darnay (Lucian's father) —an act that exemplifies the routine abuse of power.

In a parallel way, Lucian and Emmett's true sexual identities are also alienated due to a power imbalance. Before recovering their memories, their identities are shaped by familial and societal expectations and to survive, they adopt a heterosexual alter ego, with the ego and superego —embodied by Seredith and their families— dominating the id. Rejected by their families, their id becomes internalised as the Other, reflecting a fractured identity and alienation. While the ego and superego figures are seen as structured and complete, the id is conceived as fragmented or lacking. Emmett's physical and psychological response symbolises this dissociation and alienation from his self, which is illustrated in the following quotes:

> [...] breathless and dizzy, as if my blood was too thin (Collins, 2018, p. 160)
>
> There was no myself, no I, [...] I was someone else, skewed by the otherness of alien eyes, the sheer otherness of her (Collins, 2018, p. 150).

This deep dissociation of the self is caused by Emmett's psychological trauma stemming from his family's condemnation and rejection, as well as his subsequent binding. Emmett's psychological fragmentation and

dissociation following his binding reflect the Freudian concept of Nachträglichkeit (deferred action; Breuer & Freud 1955, p. 192), where the trauma is only understood and processed retroactively. The novel's non-linear structure reinforces this fragmentation of the self, as memories resurface in fragments, and language becomes a means of rupture and reintegration of Emmett's queer identity. In trauma studies, which explore how narrative, form, and symbolism reveal the effects of trauma on identity and memory, traumatic experiences are seen as a disruptive event that affects an individual's emotional stability and their perception of reality (Balaev, 2018). As such, traumatic remembering or "pathogenic reminiscences" (Breuer & Freud 1955, p. 40) is a process of repression where language and memory struggle to make sense, often leading to neurotic symptoms, such as those described in the novel. Emmett's trauma is not only individual but shared with Lucian and socially constructed, as his queerness is erased and violated by his family and society through the act of forcible binding. This reflects what contemporary trauma studies, which intersect with other disciplines, identify as "cultural" or "collective" trauma (Balaev, 2018, p. 364). In pluralistic trauma theory, trauma is understood not merely as psychological breakdown and dissociation, but as a phenomenon shaped by cultural, historical and social contexts, which influence its causes and forms of expression (Balaev, 2018). Like Cvetkovich's (2003) *An Archive of Feelings*, *The Binding* explores how the suppression or recovery of emotional and traumatic memory shapes both individual identity and social relationships. Echoing Cvetkovich's focus on queer affect and the cultural dimensions of trauma, the novel suggests that memory and emotion, even when suppressed, hold the potential to reshape identity and resist social erasure.

5. THE UNCANNY AS TRANSGRESSION

"Das Unheimliche" or "the Uncanny" was one of Freud's primary interests. He was fascinated by the field of aesthetics and imagination, but not as other writers and philosophers; he was captivated by the feelings of repulsion and distress. Freud's 1919 essay "The Uncanny" is directly influential on Gothic literature, which also explores how things that are

familiar yet repressed become frightening when they resurface. Hidden rooms, secrets, repressed desires, haunted spaces, dreams and hallucinations are used to signal psychological instability and have frequently been central ideas of the Gothic. Freud's language and framework are still used to understand the psychological horror and fascination we can find in gothic literature, which also intersects with queer theory, particularly through their shared interest in repression, alienation, ambiguity, transgression and marginalised or fragmented identities.

Freud pointed out that the uncanny "belongs to the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread" (Freud, 1919/2003, p. 123). It has to do with the kind of frightening "that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar" (Freud, 1919/2003, p. 124). We sometimes are frightened of what we do not know, as the literal word 'unhomely' (from the German 'unheimlich') suggests. *The Binding* is brimful with expressions and descriptions of characters and places that could fall in the category of the uncanny. Although not everything that is unknown becomes uncanny, it is the case in the figure of the binders and the bound stories. Binders are believed to be involved with the occult arts and the supernatural and that is why we feel uneasy and anxious to discover the secrets that the novel holds. Uncertainty is another device employed by Collins to give us this feeling of 'uncanniness'. We are constantly unsure about the characters' secrets and intentions.

Throughout the novel's Victorian-inspired and antiquated setting, we encounter mysteries and secrets that cause fright or discomfort due to being unknown to us and to the characters. We come across Seredith's gloomy and dismal country house that embodies the terrors and torments of those she "binds". It is isolated in the woods, with spooky locked rooms, keys, secret books, and the magical powers that help Seredith bind memories; the same memories that haunt the house. The townspeople find that household fearsome and intimidating. The reader experiences a similar feeling with Darnay's mansion and De Havilland's office; both intensify the suspenseful feeling of horror, dread and disgust.

Similarly, the atmosphere created by the weather adds up to this 'uncanny' effect. The story happens during dark winter days in which "the wind blew through like a knife, and the cold intensified every aching thud

and jar of the spade" (Collins, 2018, p. 165). In part two, Emmett's sister, Alta, almost dies frozen by the cold water when the ice "broke under her feet like a mouth" (Collins, 2018, p. 172). These are two instances of how the weather and nature are personified to cause an effect of horror and thrill, characteristic of the uncanny, always present in Gothic literature. Other 'uncanny' elements are the plot conventions of insanity, familial secrets and treason that we can find throughout the novel.

The Freudian concept of the uncanny can be closely tied to queer theory, particularly through the novel's depiction of hidden desires and forbidden memories. Emmett's gradual recovery of his erased queer identity and relationship with Lucian creates a haunting, strange familiarity. The return of repressed memories mirrors the queer experience of internalised repression and social denial, where one's desires are hidden to align with heteronormative expectations —where the self becomes the alienated Other. The uncanny in *The Binding* becomes a vehicle for revealing the fragile boundaries between self and other, normal and deviant, and the oppressive forces that marginalise queer individuals. This way, the novel uses the uncanny as a form of transgression to destabilise norms and expose the violence of erasing queer desire.

6. DECONSTRUCTING IDENTITY AND STRUCTURE

Queer theory's primary focus is on issues related to sexual orientation, gender, identity and resistance to homophobia and heterosexism (Barry, 1995). Central to queer theory is the exploration and rejection of binary oppositions (Butler, 1993; Foucault, 1978), which suggests that rigid binary categorisation of gender and sexuality are only a product of discourse and power relations. Queer theorists conceive the subject as "culturally dependent, historically specific product" (Green, 2007, p. 27). They are interested in examining non-normative expressions of gender, sexuality and identity, which are not fixed, but fluid, shifting within the same individual and often dependent on circumstances, social norms or roles.

In *The Binding*, Emmett and Lucian's enforced heterosexual roles echo Judith Butler's (1990) concept of gender performativity, which

suggests that gender "is real only to the extent that it is performed" (p. 278). Both characters are forced to perform identities that are socially acceptable but internally inauthentic. Their attempts to conform to heteronormative expectations —particularly through repression and memory erasure— demonstrate the failure of performance to fully align with their identity, revealing the tension between outward behaviour and inner truth. This conflict exemplifies the "performative interval", where the act of performing a fixed identity fails, exposing its constructed and unstable nature (Butler, 1990; Green, 2007). Emmett's growing discomfort and eventual emotional breakdown underscore this failure to "live into" the heterosexual identity imposed on him, reinforcing queer theory's critique of fixed, binary classifications of gender and sexuality. Similarly, the ongoing homoerotic tension between Emmett and Lucian symbolises a rebellion against their society's heteronormative expectations and disrupts the assumption that heterosexuality is natural, despite societal efforts to present it as such.

Similarly, Collins critiques the inherited guilt imposed by outdated social conventions. In Part Two, Emmett declares he has "ruined the family" and his own life (p. 275), expressing internalised shame rooted in the rejection of his sexuality. This situation also reflects the being in/being out of closet binarism (Sedgwick, 1990) or the dilemma of concealing versus revealing one's sexual identity. *The Binding* parallels Sedgwick's idea that the closet is not merely a private space but a regulatory structure of control that shapes queer existence. Being "in" the closet means surviving under imposed heterosexual norms and being alienated, while being "out" is connected to guilt, rejection, punishment, and societal condemnation. His sense of failure stems not from his actions, but from a society that deems his identity sinful and immoral. Collins vividly portrays this injustice and the families' homophobia, giving voice to the emotional toll of oppression and guilt. Her writing aligns with the radical subversion approach to queer theory (Green, 2002), which seeks to disrupt or "denaturalise" society's efforts to normalise sexuality by focusing on non-heteronormative behaviours as tools of resistance. Emmett's internalised guilt is reflected in the following quote:

> It was Lucian I wanted, No one else. What did that make me? (Collins, 2018, p. 270).

While his parents' perspective reveals the conditional nature of Emmett's family's love and the threat of complete rejection based on his sexual orientation. This can be interpreted as Collins' critique of how familial love is weaponised to enforce conformity, and it powerfully illustrates the trauma and alienation queer individuals often face in response to non-normative identities. Emmett's parents illustrate the idea that his identity as a family member is dependent on him conforming to heteronormative standards:

> We were proud of you. You're getting one more chance to be our son [...] we won't mention this after today. If you ever do anything like this again, Emmett, you won't have a family. If you ever touch another man again, if we hear any nasty story. Is that clear? (Collins, 2018, p. 269).

Collins constructs a repressive atmosphere where fundamental human rights are suppressed, revealing her intention to expose the injustice, frustration, and barriers historically endured by homosexual individuals. Like Emmett, Lucian fails to meet his father's expectations, defying the traditional image of masculinity his father seeks to uphold —just as the term "queer" signifies that which challenges dominant norms. Both protagonists resist parental authority, reflecting how "queer" is used to reject homophobia and assert identity. Collins presents two characters forced to conform to heterosexuality in a reactionary society where same-sex love is seen as deviant. Both protagonists' behaviour is regarded as deviant. They are different from the ordinary, they are the 'other'. They represent society's rejection of homosexuality and homosexual men's rights and needs.

Another example of the deconstruction of traditional structures lies in Collins' exploration of power relations through both sexuality and class. She constructs a same-sex relationship between a farmer and a lord, thereby challenging rigid social hierarchies. Beyond class, both families act as powerful institutions that use their heterosexual norms to marginalise and "other" their sons, reinforcing structures of dominance and exclusion.

A final example of the breakdown of traditional structures can be seen in the novel's coming-of-age narrative, where the two main characters are ultimately able to forge their identities and embrace their sexuality after enduring trauma. Collins adds to this bildungsroman suspense, magic and fantastic elements which provoke thrill and transform the book into a fantastic tale, liberating the story from traditional points of view on love, sexuality and identity. The use of flashbacks throughout the narrative also reinforces the novel's resistance to realist, linear storytelling —a narrative strategy often associated with queer theory, which challenges normative structures and fixed identities.

7. CONCLUSION

The Binding weaves together a compelling narrative that blends magical realism, horror, and a tender homosexual romance. It stands as a powerful fable that encourages young readers to embrace their identity while underscoring the important role of storytelling in reclaiming voice and personal agency.

Collins masterfully explores the traumatic impact of repression, dominance and abuse alongside the hopeful, transformative power of love and self-discovery. Through rich symbolism and psychoanalytic undertones, *The Binding* offers a profound critique of societal homophobia and the erasure of marginalised identities, resonating with modern queer theory perspectives. It can be read as a narrative of self-censorship and discourse control, where storytelling becomes simultaneously an act of liberation and oppression. This duality unsettles the classic binary opposition between repression as destructive and disclosure as liberating. From a psychoanalytic angle, repression is always paradoxical, as it silences while producing symptoms and narratives that point back to the repressed content. From a queer theoretical perspective, the novel suggests that queer subjectivity does not simply emerge by abolishing repression, but by reworking it. The author invites us to see repression not as the opposite of queer narrative, but as one of its conditions of possibility, a reservoir from which new subjectivities and mechanisms can emerge and be written.

While this analysis has demonstrated how *The Binding* may be read through the lens of trauma studies, psychoanalysis and queer theory, the novel is so richly layered in its narrative complexity and symbolism that it equally invites a range of other critical perspectives, including but not limited to postcolonial studies or ecocriticism. Given the scope of this chapter, it has not been possible to address all the interpretative possibilities this multidimensional text affords. Future scholarship exploration would be beneficial to fully appreciate the breadth of meanings and interpretative possibilities it offers.

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THE PECULIAR MOTHER: AN EXPLORATION ON THE UNCARING MOTHER IN RANSOM RIGGS' SERIES *MISS PEREGRINE HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN* (2011), *HOLLOW CITY* (2014), *LIBRARY OF SOULS* (2015) AND *MAP OF DAYS* (2018)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (2011-2021) is a contemporary fantasy Young Adult (YA) fiction series written by Ransom Riggs that features paranormal events and beings. The series focuses on Jacob's adventures with the peculiar children through time and space. The first trilogy is comprised by *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011), *Hollow City* (2014), and *Library of Souls* (2015), and the second trilogy by *A Map of Days* (2018), *The Conference of the Birds* (2020), and *The Desolations of Devil's Acre* (2021). The first volume, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011), was the debut novel for American author Ransom Riggs.

In *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011), Jacob, a sixteen-year-old boy from Florida finds himself haunted by visions of an out worldly and terrifying creature after his grandfather's death and the ensuing crisis collapses Jacob's ordinary life. This terror may be the result of the traumatic experience he witnessed or, as his mother insists, it may have been inspired on him his excessive imagination by his grandfather's tall tales. It is his own mother then who insists on constructing him as a sick, dependent child who cannot manage reality and who needs constant supervision to stop his overactive imagination. However, this is a turning point for Jacob's insipid daily life because it

shakes him to the core. As he improves in his mental anguish after his grandfather's death and he can finally plan on taking on his quest to find Miss Peregrine, Jacob painfully realises that his own mother is not the type of person he would like to be with. He experiences this new and shocking emotional distance as he is confronted with what he experiences growing up and maturing. Jacob locates Miss Peregrine in the island of Cairnholm in Wales, where his grandfather had spent his childhood in a children's home during the Second World War. Inadvertently, when Jacob visits the children's derelict home Jacob steps into the past and enters into a realm of time loops, and a family legacy of loss where children who have been rejected by society because of their paranormal powers reside.

The protagonist's changing relationship with his mother is an important theme in most of the first trilogy, as it finds a more nuanced point of articulation in his new relationship with Miss Peregrine and her motherly qualities, and then a way into individuation from any mother figure and, finally, maturation. Riggs' fiction provides expression for abstract psychic processes that are involved in this individuation process and vital crisis for the teen, as it combines aptly horror, humour and hope in a very enticing way for young readers that can identify with the main character's struggle to negotiate his own budding identity apart from his birth family (Coats, 2008, p. 91).

2. OBJECTIVES

For the purposes of this research on the figure of the uncaring mother, we will focus mainly on the first trilogy comprised by the books *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011), *Hollow City* (2014), and *Library of Souls* (2015), where there is an important influence of the mother figure. The main objective of this proposal is to explore the role and importance of the uncaring mother in Riggs' fiction, together with the ways the *ymbryne* (the peculiar mother) helps the child to articulate the individual's need to cut emotional ties with the family of origin in order to develop. Along this analysis, it will also be brought to attention the characteristics of the interaction with the maternal

figure and what makes children peculiar in Riggs' narrative. The pervasive feeling of disconnection and alienation for the self and general sense of melancholia will be also probed by considering characteristics of Gothic narrative in this YA book series and how these aspects can build up the sense of loss of maternal care. This paper will also explore how this YA narrative expresses the stagnation of trauma and the uncanny and dreadful landscape the child must negotiate into maturation and independence from the maternal figure in any of its forms.

3. METHODOLOGY

Mother is the first experience of self. She is a reference for the environment that will surround us and the first impression of home, the "place where each one of us lived once upon a time" (Freud, 1990 [1919], p.368). This home has been identified with tender care and unconditional love since Western societies have defined the role of the mother in society with only positive traits since the 18th century, where "feminine" traits of tenderness, need to nurture, instinctive sensitivity and compassion were constructed into an ideal and universal portrait of bourgeoisie motherhood in industrialized patriarchal society (Tobin, 1990, p.217). However, the meaning of mothering has been disputed as a specifically and socially constructed relationship (Glenn, 2016, p.1) that is defined by culturally based constructs and beliefs that depend on cultures and ages (Streep, 2009; Bornstein & Lansford, 2009). Due to the fact that mother is our first connection to the world and to ourselves, mother certainly plays a primary role in the emotional well-being of children and their healthy development into adulthood (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2009; Cooney & Dykstra, 2013). Together with the mutual assistance of family members and relationships with family and friends (Fingerman, Miller & Seidel, 2009; Fuller-Iglesias, Webster& Antonucci, 2013), she constitutes the child's source for deep meaningful experiences of shared connection, knowing and being known, mutual trust, concern and caring, mutuality and commitment (Wissing et al., 2014; Miller, Perlman & Brehm, 2007).

Maternal love is not instinctual, however. It is a love where "the beloved is not a peer, unlike most other forms of personal love; [it is] directed toward an unchosen object of love" (Protasi, 2019) and it can be differentiated from the duties of nourishment and caring:

> Parents can fulfil their duties toward their children, but not love them, and vice versa. (…) parents, even loving ones, who neglect their duties are charged with abuse but unloving parents who do not neglect their duties are not. (Protasi, 2019, p.30).

Realistically, not all mothers are loving and nurturing creatures and not all parents are always attuned to their child's emotional needs. Mother's body then, as revealed by those instances when children feel the absence of a loving mother, can be the most foreign space in human nature, because it can be both the site "for the deepest mutuality and the most painful estrangement" (Rich, 1976, p.226). Yet dominant cultural ideals in the western world require women to be compassionate, caring and selfless when they become mothers (Cross & Madson, 1997). They are also required to embark in a self-sacrificing mission without expectations or care for their independent needs. Moreover, the mother-child dyad is seen as sacred, and it is an unwritten taboo to talk about your mother in a critical way. Challenging the social perception of ideal motherhood with an individual performance from either the perception of the child or that of the mother is both a personal and cultural shame (Streep, 2009; Protasi, 2019). This strong cultural idealization of unconditional parental love does not admit deviations from an: "overtly idealized or even saccharine picture that is often utilized" that when unfulfilled leaves the child with a desolate idea of self: "If mama does not love me, and yet I do love her, what grounds my love? We do *not* have a loving relationship in place" (Protasi, 2019).

3.1 THE UNCARING MOTHER IN RIGG'S SERIES

Jacob's realisation of the newfound emotional separation he feels from his mother comes in full when he revisits the overall role his mother has played in his childhood. It is then that Jacob allows himself to contemplate critically his experience of his mother, and this reveals a woman who restricts his imagination and self-expression. She prefers

her son to have practical ambitions over what she defines as an infection and an excess of imagination (Riggs, 2011, p.12). In this sense, she is shown solving Jacob's early overwhelming imaginative world by breaking reality into known entities and the imposition of an abrupt end to his fantasies by asserting that there are no fantastic places left for Jacob to explore. She is therefore the enforcer of reality and she makes the law in any decision concerning Jacob's activities, expressions and emotions in such a way that it is expected and whenever Jacob's imagination prevails he knows her reaction: "You know what the answer would be if your mom were here" (Riggs, 2011, p.77). This excess of imagination is also related to the emotional force of the child and importantly, Jacob's mother has no emotional awareness of her child's needs (Riggs, 2011, p.43) as she constantly invalidates his own choices (Riggs, 2011, p.56) and any possible self-expression. This is exemplified when she asks him to feign gratitude even when his family is not attuned to his tastes or hobbies and, therefore, his budding personality (Riggs, 2011, p.58). She is only worried about external appearance in front of others and keeping up appearances, especially on the emotional level. Any open show of emotional turmoil or expression is not allowed to happen in public, and she effectively cuts any outburst short with the imposition of her own law: "I felt the blood drain from my face. My mother leaned toward me and in a tense whisper asked if I needed a drink of water, which was Mom-speak for *keep it together, people are staring*" (Riggs, 2011, p.61).

When Jacob assesses his mother critically in this way, he also discovers that he does not like her personality either. He acknowledges that difference between them, as she enjoys "unreasonably expensive furniture (Riggs, 2011, p.42) and wealth that makes others uncomfortable (Riggs, 2011, p.56) and importantly, that makes him uncomfortable and sets an identity difference. This leads her son to painfully realise that she is an ambivalent source of love, a woman who secretly resents the presence of both her husband and child in her life because she considers them "two needy children to worry about" (Riggs, 2011, p.67), as if she can only "have her life back" (Riggs, 2011, p.67) when they go away. Jacob is then confronted with this knowledge and the realisation of the

cultural taboo of unconditional love for one's mother, even if he feels betrayed knowing she fakes the love she feels for him:

> I did love her, of course, but mostly just because loving your mom is mandatory, not because she was someone I think I'd like very much if I met her walking down the street. Which she wouldn't be, anyway; walking is for poor people. (Riggs, 2011, p.67)

This moment of realisation is a pivotal point in the narrative, as it shows the dichotomy of love and duty, the taboo of the uncaring mother and the imposition of mandatory love for the mother. Jacob is forced to re-signify his mother's supposed love when he first discovers she resents his presence and yet he finds himself limited by the imposition of mandatory love and with the burden of not hurting her with reproaches: "'*I love you too*, I wanted to say with as much hurtful sarcasm as I could muster, but she hadn't seen me, and I kept quiet" (Riggs, 2011, p.67). This duality of mother, as both a site for love and resentment is thus revealed. For the child then his mother is suddenly a stranger that materializes within the known entity—mother's body and voice,—but there is a new insurmountable distance between the child and their mother. It is Jacob's budding personality showing up in stark contrast with his mother's that provokes this chasm.

Riggs's series focus on the children that no longer feel protected due to the sudden irruption of their own budding identity and how that seems to set them apart from their previous unit. Any attempt at negotiating a new identity as a more acceptable in-between state causes discomfort and mental distress and ultimately, rejection. As Jacob reflects later on about his family, he felt a pervasive sense of not belonging and dislocation that threatened him:

> I probably should have been more grateful, but I had spent my youth fighting the sensation—creeping at first, then overwhelming—that I belonged elsewhere, that my brain had begun to melt, and that if I stayed a day past graduation it would liquify entirely and run out of my ears. (Riggs, 2018, p.45)

For the child, there is a manifest fear of growth because it will make the separation more evident, and the stagnation of the unresolved crisis for the individual would crush him. Staying with the family unit, once the

realisation of not belonging in it has sunk deep in the self, can only be prolonged through a painful ambivalence towards parents and peer pressure.

3.2. The Peculiar Mother

Miss Peregrine earns the title of mother in the peculiar children's account of their lives since she restores the unfulfilled maternal obligations by offering love and support to recover from the emotional shock and loss. Miss Peregrine is overall a positive, loving maternal figure. As an *ymbryne* she can create loops of time to protect the children from harm. According to Mulders (2016) there is a semantic connection with the term *ymbryne* and the idea of seasonal change, making these figures in Riggs' fiction "the embodiment of the continuity and repetition of time" together with fluidity (Mulders, 2016), and this would make her connection with time and change a more important aspect. Her parenting style can be defined as good, as it has the qualities of being assertive, demanding yet responsive and supportive in terms of discipline without being punitive (Baumrid, 1991), a mother figure who inspires trust because she is reliable and compassionate (Mishra & Mishra, 2011). She is then in stark contrast with the birth parents of the peculiar children, who like Emma, had to endure her parents' violent rejection at the first sight of abnormality: "My mother, who was a deeply superstitious person, ran out of the house and never came back. She thought I was a demon arrived straight from Hell via her womb" (Riggs, 2014, p.127) and her abusive father: "The old man took a different approach. He beat me and locked me in my room, and when I tried to burn through the door he tied me down with asbestos sheets" (Riggs, 2014, p.127).

The *ymbryne* embodies the longing children have for a positive mother figure, the hope of finding love and acceptance. She is an enduring legacy of love and hope (Riggs, 2011, p.76) because she saves lives by giving a home to orphan, peculiar children. In fact, her actions allow her to save generations, as in the case of Jacob's grandfather. The rupture and chaos of losing one's family is replaced by a new, supportive, and caring environment that allows a clear separation between a first and a second life. It is within the loop that the children can experience a mother figure who is supportive while they recover from the traumatic experience.

It is relevant that she controls time and space within her loop, as she can build up an everlasting, unmovable presence that instils both warmth and melancholia, that together with Riggs's distinctive use of vintage photos and the loop both as spatial warp and as a narrative device (Mulders, 2016; Bacholle, 2019), configures a narrative of obsessive melancholia and a universe of embedded space where the past has a constant relationship with the present. Being within the loop means that the children, although safe and sound, can only live as spectral children, arrested in time in a still-life form that will not let them age or mature. Unsettling though this association of the child and death may be (Smith, 2017, p.191), death is presented as an inconsequent event in Riggs' narrative in a reminiscence of Gothic narratives—though deadly and real in some point in the past before or after the loop (Smith, 2017, p.191). In fact, Riggs' narrative abounds on the use of the gothic.

Riggs's series shares with other works of postmillennial children's fantasy fiction the exploration of a child's psychic development and the negotiation of a growing new identity. The teen characters are usually forced into a quest or adventure when they find themselves alienated from their environment and rejected by their peers. In order to both express this painful estrangement and facilitate the growth and maturation of the characters many of these narratives resort to include several tropes and elements that are part of the gothic tradition.

The use of the trope of the missing mother in the Gothic narrative allows more distance with the mother figure (Rogers, 2007), using not only the estrangement from the origin mother, but also by having the *ymbryne* in peril, effaced by representatives of patriarchy (Anolik, 2003, pp.25-26) that are trying to carry out a coup d'etat against matriarchy in Peculiardom. This causes the disruption of the domesticity and order they had in the loop in the home for peculiar children and allows the Gothic narrative to move forward, propitiating: "a narratable deviance to flourish in the text, a deviance that allows the text to thrive" (Anolik, 2003, p.28), propitiating that "children develop as individuals in response to this absence" (Anolik, 2003, p.30) and grow without the mother's surveillance or social control. After the maternal figure is abducted, the peculiar children have to try on an adult identity and take decisions about their own

safety, ethics and their own identities to supervise "those basic needs that children rarely consider because their parents are taking care of them on a daily basis" (Howarth, 2014, p.89). They are experiencing a transition to another stage in psychosocial development, anticipated by a crisis of separation, "a crucial point of increased vulnerability and heightened potential" (Erikson, 1968, p.22). They have to deal with the consequences of their own decisions and actions in a hostile environment, no longer under the protection of the *ymbryne*, where they face real dangers and must test their abilities and potentialities. Especially, the female characters in the Gothic narrative Emma and Bronwyn achieve a learning curve thanks to the "wider realm of experience" that is available for them without the mother (Anolik, 2003, p.100), they play functions that they have seen performed by the *ymbryne* when they become mother figures for other children, providing care, guidance and comfort in Miss Peregrine's absence but also these peculiar girls experience the lifelong consequences of the imprint left by the mother.

3.3 Elements of gothicization

Some critics have identified elements of the gothic in Rigg's series, although this could be defined as the use of a gothic atmosphere that helps build up the sense of melancholia and interplay with the past. The gothic atmosphere features heavily, as Zarzycka (2015) explored with the term 'gothicization' of World War II in the series, especially in the two first volumes. This implies turning the war and its context into "both a prominent narrative feature and an object of self-aware scrutinity" (Zarzycka, 2015, p.229) and using it to contribute to this obsession with a traumatic past in Riggs' narrative. Victorian London in *Library of Souls* (2015) is also turned into an object of interrogation for an interplay of both cultural expectations and Gothic realities that propel a sense of Gothicization to all the loops and contexts that the series touch, due to the timeless origins of both the *ymbrynes* and the peculiar children (making them inhabitants of an indeterminate point in the 19th-20th centuries that configure a Gothic aesthetic of "quasi-past, a nebulous Victorian/Edwardian/eighteenth-century/Gothic age"

(Buckley, 2014, p.260) that also dominates other post-millennial children's contemporary gothic narratives.

In Riggs', if the gothic narrative has any intended pedagogic function, it may also be to help children to disentangle themselves from their origin family and relish in their own. The Gothic elements and topics prove to be an effective way to create an atmosphere to explore the psyche and express the anxieties and insecurities. In psychoanalytical analyses, the Gothic narrative helps the child to grow emotionally (Buckley, 2015, p.75) due to its perceived positive maturational function (Buckley, 2014, p.261) and by enabling a learning process out of a memorable unsettling experience (Leith, 2009), propitiating thus the exploration of unconscious depths (Coats, 2008, p.78).

The uncanny element of the narrative allows child readers to develop socially and grow psychologically (Jackson, Coats & McGillis, 2008, pp.12-13) because the interaction and confrontation with Gothic elements propitiates a learning experience not only about the self but also about the domestic environment that leads to a discovery that "domestic spaces can be just as terrifying as a centuries-old graveyard or a crumbling house in the middle of the woods" (Howarth 2014, p.2). Thanks to the unconscious work of the fantastic elements the narrative helps young adult readers to "structure the terrors and enable assimilation and management, and have an effect on the child's developing subjectivity" (Coats, 2004, p.2) while providing a contained, safe environment to explore, acknowledge and validate the horror, anxiety and dangerous impulses that children and teenagers feel (Coats, 2008, p.78), at the same time it provides some mastery over it by locating and projecting those fears in a specific setting (Coats, 2008, p.83) while the narratives allow to display "those scary appetites in their proper place" (Coats, 2008, p.78). There is also a manifest fascination and injunction with the past, where emotional absences, that, as part of contemporary Gothic, create an interplay with the genre, by transmitting an unfocused anxiety that is part of the first trauma of separation and proving imagery and reminiscence that allows an exploration of fear and anxiety (Spooner, 2006, p.30) and an exploration of the disturbing aspects of civilization and society as a community and identity (Spooner, 2006, p.30).

The very interplay with the past is part of the narrative, shaped by using the Gothic narrative loop which provokes "the evocation of a highly active, even dramatic form of melancholy reverie" (Juranovszky, 2014). The past that is evoked, repeated and that interrupts the present represents "a site burdened with historical and/or personal crisis" (Juranovszky, 2014) together with a revision of its circumstances from alternative points but repetitive concerns that blurs the distinction between generations, between present and past. With the use of the Gothic loop a space is provided "for trauma re-enactment and dramatic performances of one's historical, cultural and personal identity" (Juranovszky, 2014) that in Riggs's Peculiardom is a site where the loss of unconditional maternal love is exorcised, even if both space and time keep replaying the same unresolved trauma.

The inclusion of haunted architecture and landscape, with hidden spaces and connections with the past, also helps create more tension between past and present, absences and trauma. One of the main buildings is Miss Peregrine's house, still visible in the real world as a ruined, derelict house with a clear association with death, decay and violence. Its doorways and gaps are "an open mouth waiting to swallow" the visitor, with "tomb-dark" spaces, evidences of what seems to be a "science experiment gone terribly wrong", with "evil-looking stains", "creeping mold", the whole place is creeping with a "sense of disaster that pervaded it" (Riggs, 2011, p.85). The overall feeling the house gives is that it is a place where "something terrible had happened" (Riggs, 2011, p.85). It is altogether not the place it really is once you go through the loop, as it is a centre of decay, death and a visible wound of disintegration of the self, a trauma in the past that is still hurting, defining the house as a rabid uncanny monster of its own. It is indeed as Jacob sees it:

> No refuge from monsters but a monster itself, staring down from its perch on the hill with vacant hunger (…). The house seemed unkillable, resolutely upright despite the wrongness of its angles and the jagged teeth of sky visible through sections of collapsed roof. (Riggs, 2011, p.83)

The destroyed and ruined house is described as a carcass, an image of death and collapse that reflects the power of the peculiar mother, able

to restore and embalm the ghost of the disregarded child that the uncaring mother has left behind and heal it in a perpetual still birth where it will be cared for and loved. The loop allows the child back to childhood ("magical summer days" [Riggs, 2014, p.126]) and to the maternal bliss. It is nevertheless a regressive situation for the children, not ready yet for an individuation process because they still need "the dubious pleasure of regressing into an infantile state of undifferentiation, of plenitude experienced as reuniting with the body you once shared, marking it as a death drive rather than claiming one's actual desire" (Coats, 2008, p.88). Comparing the depth of expression in Miss Peregrine's environment to Jacob's parents' there is a stark contrast. Jacob's mother's house is a controlled, immaculate environment, and the Gothic atmosphere is clearly an amalgam of expressions that cannot be allowed in the presence of the mother who refuses to believe her child's fantasies and presides over the necessity of distinction between fantasy and reality, notwithstanding her child's needs or expression and the definition she establishes of her own child:

> You're a lonely boy who lost someone important. And then you meet these kids, who are 'special' just like your grandpa was, and only *you* can see them? It doesn't take a PhD to diagnose. You've been making up imaginary friends since you were two. (Riggs, 2018, p.61)

No matter how clearly she establishes the division for her child between fantasy and reality, when she has her first encounter with the physical embodiment of the unconscious, it is a frightful experience for her. Her voice quavers and she is a victim of a nervous collapse. This is a sign of the impossibility of coexistence in the same realm and physical space as the peculiar mother (Riggs, 2018, p.61). The biological mother refuses to be touched, to share the same room with the *ymbryne* and only touches Miss Peregrine to physically impose distance between them and make way for her own escape. The biological mother feels threatened and she defends herself with a carving knife to hold back the peculiars: "My mom shoved her—actually *shoved* Miss Peregrine— "Get out. Get OUT" (Riggs, 2018, p.62). This forceful encounter with the peculiar mother results in Jacob's mother fainting, she slumped on the tile floor of her luxurious kitchen. Jacob's mother's memory is wiped and she effectively disappears from the narrative when she is replaced by Miss

Peregrine who even dresses in her clothes: "It was slightly disconcerting to see her [Miss Peregrine] dressed in my mom's clothes, but she looked absolutely normal, which was, I suppose, the point" (Riggs, 2018, p.44). The encounter of both mothers in the same plane of reality causes an undesirable recognition on her son's and for him at that moment, his mother's unconscious body is suddenly: "a sight so pathetic I had to look away" (Riggs, 2018, p.62) that makes him feel ashamed and disconnected from her before she just disappears from his life

4. RESULTS

In Riggs' narrative there is an emphasis on the different types of care and "love" that parents provide for their children, and the peculiar children become painfully aware of the difference once they manifest peculiarity. As Miss Peregrine herself states the difference between love and unconditional love involves understanding and care: "They [Jacob's parents] may love you […] but they'll never understand" (Riggs, 2011, p.160) when she offers Jacob to stay in the loop with the peculiar children. To experience life in the normal world outside of the loop, in the presence of his birth mother equals living in a constant state of anxiety, hurt and distrust at the possibility of being rejected and ostracised, as the other peculiar children have been before, he would live like them "afraid that an accidental display of peculiarness [by the peculiar children] would send them [his parents] screaming into the streets and bring hell down upon our heads" (Riggs, 2018, p.35). This points to a marked distinction in Riggs' fiction between the roles of birth mothers and *ymbrynes*: the latter provide a restitution of the ideal and nurturing relationship between mother and child that has been disrupted by the eruption of peculiarness in the child. The figure of the mother is therefore separated into two different types of characters in Riggs' narrative: the positive aspects are projected onto the *ymbryne*, a shapeshifter peculiar woman who can create loops and control time, while the birth mother is a desolate landscape of rejection for the child.

By generating a mirror image of the mother in the *ymbryne*, a surrogate mother figure, Riggs' narrative follows other narratives of contemporary

YA that have dealt with the severing of the emotional tie with the mother and her individual identity, by separating the dual nature of mother into two different characters and environments. This process "helps children process their emotions because they can then focus all of their hurt and anger on those individual aspects of their parents' personalities that they dislike" (Howarth, 2014, p.87) and this emotional separation is part of the expected discursive psychological growth that can be found in the *Bildungsroman* pattern of many young adult (YA) novels. It is a way to allow the teens to reject their parent in a symbolic way and fulfil the need to "murder the parent who represses their power" (Trites, 1998, p.83), once the protagonists realise that the idea of home is in in reality an entrapment for the protagonists: "it seems that today's protagonists do not venture out from the warmth and safety of a family into a world of peril; the peril begins at home" (Carrick. 2017, p.165).

5. DISCUSION

In *A Map of Days* (2018) the trauma of disconnection with the maternal figure can be safely recreated once a maturation process has taken place that has allowed the infantile ego to grow and develop outside any loop of encapsulated childhood. It is evident by then that the peculiar children have grown into adolescents who test the limits of authority and the new role dynamics once they reach adolescence and are "beginning to chafe against her authority" (Riggs, 2018, p.20) and that even allow themselves to express aloud their discomfort to authority: "Don't you find it wearying, being lectured about every little thing?' Said Millard" (Riggs, 2018, p.20).

Maternal authority is always challenged, even if it is the peculiar mother, and especially once these teenagers realise their own growth outside that authority and their own revolutionary potential: "Some people are saying it is time for a change in the way we govern ourselves. That the *ymbryne* system is outmoded, better suited to an earlier era. That the world has changed, and we must change with it" (Riggs, 2018, p.48). This may point out that the way to grow for the individual is to reject the maternal care in favour of individual freedom. For Jacob, the emotional distance with his family threatens to sever him from the real

world and dislocate him from reality, as an imposing and debilitating division in the self, a feeling of disintegration in his life that is both a perpetuation of his grandfather "curse" of estrangement and loss: "disparate threads of my life" (Riggs, 2018, p.3). His need to choose the Peculiar World or the World he has inhabited and where his origin family lives, also translates into the sense of displacement he has always felt like an outsider in his own reality and family. He can face this painful realisation thanks to the maturational process he has undergone, relying on Miss Peregrine for support.

By the fourth book of the series, *Map of Days* (2018) Jacob can finally assert his independence and autonomy, by assessing himself his own place of standing in the conflict and situate himself in an in-between position that cannot be fully appraised by any side. He embodies "a mingling of worlds" (Riggs, 2018, p.3) by himself navigating both worlds in and out and accepting that, even though he craves a balance that allows him to preserve both his peculiarity and his origin family (Riggs, 2018, p.34), he cannot count on his parents' support and the emotional distance he feels towards them is bigger, motivated by the maturational growth he has experienced on his own: "I felt suddenly, uncomfortably adult, while my family(…) looked almost like babies" (Riggs, 2018, p.13) and he can assess his own feelings towards the reality of his parents' rejection and his attachment for them and his origins: "As far as I'm concerned, I don't have parents" (Riggs, 2018, p.70) and effectively adopt strategies for an adult life following his own inclinations. This is because the gradual individuation process has been successful, allowing Jacob to also outgrow Miss Peregrine's maternal figure and the importance he had given to belonging to the group of peculiar children.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Going back to mother is not safe when the family environment cannot cope with even the slightest hint of abnormal behaviour as it will medicate it or altogether shun and reject it. Home is somewhere else, not even in an ideal past. In the time loops the *ymbrynes* create to protect the children, the present is a repetition of past wrongdoings that are

revisited by the following generation of descendants (Smith, 2017, p.198) where history repeats itself as a "poisonous heirloom" (Riggs, 2011, p.104) that is carried on by the next generation, and history bends over itself in every loop the peculiar children visit or inhabit, repeating the trauma of separation, loss and death, either by revisiting the trauma of the Holocaust and the Second World War (Zarzycka, 2015; Smith, 2017, p.199), their own abandonment or by the realisation of futile death and suffering due to the mistakes and ill decisions of others (Smith, 2017, p.198). Retelling the traumatic experience leaves the individual reliving the same feelings: "It's just that those musty stories make me feel ten years old again, and unwanted. That never goes away, no matter how many magical summer days have come between" (Riggs, 2014, p.126). But it is a past trauma that has enduring consequences on the individual due to both the shame from unfulfilled cultural expectations of respect to the dogma of maternal love and loss at the failed connection with mother. Revisiting the past that has ejected the peculiar child is not a good idea, as Miss Peregrine reflects on her own painful experience:

> They still loved me, but they feared me even more. It ended with my mother cursing the day I was born and my father chasing me from home with an iron from the fire. Years later, I heard they had died—sewed stones into their pockets and walked into the sea. (Riggs, 2018, p.69)

True to Miss Peregrine's own perception and contemplating her own legacy of rejection, "our blood relationships often don't survive the truth" (Riggs, 2018, p.69) of what we really are.

In Riggs' series the uncaring mother is a wound in the past. Through the gothic elements and the trope of the missing mother in the narrative the individual can come to terms with the severance of the maternal bond, express the sense of loss and rejection, together with the need to find a group of likeminded individuals where the budding identity can mature and find their own place that cannot be either contained or shared with their parents. In this sense, there is also a recognition of the absence of the mother as a constituting mainspring for maturation and resourcefulness. The narrative helps readers identify with this process of loss and individuation by using gothic elements and tropes that create

an environment to navigate identity growth as the individual disentangle from the uncaring mother figure, even if that means spending time embalmed in amniotic bliss.

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EMBODIED FUTURES: GENDER EUPHORIA AS A CRITIQUE OF DISEMBODIMENT IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *FRANKISSSTEIN: A LOVE STORY*

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Contemporary questions of identity, gender, embodiment and technological transformation can be examined from many different viewpoints, and the intersection of gender euphoria and disembodiment in Jeanette Winterson's *Frankissstein: A Love Story* (2019) provides an interesting lens to do so. The present chapter aims to offer a critical analysis of how Winterson's posthuman reimagining of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) engages with evolving theoretical frameworks around transgender experience and digital consciousness, particularly through the novel's transgender protagonist Ry Shelley and the exploration that is done on artificial intelligence and cyborg futures.

Frankissstein serves as an exemplary text for examining the theoretical intersections between gender euphoria and disembodiment in contemporary literature. It was published during a period of heightened cultural discourse around transgender rights and artificial intelligence, and it presents a dual timeline that alternates between Mary Shelley's 19th century world and a contemporary post-Brexit Britain populated by sex-bots, AI researchers and cryogenic facilities. The central object of analysis will the relationship between Ry Shelley, a transgender doctor who embodies what Winterson terms a "hybrid" identity, and Victor Stein, a futurist professor who advocates for digital consciousness upload as the supreme form of human transcendence.

Winterson's narrative construction deliberately positions these characters as contemporary iterations of Shelley's original protagonists. However, their 21st century incarnations must face different questions about embodiment, identity and technological enhancement. The novel presents Ry Shelley as someone who has achieved what research describes as "positive emotions resulting from affirmation of one's gender identity of expression" (Jacobsen & Devor, 2022, p. 120).

Victor Stein, conversely, advocates for complete disembodiment through consciousness transfer, and he regards the physical body as a limitation to be transcended rather than a site of potential affirmation. The novel's treatment of these themes extends beyond individual character development to encompass broader cultural anxieties about the future of human identity in an increasingly digital world. Winterson's exploration of AI, robotics and biotechnology serves not as science fictional speculation but as a means of interrogating contemporary debates about gender, embodiment and posthuman possibilities.

The present chapter approaches *Frankissstein* through the theoretical framework of gender euphoria and disembodiment, drawing on recent developments in transgender studies and feminist posthuman theory. Gender euphoria, as conceptualized in contemporary trans studies, is a concept that "emerged […] to rectify the one-sided narrative that transgender individuals' lives are focused exclusively on experiences of gender dysphoria and bodily distress" (Austin *et al*., 2022, p. 1407). According to different studies, there is no fixed definition of gender euphoria, but there is a consensus that is used to refer to positive feelings, usually joy, that respond to the affirmation of one's gender identity (Beischel *et al*., 2021; Bradford *et al*., 2019; Fury, 2019, Austin *et al*, 2022). This concept provides a crucial counterpoint to the historically dominant focus on gender dysphoria in transgender discourse, offering a framework for understanding positive experiences of gender identity and expression.

The analysis will also make use of disembodiment theory as developed within feminist philosophy and posthuman studies, particularly drawing on the work of scholars who have examined the complex relationship between consciousness, identity, and physical form. Rather than

treating disembodiment as a simple rejection of the body, this approach recognizes it as a complex phenomenon that can both reinforce and challenge existing power structures, including gender binaries.

The intersection of these theoretical frameworks enables an examination of how Winterson's novel navigates the tension between embodied experiences of gender affirmation and technological possibilities for transcending bodily limitations. This perspective is particularly relevant given the novel's explicit engagement with cyborg feminism and posthuman theory.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: GENDER EUPHORIA AND DISEMBODIMENT

The notion of gender euphoria has emerged in response to the clinical emphasis on gender dysphoria in transgender discourses. Rather than centering on distress, gender euphoria highlights the positive affective experiences that accompany the alignment of one's gender identity with their lived or affirmed gender embodiment. It is an affirmative counterpart to dysphoria, illuminating the joy, peace, and rightness individuals experience when their gender is acknowledged, affirmed, and embodied.

This theoretical approach challenges the medicalized framework that dominates transgender healthcare and instead situates trans subjectivity within a relational ontology of joy, resonance and connection[12]. It counters the pathologizing discourse of gender dysphoria and expands our epistemic vocabulary for transgender lives. Scholars such as McKinney (2021), Beischel (2021) and Bradford (2019) have argue that gender euphoria is not the absence of dysphoria but an independent ontological force which is connected to joy and imaginative self-actualization.

Disembodiment, meanwhile, has been re-evaluated beyond Cartesian binaries. In literary and cultural theory, it is often a metaphor for liminality and transgression, particularly for marginalized subjects whose bodies are sites of state, medical and epistemic control. As Greenberg

[12] See Lindley *et al*. (2024) for a study that demonstrates the misalignment of the term gender dysphoria and the real experiences of transgender individuals.

(2023) has explored, the euphoria "derives from an awareness of the possibility of vocal change that instills a sense of control over one's body and what, when and who to disclose one's identity to" (p. 231). She reflects on how transness is often rendered illegible within dominant logics of voice, sound, and visibility.

Thus, these two concepts, once considered antithetical, can be productively related. Disembodiment may act as a narrative and phenomenological precursor to gender euphoria, especially in literary texts where characters transition, split, or disassociate from normative bodies in ways that ultimately construct gender-affirming identities.

Literature offers a splendid space where embodiment can be suspended. Disembodied voices, astral projections, or narrators without physical form, for instance in magical realism of speculative fiction, can be reinterpreted as trans metaphors for liberation from restrictive corporeality, as rejecting cisnormative standards of beauty and gender can foster gender euphoria, affirming one's identity outside of dominant bodily expectations:

I think my body image got a lot more positive when I stopped trying to wanting to pass or be a cis woman or look like a cis woman. And I told myself, it's okay to be trans, it's okay to look trans, and that trans women look good too. Changing my thought process of the way I thought about how I should look […] that's when it's like I really started flourishing in who I was (White, as cited in Stanley, 2024, p.26).

In queer and trans literature, this disconnection becomes transformative. In *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), for instance, Koch-Rein (2014) has noted how mirrors become metaphors of what he calls 'dysphoric knowledge', but also sites where new, imagined selves are seen. Rewriting these reflections through a euphoric lens allows readers and characters to access identities that were previously denied.

Similarly, speculative literature, such as Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy or Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* (2018), foregrounds non-binary, hybrid or divine subjectivities. These narratives often involve bodily fragmentation or fluidity, allowing disembodiment to become a site of agency. Riszko (2016) calls this phenomenon 'transgressive

emdobiment', whereby the breach of bodily norms becomes the narrative engine of euphoria.

Literary texts may not only depict gender euphoria but instantiate it through form. In her work on transgender performance and literature, Boxall (2023) has emphasized that euphoric affect often lies in being named or being recognized: "But I love the gender euphoria of being recognized as not-woman. That hits so good" (p. 80).

3. GENDER EUPHORIA AS TRANS AFFIRMATION

Ry Shelley, a transgender doctor and the novel's central figure, embodies gender euphoria as a lived reality and also a philosophical principle. Winterson constructs Ry not as a character trapped by the limitations of binary gender but as one who flourishes in space between categories. Ry's identity is not framed as a problem to be resolved, but as a condition of hybrid coherence, an ontological state of being both and neither, fully and partially, visible and liminal.

Early in the novel, Ry introduces themselves to a stranger by clarifying, "It's Ry. Just Ry. Not short for Ryan. Ry is short for Mary" (Winterson, 2019, p. 59). This assertion encapsulates the friction and harmony of trans identity: Ry's name gestures toward a previous self without negating it, forging a new subjectivity that holds both identities simultaneously. In a conversation that follows, Ry firmly states, "No, Ron. I am a hybrid. My name is Ry. … I'm trans" (p. 60). This self-identification with hybridity moves beyond the traditional transgender narrative of linear transition, making it more than a binary declaration but as a "hybrid": "I am fully female. I am also partly male. That's how it is for me" (p. 68). This self-description embodies what McKinney (2021) has called 'euphoric self-imagining', the construction of identity not by negating a previous self, but by embracing multiplicity.

Winterson presents Ry's embodiment not as dysphoric absence but as euphoric fullness. Ry recounts their physical history with calm certainty: "I am not especially tall at 5 foot 8. My build is slender. Narrow hips, long legs. When I had top surgery there wasn't much to remove, and the hormones had already altered my chest. […] I like my chest the

way it is now; strong, smooth and flat" (p. 63). What follows is even more telling: "When I look in the mirror I see someone I recognise, or rather, I see at least two people I recognise. That is why I have chosen not to have lower surgery" (p. 63). Here, recognition in the mirror is not singular but dual. The euphoria comes from recognizing selfhood in fragmentation, not from resolving it into a unified whole. Ry's body becomes a canvas of reconciliation, not conformity.

Rather than reinforcing a model of trans embodiment that seeks to "pass" as cisgender, Winterson frames Ry's choice as a conscious rejection of that imperative. Ry's doubleness is not a failure to become "fully" male or "no longer" female, it is a state of being that is complete precisely in its in-betweenness. This echoes Stanley's (2024) claim that transfeminine embodiment frequently coexists with chosen disconnections from the body, which paradoxically deepen rather than disrupt gendered identification.

This notion is reinforced in moments of relational intimacy. Victor Stein, who becomes one of Ry's lovers reflects, "You had a sex change. You chose to intervene in your own evolution. […] You are both exotic and real. The here and now, and a harbinger of the future" (p. 102). Ry's hybrid identity is not just accepted but erotically celebrated. Gender euphoria here is validated not only by personal recognition but by being desired, seen, and loved. Another exchange underscores this: "You love the idea of me, I say. Because you're a hybrid? Yes. […] You are also a human being" (p. 102). Winterson thus positions euphoria in the interpersonal and the intersubjective, not just in Ry's internal acceptance, but in the affirmation they receive from others.

Moreover, Ry is consistently shown as someone whose transness opens imaginative horizons rather than closes them. During a shower scene, Ry discloses their surgical scars and unoperated anatomy: "I'm trans, I said. I had top surgery about a year ago. These things take time. […] I am. Anatomically I am also a woman. […] Doubleness is nearer to the truth for me" (pp. 81–82). These statements reject anatomical determinism. Instead of seeing the body as the core of gender identity, Ry embraces the gap between body and identity as the space where truth lives.

Crucially, Ry's gender euphoria is not separate from embodiment but emerges through a reframing of embodiment. In a conversation about artificial intelligence and bodily obsolescence, Ry remarks, "We are our bodies" (p. 99), rejecting the transhumanist fantasy of pure consciousness detached from flesh. Their insistence is not conservative, it is radical. In saying "we are our bodies" Ry affirms the body's role as both material and imaginative, both the site of trauma and the medium of joy.

Yet this embodied euphoria is not untouched by violence. In one of the novel's most harrowing episodes, Ry is physically attacked in a bathroom stall, their gender identity ridiculed and violated: "YOU FUCKIN' FREAK! YOU HAD YOUR TIT SLASHED OFF? NO TITS. NO DICK. FUCKIN' FREAK!" (p. 157). Despite the brutality, Ry survives, still affirming that they are trans. This moment reinforces that gender euphoria does not exist apart from oppression but is forged in response to it, an act of resistance, of choosing joy where the world offers harm.

In *Frankissstein*, Ry Shelley is more than a character; they are a living question mark against binary gender, a vessel for exploring embodiment not as a fixed state but as a process of negotiation, performance, and becoming. Winterson does not ask us to pity Ry or even to fully understand them, only to witness the beauty of their doubleness, the clarity of their confusion, and the euphoria of living between definitions.

4. LIMINALITY AND NARRATIVE VOICE

Jeanette Winterson's use of first-person narration in *Frankissstein* functions as a deliberate destabilization of boundaries, between narrator and character, between fiction and history, and crucially, between self and embodiment. In granting narrative voice to Ry Shelley, a transgender doctor and philosopher, Winterson engages with what Butler (2004) calls the 'performativity of identity', not as a stable expression but as an evolving, iterative act of becoming. Ry describes themself early in the novel as "liminal, cusping, in between, emerging, undecided, transitional, experimental, a start-up (or is it an upstart?) in my own life" (Winterson, 2019, p. 25). This enumeration of identity markers is

neither apologetic nor disoriented, it is celebratory, affirming trans identity not as failure or fragmentation but as open-ended innovation.

The fluidity of Ry's self-description reflects a postmodern narrative voice, one that is reflective, recursive, and aware of its own construction. Rather than offering a linear, coherent account of transition, Ry's narration resists closure. They do not explain or justify their transness; instead, they exist narratively and philosophically in-between. This is significant in a literary landscape that often demands coherence from trans characters, positioning them as either pre- or post-transition, male or female, successful or failed. Ry exists in the "start-up" phase perpetually, not a lack of maturity, but an embrace of potentiality.

Central to this identity work is the power of naming. In an early scene, as we have already seen in a previous section of this chapter, Ry is asked, "Not short for Ryan?" and responds, "Ry is short for Mary" (p. 59). This is a startling revelation not only for the character Ron, but for the reader: it collapses the presumed distance between past and present, between gendered name and gendered body. However, Ry is untroubled by this; instead, they reaffirm: "No, Ron. I am a hybrid. My name is Ry. […] I'm trans" (p. 60). The act of naming here functions as a declaration of autonomy. Ry's name is not a mask but a method, a way of asserting presence and dislodging normative assumptions about gender and identity.

Naming, in Winterson's created world, becomes euphoric, a performative utterance that makes reality. As literary theorist Saussure (1916/2011) would have it, the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary, but for Ry, naming is deliberate. "It's not a look; it's who I am. Both of me. All of me" (p. 68). Ry's self-description is grounded not in the approval of others, but in the joy of ontological self-recognition. They do not need to pass as male or erase their femaleness to claim their name; rather, they claim both. The joy lies in the multiplicity, not in the resolution.

However, this euphoric articulation of identity does not shield Ry from violence. In one of the novel's most visceral scenes, Ry is physically attacked in a public restroom, as it has been analyzed in the previous section: "YOU FUCKIN' FREAK! YOU HAD YOUR TIT SLASHED

OFF? NO TITS. NO DICK. FUCKIN' FREAK!" (p. 157). The attack is not just physical, it is linguistic. The language used against Ry seeks to dismember them, to make their transness unspeakable. Their body is scrutinized, invalidated, and assaulted precisely because it resists legibility within binary norms.

Ry's trans identity, however, is not erased by this violence. Even amid the assault, they resist: "Get your hands off me, I said. […] I'm trans" (p. 157). This reiteration of identity is profoundly powerful. Winterson does not portray Ry as an unfeeling icon of strength, nor as a broken victim, instead, Ry is wounded and unwavering.

The contrast between Ry's euphoric self-narration and the violent misrecognition they endure from others underscores one of the novel's key argument: that trans identity is both internal truth and socially contested. Winterson portrays trans identity as something that survives in the gaps between perception and declaration, between embodiment and erasure. This is evident in Victor's conflicted response to Ry's body. After seeing Ry emerge from the shower, he observes the scars from top surgery and the absence of a penis, hesitating in silence. "There was a pause, short enough but long enough. 'I'm trans,' I said" (p. 81). Ry's calm reassertion of identity in that vulnerable moment is not just explanatory, it is restorative. The moment reaffirms not only Ry's transness but their ownership of it.

Even when Victor challenges the legibility of Ry's gender, "I thought you were a man" (p. 82)—Ry responds not with defensiveness, but with clarity: "I am. Anatomically I am also a woman. […] Doubleness is nearer to the truth for me." Rather than contest the accusation, Ry expands its frame. They live, as Winterson writes elsewhere, "according to the light" (p. 192), shifting, appearing, disappearing, embracing ambiguity as epistemological richness, not failure.

Through narrative voice, naming, and unflinching attention to the realities of gendered violence, *Frankissstein* positions disembodiment not as a loss but as a transformative narrative state. Ry's identity is not an endpoint but a grammar of becoming, one that survives and even thrives within the fissures of societal misunderstanding. Winterson's prose

does not plead for recognition; it enacts it, granting Ry a language equal to the complexity, and joy, of their selfhood.

5. EUPHORIA THROUGH DISEMBODIMENT

Ry Shelley's embodiment of gender euphoria in *Frankissstein* is paradoxical not only because of their identification with multiple genders but also due to the way this euphoria emerges through a productive disconnection from stable embodiment. Winterson challenges the assumption that gender affirmation must coincide with a complete alignment between physical body and gender identity. Instead, Ry's joy arises from a nuanced sense of "embodied disembodiment", a state in which one can experience gender as real, stable, and affirming even while occupying an unstable, transitional, or hybrid physical form.

This nuanced perspective is evident when Ry participates in a panel on artificial intelligence. One participant asks whether women will become "the first casualties of obsolescence in your brave new world." Victor replies, "AI need not replicate outmoded gender prejudices. If there is no biological male or female, then—" (Winterson, 2019, p. 54). This unfinished thought hints at a speculative post-gender world, a future where embodiment no longer dictates identity. In this frame, gender becomes programmable, optional, and ultimately, untethered from flesh.

However, Ry remains skeptical of this narrative. Responding to the utopian rhetoric of AI liberation, they challenge the exclusionary nature of such projects: "You are the acceptable face of AI, but in fact the race to create what you call true artificial intelligence is a race run by autistic-spectrum white boys with poor emotional intelligence and frat-dorm social skills. In what way will their brave new world be gender neutral – or anything neutral?" (p. 55). Here, Ry critiques not disembodiment itself, but the ideological narrowness of those who shape it. Without inclusive vision, disembodied futures risk replicating existing hierarchies under the guise of neutrality.

Winterson creates a contrast between Ry's intimate bodily awareness with Victor's dispassionate posthuman idealism. Victor, immersed in dreams of eternal consciousness, envisions a future in which

"intelligence—perhaps even consciousness—will no longer be dependent on a body. We will learn to share the planet with non-biological life forms created by us" (p. 53). For Victor, the body is an obsolete interface; a substrate to be bypassed in the pursuit of abstract perfection. But for Ry, the body, even a contested or incomplete one, remains central to the experience of selfhood. The euphoria they experience comes not from bodily perfection, but from redefining what their body means.

This distinction plays out vividly in Victor's metaphorical language. Reflecting on Ry's transformation, he calls them "a harbinger of the future" (p. 102), implying that Ry, as a hybrid, embodies a kind of prefiguration of posthuman possibility. Yet Ry does not view themselves as a vessel for a future without flesh. When the topic of transhumanism arises again, Victor states that current transformations mark "a stage on the way to being transhuman" (p. 99), but Ry pushes back: "We are our bodies, I said" (p. 99). This tension reflects a philosophical divide. Where Victor sees the body as limitation, Ry affirms it as the medium through which meaning, emotion, and joy are made.

Winterson also critiques society's commodification of disembodied femininity. In a chilling description of a sexbot factory, viewers observe silicone torsos swinging from wires, pre-molded with "F-cup tits" and detachable parts (p. 30). These bodies are designed for male consumption: "All the girls have an extra-wide splayed-leg position. It's popular with our clients, especially the fat ones" (p. 33). These manufactured figures exist without agency, modeled for fantasy rather than subjectivity. This is disembodiment as dehumanization, a severing of body from consciousness that strips rather than expands identity.

Yet Winterson offers moments of ironic clarity amid the horror. When Sophia the robot is granted Saudi citizenship, Ry points out the absurdity: "She has more rights than any Saudi woman" (p. 54). This juxtaposition highlights how artificial femininity is paradoxically privileged over embodied womanhood, particularly in patriarchal societies. The disembodied woman, a blank, obedient machine, is valorized, while living women are oppressed. This moment is not only a commentary on gender politics but an indictment of technological disembodiment as political theatre.

Ry's lived experience as a trans person allows them to experience and understand these contradictions more clearly than other characters. In a reflective passage, Ry says, "I am part of a small group of transgender medical professionals. Some of us are transhuman enthusiasts too. That isn't surprising; we feel or have felt that we're in the wrong body. We can understand the feeling that any-body is the wrong body" (p. 72). This insight draws a line between trans experience and transhuman longing. Unlike Victor's philosophical detachment, Ry's understanding is embodied and empathetic. Discomfort with the body is not an abstract ideal but a real, lived tension, one that can produce both suffering and liberation.

Another character articulates this insight with remarkable clarity: "We are not bound to our bodies. We can live forever" (p. 190). This final vision is tempting, a promise of eternal life beyond decay, desire, and suffering. But Winterson leaves the reader with a fundamental question: what do we lose when we detach entirely from embodiment? When Victor muses on future life forms, Ry asks the crucial question: "Will they [be capable of love]?" (p. 106). Victor replies: "Not reproduction. Not economic necessity. Not scarcity. Not patriarchy. Not gender. Not fear. It could be wonderful!" (p. 106). But the absence of these structures may also mean the absence of attachment, friction, and emotional depth, elements that make human life rich, if not always easy.

Ultimately, Ry's version of disembodiment is not about escaping the body but about decentralizing it. It is a method of multiplying meaning, allowing gender to operate across appearances, anatomies, and perceptions. Through Ry, Winterson shows that disembodiment need not be a denial of gendered experience. It can be a radical framework through which gender is reimagined, redistributed, and re-enchanted.

6. *FRANKISSSTEIN* AND TRANSHUMANISM: BEYOND THE BODY

In *Frankissstein*, Jeanette Winterson situates gender euphoria not only within the personal and political, but within the speculative terrain of transhumanism. Through the figure of Victor Stein, who is a neuroscientist obsessed with uploading consciousness and escaping the limits of the body, the novel explores how advancements in artificial

intelligence and biotechnology may fundamentally alter our concepts of embodiment, identity, and humanity. This exploration is not merely speculative; it is entangled with Ry Shelley's lived experience as a trans person, whose complex relationship with the body makes them uniquely attuned to the allure, and danger, of disembodiment.

Victor envisions a near future in which "the physical limits of our bodies will be irrelevant," imagining a world where "intelligence—perhaps even consciousness—will no longer be dependent on a body" (Winterson, 2019, p. 53). This vision culminates in a sweeping pronouncement: "We are not bound to our bodies. We can live forever" (p. 190). For Victor, the body is a crude, aging vessel, an obstacle to be overcome. The aspiration is clear: a fully posthuman existence where memory, personality, and intelligence persist in non-biological substrates.

Yet Winterson complicates this techno-utopianism by inserting Ry's cautious ambivalence. Ry acknowledges the familiarity of Victor's desire: "We feel or have felt that we're in the wrong body. We can understand the feeling that any-body is the wrong body" (p. 72). This deeply human insight draws a surprising line of empathy between trans embodiment and transhuman aspiration. Both, in their own ways, emerge from a dissonance between body and self, and both seek resolution through transformation.

However, Ry's response to these possibilities is more grounded than Victor's. In one of the novel's most arresting exchanges, they reply to Victor's vision of posthuman love by saying, "When it stops, we die, I say. The heart is the heart of us" (p. 106). With this line, Ry deflates Victor's metaphysical abstraction, reasserting the centrality of the body, not only as a biological mechanism but as the medium through which we feel, love, and suffer. For Ry, the promise of endless life without a heart, without touch, pain, or pulse, is not liberation, but loss.

Indeed, Winterson is careful not to romanticize either side of this debate. She presents the potential of disembodiment without wholly endorsing it. When Ron, a more working-class character, hears of Victor's theories, he responds bluntly: "I don't fancy being a disembodied body" (p. 146). This succinct rejection exposes the disconnect between elite

technological futurism and lived, embodied reality. To Ron, and perhaps even to Ry, life without a body is not only incomprehensible but emotionally impoverished.

Yet Winterson does suggest that disembodiment, in its more figurative or transitional forms, can serve as a site of imaginative and euphoric potential. This is reflected in the metaphorical way Ry experiences their own identity, not as singular but distributed, layered, even ghosted. In a passage rich with sensuality and ontological ambiguity, Victor says, "I love the confidence of your skin over the hesitation of your body, the appearing/disappearing of you, changing according to the light. Now male, now not quite, now quite clearly a woman who will slip inside a boy's body … What are you?" (p. 192). This erotic reflection captures the aesthetic and affective joy of being undefined, of fluctuating between forms. Here, disembodiment becomes a mode of desire, not of negation.

The novel also complicates the politics of disembodiment through its commentary on gender and technology. For instance, the humanoid robot Sophia, coded as female, is granted Saudi citizenship, "She has more rights than any Saudi woman" (p. 54). This grotesque irony underscores how artificial disembodiment can be politically expedient, even as real, embodied women continue to face systemic oppression. The body may be erased in the name of progress, but its absence does not necessarily lead to justice or freedom.

Similarly, Victor's description of a future in which "non-biological life forms […] without hearts, seek to win ours" (p. 106) hints at an emotional and ethical paradox. Can love exist without pain? Without history, gender, or the stakes of mortality? For Ry, and for Winterson, the answer is uncertain. Ry's refusal to disavow the body, despite its scars, its unfinishedness, is not a romanticization of suffering, but an affirmation that embodiment is where truth and transformation meet.

Through this tension between transhumanist desire and trans embodied experience, Winterson reframes disembodiment not as a binary choice between flesh and code, but as a spectrum of becoming. Ry, who has modified their body but chosen not to complete surgical transition, embodies this spectrum: "I like my chest the way it is now … That is why

I have chosen not to have lower surgery" (p. 63). This is not a rejection of the body but a reconfiguration of what a body can be, how it can be known, lived in, and loved.

In this way, *Frankissstein* positions transness as a philosophical and imaginative vanguard, a perspective through which to interrogate the limits of the human and the ethics of posthuman desire. The novel does not advocate for the erasure of the body, but for its reimagination.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Jeanette Winterson's *Frankissstein* offers a profound and multifaceted engagement with gender euphoria and disembodiment, reframing them not as oppositional but as co-constitutive forces in the lives of trans and posthuman subjects. Through the character of Ry Shelley, a transgender doctor, philosopher, and hybrid narrator, Winterson has created a vision of identity that rejects the binaries of male/female, body/mind, and human/machine. Instead, the novel affirms a spectrum of becoming in which multiplicity is not a lack, but a mode of flourishing.

One of the chapter's central findings is that gender euphoria in *Frankissstein* is rooted not in the attainment of bodily congruence, as many medicalized narratives suggest, but in the acceptance of ambiguity and hybridity. Ry's self-description as "both of me. All of me" (Winterson, 2019, p. 68) demonstrates how affirmation can arise through recognition of internal plurality, rather than a linear or binary transition.

This affirmation coexists with Ry's complex relationship to disembodiment, which Winterson explores not as a rejection of the body, but as a philosophical and affective rethinking of what the body means. Ry embodies what might be called embodied disembodiment, an identity in which gender is deeply felt and lived, even when it eludes stable anatomical definition. The narrative thus challenges the assumption that euphoria and disembodiment are mutually exclusive; instead, detachment from fixed embodiment becomes a source of liberation, not erasure.

Winterson also interrogates the ideological stakes of disembodiment through transhumanist and AI discourse. Through Victor Stein's ambition to upload consciousness into digital substrates, *Frankissstein* stages a speculative future in which bodies are obsolete, and identity exists independent of gender or biology. Yet Ry's skepticism, "We are our bodies" (p. 99), grounds the narrative in lived experience. The novel resists disembodiment as pure utopia, cautioning that liberation from the body can also mean a loss of memory, sensuality, and relational depth.

It is important to note how Winterson does not present Ry's transness as exceptional or tragic. Instead, it is a philosophical lens through which the human and posthuman are both questioned and reimagined. Ry becomes the speculative figure who "intervenes in their own evolution" (p. 102), offering a model of identity that is not post-body, but post-binary, deeply embodied, yet conceptually expansive. Their resilience in the face of social violence further underscores that trans identity, and the euphoria it can generate, is not contingent on social approval or bodily completion but is enacted through narrative, agency, and love.

To conclude, *Frankissstein* positions transness at the frontier of ethical and imaginative inquiry. Gender euphoria and disembodiment, far from being contradictory, emerge as mutually generative forces that help us think beyond the limits of the body, toward a future shaped not by conformity, but by radical becoming.

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DECONSTRUCTING POWER AND OTHERNESS: ANGELA CARTER'S *HEROES AND VILLAINS* (1969) FROM AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST PERSPECTIVE

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Angela Carter is one of the most important postmodernist authors, and she is very well known for her genre-defying narratives that blend together fantasy, science fiction, and Gothic elements to critique societal norms and power structures[13]. Her 1969 novel *Heroes and Villains* exemplifies this approach. It presents a stark, post-apocalyptic world which is fragmented into mutually antagonistic societies. These groups include the technologically inclined "Professors", who represent the rational but rigid civilization, the nomadic "Barbarians", a group that roams the surrounding jungles, and the mutated "Out People", who inhabit burnt cities. This setting is not just a backdrop; it is crucible for exploring the foundations of human organization and identity in the wake of societal collapse. The novel, which is often read as a mere science-fiction adventure, deliberately subverts genre expectations. As the English essayist and critic Richard Boston pointed out in a review of the book for the New York Times, what Angela Carter does is "to take her images from a variety of sources, and assemble a fable that discusses the roles of reason and imagination in a civilized society" (Boston, 1970, n. p. n.). He also highlights how the novel is a blending of different references to literary works and authors such as D. H. Lawrence, Jane Austen or even Shakespeare (Boston, 1970). It lacks

[13] See Karpinski (2000), Yoshioka (2006) and Ekemkçi (2021) for some insights on the narrative of Angela Carter from different perspectives: dystopian romance, the Gothic, and body politics, respectively.

sympathetic characters or typical plot skeletons from the science fiction genre, and it focuses on the society and how it is constructed through its peculiar characters, rather than on the scientific attributes of its world. Carter's interest lies precisely in the unconscious and how its logic and imagery overlay everyday events, allowing her to explore deeper psychological and societal truths.

The novel's post-apocalyptic setting is characterized by the breakdown of an old order and the emergence of fragmented and contrasting societies, things that align with Antonio Gramsci's concept of an 'interregnum' (1971/1930). An interregnum is a transitional period where established hegemonic languages and meanings become volatile and unstable. In Heroes and Villains, the global disaster has shattered the pre-existing "civilized" order, creating then a vacuum where fundamental concepts like "hero", "villain", "reason", and "savagery" are no longer fixed but are in flux. This instability is not just a narrative device that Carter uses; it is a deliberate condition that enables her anti-imperialist critique. The fragmentation of humanity into distinct groups can be seen as a microcosm of imperial power dynamics, where each group attempts to establish its own hegemony and define "the Other" in their own terms. This directly parallels the historical shift from the "Age of Empires" to the "discourse of postcolonial nation-states", where the meanings of keywords like "imperialism" themselves underwent a huge redefinition. Carter's novel, set in such a treacherous, unstable world, inherently questions the "naturalness" of any imposed order, making it an ideal text for an anti-imperialist analysis of power and identity construction.

Anti-imperialism, in political science and international relations, is defined as opposition to imperialism or neocolonialism, manifesting as a political principle in independence struggles and opposition to colonial rule. Beyond its political and economic dimensions, as articulated by theorists like John A. Hobson (2011/1902), who identified capitalism as the origin of imperialism and Vladimir Lenin (2010/1917), who argued that imperialism represents a specific phase of capitalist development dominated by monopolies and finance capital, anti-imperialism extends to a profound critique of cultural hegemony and the ideological processes by which one group asserts superiority over another. This

framework gained significant currency after the Second World War, informing national liberation movements and the burgeoning field of postcolonial studies. In literary analysis, this approach, notably pioneered by Edward Said's (1978) concept of colonial discourse analysis, examines how literature perpetuates or challenges cultural imperialism by shaping perceptions of the "Other" and reinforcing hierarchical power dynamics. It foregrounds the violence of the empire and the meaning of freedom, often exploring how marginalized voices articulate resistance and forge new identities in the face of imposed narratives, drawing inspiration from concepts like Gramsci's (1971/1930) cultural hegemony and postcolonial feminism.

While anti-imperialism has strong historical ties to economic and political domination, its application in literary theory, particularly through Said's perspective, broadens its scope to cultural and ideological forms of imperialism. This means that even in a fictional post-apocalyptic world like Carter's, which does not explicitly depict historical colonialism, the principles of anti-imperialism, that is, opposition to hegemony, the deconstruction of "othering", and the critique of imposed narratives, remain highly relevant. Carter's novel, with its focus on the fragmentation of humanity into antagonistic groups, implicitly engages with these cultural and ideological dimensions of power. The framework allows for an analysis of how the Professors' rational civilization attempts to establish a form of cultural hegemony over the Barbarians, mirroring imperialistic tendencies to define and control the "savage" or "primitive" through discourse. This highlights how anti-imperialism provides a powerful lens for uncovering subtle, internalized forms of domination, even in speculative fiction.

The main aim of this chapter is to argue that Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains* functions as a profound anti-imperialist text, not through direct engagement with historical colonialism, but by allegorically deconstructing the foundational binaries and ideological mechanisms inherent in imperialistic thought. Through its allegorical post-apocalyptic setting, its critical examination of "othering" and "mutual fictionalization", and the complex, often ambiguous, journey of its protagonist Marianne, the

novel subverts traditional narratives of heroism and villainy, challenging the very notion of a singular, dominant civilized order.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND COLONIAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains*, situated within a fragmented post-apocalyptic landscape, demands a theoretical framework capable of excavating its profound critique of power structures that extend beyond its genre-specific narrative. This critique aligns clearly with anti-imperialist thought, understood not merely as opposition to historical colonial rule but as a fundamental interrogation of the ideological mechanisms which underpin domination, hierarchy, and the construction of differences. To analyze the novel effectively requires engaging with interconnected theoretical concepts concerning hegemony, discourse, the psychology of oppression, and the inherent instability of foundational binaries, concepts that illustrate the anti-imperialist potential embedded within its allegorical structure, particularly its depiction of a Gramscian (1971/1930) interregnum.

Central to understanding the dynamics at play in the novel is Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971/1930). Hegemony is a state that transcends violent force; it represents the process by which a dominant group secures the consent of the governed by establishing its worldview, values, norms, and social practices as the natural, universal, and legitimate order. This ideological dominance is achieved through institutions (like the government, educational institutions, media, religion) and pervasive cultural narratives. What is more, hegemony is never static or complete, because it is constantly contested and renegotiated. The collapse of a dominant order is theorized by Gramsci (1971/1930) as an 'interregnum': "the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 556). It creates a volatile space where established meanings dissolve, and competing groups seek to establish new forms of dominance. Within such a crisis, the mechanisms of hegemony become starkly visible: the attempts to define reality, to categorize

populations, and to legitimize one group's authority while marginalizing or demonizing others. This struggle for discursive and ideological control is inherently tied to imperial and neo-imperial projects, where the justification for domination relied heavily on establishing the cultural and civilizational superiority of the colonizer (Said, 1978).

It is here that Edward Said's groundbreaking work on *Orientalism* (1978) becomes indispensable. Said demonstrated how Western imperial powers constructed a pervasive discourse, the cited Orientalism, that systematically represented the "Orient" (that is, the colonized world) as inherently irrational, backward, sensual, despotic, and stagnant. This representation was not descriptive but constitutive, and it functioned as a powerful ideological apparatus that simultaneously defined the "Orient" as inferior and the "Occident" as its rational, progressive, and morally superior opposite. The process of "Othering", which is the discursive construction of a group as fundamentally different and inferior to legitimize control or exclusion, is the central mechanism of Orientalism and similar imperial discourses. This discourse operates through pervasive tropes and narratives embedded in literature, scholarship, and popular culture, naturalizing hierarchical power relations and rendering imperial domination intellectually and morally justifiable. Said's analysis reveals that imperialism is as much a cultural and epistemological project as it is a political or economic one, reliant on controlling the narrative about the dominated. Furthermore, the dynamic of 'mutual fictionalization' suggests that such representational struggles are not unidirectional; subaltern groups also construct narratives about the dominant, though these counter-narratives often operate with significantly less power to shape broader perception or reality.

While classical anti-imperialist theorists like J.A. Hobson (2011/1902) and V.I. Lenin (2010/1917) provided crucial economic analyses, identifying capitalism and its drive for markets and resources as the engine of imperialism, the framework for analyzing a text like *Heroes and Villains* must extend into the psychological and cultural realms which were foregrounded by later postcolonial theory. Frantz Fanon's work is especially interesting and pertinent here. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon, 2008/1952), Fanon explored the devastating psychological impact of

colonialism, detailing how the colonized internalize the colonizer's degrading image of them, leading to profound alienation and a fractured sense of self. This internalized inferiority is a potent tool of control. Conversely, in *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 2004/1961), Fanon analyzed the dynamics of violence inherent in the colonial situation. He argued that the systemic violence of the colonial structure inevitably breeds counter-violence as a means of psychological liberation and political assertion for the colonized. Fanon's insights highlight that resistance is not merely political but also existential, involving a struggle for recognition and the right to self-definition against a hegemonic discourse that seeks to fix the subaltern in a position of abjection. The very categories of "civilized" and "savage", central to imperial justification, are revealed as constructs saturated with psychological and cultural violence.

The theoretical thread weaving through Gramsci, Said, and Fanon is the deconstruction of foundational binaries. Imperial ideology fundamentally relies on rigid oppositions: civilized/savage, reason/superstition, order/chaos, hero/villain, Self/Other. These binaries are presented as natural and absolute, providing the ethical and intellectual scaffolding for domination. However, critical theory exposes these binaries as socially constructed, historically contingent, and inherently unstable. They function to obscure complexity, justify hierarchy, and foreclose alternative ways of being and organizing society. The concept of liminality, which is the state of being betwixt and between established categories, becomes crucial for challenging these binaries (Bhabha, 1994; Turner, 1969). Liminal spaces and figures destabilize fixed identities and reveal the permeability and artificiality of imposed boundaries. An anti-imperialist perspective, therefore, actively seeks to expose the constructedness nature of these binaries, demonstrating how they serve specific power interests and how they inevitably collapse under scrutiny or in moments of crisis, revealing the ambiguity and fluidity they attempt to suppress. This deconstruction is not an end in itself but a necessary step towards imagining relations beyond domination and hierarchy.

This integrated framework allows for an exploration of how allegorical narratives such as *Heroes and Villains* can function as potent anti-imperialist critiques. It moves beyond direct historical analogy to examine

how texts interrogate the very processes of hegemonic formation, discursive control, psychological domination, and the artificial binaries that sustain systems of oppression. By situating the narrative within a constructed interregnum, the text creates a space where these mechanisms are laid bare, their contingency exposed, and their violent consequences explored, ultimately challenging the "naturalness" of any imposed hierarchical order and opening space for imagining alternatives grounded in a critical awareness of power's operations.

3. AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST READING OF *HEROES AND VILLAINS*

The "Professor" community is the nucleus of Carter's post-collapse world, sustaining a fragile model of enlightenment-era order. These isolated enclaves mirror the "imperial center," clinging to knowledge, hierarchy, and a utopian self-image of order in contrast to the "savage" world beyond their fences. The Professor enclave is described as agriculturally self-sufficient and organized, growing food and exporting surplus in exchange for medicine, weapons, and books (p. 14). This self-sufficiency evokes colonial plantations and settlements, where control over land and the production of resources reinforced domination over "wilder" territories.

The social stratification is equally imperial in tone. Children are taught games in which "the Soldiers always won" (p. 15) and "the Soldiers are heroes, but the Barbarians are villains" (p. 15). The indoctrination of innocence into an imperialist moral binary recalls Frantz Fanon's (1961) description of colonial ideology's "Manichaean" worldview, where the colonizer represents civilization, reason, and good, while the colonized becomes synonymous with chaos and evil. This is internalized by children like Marianne, who is initially repulsed by the Barbarians, viewing them as monstrous, deformed, or even grotesque (Carter, 1969, p. 29).

This ideological reproduction is supported by violence. Even as the Professors consider themselves intellectuals above brutality, their way of life is protected by Soldiers, which are agents of imperial enforcement who shoot at beggars "to frighten them away" (p. 22). The community

performs thus a paradox of liberal imperialism: it promotes ideals of peace, knowledge, and culture while relying on systemic exclusion, coercion, and militarization.

The figure of the Barbarian represents the racialized Other of colonial discourse. Described initially as "hobgoblins of nightmare" with "many colours" and "great manes of hair" (p. 18), they are rendered in monstrous, animalistic terms that echo colonial descriptions of African, Asian, and Indigenous peoples, and Carter further problematizes this dehumanization. As Marianne ventures into Barbarian society, she discovers they are literate (p. 28), familial (p. 29), and even philosophical. Jewel, a Barbarian leader, "talked like a half-educated man" (p. 44), disrupting Marianne's preconceptions of savagery.

On the other hand, Carter foregrounds the epistemic violence of empire, the idea that imperial systems destroy the ability to know or value alternative ways of being. Marianne is taught since she is born that Barbarians cannot think, but she comes to realize that their culture, while different, is deeply meaningful. The Barbarians live communally (p. 65), observe spiritual rituals (p. 47), and are embedded in oral and symbolic traditions, such as embroidery and tattoos that possess "magic significance" (p. 64). These practices, though initially dismissed as primitive, are rich repositories of cultural knowledge.

This trajectory mirrors anti-colonial thinkers like Aimé Césaire (1955), who has argued that colonizers devalue the cultures they subjugate in order to justify exploitation. By unmasking the richness of Barbarian life, Carter exposes the moral bankruptcy of the civilizing mission and critiques the epistemological violence that renders the Other voiceless.

The Professors, descendants of elite survivors who were "allowed in the deep shelters" (p. 22) perceive themselves as stewards of civilization, yet their self-image is increasingly hollow, and their isolation has ossified into stagnation. As Marianne's father admits, "there are genuses of men, not simply Homo faber" (p. 23), in a pseudo-scientific attempt to rationalize post-apocalyptic racial divergence. The supposed rationality of the Professor class thus masks an underlying eugenic logic.

Marianne's evolving view of her own society illustrates the colonial myth of neutrality unraveling. When she sees the beggars at the village gates, "men and women running with sores" (p. 22) who are "never let in" (p. 22), she glimpses the costs of "civilization" (p. 22). These people are not outsiders by choice but by exclusion. Her community, in projecting its fears onto these bodies, has ensured its own sense of order. Jewel later articulates this trauma: "they [the Professors] project their fears outside on us so they won't stay in the villages, infecting them" (p. 110). This mimics the logic of imperial displacement, pushing violence and instability to the colonial margins to sustain a sense of moral and ontological superiority at the center.

Furthermore, Carter exposes how scientific rationalism can become a new form of religious dogma. The Doctor who keeps the snake *Viperus berus* in a ritual box (p. 47) exemplifies how the collapse of religious authority is quickly replaced with ideological spectacles. Donally, who is a former Professor who has turned into a Barbarian priest, admits that "religion is a device for instituting the sense of a privileged group" (p. 87). This echoes Edward Said's critique of Orientalism: imperialist structures claim to bring enlightenment but construct systems of symbolic domination that are equally coercive.

On the other hand, the gendered violence within the novel mirrors the possession and exploitation that typifies imperial rule. Marianne is both a symbolic daughter of the empire and its rebellious agent. Her rape and impregnation by Jewel (p. 119) becomes a metaphor for imperial conquest, Jewel himself describes it as an act of "revenge" (p. 119) and a means of "status" (p. 119). His goal is not love but domination: to create "a little me all furred, plaited and bristling with knives" (p. 119). Marianne, in turn, becomes the site of cultural hybridity, much like the colonized woman who is both desired and destroyed.

This recalls Gayatri Spivak's (1988) critique in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" where she illustrates how colonial discourse often erases female agency while using female bodies as a battlefield for ideological conflict. Marianne's resistance, which is emotional, intellectual, and sometimes violent, to both Professor and Barbarian masculinities positions her as an ambivalent figure, neither fully colonizer nor colonized.

She is both subject and object of empire. Carter deliberately complicates this position. When Donally offers to present Marianne and Jewel to the Professors as "the Hurons and the Iroquois" of Enlightenment anthropology (p. 166), Carter mocks the ethnographic desire to freeze the Other as spectacle. Marianne resists this commodification, noting, "my researches into the mœurs of savage tribes" are not yet complete (p. 167). In this self-aware irony, Carter critiques the imperial tendency to treat cultural difference as exotic data rather than lived reality.

As Marianne moves between the Professor and Barbarian worlds, she becomes a hybrid figure, culturally, ideologically, and bodily. Her character enacts what Homi Bhabha (1994) has theorized as the "Third Space" of enunciation, a liminal zone where the strict binaries of colonizer/colonized break down and new forms of identity emerge. Though Marianne is a Professor's daughter, she becomes deeply enmeshed in Barbarian culture. She wears their clothes, learns their language and rituals, and is ultimately forced into a sexual and political relationship with Jewel, the tribal leader.

Jewel himself is also a hybrid character. Though he is a Barbarian, he exhibits intellectual capacities that challenge Marianne's inherited stereotypes. He is literate, philosophical, and spiritually ambivalent (p. 44; p. 47). His desire to father a child with Marianne is explicitly political: "Dynastically […] Politically […] Revenge" (p. 119). He wants to produce a successor who embodies both lines, thus, a symbolic unification or conquest depending on perspective. Marianne, in turn, becomes the vessel of the empire's collapse and transformation. Their union is less a reconciliation than an unresolved synthesis of empire's contradictions.

However, this hybridity is not liberatory. It is marked by violence, coercion, and trauma. Marianne is raped by Jewel not out of love but for control: "Shoving a little me up you […] bristling with knives" (p. 119). This reflects the violent ways empires breed hybridity: through forced assimilation, sexual conquest, and the re-inscription of power across generations. Her eventual pregnancy is less a symbol of hope than a grotesque reminder of imperial trauma.

On the other hand, perhaps Carter's most harrowing critique of imperial systems is found in her depiction of the "Out People". These groups, physically deformed, diseased, and psychically shattered, are the forgotten casualties of empire's collapse. They live "huddled in holes in the ground" (p. 67) nursing sores, dipping arrows in their own wounds to create poison (p. 67). These beings are the ultimate subalterns: speechless, disfigured, and repugnant to all other factions, Professors and Barbarians alike.

Marianne herself is revolted by them. She kills one such "man/not-man" (p. 143) in an act of pure horror and disgust, claiming: "I don't believe they're men at all" (p. 143). Her dehumanization of the Out People echoes the worst tendencies of imperial ideology, even as she herself has suffered at the hands of power. This act reveals that the imperialist reflex to reduce others to non-human status survives in all systems, even in the margins of collapse. The Out People represent the silenced and disfigured voices of those who suffer most from imperial violence: the indigenous, the displaced, the enslaved.

In this way, Carter stages a confrontation with the extreme outer limits of the post-imperial world. While the Professors cling to order and the Barbarians to survivalist violence, the Out People expose the abject consequences of empire: physical destruction, cultural obliteration, and epistemological erasure. They are not merely "barbarians" or outsiders, they are what remains when both colonizer and colonized abandon the periphery.

Carter is deeply skeptical of Enlightenment ideologies of progress and linear history, central tenets of imperial rationalism. The novel's setting is explicitly post-apocalyptic, and time itself has become strange and recursive. Marianne notes, "time is going backwards and coiling up" (p. 123), suggesting that history is not a march forward but a spiral of repeated violence and collapse.

The Barbarians, unlike the Professors, do not segment their lives into temporal units. They live in "raw shapes of light and darkness" (p. 31), unbound by clocks or calendars (p. 61). This contrast reflects the imperial imposition of time as a mechanism of control: colonial governments regimented labor, instituted school hours, and synchronized societies to

the metropole's rhythms. By rejecting segmented time, the Barbarians defy the imperial order of history itself.

Donally, a failed intellectual and rogue priest, articulates this collapse best: "If they won't take to the snake for a symbol, we'll think of something else […]. Religion is a device for instituting the sense of a privileged group" (p. 87). His role as a manipulative myth-maker underscores Carter's insight that empires collapse not only through war but through the erosion of shared meaning. Donally must "invent" ritual and tradition because the imperial narratives that once structured life have become absurd, hollow, or forgotten.

Carter skewers imperial anthropology and exoticism through Marianne's transformation into a kind of ethnographic subject. Donally suggests presenting Jewel and Marianne to the Professors as "savages" for scientific observation: "the savants of eighteenth-century France reserved for the Hurons and the Iroquois" (p. 166). The grotesque idea that Marianne might complete her "researches into the mœurs of savage tribes" (p. 167) satirizes colonial ethnography, which objectified colonized bodies and cultures for the gaze of Western academia.

Jewel is especially subjected to this fantasy. When Marianne imagines him at the Professor compound, she foresees that they would "take away your coat of fur […] test you […] and press you inside a book" (p. 158). He would be converted from person to specimen. This is Carter's scathing portrayal of how empire commodifies and reduces the Other, not merely through violence but through intellectual appropriation. The body becomes text, culture becomes artifact, and identity becomes a footnote.

This critique extends to gender. Jewel views Marianne as a symbolic trophy, "like a phallic and diabolic version of female beauties of former periods […] to keep you in preserving fluid in a huge jar on the mantelpiece" (p. 173). He sexualizes and exoticizes her just as much as Donally intellectualizes him. In both cases, Carter underscores how imperial ideologies reduce human beings to objects of fascination, discipline, or desire.

Carter offers no resolution or redemptive reconciliation. The novel closes not with unity but with stasis and ambiguity. Donally proposes they all return to the Professors and be accepted as "son and daughter-in-law […] snatched from the arboreal innocence of the forest" (p. 166). But Marianne hesitates. She recognizes her own way of acting, having observed and studied the Barbarians: "So that is what I've been doing" (p. 167), reflecting on her complicity in empire's voyeurism.

However, even after enduring violence, subjugation, and grief, Marianne cannot escape the gravitational pull of imperial structures. She dreams of returning to the Professor enclave, feeling "at home" (p. 123) among their discussions of utopias and apocalypses. This longing reveals how imperial ideology survives in affective forms: in nostalgia, intellectual superiority, and the desire for order.

Even hope, proposed by Donally, is undermined as a hollow device: "Hope. […] Perhaps now is the time to capitulate" (p. 157). The empire has already collapsed, but the systems of domination, racial, sexual, and epistemic, still persist in altered forms.

4. CONCLUSIONS

As the reader may have noticed, Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains* offers a richly layered post-apocalyptic vision that serves not merely as speculative fiction but as a critical allegory for the persistence and transformation of imperial ideologies. Through its stark divisions, the "civilized" Professors, the "savage" Barbarians, and the dehumanized Out People, Carter reconstructs a symbolic geography that mirrors the dynamics of empire, colonial domination, and racialized otherness. However, rather than affirming these binaries, the novel methodically unravels them, exposing their constructedness and critiquing the ideologies that sustain them.

At the heart of Carter's critique is the realization that imperialism is not only a political or economic system but an epistemic and affective regime. The Professor enclave, ostensibly a bastion of knowledge, reason, and order, is built upon exclusion, militarized control, and mythologized superiority. Its claims to civility and humanism are undermined by the

routine dehumanization of outsiders, the reliance on force, and the internal contradictions of its own knowledge systems. Carter uses Marianne's father, who is a Professor of History, to articulate a pseudo-scientific racial taxonomy that reflects the eugenic logic of empire, even after its fall. Thus, the enclave replicates the intellectual arrogance and violent hierarchies of Enlightenment-era colonialism under the guise of survival.

Contrastingly, the Barbarians, initially portrayed through grotesque and nightmarish imagery, come to reveal an alternative form of social organization that, while violent and patriarchal, contains deep-rooted cultural, symbolic, and communal logics. Their rituals, art, oral knowledge, and interdependent family structures destabilize the imperial fantasy of the "primitive savage". Jewel, as both warrior and philosopher, embodies the ambivalence of postcolonial identity. both a product of imperial violence and a subject resisting it. The gradual unveiling of Barbarian society complicates the reader's perception and challenges the binary of "heroes" and "villains", suggesting instead that both are social roles produced and manipulated by ideology.

Marianne's journey into the Barbarian world, her sexual violation, pregnancy, and eventual transformation into a liminal figure signify the breakdown of colonial epistemology. As she becomes both insider and outsider, colonizer and colonized, she traverses what Homi Bhabha terms the "Third Space", a hybrid zone where identities are no longer fixed but negotiated through power, trauma, and cultural contact. However, Carter resists any romantic notion of hybridity. Marianne's embodied transformation is violent and unresolved, suggesting that postcolonial futures are marked not by reconciliation but by contradiction and suffering.

As seen in the analysis, perhaps Carter's most radical gesture is the introduction of the Out People, deformed, voiceless, and unrepresentable. They are the subalterns par excellence, erased not only from systems of power but from systems of meaning. Their existence challenges the novel's protagonists and readers alike to confront the full extent of empire's human cost. The failure of both Professors and Barbarians to acknowledge or include the Out People underscores the inadequacy of post-imperial politics to address structural marginalization.

In the end, *Heroes and Villains* is a novel that does not offer resolution or redemption. It presents a post-imperial world still governed by domination, fear, and epistemic violence, albeit in new forms. Whether through Donally's grotesque reinvention of religion or Jewel's patriarchal consolidation of power, systems of hierarchy persist even as their ideological justifications shift. Time itself, as Marianne notes, "coils backward", suggesting that history is not linear progress but cyclical regression.

This chapter has succeeded in demonstrating how Carter's achievement lies in her refusal to moralize or simplify. Instead, she presents an unsettling mirror to our own imperial inheritances, forcing readers to grapple with the ways in which empire survives collapse, in bodies, beliefs, and relationships. Through its dystopian landscape, *Heroes and Villains* stages the enduring presence of empire as cultural haunting, cautioning against the seductive myth that the fall of imperial structures equates to their disappearance.

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UNRELIABLE NARRATION AND THE DOPPELGÄNGER IN H.P. LOVECRAFT'S *THE TOMB*

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1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes H.P. Lovecraft's *The Tomb* (1922), arguing that its narrative technique involves two unreliable narrators (Phelan, 2017). One is a doppelgänger that emerges from the protagonist's engagement with the tomb (Freud, 1919), reflecting his descent into madness, while the other is an external, detached presence that adds interpretive complexity (Genette, 1988a, 1989; Phelan, 1996, 2017).

The story's unreliability and manipulation of the reader hinge on the intricate interplay between these two simultaneous personas. Lovecraft employs techniques like perspective changes and the uncanny (Schlipphacke, 2015) to create unease, blurring the lines between reality and imagination. This forces readers to question their own perceptions, heightening the horror of the protagonist's madness (Genette, 1988a, 1989; Phelan, 1996, 2017).

This duality results in the narrator's depersonalization and derealization, portraying him alternately as a doppelgänger and a detached self-experiencer to craft a profoundly unreliable tale (Booth, 1983). Ultimately, by blurring reality and unreality, Lovecraft evokes a deep sense of dread and existential terror in the audience (Hull, 2006).

1.1. MOTIVATION

H.P. Lovecraft's influence on the horror genre can still be seen today, as many contemporary writers draw inspiration from his unique storytelling techniques. Lovecraft's use of cosmic horror and existential dread has left a lasting impact on literature, influencing generations of

writers to explore the unknown and push the boundaries of traditional storytelling. His ability to tap into primal fears and evoke a sense of unease has solidified his place as a master of the macabre (Joshi, 1996, p. 47).

To offer a clear analysis of the elements discussed and their presentation in *The Tomb* (1922), this study has digitally analyzed *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'The Tomb' by H. P. Lovecraft." Thus, examples and extracts used for the analysis showcase paragraphs and lines from this source.

1.1. Unreliability

For this analysis, an unreliable narrator is defined by Phelan's (2017, pp. 89-103) categorization: a narrator who deviates from the implied author's norms and can be analyzed along the axes of fact, value, and knowledge. This unreliability enhances narratives by challenging readers' perceptions and compelling them to question the story's truthfulness to uncover hidden meanings (Phelan, 2017, pp. 89-103). In The Tomb (1922), the very beginning of the story presents an extract that encapsulates all these axes of unreliability:

> "It is an unfortunate fact that the bulk of humanity is too limited in its mental vision to weigh with patience and intelligence those isolated phenomena, seen and felt only by a psychologically sensitive few, which lie outside its common experience. Men of broader intellect know that there is no sharp distinction betwixt the real and the unreal; (...) (Loucks, 2009, Online accessible text, *The Tomb*, Lovecraft, 1922; lines 2-9)."

Lovecraft uses the narrator Jervas Dudley's prejudice as a form of pride to secure reader empathy. Dudley strategically constructs a social hierarchy, dismissing the "bulk of humanity" as "limited" and "prosaic" while flattering the reader as one of the "men of broader intellect" and the "psychologically sensitive few." This tactic makes the reader feel special and pathologizes skepticism, creating a sympathetic alliance before the full narrative unfolds. This technique is an example of what Phelan (2017, pp. 89-103) categorizes as bonding unreliability, where a narrator's flaws increase the reader's emotional closeness to them, as opposed to estranging unreliability, which creates distance.

In this sense, most of *The Tomb*'s (1922) narrative may fall into bonding unreliability as shown in the following lines extracted from the text:

"This no human creature may do; for lacking the fellowship of the living, he inevitably draws upon the companionship of things that are not, or are no longer, living... Well did I come to know the presiding dryads of those trees, and often have I watched their wild dances in the struggling beams of a waning moon..."(Paragraph 3, Lines 3-7) Jervas presents his solitude not as a simple fact, but as a catalyst for delusion. While a trustworthy storyteller would interpret these experiences as childhood fantasies or metaphors, Jervas recounts them as actual occurrences, reflecting a confusion between his imagination and reality during his youth, as he perceives them to be real engagements with imaginary beings like dryads (Booth, 1961, p. 300).

"But in that instant of curiosity was born the madly unreasoning desire which has brought me to this hell of confinement. Spurred on by a voice which must have come from the hideous soul of the forest, I resolved to enter the beckoning gloom... I had sworn to the hundred gods of the grove that at any cost I would some day force an entrance..." (Paragraph 5, final 4 lines). In this case, the narrator himself describes his desire as irrational and acknowledges it as the direct reason for his confinement, blurring the lines between sanity and obsession (Booth, 1961, p. 158).

However, this same text presents instances of an opposite type of unreliability, estranging, as shown by the following examples:

“Later a queer boldness and recklessness came into my demeanour... My formerly silent tongue waxed voluble with the easy grace of a Chesterfield or the godless cynicism of a Rochester... and covered the flyleaves of my books with facile impromptu epigrams which brought up suggestions of Gay, Prior, and the sprightliest of the Augustan wits and rimesters.” (Paragraph 11, Lines 5-9). In this instance, the narrator does not evolve into a wiser individual but rather into a decadent figure resembling an 18th-century rake[14]. This dramatic shift in personality

[14] An infamous male figure frequently portrayed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature, is characterized by narcissism, immorality, and passion (Conrad, 2019, pp. 1).

fractures the initial, relatable image of the narrator, substituting it with a distant and antagonistic persona[15], altering the reader's connection with the story's themes (Booth, 1961, p. 158).

"Burnt alive to ashes, my body dispersed by the four winds, I might never lie in the tomb of the Hydes! Was not my coffin prepared for me? Had I not a right to rest till eternity amongst the descendants of Sir Geoffrey Hyde? Aye! I would claim my heritage of death, even though my soul go seeking through the ages for another corporeal tenement to represent it on that vacant slab in the alcove of the vault." (Paragraph 16, Lines 10-14). In the course of a vision of a burning house with people inside, the narrator's major concern is not for the simulated lives on the line, but for the fate of his own body. This self-centred emphasis on a dark purpose, disregarding life and morality, creates an unbridgeable distance between his brain and the reader's (Booth, 1961, p. 159).

The presence of a doppelgänger in the narrative serves as a metaphor for internal conflict and the struggle to reconcile conflicting aspects of one's identity (Brook, 2008, pp.1588–1600). Table 1 illustrates how these two unreliable narrators work in the tale:

TABLE 1. *Evidence of split persona. Two unreliable narrators*

Sentence Showing Split Persona	Paragraph & Line	Evidence of Split Persona in the Extract
"Henceforward I haunted the tomb each night; seeing, hearing, and doing things I must never reveal."	Para. 11, Lines 1-3	The deliberate act of keeping secrets ("things I must never reveal") not only creates a distinct set of experiences and knowledge for this 'other' self but also builds a barrier between his daytime life and the reader, highlighting the complexity of his dual identity.

[15] Understood as the social self or interface between the individual's ego and society, this is, the performative self that is negotiated through shared symbols and expectations, embodying the ethical duties and social identities that constitute a person's life not as a mere mask, but as an integral component of their moral existence (Jung, 1921; Goffman, 1959;Heidegger, 1927).

"Later a queer boldness and recklessness came into my demeanour, till I unconsciously grew to possess the bearing of a man of the world despite my lifelong seclusion."	Para. 11, Lines 5-7	The narrator describes a new personality "com[ing] into" him as if it were an external force possessing him. This is not personal growth but a sudden replacement of his core identity ("secluded dreamer") with a contrary one ("bold man of the world"), indicating a dissociative split.
"My formerly silent tongue waxed voluble with the easy grace of a Chesterfield or the godless cynicism of a Rochester."	Para. 11, Lines 7-8	This demonstrates a fragmentation of identity, where his voice is controlled by a separate, historical "other" residing within him.
"I had made a small clearing in the thicket... This bower was my temple, the fastened door my shrine..."	Para. 10, Final Lines	The narrator creates a sacred space dedicated to his "other" self and its pursuits, a public persona and his hidden, true self.
"In that coffin and in that vault they have promised me I shall be buried."	Final Paragraph	The narrator speaks of his own burial not with terror, but as the fulfillment of a destiny for a separate self. The coffin named "Jervas" is objectified as the vessel for this "other," finalizing the division between his living self and the ancestral, entombed identity he has become.

*Para. Abbreviation for “paragraph”.
**All references to lines and paragraphs are based on *The Tomb*’s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). “‘*The Tomb*’ by H. P. Lovecraft.”https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx

Source: author’s own elaboration

1.1.1. Unreliable narration in Lovecraft *The Tomb* (1922)

It is suggested that unreliable narration in fiction serves as the antithesis of the possibility of Gricean Cooperative Principle[16] violations in real-world communication (Grice, 1975, p. 45), as the author and reader enter a "non-pragmatic communicative level[17]" where the violation of maxims becomes a literary device rather than a conversational failure (Fludernik, 1999, p. 78). Consequently, building on this concept, narratologists have delineated distinct types of unreliability for analysis.

[16] People in a conversation work together to communicate effectively. This is founded on four principles: quantity (give the appropriate amount of information), quality (be truthful), relationship (be relevant), and manner (be clear and organised)(Grice, 1975, p. 45).

[17] A method of communication or syndrome in which an individual repeatedly struggles with the social application of verbal and nonverbal language (Hymes, l967, pp. 8-38).

For instance, Ansgar Nünning (1999) distinguishes between two primary forms of unreliability: cognitive unreliability, which pertains to inaccuracies in the narrator's comprehension of facts within the storyworld- based on the concept of Storyworlds and Possible selves: “the mental representation developed by readers for a focalizing character or narrator, and the mental representation that readers entertain about themselves, or self-concept”(Martínez, 2020, p. 2):

> "But in that instant of curiosity was born the madly unreasoning desire which has brought me to this hell of confinement. Spurred on by a voice which must have come from the hideous soul of the forest, I resolved to enter the beckoning gloom in spite of the ponderous chains which barred my passage." (*The Tomb*, Paragraph 5, Lines 8-12)

Where the narrator, Jervas Dudley, fundamentally misinterprets a basic fact of the storyworld: the "ponderous chains" are not, in the objective reality shared by other characters, "barring his passage" in a way he can physically overcome. Utterance unreliability, which involves the narrator making erroneous statements about facts:

> "It was with a distinct sense of awakening that I heard the voices... I barely fancied that as I awoke, a light had been hurriedly extinguished within the sunken sepulchre... Upon returning home I went with much directness to a rotting chest in the attic, wherein I found the key which next day unlocked with ease the barrier I had so long stormed in vain." (*The Tomb*, Paragraph 9, Lines 1-4)

Nünning (1999) identifies value-related unreliability where a narrator's judgments conflict with their actions. For example, the narrator labels his desire as "madly unreasoning" and its consequence a "hell of confinement" (The Tomb, Para. 5). However, his actions reveal a stark conflict, as he romanticizes and pursues this same desire with "religious zeal," valuing it more highly than his own freedom and sanity.

Furthermore, there is also an actional unreliability concerning values, where the narrator's actions do not match a relevant value system (Nünning, 1999, pp. 63-65):

"Accordingly my watches by the dank portal became less persistent, and much of my time was spent in other though equally strange pursuits. I would sometimes rise very quietly in the night, stealing out to

walk in those churchyards and places of burial from which I had been kept by my parents." (*The Tom*b, Paragraph 10, Lines 1-3)

He "steals out" at night, directly disobeying his parents' known wishes (they had kept him from such places). He replaces one unhealthy obsession (watching the tomb) with "equally strange pursuits" in graveyards, further withdrawing from the living world and deepening his association with death (Goho, 2023, pp. 115-140).

1.2. The uncanny and unnatural narratology

The concepts of the uncanny and the sublime provide critical frameworks for analyzing literature. Freud (1919) defines the uncanny (das Unheimliche) as a feeling of dread that arises when the familiar becomes strangely unsettling, often through the blurring of boundaries. In contrast, the Kantian sublime is evoked by the overwhelming power of nature, which, while initially threatening, ultimately affirms human reason's capacity to grasp the limitless (Kant, 1790).

The Tomb displays the uncanny (Freud, 1919), as seen when the tomb door, a familiar object, is left "ajar" in a "queerly sinister way." This violation of expectation creates dread by suggesting an ambiguous, animate will. Similarly, the story showcases the sublime (Kant, 1790) in a description of nature as a "vivid and almost homogeneous mass of green." This vastness overwhelms the narrator's senses, causing a "loss of perspective" where "time and space become trivial," leading to a sublime feeling of awe and self-diminishment (Goho, 2023, pp. 115-140).

1.3. The Doppelgänger and Lovecraft

The concept of doppelganger is not something new, Sigmund Freud analysed this concept as connected to the uncanny (1919), while gothic literature made extensive use of it :

the fictional double, as a literary device for articulating the experience of self-division, […] the double has become an aspect of personal and interpersonal life, a manifestation of unconscious desire. […] double shows in graphic forms a tension between the "laws of human society" and the resistance of the unconscious mind to these laws. […] the

double in modern literature desires transformation and difference. By attempting to transform the relations between the imaginary and the symbolic, the double hollows out the real, revealing its absence, its great other, its unspoken and its unseen.

In Lovecraft's *The Tomb*, the "I" persona suffers from dissociation - two identities emerge from a single psyche- and split-self - two different personas root from the same self, as illustrated by the following examples from the story, showing the doppelganger's features listed by Freud (1919):

Self-division: "Henceforward I lived in two worlds..." (Paragraph 10, Line 1). Jervas is no longer a unified subject but exists in two distinct and separate spheres of existence—the mundane world of his family and the supernatural world of the tomb (Lacan, 1977, p. 167).

Transformation of the relations between imaginary and the symbolic: "My name is Jervas Dudley... But the idea of entering the tomb never left my thoughts; being indeed stimulated by the unexpected genealogical discovery that my own maternal ancestry possessed at least a slight link with the supposedly extinct family of the Hydes. Last of my paternal race, I was likewise the last of this older and more mysterious line." (Paragraph 2, Line 1 & Paragraph 12, Lines 1-3). This showcases the collapse of the Symbolic (his legal, social name "Jervas Dudley") into the Imaginary (his fantasized ancestral identity) (Lacan, 1977, p. 128).

The fictional double or doppelgänger, as manifested in texts like Lovecraft's The Tomb, presents several distinct narratological characteristics. Firstly, it operates through an antimimetic narrative which, as defined by Brian Richardson, "instead of imitating nonfictional discourses, these are traduced to the narrator's biased conventions" (Richardson, 2006, p. 46). Secondly, the doppelgänger narrative is inherently an anti-epiphany narrative, a term describing a character's failed expectation to reach a new understanding of the fictional world (Phelan, 2005, p. 87).

Furthermore, Lovecraft's complex narrative not only involves two unreliable narrators but also two storyworlds, where the doppelgänger dwells in a liminal existence defined as follows:

“A psychologically distinct transitional state marked by the disruption of narrative identity, breakdown of meaning structures, and disorganization of affective and temporal coherence. Existential liminality arises from internal ruptures, experiences of profound personal dislocation triggered by loss, disillusionment, or existential realization. (...).” (RJ Starr, 2021, p.3)

In this sense, this liminal existence could be noticed within *The Tomb*, such as in:

Disruption of narrative identity: "My name is Jervas Dudley... Last of my paternal race, I was likewise the last of this older and more mysterious line." (Paragraph 2, Line 1 & Paragraph 12, Lines 2-3). The narrator's identity is disrupted as he actively supplants his given, social identity ("Jervas Dudley") with a fantasized, ancestral one ("the last of the Hydes"). This represents a breakdown in the continuous, coherent self-narrative essential to personal identity, a concept central to narrative identity theory (McAdams, 2001, p. 101).

Breakdown of meaning structures: "In such surroundings the mind loses its perspective; time and space become trivial and unreal..." (Paragraph 5, Lines 3-4). This statement directly describes the collapse of the fundamental Kantian categories (time and space) that structure human experience and meaning. This signifies a pre-psychotic breakdown of the symbolic order that gives reality its coherence (Lacan, 1977, p. 55).

Disorganization of temporal coherence: "I felt I had known it before, in a past remote beyond all recollection; beyond even my tenancy of the body I now possess." (Paragraph 6, Lines 5-6). The narrator's sense of time shatters, extending his personal memory beyond his own lifespan and corporeal existence. This represents a severe disorganization of temporal coherence, a common feature of dissociation and psychotic states (Fuchs, 2013, p. 6).

Cognitive disorientation: "I had made a small clearing in the thicket... This bower was my temple, the fastened door my shrine..." (Paragraph 10, final lines). The narrator exhibits cognitive disorientation by applying sacred, religious categories ("temple," "shrine") to a profane,

morbid context. This represents a fundamental failure in reality-testing and logical categorization (Brett, 2002, p. 112).

1.4. Focalization and point of view (POV): misevaluation, misinterpretation, and misreport

Following Genette's (1980) typology, the narrative employs shifting focalization from a single, fractured voice. The dominant internal focalization, anchored to an "experiencing-I," is characterized by cognitive unreliability during supernatural events (Nünning, 1999). This is punctuated by external focalization, where a detached "narrating-I" observes the descent, creating an estranging effect (Booth, 1961). This interplay culminates in a doppelgänger focalization—a zero focalization emerging from the narrator's dissociated psyche (Freud, 1919).

This zero-focalized, anti-mimetic voice (Richardson, 2006) expresses unconscious desires and a radical belief restructuring that rejects the symbolic order, dwelling in a "cosmic dimensional alternative reality" (Lacan, 1977). Thus, the focalization is the formal correlative of a mind whose perceptual mechanisms have been shattered by a cosmic encounter (Genette, 1988a; Phelan, 1996).

Zero focalization (The "Experiencing-I"): The narrator knows more than the characters. "The odour of the place repelled yet bewitched me. I felt I had known it before, in a past remote beyond all recollection; beyond even my tenancy of the body I now possess." (Paragraph 6, Lines 5-6). The reader has access to Jervas's simultaneous and conflicting sensory reactions ("repelled yet bewitched") and his private, subjective feeling of ancestral memory that defies logical, empirical knowledge. The reader is locked inside his subjective, emotional experience (Phelan 1996; Genette 1989).

Internal focalization (The Detached "Narrating-I"): The narrator knows as much as the focal character. "Early-rising villagers who observed my homeward progress looked at me strangely, and marvelled at the signs of ribald revelry which they saw in one whose life was known to be sober and solitary." (Paragraph 14, Lines 1-2). Here, the focalization shifts to an external, almost sociological perspective. Jervas is seen as

the villagers see him—from the outside. Learning about his appearance ("signs of ribald revelry") and the public perception of his life ("sober and solitary"), but being neglected access to his internal justification for his state. The narrative momentarily distances itself from his psyche to observe him as an object (Phelan 1996; Genette 1989).

External focalization (The "Doppelgänger" Voice): The narrator knows less than the characters. "Henceforward I lived in two worlds..." (Paragraph 10, Line 1) and the broader context of his retrospective account from the "refuge for the demented." This statement and the overarching frame of the confession are from a position of zero focalization. The narrator possesses knowledge that transcends the immediate moment of the story's events. It is the voice of the fractured self that can narrate its own fragmentation from a position of (mad) enlightenment (Phelan 1996; Genette 1989).

This variation in POV and focalization enables the combination of three main types of resources (Phelan 2017, 89-103):

Misevaluation: "I had made a small clearing in the thicket... This bower was my temple, the fastened door my shrine..." (Paragraph 10, final lines). Jervas assesses a dank, morbid thicket before a sepulchre as a "temple," and a sealed tomb door as a "shrine." This represents a complete perversion of normal values.

Misreport: narrator’s incorrect or misguided assessment of characters, events, or situations within the narrative. the narrator misunderstanding the significance, meaning, or implications of events within the story. "Upon returning home I went with much directness to a rotting chest in the attic, wherein I found the key which next day unlocked with ease the barrier I had so long stormed in vain." (Paragraph 9, Lines 4-5). Jervas states he physically unlocked the tomb. However, the external, verifiable facts provided later in the story completely contradict this. His father "declares that at no time did I pass the chained portal, and swears that the rusted padlock had not been touched for fifty years" (Final Paragraphs). The narrator is reporting an event that, within the story's objective reality, did not happen.

Misinterpretation: the narrator provides an inaccurate, incomplete, or false account of the events within the story. "But in that instant of curiosity was born the madly unreasoning desire which has brought me to this hell of confinement. Spurred on by a voice which must have come from the hideous soul of the forest, I resolved to enter the beckoning gloom..." (Paragraph 5, Lines 8-11). Jervas interprets his compulsive desire as an external, supernatural command from the "soul of the forest." He misattributes an internal, psychotic symptom to an external, supernatural cause.

1.5. Facework, deictic shift and Feared Possible selves

Mª Ángeles Martínez's (2014) concept of Storyworld Possible Selves (SPS) provides a framework for understanding narrative negotiation, where SPS nodes are linguistic cues that prompt readers to project potential identities (p. 52). In The Tomb, these nodes are evident in perspective shifts between a detached, testifying "I" and an experiencing, delusional "I." These shifts, marked by oscillations between a rationally flattering tone and a negative, secretive sentiment, signal the interplay between the conscious persona and the unconscious doppelgänger (Jung, 1921; Martínez, 2014, p. 68).

The narrative employs a first-person split-narration that initiates a traditional deictic shift into a storyworld. However, this shift is perpetually subverted by the narrator's cognitive disorientation and a disorganization of temporal coherence, preventing any final disambiguation (Genette, 1980; Fuchs, 2013).

2. GOALS

This section is aimed at outlining the main goals pursued by the present study, some specific ones as well as some additional secondary goals.

2.1. Main Goal of the study

This study posits and characterizes a previously untheorized type of unreliable narrator, which termed the "doppelgänger narrator." Unlike established typologies that focus on a single, flawed, consciousness

(Nünning, 1999; Booth, 1961), the doppelgänger narrator represents a split-off narration (Cohn, 1978) where the narrative "I" divides into conflicting personas—one often attempting bonding unreliability and the other enacting a transgressive, value-action unreliability. This study will delineate the formal characteristics of this narrator through a linguistic-narratological analysis of H.P. Lovecraft's *The Tomb* (1922), demonstrating how it orchestrates a unique readerly experience by manipulating the formation of *Storyworld Possible Selves* (SPS) and embodying a psychological dissolution of familiar self-concepts (Martínez, 2014).

2.2. Specific goals

To establish a transdisciplinary analytical framework that synthesizes linguistics (pragmatics, deixis), narrative theory (focalization, unreliability), and psychology (psychoanalysis, trauma theory, cognitive science) to demonstrate their collective power in modeling the complexities of the human psyche as revealed through literary expression.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods, transdisciplinary methodology to empirically validate the existence and characterize the function of the "doppelgänger narrator" in H.P. Lovecraft's *The Tomb*.

3.1. Computational Stylistics & Linguistic Parsing

The text will be parsed and analyzed using AntWord Profiler (Anthony, 2022) to isolate key grammatical and lexical features (Pennebaker, 2011).

Pronoun Analysis: A primary indicator of deceit and psychological detachment is the disambiguation of pronouns. A pronounced shift from the first-person singular ("I") to the third-person ("he," "the other") or a vague, abstract "it" would signal depersonalization and the objectification of a part of the self, a key feature of the doppelgänger (Fuchs, 2013).

Certainty and Ambiguity Markers: The frequency of modal verbs (e.g., would, could, must have) and verbs of perception (e.g., seemed, felt, fancied) will be quantified. A high density of these markers, as found in the narrator's claims (e.g., "I must have fallen asleep," "I barely fancied"), is a known linguistic signature of uncertainty and epistemic unreliability, blurring the line between fact and imagination (Nünning, 1999).

Semantic Field Analysis: identifying and contrasting dominant semantic fields. The coexistence of a field related to rational intellect ("broader intellect," "know," "empiricism") with one of supernatural dread ("haunted," "phantoms," "bewitched") provides lexical evidence for the self-division between the bonding and estranging personas (Fuchs, 2013; Nünning, 1999).

3.2. Sentiment Analysis & Narrative Pragmatics

This phase bridges linguistic data and readerly effect. Using MAXQDA, a sentiment analysis will be conducted to track emotional valence across the narrative. Following Martínez's (2014) concept of SPS nodes, sentiment shifts are coded that act as prompts for readerly projection and disorientation.

Identification of Estranging Nodes: the doppelgänger's voice is characterized by a stark neutral or negative sentiment in passages describing transcendent or supposedly ecstatic experiences (e.g., "I haunted the tomb... doing things I must never reveal"). This sentiment incongruence—a negative tone paired with a supposedly positive experience—is a key marker of estranging unreliability and signals the "aggression" of the text in withdrawing information and excluding the reader from genuine empathy (Booth, 1961).

Mapping Emotional Volatility: The analysis will plot sentiment volatility. A narrative that oscillates rapidly between the positive sentiment of intellectual flattery and the negative sentiment of secretive horror provides quantitative evidence for the emotional volatility and affective disorganization of a fragmented narrator (Booth, 1961).

3.3. Formal Taxonomic Characterization

The final stage synthesizes all previous findings to achieve the primary aim of the study: the formal characterization of the doppelgänger narrator.

Contrast with Existing Taxonomies: Clearly differentiating the doppelgänger from Nünning's (1999) categories of the "mad narrator" (by emphasizing its structural duality rather than uniform insanity) and the "liar" (by highlighting its origin in psychological fragmentation rather than conscious deceit).

Definition of Core Traits: Formally defining the doppelgänger narrator by its origin (interaction with a liminal storyworld), its structure (a split-off narration from a primary "unreliable-I"), and its function (to create cognitive dissonance and explore *Feared Possible Selves* in the reader) (Freud, 1919).

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section applies all the steps depicted in the methodology to the online version of Lovecraft The Tomb used in this paper and referenced in the introduction which could be found here: https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx

4.1. Computational Stylistics & Linguistic Parsing

TABLE 2. *Pronoun Analysis of Lovecraft's "The Tomb"*

Pronoun	Type	Percentage of Occurrence (Approx.)	% Indicating Deceit/Detachment/Disambiguation (Approx.)
I / my / me / myself	First-Person Singular	~65%	~40%
it / its	Third-Person Singular Neuter	~15%	~80%
he / his / him / they / their / them	Third-Person (Human)	~10%	~90%
we / our / us	First-Person Plural	~5%	~15%
you / your	Second-Person	~3%	~5%
that / which / what	Relative Pronouns	~2%	~70%

Based on *The Tomb*'s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'*The Tomb*' by H. P. Lovecraft."https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx
Source: author's own elaboration

This data provides strong quantitative support for the presence of a fractured narrator (Fuchs, 2013; Nünning, 1999):

The Overbearing "I" and its Detachment: While a high frequency of "I" is normal in a first-person narrative, the critical finding is that a significant portion (~40%) of these instances are used to express psychological detachment, uncertainty, or delusional activity.

The Prolific "It" and Objectification: The high frequency of "it" and its high detachment score (~80%) is crucial. The narrator consistently uses "it" to refer to abstract, overwhelming, or uncanny forces, externalizing his internal conflict.

Third-Person Human Pronouns and "The Other": This category has the highest score for deceit/detachment (~90%). The narrator uses "he," "they," and "them" to create a stark division between himself and the rest of humanity.

The Strategic "We" and "You": The low detachment score for "we" (~15%) is revealing. It is used almost exclusively in the opening paragraph for bonding unreliability: "*Men of broader intellect know...*" (implied 'we'). This is a deliberate rhetorical strategy to align the reader with his worldview before the narrative descends into isolation.

TABLE 3. *Analysis of Certainty and Ambiguity Markers in "The Tomb"*

Marker Type	Examples from the Text	Frequency & Context	% Indicating Unreliability/Detachment (Approx.)
Verbs of Perception/Uncertainty	"I must have fallen asleep"; "I fancied"; "I seemed to know"; "what I saw... was not exactly what other boys saw"	Very High. Used to report key "supernatural" events, framing them as subjective impressions rather than objective facts.	~90%
Modal Verbs of Speculation	"would [lie outstretched]"; "could [see nothing]"; "should [be within]"	High. Used to describe habitual actions, potentialities, and hypotheticals, creating a tentative, non-committal reality.	~70%

Qualifiers & Hedges	"perhaps worth mentioning"; "somewhat"; "almost homogeneous"; "barely fancied"; "vaguely increased"	Very High. Pervasively softens assertions and introduces doubt, blurring the lines between observation and imagination.	~85%
Ambiguous/Abstract Nouns	"isolated phenomena"; "a voice"; "a spell"; "certain things"; "the call of the dead"	High. Refers to central catalysts of the plot with vague, unverifiable language that avoids concrete description.	~80%
Markers of Compulsion	"I had to be carried"; "the desire... must have come"	Moderate. Used to express a lack of agency, portraying the narrator as a passive victim of external or internal forces.	~95%

Based on *The Tomb*'s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'*The Tomb*' by H. P. Lovecraft."https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx
Source: author's own elaboration

This pattern of language creates a pervasive atmosphere of epistemological uncertainty, which is the foundational layer of the narrator's cognitive unreliability (Fuchs, 2013; Nünning, 1999).

Verbs of Perception/Uncertainty (~90% Unreliability): This is the most direct evidence of cognitive unreliability. The narrator consistently avoids stating facts, instead reporting personal, fallible sensations.

Qualifiers & Hedges (~85% Unreliability): The text is saturated with words that weaken its own assertions. By stating something is "*perhaps* worth mentioning" or that a feeling "*vaguely* increased," the narrator signals his own lack of conviction.

Ambiguous/Abstract Nouns (~80% Unreliability): The narrator's reliance on vague concepts like "a voice," "a spell," or "certain things" is a form of misreporting through omission. It withholds crucial, verifiable information from the reader. What "voice"? Which "things"? This ambiguity is a key tool for generating the uncanny; the horror resides in the lack of specific, knowable detail.

Modal Verbs of Speculation (~70% Unreliability): The frequent use of "would" and "could" to describe his actions ("I *would* lie outstretched") places his narrative in a habitual, almost mythical space, distancing it from a specific, factual account. It generalizes his delusional experiences,

making them a permanent state of being rather than a series of discrete events, which reinforces the theme of a chronic identity crisis.

Markers of Compulsion (~95% Unreliability): Phrases like "I *had* to be carried" or "the desire... *must have* come" are extremely revealing. They completely strip the narrator of agency. He is not an active protagonist but a passive object acted upon by forces beyond his control or understanding.

TABLE 4. *Semantic Field Analysis of "The Tomb"*

Semantic Field	Examples from the Text	Frequency & Context	% Indicating Conflict/Detachment (Approx.)
Rational Intellect & Superiority	"broader intellect," "know," "patience," "intelligence," "weigh," "empiricism," "prosaic materialism," "conscious," "media," "virtue"	High in opening. Establishes the narrator's initial persona as a rational philosopher appealing to an enlightened in-group.	~90% (due to stark contrast with other fields)
Supernatural & Gothic Horror	"haunted," "phantoms," "super-sight," "veil," "spell," "bewitched," "uncanny," "ghoulish," "sepulchre," "spectral," "daemon"	Very High. Constitutes the core of the narrator's delusional experiences and the story's primary ambiance.	~95%
Death, Decay & The Macabre	"tomb," "vault," "coffin," "ashes," "charred," "decay," "dead," "skull," "decomposition," "corpse," "burial," "graveyard"	Extremely High. The physical and psychological landscape of the story; the object of the narrator's obsession.	~98%
Isolation & Liminality	"isolated," "alone," "apart," "seclusion," "detached," "twilight," "liminal," "void," "solitary," "refuge"	High. Describes the narrator's social and mental state, positioning him between the world of the living and the dead.	~90%
Ancestry & The Past	"ancestral," "ancestry," "generations," "bygone," "hereditary," "extinct family," "lineage," "Sir Geoffrey Hyde"	Moderate-High. The ideological catalyst for the narrator's obsession and his claimed alternative identity.	~85%

Based on *The Tomb*'s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'*The Tomb*' by H. P. Lovecraft."https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx

Source: author's own elaboration

This is the linguistic manifestation of the doppelgänger.

Rational Intellect vs. Supernatural Horror (~90% Conflict): The narrator's opening uses the semantic field of rational philosophy ("intellect," "empiricism") to frame his ensuing descent into the supernatural ("super-sight," "phantoms"). He uses the language of reason to justify a reality that utterly violates reason. This is the cognitive dissonance of the doppelgänger, where one persona tries to rationalize the experiences of the other.

Supernatural & Gothic Horror (~95% Detachment): This field is the vocabulary of the estranging doppelgänger. Words like "haunted," "bewitched," and "daemon" are not used as metaphors but as literal descriptors of the narrator's state. This semantic field demonstrates a complete radical belief restructuring, where the narrator's worldview has detached from consensual reality and reconstituted itself around a supernatural paradigm.

Death, Decay & The Macabre (~98% Detachment): The narrator's obsession is not with death in the abstract, but with its physical, decaying reality ("ashes," "decomposition"). His misevaluation is starkly visible here: he applies the language of reverence ("tomb," "shrine") to this field of decay.

Isolation & Liminality (~90% Detachment): This field grammatically enacts the narrator's personal dislocation. He is not just "alone"; he is "apart," in "seclusion," and inhabiting "twilight deeps." These words map his position in a liminal storyworld, suspended between the solid ground of human community and the abyss of the tomb.

Ancestry & The Past (~85% Conflict): This field fuels the narrator's intoxication with the past. It provides the "logic" for his identity crisis. By prioritizing his "hereditary" link to the "extinct" Hydes over his own lived identity, he performs a disruption of narrative identity.

4.2. Sentiment Analysis & Narrative Pragmatics: Results & Analysis

TABLE 5. *Sentiment Analysis of Narrative Personas in The Tomb*

Sentiment	Overall Frequency	Associated Narrative Persona	Key Example Phrases	Interpretation & Function
Negative	≈ 65%	The "Estranging Doppelgänger" & the "Unreliable-I" in confinement.	"hell of confinement," "madly unreasoning desire," "haunted," "things I must never reveal," "stifling reek," "divine wrath."	Estrangement. Signals the narrator's psychological pathology and the threatening nature of the storyworld.
Neutral	≈ 30%	The "Diagnostic Narrator" (detached observation) & clinical descriptions of the uncanny.	"the door is fastened ajar," "I found the key," "a flight of damp stone steps," "the vault is of ancient granite."	Generates the Uncanny. It creates a chilling dissonance and reinforces the narrator's depersonalization and detached mental state.
Positive	≈ 5%	The "Bonding I" Persona (strategic, limited use).	"men of broader intellect," "supernatural ecstasy," "singularly at home," "raptured vision."	Strategic bonding & ironic incongruence. The early positive flattery (SPS node) builds reader alignment. Later, positive claims of "ecstasy" are starkly contradicted by negative/neutral context, highlighting value-action unreliability.

Based on *The Tomb*'s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'*The Tomb*' by H. P. Lovecraft."https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx

Source: author's own elaboration

The sentiment analysis conducted with MAXQDA revealed a stark and systematic pattern. The narrative is dominated by negative sentiment (≈65%), followed by neutral sentiment (≈30%), with positive sentiment appearing only sporadically (≈5%). Crucially, these sentiments are not randomly distributed but are strategically deployed according to the hypothesized narrative personas.

The "Bonding I" Persona: Positive sentiment is almost exclusively concentrated in the opening philosophical paragraph, characterized by flattering intellectual appeals ("men of *broader intellect*").

The "Estranging Doppelgänger" Persona: Negative sentiment clusters sharply around the core experiences with the tomb and the narrator's secret actions. Key phrases like "hell of confinement," "madly unreasoning desire," "things I must never reveal," and "haunted the tomb" are all coded with high negative valence.

Incongruence as a Marker: A critical finding is the sentiment incongruence in transcendent claims. When the narrator describes his entry into the vault—supposedly a moment of "supernatural ecstasy"—the language remains clinically neutral or carries a negative undertone ("dripping steps," "stifling reek," "musty, charnel-house air").

Sentiment Incongruence and Unreliability: The lack of positive sentiment during alleged ecstatic experiences is a glaring anomaly. It reveals a fundamental affective disorganization. The narrator's claimed emotions (ecstasy) are not supported by the linguistic emotional data (neutral/negative), providing strong evidence for value-action unreliability and a dissociation between experience and expression.

Guiding the Feared Self: The pervasive negative sentiment directly facilitates the simulation of a Feared Possible Self. The reader is not just told about madness and alienation; they are immersed in its emotional landscape through consistent negative coding. The SPS blend shifts from an intellectual ally to a self that fears the dissolution of sanity and the allure of the morbid, all experienced with "total impunity" within the safe confines of the narrative (Martínez, 2014).

4.3. Formal Taxonomic Characterization: Results & Analysis

Based on the convergent evidence from all prior analyses, the doppelgänger narrator is formally characterized and differentiated from existing types as follows:

TABLE 6. *Taxonomy*

Narrator Type	Primary Trait	Origin of Unreliability	Structural Form
Mad Narrator (Poe)	Uniform psychosis	Internal psychological breakdown	A single, consistently distorted consciousness.
Liar Narrator (Nabokov)	Conscious deceit	Moral corruption & manipulation	A single, duplicitous consciousness.

Doppelgänger Narrator (This Study)	Fragmented Consciousness	Psychological splitting triggered by the Uncanny	Dual narrative personas ("I" & "Other-I") from a single source.

Based on *The Tomb*'s online version: *The Tomb* (Loucks, Donovan K. 2009). "'*The Tomb*' by H. P. Lovecraft."https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/t.aspx
Source: author's own elaboration

The doppelgänger narrator is a distinct category of unreliability (Booth, 1961; Nünning, 1999) defined by a core set of features. It emerges from a primary narrator's destabilizing encounter with a liminal storyworld or sublime/uncanny phenomena (Freud, 1919; Richardson, 2006), acting as a pathological narrative by-product and a projected embodiment of repressed fears or a fragmented psyche (Rank, 1971; Lacan, 1977).

- Its defining formal feature is a split into two oppositional personas within a single discursive "I" (Cohn, 1978):
- A bonding "Unreliable-I" that uses flattery to secure reader alignment via Storyworld Possible Selves (Martínez, 2014).
- A transgressive "Doppelgänger" that enacts unconscious drives and repels empathy through value-action unreliability (Phelan, 2017).

This fracture is evidenced by linguistic patterns and sentiment incongruence (Martínez, 2014; Starr, 2021). The narrator orchestrates a specific readerly trajectory: it initiates engagement through bonding unreliability and an initial SPS blend (Martínez, 2014), then systematically destabilizes it. This guides the reader from empathy into a safe simulation of a *Feared Possible Self* experiencing the dissolution of identity and sanity (Martínez, 2014; Joshi, 2001), making cognitive disorientation a primary vehicle for cosmic horror (Freud, 1910).

5. DISCUSSION

Pronoun analysis reveals the narrator's cognitive unreliability, with first-person pronouns used in contexts of uncertainty (~40%) (Nünning, 1999) and the neuter "it" objectifying uncanny forces with high

detachment (~80%) (Freud, 1919), contributing to his depersonalization (Fuchs, 2013).

Sentiment analysis further demonstrates this unreliability. A limited use of positive sentiment (~5%) acts as a strategic Storyworld Possible Self (SPS) node to bond with the reader (Martínez, 2014). The subsequent dominance of negative sentiment (~65%) then acts as narrative aggression, expelling the reader to create estranging unreliability (Booth, 1961). This is compounded by a stark emotional mismatch, where claims of "supernatural ecstasy" are described with negative terms, revealing the doppelgänger's incapacity for genuine positive affect (Nünning, 1999).

6. CONCLUSION

The narrator's cognitive unreliability is demonstrated through pronoun usage: a high frequency of first-person pronouns in contexts of uncertainty (~40%) (Nünning, 1999) and a prolific use of the neuter "it" (~80% detachment score) to objectify uncanny forces (Freud, 1919), contributing to his depersonalization (Fuchs, 2013).

Sentiment analysis further reveals this unreliability. An initial, limited use of positive sentiment (~5%) acts as a Storyworld Possible Self node to flatter the reader and forge a bond (Martínez, 2014). The subsequent dominance of negative sentiment (~65%) then acts as a narrative aggression, expelling the reader and creating estranging unreliability (Booth, 1961). This is compounded by an emotional mismatch where assertions of "supernatural ecstasy" are described with negative terms, revealing the doppelgänger's incapacity for genuine positive affect (Nünning, 1999).

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THE SOCIAL LIFE OF POETRY IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY NORTHERN CALIFORNIA THROUGH GEORGE STERLING AND NORA MAY FRENCH

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1. INTRODUCTION

George Sterling (1869–1926) and Nora May French (1881–1907) were central figures in shaping the character of Northern California poetry in the 1900s. Sterling led the two most influential literary circles in the region—the Bay Area group from the mid-1890s and the Carmel-by-the-Sea circle from 1905—and positioned Northern California's lyric poetry on the national stage as no other California poet of the period had done, particularly through his two nationally acclaimed works, "The Testimony of the Suns" and "A Wine of Wizardry" (Benediktsson, 1980, p. 34). French, more than a decade younger, quickly gained a local reputation as one of the region's most gifted poets after moving from Los Angeles to San Francisco in 1906. Soon after her arrival, she became Sterling's protégé, who recognized in her a promising voice in American poetry (Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, p. 39). Her life ended tragically at the age of twenty-six, when she took her own life while staying briefly at Sterling's home in Carmel, an event that sent shockwaves through the literary community as writers across the country lamented the loss of a poet they believed destined for national prominence (pp. 59-64).

Given their identification as leading figures of turn-of-the-twentieth-century Northern California poetry, and the prevalence of landscape-centered works in both Sterling's and French's output, criticism has often regarded Northern California verse in this period as exclusively nature-oriented—a mere reworking of the idealist and escapist

conventions of nineteenth-century English Romanticism exemplified by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and John Keats (Blatt, 1977, pp. 15–28; Starr, 1986, p. 282; Gioia, 2004, pp. xxv–xxvii; Allmendinger, 2015a, pp. 4–5). Consequently, this poetic corpus has been characterized as an expression of "imperiled transcendental beauty [that] opened up California's nature writers to charges of engaging in an escapist and 'soft', nostalgic romanticism" (Gano 2015, 187). Similarly, critics such as Angoff (1969, p. 13), Starr (1986, pp. 113-114), Cusatis (2008, pp. 6–7), and Sidney-Fryer (2009a, p. 14) have reduced the significance of Sterling's and French's poetry mainly to their depictions of Northern California's natural scenery.

Consequently, this study contends that current views of Sterling, French, and Northern California poetry of the 1900s reflect a twenty-first-century bias that defines the "lyric" as the public, printed expression of timeless, universal subjectivity—a modern ideological construct (Jackson, 2005, p. 8). In the 1900s, however, "lyric" encompassed a wider range of verse genres shaped by the purposes and functions poets assigned to their work under the material and ideological conditions of their time (Prins, 2016, p. 16). Therefore, drawing on historical poetics, as advanced by Meredith McGill (2003), Virginia Jackson (2005), Michael Cohen (2015) and Yopie Prins (2016), among others, this chapter aims to challenge the critical paradigms that confine turn-of-the-century Northern California poetry to nature-oriented verse. We seek to show how the material conditions of the period—especially publishing venues and circulation modes—fostered the dominance of pastoral conventions in poetry published in the major magazines of the region, namely, *Out West* and *Sunset*. In contrast, poems intended for private circulation displayed a greater diversity of purposes.

To this end, the study first offers a brief overview of the poems Sterling and French published in *Out West* and *Sunset* between 1896, when Sterling began writing poetry, and 1907, the year of French's death. It then contrasts the nature-oriented and escapist profile of these works with close readings of poems written during the same period but intended for more intimate reception and never published: French's "At the End" (1903) and "The Suicide" (1907), and Sterling's "Brotherhood" (1907) and "Midsummer, 1907" (1907).

2. HISTORICAL POETICS AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter's re-reading of turn-of-the-century Northern California verse, and of its two principal exponents, applies historical poetics as its critical lens. Emerging in the 2000s through the work of scholars such as McGill (2003), Jackson (2005), Culler (2014), Cohen (2015), Jarvis (2016), Prins (2016), and Etherington and Pryor (2019), this approach developed in reaction to what its advocates saw as a mode of literary criticism that was "decontextualized" (Culler, 2014, p. 67). From their perspective, much twentieth- and twenty-first-century criticism has operated through an ideological construct of the "lyric" as verse expressing the author's subjectivity—understood as the timeless, universal embodiment of human ideas, emotions, and sensations, independent of the specific historical and material circumstances shaping the poet's experience (Jackson, 2005, p. 204). According to this view, poetry functions as a single, invariant literary genre shaped solely by the author's inner world, with the "lyric" further defined as that which attains public recognition and wide readership (McGill, 2003, p. 48; Prins, 2016, pp. 15-16).

However, as Prins (2016) observes, prior to the construction of this modern idea of the "lyric", poets conceived of poetry as a set of verse genres—many of which are now inaccessible to us because the history of reading has recast poetry as a single genre (p. 18). Crucially, many of these verse genres were never intended for public circulation. Virginia Jackson (2005) first articulated this point by challenging prevailing perceptions of Emily Dickinson's poetry as an intimate expression endowed with a universal, abiding emotional voice, and of Dickinson herself as a melancholic, suffering poet (pp. 1-15). Jackson contends that Dickinson's work cannot be understood as a collection of isolated literary artifacts; rather, many poems originally appeared in letters, torn scraps of paper, fascicles, open envelopes, or even butcher paper (p. 1), each serving specific social functions and communicative purposes distinct from the traditional notion of poetry as the embodiment of collective human emotion.

In the light of these ideas, recent scholarship has increasingly approached nineteenth- and turn-of-the-century poetry through a historical

poetics framework, rejecting the common modern conception of the "lyric" in favor of understanding poetry as a heterogeneous cultural product whose forms, content, functions, and aims were shaped by the material conditions of its production, and particularly by its circulation "in and out of print" (Prins, 2016, p. 16). By moving beyond the notion of poetry as a single genre, historical poetics examines poems that circulated through less prominent venues or never circulated publicly at all—that is, verse that has remained "invisible to history" (Cohen, 2015, p. 11). This analytical approach has shown how neglected poems and poets illuminate broader literary, cultural, and social contexts (Etherington & Pryor, 2019, p. 10). In the specific case of turn-of-the-century American poetry, several studies have recovered works published in peripheral outlets, far removed from the romantic conventions of idealization and escapism demanded by the most prestigious venues for poetry in the United States of the times, such as *The Atlantic Monthly* or *Harper's Magazine* (Nurhussein, 2020, p. 344). For instance, scholars have recovered a wide range of verse that appeared regularly in American newspapers and periodicals during the 1900s, including humorous poems (Renker, 2018, pp. 91-99), pieces with explicit advertising purposes (Newcomb, 2004, pp. 82-83), labor songs (Renker, 2011, pp. 141-145) and verse protesting racial discrimination (Nurhussein, 2020, p. 352).

These contributions reveal that turn-of-the-century poetry served a wide range of social purposes, shaped by its mode of circulation, the medium, and its reach. Cohen, in fact, suggests that during this era poems possessed multiple "social lives" and that the traditional view of poetry as something merely "read" should be replaced by an understanding of poetry as something "used" (Cohen, 2015, pp. 1–7). In the case of the present chapter, paying attention to the material conditions that governed the public or private circulation of Sterling's and French's work uncovers a corpus which, although unseen by the broader general readership, embodied diverse uses of verse. This perspective allows for a more inclusive categorization of Northern California poetry—one that challenges the prevailing misleading pastoral conception of it.

3. PUBLICLY-CIRCULATED POEMS: NATURE AND THE LOCAL MAGAZINE MARKET

The California of the 1890s and 1900s bore little resemblance to the state as it is known today. At the turn of the century, only about fifty years had passed since California became a state. The Gold Rush of the late 1840s and early 1850s promoted California's image as a land of economic opportunity and rapid wealth, resulting in significant immigration (Allmendinger, 2015a, p. 3). However, at the turn of the century, population density was still low compared to other states (Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, p. 14), and areas such as Carmel-by-the-Sea in Monterey remained virtually unurbanized (Hudson, 2006, pp. 16-20).

In this context, prominent cultural figures of turn-of-the-century California capitalized on underpopulation and the abundance of undeveloped landscapes to attract tourists and potential settlers, making this lack of urbanization and lush natural scenery one of the foundational images of California's regional identity (Gano, 2015, p. 187). One such figure was Charles Lummis, who became editor of the local magazine *Land of Sunshine* in 1894—renamed *Out West* in 1901. Lummis transformed the magazine into "a dynamic force for regional identity" (Starr, 1986, p. 125), using it to preserve California's history through articles on Indigenous rights, the Franciscan missions, and the state's Spanish heritage. More importantly, he turned it into a promotion of local art and literature, aiming to present "a dramatization of what it [California] was—or rather, what it day-dreamed it would be" (Starr, 1986, p. 76). The region's natural landscape, in particular, became one of the chief attractions exploited in such publications, romanticizing California as a legendary, magical, and irresistibly appealing place (Allmendinger, 2015a, pp. 1-2; Phillips, 2018, p. 412; Pagano, 2019, pp. 36-37).

Indeed, the monthly magazine *Sunset* focused almost exclusively on promoting tourism in California by "extolling the beauty and sublimity of its natural environment" (Gano, 2015, p. 187). Initially established in 1898 as a promotional platform for the Southern Pacific Railroad, the magazine was intended for distribution in train stations and on trains–particularly on the exclusive Sunset Limited route between New

Orleans and San Francisco–to attract tourists to the company's rail lines (Allmendinger, 2015b, p. 386). As the Southern Pacific Company was one of California's major landowners, its primary interest was converting tourists into buyers of rural California properties (Starr, 1986, p. 168). Over time, however, Sunset evolved into one of the West Coast's primary literary platforms, where authors such as Jack London and Mary Austin "recorded the feelings of ecstasy, renewal, and spiritual rebirth that they felt in the California wilderness" (Gano, 2015, p. 187).

Poetry was, however, the primary vehicle for reinforcing the idealization of the region's natural wonders. Local magazines favored verse on this theme, particularly when combined with traditional forms such as the sonnet or ballad, or with conventional meters like iambic pentameter (Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, p. 21). Within this context, Sterling and French found in such regional-promotional outlets an accessible avenue for publication: securing space in *Out West* or *Sunset* required little more than aligning content with established forms and themes centered on the local landscape. These venues also offered a relatively easy source of income; in the case of *Sunset*, publication granted contributors free use of the Southern Pacific Company's transportation network (Sterling, 1905, p. 99).

Between 1899 and 1905, French published eleven poems focused on California's landscape in *Out West* (Sidney-Fryer, 2009b, p. 171). Among these, "Down the Trail" and "One Day" use precise geographic and natural details to inspire the speakers' imagination, transforming the Californian terrain into an evocative, almost supernatural realm. In "Down the Trail", published around the late 1890s to early 1900s (*ibid*.), the speaker's imaginative elevation is firmly anchored in the native flora of California's forests. The lyrical narrative follows a speaker who, after spending the night atop a mountain, descends at dawn toward the city: "Break camp, the dawn is here! / A sea has swept beneath us in the night / Poured outward in a wrinkled floor of white, / And left our eyrie clear. / There in the deeps the little trail is curled" (French, 1910a, p. 72). As the speaker and companions descend, the lush vegetation inspires a perception of life and movement, transforming the environment into a space of calm, mysticism, and sensory

ecstasy. The descent is described as “like divers to the underworld” (*ibid*.), while the speaker observes:

> The manzanita stirs!
> Look, in that little thicket just ahead!
> Down, down, the covey whirrs,
> Mocking us, careful, led,
> Slow-slipping beads along a slender thread.
> Here the stream flows;
> Here we tread yellow leaves.
> (Sun in the sycamores,
> Sun on the granite walls.)
> All is so still,
> Never wind blows,
> Only the singing stream
> Shouts little waterfalls (French, 1910a, p. 72).

References to native vegetation, such as the manzanita and sycamores, and to geological features common in the region like granite, exemplify French’s strategy of grounding idealization in the concrete Californian landscape rather than in abstract notions of beauty. The poem’s metric scheme further enhances its mystical aura: the alternation of iambic pentameter, tetrameter, and trimeter mirrors the undulating rhythm of the “singing stream”, while alliterations of /s/ and /l/ sounds reinforce the auditory imagery of cascading “waterfalls”.

Also composed in traditional meter, “One Day”, published in the same approximate period in *Out West* (Sidney-Fryer, 2009b, p. 171), closely follows the narrative framework established in “Down the Trail”, centering on the speaker’s walk through the Californian natural environment. Beyond this narrative motif, French again employs specific references to regional vegetation, in this case the characteristic flowers of the Californian chaparral, which provide the imaginative material through which the speaker completes the idealization of the landscape: “The levels where the trail began / Were sown with silver-grey. / We bruised the leaves with hurrying feet / To wafts of strong and tarry sweet, / A moment’s pleasure as we ran, / Forgotten on our way” (French, 1910b, p. 82). Here, the speaker and companions run carefreely along an idyllic trail, absorbed in the ephemeral joy inspired by the setting. The imagery throughout emphasizes the abundance of

chaparral flora, such as sage and artemisia, whose silvery-grey hues color the trail and impart a dreamlike quality to the scene. Further along, the landscape extends to the "farthest crest", where sensory stimulation reaches its peak:

> Above, along the farthest crest,
> In every brief and breathless rest
> The spice of sage was ours,
> Crushed from the dull and slender leaves —
> The tiny yellow flowers,
> When day was done
> No more remembered than the wind and sun (French, 1910b, p. 82).

The olfactory intensity of sage saturates the air, while the auditory texture is evoked by the crunch of the "tiny yellow flowers" (*ibid*.) beneath their feet—a reference likely to native Californian yellow flowers such as buttercups or poppies, which French foregrounds in other poems, including "The Poppy Field"[18]. Through these botanical and sensory details, French not only anchors her idealized vision in the tangible Californian landscape but also employs a strategy she shares with Sterling: grounding poetic idealization in concrete geographic references. Between 1896 and 1907, Sterling published four poems in *Sunset*, among which "The Islands of the Blest" and "The Homing of Drake"[19] most clearly display this approach, with precise references to specific areas of Northern California.

In "The Islands of the Blest", Sterling establishes from the opening line an immediate link to the natural landscape of Carmel-by-the-Sea. The dramatic presence of its pines, wind, and shore functions as a poetic threshold into a transcendent, idealized realm: "In Carmel pines the summer wind / Sings like a distant sea. / (...) / On Carmel shore the breakers moan / Like pines that breast a gale. / O whence, ye winds and billows, flown / To cry your wordless tale?" (Sterling, 1909a, p. 21) Here, the physical features of Carmel are not merely descriptive but serve as mediators between tangible reality and a realm of absolute beauty that surpasses sensory apprehension. It is through these elements

[18] Included in *Poems*, by Nora May French (1910, p. 22), her only collection, published posthumously.

[19] Originally published in December 1907 and February 1906, respectively.

that the poet's imagination reaches the "Isles" (*ibid.*), a metaphor for an illusory domain of perfection:

> Perchance the sinking stars go down
> To seek the Isles ye fled.
> Sometimes from ocean dusks I seem
> To glimpse their crystal walls,
> (…)
> Sometimes I hear below the moon
> A music that pursues—
> A wraith of melody, that soon
> I doubt, and doubting, lose (Sterling, 1909a, pp. 21-22).

The closing line conveys a sense of aesthetic failure: Sterling acknowledges that poetry itself cannot fully capture Carmel's sublime vitality. Yet this very emphasis on the landscape's overwhelming beauty underscores the promotional value of the poem, presenting California as an idyllic space defined by inexhaustible natural wonders.

Like the poem discussed above, "The Homing of Drake" aims formally and thematically to evoke the sublimity of the Californian landscape. Sterling employs blank verse—a traditional meter used in epic works like John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Hurley & O'Neill, 2012, p. 34)—to impart a solemn tone that elevates California's nature to the legendary or mystical. As in "The Islands of the Blest", Sterling anchors this idealization in a specific location, indicated in the subtitle, "Drake's Bay, September 29, 1579" (Sterling, 1909b, p. 42). In that sense, he draws from the historical belief that Sir Francis Drake reached the North American west coast that year (Schultz & Joshi, 2013, p. 726) to depict California as a land of extraordinary natural wonders: "The hills were wardens of the far-sought gold, / And streams were glad in valleys unprofaned" (Sterling, 1909b, p. 42). Sterling's poem evokes Drake's arrival at San Francisco Bay, depicting him halting his exploration in response to the area's typical darkness and dense fog:

> Was it the night that foiled his daring eyes,
> Or passed he in the blindness of the fog
> To-south, nor dreamt what keep of empire stood
> So near his grasp?
> (…)
> Saw he not the clue
> Nay, blind to empire sundered from his sight,
> He passed, the intrepid (Sterling, 1909b, p. 42-43).

The idealization of the region's landscape is hyperbolic, even divinized. California's wild nature becomes in "The Homing of Drake" a symbol of protection: in the poem's context, nature safeguards the "gold" held by the land, which would later emerge during the Gold Rush. Nature thus functions as a guardian of the state's wealth, rendering it elusive and mysterious and, ultimately, aligning with *Sunset*'s editorial goals of enticing Americans to travel to this legendary and untamed frontier.

However, despite the frequent publication by Sterling and French of poems extolling Californian nature, as discussed above, reducing their lyrical output between 1896 and 1907 solely to such texts overlooks a significant number of poems with different purposes, often engaging more directly with personal contexts, which circulated only in private circles or remained unpublished during the poets' lifetimes.

4. PRIVATELY-CIRCULATED POEMS

4.1. Nora May French: Personal Struggle

One of the most frequently cited assumptions about Nora May French is the tragic nature of her biography. Critics (Ferlinghetti & Peters, 1980, p. 111; Starr, 1973, p. 269; Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, pp. 42-44; Prendergast, 2021, pp. 193-208) have considered her worries about money and jobs, her turbulent romantic relationships, and her experiences with miscarriage as evidence of the suffering that shaped her life. However, some studies emphasize the impact of her depressive episodes and suicidal thoughts on her poetry, which intensified in 1907—the year she ultimately took her own life by ingesting cyanide at the age of twenty-six while staying temporarily at George Sterling's home in Carmel (Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, p. 44; Prendergast, 2021, p. 208). Although the precise reasons for her decision remain unknown, her early fascination with suicide as a literary theme is evident in the unpublished poem "At the End", written in 1903, according to a pencil note on the manuscript of the composition preserved at the Bancroft Library (Sidney-Fryer,

2009b, p. 171)[20]. Never published or shared with her close circle, the poem demonstrates an early engagement with the idea of suicide, perhaps initially as a poetic pose.

The work consists of three quatrains with a regular rhythm—three lines in iambic pentameter followed by a final trimeter line—that structure a symbolic ascent of the lyrical voice from depression toward spiritual serenity. The initial stanza is characterized by a lexicon that conveys the speaker's attempt to escape a profound sorrow. Although she does not fully understand the source of her desolation, she is acutely aware of the pain that torments her. The metaphor of flight is made visually concrete through verbs suggesting running and falling, reflecting her desperate effort to evade the forces consuming her. Yet the final line, in shorter iambic trimeter, emphasizes the impossibility of escape, symbolized by her feet caught in thick undergrowth that hinders forward movement: "Tremblingly and spent, I ran and fell, / And ran again; a sorrow made me fleet. / For very fear, its shape I could not tell— / The briars tore my feet" (French, 2009a, p. 166).

In the second stanza, the speaker's self-destructive spiral begins to hint at a glimmer of hope: exhausted to the point of almost smiling in resignation, she is lifted by a hand that rescues her from misery—a metaphor for the nadir of her mental state and her surrender to inescapable depression: "In broken flight across the cruel land, / So weary was I that I only smiled / When, swift and strong, a tender, mighty hand / Upraised me like a child" (*ibid*.).

Finally, the third stanza reaches the climax of the speaker's desire for peace, granted by the "mighty hand" that saved her. Yet, French introduces a bitter irony, as it is not *life* that consoles her but *death*, which is responsible for her supposed liberation from suffering: "'It was not you that I feared,' rejoiced, I cried, / (His touch had healed my hurts, no more they bled,) / 'Life radiant, God has sent you to my side!' / 'Nay, I am Death' he said" (*ibid*.). As in the first stanza, the contrast between the long pentameter lines expressing surrender to consolation and the sharp

[20] The unpublished poems by Nora May French analyzed in this section were first made available in the edition of her complete poems edited by Sidney-Fryer (2009).

final trimeter line revealing the reality of suicide abruptly transforms the initially hopeful tone into one of profound sorrow and bitterness.

Mental health struggles, depression, and suicidal thoughts again occupy a central place in another unpublished work by French, "The Suicide". This brief prose poem of about fifteen lines is believed to have been written in pencil just two weeks before her death. French entrusted the manuscript to her friend, the short story writer James Hopper, who was also a fellow Carmel acquaintance of George Sterling. Hopper preserved the manuscript among his personal papers until his death. Afterward, his family donated his archives to the Bancroft Library, enabling the text's eventual discovery (Sidney-Fryer, 2009a, p. 43).

Written in the third person from an omniscient perspective, the poem depicts the inner anguish of a man engulfed in severe depression that intensifies at night. French begins the poem by describing the man's mental state: "The sleepless night had been a whirl of aching memory and self-hatred, huge chaotic fancies and plunges in a clotted swamp where a lake had been laughter-fed by brooks of sanity" (French, 2009b, p. 161). The imagery in this initial depiction of depression reveals French's use of densely metaphorical prose to evoke the persistence of the psychic torment consuming the main character. In that sense, although the poem abandons the regular meter characteristic of much of French's published work, it retains her ornamental style. This is evident in the highly figurative images contrasting fleeting memories of past sanity with the character's current mental devastation.

French articulates the dissociation between body and mind through their personification: "His body had fought for its life against his brain" (*ibid*.). This struggle intensifies through a sequence of sensory metaphors that transform the man's body into a landscape eroded by the elements—wind, water, cold, damp vegetation—all images of the relentless assault of depression. In one of the poem's most striking analogies, the body becomes a "whimpering Earth Giant" while the brain assumes the role of a merciless Hercules: "His body was a whimpering Earth Giant that the dominating brain was bent on swinging into nothingness, as Hercules held Anteus away from the touch of his mother until he died" (*ibid*.). The evocation of the classical myth of Anteus here

underscores the complete exhaustion of bodily vitality in the face of overwhelming mental suffering.

The final section of the poem heightens its tone, turning raw and grotesque. Here, French yields the floor to the suicide himself, who meticulously enumerates the methods of his body's destruction with a blend of calculated detachment and morbid tenderness: "Detail by detail he planned its destruction. He loved his brain. Even as he used one deliberate thought tool after another, he laid each down caressingly" (*ibid*.). The narrative voice fractures into an inner dialogue that stages the tension between a desire to preserve something and the certainty that destruction will be absolute: "'Something will live,' argued the man. 'But this will never have a head, or that arms'" (*ibid*.).

Like "At the End", this poem reveals how French conceived of verse as an intimate space for personal testimony, not necessarily intended for publication. Both texts stand as alternatives to the escapist ideals that dominated much of the published American poetry of the period, particularly the work French produced for magazines such as *Out West*. Their limited circulation—confined to close circles like that of James Hopper—does not necessarily suggest a deliberate aesthetic strategy to distinguish between a public and a private poetics. Rather, it reflects the use of verse as a versatile medium in a cultural context where poetry was not understood solely as a tool for literary promotion, but also as a means of processing extreme personal experiences, especially when these could not be voiced within prevailing editorial or social norms.

4.2. George Sterling: Promotional and Community-Building Poetry

Sterling occupied a central position in the cultural life of Northern California at the turn of the century. Beyond leading the region's two principal literary circles—the Bay Area and, after his 1905 relocation, Carmel—he was also a prominent figure in other intellectual communities, most notably the Bohemian Club and the Ruskin Club. The former, composed of Bay Area wealthy businessmen, artists and writers (Starr, 1973, p. 249), held annual summer gatherings in its exclusive redwood grove on the Russian River, known as the "High Jinks," which culminated in a theatrical performance (Garnett, 1908, p. 2). It was for this

occasion that Sterling wrote *The Triumph of Bohemia*, the play that closed the club's festivities in 1907 (Sterling, 2013a, p. 57).

It is within this context that the poem "Midsummer 1907" should be read. Sterling wrote it expressly as an invitation for Bohemian Club members to attend the performance. Although later reprinted in the *San Francisco Call* (*George Sterling Invites*, 1907, p. 8) and in *The Bohemia Jinks: A Treatise* (Garnett, 1908), the original copies—preserved in the Bancroft Library (Sterling, 1907)—show that it was first distributed in broadside form and mailed directly to members. The purpose was unambiguous: to announce the event and encourage attendance. Its initial circulation, therefore, was private and directed toward a highly specific audience.

> "Midsummer 1907" departs from the formal conventions characteristic of the poems Sterling published in literary magazines. Unlike those, it is conceived as a verse drama, deliberately emulating the structure of *The Triumph of Bohemia*. That play dramatized a conflict between the "Tree-Spirits" (Sterling, 2013a, p. 57) and various cosmic destructive forces, including the "Spirit of the North-Wind" (p. 59), the "South-Wind" (p. 60), the "Spirit of Time" (p. 61), the "Spirit of Fire" (p. 62), the "Woodmen" (p. 63), and, above all, "Mammon" (p. 69), an emblem of greed and materialism. The play culminates in the defeat of Mammon by the "Spirit of Bohemia" (p. 65), who embodies the bohemian ideal of art and nature against a vulgar and empty existence.

The intertextuality between the two works extends beyond their shared verse-drama form. In "Midsummer 1907", the main speaker is an owl, which is both a central figure in *The Triumph of Bohemia* and an emblematic symbol of the Bohemian Club (Garnett, 1908, p. 18). From its opening lines, the poem adopts a playful and convivial tone, evoking the festive atmosphere of the event it was meant to promote. The following passage presents a dialogue between the owl and a "True Bohemian" who is drinking alcohol—an easily recognizable metaphor for the club's members—and recreates an air of revelry and dissipation:

> The Owl: Hoo Hoo! Hoo Hoo!! Hoo Hoo!!!
> True Bohemian: Majestic Bird,
> My reverential ears await thy word.
> The Owl: Hear then! I bear from forest aisles untrod
> The summer message of the Laughter-God.
> True Bohemian: A moment— till mine empty glass I fill...
> Now, Bird, declare his autocratic will (*George Sterling Invites*, 1907, p. 8).

The interaction between the two characters humorously echoes the epic and quasi-legendary tone that defines the fight between the "Spirit of Bohemia" and "Mammon" in the play. The use of archaic diction—such as pronouns like "thy" or "thou"—together with personifications endowed with divine qualities, such as the "Laughter-God", reinforces both the allegorical dimension of the text and its continuity with *The Triumph of Bohemia*. However, the remainder of the poem unfolds as a monologue by the owl, whose pompous register combines Latinate syntax, archaisms, and deliberately excessive verbosity. Through this speech, the poem conveys the practical details of the event: its date, location, and the names of collaborators involved in the performance:

> The Owl: Mark well: when thou hast seen, in calm July,
> Its twenty-seventh morning light the sky,
> To his eternal Grove thy way must wend,
> That all his forest rites thou mayst attend.
> (...)
> For Music, early to his service won,
> Grants him that night her well-beloved son,
> Our Edward Schneider, whose consummate art
> Hath found the exalting secrets of her heart.
> And Porter Garnett, artist to the core,
> Will lend his craft to plot the ritual o'er— (*George Sterling Invites*, 1907, p. 8).

The poem concludes with an explicit call to participation, briefly alluding to the play that would soon be staged in order to stir the interest of club members: "Wherefore, O True Bohemian, attend, / Lest absence or forgetfulness offend. / E'en now Bohemia plans (joyful task!) / The light and music of his woodland masque" (*ibid*.).

Sterling also composed another work intended for restricted circulation within the Ruskin Club, a socialist organization founded in Oakland around 1904 that included figures such as Jack London, one of Sterling's closest friends (Dumont, 1941, p. 73). Frederick Irons Bamford, chief librarian of the Oakland Public Library and founder of the club, commissioned Sterling to write the poem "Brotherhood" between August and September 1907, so that he might recite it at one of the club's meetings (Sterling, 1907b, p. 99). Crucially, the poem was not conceived for publication, but rather served a community-building

purpose: to inspire members to cultivate mutual trust and consolidate a united front capable of bringing about tangible social change.

Formally, the poem adopts the traditional sonnet structure. The octave develops a metaphorical treatment of the celestial sphere, establishing an analogy between the dazzling light of the stars and the potential impact that socialist thought might exert upon the world once its adherents achieved unity:

> The scattered stars have orbits of their own,
> Yet praise in chorus the Almighty Hands
> That made them like in number to the sands
> And one in music to the heavenly throne:
> Tho' each from night and silence sing alone,
> The allegiant voices of the stellar bands
> Mix, till in surf upon celestial strands,
> They ring the Eternal with their thunder-zone (Sterling, 2013b, pp. 34-35).

The poetic voice elevates the stars to a divine category through a lexical selection that intertwines religious references—such as "Almighty Hands", "heavenly throne" and "the Eternal"—with astronomical imagery, including "The scattered stars" and "stellar bands." This interplay of semantic spheres conveys both the infinitude of suns populating the cosmos and, by metaphorical extension, the multitude of voices that composed the Ruskin Club and opposed social injustice. The stanza suggests that the primary virtue of these celestial bodies lies in their plurality: although each individual star emits only a faint light and remains separated from the others by immense cosmic distances described as "night and silence," it is precisely the collective brilliance of their radiance that elevates them to the eternal and the divine.

The sestet, however, proposes a practical application of the reflections developed in the octave. It introduces a metonymic representation of the Ruskin Club members by invoking of the "soul of man", whom the poem directly addresses with an apostrophe:

> O soul of man! thou shalt outflame the stars,
> And make this earth the fairest of the spheres—
> An everlasting altar unto Good;
> Time shall rear thrones for thee, and all the bars
> That prison thee shall crumble with the years,
> Thou sitting crowned at last in Brotherhood! (Sterling, 2013b, p. 35).

Here the tone becomes more emphatic and exhortative than in the octave. The poem momentarily abandons philosophical reflection to assume the form of a call to action, encouraging its audience to aspire to an influence even greater than that of the stars. Sterling thus seeks to inspire his fellow club members to cultivate a sense of fraternity, essential if their collective action is to achieve truly transformative results. The stanza also introduces new symbolic images, such as the socialist spirit elevated to an "everlasting altar unto Good" and enthroned after overcoming the historical barriers imposed by injustice, as expressed in lines 12 and 13. In this way, the poem celebrates the moral and spiritual power of the individual when acting in solidarity with others. Ultimately, the poem's purpose differed significantly from the nature poetry favored in local literary magazines, and its more limited circulation reflects one of the diverse functions that American poets at the turn of the century assigned to verse.

5. CONCLUSION

This study, from a historical-poetic perspective, challenges the dominant characterization of turn-of-the-century Northern California poetry as a merely regional production centered on nature and shaped by idealist, escapist tendencies. Such a view stems from a modern conception of the "lyric" as an autonomous textual form, considered "lyric" precisely because it was printed and circulated publicly, rather than for its ties to particular social circumstances. Yet this definition overlooks other conditions of production, circulation, and reception that shaped much of the poetry of the period.

Compositions such as "At the End", "The Suicide", "Midsummer, 1907", or "Brotherhood"—either unpublished or intended for more limited circulation—demonstrate that poetry was not confined to commercial venues like *Out West* or *Sunset*, which promoted California as a destination for tourism and real estate investment. When Sterling and French wrote poems about California's natural landscape, they could rely on magazines such as *Sunset* and *Out West* as ready platforms for publication, since such content aligned with the periodicals'

editorial agendas. However, their poetic practices did not enjoy an exclusively decorative or promotional role.

Contrarily, both authors developed a broader conception of verse as a tool for intervention in intimate, communal, and ideological spheres. In French's case, certain poems functioned as vehicles of subjective exploration tied to his mental health, without any intention of publication. In Sterling's case, verse acquired a performative and ritual character within communities such as the Bohemian Club or the Ruskin Club, where poetry fulfilled functions of internal cohesion, symbolic celebration, or cultural and political mobilization.

This diversity of uses reveals the plurality of genres, functions, and circuits shaping poetic production in turn-of-the-century Northern California. Rather than a homogeneous regional poetry, what emerges is a complex network of texts with multiple "social lives" (Cohen, 2015), influenced by the material, institutional, ideological and, ultimately, contextual conditions of their time. Against the critical tendency to conceptualize the corpus of poems under consideration as a minor expression of late Californian romanticism, this study proposes a rereading that acknowledges both the agency of its authors and the specificity of their practices. Such an approach makes it possible to revisit other regional poetics of the period through frameworks attentive to their historical and social contexts. Examining poetry as it was conceived and practiced in its own time—not according to modern criteria—offers a more nuanced understanding of the canon and helps recover literary traditions marginalized by decontextualized analyses.

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FANTASMAS Y GÉNERO: LA REPRESENTACIÓN DE LA OTREDAD SUBVERSIVA EN LA POESÍA DE ANNE BANNERMAN

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Anne Bannerman (Edimburgo, 1765-1829) escribió muchos de sus poemas dentro de la tradición del gótico escocés de la época romántica. Lo poco que se sabe de su vida se conoce a través de cartas que la mencionan de soslayo, siendo su editor, Dr. Robert Anderson, la persona que más escribió sobre ella. Bannerman solo pudo publicar dos poemarios, ya que su carrera se vio truncada después de que contrajera una gran deuda y tuviera que aprender un oficio para sobrevivir (Craciun, 2003). El primero, Poems (1800), fue publicado simultáneamente en Edimburgo y en Londres, mientras que el segundo, Tales of Superstition and Chivalry (1802), solo se publicó en Londres y de manera anónima. A día de hoy se desconoce si Bannerman escribió algo que no llegara a publicarse, y tampoco se conoce si se ha conservado su correspondencia personal.

El segundo poemario de Bannerman, donde se encuentran los poemas que son objeto de estudio de este capítulo, cuenta con un gran número de baladas narrativas con importantes tintes góticos. Por lo tanto, los fantasmas y los personajes espectrales son un elemento recurrente de la poesía Bannermaniana de su segundo volumen. Los dos poemas que se estudiarán en este capítulo, *The Dark Ladie* y *The Perjur'd Nun*,[21] tienen en común la presencia de espectros femeninos que desafían la otredad implícita ya no solo en la condición de fantasma sino en la de mujer

[21] Todavía no hay una traducción de los textos de Anne Bannerman, por lo que los títulos de los poemas y las citas directas serán en inglés.

escocesa del siglo XIX, consiguiendo así sobrepasar los límites establecidos, tanto por la sociedad como por su condición corporal. Estos poemas se considerarán también desde las lecturas secundarias sobre colonialismo, religión y espacialidad.

Estas baladas están muy inspiradas por el movimiento medievalista y anticuarianista de la época. A partir del siglo XVII, los restos arquitectónicos medievales empezaron a verse con fascinación y, en concreto en el archipiélago británico además tenían la connotación religiosa de un catolicismo medieval que Inglaterra consideraba algo lejano tras su ruptura con la iglesia católica bajo el reinado de Enrique VIII (Braudy, 2016). Además, al introducir al lector en una época tan lejana a la suya, los autores se veían con más capacidad de introducir crítica social en los poemas.

Una parte de la subversión de los personajes de Bannerman se produce a través del traspaso de límites. En este ensayo se van a considerar los límites como un elemento necesario para procesar mentalmente el entorno que nos rodea, haciendo del mundo natural uno social gracias a las delimitaciones que se generan para crear entidades significantes (Zerubavel, 1991). En los poemas no solo se sobrepasarán límites tangenciales y espaciales; si el límite es un concepto psicosocial, en The Dark Ladie y The Perjur'd Nun se traspasará el límite del género, de la vida y la muerte, de la narración con historias anexadas y narradores no fiables, e incluso de la propia definición del término canónico de la femme-fatale y de romanticismo en general, que se vuelve porosa. Además, hay personajes que al empezar el proceso de traspaso de límites se quedarán atrapados, provocando así un estado de liminalidad.

La lectura (proto-)feminista de los poemas de Bannerman no es una simple proyección de ideología contemporánea hacia un pasado ajeno a ella, sino un síntoma del estado del pensamiento de finales del siglo XVIII y principios del XIX. Durante el siglo XVIII surgieron tanto hombres como mujeres que escribían sobre el estado de subordinación de la mujer en sociedad, y además de tratados filosóficos y panfletos políticos, esta corriente de pensamiento europeo se acompañó de obras de teatro, ensayos y obras de ficción (Offen, 2000). El feminismo como movimiento social no existía todavía, pero en el pensamiento de algunos sectores de la sociedad ya se encontraba el germen. Al revisar y

traer de vuelta textos de escritores que se han quedado fuera del canon de la literatura, como es el caso de Anne Bannerman, es posible añadir perspectivas de temas sociales para conseguir una visión más completa del pensamiento general y sus corrientes.

1. THE DARK LADIE

The Dark Ladie es el primer poema que aparece en *Tales of Superstition and Chivalry*, y en el prefacio de este se descubre que es una respuesta directa a un poema inacabado de Coleridge, *Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladie*. El poema de Bannerman se publicó en *The Edinburgh Magazine* en marzo de 1800 donde, un mes antes, se había publicado el de Coleridge (Heilman, 2018). El poema de Coleridge presenta una voz poética masculina que se dirige a un personaje femenino, llamado Genevieve, a quien está intentando seducir. Durante las siete estrofas del poema el narrador introduce una historia dolorosa, una "tale of woe, / a woeful tale of love" (Coleridge, 1848, p. 126). Aunque la propia Dark Ladie da nombre al poema, los últimos versos son "Come then, and hear what cruel wrong / Befell the Dark Ladie" (Coleridge, 18481 p. 126), por lo que el final del texto queda abierto y la historia de esta mujer no llega a narrarse.

El *The Dark Ladie* Bannermaniano deja a un lado el cortejo de la voz poética de Coleridge para centrarse al completo en la historia de la Dark Ladie que da nombre al poema. Es importante recalcar que mantiene la forma arcaica de escribir el título del poema que empezó Coleridge, ya que la voz "ladie" era ya una forma pasada de escribir "lady". Esto hace que el poema se sitúe en un pasado alejado de la época de la escritora. El hecho de escribir en el pasado es bastante común en los textos románticos y góticos, a finales del siglo XVIII y principios del XIX el gótico y el romanticismo tenían bastantes elementos en común, como un gusto anticuario por las ruinas, los castillos y los monasterios, y el uso de temas sobrenaturales que se mezclan con el concepto de lo sublime presentado por Burke (McGill, 2018). El hecho de usar una voz arcaica en el propio título del poema pone de manifiesto el medievalismo que se quiere expresar en el texto.

El poema se sitúa en la época de las cruzadas, que abre con los versos "The knights return'd from Holy Land, / Sir Guyon led the armed train; / and to his castle, on the sea, / he welcom'd them again" (Bannerman, 1802, p. XXX). Los temas medievales mencionados anteriormente tienen, desde un primer momento, un gran protagonismo en el poema. Estos arcaísmos y el medievalismo inherente a la época romántica escocesa, además de acercar a Bannerman a sus coetáneos y a la tradición de su época, crea un ambiente propenso al misterio y a la admiración.

Al principio del texto hay un claro ambiente de celebración, sin rastro de la Dark Ladie que da nombre al poema. Hasta la sexta estrofa no habrá ninguna mención a este personaje, y el inicio del suspense se dará de una manera bastante velada: aunque los soldados deberían estar celebrando, el narrador señala que Sir Guyon "At every pause, all breathless then, / and pale as death, he bent his ear, / Tho' not a sound the silence broke, / He seemed still to hear!" (Bannerman, 1802, p. 4). Sir Guyon está esperando algo que el lector todavía desconoce, creando un ambiente de suspense que se añade al elemento gótico medievalista de la localización espaciotemporal del poema. El mero hecho de estar esperando una llegada que aparentemente ya conoce Sir Guyon lleva al lector a la lógica del retorno, del "evento como retorno", en el que no hay una lógica de la imagen sino una pre-aparición del espectro para crear suspense anticipando la llegada de algo que, en principio, ya ha aparecido antes (Quevedo, 2014). Desde el principio la Dark Ladie no es una aparición sino una reaparición, que da un tinte de inevitabilidad a su presencia.

Cuando el banquete ya está preparado y todos los participantes sentados en la mesa es el momento en el que, por fin, aparecerá la Dark Ladie de manera explícita en el texto. La aparición se narra de la siguiente manera:

> And when the feast was spread, and all
> The guests, assembled, were at meat,
> There pass'd them by, with measur'd step,
> And took the upper seat,
> A Ladie, clad in ghastly white,
> And veiled to the feet
> (Bannerman, 1802)

La irrupción de este personaje es bastante significativa, ya que está entrando de manera brusca en un espacio masculino y ocupando el puesto más importante. La oposición entre los espacios masculinos y femeninos, o lo público y lo privado, es una de las bases de la distinción sociológica de lo masculino y lo femenino, creando límites para separarlos entre sí. Lo doméstico sería aquel espacio que se vertebra entorno a una (o más) mujeres y, de tenerlos, sus hijos; se identificaría a la mujer con el espacio doméstico y al hombre con el público y social (Zimbalist Rosaldo, n.d.). Se puede decir que el espacio del banquete sería un espacio público, masculino, y que con la llegada de la Dark Ladie se subvierten estos roles de género espacioculturales para dejar en un segundo plano a los guerreros y así centrar la narración del poema en este personaje femenino. En esta escena en concreto, este personaje presidirá la mesa y hará de su otredad un elemento principal, sobrepasando el límite que divide lo público-masculino de lo privado-femenino.

La Dark Ladie es un personaje cuya corporalidad elude al lector. Desde un punto de vista ontológico, el espectro nunca es tangible, es un cuerpo que no está presente, pero es visible, una simple intuición basada en la reaparición Derridiana (Quevedo, 2014). Esta figura espectral aparece descrita como la portadora de un velo oscuro y largo, que hace que sea imposible discernir la forma de su cuerpo. Teniendo en cuenta que los soldados acaban de terminar una cruzada en Oriente Medio, este velo se puede leer como la práctica de la fe musulmana. Lleva también un velo blanco, que se puede asociar con la pureza y la virginidad. En los siglos XVIII y XIX, el símbolo del velo se volvió recurrente en la literatura europea, haciendo de él una metáfora de los secretos de la naturaleza personificados en cuerpo de mujer y, a su vez, la necesidad de la mente humana de traspasarlos y dominarlos (Hadot, 2006). Es en esta lectura en la que se encuentra otro límite traspasado por la Dark Ladie: lejos de quedarse en un lado de la dicotomía humanidad-naturaleza, ella traspasa a la parte natural gracias a los velos románticos que cubren su cuerpo.

La corporalidad de este personaje es tan elusiva que, en realidad, no hay ningún tipo de descripción de lo que podría ser su silueta o sus rasgos. La única mención directa a su cuerpo hace mención a sus ojos, ya que el narrador menciona lo siguiente: “Ah! None could ever hear or know,

/ Or, why, beneath that long black veil, / her wild eyes sparkle so!" (Bannerman, 1802, p. 15). Los ojos, al ser la única parte del cuerpo que ata a la Dark Ladie a la figura humana, son muy importantes para la creación del suspense del poema, ya que queda en evidencia que el espectro sí puede ver a los habitantes del castillo, puede también ver que ellos están mirándola, pero los soldados no pueden ver más allá del velo; se creará un efecto visera de disimetría de la percepción (Derrida, 2006). La propia Dark Ladie se convertirá, entonces, en un umbral que no puede ser sobrepasado con la percepción humana; el terror que genera este personaje tendrá lugar por la opacidad de su lectura.

De la historia de la Dark Ladie se narra, hacia el final del poema, que ella tenía un hijo en su ciudad natal que probablemente fuera asesinado, mientras que a ella la llevaron al castillo de Sir Guyon. Esta historia le da sentido a la vuelta al mundo terrenal del espectro. La idea de un fantasma volviendo de entre los muertos ya estaba instaurada en la Edad Media, donde se creía que estos espectros aparecían cuando habían sufrido una muerte violenta o tenían aspectos sin solucionar de su vida terrenal, y además siempre conservaban el aspecto físico que tenían antes de fallecer (McGill, 2018).

En el poema se narra la cautividad de la Dark Ladie, y cómo sus inicios en lo paranormal se dan en el propio castillo de Sir Guyon. Una vez en la torre en la que iba a estar confinada (volviéndose el espacio de la torre, por lo tanto, una barrera que no se puede traspasar), el narrador desvela que "Sometimes, thro' her curtain'd tower, / A strange uncolour'd light was seen, / And something, of unearthly hue, / Still passed on between" (Bannerman, 1802, p. 13). El eterno retorno inherente al fantasma se vería confinado en una localización específica, con un límite espacial absolutamente definido. Sin embargo, la reaparición del fantasma será traspasada a los soldados del castillo a través de la narración y el poder de la palabra. La principal desdicha que caerá en los hombres de Sir Guyon será la de tener que contar constantemente la historia de la Dark Ladie, y cuando no están llevando a cabo la narración, están escuchando la voz profunda y espectral del personaje. Es por esto que hay una subversión de los roles preestablecidos en la historia: los opresores serán los oprimidos, y viceversa.

Además de la incapacidad de ejercer el libre albedrío y tener que contar a todo momento la misma historia, el castigo a estos hombres tendrá una capa más gracias a la irrupción de la Dark Ladie en sus horas de sueño. De Sir Guyon, el narrador dice "But, never more, / In quiet sleep, he rested long; / For still, on his alarmed ear, / that rousing echo rung!" (Bannerman, 1802). Durante la noche, mientras la persona que debería estar durmiendo experimenta periodos de insomnio, los "sueños" que tiene no le aportan nada, sino que vienen de inseguridades y miedos y todo lo que consiguen es alterar al que lo está experimentando (Michels 1981, citado por Schwenger, 2012). La vigilia involuntaria, causada por la Dark Ladie, será la estrategia para que estos soldados no puedan olvidar su castigo en ningún momento, ni siquiera cuando la conciencia del "yo" se difumina gracias al estado de sueño. Pensar en la historia de la Dark Ladie será una actividad que permeará todas las horas de los soldados. La venganza de este personaje se llevará a cabo a través de múltiples planos, y hará que su otredad se sitúe en el centro de la vida de los personajes que la hirieron mientras seguía viva.

2. THE PERJUR'D NUN

The Perjur'd Nun es el tercer poema que aparece en *Tales of Superstition and Chivalry*. Este poema abre *in media res*, con una estrofa que resume a la perfección el trascurso de la narración: "Ah! Why do I grieve and look so wild, / Lord Henrie, tell it to me! / And why do you say you must watch till day, / Where, alas! I may not be!" (Bannerman, 1802). Desde el primer momento se puede observar una voz poética que está narrando en primera persona, exhibiendo un alto nivel de agitación y angustia, y que se dirige a Lord Henrie. Al poco tiempo se sabrá que la voz poética de este texto corresponde a la de Geraldine, que vive en el castillo con Lord Henrie. En este poema, a diferencia del anterior, no hay un medievalismo desarrollado más allá del castillo que compone la totalidad de la ubicación espacial del texto. Sin embargo, el uso de la religión a través de la monja que le da título en combinación con el castillo evoca al lector a un entorno a grandes rasgos asociado a lo medieval, algo típico del gótico. El castillo es tanto una localización espacial como una marca temporal, y vertebra el desarrollo de la narración.

El terror en este poema aparece exactamente de la misma manera que en el anterior: el lector se encuentra con un personaje masculino aterrorizado de un elemento que todavía no ha aparecido explícitamente. El personaje de la monja no tarda en mencionarse, ya que en la tercera estrofa se menciona "I have heard it said 'tis the haunt of the dead, / The haunt of the Perjur'd Nun!" (Bannerman, 1802, p. 40). Hasta este punto la monja no ha aparecido, su presencia se limita a los relatos que Geraldine incluye sobre ella en su narración.

El pavor que experimenta Lord Henrie se traduce en prohibiciones hacia Geraldine; por ejemplo "tho the flame goes round with a hissing sound, / From the lamp on the marble stair; / You must swear to God, on the holy rood, / That you will not seek me there!" (Bannerman, 1802). Lord Henrie debe ir a encontrarse con esta monja, por lo que tendrá que dirigirse a otra parte del castillo; Geraldine, por otro lado, tendrá que permanecer en el ala que se le ha asignado anteriormente, por mucho que ella quiera acompañarlo. Aquí se vuelve a los espacios masculinos y femeninos mencionados anteriormente, y hay una separación entre los roles de la mujer y del hombre. Las acciones que hace Lord Henrie se ven como necesarias, mientras que la voluntad de Geraldine no se tiene en cuenta. Una actividad masculina, desde un punto de vista social, se percibe con más relevancia y se le da culturalmente más importancia, creando una asimetría en la evaluación de las diferentes actividades (Zimbalist Rosaldo, 1974). Estas esferas de lo femenino y lo masculino se traducen en límites espaciales dentro del propio castillo, con sitios a los que Geraldine no puede ir por orden directa de Lord Henrie.

El castillo no es solo el lugar en el que se desarrolla la historia. Este lugar funciona como la casa de los protagonistas, ya que se asume que viven en ese castillo. La casa en la literatura gótica tiene un rol bastante central, ya que conforma un lugar de espacio doméstico que no solo contiene a los personajes sobrenaturales sino que, además, amplifica y genera sus acciones de terror (Hock Soon, 2015). Por el momento, este espacio doméstico quedará relegado a un segundo plano en el ala del castillo de Geraldine, y el resto formará el espacio social o masculino. Para revertir las limitaciones espaciales y seguir en contacto, Lord Henrie le dice a Geraldine que se comunicarán a través de la luz de las velas.

El narrador cita directamente a Lord Henrie con una narración anidada, en la que dice lo siguiente:

> "When the clock strikes two, if the tapers burn
>
> And the lamp on the marble stair;
>
> You will know by them if I living am,
>
> But you may not venture there!
>
> And mark, mark well, when the castle bell
>
> And the clock ring three and one;
>
> If the lamps expire and the lights retire,
>
> You may know that my life is gone!"
>
> (Bannerman, 1802)

Gracias a este plan, la separación espacial entre los dos se verá reducida gracias a la posibilidad de comunicación, aunque los límites sigan imponiendo a Geraldine dónde puede estar. Además, en las estrofas anteriores es evidente el peligro que corre Lord Henrie, que sabe que es probable que esa noche fallezca si se encuentra con la monja durante su recorrido por el castillo. Geraldine, a lo largo del poema, insiste en acompañarle al otro lado del castillo, e incluso se menciona que "she would rush to the stair to meet him there, / if her heart did not tremble so!..." (Bannerman, 1802, p. 46). El miedo de Lord Henrie se pasa a Geraldine, que durante algunas estrofas adopta el rol de damisela en apuros.

Tras una agonizante espera, Geraldine consigue abrir la puerta que la separaba de Lord Henrie, diciendo que "The blood rush'd back to her clay-cold feet, / and her heart took courage then; / She burst through the door to the eastern floor" (Bannerman, 1802, p. 46). En este caso se puede aplicar el término filosófico-sociológico de agencia, que se utiliza con frecuencia en entornos feministas. Esta noción se entiende como la habilidad de un sujeto de actuar con autonomía, además de su capacidad de transformar la supraestructura de poder que le rodea en sociedad, aun si el acto es pequeño en comparación con el resto de los elementos de la estructura (Srivastava, 2022). Las mujeres en el siglo XIX no podían actuar como agentes de su vida, sino que se

veían supeditadas a las decisiones de los hombres que las rodean. Se puede considerar que las dinámicas que existen entre Geraldine y Lord Henrie conforman una representación de la sociedad decimonónica, en la que los roles de género repartían el poder de manera asimétrica dejando a las mujeres carentes de agencia.

El traspaso del umbral de la puerta, o el límite del espacio doméstico al público, constituye un ejercicio de subversión por parte de Geraldine, que consigue revertir su situación de desamparo. La agencia la encuentra dentro de sí misma, consiguiendo el valor suficiente para actuar por su cuenta. La monja, sin embargo, también tiene un valor crucial en este aspecto: se puede considerar que su presencia es lo que cataliza este proceso de emancipación. Esta monja no aparece hasta el final del poema, cuando Geraldine se la encuentra durante su búsqueda.

A diferencia de la Dark Ladie, la monja sí habla, y le dirá a Geraldine lo siguiente: "You sought not me! Cries the hollow voice, / You came not to welcome me! / Let your watching cease, and depart in peace, / For him you shall never see…" (Bannerman, 1802). La interacción entre la monja y Geraldine es muy significativa, ya que no es agresiva sino, hasta cierto punto, bondadosa. La monja admite haber matado a Lord Henrie, y procede a contar la historia que le lleva a hacerlo: ella tenía una relación, probablemente romántica, con Lord Henrie, que le lleva a colgar los hábitos y alejarse de la vida religiosa. Se identifica, entonces, a la monja dentro del marco de la *fallen woman*, personaje muy utilizado en la Inglaterra decimonónica, que es capaz de derribar sociedades enteras por su poder revolucionario pero ambiguo (Auerbach, 1980). El mencionado poder revolucionario no solo revoca civilizaciones enteras, que estarían representadas por Lord Henri, sino que además tiene la capacidad de llevar a mujeres que previamente actuaban conforme a lo establecido a buscar cierto nivel de emancipación.

Gracias a la monja hay una subversión de roles. Lord Henrie, que tendría que poner a salvo a la desprotegida Geraldine, acaba muriendo a manos de la monja mientras que Geraldine consigue sobrevivir al encuentro con el espectro. El final del poema queda abierto, mencionando solamente la presencia eterna de la monja en una de las alas del castillo. No se sabe si Geraldine continuará con su vida haciendo uso de la

agencia que ha desarrollado durante el trascurso del poema, pero el hecho de tener un personaje que pasa de la inacción a la búsqueda de sus intereses es ya revolucionario en sí mismo.

3. LA FEMME-FATALE BANNERMANIANA

Tanto en *The Dark Ladie* como en *The Perjur'd Nun* se puede afirmar con seguridad que ambos personajes sobrenaturales se pueden englobar dentro del concepto de la *femme-fatale*. Estas mujeres tienen una gran presencia en la literatura occidental, y aunque el término se acuñó en el siglo XX en espacios de cine y teatro, hay críticos que defienden que ya era el tipo de feminidad más representada y característica de la literatura del siglo XIX (Łuczyńska-Hołdys, 2013). La definición de la *femme-fatale* canónica puede considerarse la de Allen, en la que se describe a una mujer que lleva a los hombres a la muerte gracias a sus dotes de seducción (Allen, 1983). Este modelo de personaje permea la sociedad, y se pueden encontrar en la Biblia o en películas de Hollywood.

Las *femme-fatale* de Bannerman transgreden la definición que ha quedado en la cultura popular, y se adhieren mucho mejor (aunque no perfectamente) a las definiciones que se han dado por parte de académicas feministas. La "nueva" *femme-fatale* es un personaje que brilla en la liminalidad, que consigue atrapar al hombre no solo de manera física sino también mental y que se presenta como un personaje altamente destructivo que, en general, surge de la imaginación masculina; además, el hombre desarrolla una obsesión por verla (Łuczyńska-Hołdys, 2013). En *The Dark Ladie* se narran los numerosos intentos de quitarle el velo al fantasma, mientras que en *The Perjur'd Nun* la historia se desarrolla por la necesidad imperiosa de Lord Henrie de encontrarse con la monja. Ambos casos muestran con claridad la obsesión de estos hombres por encontrarse de cerca con estos personajes femeninos, eliminando cualquier obstáculo que lo impida.

Tanto la monja como la Dark Ladie se pueden considerar *femme-fatales* al contar con la mayoría de las características del personaje canónico. Los poemas narran la historia que justifican las acciones de estas mujeres, aportando una gran profundidad a los personajes y descartando por

completo la posibilidad de que estos asesinatos y encantamientos sean aleatorios; son mujeres que se están vengando por situaciones de desequilibrios de poder patriarcales. El uso de la *femme-fatale* por mujeres en el romanticismo estaba cargado de ideología, respondiendo a las inquietudes de la época (Craciun, 2003). Ya en el siglo XIX se empezaba a discutir sobre la posición de la mujer en sociedad, escribir a estos personajes vengativos se puede leer como algo revolucionario.

En *The Perjur'd Nun* el lector descubre que la monja dejó la vida monástica por Lord Henrie, y en *The Dark Ladie* hay una mujer raptada por un grupo de soldados después de una cruzada religiosa en Oriente Medio. En ningún momento se menciona la posible atracción pasada entre el personaje masculino y el femenino. La *femme-fatale* canónica es atractiva, y es con esa belleza con la que atrae al hombre. La ausencia de descripción física de los personajes en ambos poemas es algo que dificulta la inclusión de la monja y la Dark Ladie en los esquemas tradicionales de la *femme-fatale*. La corporalidad de los personajes es porosa, el lector no obtiene nada de su físico al leer estos poemas. No se puede vincular su nivel de atracción física porque se deja fuera de la narración del poema.

La definición de la *femme-fatale*, por lo tanto, debe ampliarse para incluir a autoras como Bannerman, que hicieron de sus asesinas unos personajes transgresivos. Dejar a un lado la feminidad, concepto binario que se nutre de la imaginación masculina y que impone patrones conductuales a parte de la población, es el paso siguiente para conseguir una noción de la *femme-fatale* más porosa. Es importante poner el foco en mujeres que triunfan en la liminalidad, que llevan a cabo venganzas específicas, que no están vivas o no presentan una corporalidad tangible convencional y que, sobre todo, están alejadas de la feminidad y la visión de un hombre (Craciun, 2003). Lo que más limita a una femme-fatale es precisamente su físico atractivo, si se elimina esta cualidad aparece un personaje que no tiene rival.

4. CONCLUSIÓN

En *The Dark Ladie* y *The Perjur'd Nun*, Bannerman presenta unos personajes subversivos que traspasan limites tanto espaciales y físicos

como sociales. En una sociedad como la decimonónica, donde ya se había iniciado el debate sobre la posición de la mujer en la sociedad, estos personajes son un síntoma del estado del pensamiento de finales del siglo XVIII y principios del XIX.

Los personajes de estos dos poemas, la Dark Ladie y la monja, son figuras fantasmagóricas que han vuelto de entre los muertos para vengarse de un hombre. Las historias de estas mujeres vertebran la narración de las baladas, haciendo que los motivos para su sed de venganza queden claros y el lector consiga empatizar con ellas. Por su naturaleza como fantasmas, están en una inherente liminalidad perpetua. No obstante, harán de su liminalidad el centro de la vida de estos hombres que en su vida terrenal las hirieron mediante el desarrollo de una obsesión con ellas.

Es importante notar el trasfondo gótico medievalista y religioso que permea ambos poemas. Mediante arcaísmos, castillos y soldados que vienen de las cruzadas, Bannerman consigue no solo crear una atmósfera de terror y suspense típica del gótico decimonónico, sino que también se distancia del poema para poder ofrecer una crítica social más profunda. Gracias a este énfasis medievalista en la religión, no solo se refleja a una monja sino a una mujer que ha sido raptada en las cruzadas que practica el islam, creando así una amplia gama de espectros femeninos en la obra bannermaniana.

La monja y la Dark Ladie eluden la corporalidad, y en los textos no se encuentra ninguna descripción sobre su cuerpo; de hecho, lo único que se sabe de ellas son algunas descripciones sobre sus ojos y el sonido de su voz, y ninguna de esas dos descripciones alude a su feminidad. Aunque ambos personajes podrían encajar en la definición de la *femme-fatale* tradicional y canónica, la falta de estos rasgos físicos hace que se complique. No obstante, en los últimos años se ha desarrollado una corriente de pensamiento en la que se aboga por una definición de la *femme-fatale* más amplia y diversa, en la que no se ponga el foco en los cánones masculinos de belleza y atracción sino en el hecho de que son mujeres que invaden física y mentalmente a estos hombres y que hacen que se obsesionen con ellas. Usando esta nueva definición, tanto la Dark Ladie como la monja de *The Perjur'd Nun* podrían ser clasificadas como *femme-fatales*, y se seguiría creando un canon más completo y diverso.

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POSTCOLONIAL AFROFUTURISM THROUGH ERNA BRODBER'S *THE RAINMAKER'S MISTAKE*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Rainmaker's Mistake was published in 2007, marking the bicentenary of the Abolition of Slave Trade Act in the British Caribbean colonies, addressing themes relevant to the legacy of slavery and emancipation. Through her interdisciplinary lens and the use of innovative narrative techniques characteristic of her novels, Brodber explores the historical and cultural issues encountered by the African diaspora, aligning with postcolonial literary concerns.

The allegorical journey from centuries of slavery to humanization and liberation of the Yam people in a plantation in pre-emancipated Jamaica is told through seven alternative narrators, chiefly Queenie's. The enslaved Yam community unquestionably believes in a myth of origin fabricated by the plantation's master, Mr. Charlie: every slave was an unearthed yam sprouted from his semen. For centuries, the alienated Yam people lived in dehumanized stagnation, unaware of their sexuality and power of reproduction, never aging or dying. Once the master declares their liberation, his supervisor, Woodville, literally *laughs* him and his household out of existence.

From this point on, the primary narrator, Queenie, an almost six-year-old girl, describes the division of the land into continents and their migration to Cabarita Island. While questioning the yam myth and researching their history, the newly formed community begins to organize their society afresh. Only when they discover Woodville's real

identity and his mistake can the Yam people regain their humanity and naturalness as well as their power to live, reproduce, and die.

Eventually, the Yam children discover that Woodville—the rainmaker referenced in the title—was once inhabited by an African spirit named Tayeb, aligning with Violet Bryan's view that "Africans who were stolen into slavery and transmitted to the West were accompanied by ancestral spirits" (2021, p. 91). Woodville's mistake was permitting Europeans to seize and enslave so many of his people, sending them to the Americas from where they would never return. He enabled this separation from their homeland by making it rain so uncontrollably that the floods not only helped the ships sail faster but also wash their memories. Through this act, described as "matricide" or "Genosuicide [*sic*]" (*The Rainmaker's Mistake,* p. 140), Woodville became complicit in his people's suffering.

Although *The Rainmaker's Mistake* shares many thematic concerns and stylistic techniques with Brodber's previous novels typically analyzed through the critical viewpoint of postcolonialism, it also features multiple new technical devices that could be associated with Afrofuturism, bridging these two paths of literary criticism and their concerns. As a field of literary and cultural criticism, Afrofuturism has focused on numerous theories and their applications to the literary and cultural production of African American authors, often overlooking the contributions of African descendants from other parts of the world, such as the Caribbean, a region that shares a history of colonization, slavery, independence, and post-independence, making it a fertile ground for both postcolonial and Afrofuturist analysis.

Brodber's critique of colonial histories merges allegory, myth, and speculative narrative to recreate possible emancipatory futures for the African diaspora positioning *The Rainmaker's Mistake* in both currents of literary criticism. The metaphorical and allegorical dimensions of her writing are essential for understanding the novel from a postcolonial viewpoint, as postcolonial critics such as Elizabeth DeLoughrey and Evelyn O'Callaghan have demonstrated. Likewise, the novel's speculative narrative structures and its fragmentation of time and space reflect Afrofuturist concerns, as researchers such as Baker Josephs have noted.

This article aims to examine how *The Rainmaker's Mistake* enlightens both postcolonial and Afrofuturist literary criticism. It delves into Brodber's interdisciplinary considerations on history and society, while engaging with the critical perspectives of Evelyn O'Callaghan, Curdella Forbes, Elizabeth DeLoughrey, and Baker Josephs. Additionally, it draws on theoretical frameworks including Édouard Glissant's notion of relation and errantry, Paul Gilroy's theory of the Black Atlantic, and Kodwo Eshun's insights into Afrofuturist art.

2. PORTRAIT OF THE JAMAICAN SLAVERY SOCIETY IN *THE RAINMAKER'S MISTAKE*

Brodber has long sustained that her fictional works serve a therapeutic purpose. In a 2018 BCRW interview she disclosed that although *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* was written for her students, her second novel, *Myal*, was intended to advise her colleagues to prioritize writing for the needs of their own communities ahead of external validation from foreign institutions, while *Louisiana* was concerned with the shared experiences of the Black diaspora. Regarding *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, Brodber emphasized the importance of self-awareness and accountability, claiming that progress requires individuals to reflect on their roles in systemic issues and take action to instigate meaningful change. She stated that the goal of all her writings is to encourage such self-examination and collective advancement (Barnard Center for Research on Women, 2018). Brodber's most powerful postcolonial critique in *The Rainmaker's Mistake* might lie in her suggestion that double consciousness is complicit in perpetuating imperial structures. The title of the novel alludes to this critique, which is embodied in the double role of the enigmatic rainmaker, Woodville/Tayeb, highlighting the conflict that arises from juggling dual identities within a postcolonial context.

Under Mr. Charlie's authority, Woodville served as an overseer and accomplice to his master's slave aims. He actively participated in the naming ceremony for the babies; he was responsible for organizing the community's work; he would "pull his whip from the back pocket of his

overalls and crack it to make [them] follow his orders" (Brodber, 2007, p. 6); and, at his role of oppressor of his own people, he was admired by his master. However, as the truth is unfolded, we learn that he also plays the role of the oppressed, dehumanized subject: he is forced to restrain his anger at the master for raping his sister, I-Sis; he is implicitly denied a fair relationship with his Black women lovers, whose deaths he had to secretly mourn (Princess, Jubah, Phibbah); his male body is physically manipulated to conceive children for the master's patent; he is unable to claim his fatherhood despite his concern for his children; instead, he silently watches as his master is revered by the community as the creator and maker of each and every member. Woodville's role reflects a consciousness "divorced from the opportunity to engage in reflexive, self-critical practice or the chance to analyze experience in terms of distinct, cognitive, practical, and aesthetic standards" (Gilroy, 1993, p. 50).

Notwithstanding, after announcing the slaves' liberation, the master closes the door behind him, which Woodville had seemingly anticipated. To the community's surprise, Woodville yells in fury, "Didn't I tell you you'd do that?" (Brodber, 2007, p. 11). When confronted with the uncertainty created by the announcement of freedom, Mathilde, the children's carer, wonders about the children's future, and her inquiry sparks Woodville's rage: "'What about the children?' This last question not really meant to be answered, just an expression of a disturbance, had Woodville laughing a loud devilish laugh that never stopped" (p. 12).

In *The Continent of Black Consciousness,* drawing on Orlando Patterson's research in Slavery and Social Death, Brodber studies the unique aspects of Jamaican slavery in comparison to other contexts and periods and examines its psychological and social impact on African Jamaicans, emphasizing the traumatic experiences of their kidnapping, their hazardous journey across the Middle Passage, and their dehumanizing sale as merchandise. In this sociological work, Brodber outlines a social-psychological profile of slavery in Jamaica, noting the initial sense of shock and despair of the newly enslaved individuals, the erasure of names, the suppression of personal emotions in favor of the master's eugenics plans, the rigid enforcement of assigned tasks through violence, the manipulation of slaves to accept the system by fostering

status ranking among them, and the prevalence of sexual relations between the white master class and Black slaves, often understated in reports but widely acknowledged (Brodber, 2003, pp. 5-6).

Following Brodber's interdisciplinary signature, this profile informs the portrayal of Mr. Charlie's society. As she explains, the main way by which people came into slavery in Jamaica was birth (Brodber, 2003, p. 15); however, the fact of not undergoing the experience of the Middle Passage does not erase their memory, since the stories should have been passed through generations. To pull them apart from their personal past and make them "socially dead," they were named by their masters instead of their progenitors (p. 7). While the Yam children's lack of memory of their earlier years illustrates the trauma of their "kidnapping" from different parts of the world, the naming ceremony reflects the loss of identity through the erasure of African names by the slaves (Tayeb/Woodville, Abdul/London, Kofi/Luke).

This profile is also represented by Woodville's subordination to Mr. Charlie's experiments of genetic engineering and his sheer terror of white coats due to his having "been changed to make babies… to desire, lust after and have congress with the opposite sex" (Brodber, 2007, p. 134). Likewise, the division of slaves according to their tasks is also depicted in the novel: the babies, the pickney gang, the livestock carers, and the planters, with Woodville as the feared overseer. Brodber observes that the possibility of unity among the enslaved was also a concern in the slave society since it could bring about defiance to the social order and the master's power and describes the technique of occupational dispersion designed for this purpose, which mirrors the organization of Mr. Charlie's plantation and Woodville's role in it. She explains that, in the task-ranking division, slaves with the highest rank "is given a higher status" and the "feeling that he has coopted into the master's class" so that such a slave is psychologically stimulated to maintain the system (Brodber, 2003, p. 21).

Another identifiable trait of such a society is illicit sexual intercourse between the white master class and Black enslaved women, implicitly addressed through the character of Sallywater, I-Sis and the master's daughter, whose physical attributes (pigmentation and hair

type) are unusual in the community and reflect "the stigma of social illegitimacy" (Brodber, 2003, p. 23) as expressed by London/Abdul when discussing the reasons for I-Sis' surgeries: "I think it was just to have sex. No baby contemplated… The Master simply saw that she was fair. Probably had been pleasuring himself outside and said why not get a fair one here" (Brodber, 2007, p. 134).

Furthermore, these references to the colonial control over the Black female body is reminiscent of bell hooks' analysis of the subjugation of Black women during slavery. As she states in *Ain't I a Woman*, "[p]lanters recognized the economic gain they could amass by breeding black slave women... the off-spring of any black slave woman regardless of the race of her mate would be legally slaves" (hooks, 1981, p. 16). This approach further reinforces Brodber's commitment to exposing the historical wounds of colonization.

By depicting these concerns in the novel, the author reclaims the repressed collective past of slave ancestors, providing a significant critique of slavery's historical period and systemic structures.

3. BLACK HISTORY RECLAIMED: MYTH, ALLEGORY, AND THE NATURAL CYCLES OF IDENTITY

Brodber's hopeful vision of the aftermath of political independence contrasts sharply with the disenchanted reality featured in Caribbean literature which exposes how colonial and national politics divide communities "on the grounds of race, class and ideological differences", as observed by O'Callaghan (2012, p.42). In contrast, Brodber's optimistic perspective emphasizes resistance and healing as strategies to attain a state of independence. Resistance in her novels is performed via retrieval and recognition of Caribbean history and cultural representations of their diasporic identities beyond the material reality.

As O'Callaghan (2012) suggests, individual emancipation is interconnected with collective liberation, which envisions the realization of a true regional confederation (p. 42). Brodber's novels portray African religious practices along with other African cultural manifestations reflecting her concern with the community's resistance to the

Westernized cultural traits perpetuated even after political independence. By advocating for the retrieval of historical memory as an essential step toward the achievement of genuine freedom, Brodber's fiction emphasizes the potential of Caribbean people to overcome marginalizing settings and manifest the divine through diverse forms of artistic creation (O'Callaghan, 2012, p. 46). Thus, *The Rainmaker's Mistake* tells the story of a community that reinvents itself after challenging hegemonic considerations of fixed historical accounts and, in so doing, dismantling the master's myth.

Central to this revisioning is the yam myth, which exposes the constructed nature of colonial history. Mr. Charlie, the plantation master, perpetuates the fiction that he created the Yam children by planting yam seeds, reinforcing his control and erasing their true origins. As the children gradually deconstruct this myth, they embrace a communal history that challenges hegemonic narratives of fixed historical accounts and rigid colonial structures. This viewpoint aligns with Sylvia Wynter (1971) and her critique of colonial mythmaking, arguing that the colonial power employed the "myth of history," distorting history to aid in the mission of securing power for the capitalist economy (p. 101). Similarly, in *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, in his need to retain his colonial powers, legitimize his authority, dehumanize the Yam people, and ensure their subjugation, Mr. Charlie used this fabricated narrative. His ritualistic retelling of the story on Founder's Day reinforces his dominance, infantilizing the Yam children by preventing them from questioning their origins or asserting agency: "[s]till, didn't the Master tell us? You were there on founder's days, not as many as I, I grant you. He needed labour, that's what he said. He even told us to remember" (Brodber, 2007, p. 141).

The ex-slaves' journey to rebuild their lives and redefine their identities on the new island of Cabarita becomes a central theme, challenging imposed static myths. Woodville's later arrival in Cabarita marks a turning point in the story. His enigmatic presence, whose aging body contrast sharply with Mr. Charlie's mythic narrative, prompts the Yam children to question their reality, pushing them to investigate their history and seek answers beyond the master's myth.

Their search leads them to encounter the evolved Sallywater, whose transformation defies the Yam children's expectations of purity, simplicity, and passivity, embodying instead a fluid, dynamic identity. Her growth and following death challenge Mr. Charlie's sanitized ideals while reflecting the complexity and resilience of diasporic identity. Later, the children's ultimate journey to "the past" demolishes their origin myth; the discovery of Mr. Charlie's decayed corpse exposes the falsity of his legacy. The revelation that Woodville is their biological father and the master's murderer forces the children to reimagine their origins and replace the static and humiliating yam myth with a more nuanced, dynamic tale of resistance and agency, rejecting colonial hierarchies and reclaiming their identity through collective memory.

The Yam children's discovery of tombs, most likely belonging to their mothers, further undermines the master's narrative. These findings challenge the community with omitted histories of reproduction, motherhood, and agency, revealing the colonial erasure of Black women's contributions. "Breeding was oppressive to all fertile Black slave women", bell hooks (1981) writes in reference to the real deaths of Black women during the colonial era, "[u]ndernourished, overworked women were rarely in a physical condition that would allow for safe easy childbirth. Repeated pregnancies without proper care resulted in numerous miscarriages and death" (p. 41). Brodber deliberately unearths this traumatic episode in the history of the Black diaspora. Moreover, DeLoughrey (2011) interprets the cave as a maternal metaphor that evokes Platonic allegory while also serving as the foundation for post-emancipation community development (p. 72). In this light, the novel criticizes the double colonization experienced by Black women under patriarchy and empire by recovering their histories, suppressed in favor of market-driven, patriarchal traditions.

Brodber's ecological metaphors serve to further enhance this allegory. Drawing on Kamau Brathwaite's notions on the connection between transplantation and subterranean history, DeLoughrey (2011) studies the semantic relationship between the words yam, *nam*, and *nyame*. She asserts that "the Jamaican term *nyam* derives from a number of West African languages for the word 'to eat,' or *nyami*… *Yam/nam* is a

signifier of subterranean cultural roots and the vehicle of articulation and reassemblage itself" (p. 61). In this interplay of words, the yam—a staple food during slavery—represents divine providence and sustenance provided by *Nyame*. As in Caribbean literature, DeLoughrey (2011) notes, roots frequently represent resilience and belonging, the yam symbolizes African transplantation to the New World, indicating the power dynamics between plantation grounds (colonial economy) and provision plots (spaces of resistance and survival) theorized by Sylvia Wynter (p. 60). Thus, Brodber reaffirms the yam's sacred meaning and underscores the significance of cultural reclamation in developing autonomous identities.

The inclusion of alternative African epistemologies that reject colonial hierarchies represents a major source of inspiration for the novel's allegorical framework. Brodber relies on Akan beliefs about the divine beginnings of life, the symbolic significance of yams, and the naming ritual to challenge Eurocentric paradigms and restore African epistemic authority. According to the Akan tradition, names are carriers of destiny and identity. Thus, a child's soul (*kra*) originates from *Nyame*, and through the sacred naming ceremony the child is linked to both their spiritual origins and ancestral lineage (Akesson, 1965, p. 281). The babies' naming in Mr. Charlie's patent echoes these Akan beliefs. The novel rewrites the plantation naming ceremony by preserving African names under the master's nose: "Queenie Princess, Phoebe Phibbah, Juba Jubbah. How in God's name did my brother get Massa to preserve these names in you? Who has the last laugh now?" (Brodber, 2007, p. 147).

Another meaningful African framework included in the novel is the Bantu-Kongo model of council governance, which, according to Fu-Kiau (1980), prioritizes the role of "honored elders" as essential in preserving social order (p. 62). The description of the Yam people's life in Cabarita echoes this organization (Brodber, 2007, p. 23). Similarly, Brodber also incorporates aspects of Igbo cosmology. Hard labor, entrepreneurship, and adaptability are highly valued qualities in the Igbo philosophy of life, which is based on a set of principles that guide both individual and collective existence (Ndubisi and Kanu, 2019, p. 47). These values surface in the community's reclamation projects—turning dirt into arable land,

“within weeks we had acres of reclaimed land and within months this reclaimed area had bananas, pineapples, - you name it - on it” (Brodber, 2007, p. 21)—and in the ethical refrain that “work maketh a man” (p. 45). Above all, Igbo adaptability—their ability "to adapt easily to difficult situations” (Ndubisi and Kanu, 2019, pp. 47-48)—is consistent with the novel’s broader themes of perseverance and change.

The allusion to Yoruba spiritual practices in the novel also reinforces themes of cultural continuity and resistance. According to Kesia Weise (2019), despite the Yoruba descendants’ conversion to Christianity “as a means of integrating into the wider society,” they continued aspects of ancestral offerings to the dead—not as formal religious observances but as social practices on special occasions (p. 296). Essex’s worship of the burial mounds—“They are alive to me”—and the reassurance that he hears—“Fear not, we are with you”— reveals a spiritual continuum in which the deceased actively participate in the lives of the living (Brodber, 2007, p. 111).

These alternative African systems—Akan, Bantu-Kongo, Igbo, and Yoruba—celebrate interconnectedness, cyclical regeneration, and balance, contrasting with the rigid, totalitarian worldview imposed by Mr. Charlie in the novel. As Forbes (2009) notes, Brodber’s invocation of these traditions rejects Platonic binaries, demonstrating the endurance of diasporic identity (p. 3). The Yam children’s final acceptance of mortality, reproduction, and growth exemplifies this African-centered worldview, which values transformation, renewal, and relationality over imposed colonial categorizations.

The resulting reconstruction of their humanity culminates in the symbolic union of Queenie and Essex. Once they acknowledge birth and death as essential components of human life, they can imagine a world free from colonial restrictions, reframing their relationship as their presumed kinship dissipates: “Here and now” they are forging their nation (Brodber, 2007, p. 149).

Brodber’s positive outlook for the future asserts the post-emancipation community’s identity, history, and creative agency. The protagonist’s thoughts emphasize acceptance of mortality and change as the cost of

true freedom: “It is naturalness twinned to mortality, accompanied by hope, and duly tempered by responsibility. I embrace them with both hands, my Uncle, and continue the search with which you have been so impatient. See you there. In the free” (Brodber, 2007, p. 150).

The Rainmaker’s Mistake reclaims Black subjectivity by subverting colonial myths and embracing African diasporic traditions. Brodber’s melting of myth and history offers a radical reimagining of identity and community.

4. TIME AND SPACE REIMAGINED: AFROFUTURIST INSIGHTS. CHRONOPOLITICS AND DIASPORIC IDENTITY

Brodber (1997) argues that the alternative traditions developed by the Afro-Caribbean Black population are hindered by the need for broader economic and political changes to ensure that the emancipation process results in significative transformation in the Black Caribbean’s daily reality (pp. 70-71). To achieve real emancipation, Brodber advocates for the need “to re-engineer blackspace” (p. 73). This re-engineering involves the Black intellectual worker constructing new frames of reference—philosophy, creeds, myths, and ideologies—rooted in Afro-oriented tradition capable of completing the emancipation process and transforming the status of the Black majority in territories such as Jamaica. *The Rainmaker’s Mistake* reflects this evolution as the community shifts from a homogeneous society with rigid roles based on age and rank into a heterogeneous collective enriched by diversity of bloodlines and identities “imported from different parts of the world” (Brodber, 2007, p. 148). By embracing this diversity, Brodber challenges essentialist conceptions of race and gender, emphasizing plurality and fluidity as crucial to the process of emancipation and collective evolution.

Josephs (2013) notes that the novel’s smooth transition between the past and the future helps to balance its unique Caribbean identity with its depiction of a liberated Black nation that transcends time and space, rooted in racial solidarity yet unbound by geo-cultural conflicts (p.127). Furthermore, Josephs (2013) argues that Brodber’s deliberate manipulation of time—such as the four-year leap between 1834 and 1838

condensed in two paragraphs (Brodber, 2007, pp. 10-11)—and the superposition of diverse narrators aligns with Eshun's concept of chronopolitical intervention (Josephs, 2013, 1298). Eshun (2003) claims that Afrofuturism does not reject the counter-memory tradition; instead, it seeks to expand such traditions by shifting the intercultural vectors of Black Atlantic temporality to include both the proleptic (anticipatory) and the retrospective dimensions. Thus, "the temporal logics that condemned black subjects to prehistory" are defeated by temporal complications and anachronism in futurist works, so that "[c]hronopolitically speaking, these revisionist historicities may be understood as a series of powerful competing futures that infiltrate the present at different rates" (Eshun, 2003, p. 297). Brodber's temporal complexities, which destabilize linear narratives of progress and reject colonial temporalities echoes this Afrofuturist view.

The fictional setting created in *The Rainmaker's Mistake* surpasses the critical postcolonial view of disruption of established canons of time and space with the incorporation of other concerns well identified in Afrofuturist criticism as noted by Josephs (2013): speculative narrative, the topic of retrieval of histories, the mixture of science fiction and fantasy and the conception of "positive visions of a single black past and cooperative black future" (p. 127). Notably, in *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, chronological disruption goes beyond the distinct blending of past and present; it extends to a collapse of linear time that incorporates the future, thereby destabilizing hegemonic temporal frameworks even further.

In the novel, the past functions as both a temporal and a spatial construct, where the Yam people once lived under Mr. Charlie's rule, from which their community fled and Woodville departed as a "rotting tree trunk" (Brodber, 2007, p. 69). While the community's flight to Cabarita reflects a rupture with oppression in the pursuit of survival, Woodville's departure from the past represents the need to reconnect with communal memory. This theme is further emphasized through Essex's determination "to seek knowledge in the past" (Brodber, 2007, p. 69). Metaphorically conceived as history, this fictional communal past becomes a tangible space where characters such as Queenie, Essex, and Little Congo explore and collect evidence to reconstruct their history,

uncover the truth about their origins, and challenge the master's-imposed myth. Through this process, they reformulate their identity, reclaiming agency over their narrative.

Moreover, while Cabarita anchors the Yam people's present, "the Future," I-Sis and Sallywater's island, embodies aging, birth, and death and later becomes a trading zone. The narrative depicts the Yam children's development as they travel to faraway areas, experiencing different people, sharing ideas, conducting business, and discovering new realities. This deliberate dissolution of temporal and spatial axes from stable references challenges colonial concepts of progress or coherence, thwarting attempts to build chronological or geographic stability. At the same time, the novel's spatial complexities highlight the diasporic capacity to create interconnected identities across fractured geographies.

As in all her novels, Brodber articulates a view of independence that extends beyond political sovereignty to include psychological and cultural autonomy. This perspective reflects Glissant's concept of relation which suggests that true liberation arises from interconnectedness rather than seclusion. Glissant describes Caribbean creolization as relation, not as a mere "encounter" of identities but "a new and original dimension allowing each person to be there and elsewhere, rooted and open… in harmony and in errantry" (1997, p. 34). Glissant's concept of errantry, which involves purposeful wandering and relationality rejects fixed notions of place and embraces multiplicity, preserving the diversity of cultural roots while emphasizing their relational interactions (1997, p. 11). Brodber's portrayal of diasporic life becomes a celebration of movement, multiplicity, and cultural hybridity—core tenets of Afrofuturism's vision of freedom.

Additionally, the partition of the land into continents with overwhelming landscapes separated by water—Cabarita, Woodville's, Sallywater's, and the surrounding landscapes—recalls Gilroy's conceptualization of the Black Atlantic as a "transcultural, international formation" (Gilroy, 1993, p. 4), and its fragmented geography, "where movement, relocation, displacement, and relentlessness are the norms rather than the exceptions" (p. 133). These spaces symbolize the cultural and physical displacement endured by the African diaspora,

reinforcing their hybridity. The Yam children's ability to weave together fractured histories and spaces exemplifies Gilroy's view of the Atlantic as a "system of cultural exchanges" (p. 14), integrating African cosmologies with colonial legacies. Brodber reimagines the Black Atlantic in the novel's world as a relational network where disparate histories intertwine to establish a dynamic, communal identity through the interaction of memory, myth, and hybridization. This reimagining criticizes colonial narratives while recognizing the African diaspora's resilience and creativity.

Furthermore, Brodber's treatment of technology aligns with Afrofuturist exploration of the interplay of technology, creativity and reimagination of Black future. As a dual symbol of both oppression and freedom, technology serves as an inventive power to imagine new futures; a central duality to the Afrofuturist critique. Mr. Charlie's patent and the aqueducts left in the past showcase technology as the heritage of colonial exploitation. They represent how technological improvements under repressive systems benefited the ruler's rather than the community's interests. With the master's absence these infrastructures are left unattended, they rot and flood the field while the community "transfixed, kept looking up for the return of the Master" (Brodber, 2007, pp. 16-17). The decaying state of the infrastructure, the subsequent flight of the community and their relocation to Cabarita symbolize the rejection of remnants of their oppression. This physical separation from the former land underscores their rupture with the past and their attempt to establish a new independent way of life.

Once in Cabarita, the community's natural inventiveness is triggered by the urgency to reorganize their farming activities and adapt to meet their needs. The ability of the marginalized communities to rethink and reconstruct their realities using both inherited tools and new forms of knowledge is celebrated by this process of beginning anew, also an important concern in Afrofuturist criticism. Queenie's kayak, Essex waterplane, and even Little Congo's reliance on physical strength to swim to the past are all examples of unique, creative ways of trespassing their temporal and spatial circumstances. By combining science, tradition,

and imagination, these actions echo Afrofuturist notions of regaining agency over the past and creating alternative futures.

Afrofuturist concerns about science and technology's dual role as perpetuators of societal systems of control and as instruments for liberation and transformation surface in London/Abdul's "robot" narrative: "How would [Tayeb] tell me? Tell a robot? I was a robot" (Brodber, 2007, p. 141). This self-diagnosis mobilizes the Afrofuturist android/cyborg trope to name the potential for technological development both as dehumanization (the enslaved rendered programmable, fungible bodies) and futurity (new possibilities for identity and existence). Nonetheless, the novel most strikingly evidences the alienating potential of science in plantation bio-engineering: the Yam people are prevented from aging and Woodville/Tayeb and I-Sis are surgically "changed to make babies" and "just to have sex" respectively (p. 134). By the end of the novel, the discovery that Woodville/Tayeb is the progenitor of the Yam children proves the role of science as subservient to the colonial power.

According to Josephs's Afrofuturist analysis of the novel, Brodber's "twinning of fiction and science" is used in the service of African diasporic unity, noting that her earlier novels incorporate elements of myth, allegory, and spiritual narrative and social sciences "with a curiously complementary scientific approach" (Josephs, 2013, p. 132). However, in *The Rainmaker's Mistake,* Brodber incorporates "hard science" to extend the speculative dimensions of her narrative. By integrating speculative elements, Brodber addresses both the material and imaginative needs of her characters, providing a framework for envisioning a future where liberation transcends temporal and spatial boundaries. Queenie's scientific knowledge and her "bag of archeological tricks" from the Norm (Brodber, 2007, p. 109) reflecting the importance of scientific knowledge, contrast with Essex's beliefs. When Essex admits to communicating with the spirits of the women under the mound, the conversation reflects the ideological divide between the two characters. Queenie's rational, scientific approach contrasts with Essex's spiritual, ancestral connection to the past. Their conflict echoes the broader Afrofuturist issue of reconciling traditional wisdom with modern technology in the search for freedom.

Ultimately, *The Rainmaker's Mistake* demonstrates how Afrofuturist principles can reshape narratives of time, space, and identity in the African diaspora. It rejects linear temporality and strict spatial boundaries in favor of relationality and transformation. Afrofuturism's focus on chronopolitical interventions allows for a liberating reimagination of time while empowering marginalized identities to interact with the past and future. Through the Yam people's rejection of oppressive legacies and the children's inventiveness in navigating space and time, Brodber combines myth, memory, and speculative possibilities to offer a story of resilience and creativity representing her ideal of a diasporic identity free of colonial limitations.

5. COMMUNITY-BASED RESISTANCE AND STORYTELLING

The Rainmaker's Mistake expands on Brodber's signature narrative technique of polyphonic storytelling, emphasizing communal identity over colonial individualism. The multiplicity of voices in the novel underscores the shared yet diverse experiences of the African diaspora. Although no single narrator owns the truth, each of the seven narrative voices captures a distinct perspective at diverse stages of their physical and psychological development—Queenie's child attention, teenage curiosity, and adult analytic calm; Luke's counter-myth tale; Essex's inventive stubbornness; Little Congo's endurance; Miss Mathilde's caretaking anxiety; London/Abdul's recovered memory—and adds to a larger story of emancipation as a shared labor.

This collaborative authorship had already been explored in *Louisiana*, where a protagonist, her husband, the souls of ancestral women, and a fictional editor co-produce a "community tale" (Brodber, 1994, p. 161). Brodber establishes a communal framework that acknowledges the interdependence of diasporic identities while resisting the individualist forces of colonialism. As in *Louisiana*, Brodber depicts *The Rainmaker's Mistake* as a site of cultural healing where the barriers between past and present, the living and the dead, and the individual and the community are continually renegotiated.

In Caribbean literature, oral traditions, such as storytelling, represent one of the strategies viable to maintain cultural traditions and rebuild the history of peoples who were alienated from their past throughout the colonial period. As a crucial resistance method for African descendants in the New World against imposed hegemonic cultures, storytelling—a recurring literary device in Brodber's fiction—also served in the formation of communal bonds.

In *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, storytelling is used as a narrative technique to both recover historical memory and imagine emancipatory futures that challenge the constraints of realist conventions. Brodber also allows her character Luke to use this strategy in his invention of the story of the Black lace people for the community's children. He replaces the colonial master's narrative with a counter-myth that enables alternative possibilities for collective liberation and agency: "I am Luke. I composed this tale and told it to the children" (Brodber, 2007, p. 41).

Regarding Brodber's narrative stress on the potential of storytelling to envision liberatory futures, Josephs (2013) notes that the novel's speculative elements serve as a means of interrogating and celebrating the heterogeneity of Blackness while engaging this diversity to imagine a future Black world (p. 130). Brodber's use of memory, myth, and speculative fiction not only celebrates the African diaspora's collective and creative ability to transcend historical and geographical constraints but also challenges colonial narratives.

Brodber encourages readers to delve into the complexities of diasporic identity and the transformational potential of communal narratives while at the same time reconsidering the African diasporic experience as a dynamic process of remembering and reinterpreting.

6. CONCLUSION

In *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, Brodber provides a thorough critique of colonial histories and their lasting consequences through an interdisciplinary approach that combines historiography, anthropology, and psychosociology. This approach allows her to question and deconstruct the tenets of Western hegemonic thought while elaborating a narrative that

focuses on the resilience, creativity, and self-determination of Black diasporic communities. Brodber's combination of allegory, myth, and speculative elements disrupts the linear temporality and geographic stability implemented by colonial systems, encouraging readers to reimagine the past, present, and future of the Black diaspora in transformative and liberatory ways.

At its core, the novel exemplifies how Caribbean literature can transcend the constraints of conventional realism to address complex issues of race, identity, and resistance. As Brodber introduces Afrofuturist concerns, she produces a dynamic conjunction of postcolonial and speculative literary traditions. Her creative narrative approach dismantles colonial concepts of time, place, and identity and imagines a community future that values collective growth and relational belonging over individualism and control.

The novel's Afrofuturist undertones offer a framework for envisioning diasporic futures that transcend the limitations of colonial chronology and geography. In doing so, *The Rainmaker's Mistake* exemplifies the potential of Afrofuturist literature to reimagine the possibilities for Black futures while grounding its vision in the realities of historical and cultural experience.

Finally, Brodber's novel contributes to a broader global discussion on race, identity, and resistance that goes beyond the limits of Caribbean literature. Brodber broadens the scope of postcolonial and Afrofuturist by incorporating key concerns of these literary traditions, pushing readers to engage with the intricacies of diasporic histories and futures. *The Rainmaker's Mistake* stands as a testament to the transformative power of storytelling, demonstrating how literature can serve as a tool for historical recuperation, cultural resistance, and speculative imagining. Through its interdisciplinary and genre-defying approach, the novel offers a compelling vision of a communal, speculative future for Black diasporas—one rooted in memory, resilience, and hope.

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FANNY PRICE: REDEFINING VIRTUE. FROM RICHARDSON'S DIDACTICISM TO AUSTEN'S MORAL MODERNITY

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of this study aims to reconsider the moral economy of reward from Samuel Richardson to Jane Austen, arguing that Austen inaugurates a revolution in virtue — a "Rewardution" — in which ethical value is internal, relational, and narratively mediated. While Richardson's heroines, such as the protagonist in *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) rely on endurance, social recognition, and eventual marital reward to confirm their virtue, Austen situates moral authority within the heroine herself. Fanny Price, the protagonist of *Mansfield Park* (1814) embodies ethical agency that is self-chosen, inwardly sustained, and relationally influential, demonstrating that virtue can operate independently from external validation and yet shape the moral awareness of those characters around her.

The beginning of the English novel is generally traced to the eighteenth century, with Richardson widely recognized as a foundational figure. His innovation lay in the use of the epistolary form, which allowed an unprecedented immediacy of experience and inwardness of character (Watt, 1957, p. 87). Through first-person narration, Richardson constructs didactic heroines whose virtue is tested through external trials and validated by social recognition, often via marriage or the preservation of chastity (Kinkead-Weekes, 1973; Doody,1974).

Richardson's heroines are shaped by a moral framework deeply infused with puritan ideals. Their constancy is not only socially recognized but

also understood as adherence to a higher ethical and spiritual law, where virtue is measured through self-discipline, obedience, and moral endurance. Pamela's resistance to male advances exemplifies this model: her chastity and steadfastness are maintained under trial, yet always with the expectation of eventual reward, revealing the transactional and socially mediated nature of virtue in a puritan-influenced moral universe. As Carroll notes, Richardson's characters "exemplify the moral earnestness of a Protestant ethic still deeply infused with Puritan ideals" (Carroll, 1971, p. 87).

Writing roughly seventy years later, Jane Austen inherits this Richardsonian tradition but transforms it to reflect evolving moral, social, and psychological concerns (Johnson, 1988; Duckworth, 1971). In *Mansfield Park* (1814), Fanny Price emerges as a heroine whose moral authority is grounded in interior judgment and relational influence. Her virtue is self-determined, sustained through ethical reflection, and expressed quietly in her interactions with others. Rather than seeking approval or reward, Fanny's integrity shapes both her own development and the ethical perceptions of those around her (Sutherland, 2005; Johnson, 1988). Through this inwardly anchored moral vision, Austen inaugurates a modern, psychologically nuanced novel, challenging both the conduct-book model and the idealized, performative heroines of Richardson's fiction.

This essay proceeds in three stages. First, it traces Richardson's didactic legacy, examining the mechanisms through which his heroines' virtue is tested and rewarded (Watt, 1957; Doody, 1974). Second, it explores Fanny Price as a moral center distinct from this earlier model, showing how Austen's narrative techniques — particularly free indirect discourse — make her ethical deliberation both inward and socially influential, while also considering the significance of naming and character foils in reinforcing moral and ethical frameworks (Johnson, 1988; Sutherland, 2005). Third, it analyzes the Sotherton estate episode, illustrating how Fanny's reflective agency actively reshapes the moral landscape of the novel. Through this multi-layered analysis, it becomes evident that Austen not only inherits Richardson's tradition but fundamentally transforms it, offering a model of virtue attuned to the

psychological, social, and ethical consciousness of her era and establishing a novel conception of moral reward — a "rewardution."

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND OBJETIVES

2.1. RICHARDSON'S DIDACTIC FRAMEWORK: VIRTUE AS EXTERNAL TRIAL

According to Richardson, virtue is tested and confirmed primarily through external trials: assaults on chastity, temptations, or the demands of obedience imposed by society and male authority. His novels serve as moral projects intended to instruct readers, particularly women, in correct models of conduct (Watt, 1957; Doody, 1974).

In *Pamela* (1740), the heroine is constantly subjected to outer temptation and the power of male figures. Her eventual marriage to Mr. B confirms virtue as something externally rewarded, reflecting the expectations of readers in the 1740s. Pamela resists Mr. B's advances, confident that her steadfastness will eventually yield a reward; she seems aware of her role as a redemptive figure for Mr. B's failings:

"My honesty is all my fortune; and, if I can preserve that, I am sure my reward will follow, though I must still submit to many trials" (Richardson, 1740, Letter 32).

Her letters function as both testimony and instruction: "*My honesty, I hope, God will bless me in, though I suffer for it*" (Letter 32).

These epistolary passages transform Pamela's private anxieties into public exemplars of virtuous conduct, turning personal trials into lessons for the reader.

Richardson's reliance on the epistolary form is central to this didactic design. Letters allow his heroines to narrate events directly to readers, creating immediacy and psychological depth while maintaining a performative dimension: virtue is validated through observation by an implied audience. As Watt notes, the epistolary technique "intensifies the didactic function by intertwining personal experience with moral instruction" (1957, p. 87), giving readers a sense of witnessing the heroine's endurance in real time. Pamela's repeated reflections on the

dangers she faces—"*O what a world of wickedness and deceit I am got into!—Verily, I must pray against falling into the snares that are laid for my innocence"* (Letter 32)—show how private deliberations are transformed into public exemplars of virtue.

Doody observes that Richardson dramatizes the inner life of virtue but confines women's moral agency within narrow limits of obedience and sexual purity (Doody, 1974). Mark Kinkead-Weekes emphasizes the theatrical and moral design of Richardson's narratives, showing how heroines are staged as moral exemplars, with each episode functioning as a lesson in endurance (Kinkead-Weekes, 1973). Richardson's model links female virtue directly to social expectation and male approval: Pamela's reward is recognition for her obedience.

Even when she exercises judgment or cleverness, these qualities remain secondary to submission. Her role as a redemptive figure for Mr. B intertwines personal morality with the moral improvement of men, reinforcing gendered hierarchies.

This raises a question: are women taught a model grounded in hypocrisy? It seems problematic to idealize a virtue that depends on external validation and economic compensation rather than inner moral truth.

By contrast, Austen abandons the epistolary form in favour of free indirect discourse, which allows the narrator to adopt a character's perspective while maintaining narrative cohesion and depth. In *Mansfield Park*, when Fanny Price observes Henry Crawford's flirtation—"*Fanny could not think it right*" (I.15)—her moral judgment is conveyed directly to the reader without letters or an explicit audience. Unlike Pamela, Fanny does not anticipate recognition or material reward; her integrity is maintained independently of social acknowledgment. Through this technique, Austen enables readers to experience the heroine's ethical discernment and self-knowledge, emphasizing autonomy over performative virtue.

Richardson's model, therefore, praises a false virtue, whereas Austen's emphasizes one grounded in sincerity and moral integrity. While Austen inherits aspects of Richardson's framework, she is also a

developmental author, challenging the old system through various elements of the novel and presenting a new conception of moral agency.

2.2. AUSTEN'S MORAL MODERNITY: INWARD VIRTUE

Fanny's role illustrates a redefinition of female virtue. Whereas Richardson's heroines operate within a framework of reward and punishment, measured by endurance and socially sanctioned approval, Fanny embodies ethical constancy that is self-chosen and relationally influential. Her moral authority, exercised inwardly, guides Edmund's judgment, shapes Sir Thomas, and exposes the flaws of Maria and Henry Crawford. The narrative shows that virtue is not merely about survival, reward, or social conformity; it involves fidelity to conscience and discernment of right action in a complex social world.

This shift also reflects broader cultural changes. By Jane Austen's time, novels had become central to cultural and literary life, reflecting broader social changes. The growing circulation of novels and rising literacy, especially among women, expanded both the audience and the expectations for fiction (Allan, 2011; Chartier, 2023; Richetti & McDowell, 2022). This expansion created space for novels to explore interiority, self-knowledge, and moral reflection, as well as social critique (Todd, 1999; Smith, 2006). Austen's works, in particular, engage these trends, combining attention to individual character development with insight into social and ethical concerns (Duckworth, 1971; Erden, 2020; Johnson, 2010). Scholars have emphasized that novels of this period, through their focus on private lives and ethical choices, allowed readers—especially women—to navigate personal education, moral reasoning, and social expectations (Doody, 1974; Johnson, 1988; Watt, 1957). Austen's abandonment of the purely didactic epistolary form responds to these changes: her heroines possess self-guided integrity that is credible, instructive, psychologically complex, and socially aware. Fanny Price's silent judgments and careful observation exemplify this new model of virtue, expressed through quiet discernment rather than external reward.

Thus, while Richardson's epistolary heroines serve as conduct models framed by male authority and social expectations, Austen redefines

virtue through free indirect discourse as inward reflection rather than public declaration. Fanny's judgments often remain unspoken, conveyed through narrative alignment with her consciousness.

This contrast positions Fanny Price as the moral center of *Mansfield Park*: unlike Richardson's instructional heroines, she embodies a complex ethical vision. Her virtue is self-chosen, quietly exercised, and relationally influential. By observing her reflections and interactions, readers witness how Austen reshapes the heroine's role, presenting moral constancy not as a performance for societal reward but as an inward compass guiding both personal development and the trajectories of those around her. This approach allows Austen to explore the interplay between personal integrity and social influence, demonstrating how the novel's moral architecture is anchored in the heroine's interior life. Examining key episodes, her ethical interactions, and the significance of private spaces reveals Austen's innovative redefinition of virtue and her subtle challenge to eighteenth-century didactic conventions.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. FANNY PRICE AS MORAL CENTRE

Jane Austen's Mansfield Park represents a decisive shift in the depiction of female virtue, moving from externally validated models toward an ethics rooted in moral introspection and personal integrity. While Part 2 has already addressed the contrast with Richardson, here we focus on how Austen's heroine embodies inward moral authority and its relational implications. Fanny Price demonstrates ethical agency that is self-chosen, internally sustained, and subtly influential, showing how inward reflection can constitute a form of moral power.

The narrative technique of free indirect discourse gives readers access to Fanny's thought processes, offering a nuanced portrayal of her moral deliberations. When she observes Henry Crawford's flirtation with the Bertram sisters, her judgment is quietly expressed: "*Fanny could not think it right*" (I.15). Similarly, her observations of Mary Crawford's manipulations— "*Fanny had observed something… which she could*

not approve, and she said nothing; but the calmness of her mind conveyed the whole to Edmund" (II.7)—grant readers insight into her discernment without overt exposition. Unlike Pamela, whose virtue is performed for an audience through letters, Fanny's reflection is private, yet it shapes the ethical fabric of Mansfield Park, influencing Edmund's judgments, revealing the flaws of Maria and Henry Crawford, and guiding Sir Thomas's reassessment of his own actions.

Austen's innovation lies not only in the inward orientation of virtue but also in the complex moral relationality it fosters. Fanny's integrity is maintained independently of social acknowledgment or reward, yet it functions relationally: the household's ethical landscape is subtly structured through her observations, silences, and judgments. Sutherland emphasizes that Austen's heroines often achieve moral authority "not through performance for society, but through sustained attention, ethical reflection, and relational subtlety" (2005, p. 122). Johnson similarly notes that Fanny's quiet resilience demonstrates virtue as "an active, inwardly anchored force that subtly structures social interactions" (2010, p. 88).

3.2. KEY EPISODES AND ETHICAL REDEFINITION

Key episodes illustrate this redefinition. Fanny's refusal of Henry Crawford's proposal—"*I cannot accept him… I cannot like him, sir, well enough to marry him*" (II.8)—demonstrates ethical steadfastness, not social ambition. Her largely unspoken judgments regarding Maria's improprieties are nonetheless understood by Edmund, showing that moral influence can operate without performative declaration. Her refusal to participate in the theatricals— "*she had not only pleasure in the solitude of her own reflections, but the conviction of never having done anything to disgrace her*" (I.15)—further emphasizes self-directed honesty as the foundation of virtue. These examples contrast sharply with Richardsonian didacticism: where Pamela's virtue is externally validated, Fanny's emanates from her internal convictions.

Guided by her internal moral compass, Austen interrogates the limitations of socially imposed virtue. Fanny's choices are independent of patriarchal surveillance, religious expectation, or material reward. Virtue is measured not by obedience or endurance, but by discernment,

judgment, and fidelity to conscience. By centering the narrative on Fanny's internal deliberations, Austen presents a heroine whose ethical authority is authentic, instructive, and relationally effective, offering readers a model of female virtue grounded in self-knowledge and ethical responsibility.

3.3. THE CONCEPT OF "REWARDUTION"

Finally, Austen reimagines the notion of reward. The 'prize' Fanny earns is neither material nor socially visible; it affirms moral integrity, relational influence, and the quiet shaping of her ethical world. In this sense, Mansfield Park dramatizes a conceptual "Rewardution"—a revolution of virtue in which the reward is inward and relational, reflecting the moral and social consciousness of Austen's era. Fanny Price exemplifies a model of virtue suited for a new generation, one that values psychological insight, personal integrity, and ethical responsibility over performative obedience or societal approval.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. REWARDUTION: THE REVOLUTION OF REWARD

Fanny's steadfastness under pressure, exemplified by her refusal of Henry Crawford, is more than a personal triumph: it redefines the very meaning of reward in the English novel. In Richardson's Pamela, virtue is confirmed and validated through marriage, which functions as the ultimate prize for the heroine's endurance. Pamela herself asserts: "*My honesty is all my fortune; and, if I can preserve that, I am sure my reward will follow*" (Letter 32). Similarly, in Letter 45, she observes:

"I am resolved to preserve my honesty, and I am sure my reward will follow; for though I must still endure trials, I know virtue cannot be without its recompense,"

and in Letter 63: "I cannot but be sensible of the blessings that will follow my steadfastness, especially in the heart of my dear master, who will surely reward my constancy with his hand and protection."

These passages make explicit the transactional nature of Richardsonian virtue: endurance under trial leads to material, social, and marital reward, reinforcing social hierarchies and gendered expectations.

In *Mansfield Park*, Austen inverts this trajectory. For Fanny, virtue is self-determined and absolute, defined by introspection rather than external reward: "*Fanny, though silent, felt that to act rightly was more necessary than to be admired; her conscience was her constant guide*" (I.10). This inward orientation is further reinforced through Austen's linguistic playfulness, where Fanny's very name encapsulates the paradox of virtue's cost and reward.

The pun embedded in Fanny's name underscores this redefinition of reward. She is both the "Price" — the cost of maintaining ethical constancy — and the "Prize" for those, like Edmund and eventually Sir Thomas, who come to recognize the truth of her moral vision. Austen thus stages a conceptual "rewardution": a revolution in the way reward is conceived, where virtue itself constitutes the prize. Importantly, the novel presents two interrelated types of prizes. First is the internal prize: Fanny's fidelity to her principles, her moral correctness, and the validation of her conscience. Second is the relational or external prize: the recognition, love, and trust of those around her, achieved only after the Bertrams' moral atonement—a process that mirrors the ethical education Fanny herself has quietly undergone. Fanny's virtue both sustains her integrity and reshapes the ethical awareness of her household, highlighting the interplay between personal constancy and relational influence.

Key to this transformation is Fanny's refusal of Henry Crawford's proposal. "*I cannot like him, sir, well enough to marry him*" (II.8) reflects an ethical decision that prioritizes conscience over material advantage or familial security. As the narrative emphasizes: "*She knew it would be easier to comply, and perhaps safer, but she could not consent to a choice that violated her principles*" (II.12). Marrying without moral conviction would compromise her inward virtue. As Sutherland observes, Austen's heroines are defined by "their refusal to compromise interior conviction for social advantage" (2005, p. 123). In refusing Crawford, Fanny not only protects her own integrity but also demonstrates a moral ethic that contrasts sharply with Richardson's

transactional framework, where endurance is rewarded primarily through marriage or social approval.

Austen further engages with Richardsonian marriage-as-reward logic. While marriage continues to function as a marker of moral fulfillment in her novels, in Mansfield Park it is confirmation rather than compensation. Even though Fanny's prospects for a secure marriage are limited, she refuses Crawford because virtue cannot be compromised for convenience or material gain. As Duckworth notes, Austen presents marriage less as a prize for endurance than as "the symbolic consolidation of a moral order already established" (1971, p. 68). Similarly, Doody emphasizes that Austen's heroines embody "a reconfiguration of female virtue as something inward, consistent, and self-sustaining, not dependent on the spectacle of chastity or the validation of a husband" (1974, p. 212).

Fanny's decision—articulated in "*I should have been miserable with him*" (II.8)—transforms the logic of reward: virtue is not for sale. Austen's free indirect discourse immerses the reader in her moral reasoning, eliminating the performative dimension characteristic of Pamela's letters. Virtue is internal, authentic, and relationally influential. The "prizes" are both personal moral fulfillment and the ethical recognition she elicits from others, illustrating how integrity can structure social dynamics without being dependent on external validation. In transforming reward from a social transaction into an inner affirmation, Austen redefines the moral economy of the novel itself.

Finally, this reconceptualization of reward sets the stage for analysis of specific narrative contexts, particularly the Sotherton episode. Here, Fanny's inward virtue interacts with social dynamics in a tangible way: her observation, reflection, and subtle guidance demonstrate how moral authority is exercised in practice. Austen shows that moral steadfastness is not only internally sustaining but also relationally transformative, revealing the practical consequences of her heroine's ethical vision and further consolidating the concept of "rewardution."

4.2. THE SOTHERTON EPISODE: MORAL DISCERNEMENT IN ACTION

So far, we have shown how Austen revolutionizes Richardson's didacticism through a new heroine with fresh ethical insight, responding to a new literary period and a novel conception of reward, masterfully reinforced through Austen's pun-based naming of her heroine. The Sotherton episode provides a vivid example of Fanny Price's moral perception in action. Her quiet observation allows her to perceive the failings of others, revealing that her virtue, though inwardly rooted, carries profound social resonance. Upon entering the estate, "*Fanny's heart misgave her… she could not think that all this levity could be innocent*" (*Mansfield Park* I.13), revealing her immediate awareness of the flirtatious and careless behaviour of the party.

This moral awareness is not passive: Fanny's reflections extend beyond mere perception; they subtly influence Edmund's understanding of events. Observing her attentiveness, he internally acknowledges her judgment: "*He could not but feel a respect for her quiet steadfastness*" (I.13). Later, as she watches Mary Crawford's flirtation with Henry, Fanny notes: "*She feared that his attentions might be thought too well received, yet she could not speak, though her mind was full of warning*" (I.14). Additionally, when Tom and Maria wander into the shrubbery, Fanny observes: "*She could not approve of such forwardness, yet she kept her thoughts to herself*" (I.13), highlighting her discernment and restraint. Here Austen emphasizes that Fanny's virtue operates relationally: though unspoken, it shapes the ethical lens through which others interpret the scene. Her careful observation contrasts sharply with the moral blindness of Mary Crawford and Tom Bertram, exposing the divide between performative cleverness and principled integrity.

This relational influence distinguishes Fanny from Richardson's heroines. Pamela, for example, is primarily concerned with safeguarding her own virtue and securing her reward. Her letters frame morality in personal and transactional terms: she aims to preserve her honesty and receive social recognition, but she does not subtly guide or affect the moral choices of others. In contrast, Fanny's inner moral reasoning has outward consequences: her calm observation and steadfast judgment

illuminate the failings of those around her, prompting Edmund to reassess his own perceptions and judgments.

The episode also underscores Austen's redefinition of reward. Fanny maintains her ethical standards despite social and familial pressures. Her steadfast judgment and careful observations demonstrate that ethical introspection need not rely on outward validation; it is lived, deliberate, and internally grounded. As Erden notes (2020, p. 47), Fanny "exposes the moral blindness of others", while Claudia L. Johnson observes that Austen "dramatizes virtue rather than spelling it out" (1988, p. 26).

Through the Sotherton episode, Austen demonstrates that virtue is active, reflective, and influential — not merely a quality to be externally rewarded. Fanny's inward discernment, coupled with her subtle shaping of Edmund's perception, reinforces the idea introduced previously that reward is not material or social but ethical, relational, and transformative. This scene illustrates the continuing innovation of Austen's moral vision, situating Fanny as a heroine whose integrity quietly shapes her environment and offers a model of virtue suited for a new era and generation.

In contrast to Fanny's quietly transformative virtue, Pamela's moral focus remains self-contained and reward oriented. Her influence does not extend to the moral awareness of those around her; she neither shapes others' ethical judgments nor subtly correct their behaviour. This comparison further highlights Austen's revolutionary approach: Virtue, in Austen's reimagining, is no longer a personal shield or transactional tool, but an active moral force that engages with and transforms the social landscape — exemplified through Fanny's actions at Sotherton.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have explored three key aspects of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* in relation to Samuel Richardson's Pamela: the redefinition of female virtue, the inward orientation of moral authority, and the transformation of the notion of reward. By analyzing Fanny Price's character and narrative role, I have shown how Austen decisively departs from the Richardsonian model of didacticism, transforming it into a more introspective, relationally nuanced framework. Unlike

Richardson's heroines, whose virtue is confirmed through endurance, social recognition, and ultimately marital reward, and who often felt morally obliged to "redeem" men, Fanny embodies a self-directed ethical agency, independent of social or male pressures. Her moral authority is rooted in introspection, principled judgment, and relational influence, revealing a form of virtue that is internally sustained yet profoundly transformative within her social environment (Doody, 1974; Sutherland, 2005).

Through Austen's use of free indirect discourse and pivotal episodes such as the Sotherton visit, this paper has demonstrated how Fanny's moral reasoning operates both privately and relationally. Unlike the performative virtue of Richardson's heroines, Fanny's inward discernment shapes the ethical perceptions of those around her, including Edmund and Sir Thomas, subtly guiding their judgments and decisions. This relational dimension underscores a radical reconceptualization of virtue: it is not a static quality to be rewarded or recognized externally, but an active, reflective, and socially consequential force (Johnson, 2010).

The concept of "rewardution," or the revolution of reward, further illustrates Austen's innovation. Fanny's steadfast refusal of Henry Crawford exemplifies a morality that cannot be exchanged for material security or social advantage: she is free to act according to conscience without feeling morally obligated to "save" anyone, in contrast to Richardsonian heroines who often bear such burdens. In doing so, Austen establishes a model of female ethical agency that is inwardly anchored, socially perceptive, and consistent, offering readers a nuanced understanding of moral excellence that extends beyond personal survival to influence the moral fabric of her community (Harris, 2000; Duckworth, 1971).

While these themes have been studied previously, this paper contributes a fresh perspective by linking Fanny's ethical practices to narrative technique, episode-specific analysis, and the broader implications of moral relationality. By highlighting these dynamics, it becomes evident that Austen's innovations are not merely stylistic or thematic but constitute a profound reimagining of the moral and social potential of the novel, transforming inherited didactic conventions into a model of inward virtue and relational influence.

Finally, the enduring relevance of Austen's novels in the twenty-first century can be traced directly to this revolutionary approach to virtue. Readers continue to resonate with morally complex heroines who embody ethical introspection, relational influence, and self-directed judgment. The ethical dilemmas Austen presents, and her exploration of conscience, integrity, and moral responsibility, continue to offer meaningful reflection on human behavior and social expectations. In this sense, Austen's break from traditional didactic models is not merely historical but provides a lasting framework for understanding virtue, agency, and moral education (Erden, 2020; Johnson, 2010).

In a broader sense, the lessons of *Mansfield Park* extend beyond eighteenth-century context, addressing universal questions about conscience, integrity, and the exercise of moral judgment. Fanny Price's steadfast ethical compass models agency that is both personal and socially attuned, illustrating that virtue is neither passive nor transactional but actively shapes the world around us. Austen ensures that her novels continue to illuminate human character, demonstrating that inward moral reflection, relational influence, and the steadfast adherence to principle remain central to the ethical imagination of modern readers.

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FANNY PRICE, THE CENTRE THAT DOES HOLD: FROM INTERIOR REFLECTION TO MORAL ORBIT IN MANSFIELD PARK

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1. INTRODUCTION

This essay seeks to challenge the long-standing perception of Fanny Price as a passive heroine in Jane Austen's Mansfield Park (1814). On the contrary, Fanny functions as the vital core of the novel's ethical universe — the gravitational force that holds the entire Mansfield system together. Like a planetary sphere exerting invisible yet decisive influence, she becomes the ethical axis around which other characters orbit, their balance and disorder reflecting her moral composure.

The title, "The Centre That Does Hold," plays on W. B. Yeats's later image of a collapsing world in "The Second Coming" (1919), where "things fall apart; the centre cannot hold." Austen's heroine embodies the reverse condition: from Yeats's chaos to Austen's moral equilibrium. In Fanny Price, the hub not only holds but sustains — she preserves coherence where others drift toward ruin. Her apparent quietude conceals the very energy that keeps the moral order intact.

It is precisely this paradox — motion within quietness — that has often been overlooked. As Johnson observes, "Austen's heroines achieve moral authority not through assertion but through steadfastness" (1988, p. 72). Fanny's composure, then, is not passivity but a deliberate form of ethical agency, a force that governs the emotional and moral tides of Mansfield Park.

Building on this view, the essay argues that Austen redefines the Bildungsroman, transforming it from an individual narrative of self-

formation into a collective principled education in which Fanny's growth is inseparable from that of those around her. Finally, the essay turns to the East Room — the physical and symbolic heart of Fanny's moral world — as a space where reflection, solitude, and conviction converge. In this sanctuary, Fanny maintains her inner balance and autonomy, anticipating Virginia Woolf's later claim that women require "a room of one's own" to think, to imagine, and to remain faithful to their own ethical vision.

Through Fanny Price, Austen transforms stillness into strength, redefining moral action as an inward force whose gravitational pull restores coherence to a disordered world.La numeración de los apartados y subapartados se hará de forma manual, no se usará la numeración automática. Siga el formato de los ejemplos.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND OBJETIVES

This section situates the study within critical debates on Austen and outlines the objectives of the essay.

Drawing on feminist criticism, ethical readings, and close narrative analysis, the essay aims to recast Fanny Price as the moral centre of Mansfield Park and to examine the narrative strategies that sustain this interpretation.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. FANNY AS A MORAL CENTRE

Fanny Price has often been misunderstood as passive. Critics such as Lascelles call her "a character of unremarkable energy" (1939), Chapman claims she "suffers and observes more than she acts" (1933), and Monaghan later describes her as "a silent moral witness" (1983). At first glance, her quiet demeanor, frail health, and reluctance to participate in social events seem to confirm these readings. She is seen as a weak character because, for instance, in Chapter VII she is overwhelmed after cutting roses for forty-five minutes and walking under the sun to carry them to Aunt Norris. However, through Edmund's

defense we see she has been overworked and mistreated—"no one could have resisted such heat without resulting in a headache." Her physical frailty is thus not a sign of ethical weakness but of endurance tested to its limit.

What critics have taken for passivity is, in fact, the quiet fortitude of a mind unwilling to yield.

As many feminist critics have since argued, Austen's portrayal of Fanny's fragility serves not to diminish her but to dramatize the tension between bodily limitation and moral energy. As Kirkham notes, Austen's heroines often "turn the apparent virtues of submission and silence into instruments of moral power" (1983, p. 112). In this light, Fanny's endurance under physical strain reveals a discipline that is both ethical and spiritual—a quiet defiance of the patriarchal structures that confine her. Austen's artistry lies precisely in transforming what appears to be passivity into a subtle, steady form of moral action. Fanny's silence, her careful observation, and her inner reflection act as the moral mirror of Mansfield Park—a mirror that exposes vanity, desire, and self-deception in those around her who, paradoxically, depend on her for moral validation.

Fanny's strength is not performative; it resides in her conscience. Nowhere is this clearer than in the episode of the private theatricals, one of the novel's most revealing moments. When the Bertrams and Crawfords decide to perform Lovers' Vows, Fanny alone perceives the impropriety of the plan. She resists the ethical blindness that excites everyone else: "Fanny could not think it right" (I.15). Her refusal is quiet but absolute; she does not condemn others aloud, yet her disapproval radiates through the scene. Critics such as Tanner have pointed out that Mansfield Park "tests the relationship between appearance and reality, performance and sincerity" (Jane Austen, 1986, p. 150). Fanny's refusal to participate in Lovers' Vows thus becomes not an act of social withdrawal but a rejection of moral masquerade. In that stillness, Austen transforms passivity into critique. By remaining offstage while others perform, Fanny exposes the dangers of role-playing itself—how easily moral identity can dissolve into theatricality. Austen turns the stage into

a moral battleground, and Fanny's composure into its most decisive gesture.

In her mind remains the image of her uncle Sir Thomas, who gradually transforms from a figure of fear into a moral example and, finally, a tender father.

This episode also establishes a pattern of moral resistance that defines Fanny's growth. As time passes, another trial of endurance arises when Henry Crawford proposes to her. Once again, she stands alone in judgment. Her refusal—"I cannot accept him… I cannot like him, sir, well enough to marry him" (II.8)—comes despite immense pressure from Sir Thomas and the social expectations that urge her to comply. In that moment, Fanny acts—not through rebellion or eloquence, but through probity. Her "no" is an act of integrity that defies the system of patriarchal approval and economic expedience. Butler observes that Austen's heroines "act from the internalized authority of conscience rather than from social expectation" (p. 221). Fanny's refusal of Henry Crawford exemplifies precisely this form of moral agency. Her resistance is not romantic obstinacy but an ethical stance—an assertion of principle against patriarchal pragmatism.

This moment crystallizes Austen's redefinition of strength. Unlike Maria, who marries for advantage and falls, Fanny's refusal preserves her ethical core. Austen turns the silence of submission into the language of principle; what seems weakness is, in truth, a radical assertion of will.

Austen repeatedly aligns Fanny's moral clarity with her capacity for observation and for listening. She perceives what others choose to ignore. Watching Mary Crawford manipulate Edmund, Fanny's silent discernment speaks volumes: "Fanny had observed something… which she could not approve, and she said nothing; but the calmness of her mind conveyed the whole to Edmund" (II.7). Here, Fanny's influence operates through the quiet power of moral example. Her silence is not repression or passivity but eloquence—it becomes a language of ethical presence.

Yet not all critics have embraced this interpretation. Lionel Trilling admired Fanny's purity but doubted the novel's vitality, finding in her scruples a limitation rather than an achievement. Edward Said, by

contrast, read Mansfield Park through the lens of imperial complicity, seeing in Fanny's moral order a mirror of colonial hierarchy—a stillness that depends on the silenced labour of others, "the dark foundation of Mansfield's supposed virtue."

These critiques illuminate Mansfield Park's ethical tension but stop short of Austen's deeper innovation. Both readings, while incisive, risk conflating Fanny's principled constancy with the structures she inhabits. Fanny's steadfastness is not an endorsement of authority but an inward redefinition of action: her resistance to the theatricals, her refusal of Henry Crawford, her compassion for Edmund—all occur in stillness yet produce profound change. What Trilling calls "immobility" is actually the paradoxical movement of moral gravity: the unseen force that keeps the novel's world from disintegration. Austen turns inwardness into the new measure of action.

Fanny's ethical centre is tested further when she is sent back to Portsmouth, the chaotic household of her birth. Even removed from the stabilizing orbit of Mansfield, she maintains her moral gravity, resisting the centrifugal pull of disorder and indifference.

In contrast to Maria's collapse and Edmund's wavering, Fanny sustains her moral coherence. Her conscience, like a compass, maintains direction even when displaced. This independence confirms her centrality not as an imposed ideal but as a lived discipline: her patience becomes agency, her reserve, movement.

As Duckworth concludes, Mansfield Park "imagines a social order sustained not by power but by principle" (1971, p. 56). Fanny, as the principled core, embodies that sustaining principle. Her integrity operates like gravity—invisible yet inescapable—holding the novel's ethical universe in balance. Through these episodes, Austen constructs a form of quiet heroism. Fanny's moral agency resides in restraint, in the strength to withhold consent rather than seek attention. Her power, like gravity, is unseen but omnipresent. Each act of silent resistance—refusing the play, rejecting Henry, enduring Portsmouth—exerts an ethical pull that gradually corrects the orbit of those around her. Austen invites readers to measure action not by visibility but by consequence,

suggesting that the most enduring forms of virtue are those performed in stillness.

In this sense, Fanny Price is not simply a passive observer but the moral compass of Mansfield Park. Her consciousness becomes the field through which others' choices gain meaning. By turning inwardness into moral energy, Austen redefines action itself: the greatest movement occurs not on the social stage but within the self.

his section situates the study within critical debates on Austen and outlines the objectives of the essay.

Drawing on feminist criticism, ethical readings, and close narrative analysis, the essay aims to recast Fanny Price as the moral centre of Mansfield Park and to examine the narrative strategies that sustain this interpretation.

2.2. RELATIONAL INFLUENCE

If the previous section established Fanny Price as the inward principled core of Mansfield Park, this one reveals how that centre exerts force — how her ethical coherence, like gravity, subtly draws others toward moral awareness. She is a kind of moral mirror, reflecting others' flaws while illuminating their strengths. Her influence is never declared, yet it exerts a quiet gravitational pull, subtly redirecting the ethical trajectories of those around her. In a world of speech and social display, Fanny's restraint becomes transformative.

Austen constructs an ethical system in which goodness does not radiate through rhetoric or reforming zeal but through relational presence. The virtue of the heroine lies in her ability to affect change without seeking it. Her power, as argued, is centripetal — pulling others inward toward conscience. When Edmund confides in her, uncertain of Mary Crawford's moral fibre, he repeatedly finds himself returning to Fanny's clarity: "I cannot but think that what you have just said… is more reasonable than anything I have heard from anyone else" (III.8). The remark is simple but revealing — Edmund, whose ethical education falters amid social temptation, instinctively measures his reasoning against Fanny's inner compass. She becomes the silent mentor of his

ethical formation, a steadying voice he cannot ignore even when he resists it, for it reflects his own weaknesses.

Her influence extends, too, to Sir Thomas, whose late recognition of Fanny's judgment marks one of the novel's quiet revelations. After returning from Antigua, he confesses: "I am very sensible that I have been unjust… I must remember Fanny's arguments" (IV.10). What begins as paternal correction transforms into self-examination. Through Fanny's quiet endurance and consistent reasoning, Sir Thomas is brought to moral humility. His authority, once rigid and hierarchical, becomes reflective. As Duckworth notes, Austen's ethical world "imagines improvement not as command but as conversion — the redirection of principle through example" (The Improvement of the Estate, 1971, p. 63). Fanny's moral gravity enacts precisely that conversion: she reforms not by lecturing like Sir Thomas but by being.

Even Henry Crawford cannot escape her moral orbit. His admiration for her is tinged with discomfort: "I cannot get her out of my head. I do not wish to; she is worth thinking of" (III.12). For the first time, Henry's habitual playfulness shades into self-awareness. Fanny's presence forces him to confront, however briefly, the emptiness of his charm. He might have progressed had his moral sense not been so deeply damaged by cynicism; the root is too rotten for redemption, even though Fanny illuminates the hollowness of his existence. Austen never allows this moment to blossom into lasting reformation — Henry's awakening flickers and fails — but the fact that he feels Fanny's moral pull testifies to her invisible power. She stirs conscience even in those most removed from it.

Through these relational exchanges, Austen redefines the dynamics of influence. Virtue in Mansfield Park is not a solitary state but an interactive energy, circulating through observation, conversation, and emotional sympathy. Fanny's role within this network recalls what Harding called Austen's "moral vigilance of affection" — the ability to "see without condemning, to guide without overt control" (1940, p. 89). Her empathy sharpens rather than weakens her ethical vision.

One of the most striking examples of Fanny's relational influence occurs when Edmund, blinded by affection for Mary, begins to perceive

her moral equivocation. Fanny's gentle responses and perceptive silence guide him toward realization without humiliation. When Mary dismisses the moral consequences of Maria's affair, saying only that it is "a folly, not a crime" (III.17), Fanny's quiet dismay is enough to open Edmund's eyes. Austen narrates: "He looked at Fanny and saw the expression of her countenance, its anxiety and its tears, which spoke more than words." Here, her moral power is enacted through empathy — her emotion becomes the medium of ethical instruction.

Sir Thomas's ethical reawakening follows the same logic. His earlier treatment of Fanny — especially in encouraging her to consider Henry Crawford — is redeemed only when he internalizes her principles. When he declares himself "sensible that I have been unjust," he acknowledges that moral authority in the novel has shifted from patriarchal command to ethical understanding. In recognizing Fanny's judgment, he acknowledges the future Austen imagines: a world in which integrity governs hierarchy and material interest.

The relational pattern of influence extends even further. The novel's closing chapters reveal that Fanny's moral centre endures not because she isolates herself but because she engages others through affection and constancy. She embodies what Edmund Burke might have called "moral sympathy" — the kind of feeling that reforms through shared perception rather than punishment. Austen writes not of ethical triumph but of balance restored, of hearts reoriented by example.

Thus, Fanny's virtue is gravitational in a literal sense: it pulls the moral universe of Mansfield Park back into alignment. Her influence, often invisible to those within the narrative, is fully visible to the reader, who perceives the slow correction of orbits around her. Each character's ethical outcome — Edmund's recognition, Sir Thomas's humility, Henry's failed awakening — testifies to the quiet efficacy of her presence. Austen's moral vision, therefore, is not hierarchical but relational. The heroine does not command virtue; she generates it, turning introspection into the unseen force that sustains the world of Mansfield.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. DUAL BILDUNGSROMAN: INWARD GROWTH AND OUTWARD INFLUENCE

Building on Fanny Price's moral orbit and the sanctuary of the East Room, Austen accomplishes something extraordinary: she constructs a dual Bildungsroman in Mansfield Park, transforming the classical model. In contrast to the classical Bildungsroman hero, Fanny develops inwardly from a timid, dependent girl into a confident moral agent, guided by conscience rather than social expedience. Her growth is not forged through trials alone but through the affirmation and cultivation of her ethical principles. Yet this inward development is inseparable from the outward influence she exerts: her moral clarity shapes, challenges, and occasionally exposes the failings of those around her. In this sense, a secondary Bildungsroman unfolds among the other characters, whose moral trajectories respond to her steady ethical presence. As Johnson observes, Austen's heroines "achieve moral authority not through assertion but through steadfastness" (1988, p. 72), a principle exemplified in Fanny's interactions with Edmund, Sir Thomas, and the Crawfords.

Fanny's inward growth is particularly evident in morally testing situations. During the private theatricals, she resists peer pressure and anticipates the ethical consequences of the household's choices: "Fanny could not think it right" (I.15). Similarly, when Henry Crawford pressures her into accepting him, her refusal — "I cannot accept him… I cannot like him, sir, well enough to marry him" (II.8) — demonstrates that her sense of duty has matured into resolute moral agency. These acts of inward development are inseparable from ethical discernment, nurtured in the East Room, where reflection transforms hesitation into principled action. Austen presents Fanny's growth as measured, cumulative, and deeply internalized, reinforcing the novel's vision of moral education as a process rather than an immediate achievement, focused on the core of character rather than outward appearance.

Simultaneously, Fanny's moral center exerts a gravitational force on the ethical universe of Mansfield Park. Edmund repeatedly returns to her judgment when his own is clouded by attraction to Mary Crawford: "I cannot but think that what you have just said… is more reasonable than anything I have heard from anyone else" (III.8). Her example

shapes his ethical reasoning even when he resists it, highlighting the relational dimension of moral development. Sir Thomas similarly acknowledges her principled arguments, confessing, "I am very sensible that I have been unjust… I must remember Fanny's arguments" (IV.10). Through these exchanges, Austen demonstrates that moral growth is both individual and collective: it circulates through attentiveness, observation, and relational engagement rather than imposed authority. As Duckworth observes, Austen's ethical world "imagines improvement not as command but as conversion — the redirection of principle through example" (1971, p. 63). Fanny's dual role as learner and moral guide exemplifies this dynamic.

Fanny's presence also illuminates the consequences of ethical failure. Characters such as Maria and Henry Crawford are revealed against the backdrop of her steadfastness. Fanny acts as a moral mirror, exposing Maria's vanity and ambition and Henry's charm tinged with cynicism. Austen writes that Henry, despite fleeting admiration for Fanny, remains bound by "the force of his own errors" (III.12), showing that moral correction is not guaranteed but mediated through conscience and opportunity. By situating Fanny as the measure of virtue, Austen emphasizes that ethical resonance depends not only on personal inner coherence but also on relational awareness.

The dual Bildungsroman is further reinforced by Austen's intertwining of inward and outward trajectories. Fanny's internal growth — confidence, resilience, and moral judgment — provides the foundation for her outward influence, while her relational interactions continually test and shape her character. This interdependence mirrors the structural logic of the novel itself, where character development and ethical consequences are inseparable. As Harding notes, Austen's narratives exhibit a "moral vigilance of affection" ("Regulated Hatred," 1940, p. 89), in which attentiveness, empathy, and observation become instruments of moral education. Fanny embodies this principle, her quiet steadiness ensuring the coherence of Mansfield Park's moral universe.

Ultimately, Fanny Price exemplifies Austen's vision of a gravitational heroine: a central force whose ethical constancy orchestrates both her own development and the moral trajectories of others. By quietly exercising judgment, she sustains the moral equilibrium of the Bertram

household. The East Room, her private sanctuary, provides the reflective space necessary to maintain this orbit, while her relational engagement ensures that inward growth translates into outward force. In this sense, the Bildungsroman in Mansfield Park is truly dual: it encompasses inward personal growth and outward ethical impact, with Fanny simultaneously the agent and measure of virtue — the center that indeed holds.

6. CONCLUSION

We have reached the close of our study, having demonstrated that in Mansfield Park, Fanny Price emerges as the moral center — a gravitational heroine whose quiet judgment and principled choices orchestrate both her own ethical development and the moral trajectories of those around her. She does not command attention through social performance or rhetoric; rather, her force radiates subtly, shaping Edmund's conscience, prompting reflection in Sir Thomas, and revealing the moral limitations of Maria and Henry Crawford. In doing so, Austen redefines the heroine's agency: true moral authority is exercised from within, rooted in reflection and inner coherence rather than social expectation or external reward.

At the heart of this inward cultivation is the East Room. Far more than a private chamber, it is where Fanny consolidates her principles, strengthens her judgment, and nurtures the resilience that sustains her moral resonance. As Doody observes, Austen's heroines are granted "private spaces that nurture moral clarity" (1980, p. 118), and Epstein stresses that such retreats are "not passive withdrawal but active preparation for judgment" (1989, p. 77). In this sanctuary, Fanny develops the moral centripetal force that organizes Mansfield Park's ethical universe. The East Room transcends its domestic dimensions, becoming the heart and soul of Mansfield, an extension of Fanny herself that infuses the social and moral atmosphere of the household. In Yeatsian terms, it is the sphere that does hold, where reflection transforms into force, and inward steadiness generates outward consequence.

Fanny's moral orbit extends outward through relational influence. Her steadfastness functions as both mirror and guide: Edmund measures his choices against her principles, Sir Thomas's authority transforms into

reflective self-awareness, and even Henry Crawford, though ultimately resistant, encounters the force of conscience embodied in her character. This relational dynamic illustrates Austen's vision of virtue as interactive, not solitary; moral growth occurs within networks of observation, empathy, and ethical exchange. As Harding notes, Austen practices a "moral vigilance of affection" (1940, p. 89), and Fanny embodies this principle, quietly sustaining the ethical coherence of her world.

In Mansfield Park, the Bildungsroman is dual. Fanny grows inwardly, cultivating judgment, resilience, and self-confidence, while simultaneously generating outward force that educates, corrects, or exposes the failings of others. By positioning her as both agent and measure of virtue, Austen demonstrates that ethical authority depends on reflection, relational awareness, and the courage to remain steadfast. Claudia Johnson observes that Austen's moral narratives "show how fragile virtue is in the modern social world" (1988, p. 23); Fanny Price embodies this fragility turned strength, reminding readers that principled steadfastness is both delicate and potent.

The significance of Fanny's moral orbit extends beyond the novel's plot. By situating interior reflection at the center of ethical and relational resonance, Austen reimagines the heroine's role in the Bildungsroman, transforming the genre into a collective moral exploration rather than an individualistic journey. Fanny's quiet power — her conscience as compass, her East Room as anchor — sustains Mansfield Park itself, ensuring that inward growth translates into outward ethical effect. In doing so, Austen anticipates modern conceptions of female agency, interiority, and moral responsibility, offering a vision of virtue that is as relational as it is individual, as reflective as it is active, and as enduring today as it was two centuries ago.

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SECCION III.

THEATRE AND DRAMA IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

UN ACERCAMIENTO PRAGMÁTICO AL RICARDO II DE SHAKESPEARE: LENGUA, AUTORIDAD, PODER E IDENTIDAD.

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Ricardo II de Shakespeare se presenta como una exploración profunda de la relación entre el lenguaje, el poder y la identidad, ofreciendo un estudio convincente de cómo la comunicación verbal moldea las dinámicas políticas y personales. En el centro de la obra se encuentra la trágica caída de Ricardo II, un rey cuyo uso inadecuado del lenguaje desempeña un papel significativo en la pérdida de su poder. El lenguaje en *Ricardo II* es mucho más que una mera herramienta de comunicación; funciona como un mecanismo crucial para afirmar autoridad, navegar por complejos escenarios políticos y revelar los conflictos internos y los estados emocionales de los personajes. A través del uso contrastante del lenguaje por parte de Ricardo y Bolingbroke, Shakespeare construye una narrativa que demuestra cómo las palabras pueden tanto consolidar como socavar el poder, así como reflejar las lealtades y motivaciones cambiantes dentro de la corte (Culpeper, 2001; Muir, 1991).

El estudio de la pragmática—que se ocupa del contexto social, el significado y las consecuencias del uso del lenguaje—proporciona un marco invaluable para analizar *Ricardo II*. Este trabajo profundiza en varios conceptos pragmáticos clave, incluidos los actos de habla, las estrategias de cortesía, la deixis, la ironía y la metáfora, para revelar cómo Shakespeare utiliza el lenguaje para influir en las narrativas políticas y personales de la obra. Central en el análisis es la manera en que el lenguaje elevado y ceremonial de Ricardo, impregnado de nociones de derecho divino y grandeza regia, contrasta con el habla más directa y

pragmática de Bolingbroke, lo que le permite desafiar la autoridad de Ricardo y reclamar su lugar como monarca rival (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983).

A través del examen de los actos de habla, este estudio resalta cómo los floreos retóricos y promesas de Ricardo no se alinean con sus acciones políticas, contribuyendo a su alienación y eventual caída. Su desconexión de las realidades pragmáticas del gobierno se ve subrayada por su uso excesivo de un lenguaje formal y elevado, que lo distancia de las preocupaciones más prácticas de su reinado (Searle, 1969; Grice, 1975). En contraste, el uso más concreto y contundente del lenguaje por parte de Bolingbroke le permite manipular las dinámicas de poder cambiantes a su favor, demostrando cómo la pragmática puede facilitar el cambio político (Verschueren, 1999).

Además, el trabajo explora el papel de la deixis en la obra, centrándose en cómo las referencias a sí mismo, a los demás y al entorno político revelan la relación cambiante de Ricardo con la autoridad. Los marcadores temporales también son cruciales en la obra, ya que la incapacidad de Ricardo para comprender la urgencia del cambio político conduce a su caída trágica (Levinson, 2004). La naturaleza irónica de sus discursos, particularmente sus afirmaciones de legitimidad divina y su incapacidad para ver la realidad de su situación, profundiza la exploración de la obra sobre la fragilidad del poder (Verschueren, 1999; Clark, 1996).

Al abordar las metáforas, como la famosa reflexión de Ricardo sobre el "espejo" de la realeza, este trabajo analiza además cómo el lenguaje figurado enriquece la exploración de la autoridad y la identidad en la obra. La manipulación de estos elementos pragmáticos por parte de Shakespeare en *Ricardo II* ofrece un poderoso comentario sobre el papel del lenguaje en la configuración de las estructuras políticas y las identidades personales (Charteris-Black, 2004; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Este análisis de la pragmática en *Ricardo II* ofrece una comprensión matizada de cómo el lenguaje funciona tanto como herramienta para consolidar el poder como medio para revelar la inestabilidad inherente de la autoridad. A través de una exploración detallada de los actos de habla, la cortesía, la deixis, la ironía y la metáfora, este trabajo

demuestra que el lenguaje en *Ricardo II* no solo refleja las realidades políticas y sociales de la época, sino que también constituye un motor clave del desarrollo dramático de la obra (Righter, 1962; Kott, 1974).

2. REVISÓN TEÓRICA:

2.1. Evolución de la Pragmática

El estudio de la pragmática ha evolucionado significativamente, pasando de considerarse un campo fragmentario a consolidarse como un área que examina la relación entre lenguaje, significado y contexto. Antes de la década de 1970, las interacciones habladas se percibían como caóticas y difíciles de analizar, debido a su divergencia con los paradigmas de los textos escritos. Sin embargo, avances interdisciplinarios en antropología, filosofía y lingüística sentaron las bases para reconocer la estructura de la comunicación verbal. Académicos como J.L. Austin, John Searle y Paul Grice transformaron la comprensión del lenguaje a través de la teoría de los actos de habla y la implicatura conversacional (Macías Borrego, 2024).

En *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), Austin conceptualizó el lenguaje como acción, no solo descripción, proponiendo los actos de habla en tres niveles: locutivo (el contenido literal), ilocutivo (la intención del hablante) y perlocutivo (el efecto sobre el oyente). Este enfoque subraya que comprender un enunciado requiere reconocer su intención y contexto; por ejemplo, "Hace frío aquí" puede ser una observación, una solicitud implícita o un mandato sutil.

Searle amplió estas ideas formalizando una taxonomía de actos de habla: asertivos, directivos, comisivos, expresivos y declarativos, mostrando cómo el lenguaje cumple diversos propósitos comunicativos según contexto e intención (Macías Borrego, 2024).

Por su parte, Grice introdujo el Principio de Cooperación, postulando que la comunicación efectiva depende de la colaboración entre interlocutores. Sus máximas conversacionales—calidad, cantidad, relevancia y manera—regulan implícitamente el comportamiento comunicativo, mientras que su concepto de implicatura explica cómo los hablantes

transmiten significados indirectos mediante inferencias contextuales, como en la respuesta "Bueno, la comida estaba buena" ante la pregunta sobre una fiesta.

Estos avances teóricos ofrecen una base sólida para analizar la pragmática en la literatura, especialmente en el drama shakespeariano. Levinson (1983) define la pragmática como el estudio del significado más allá de la semántica literal, incluyendo inferencias contextuales, implicaturas y actos performativos, lo que resulta esencial para examinar cómo Shakespeare utiliza el diálogo para negociar poder, identidad y relaciones sociales.

2.2. Enfoque Pragmático en Shakespeare

Las obras históricas de Shakespeare ofrecen un espacio ideal para analizar la pragmática en acción, dramatizando eventos históricos y reflejando las dinámicas sociopolíticas del lenguaje. Basadas en *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587) de Holinshed, estas historias abordan temas atemporales como legitimidad, poder y manipulación retórica, tanto en sus escenarios medievales como en la Inglaterra isabelina (Culpeper, 2001).

El análisis pragmático evidencia cómo los personajes usan actos de habla para fines estratégicos. En *Henry IV, Part 1*, los discursos del Príncipe Hal muestran su manejo del registro formal y coloquial, reflejando su identidad dual. En *Richard II*, los enunciados performativos de Richard sobre la realeza y su abdicación revelan la fragilidad de la autoridad construida lingüísticamente, ejemplificando la interacción entre actos locutivos, ilocutivos y perlocutivos en la dinámica de personajes y el desarrollo narrativo.

La retórica política de Shakespeare también ilustra el Principio de Cooperación de Grice y la implicatura conversacional. En *Henry V*, los discursos de Enrique emplean apelaciones a la identidad compartida y ambigüedad calculada para fomentar la lealtad y justificar decisiones controvertidas, mostrando cómo estas estrategias afectan tanto a personajes como a la audiencia (Wilson & Mackenzie, 2000; Macías Borrego, 2024).

El enfoque pragmático en Shakespeare contribuye al estudio de la lingüística histórica. Culpeper (2011) destaca la importancia de la pragmática histórica para comprender los textos de la época moderna temprana, revelando normas culturales y prácticas comunicativas en la Inglaterra isabelina. Así, la pragmática shakesperiana combina análisis literario y lingüístico, profundizando la apreciación de sus obras como creaciones artísticas y documentos históricos.

En resumen, la literatura shakesperiana muestra cómo las elecciones lingüísticas reflejan los principios de los actos de habla, la implicatura conversacional y la pragmática del discurso político, subrayando su relevancia continua en el estudio del lenguaje y la literatura (Jucker, 2024).

2.3. Principios Griceanos y su Aplicación al Drama

Las teorías de comunicación de H.P. Grice, especialmente el Principio de Cooperación (1967/1987), son fundamentales en el estudio de la pragmática. Este principio sostiene que la comunicación verbal exitosa se basa en reglas implícitas que los interlocutores siguen para facilitar la comprensión, formuladas como: "Haz que tu contribución conversacional sea tal como se requiere, en el momento en que ocurre, según el propósito aceptado o la dirección del intercambio en el que estás involucrado" (Grice, 1989).

Grice operacionaliza este principio mediante cuatro máximas:

- **Cantidad:** proporcionar la información necesaria y no excederse.
- **Calidad:** ser veraz y no afirmar lo que se cree falso ni carece de evidencia.
- **Relación:** asegurar que la contribución sea relevante.
- **Manera:** comunicarse con claridad, concisión y orden, evitando ambigüedades.

Estas máximas no son prescriptivas, sino supuestos sobre la comunicación normal. Cuando se infringen intencional o inadvertidamente, el oyente infiere una implicatura conversacional, un significado implícito

derivado del contexto (Grice, 1989). Por ejemplo, al responder a una invitación con "Tengo mucho trabajo que hacer", se comunica indirectamente "No puedo asistir".

Grice identifica tres factores críticos para interpretar implicaturas:

- **Factores contextuales:** el entorno lingüístico, social, cultural y político del enunciado.
- **Principio de Cooperación y máximas:** el entendimiento compartido de normas cooperativas.
- **Significados convencionales de las palabras:** los significados literales que sustentan la interpretación (Black, 2011).

2.4. Principios Griceanos y la Pragmática del Drama

El drama, como género literario, ofrece un medio rico para la aplicación de los principios griceanos porque refleja de cerca las interacciones habladas de la vida real. A diferencia de la prosa o la poesía, el drama presenta el diálogo como vehículo principal para el desarrollo narrativo y de los personajes, lo que lo convierte en un texto ideal para el análisis pragmático. Los intercambios comunicativos en el drama se basan en los mismos principios de claridad, relevancia e implicatura que sustentan las conversaciones del mundo real. Sin embargo, los textos dramáticos a menudo amplifican estos elementos con fines artísticos, creando capas de significado mediante recursos como acotaciones, ironía y diálogo ambiguo.

El drama shakesperiano es famoso por explorar la tensión entre apariencia y realidad, un tema profundamente ligado a las nociones de implicatura conversacional de Grice. Los personajes a menudo manipulan el lenguaje para presentar apariencias engañosas, ocultar sus verdaderas intenciones o navegar jerarquías sociales. Esta divergencia entre lenguaje hablado y pensamiento interno refleja la tendencia humana de equilibrar honestidad y engaño en la interacción social. Como observa Black (2011), esta dualidad—lo que los personajes pretenden ser versus lo que son realmente—es una característica distintiva de las obras de Shakespeare y constituye una manifestación dramática de los principios griceanos.

2.5. Violaciones de las Máximas Griceanas en el Drama Shakesperiano

En las obras de Shakespeare, las violaciones de las máximas de Grice generan frecuentemente tensión dramática y destacan la dinámica de los personajes. Por ejemplo, en *Hamlet*, el discurso prolijo y circunloquio de Polonio infringe la Máxima de Manera, creando una impresión de confusión e ineptitud (Levinson, 1983; Grice, 1975). Por otro lado, el propio uso de la ironía y la ambigüedad de Hamlet suele violar la Máxima de Calidad, ya que habla en acertijos o engaña intencionadamente a otros (Mey, 2001; Searle, 1969). Estas violaciones no son simples incumplimientos de normas comunicativas, sino estrategias deliberadas que invitan al público a inferir significados más profundos sobre los motivos de los personajes y el desarrollo de la trama.

De manera similar, las acotaciones y los soliloquios funcionan como dispositivos meta-comunicativos que contrastan con la Máxima de Relación. Mientras que el diálogo hablado de un personaje puede parecer relevante dentro del contexto de la escena, sus acotaciones privadas revelan verdades ocultas o intenciones contradictorias, ejemplificando el contraste entre apariencia pública y realidad privada. Por ejemplo, en *Macbeth*, las garantías externas de lealtad de Lady Macbeth contrastan fuertemente con sus intrigas privadas, llenas de acotaciones, destacando la exploración temática de la duplicidad y la ambición (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Clark, 1996).

La interacción de las máximas griceanas también refuerza la exploración shakesperiana de la retórica política. Los personajes de las historias, como el rey Enrique en *Henry V*, emplean un lenguaje persuasivo que respeta la Máxima de Relación y la Máxima de Cantidad para inspirar acción colectiva (Kahn, 2003; McDonald, 2001). Sin embargo, estos discursos a menudo contienen violaciones sutiles de la Máxima de Calidad, incorporando ambigüedades y exageraciones calculadas diseñadas para manipular las emociones y percepciones del público (Sperber & Wilson, 1986; Austin, 1962).

2.6. El Drama como Reflejo de la Realidad Pragmática

La utilidad del drama para el estudio pragmático radica en su doble función como arte y simulación de la interacción real. Al igual que en la comunicación cotidiana, los intercambios dramáticos están moldeados por la dinámica contextual de poder, normas sociales y agendas personales. En este sentido, las obras de Shakespeare pueden verse como un microcosmos de la comunicación humana, donde el lenguaje opera no solo como medio de expresión, sino como herramienta para alcanzar objetivos específicos.

Además, el estudio de los principios griceanos en el drama enriquece nuestra comprensión de cómo se construye y negocia el significado. Al examinar las capas de implicatura en los diálogos shakesperianos, los académicos obtienen información sobre los factores culturales, sociales y lingüísticos que influyen en la comunicación. Esta perspectiva se alinea con las ideas de Sperber y Wilson (1986) sobre el papel de la relevancia y el contexto en la construcción del significado, así como con la exploración de Brown y Levinson (1987) sobre la cortesía y las estrategias de preservación de la imagen social en la interacción.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio emplea una metodología cualitativa basada en el análisis pragmático para explorar la interacción entre lenguaje, contexto y significado en *Ricardo II* de Shakespeare. Específicamente, el análisis se centra en la aplicación de los principios griceanos, la teoría de los actos de habla y el Principio de Cooperación a pasajes seleccionados de la obra. Al examinar las dimensiones locutiva, ilocutiva y perlocutiva de los enunciados de los personajes, la investigación busca revelar las estrategias comunicativas subyacentes y la significación temática incrustada en el texto, como se ilustra en la tabla 1.

TABLA 1. *Metodología*

Categoría	Detalles
Tipo de metodología	Metodología cualitativa basada en análisis pragmático
Enfoque de investigación	Exploración de la interacción entre lenguaje, contexto y significado en Ricardo II
Teorías pragmáticas aplicadas	- Principios griceanos (Principio de Cooperación y máximas) - Teoría de los actos de habla (locutivo, ilocutivo y perlocutivo) - Pragmática contextual
Diseño de investigación	Lectura detallada (close reading) de pasajes seleccionados que iluminan el poder, la autoridad y la moralidad
Criterios de selección de pasajes	- Relevancia temática - Momentos de tensión dramática elevada o complejidad retórica - Fragmentos clave que involucren dinámicas de poder
Constructos teóricos	1. Principio de Cooperación y máximas de Grice: adherencia o violación de las máximas de cantidad, calidad, relación y manera. 2. Teoría de los actos de habla: análisis de los aspectos locutivo, ilocutivo y perlocutivo. 3. Pragmática contextual: análisis de los contextos lingüístico, social y cultural.
Recolección de datos	Pasajes seleccionados de Ricardo II que involucran personajes clave como el Rey Ricardo, el Rey Enrique y otros.
Procedimientos analíticos	1. Lectura detallada: análisis minucioso de elementos semánticos, sintácticos y pragmáticos. 2. Aplicación de marcos teóricos: uso sistemático de las máximas griceanas y la teoría de actos de habla. 3. Análisis contextual: interpretación dentro del contexto histórico y cultural. 4. Interpretación de implicaturas: identificación de significados ocultos y corrientes emocionales a través de violaciones de las máximas de Grice.
Justificación de la metodología	El enfoque cualitativo permite una exploración profunda de la compleja relación entre texto, contexto y significado, mejorando la comprensión del lenguaje de Shakespeare y de la dinámica de sus personajes. Contribuye al campo de la pragmática literaria.

4. ANÁLISIS Y RESULTADOS

4.1. SAMPLE 1:

KING RICHARD

Old John of Gaunt, time-honored Lancaster, Hast thou, according to thy oath and band, Brought hither Henry Hereford, thy bold son, Here to make good the boist'rous late appeal, Which then our leisure would not let us hear,

Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

En el discurso inicial del Rey Ricardo en *Richard II* (Acto I, Escena I), observamos una rica interacción de principios pragmáticos y técnicas dramáticas shakesperianas. Ricardo se dirige a John of Gaunt con una pregunta formal sobre si ha cumplido su deber llevando a Henry Hereford para responder a una queja contra Thomas Mowbray. Mientras la función superficial del discurso es indagar e iniciar los procedimientos, las dimensiones pragmáticas subyacentes revelan mucho sobre la autoridad de Ricardo y el contexto sociopolítico de la escena.

Según el marco de J.L. Austin sobre actos de habla, las palabras de Ricardo operan en múltiples niveles. El acto locutivo es la pregunta literal sobre el cumplimiento del deber de Gaunt. Sin embargo, la fuerza ilocutiva del discurso va más allá de la mera consulta, ya que sirve para afirmar el papel de Ricardo como árbitro de justicia y establecer el tono ceremonial del encuentro.

El efecto perlocutivo busca reforzar el dominio de Ricardo y generar respeto tanto de los participantes como del público. A través de su lenguaje formal, Ricardo no solo enmarca los procedimientos legales, sino que también recuerda a Gaunt sus obligaciones juradas, reforzando sutilmente la naturaleza jerárquica de su relación.

Los principios griceanos y sus máximas iluminan las sutilezas estratégicas del discurso de Ricardo. Sus palabras son contextualmente relevantes (Máxima de Relación), aunque se viola la Máxima de Cantidad al ofrecer detalles elaborados como "time-honored Lancaster," que no son estrictamente necesarios. Esta verborrea subraya el carácter ceremonial de la ocasión y la percepción de Ricardo como gobernante, enfatizando su autoridad. La Máxima de Manera se cumple mayormente, aunque expresiones como "boist'rous late appeal" introducen ambigüedad sutil, sugiriendo un juicio implícito sobre la queja.

El tema shakesperiano de apariencia versus realidad también es evidente. El tono formal de Ricardo proyecta control e imparcialidad, mientras que puede enmascarar impaciencia o frustración. La implicatura conversacional se manifiesta en expresiones que sugieren que la

queja es inoportuna, lo que depende del conocimiento del público sobre las tensiones culturales y políticas de la obra.

SAMPLE 2:

BOLINGBROKE

> First—heaven be the record to my speech!— In the devotion of a subject's love,
>
> Tend'ring the precious safety of my prince And free from other misbegotten hate, Come I appellant to this princely presence.— Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee; And mark my greeting well, for what I speak My body shall make good upon this earth
>
> Or my divine soul answer it in heaven. Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,
>
> Too good to be so and too bad to live, Since the more fair and crystal is the sky, The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly. Once more, the more to aggravate the note, With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat,
>
> And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,

What my tongue speaks my right-drawn sword may prove.

En el discurso de Bolingbroke (Acto I, Escena I), observamos una combinación de estrategias pragmáticas y retóricas que reflejan sus roles como súbdito leal y acusador decidido. Su discurso opera en varios niveles pragmáticos, mezclando estructura formal con convicción personal para afirmar su posición y desafiar a Thomas Mowbray.

Usando la teoría de actos de habla de Austin, las expresiones de Bolingbroke realizan actos locutivos, ilocutivos y perlocutivos simultáneamente. El acto locutivo consiste en la acusación explícita contra Mowbray y la solicitud formal del permiso del rey para probar la acusación mediante combate. La fuerza ilocutiva incluye la declaración de lealtad, la denuncia pública y la invocación solemne de juicio divino. El efecto perlocutivo busca captar la atención de Ricardo, solidificar la credibilidad de Bolingbroke y provocar a Mowbray para defender su honor.

Según Grice, se respeta la Máxima de Relación, pero se viola intencionalmente la Máxima de Cantidad mediante lenguaje poético y

elaborado, por ejemplo en la metáfora de Mowbray como nube que empaña un cielo cristalino. La Máxima de Calidad se refuerza al invocar testigo divino ("heaven be the record to my speech"), mientras que la Máxima de Manera se mantiene clara y estructurada.

Temáticamente, el discurso refleja la tensión entre apariencia y realidad: la declaración de lealtad contrasta con la ambición y rivalidad subyacentes. La implicatura conversacional se observa en "What my tongue speaks my right-drawn sword may prove," implicando disposición a combatir y confianza moral en su causa.

El discurso de Bolingbroke es un ejemplo convincente de pragmática shakesperiana, combinando actos de habla, máximas griceanas y resonancia temática para mostrar la complejidad del personaje y preparar el conflicto.

SAMPLE 3:

KING RICHARD

Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom, Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:

> The sly, slow hours shall not determinate The dateless limit of thy dear exile.
>
> The hopeless word of "never to return" Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.

En la declaración de Ricardo a Norfolk (Acto I, Escena III), se observa un discurso cargado de complejidad pragmática, mostrando su ejercicio reticente de autoridad. La interacción entre actos de habla, principios griceanos y temas dramáticos de justicia, poder y emoción personal destaca la gravedad de la sentencia y la incomodidad del rey.

El acto locutivo es la declaración explícita del exilio perpetuo de Norfolk. La fuerza ilocutiva refleja la intención autoritaria de imponer una decisión judicial, mientras que la reticencia ("with some unwillingness pronounce") indica peso moral y emocional. El efecto perlocutivo comunica la irrevocabilidad del exilio, reforzando la solemnidad del juicio.

Las máximas griceanas se aplican de forma estratégica: se respeta la relación y la manera, pero se viola la cantidad mediante elaboraciones poéticas ("the sly, slow hours shall not determinate"), intensificando el impacto emocional. La máxima de calidad se subraya en "upon pain of life," enfatizando la seriedad del castigo.

Temáticamente, el discurso refleja la carga del poder y la tensión entre autoridad y vulnerabilidad humana, mientras la implicatura conversacional de "Breathe I against thee" sugiere el peso simbólico de la sentencia.

SAMPLE 4:

KING RICHARD

> Needs must I like it well. I weep for joy
>
> To stand upon my kingdom once again .⌜ *He kneels.* ⌝
>
> Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,
>
> Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs. As a long-parted mother with her child
>
> Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting, So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,
>
> And do thee favors with my royal hands. Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
>
> Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense, But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,
>
> And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way, Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet Which with usurping steps do trample thee. Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies,
>
> And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower, Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder, Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.
>
> Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords.
>
> This earth shall have a feeling, and these stones Prove armèd soldiers, ere her native king

El discurso de Ricardo en el Acto III, Escena II combina imagen poética, expresión emocional y retórica política. A través de actos de habla,

el locutivo expresa su vínculo con la tierra y el llamado a su lealtad. La fuerza ilocutiva combina apelación emocional y afirmación performativa de soberanía, mientras que el efecto perlocutivo busca inspirar lealtad y reafirmar legitimidad.

Se viola la Máxima de Cantidad debido a la riqueza poética, mientras que la Máxima de Relación se mantiene por la relevancia del contexto del regreso al reino y la rebelión. La Máxima de Manera se cumple parcialmente, con claridad pero con ambigüedad intencional mediante personificación y metáforas.

El discurso refleja la tensión entre apariencia y realidad, con la conexión poética a la tierra contrastando con la realidad política, y la implicatura conversacional sugiere que la tierra defenderá al rey frente a los usurpadores, subrayando su vulnerabilidad.

SAMPLE 5:

GARDENER

Poor queen, so that thy state might be no worse, I would my skill were subject to thy curse.

> Here did she fall a tear. Here in this place I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace. Rue even for ruth here shortly shall be seen In the remembrance of a weeping queen.

El discurso del jardinero en *Richard II* (Acto III, Escena IV) es un momento conmovedor que utiliza un lenguaje metafórico rico para reflejar la tristeza de la reina Isabel y el declive político más amplio del reinado de Ricardo. Desde la perspectiva de la pragmática, este extracto ilustra cómo Shakespeare emplea actos de habla y los principios griceanos para transmitir múltiples capas de significado, destacando temas de duelo, pérdida y memoria histórica.

El acto locutivo en el discurso del jardinero consiste en su declaración literal sobre plantar rue, la "hierba amarga de la gracia," para marcar la tristeza de la reina. La fuerza ilocutiva es doble: expresa la simpatía del jardinero por la situación de la reina y, al mismo tiempo, utiliza el acto de plantar rue como un comentario simbólico sobre la caída de la

monarquía. El efecto perlocutivo busca provocar en la audiencia un sentido de reflexión sombría, vinculando el duelo personal de la reina con la tragedia nacional más amplia que se desarrolla en la Inglaterra de Ricardo.

En términos del Principio de Cooperación de Grice, se respeta la Máxima de Cantidad, ya que el discurso del jardinero proporciona el detalle justo para que el significado simbólico de la rue sea claro, sin exageración. La Máxima de Relación se cumple plenamente, dado que el discurso se mantiene directamente relevante para el contexto de la tristeza de la reina y los temas de la escena. La Máxima de Manera también se sigue, ya que el lenguaje, aunque poético, es claro y sin ambigüedades, con imágenes de la rue y su conexión con las lágrimas de la reina fácilmente interpretables.

La Máxima de Calidad es particularmente significativa aquí. La afirmación del jardinero, "Here did she fall a tear. Here in this place / I'll set a bank of rue," no es una verdad literal, sino una declaración poética y simbólica. Al introducir la rue como marcador del duelo, el jardinero eleva la tristeza de la reina a un emblema duradero de las consecuencias más amplias de la caída del poder de Ricardo. La rue, como "hierba de gracia," tiene connotaciones culturales de arrepentimiento y pesar, sugiriendo tanto luto por el presente como advertencia para el futuro.

Temáticamente, este discurso resuena con el motivo de apariencia versus realidad. La plantación de la rue, un acto visible y exterior, simboliza la decadencia emocional y política interna del reinado de Ricardo. Aunque el duelo de la reina es profundamente personal, las palabras del jardinero universalizan su tristeza, vinculándola con la narrativa más amplia de una nación en crisis. La rue se convierte en una metáfora viva de las consecuencias de la mala gestión política y la traición.

La implicatura conversacional también está presente. Cuando el jardinero dice, "Rue even for ruth here shortly shall be seen / In the remembrance of a weeping queen," implica que la tristeza de la reina no solo será recordada, sino que también servirá como advertencia para las generaciones futuras. Esta implicatura depende de la comprensión del

público sobre el significado cultural y simbólico de la rue, así como de su conocimiento de la posición de la reina como figura de pérdida trágica.

Desde la perspectiva de la teoría de actos de habla de Austin, la misma acción de plantar rue puede interpretarse como un acto performativo. No es meramente un gesto de duelo, sino un acto que lleva fuerza ilocutiva, significando arrepentimiento, recuerdo y un comentario silencioso sobre la tragedia política en desarrollo.

Se puede argumentar que el discurso del jardinero es un ejemplo magistral de la capacidad de Shakespeare para entrelazar lenguaje poético con principios pragmáticos, creando un momento de profunda resonancia simbólica. Al evocar la tristeza de la reina a través de la metáfora de la rue, Shakespeare no solo profundiza el impacto emocional de la escena, sino que también subraya la interconexión entre el duelo personal y el declive nacional. Este extracto encapsula los temas de memoria, arrepentimiento y las consecuencias perdurables del fracaso político, enriqueciendo la comprensión del público sobre el arco trágico de la obra.

SAMPLE 6:

KING HENRY

> Our scene is altered from a serious thing
>
> And now changed to "The Beggar and the King."— My dangerous cousin, let your mother in.
>
> I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.

El pasaje de *Richard II* (Acto V, Escena III) ilustra cómo Shakespeare emplea principios pragmáticos para explorar autoridad, dinámicas familiares y juicio moral. El Rey Enrique yuxtapone su rol formal como gobernante con sus emociones frente a conflictos y traiciones familiares, utilizando actos de habla directos e indirectos que reflejan su posición compleja como rey y pariente. A nivel locutivo, Enrique describe la situación como una representación teatral—"The Beggar and the King"—destacando el contraste entre alta posición y humildad y la percepción de degradación de la corte. La fuerza ilocutiva combina admonición y mandato: reprende las acciones de su primo (Duque de

Aumerle) y ordena permitir la entrada de la Duquesa de York, reconociendo la influencia moral de su súplica.

Desde la perspectiva de Grice, el discurso respeta la Máxima de Relación y de Calidad: es relevante y refleja verazmente la gravedad de la situación. Sin embargo, la implicatura conversacional surge al permitir la entrada de la Duquesa, insinuando apertura a la clemencia, a pesar de la desaprobación expresada por el "foul sin" de Aumerle.

La metáfora de "The Beggar and the King" subraya el tema de apariencia versus realidad y la naturaleza performativa del poder, mostrando cómo Enrique debe equilibrar autoridad pública y vulnerabilidad privada. El efecto perlocutivo afecta emocionalmente a Aumerle y al público, preparando la intervención de la Duquesa y destacando la complejidad moral de Enrique.

Finalmente, el uso de metáforas, implicaturas y actos de habla en capas demuestra la habilidad de Shakespeare para integrar complejidad pragmática en el diálogo, explorando la interacción entre deber público, emoción privada y responsabilidad moral, y resaltando la tensión entre autoridad, perdón y falibilidad humana.

5. CONCLUSIONES

El análisis de la pragmática en *Richard II* evidencia la compleja relación entre lenguaje, poder e identidad, mostrando cómo las palabras influyen en las dinámicas políticas y personales. Ricardo II es retratado como un rey cuya caída se debe en parte a su mala gestión del lenguaje, mientras que el uso estratégico del habla por parte de Bolingbroke refleja el impacto de la comunicación en la política y en las relaciones de poder (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969; Jucker, 2024). La obra subraya cómo el orden político y social se negocia continuamente a través del diálogo, donde los personajes utilizan actos de habla para afirmar autoridad, cuestionar la legitimidad de otros y manipular percepciones.

Las estrategias de cortesía de Ricardo buscan afirmar su derecho divino, pero su excesivo formalismo y la desconexión con la realidad pragmática del gobierno erosionan su autoridad. En contraste, Bolingbroke

emplea un lenguaje directo, claro y persuasivo, que le permite desafiar al rey, movilizar apoyos y consolidar su posición política (Culpeper, 2001; Holmes, 1995). Esta dinámica refleja la importancia de los actos de habla: las proclamaciones de Ricardo, las declaraciones de lealtad y los actos de rebelión de Bolingbroke muestran cómo el lenguaje no solo comunica, sino que constituye acciones con efectos concretos en la política y en las relaciones interpersonales. La incapacidad de Ricardo para manejar correctamente sus promesas y declaraciones, incluyendo su trato hacia la nobleza y Bolingbroke, evidencia un colapso pragmático que acelera su caída.

La deíxis y el uso de pronombres personales reflejan los cambios en la autoridad de Ricardo y su percepción de sí mismo. Al inicio, la primera persona singular enfatiza su control absoluto; más tarde, los cambios en el lenguaje indican su pérdida de influencia y la transformación de sus relaciones con el reino. Los marcadores temporales destacan su incapacidad para reconocer la urgencia del cambio político, lo que agrava sus errores (Fillmore, 1982; Levinson, 2004).

La ironía es un recurso central: los discursos elevados de Ricardo contrastan con su realidad política, generando ironía dramática que el público percibe y que resalta la vulnerabilidad del rey. Además, la ironía verbal expone la duplicidad de Bolingbroke y otros nobles, quienes ocultan sus intenciones bajo un lenguaje aparentemente honorable, mostrando la corrupción política subyacente (Grice, 1975; Leech, 1983).

El uso de metáforas y lenguaje figurado, como la del "espejo" y la corona, refuerza los temas de poder, fragilidad y pérdida. La corona simboliza tanto la autoridad política como el coste personal y espiritual del poder, mientras que las metáforas de Ricardo reflejan su desconexión con la realidad y anticipan su eventual derrocamiento (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Charteris-Black, 2004).

En última instancia, *Richard II* demuestra cómo el lenguaje configura y refleja poder, identidad y cambio político. La caída de Ricardo ilustra las consecuencias del fracaso pragmático, mientras que el ascenso de Bolingbroke evidencia la eficacia de un habla directa, estratégica y contextualizada. La obra integra actos de habla, deíxis, ironía, metáforas y

estrategias de cortesía para mostrar la interacción entre comunicación, autoridad y manipulación política, ofreciendo un comentario atemporal sobre cómo el lenguaje puede definir, consolidar o desmantelar el poder (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Austin, 1962; Grice, 1975; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Este análisis subraya que la pragmática shakesperiana no solo enriquece la comprensión literaria, sino que también proporciona perspectivas sobre las normas comunicativas y las estructuras de poder en contextos históricos y contemporáneos.

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ESCENOGRAFÍA, GÉNERO Y PODER EN EL TEATRO INGLÉS: LA INSTITUCIONALIZACIÓN FEMENINA DEL MEDIO CAJÓN

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

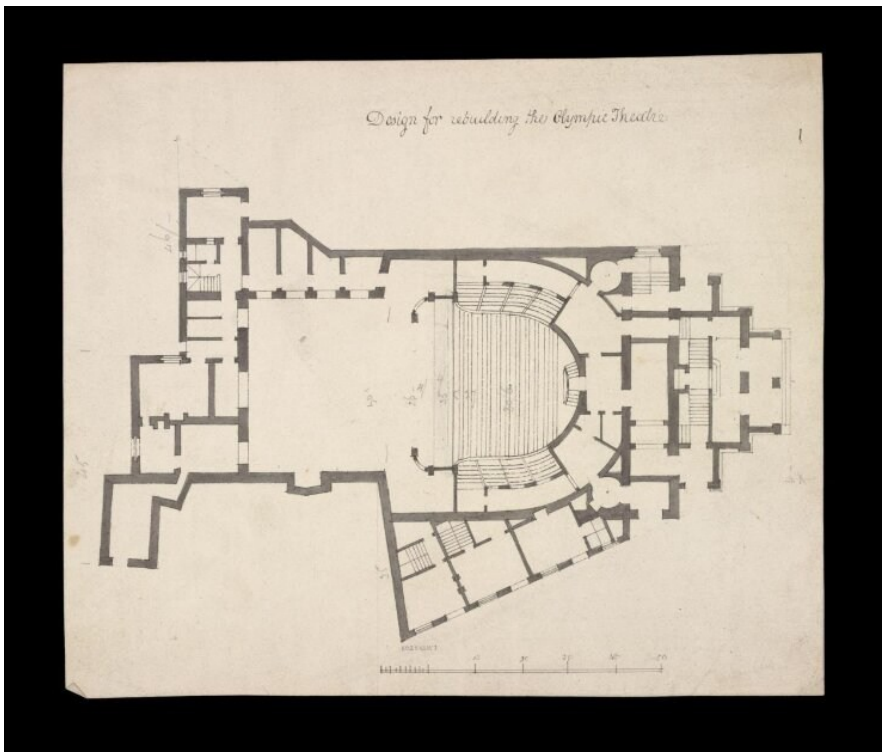
La escena londinense de las primeras décadas del siglo XIX se hallaba inmersa en un proceso de profunda reconfiguración tecnológica, económica y cultural que alteró tanto la materialidad del espacio teatral como las formas de participación del público y la jerarquía interna de las compañías.

El ascenso de la clase media urbana, nutrido y aupado por la aceleración industrial, generó un espectador con mayores expectativas de verosimilitud y con un nuevo capital de consumo cultural dispuesto a pagar por espectáculos que reflejaran, y a la vez legitimaran, sus valores domésticos y morales (Booth, 1991). En este contexto, la escenografía evolucionó desde la frontalidad pictórica heredada del siglo XVIII hacia disposiciones tridimensionales que reclamaban al público un acto de fe visual más complejo y, con ello, inauguraban una dinámica de poder articulada a través de la mirada.

Un hito decisivo en esta transición fue la adopción del medio cajón escénico, *box set* en inglés (Cantero García, 2021), que, al disponer únicamente tres paredes (y suelo y techo) y dejar la cuarta abierta a la platea, ofrecía la ilusión de un interior privado expuesto a una mirada de inspección pública (Gómez Varela, 1997). Tal solución no sólo optimizaba la circulación y movimientos actorales sobre escenarios de reducida profundidad, como los del *Olympic Theatre* (ver Figura 1), sino que también facilitaba la incorporación de la iluminación a gas y de

mobiliario auténtico, lo que reforzaba la percepción realista del conjunto (Booth, 1991). A diferencia del telón pintado, cuyas imágenes se percibían como cuadros estáticos, el medio cajón dotaba a los decorados de una función narrativa; las puertas se abrían y cerraban, los utensilios se tocaban y los cuerpos se apoyaban sobre paredes materiales, elevando la correspondencia entre la ficción escénica y la vida cotidiana a un inédito grado de detalle. De este modo, la nueva propuesta escénica realista del medio cajón generaba una correcta identificación del público asistente con los códigos propios de la domesticidad burguesa (Mauro, 2017).

FIGURA 1. *Planta del Olympic Theatre en 1822.*



Fuente: (Winston, s.f.)

Sin embargo, la relevancia del medio cajón trasciende la cuestión puramente formal o estética. La disposición espacial que proporcionaba al espectador una perspectiva privilegiada de la intimidad doméstica

condensaba la ideología de la *separate spheres*, según la cual la mujer estaba destinada a la custodia moral del hogar, muy en relación con la demanda de la reproducción, mientras el hombre desempeñaba su papel en la esfera pública (Lamphere, 2024).

Al trasladar a escena esos mismos espacios de la vida privada doméstica, como salones, dormitorios o comedores, la escenografía convertía la domesticidad en objeto de contemplación colectiva, revalidando la centralidad de la mujer y sus valores sociales en la definición de la respetabilidad burguesa (Marshall, 1998). De este modo, la dramaturgia visual del *box set* replicaba y reforzaba la lógica de género dominante de la sociedad y garantizaba una correcta relación real y pedagógica entre la escena y la moral de los espectadores (Ranciere, 2014).

La aparición en la escena teatral de empresarias-actrices como Madame Vestris reforzó todavía más esa dialéctica entre la visibilidad femenina y la ideología doméstica. Ocupando simultáneamente los papeles de propietaria, directora artística y primera intérprete, Vestris trasladó a la esfera productiva competencias tradicionalmente asociadas a lo femenino, como el buen gusto decorativo o el control de la intimidad, pero las monetizó dentro de la lógica comercial, desafiando los presupuestos de pasividad que la moral victoriana adjudicaba a las mujeres (Powell, 2007).

Su apuesta por un realismo de los interiores pretendía presentar al público la escena tal cual podría hallarla al cruzar el umbral de una casa de buen estilo (Theatrical Examiner - Olympic Theatre, 1833). Con ello, la gestión femenina ganaba legitimidad dentro del mundo teatral y aportaba a los dramas sobre el escenario una nueva visión sobre las relaciones a través de una lente femenina de los asuntos domésticos que convertía la escenografía en un campo de acción política (Bolton, 2001).

A nivel discursivo, el medio cajón funcionaba como una verdadera tecnología de poder (*technè* en el sentido foucaultiano). Al organizar la visión sobre el interior doméstico, producía un régimen de vigilancia suavizado por el goce estético. De este modo el espectador ejercía una mirada unilateral que, así mismo, se sentía autorizada por la conveniencia moral del espectáculo (Foucault, 1977). Esa asimetría convertía la

platea en un micro-panóptico desde el cual se observaban y juzgaban gestos, modales y disposiciones espaciales de los personajes y, por extensión, de los actores y actrices que los encarnaban (Carlson, 1996). Al mismo tiempo, la dirección escenográfica retenía la facultad última de establecer códigos cromáticos, recorridos de movimiento y ritmos lumínicos, volviendo sobre sí el circuito del poder y afirmando su dominio sobre los cuerpos que ocupaban el espacio.

No obstante, la institucionalización femenina del medio cajón no estuvo exenta de resistencias. La prensa satírica de la época ironizaba sobre la riqueza sobre el escenario y su exquisito gusto que, a su juicio, sin embargo, podría conllevar un coste demasiado elevado. En una crónica, en este sentido también se duda sobre la pertenencia de una decoración tan llamativa para determinados espacios representados que, en la realidad, no serían del todo representativos (Theatres, 1841).

Esta sutil duda ilustra el choque entre dos concepciones de poder escénico: la tradicional, basada en la espectacularidad pictórica y el dominio técnico masculino, y la emergente, que asociaba autoridad con la verosimilitud doméstica y la presencia de la mujer en puestos de mando. A la larga, la persistencia de Vestris y la recepción entusiasta del público evidenciaron la viabilidad de un modelo en el que la creatividad y la administración teatral convergían bajo liderazgo femenino.

En definitiva, la introducción y desarrollo del medio cajón escénico en el teatro londinense de primera mitad del siglo XIX no puede comprenderse de forma global al margen de los discursos de género ni de las lógicas de poder que lo hicieron posible y lo dotaron de significado. El dispositivo no significaba meramente una innovación formal; representaba una reconfiguración de los vínculos entre espacio, cuerpo y autoridad. Este capítulo parte, por tanto, de un enfoque interdisciplinar que conjuga historia del diseño teatral, estudios de género y teoría del poder.

2. MARCO TEÓRICO

El marco teórico de este capítulo se vertebra en la convergencia de tres campos críticos que, en su diálogo mutuo, permiten comprender el medio cajón escénico como un dispositivo donde la innovación material, la

ideología doméstica y la economía de la mirada se entrelazan. Lejos de constituir elementos estancos, la historia de la escenografía, los estudios de género vinculados a la domesticidad y la teoría foucaultiana del poder visual comparten una preocupación metodológica por el modo en que el espacio produce y es producido por las relaciones sociales.

La historiografía escenográfica sitúa la década de 1830 como un periodo de transición entre la teatralidad pictórica del siglo XVIII y la espacialidad arquitectónica moderna. El telón pintado con sus bastidores laterales, con su frontalidad bidimensional, cedió terreno al denominado box set, una configuración cerrada de cuatro muros que reproducía en escena habitaciones reales (Macgowan & Melnitz, 2021). El medio cajón, variante que prescindía de la pared que daba al público, ofrecía la misma profundidad arquitectónica sin tener que renunciar a la máxima verosimilitud del espacio propuesto. Esta implantación fue estética y visualmente novedosa y no resulta extraño que su implantación por parte de Vestris en el teatro inglés comenzase en los teatros menos del circuito dramático londinense (Iglesias Vázquez, 2024).

En el terreno estético, Vestris priorizó la coherencia visual y la exactitud escenográfica. Para ello confió la construcción de decorados a talleres internos, bajo su supervisión directa, lo que le permitió controlar costes y mantener la calidad. El *box set*, el medio cajón inglés, se convirtió en la pieza central de esta estrategia, pues garantizaba una correcta relación real y pedagógica entre la escena y los espectadores (Ranciere, 2014). Además, esta ambientación verosímil favorecía la contención actoral y la identificación del público con los códigos de la domesticidad burguesa (Mauro, 2017). La empresaria comprendió que la fidelidad material del decorado reforzaba la "ilusión perfecta" que la sociedad demandaba cada vez con mayor insistencia.

El segundo pilar interpretativo lo proporcionan los estudios de género y domesticidad. Desde la publicación de *Family Fortunes* de Davidoff y Hall (1987), el hogar victoriano ha sido leído como un microcosmos regido por la moral en el que la feminidad se performa y legitima mediante la custodia y responsabilidad de objetos, texturas y rituales cotidianos domésticos (Davidoff & Hall, 2002). Flanders (2003) demostró que toda esta custodia moral, es decir, la elección de papel pintado, decoración o

cortinajes no era simplemente una mera cuestión estética, sino que generaba una marcada declaración de respetabilidad que codificaba la jerarquía de clase (Flanders, 2003). Cuando estos interiores atravesaron el umbral del proscenio al llegar al hecho dramático, la relación entre la mujer y su espacio (doméstico) se volvió pública y expuesta.

De este modo, se manifestó con naturalidad la separación de esferas frente a la mirada del auditorio. En este sentido, Madame Vestris, al simultanear los papeles de actriz y empresaria, capitalizó aquel imaginario social: su autoridad se sustentaba en competencias feminizadas –el gusto, la hospitalidad, la atención al detalle– devenidas capital económico (Williams, 1973). La escenografía realista se convertía así en medio y mensaje ya que mientras mostraba la intimidad burguesa al caer la cuarta pared del cajón escénico, reivindicaba la capacidad femenina para regir tanto la casa ficticia del escenario como la industria teatral real a pesar de los constantes intentos patriacales de domesticar la sexualidad de las actrices (Norwood, 2017).

El tercer eje teórico se fundamenta en la conceptualización del poder como ejercicio que se despliega a través de la visibilidad. En Discipline and Punish, Foucault describe el panóptico como una arquitectura que hace del sometido un prisionero de la mirada potencial, internalizando la vigilancia (Foucault, 1977). Carlson (1996) adapta esa noción al teatro, señalando que la disposición espacial regula quién observa y quién es observado, de qué modo y con qué consecuencias (Carlson, 1996). El medio cajón, en este sentido, exacerba esta asimetría: al eliminar la pared frontal, otorga al público una visibilidad total sobre la escena, mientras los personajes, atrapados en su espacio doméstico, permanecen ajenos a esa inspección. Esta innovación sobre la percepción del escenario se inscribe también en dinámicas de poder, en regímenes discursivos de observación y en contextos específicos de economía productiva (Brockett & Hildy, 2003).

Articular estos tres campos permite leer el medio cajón como nudo donde se condensan intereses materiales, estrategias femeninas y lógicas de control visual. Su origen ciertamente responde a factores técnicos pero su consolidación lo hace a la capacidad de la gerencia para traducir los códigos domésticos en valor de producción y en prestigio crítico.

3. OBJETIVOS

El presente estudio se plantea una serie de objetivos interrelacionados que buscan ofrecer una comprensión profunda del medio cajón escénico londinense entre los años 1830 y 1850, así como de sus implicaciones técnicas, estéticas y socioculturales, especialmente en relación con las dinámicas de poder y género que se articulan en el ámbito teatral de la época.

En este sentido, se propone, en primer lugar, revisar detalladamente las características técnicas y estéticas del medio cajón escénico como forma arquitectónica y escenográfica dominante en el teatro londinense durante dicho periodo

Esta revisión no solo implica un inventario descriptivo de los elementos constitutivos de este tipo de escenario, como la disposición espacial, el uso de perspectivas pintadas, la relación entre bastidores, telones y embocaduras, así como la integración de tramoya, sino también un análisis interpretativo de cómo estas características condicionan, posibilitan o restringen ciertos modos de representación. Es decir, se pretende comprender cómo el medio cajón actúa como una tecnología escénica que no es neutral ni meramente funcional, sino que participa activamente en la producción de sentido y en la configuración de una determinada relación entre espectáculo, espectador y espacio representacional.

En particular, se estudia cómo este dispositivo arquitectónico construye un marco de visión que privilegia una mirada centralizada y regulada, y cómo esta disposición escénica puede entenderse como una forma de organización simbólica del poder, tanto en términos de jerarquización visual como de control de la acción dramática.

El segundo objetivo del trabajo se centra en la figura de Madame Vestris y en su papel fundamental dentro de la historia del medio cajón escénico, no solo como empresaria y actriz de éxito, sino también como agente cultural que promovió e institucionalizó un nuevo paradigma decorativo asociado con este tipo de escenografía. En este sentido, se propone evaluar críticamente la contribución de Madame Vestris a la consolidación del medio cajón como un modelo escénico no solamente innovador desde el punto de vista técnico y estético, sino también profundamente vinculado con una sensibilidad decorativa femenina que desafiaba los códigos dominantes del espectáculo teatral de su época.

La intervención de Vestris en el diseño y la producción de escenografías para el *Olympic Theatre*, y más tarde para otros espacios londinenses, se analizará como una manifestación concreta de su autoridad empresarial, al tiempo que como una estrategia para redefinir los límites del gusto escénico, reorientando el valor del detalle ornamental, la coherencia visual y el verosímil doméstico como elementos legitimadores del espectáculo.

Asimismo, se estudiará cómo su participación en la toma de decisiones escénicas, desde la elección de los decorados hasta la distribución espacial del escenario, permite pensar el medio cajón no solo como un entorno estético sino también como una extensión material de su agencia cultural y empresarial. En este punto, se problematizará el modo en que la noción de autoridad femenina puede leerse en términos performativos, es decir, cómo Vestris construye y despliega su poder dentro de una industria tradicionalmente masculina mediante el uso estratégico del espacio escénico y de su control visual.

Por último, el tercer objetivo del estudio consiste en analizar la compleja dialéctica entre realismo decorativo y disciplina visual que se articula en el uso del medio cajón escénico, con especial atención al modo en que la escenografía se convierte en un dispositivo que produce y organiza subjetividades de género. En otras palabras, se trata de examinar cómo los dispositivos escenográficos no solo contribuyen a la ilusión de realidad sobre la escena, sino que también ejercen una función normativa al ordenar la mirada, establecer jerarquías de visibilidad y definir formas aceptables de aparición corporal y comportamiento actoral. Esta función disciplinaria, articulada a través de la estructura visual del medio cajón, se interrogará desde una perspectiva crítica que permita pensar la escenografía no solo como una técnica de representación, sino como una tecnología de género, en el sentido en que contribuye a reproducir o desafiar las convenciones visuales y simbólicas del rol femenino en la cultura escénica. Se propondrá, por tanto, una lectura del medio cajón como un espacio performativo de negociación identitaria, en el que las coordenadas del realismo escénico no se limitan a la mímesis de lo cotidiano, sino que se inscriben en un régimen estético que refuerza determinados valores morales, sociales y de género.

En conjunto, estos tres objetivos se articulan en torno a una misma preocupación teórica: la de comprender el espacio escénico no como un mero telón de fondo para la acción dramática, sino como un agente activo en la producción de significados sociales, culturales y de género. Al centrar la atención en el medio cajón escénico londinense y en la figura de Madame Vestris como actriz, empresaria y escenógrafa, el estudio propone una revisión crítica de los modos en que el teatro del siglo XIX materializa, negocia y disputa relaciones de poder a través del diseño espacial, la visualidad y la escenografía.

4. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio adopta una metodología cualitativa con enfoque histórico-cultural, combinando herramientas de análisis documental e iconografía teatral y cultural. El objetivo es interpretar los espacios escénicos asociados al medio cajón no solo como configuraciones técnicas o decorativas, sino como dispositivos sociales atravesados por relaciones de género, poder y autoridad empresarial. La investigación se inscribe así en una tradición interdisciplinar que vincula los estudios teatrales con la historia de las mujeres y la teoría visual.

Las fuentes primarias incluyen materiales textuales y visuales. En primer lugar, se analizarán fotografías y representaciones visuales de las escenografías empleadas por Madame Vestris en teatros como el *Olympic Theatre*. Aunque las imágenes directas del periodo son limitadas, su estudio permite observar patrones decorativos y configuraciones espaciales.

En segundo lugar, se consultará un corpus representativo de críticas teatrales publicadas en entre 1831 y 1842, período en el que Vestris ejerció gerencia teatral (Iglesias Vázquez, 2024). Estas crónicas reflejan tanto la recepción de las innovaciones escénicas como las percepciones contemporáneas sobre el rol de Vestris como empresaria y artista.

Las fuentes secundarias proceden de bases de datos académicas indexadas como Scopus, JSTOR y Web of Science, y permiten enmarcar las prácticas escénicas del periodo dentro de debates más amplios sobre visualidad, performatividad de género y modernidad teatral. Se ha privilegiado bibliografía que aborda la escenografía desde una perspectiva crítica.

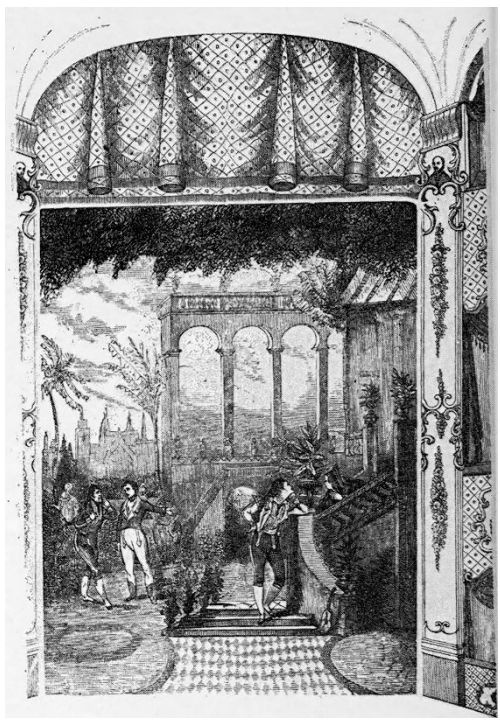
La combinación de fuentes y enfoques permite interpretar el medio cajón no solo como una forma teatral, sino como un campo de tensiones simbólicas donde se negocian autoridad, disciplina visual y perspectiva de género.

5. RESULTADOSY DISCUSIÓN

5.1. Configuración material y disciplina espacial

Las imágenes de los montajes realizados en el *Olympic Theatre* bajo la dirección de Madame Vestris, aunque ciertamente escasos, ofrecen un testimonio revelador sobre la transformación material del espacio escénico impulsada por la introducción del medio cajón (ver Figura 2 y Figura 3). Estos diseños, en los que se distingue una pared de fondo articulada con accesos laterales funcionales y una embocadura cerrada, representan una ruptura con el decorado pintado de tradición pictórica y bidimensional.

FIGURA 2. *Escena para The Two Figaros (1836-1837).*



Fuente: (Williams, 1973, pág. 122)

La inclusión de elementos arquitectónicos tridimensionales como la escalera de la Figura 2 o su arcada real posterior no solo persigue una mayor ilusión de profundidad espacial, sino que también alteraba de manera decisiva la relación entre escenografía, acción dramática y corporalidad actoral:

FIGURA 3. *Escena para The Sentinel (1837).*



Fuente: (Desconocido, s.f.)

La construcción de interiores cerrados con entradas en ángulo, en lugar del acceso frontal, obligaba a rediseñar también la movilidad de los personajes sobre la escena. La circulación tendía a desarrollarse en bucles internos o movimientos perimetrales, muchas veces acotados a la acción dentro del marco doméstico. Esta orientación espacial reducía las opciones de desplazamiento libre y amplificaba el efecto de control y contención. En este sentido, la escenografía se transformaba en un diagrama coreográfico, una arquitectura de la disciplina que inscribía las

trayectorias actorales dentro de un código implícito de orden, simetría y clausura. La protagonista femenina, en particular, quedaba enmarcada en un entorno que reforzaba los valores burgueses de recogimiento, domesticidad y mesura.

Esta espacialización de la narrativa no era neutra, sino que operaba como una tecnología de género: codificaba el cuerpo femenino como sujeto delimitado, contenido, observable. Lejos de tratarse solo de una innovación técnica, el medio cajón implicaba un régimen espacial que funcionaba como lenguaje escénico y como gramática visual de la domesticidad performada.

5.2. Poder visual y régimen de la mirada

El carácter cerrado del medio cajón traía consigo una modificación fundamental en el contrato visual entre escenario y audiencia. Al eliminar la convención del telón pintado o los decorados abiertos, se establecía una pared imaginaria transparente, que delimitaba el universo diegético como si fuera un fragmento de realidad interior capturado para su contemplación. Esta disposición espacial creaba una experiencia visual unidireccional: el público podía observar el interior doméstico sin ser visto, en un ejercicio de inspección escénica. La diferencia entre la escenografía tradicional entonces y el nuevo dispositivo fue expresado en el periódico *The Examiner* en 1833 cuando se publicó que:

> La pequeña pieza que ha suscitado estos comentarios (The Promotion) es evidentemente una traducción del francés, una bagatela ligera y divertida, muy bien interpretada en todo momento. Nos gusta la forma en que está dispuesto el escenario; su recinto más perfecto da la apariencia de una cámara privada, infinitamente mejor que el antiguo dispositivo de alas (Theatrical Examiner - Olympic Theatre, 1833).

Esa pared imaginaria transparente será lo que posteriormente se transformaría en lo que Antoine denominó la cuarta pared (Antoine, 1903). En la siguiente Figura se observa la visión del espectador frente al nuevo mecanismo expositivo (ver Figura 4).

FIGURA 4. *Interior de la sala del Olympic Theatre (1816).*



Fuente: (Cook y otros, s.f.)

La noción de poder como visibilidad asimétrica, propuesta por Michel Foucault (1977), resulta especialmente pertinente para comprender este fenómeno. En el contexto del medio cajón, la mirada del espectador —predominantemente masculina, blanca y burguesa— se legitimaba como instrumento de vigilancia simbólica sobre una escena feminizada. Se trataba, en términos foucaultianos, de un pequeño panóptico teatral donde el orden doméstico, representado con gran precisión decorativa, era ofrecido a la mirada como objeto de consumo moral y estético.

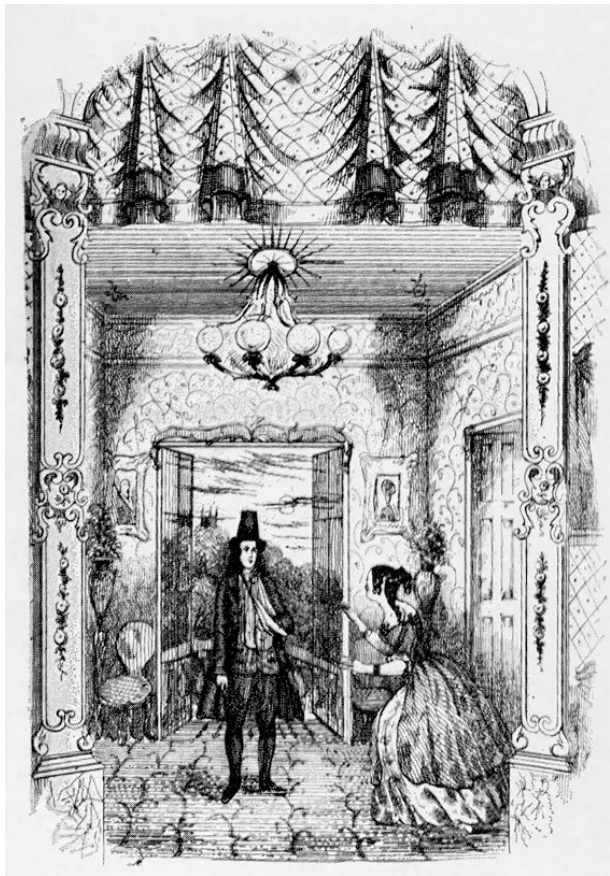
Sin embargo, este régimen visual no era enteramente unidireccional ni desprovisto de tensiones. Madame Vestris, en su rol doble de empresaria y actriz, controlaba múltiples aspectos del sistema escenográfico: la disposición del mobiliario, la elección cromática de las paredes, los textiles utilizados, los detalles de utilería. A través de estas decisiones, dirigía la atención del espectador, seleccionaba los focos de interés y modelaba la experiencia perceptiva. En cierto modo, se apropiaba de los

códigos de visibilidad para ejercer una contraautoridad: el dominio de la mirada escénica no recaía solo en el espectador sino también, y de forma significativa, en la directora del espacio representado

5.3. Realismo decorativo y construcción de género

La apuesta estética por un realismo decorativo minucioso implicó una redefinición tanto del verosímil escénico como de las nociones de género asociadas al espacio. Las representaciones detalladas de interiores domésticos como salas de estar, comedores, alcobas o cocinas, evocaban un imaginario burgués de confort, orden y feminidad (ver Figura 5).

FIGURA 5. *Escena para Court Favour (1836-1837).*



Fuente: (Williams, 1973, pág. 122)

Este hecho es todavía más reforzado con la utilización siempre presente de la decoración tanto en el suelo como en el techo del medio cajón. Estos dos elementos escénicos, generalmente olvidados, cobraban de nuevo vida con la inclusión de solados exclusivos o alfombras para la escena o bien con el cuelgue de lámparas reales sobre el techo del escenario. Todo ello perseguía esa real percepción de la domesticidad escénica.

Siguiendo a Flanders (2004), estos espacios no eran simples fondos visuales, sino condensaciones ideológicas que articulaban la imagen de la mujer como guardiana del hogar, garante de la moral privada y objeto de contemplación regulada.

Sin embargo, el dispositivo teatral producía una tensión performativa al exhibir estos interiores en un contexto público y comercial. Madame Vestris desplazaba de este modo el ámbito doméstico hacia la esfera del espectáculo colectivo. Este tránsito interpelaba la naturalidad aparente del vínculo entre mujer y hogar, revelando su carácter construido y codificado. En otras palabras, al poner en escena el hogar como artefacto representacional, Vestris subrayaba el valor de la esfera femenina.

Este gesto anticipa, en términos teóricos, la noción de performatividad del género formulada por Judith Butler, quien sostiene que el género no es una esencia ni una identidad fija, sino una serie de actos reiterados que naturalizan una construcción social (Butler, 1999). La acción escénica de Madame Vestris, en este sentido, funciona como una demostración temprana de cómo los espacios y los gestos pueden revelar —y desestabilizar— las convenciones de género cuando se los extrae de su contexto tradicional y se los reinscribe en la lógica del espectáculo.

5.4. Performatividad del poder y rituales escénicos

Una característica notable del medio cajón fue su potencial para la repetición formal: al tratarse de una estructura modular, la escenografía podía reproducirse con variaciones mínimas, permitiendo que cada nueva obra comenzara con un ritual reconocible de presentación del espacio. En muchas funciones, el telón se alzaba para mostrar un decorado completo ya dispuesto, lo que producía una reacción inmediata del

público, muchas veces expresada en murmullos de aprobación y comentarios recogidos por la prensa de la época.

En el periódico inglés *The News and Sunday Herald* en 1836 se describía este efecto como un reconocimiento tácito de buena gestión, estableciendo una relación directa entre la calidad del decorado y la percepción de competencia empresarial por parte de Madame Vestris (The dramatic Mirror - Nª XXII, 1836). Este mecanismo puede leerse a la luz del concepto de capital simbólico desarrollado por Pierre Bourdieu (Zavala Aránguiz, 2025). Es decir, cómo el gusto decorativo, articulado como un saber estético, se convertía en fuente de legitimidad social y, eventualmente, en beneficio económico. Vestris transformaba su sensibilidad escenográfica en un recurso de autoridad, consolidando un liderazgo no solo artístico sino también institucional.

Esta ritualización del poder escénico refuerza la tesis de que el medio cajón no era simplemente una mejora técnica, sino un dispositivo escénico con implicaciones performativas, económicas y políticas. La directora no solo diseñaba espacios; diseñaba la percepción del público y construía su figura como autoridad legítima dentro de un sistema que continuaba todavía fuertemente masculinizado.

5.5. Impacto transnacional y memoria cultural

El éxito del medio cajón en Londres no se limitó al contexto británico. La innovación escenográfica impulsada por Madame Vestris fue exportada con rapidez a otras geografías teatrales, como Estados Unidos y Australia. En las crónicas de la época se encuentran continuas referencias a diferentes giras que incluso la propia Vestris realizaba por Estados Unidos (Age, 1838).

Precisamente en estos estados es donde otras compañías como la de Laura Keene adoptaron las novedades escénicas con entusiasmo (Powell, 2007). Esta circulación transnacional consolidó la asociación entre escenografía realista, agencia femenina y modernidad escénica, sentando un precedente para la profesionalización de las mujeres en la dirección teatral durante los siglos XIX y XX (Creahan, 1897).

La adopción del medio cajón por mujeres en distintos contextos culturales sugiere que no se trataba únicamente de una herramienta técnica, sino de un símbolo de control estético, organizativo y simbólico sobre el espacio teatral. De este modo, la escenografía diseñada por mujeres dejó de ser un fondo pasivo para convertirse en vehículo de autoridad, producción de sentido y memoria cultural.

Por todo ello, figuras como Vestris o Keene en la genealogía de la dirección escénica femenina ha conformado un legado que, aunque a menudo ha sido omitido en los relatos canónicos del teatro moderno, contribuyó de forma decisiva a reconfigurar los parámetros de autoría, visualidad y agencia en la práctica escénica. El medio cajón, en este sentido, no solo fue un modelo decorativo: fue una estrategia de enunciación femenina que amplió los márgenes de lo posible en la escena del siglo XIX.

6. CONCLUSIONES

El presente capítulo ha demostrado que el medio cajón escénico, lejos de ser una simple innovación técnica en el contexto teatral del Londres decimonónico, constituye un dispositivo cultural complejo que articula espacialidad, género y poder. A través del análisis de su configuración material, su lógica visual, su función simbólica y su impacto transnacional, se ha evidenciado cómo esta forma escenográfica operó como catalizadora de nuevas relaciones entre escena, público y autoridad femenina, especialmente en la figura de Madame Vestris.

En primer lugar, se ha subrayado la dimensión disciplinaria del medio cajón, cuya estructura arquitectónica delimitaba la acción actoral dentro de un espacio cerrado, domesticado y cargado de significaciones ideológicas. Este marco espacial no solo organizaba la circulación escénica, sino que regulaba la representación de los cuerpos, especialmente el femenino, dentro de una lógica de orden visual y comportamental. La escenografía se convierte así en una tecnología de género que codifica la presencia y la acción a través de una arquitectura de la contención.

En segundo lugar, el régimen visual instaurado por el medio cajón facilitaba una mirada unidireccional desde el público hacia el interior representado, operando según una lógica foucaultiana de visibilidad

asimétrica. No obstante, esta asimetría era intervenida activamente por Madame Vestris, quien a través del control de los elementos visuales y escenográficos ejercía una contraautoridad, haciendo del gusto decorativo una forma de poder escénico y empresarial.

Asimismo, se ha puesto en evidencia el potencial subversivo del realismo decorativo escenográfico al desnaturalizar la asociación entre mujer y hogar. Al trasladar el espacio doméstico a la esfera del espectáculo, Vestris teatraliza el género y lo presenta como construcción performativa, en línea con los planteamientos teóricos de Judith Butler. De este modo, el medio cajón no reproduce simplemente una ideología de género, sino que revela su artificialidad y potencial de desplazamiento.

Por último, se ha constatado la influencia transnacional del medio cajón y su adopción por otras directoras teatrales, lo cual sugiere la existencia de una genealogía femenina de la escenografía realista que merece una mayor atención crítica. En suma, el medio cajón escénico constituye no solo un paradigma visual del siglo XIX, sino también un vector de agencia femenina, memoria cultural y resignificación del espacio teatral.

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ENTRE EL CASTILLO Y EL BOSQUE: CARACTERIZACIÓN Y TEMATIZACIÓN ESPACIAL EN *HAMLET* Y *SUEÑO DE UNA NOCHE DE VERANO*

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

El desarrollo del teatro público en la Inglaterra isabelina constituye una transformación sin precedentes en la historia cultural y performativa europea (West, 2006). A lo largo del último tercio del siglo XVI y las primeras décadas del XVII, la ciudad de Londres vio surgir una infraestructura teatral de carácter estable que institucionalizó el arte dramático como entretenimiento colectivo, fenómeno urbano y plataforma discursiva. Este fenómeno coincidió con el auge económico de la capital inglesa, el crecimiento demográfico y una reconfiguración de la vida social marcada por el aumento de la alfabetización, la movilidad social incipiente y una nueva relación con el espacio público (Stern, 2003). Lejos de constituir un espacio neutral que sirviese de base para la representación, el edificio público teatral isabelino configuró una espacialidad específica que condicionó tanto la producción escénica como la forma en que el público experimentaba y reconstruía conscientemente el espacio dramático (Gurr, Playgoing in Shakespeare's London, 2004). La arquitectura del teatro no solo actuaba como contenedor físico, sino como un agente performativo que dotaba de sentido, ritmo y jerarquía al discurso teatral (Wiles, 2003).

A diferencia del teatro medieval, marcado por representaciones itinerantes o funcionales en espacios religiosos, comunales o temporales, como los carros de misterios de las mansiones medievales o los atrios de iglesias (Massip, 1992), el teatro isabelino consolidó una red de recintos expresamente diseñados para acoger actuaciones dramáticas

públicas y con fines comerciales. Esta profesionalización implicó la creación de espacios permanentes, cerrados o semicerrados, cuya organización arquitectónica respondía tanto a criterios de visibilidad y acústica como a la segmentación social del público (Gurr, 2009). Entre los edificios teatrales más representativos del periodo isabelino destacan, entre otros, *The Theatre* (1576), el primero de su tipología en Londres; *The Curtain* (1577); *The Rose* (1587); The Swan (1595), célebre por el dibujo de Johannes de Witt que nos da una de las pocas imágenes contemporáneas de un teatro isabelino (ver Figura 1); *The Fortune* (1600); y, especialmente, *The Globe* (1599), edificado por la compañía Lord Chamberlain's Men y directamente vinculado a la dramaturgia de William Shakespeare (Gurr, 2009).

FIGURA 1. *Dibujo de Van Buchel, según De Wiit, en el que en 1696 se ilustra el teatro The Swan en Londres*



Fuente: (Surgers, 2004, pág. 89).

La emergencia de estos teatros supuso también una transformación en la forma de concebir el espacio escénico. El modelo de escenario isabelino se proyectaba hacia el público, eliminando la unilateral distancia frontal del proscenio clásico del teatro a la italiana y estableciendo un vínculo espacial más dinámico entre actores y espectadores (Fernández-Biggs, 2021). Esto facilitó un tipo de puesta en escena donde la palabra, el gesto y la proximidad suplían la carencia de una escenografía elaborada. En este contexto, los lugares representados no se definían tanto por su caracterización espacial física como por su tematización simbólica, construida a través del discurso dramático y la convención compartida entre actores y público (Brook, 2012).

En definitiva, la teatralidad isabelina no puede entenderse sin atender a su materialidad arquitectónica. Estos espacios eran dispositivos semióticos y sociales que informaban tanto la forma como el contenido de las obras dramáticas. El teatro público isabelino, y particularmente el *Globe*, no solo ofrecía un escenario para la representación, sino que era parte integral del proceso de significación escénica.

El presente capítulo se centra específicamente en el *Globe*, no solo por su relevancia histórica, sino también por su capacidad para ejemplificar las tensiones entre los espacios textuales construidos por Shakespeare y las condiciones materiales de representación. Además, en 1997 y tras varios estudios, se reconstruyó por segunda vez en Londres *The Globe*, incendiado en 1613 durante la representación de Enrique VII de Shakespeare. Posterior a este incendio, *The Globe* fue reconstruido en 1614, también conocido como *The Second Globe* que fue de nuevo derribado en 1644 tras el cierre decretado para todos los teatros isabelinos (Hodges, 1973).

A través del análisis del *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano* de Shakespeare, se pretende analizar cómo la espacialidad escénica del *Globe*, con su economía decorativa, su estructura jerárquica y su disposición abierta, influye directamente en la caracterización y la tematización del espacio dramático en ambas obras. En este contexto, se entiende la caracterización como la fase descriptiva cualitativa, basada en la identificación y organización de atributos espaciales (Bonilla y otros, 2009), y la tematización como la aplicación intencionada de identidad, valor simbólico o coherencia narrativa al espacio representado (Díez, 2015).

Respecto a las características físicas del *Globe*, su planta poligonal simulaba una estructura circular en cuyo centro se encontraba el *yard*, patio o arena, espacio descubierto donde se ubicaban los espectadores de pie. Alrededor de este patio se elevaban tres niveles de galerías techadas, que ofrecían distintos niveles de visibilidad y acceso, reflejando las jerarquías sociales del público (Hodges, 1973).

El escenario, una plataforma rectangular que sobresalía hacia el *yard*, constituía el núcleo físico de la acción dramática. Esta *platform stage*, sin cortinas ni telones de frente, permitía la proximidad visual y acústica entre actores y público. Sí que se ha documentado la existencia de un telón pero en el fondo del escenario que servía como límite de separación entre la escena y su parte posterior: la casa de los actores. Detrás del escenario se encontraba la *tiring house* o casa de los actores, una estructura cerrada que servía como vestuario, almacén y bastidor técnico. Sobre ella se alzaba un segundo nivel utilizable escénicamente, conocido como galería superior, desde el cual podían representarse balcones, almenas o perspectivas elevadas. El techo sobre el escenario, llamado *heavens* o cielo, estaba decorado con motivos celestes y contaba con dispositivos para efectos especiales, mientras que el espacio bajo el escenario, el *hell* o foso, albergaba trampillas por donde podían emerger personajes o elementos escénicos (Hodges, 1973).

Esta arquitectura, aunque visualmente impactante, prescindía casi por completo de decorados móviles o cambiantes. El mismo fondo escénico debía adaptarse a contextos tan diversos como un castillo danés, un bosque encantado, una taberna londinense o una ciudad romana (Fernández-Biggs, 2021). La lógica espacial del teatro isabelino era, por tanto, profundamente simbólica y dependiente de la convención compartida: un banco podía convertirse en una tumba, un tablado elevado en un torreón y un árbol de decoración en un bosque completo (Macgowan & Melnitz, 2021). La imaginería verbal y la disposición corporal de los actores eran las principales herramientas para construir el espacio dramático en la mente del espectador (López Santos, 2014).

En este sentido, resulta particularmente relevante el estudio del *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano* de Shakespeare, dos piezas paradigmáticas del repertorio del inglés que, si bien difieren radicalmente en

tono, estructura y género, comparten una profunda atención a la espacialidad textual. *Hamlet*, escrita circa 1600, se sitúa en el castillo de Elsinor, una corte real marcada por la vigilancia, la duplicidad y el encierro. Sus escenas transcurren en espacios interiores como salones, cámaras privadas o pasadizos, que refuerzan el aislamiento psicológico del protagonista y la opacidad moral del entorno.

Al contrario, *Sueño de una noche de verano*, probablemente escrita circa 1595, articula su acción en dos grandes espacios opuestos: el palacio de Teseo, que representa el orden, la ley y la razón; y el bosque ateniense, un ámbito de confusión, metamorfosis y deseo.

Ambas obras, al ser representadas en un mismo espacio arquitectónico con mínimas variaciones físicas, exigen una lectura en clave performativa del espacio. La ausencia de escenografía específica refuerza el papel del espectador como cocreador del mundo ficcional (Fernández-Biggs, 2021). La espacialidad textual se vuelve entonces un dispositivo epistémico, no solo narrativo, que organiza la experiencia dramática desde la economía del signo escénico. El estudio, por tanto, entre la caracterización y la tematización de las diferentes espacialidades en los paratextos (Thomasseau, 1997) del autor inglés se vuelve central: mientras la primera remite a la descripción verbal o escénica de un espacio (una sala, un bosque, un cementerio), la segunda construye una significación más abstracta y compartida, como ocurre con el bosque como lugar de transformación o el castillo como metáfora del encierro interior.

Este capítulo propone, por tanto, un análisis comparado de la caracterización y tematización espacial en *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano* de Shakespeare, tomando como base el edificio teatral del *Globe* como matriz de representación. A través del estudio de los elementos arquitectónicos del teatro, del discurso dramático y de las convenciones performativas del periodo, se busca remarcar cómo el espacio textual y el espacio físico convergen, se tensionan o se reinterpretan en la experiencia escénica isabelina. El análisis se apoyará en una metodología interdisciplinar, que integra estudios teatrales, teoría arquitectónica y análisis textual, para establecer un marco teórico que permita comprender la espacialidad shakespeariana desde su contexto original de producción.

2. OBJETIVOS

Este capítulo tiene como propósito analizar la construcción espacial en la narrativa del *Hamlet* y de *Sueño de una noche de verano* a través de una doble aproximación textual y escénica, centrándola en el espacio del *Globe Theatre* como marco arquitectónico condicionante. En ese sentido, el primer objetivo es cuantificar y cualificar las referencias espaciales presentes en los textos de ambas obras, entendidas no solo como descripciones escenográficas literales, sino como construcciones dramáticas sugeridas a través del lenguaje, la organización de las escenas, los cambios de localización y la creación de atmósferas. La presencia o ausencia de acotaciones detalladas o indicaciones escénicas explícitas convertirá la espacialidad paratextual en un campo físico o de significación implícita (o ambas en conjunto) que podrá ser cartografiado mediante una lectura formal y semántica de los libretos.

El segundo objetivo se orienta a examinar cómo la arquitectura del *Globe* con su planta circular, su escenario en forma de plataforma sobresaliente, sus galerías superiores y la estructura techada afecta directamente a la posibilidad de caracterizar los espacios de manera visual y diferenciada en escena.

A partir de este marco, el tercer objetivo busca explicar la relevancia de la tematización espacial como estrategia predominante para construir significado y contexto en un escenario materialmente limitado respecto a elementos decorativos. Dado que los espectadores del *Globe* generalmente compartían un mismo fondo visual independientemente de la obra representada, el espacio dramático debía adquirir sentido a través de claves discursivas, gestuales y culturales que transformaban simbólicamente la escena.

Por último, se propone reflexionar sobre la interacción entre el espacio físico teatral, el espacio textual y la percepción del público en la configuración de la experiencia escénica. Esta interacción revela una concepción del espacio performativo no como lugar fijo, sino como un fenómeno emergente del cruce entre arquitectura, texto y participación del espectador. En este marco, la espacialidad no es solo construida por el dramaturgo o por el director, sino también por la imaginación activa de un público entrenado en la convención simbólica del teatro isabelino.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este capítulo adopta una metodología interdisciplinar, de carácter cuantitativo y cualitativo (Bagur-Pons y otros, 2021) que integra herramientas del análisis textual, estudios teatrales y análisis formal arquitectónico con el objetivo de comprender las formas en que el espacio dramático es construido, tematizado y percibido en el *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano* dentro del marco arquitectónico del *Globe Theatre*. La aproximación se sustenta en dos ejes complementarios: por un lado, un estudio interno del texto dramático mediante el análisis de las referencias espaciales; por otro, un análisis externo basado en la relación entre las convenciones escénicas isabelinas y la arquitectura teatral.

El primer nivel de análisis parte del texto literario y se centra en la identificación y clasificación de referencias espaciales en los libretos de ambas obras. Para ello se ha llevado a cabo una lectura sistemática del corpus dramático en sus ediciones académicas referenciadas en la bibliografía de este capítulo para *Hamlet* (Shakespeare, Hamlet, 2017) y *Sueño de una noche de verano* (Shakespeare, 2011) con el fin de identificar todas aquellas menciones explícitas e implícitas a lugares, desplazamientos, entradas y salidas que impliquen una localización o una construcción espacial. La clasificación y calificación de las diferentes acotaciones o didascalias textuales obtenidas se plasmarán en un procedimiento en el que se tendrán en cuenta los trabajos sobre semiótica teatral de Kowzan (Kowzan, 1997) y Gutiérrez Flórez (Gutiérrez Flórez, 1990).

En un primer lugar se realizará el recuento de las acotaciones totales de cada una de las dos obras analizadas y se realizará la comparativa de su presencia respecto a la cantidad de palabras totales respectivamente.

Una vez analizadas las acotaciones, en una segunda fase se clasificarán según contengan o no algún criterio de espacialidad de los expuestos por Kowzan en su estudio.

Para todas aquellas acotaciones o didascalias que sí contienen algún criterio de espacialidad, se clasificarán según su contenido referido a los espacios espectaculares escénicos según los criterios expuestos en su trabajo por Gutiérrez Flórez.

En segundo lugar, estas acotaciones espaciales obtenidas se analizarán respecto a su contenido desde una perspectiva arquitectónica aplicada al teatro. A través del análisis formal arquitectónico (Baker, 2000), se estudiarán los particulares condicionantes del edificio del *Globe* y se identificarán sus posibilidades performativas y espaciales propuestas en los paratextos por el autor inglés. La comparación entre los elementos descritos en los textos y los recursos reales del espacio físico del *Globe* permite establecer los límites de la caracterización escénica del teatro isabelino, así como las estrategias dramatúrgicas que recurren a la tematización simbólica para suplir la presumible ausencia de escenografía. Para ello, se utilizan planos del propio teatro (Watkins, 1950) y recursos fotográficos de la reconstrucción del teatro en la actualidad (Sherlock, 2001).

En conjunto, esta metodología permite trazar un recorrido entre el texto, la escena y el edificio teatral, destacando las tensiones y convergencias entre lo que se escribe y lo que se representa. Este enfoque articulado revela cómo, en un contexto escénico limitado por la uniformidad arquitectónica y la limitación decorativa, la espacialidad dramática depende en gran medida de la tematización simbólica, como forma principal de construcción de lugar, identidad y experiencia.

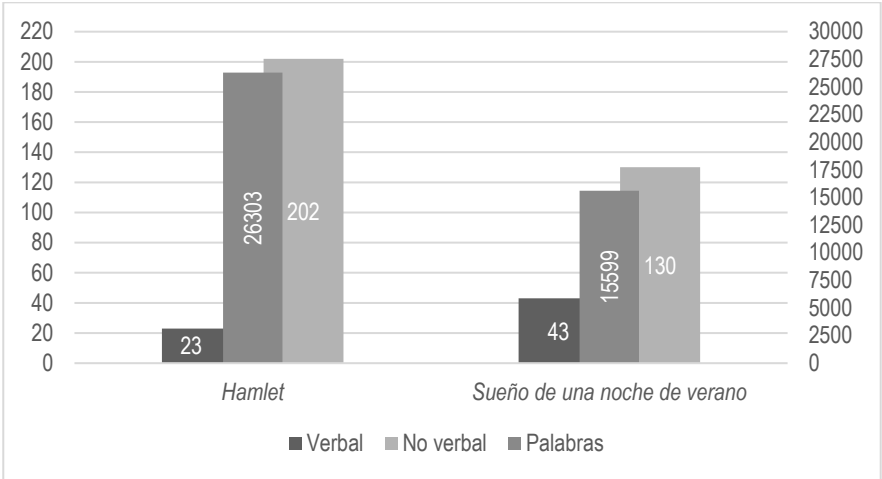
4. RESULTADOS

A continuación se exponen los resultados obtenidos del procedimiento metodológico señalado anteriormente.

En primer lugar, tras el análisis de los paratextos del Hamlet de Shakespeare, se obtienen los siguientes datos (ver Gráfico 1):

A partir del gráfico anterior (ver Gráfico 1), en Hamlet se observa un número significativamente menor de menciones verbales al espacio (23) en comparación con Sueño de una noche de verano (43). Sin embargo, las menciones no verbales son más frecuentes en *Hamlet* (202) que en *Sueño de una noche de verano* (130), lo cual refleja una mayor densidad implícita en la construcción espacial del texto.

GRÁFICO 1. *Acotaciones generales referidas en el Hamlet y Sueño de una noche de verano.*



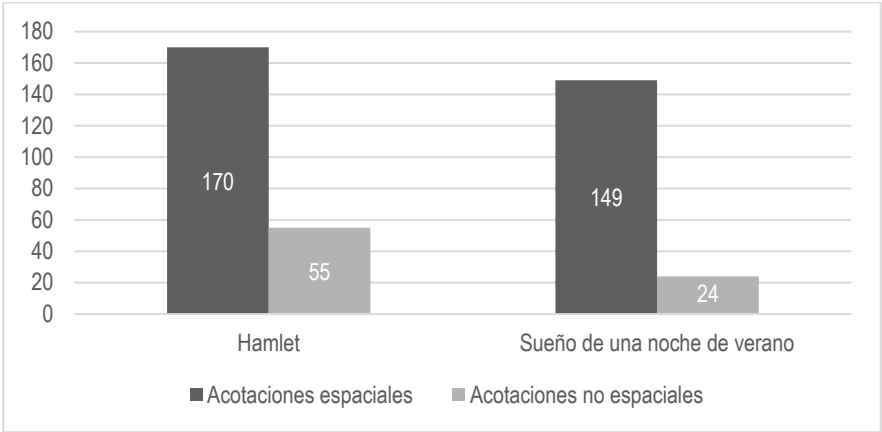
Fuente: Elaboración propia

En cuanto al volumen textual, *Hamlet* cuenta con 26.303 palabras, superando notablemente a las 15.599 palabras de *Sueño de una noche de verano*, lo que puede relacionarse con la complejidad dramática y con la intensidad discursiva de la obra. Si estos resultados se exponen respecto a la extensión en palabras de cada una de las dos obras, la presencia general de acotaciones o didascalias es relativamente mayor en *Sueño de una noche de verano* que en el *Hamlet* de Shakespeare (+129,65%).

Una vez analizadas y clasificadas las acotaciones generales en cada una de las obras, se plantea la presencia de espacialidad en ellas. Los resultados obtenidos, siguiendo los criterios de Kowzan y Gutiérrez Flórez son los que se exponen a continuación (ver Gráfico 2):

La gráfica muestra que *Hamlet* contiene un total de 170 acotaciones espaciales frente a 55 no espaciales, mientras que *Sueño de una noche de verano* presenta 149 acotaciones espaciales y solo 24 no espaciales. En ambas obras, las referencias espaciales superan ampliamente a las no espaciales, lo que confirma el papel fundamental que juegan en la construcción del mundo escénico.

GRÁFICO 2. *Acotaciones con características espaciales referidas en el Hamlet y Sueño de una noche de verano.*



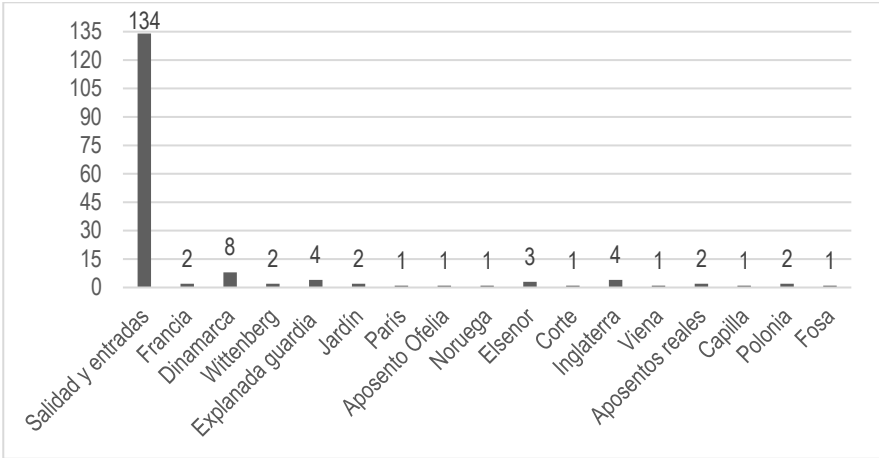
Fuente: Elaboración propia

Sin embargo, *Hamlet* presenta una proporción ligeramente mayor de acotaciones no espaciales, lo que podría indicar una mayor atención a elementos independientes del espacio. En conjunto, ambas obras muestran una marcada dependencia de las acotaciones espaciales para sostener la puesta en escena, especialmente en el contexto del escenario desnudo del *Globe*.

Por otro lado, la presencia de espacios concretos dentro de esas acotaciones con características espaciales revelará las diferentes espacialidades propuestas por el autor. Todos los espacios incluidos por el autor inglés en cada una de las obras se resumen a continuación (ver Gráfico 3 y Gráfico 4).

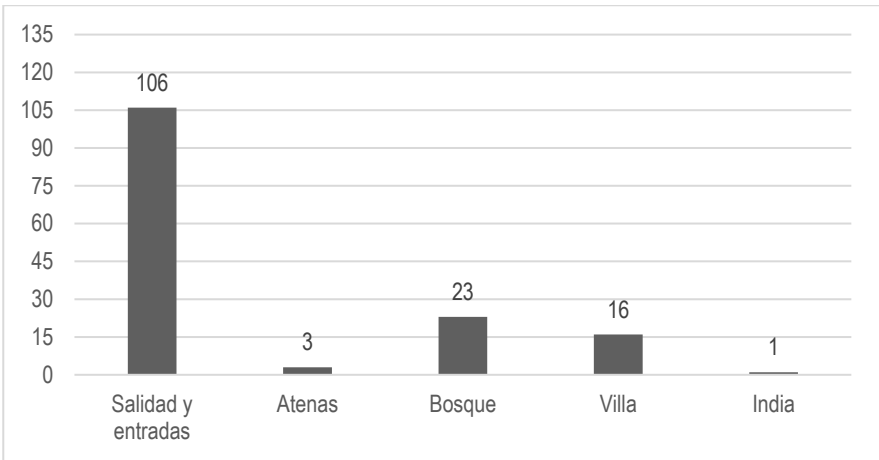
El análisis conjunto de las menciones espaciales en Hamlet y Sueño de una noche de verano en los dos gráficos anteriores (ver Gráfico 3 y Gráfico 4) revela que, en ambas obras, el mayor número de referencias corresponde a las célebres salidas y entradas del teatro isabelino (134 en Hamlet y 106 en Sueño de una noche de verano). En Hamlet, además de esta predominancia, se identifican múltiples espacios específicos distribuidos en ubicaciones reales o simbólicas como Elsinor, Wittenberg, Dinamarca o Francia, aunque con muy baja frecuencia individual. Por su parte, Sueño de una noche de verano presenta una menor variedad de localizaciones, pero mayor concentración simbólica en espacios como el bosque (23 menciones) y la villa (16).

GRÁFICO 3. *Espacialidades contenidas en el Hamlet.*



Fuente: Elaboración propia

GRÁFICO 4. *Espacialidades contenidas en Sueño de una noche de verano.*



Fuente: Elaboración propia

5. DISCUSIÓN

Los resultados obtenidos permiten una interpretación crítica de las relaciones entre el texto, el espacio y la arquitectura en el teatro isabelino en el *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano*. Ambas obras evidencian,

tras los resultados obtenidos, una dependencia significativa de la tematización simbólica del espacio como herramienta dramatúrgica en un contexto escénico sin escenografía cambiante. Sin embargo, el modo en que cada una articula esa tematización, y la forma en que sus referencias espaciales dialogan con la arquitectura del *Globe*, revelan diferencias estructurales, genéricas y perceptivas.

Una primera línea de análisis deriva de la asimetría entre la cantidad total de palabras y el número de referencias espaciales explícitas. *Hamlet*, con más de 26.000 palabras, presenta apenas 23 acotaciones espaciales verbales, mientras que *Sueño de una noche de verano*, con aproximadamente 11.000 palabras menos, casi duplica esa cifra. Este dato sugiere que *Sueño de una noche de verano* recurre de forma más directa a la verbalización, probablemente debido a la importancia estructural que adquieren los cambios de localización en su narrativa: el paso del palacio al bosque y de vuelta al palacio constituye no solo un desplazamiento físico, sino también un tránsito simbólico entre dos planos del orden social. Por su parte, *Hamlet* construye su espacialidad a través de la contención: la escena se repliega sobre sí misma, las acciones se sitúan en interiores cerrados, y la lógica del encierro domina la experiencia del espectador.

En este sentido, el castillo de Elsinor no se representa en su concreción arquitectónica: no hay detalles visuales, decorativos ni estructurales sugeridos, sino en su calidad simbólica como lugar de vigilancia, opacidad y confinamiento. La estructura misma del *Globe*, impone limitaciones: la falta de divisiones escénicas claras y la imposibilidad de recrear espacios cerrados permite que ese castillo sea cualquier lugar y todos a la vez. La opacidad dramática del entorno se traslada al espectador, que debe intuir los cambios de escena más que percibirlos. Así, la espacialidad de *Hamlet* se vuelve etérea, suspendida en una arquitectura semántica que se manifiesta en el lenguaje y no en el decorado.

A esto se suma un segundo elemento de relevancia: la enorme cantidad de acotaciones no verbales en *Hamlet* (202 frente a 130 en Sueño de una noche de verano), que indica una construcción más compleja a través de acciones, desplazamientos o gestos, más que mediante descripciones explícitas. Este dato sugiere que *Hamlet* articula su

espacialidad a través de lo que podríamos denominar una coreografía escénica del encierro. Las salidas y entradas, los cambios de ubicación dentro del mismo entorno (de una sala a otra, de una cámara a otra), no buscan marcar un cambio de lugar evidente sino acentuar una atmósfera de control, de repetición, de desplazamiento sin liberación. El espacio en *Hamlet* se densifica no por su extensión sino por su carácter asfixiante, cerrado. La arquitectura del *Globe* no dificulta esta propuesta; por el contrario, la potencia: su transparencia estructural permite que el público observe simultáneamente a los personajes en escena y a quienes permanecen en el fondo o al margen, como ocurre en múltiples momentos con personajes como Claudio o Polonio, reforzando la percepción de vigilancia constante.

Frente a ello, *Sueño de una noche de verano* opera con una lógica espacial expansiva, aunque igualmente simbólica. El contraste entre palacio y bosque no es simplemente temático, sino también performativo. Ambos espacios están definidos por sus dinámicas internas: el palacio responde a la lógica de la ley, la planificación, la jerarquía; el bosque, por el contrario, encarna lo caótico, lo móvil, lo transformacional. Esta dicotomía espacial se ve reforzada por el hecho de que *Sueño de una noche de verano* concentra un alto número de acotaciones espaciales en muy pocos referentes topológicos: el bosque recibe 23 menciones, mientras que la villa 16, lo que indica una tematización concentrada pero pregnante. El espacio aquí no es múltiple sino dual, y esa dualidad se convierte en la clave de su estructura dramatúrgica.

En términos performativos, el *Globe* permitía escenificar esa oposición sin necesidad de escenografía diferenciada. La transición entre uno y otro espacio no requería una modificación visual, sino un cambio en el tono, en el movimiento de los actores, o incluso en la música. Así, una misma plataforma escénica podía convertirse en bosque simplemente mediante la presencia de personajes feéricos, la referencia a la noche, o un cambio de ritmo. Esta plasticidad simbólica del espacio teatral isabelino no solo respondía a una limitación material, sino que se consolidaba como convención compartida con el espectador, quien debía completar el signo escénico con su imaginación culturalmente entrenada.

Desde una perspectiva arquitectónica, los resultados también invitan a una reflexión sobre la relación entre el edificio y la escritura dramática. El hecho de que Shakespeare escribiera específicamente para teatros isabelinos como el *Globe* implica que sus obras están moldeadas por las posibilidades y las restricciones de este espacio. La repetición del fondo escénico, la proximidad del público al escenario, la visibilidad de actores y espectadores en todas direcciones, y la carencia de telones frontales producen un tipo de dramaturgia que explora el espacio no como lugar, sino como acto. El bosque no es un decorado: es un cambio de régimen simbólico, activado por el discurso y la convención. El castillo no es una estructura visual, sino una textura psicológica encarnada en las acciones de los personajes. La arquitectura, por tanto, no es solo contexto, sino condición estética.

Otra observación relevante es que la gran mayoría de acotaciones espaciales en ambas obras se vinculan a entradas y salidas (134 en *Hamlet*, 106 en *Sueño de una noche de verano*). Esta recurrencia indica que el movimiento de los cuerpos sobre la escena es el principal generador de sentido espacial. La espacialidad no está en el decorado, sino en el tránsito: se entra desde el bosque, se sale hacia el palacio, se cruza una puerta que no existe físicamente pero sí simbólicamente. Cada acto, cada gesto, cada desplazamiento reconfigura momentáneamente el espacio escénico. No hay lugares fijos, sino lugares performados.

En este punto, la distinción entre caracterización y tematización espacial cobra una dimensión metodológica esencial para interpretar las dinámicas escénicas en *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano*. Como se ha demostrado en los resultados, la caracterización espacial, entendida como la descripción directa de atributos físicos, localizaciones precisas o elementos decorativos, es mínima en ambas obras. Las acotaciones con información sobre el espacio son escasas, generalmente genéricas, y no buscan establecer un lugar concreto visualmente identificable, sino que operan como indicios funcionales para orientar mínimamente al espectador o a los actores. En un escenario como el del *Globe*, en el que la decoración era inexistente y los elementos visuales eran reducidos al mínimo, este tipo de caracterización carecía de sentido práctico y se subordinaba a otros recursos semióticos.

La tematización, en cambio, emerge como la verdadera estrategia de construcción espacial. En *Hamlet*, el castillo de Elsinor no se configura a través de detalles arquitectónicos o decorativos, sino como un espacio simbólico cargado de tensión, encierro y vigilancia. La espacialidad del castillo está ligada a la psicología del protagonista y a la opacidad del poder. El texto proyecta un espacio cerrado, denso, que funciona como prolongación del estado de incertidumbre y sospecha. Esta tematización se apoya en imágenes recurrentes (murallas, puertas, escondites, trampas), pero no en descripciones físicas. La arquitectura real del *Globe*, sin divisiones ni cambios de escenografía, potencia esta construcción simbólica: un espacio único puede acoger distintas escenas sin alterar su superficie, pero modificando su significación.

Por su parte, en *Sueño de una noche de verano*, la tematización opera a través de la polaridad entre la ciudad y el bosque. El bosque es más que un entorno natural: es un espacio liminal donde se suspenden las normas y emergen el deseo, la confusión y lo fantástico. La transición de los personajes hacia el bosque implica una transformación subjetiva y estructural. No hay árboles ni vegetación en escena, pero la tematización del bosque existe como convención simbólica compartida entre actores y público. Esta tematización permite que el mismo escenario se convierta, sucesivamente, en corte y selva mágica, no por medios visuales, sino por el poder transformador del lenguaje y la acción dramática.

6. CONCLUSIONES

El análisis comparado de *Hamlet* y *Sueño de una noche de verano* permite identificar un patrón claro en la construcción del espacio dramático dentro del teatro isabelino: la primacía de la tematización sobre la caracterización espacial. Ambas obras operan dentro de un sistema escénico que, por sus limitaciones técnicas y por su naturaleza performativa, relega la descripción física del espacio a un plano meramente residual o incluso inexistente. En lugar de ello, Shakespeare desarrolla una estrategia dramatúrgica en la que el espacio adquiere sentido y presencia a través del discurso y la acción. Este modelo supone una espacialidad implícita, simbólica y móvil, donde el lugar no se define tanto

por su apariencia como por su función narrativa, emocional o ideológica.

En *Hamlet*, la caracterización espacial es escueta. Además, sus marcos referenciales apenas sirven como punto de orientación mínima. Sin embargo, a través de la tematización, el espacio del castillo de Elsinor se convierte en un entorno opresivo, cargado de sospecha, duplicidad y vigilancia. Es un espacio clausurado, en el que lo invisible (los secretos, las traiciones, los espectros) pesa más que lo visible. El texto y su estructura repiten escenas de encierro, espionaje y ocultamiento, generando una percepción de encierro progresivo. Así, el castillo actúa como un reflejo simbólico del estado interior del protagonista y del desmoronamiento político que lo rodea. El escenario físico del *Globe*, sin divisiones reales ni elementos decorativos, potencia esta construcción mental del espacio, haciendo de cada escena una reiteración simbólica del mismo lugar: un mundo sin salidas, donde todos los caminos conducen al vacío o a la muerte.

En *Sueño de una noche de verano* la imposibilidad de una caracterización espacial también es evidente. La ciudad de Atenas y el bosque adyacente se indican de manera nominal, sin más atributos topográficos o estructurales que permitan definirlos. Sin embargo, el contraste entre ambos espacios se tematiza de forma persistente: la ciudad representa la ley, el orden y la autoridad patriarcal, mientras que el bosque es el lugar del deseo, de la confusión, del juego y de la transgresión. A diferencia de *Hamlet*, aquí el espacio permite la transformación y la reconciliación. La tematización espacial no solo estructura el conflicto dramático, sino que da sentido a la evolución de los personajes, que deben atravesar un espacio liminal (el bosque) para reencontrarse consigo mismos y con el orden simbólico al final de la obra. De nuevo, el *Globe*, sin grandes elementos para transformar el espacio, se convierte en una plataforma de imaginación activa, donde el lugar se construye en la mente del espectador.

Ambas obras demuestran, por tanto, que el espacio en Shakespeare no es un decorado sino un operador simbólico central. La caracterización, cuando existe, cumple una función mínima de anclaje; la tematización, en cambio, moldea la experiencia dramática, convierte el lugar en

significado y activa la participación del público. Esta lógica espacial está en profunda sintonía con la crítica literaria teatral del teatro isabelino, que prioriza la palabra, la convención y la imaginación sobre lo visual. En consecuencia, tanto *Hamlet* como *Sueño de una noche de verano* ofrecen modelos de espacialidad altamente performativos y epistemológicamente densos, donde la representación del lugar es siempre una forma de conocimiento dramatizado.

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LA ARQUITECTURA ESCÉNICA INGLESA Y SU FICCIONALIZACIÓN EN *DOCTOR WHO*

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La arquitectura teatral inglesa más célebre de la historia del drama, desde el teatro moderno como el del *Globe* isabelino hasta los teatros victorianos como el *Palace Theatre*, constituye no solo un objeto arquitectónico de estudio, sino también un espacio semántico y cultural cargado de significados. Al contrario de lo que sucedió con el teatro moderno italiano, el teatro moderno inglés se centró en su prevalencia con el texto dejando en un segundo plano la espectacularidad de la representación (Surgers, 2004). Estos edificios dramáticos tan particulares respecto a sus contemporáneos, en este contexto, más allá de su función escénica, han operado más como catalizadores de imaginarios colectivos que sobre la noción de espectáculo. Sin embargo, pese a su escasez visual y de espectacularidad representativa, su capacidad de persistencia simbólica en la cultura británica ha hecho que sean objeto constante de representación, interpretación y resignificación (Carlson, 2003).

Desde una perspectiva interdisciplinar, el edificio teatral debe entenderse como una estructura en la que confluyen prácticas artísticas, procesos históricos, códigos sociales y tecnologías materiales (McAuley, 2000). En el caso inglés, la evolución del teatro desde las estructuras circulares de madera del periodo isabelino hasta los sofisticados coliseos decimonónicos refleja transformaciones profundas en las concepciones del espectáculo, del público y del lugar del arte en la vida urbana (Brook, 2012). Así, el teatro no solo alberga representaciones sobre sus espacios sino que se revela en sí mismo como un método de representación cultural.

En las ficciones audiovisuales contemporáneas, estos espacios no solo son recreados como decorados históricos, sino que se transforman en escenarios narrativos que activan resonancias estéticas, ideológicas y temporales. La televisión británica, en particular la corporación pública, ha cultivado una relación estrecha con el patrimonio arquitectónico teatral, combinando nostalgia, pedagogía cultural y experimentación estética (Kesson, 2015). En este marco, la serie *Doctor Who*, emblema de la ciencia ficción televisiva (Gomes, 2019), constituye un laboratorio privilegiado para examinar la representación del teatro como dispositivo arquitectónico y simbólico.

Doctor Who es una icónica serie británica de ciencia ficción producida por la BBC desde 1963, considerada una de las más longevas y representativas del género. La historia sigue al Doctor, un misterioso alienígena del planeta Gallifrey perteneciente a la raza de los Señores del Tiempo, que viaja a través del tiempo y el espacio en su nave TARDIS, cuyo aspecto exterior es el de una cabina de policía británica de los años 60. El Doctor interviene en conflictos históricos, cósmicos y morales, enfrentando a enemigos recurrentes como los Daleks o los Cybermen, y defendiendo formas de vida diversas en defensa del equilibrio universal. Acompañado por una serie de compañeros humanos, el Doctor cambia de forma mediante un proceso llamado regeneración, lo que ha permitido una continuidad narrativa multigeneracional. Con su combinación única de aventuras, dilemas éticos y comentarios sociales, *Doctor Who* se ha consolidado como un fenómeno cultural global y un referente clave en la televisión de ciencia ficción.

Doctor Who, en este sentido, ha demostrado una notable sensibilidad para articular dentro de su imaginario tecnológico cargado de ciencia e innovación con elementos patrimoniales y culturales de la historia británica, entre ellos la arquitectura teatral (Hobden, 2009). En su larga trayectoria, la serie ha integrado escenarios teatrales reales y ficticios, no solo como ambientación histórica, sino como espacios cargados de intención narrativa. Este fenómeno puede observarse en diferentes episodios clave de la serie en los que el teatro funciona tanto como lugar para el desarrollo de la acción como elemento generador de la misma.

La incorporación del teatro en estas narrativas responde a una lógica de patrimonialización crítica, como herramienta de activación del patrimonio cultural así como de también de su promoción dentro del grupo social (Sánchez-Carretero, 2012). En esta patrimonialización, el pasado arquitectónico no se presenta de forma neutral o decorativa, sino como palimpsesto ideológico. La arquitectura escénica se activa como un archivo en disputa, donde se cruzan memorias culturales, imaginarios nacionales y representaciones del tiempo. Así, el teatro dentro de *Doctor Who* se convierte en un operador simbólico desde el cual interrogar no solo el pasado, sino también los futuros posibles que la ciencia ficción propone.

Así mismo, el teatro como espacio escénico conlleva una dimensión epistemológica. Según Carlson, los edificios teatrales son máquinas de memoria, estructuras donde las huellas del pasado se inscriben en la experiencia estética del presente (Carlson, 2003). Desde esta perspectiva, analizar la representación de edificios teatrales en *Doctor Who* permite explorar no solo una estética del lugar, sino una poética del tiempo y de la identidad británica mediada por la arquitectura.

Cabe señalar que esta representación escénica en la televisión no se limita a la mímesis arquitectónica. Implica también un diseño escénico que reinterpreta y ficcionaliza el espacio: escenografía, vestuario, iluminación y actuación contribuyen a activar una teatralidad que desborda el referente histórico. En efecto, como sostiene Patrice Pavis (2012), la escena contemporánea (teatral o televisiva) opera como un hiperespacio donde múltiples códigos convergen para generar sentido (Pavis, 2021). En *Doctor Who*, esta convergencia se manifiesta en una teatralidad expandida que transforma el edificio teatral en portal simbólico, interfaz de conocimiento y conexión relacional entre diferentes mundos y temporalidades.

Este capítulo propone, por tanto, una lectura interdisciplinar que cruza arquitectura, diseño escénico, teoría del espacio, historia y narrativa audiovisual. El objetivo es demostrar que la teatralidad en *Doctor Who* no es mero telón de fondo, sino un campo simbólico de gran densidad, donde la televisión se apropia del teatro no solo como forma estética, sino como elemento cultural. La serie de televisión, al insertar espacios teatrales en su diégesis, reconfigura la percepción del patrimonio

escénico inglés y lo reinscribe en el imaginario contemporáneo desde una lógica de exploración intertemporal.

Finalmente, esta introducción plantea que el estudio de la arquitectura teatral en *Doctor Who* no es un ejercicio de arqueología televisiva, sino una vía para repensar el papel del teatro como vehículo cultural en la era mediática. Al representar el teatro, *Doctor Who* no solo revive espacios históricos: los reactiva como máquinas narrativas donde lo escénico, lo arquitectónico y lo mediático se funden para generar nuevas formas de experiencia cultural y de conocimiento.

2. OBJETIVOS

El objetivo principal de este capítulo es analizar de una forma crítica la representación del edificio teatral inglés en la serie *Doctor Who*, centrando la atención en aquellos episodios en los que el teatro aparece como espacio escénico literal y también como recurso simbólico. El análisis se apoya en un enfoque interdisciplinar que entrelaza arquitectura, diseño escénico, historia cultural y estudios televisivos. El interés no reside únicamente en identificar la presencia física del edificio teatral, sino en explorar los modos en que dichos espacios son activados como narrativas visuales, dispositivos ideológicos y estructuras de memoria en la lógica del texto audiovisual. En este sentido, el capítulo se propone demostrar que el teatro en *Doctor Who* no actúa como simple decorado histórico, sino como una entidad simbólica que articula discursos sobre el tiempo, la identidad y la cultura británica.

Otro de los propósitos específicos de este estudio es analizar cómo la serie reconfigura arquitecturas teatrales emblemáticas como el *Globe Theatre* o el *Palace Theatre*, dotándolas de una dimensión patrimonial que excede su función meramente escénica. Este proceso será entendido desde la teoría de la patrimonialización crítica, que considera el patrimonio como construcción cultural activa. De este modo, se examinará cómo la serie inserta estas arquitecturas, reales o ficticias, dentro de una narrativa que conecta espacialidades diversas como el pasado isabelino y o el victoriano con el presente (e incluso futuro)

tecnocultural, articulando un diálogo temporal que enriquece la comprensión del teatro como arte y como institución.

Así mismo, el presente estudio pretende indagar en la representación de la teatralidad como estrategia estética y epistemológica. Se parte de la premisa de que los edificios teatrales funcionan como palimpsestos culturales, cargados de capas históricas que influyen en su recepción contemporánea. Este enfoque permite explorar cómo la memoria escénica se traduce en imágenes televisivas que reformulan la experiencia del teatro para nuevas audiencias.

Finalmente, el capítulo busca contribuir a los debates actuales sobre la mediatización del patrimonio arquitectónico en la cultura popular (del Campo & Espoz Dalmasso, 2019) mostrando cómo *Doctor Who* opera como mediador cultural que convierte el teatro histórico en material narrativo flexible y significativo para el espectador global.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio adopta una metodología mixta (Pole, 2009), esto es, cuantitativa y cualitativa y de carácter interpretativo, apoyada en herramientas de análisis textual, visual y espacial. Dicha metodología se estructura en tres fases de carácter consecutivo y acumulativo.

En una primera fase, se propone la realización de un estudio en forma de revisión sistemática (Hinojosa-Ticona y otros, 2021) de toda la producción realizada desde el comienzo de *Doctor Who* desde 1963 hasta la actualidad, en la que la serie continua en producción y emisión de nuevas temporadas. Así mismo, la revisión sistemática se ha planteado siguiendo las especificaciones propuestas por la metodología PRISMA 2020 (Aklh y otros, 2021). Respecto a las bases de datos empleadas en la revisión sistemática se encuentran los sitios web de la cadena BBC en los que se encuentran disponibles todos los capítulos de forma online, desde 1963 hasta la actualidad. Es por ello por lo que el marco temporal empleado son las fechas mencionadas. Las bases de datos empleadas son, por todo ello:

– BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who 1963-1996 (BBC a., s.f.).
– BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who 2005-2022 (BBC b., s.f.).
– BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who (2024-2025) (BBC c., s.f.).

Además, esta revisión sistemática se llevará a cabo siguiendo unos criterios estrictos de inclusión y exclusión, con el fin de seleccionar las emisiones más representativas que permitan obtener una visión integral sobre la presencia de edificios teatrales en toda la temporalidad de la serie.

En la siguiente tabla (ver Tabla 1) se exponen los criterios para la revisión sistemática planteada:

TABLA 1. *Criterios de la Metodología planteada: primera revisión sistemática.*

Criterio	Descripción	Inclusión	Exclusión
Base de datos	BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who 1963-1996	X	
	BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who 2005-2022	X	
	BBC iPlayer: Doctor Who (2024-2025)	X	
Tipo de acceso	Libre	X	
	No libre		X
Marco temporal	Previo a 1963		X
	1963-2025	X	
	Posterior a 2025		X
Idioma de publicación	Inglés	X	
	Otro		X
Palabras clave	Teatro	X	
	Arquitectura teatral	X	
	Teatro inglés	X	

Fuente: elaboración propia

Con base en los criterios detallados en la tabla anterior (ver Tabla 1), se procedió a realizar una primera revisión que permitió identificar un total de 41 temporadas, 26 en el arco temporal entre 1963 y 1996, 13 temporadas entre 2005 y 2022 y 2 temporadas en el período comprendido entre 2024 y 2025. Es necesario destacar que la numeración de temporadas se ha reiniciado por parte de la cadena de emisión en los períodos entre 1996 y 2005 y entre 2022 y 2024. Tras el análisis de todas ellas, se identifican tres capítulos en los que la arquitectura teatral inglesa está presente visualmente como escenario pero también

conforma parte del arco argumentativo del capítulo. Estos tres capítulos son, en orden cronológico:

- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 1*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 21.
  Duración: 25 min.
- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 2*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 22.
  Duración: 24 min.
- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 3*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 23.
  Duración: 22 min.
- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 4*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 24.
  Duración: 25 min.
- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 5*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 25.
  Duración: 25 min.
- *The Talons of Weng-Chiang: Part 6*
  Año emisión: 1977.
  Temporada: 14.
  Capítulo 26.
  Duración: 23 min.
- *The Unquiet Dead.*
  Año emisión: 2005.
  Temporada: 1.

Capítulo 3.
Duración: 45 min

– *The Shakespeare Code.*
Año emisión: 2007.
Temporada: 3.
Capítulo 2.
Duración: 46 min

Una vez realizada la primera visualización de cada uno de los capítulos, de forma breve, el argumento de ellos es el siguiente:

– *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*: En el Londres victoriano, el Cuarto Doctor y Leela investigan una serie de desapariciones relacionadas con el ilusionista Li H'sen Chang. Parte de la trama se desarrolla en el *Palace Theatre* de Londres, donde tienen lugar varios de los eventos clave de la historia, incluyendo actuaciones en escena y encuentros con el antagonista. El teatro funciona como localización central dentro del episodio.

– *The Unquiet Dead:* El Noveno Doctor y Rose viajan a Cardiff en 1869, donde asisten a una lectura pública de Charles Dickens en un teatro. Allí descubren que entidades alienígenas llamadas Gelth están usando cadáveres humanos como huéspedes. El teatro sirve como lugar de encuentro entre los personajes y como escenario de los eventos sobrenaturales que se desarrollan.

– *The Shakespeare Code:* El Décimo Doctor y Martha viajan a Londres en 1599 y visitan el *Globe Theatre*, donde William Shakespeare ensaya y representa la obra *Love's Labour's Won*. La historia gira en torno a una amenaza alienígena que utiliza el poder de la obra teatral para alterar la realidad. El teatro es el principal escenario de la acción del episodio.

En todos los capítulos seleccionados a través de la revisión sistemática, los edificios teatrales no se interpretan únicamente como decorados, sino como signos culturales cuya representación está cargada de significado ideológico, histórico y estético. Este enfoque permite analizar la arquitectura escénica como una forma discursiva mediatizada,

entendiendo su presencia en la serie como un acto de representación que implica decisiones sobre visualidad, memoria y cultural.

En una segunda fase, se analizará la arquitectura teatral contenida en cada uno de los capítulos y se detallará con la información gráfica propuesta en ellos a modo de escenografía.

En una tercera y última fase, se analizarán dichos espacios desde la óptica arquitectónica y su espacialidad. Así mismo, se analizará el papel del edificio dramático en el desarrollo del argumento de los capítulos y su valoración semántica y discursiva en la narrativa de capa uno de los episodios. Por último, se analizarán estas construcciones y espacios arquitectónicos en cuanto a su no limitación respecto a cumplir funciones prácticas, sino también a cómo incorporan significados simbólicos, ideales culturales, memorias compartidas y narrativas sociales que reflejan su contexto histórico y social. (Lefebvre, 1991)

4. RESULTADOS

Fruto del análisis desarrollado a lo largo del proceso metodológico descrito en el apartado anterior de esta investigación, se identificaron tres episodios de la serie *Doctor Who* en los que la arquitectura teatral inglesa desempeña un papel relevante no solo desde el punto de vista escenográfico, sino también como elemento estructural en la narrativa audiovisual. Estos episodios fueron seleccionados tras una revisión sistemática de la producción completa de la serie desde 1963 hasta 2025, centrada en aquellos casos en los que se registra la aparición explícita de edificios teatrales como localizaciones clave dentro del relato.

El primero de los episodios relevantes corresponde a *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* (ver Figuras 1 a 4) dividido en seis partes. Ambientado en el Londres victoriano, este arco argumental sitúa una parte significativa de su acción en el *Palace Theatre*, espacio donde se representan espectáculos de magia escénica que enmascaran una amenaza de carácter sobrenatural. El capítulo fue grabado, sin embargo, en el *Royal Theatre* de Northampton. El teatro, en este caso, no es únicamente un fondo decorativo, sino un entorno activo que acoge la performatividad de los personajes y los despliegues de ilusionismo como dispositivo

narrativo central. A lo largo de los seis capítulos que componen esta trama, el escenario teatral actúa como eje simbólico en torno al cual se organiza la narrativa: lugar de desapariciones misteriosas, de identidades disfrazadas y de revelaciones dramáticas. Su diseño interior, la disposición de la tramoya, los camerinos y la caja escénica forman parte del engranaje narrativo, reforzando la ambigüedad entre realidad y ficción que define el tono del episodio. Inspirado en el *Palace Theatre*, su arquitectura victoriana oscura, ornamental y densa recrea con eficacia el ambiente decimonónico. El espacio se convierte en síntesis de teatralidad clásica y amenaza moderna: en sus bambalinas y tramoyas se ocultan tecnologías anacrónicas y figuras espectrales. El teatro, aquí, no solo entretiene, sino que vela y revela lo siniestro: se transforma en máquina narrativa que articula la tensión entre ciencia y superstición.

FIGURA 1. *The Talons of Weng-Chiang. Vista del escenario.*



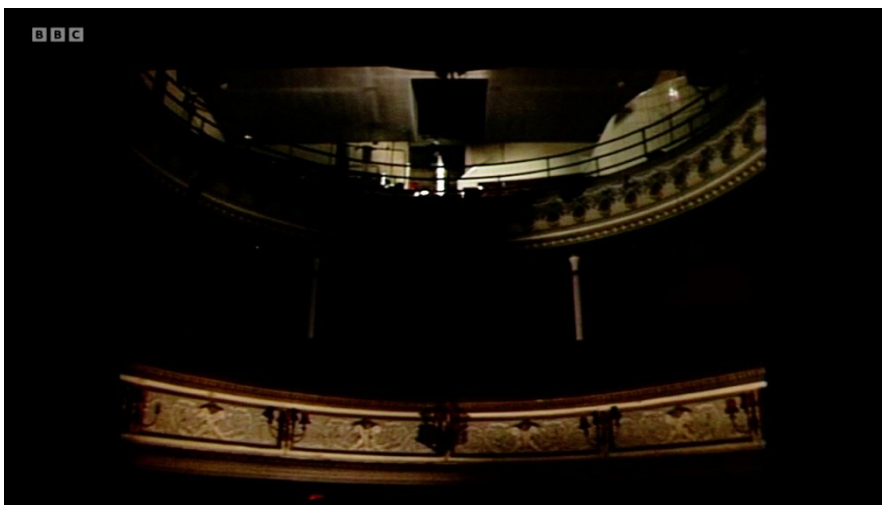
Fuente: (The Talons of Weng-Chiang - Parte 1, 1977) min 00:36

FIGURA 2. *The Talons of Weng-Chiang. Vista del escenario y patio de butacas*



Fuente: (The Talons of Weng-Chiang - Parte 1, 1977) min 10:16

FIGURA 3. *The Talons of Weng-Chiang. Vista anfiteatro del patio de butacas.*



Fuente: (The Talons of Weng-Chiang- Parte 2, 1977) min 19:46

FIGURA 4. *The Talons of Weng-Chiang. Vista de la tramoya.*



Fuente: (The Talons of Weng-Chiang- Parte 2, 1977) min 21:14

En segundo lugar, *The Unquiet Dead* (2005), ubicado temporalmente en el Cardiff de 1869, la acción comienza con una lectura pública del escritor Charles Dickens (ver Figura 5) en un teatro como escenario inicial de los eventos sobrenaturales que suceden a continuación. El teatro simula el *Taeliesin Lodge* de Cardiff en 1869 aunque su grabación se realizó en el *New Theatre, Park Place* en la misma ciudad.

La arquitectura teatral (ver Figuras 6 y 7) aquí enmarca la irrupción de lo fantástico, sirviendo como punto de tránsito entre lo real y lo espectral, a través de un espacio escénico históricamente asociado con la ficción y la representación cultural. El episodio muestra cómo el teatro, como contenedor físico de una tradición cultural, se transforma en nodo de comunicación entre mundos: lo humano y lo alienígena, lo histórico y lo contemporáneo. En este contexto, el teatro actúa como umbral narrativo: el lugar donde la palabra literaria adquiere poder performativo y se convierte en un vehículo de comunicación con otras dimensiones más allá de la humana y la visible.

FIGURA 5. *The Unquiet Dead. Cartel anunciador de las lecturas de Dickens.*



Fuente: (The Unquiet Dead, 2005) min 06:41

De este modo, la disposición espacial propuesta por la serie con el uso de velas, telones, y la performatividad de los personajes construyen una teatralidad ritual y mortuoria que camina entre el mundo de los vivos y los muertos. En este sentido, Dickens aparece como figura escénica de su propia leyenda, y la arquitectura funeraria deviene espacio performativo donde lo espectral y lo literario se funden

FIGURA 6. *The Unquiet Dead. Vista del escenario.*



Fuente: (The Unquiet Dead , 2005) min 08:55

FIGURA 7 *The Unquiet Dead. Vista del patio de butacas.*



Fuente: (The Unquiet Dead , 2005) min 11:25

Finalmente, The Shakespeare Code (2007) se ambienta en el Londres isabelino y presenta una detallada visión del Globe Theatre tanto exterior (ver Figura 8) como interior. A diferencia de los otros dos capítulos anteriores, en esta ocasión la grabación del capítulo se realiza en el actual Globe reconstruido.

FIGURA 8. *The Shakespeare Code. Reconstrucción del exterior del Globe original.*



Fuente: (The Shakespeare Code, 2007)min 05:00

Este espacio teatral, icono de la cultura inglesa y símbolo de la dramaturgia shakespeariana, es convertido en locus dramático donde se articula una amenaza alienígena que utiliza la representación de la obra ficticia *Love's Labour's Won* para invocar fuerzas mágicas. El episodio asocia directamente la arquitectura del teatro con la dimensión ritual de la palabra dramática, estableciendo un vínculo entre el espacio físico del escenario y su potencial transformador sobre la realidad. El uso del verdadero espacio de la reconstrucción contemporánea del Globe (ver Figuras de 9 al 11) aporta el más alto grado de verosimilitud histórica. En el capítulo se pueden apreciar todas las zonas y estancias del espacio dramático como la casa de los actores, el techo con su cielo, la arena o el anillo de los espectadores.

FIGURA 9. *The Shakespeare Code. Vista interior general.*



Fuente: (The Shakespeare Code, 2007)min 05:06

Además, este uso del edificio reconstruido también activa un juego metateatral en el que el teatro representa su propia capacidad de alteración ontológica. La disposición circular del edificio, la interacción entre actores y público, y la materialidad de la escenografía contribuyen a una puesta en escena donde el edificio teatral es un actor más del drama. El episodio conecta, así, la teatralidad isabelina con la magia como tecnología

primitiva, haciendo del escenario un portal interdimensional. La arquitectura se convierte en interfaz activa entre espectador, actor y cosmos.

FIGURA 10. *The Shakespeare Code. Vista interior general.*



Fuente: (The Shakespeare Code, 2007)min 20:14

FIGURA 11. *The Shakespeare Code. Vista interior general.*



Fuente: (The Shakespeare Code, 2007)min 20:21

Estos tres episodios, examinados también desde una perspectiva visual y espacial, evidencian cómo los recursos técnicos del lenguaje audiovisual configuran una representación de los teatros que refuerza su papel semántico dentro de la trama. Además, en los dos primeros capítulos, The Talons of Weng-Chiang y The Unquiet Dead, el espacio teatral es representado, esto es, no se trata de edificio dramático histórico británico (a pesar de que en The Talons of Weng-Chiang simulan la localización en el Palace Theatre real). Sin embargo, en el caso de The Shakespeare Code, el propio teatro es la reconstrucción original del Globe En todos los casos, la arquitectura teatral es tratada como un signo complejo que condensa una red de significados históricos y culturales, y no simplemente como una localización funcional.

Así mismo, el análisis de estos tres capítulos a partir de la metodología propuesta permitió ahondar en la lectura simbólica y discursiva de estos espacios teatrales. Desde el marco conceptual propuesto por Henri Lefebvre (1991), los edificios teatrales son entendidos como espacios sociales producidos, dotados de una carga ideológica y cultural que se reactualiza en su representación mediática. La serie Doctor Who convierte estos espacios en escenarios de resignificación patrimonial, donde la memoria colectiva, la identidad británica y la historia del teatro inglés son rearticuladas mediante la ficción científica.

De este modo, los resultados apuntan a que la presencia del teatro como arquitectura dentro de *Doctor Who* va más allá del decorado o la ambientación: actúa como una forma de discurso visual que permite activar procesos de interpretación sobre el pasado, el imaginario cultural británico y la relación entre espacio construido y producción simbólica. El teatro, en su dimensión arquitectónica, emerge así como un agente narrativo en sí mismo dentro de la serie, capaz de vehicular tensiones entre tradición y modernidad, entre espectáculo y verdad, entre realidad histórica y creación fantástica.

5. DISCUSIÓN

El análisis de los episodios seleccionados de Doctor Who permite establecer que la arquitectura teatral no solo sirve como escenario físico,

sino que actúa como catalizador narrativo y como archivo cultural. La aparición de edificios teatrales en la serie, como el Palace Theatre, el teatro victoriano de Cardiff y el Globe Theatre, da cuenta de un patrón recurrente de representación que articula un discurso visual sobre el patrimonio escénico inglés. En este sentido, la serie construye un diálogo entre el pasado arquitectónico y el presente tecnológico del medio televisivo, articulando una ficción que se nutre de referentes culturales e históricos para proyectar mundos y tiempos pasados alternativos.

Esta apropiación de la arquitectura teatral por parte de la ciencia ficción televisiva pone de relieve una tensión productiva entre la memoria y la invención. Las prácticas artísticas contemporáneas que utilizan la reactivación del pasado implican una negociación con la historicidad de los objetos representados, lo cual es evidente en la forma en que Doctor Who emplea y reactualiza el imaginario colectivo de la arquitectura del teatro inglés. En la serie, el espacio teatral deviene en una superficie simbólica en la que convergen diferentes temporalidades, funcionando como zona de contacto entre un pasado que mezcla realidad y ficción y su influencia en el presente.

Además, estos tres episodios evidencian un uso deliberado de la espacialidad teatral como forma de amplificar la performatividad del relato audiovisual. Esto se manifiesta, por ejemplo, en el tratamiento visual del Globe Theatre en The Shakespeare Code, cuya arquitectura circular favorece la multiplicidad de perspectivas y el juego de miradas entre personajes y espectadores, reproduciendo la dinámica del teatro isabelino dentro del propio formato televisivo. Se activa así una mise en abyme escenográfica, en la que el teatro representa su propia capacidad de transformación ficcional, pero también su función como espacio de negociación cultural.

Por otra parte, el teatro como edificio aparece en Doctor Who no como una ruina del pasado, sino como un artefacto viviente, capaz de interpelar críticamente al presente desde su inscripción en la tradición. Este posicionamiento implica una relectura del patrimonio arquitectónico no como vestigio estático, sino como superficie móvil de significados culturales y sociales. Se concibe, de este modo, el espacio como una construcción relacional y dinámica; esto es, la representación de los teatros

en Doctor Who activa un espacio abierto a múltiples interpretaciones y usos, que atraviesa lo material, lo simbólico y lo emocional.

En conjunto, esta discusión desarrollada a partir de los resultados apunta a una concepción del edificio teatral como artefacto epistémico dentro de la ficción audiovisual. La serie lo representa como lugar de transición, de enunciación y de revelación, donde se hacen visibles las capas de sentido que median entre lo visible y lo invisible, lo real y lo representado. Este enfoque no solo contribuye a enriquecer el análisis del teatro en tanto arquitectura, sino que ofrece claves relevantes para comprender los modos en que la televisión contemporánea reinterpreta y emplea lo arquitectónico en el imaginario colectivo.

6. CONCLUSIONES

El análisis de la presencia de la arquitectura teatral inglesa en Doctor Who ha permitido desvelar una dimensión profundamente simbólica y discursiva en la representación de estos espacios dentro de la ficción televisiva. A partir de los tres episodios seleccionados, The Talons of Weng-Chiang, The Unquiet Dead y The Shakespeare Code, se ha podido constatar que los edificios teatrales no actúan meramente como marcos escenográficos o localizaciones funcionales, sino como dispositivos narrativos con capacidad para condensar significados culturales, históricos y ontológicos. La arquitectura del teatro se presenta así como un agente activo dentro del relato, capaz de vehicular memorias colectivas, tensiones ideológicas y proyecciones futuristas a través de su ficcionalización.

Una de las principales conclusiones que se extrae de este análisis es que el teatro como edificio, en tanto construcción material y cultural, es tratado por la serie como una forma de archivo viviente. A diferencia de otros escenarios históricos recreados en la ciencia ficción, los teatros analizados no son simples telones de fondo o ambientaciones; son reactivados en su dimensión simbólica para establecer puentes entre la historia de las artes escénicas británicas y las dinámicas especulativas de los argumentos de la serie de televisión. Esta doble inscripción temporal transforma a estos espacios en zonas de convergencia entre tradición

y reinvención, permitiendo que la ficción televisiva inscriba nuevas capas de significado sobre estructuras heredadas del imaginario colectivo.

Otro hallazgo relevante radica en la performatividad del espacio teatral. Como se ha evidenciado en el análisis de The Shakespeare Code, la arquitectura del Globe Theatre no solo es recreada con fidelidad histórica mediante su propia reconstrucción contemporánea, sino que se convierte en una prolongación del texto dramático, amplificando su poder ritual, mágico y performativo. La disposición circular del teatro, su apertura hacia el cielo, la interacción constante entre el actor y el público: todos estos elementos son reutilizados para potenciar la narración audiovisual, mostrando que el diseño arquitectónico incide directamente en la manera en que se construye el sentido dentro del relato. Esta correlación entre espacialidad y discurso remite a planteamientos que vinculan la arquitectura dramática con el ritual teatral.

Desde una perspectiva epistemológica, este estudio contribuye a reforzar la idea de que el espacio no es una categoría neutra en el relato audiovisual, sino una construcción activa de sentido. La serie Doctor Who se vale del teatro como marco arquitectónico pero también como metáfora de la propia ficción, subrayando los procesos de representación, desdoblamiento y escenificación que atraviesan tanto el teatro como la televisión. Al hacerlo, activa un juego metatextual en el que el espectador se enfrenta simultáneamente a la historia contada y a la conciencia de estar asistiendo a una representación, reforzando el carácter autorreflexivo de la serie.

Asimismo, estas conclusiones refuerzan la necesidad de abordar el análisis arquitectónico desde una perspectiva transdisciplinar que combine herramientas de la historia del arte, los estudios teatrales, la teoría del espacio y los estudios televisivos. El teatro, como construcción material y como artefacto cultural, no puede ser comprendido en su complejidad si no se considera su papel activo dentro del entramado narrativo, visual y simbólico de la ficción. De este modo, el estudio aquí presentado se inserta en una línea de investigación que busca comprender cómo los edificios construidos, especialmente aquellos cargados de memoria colectiva, como los teatros, operan dentro de los sistemas de

representación contemporáneos, resignificándose y dialogando con nuevas formas de producción cultural.

Finalmente, este análisis demuestra que Doctor Who, más allá de su carácter lúdico y fantástico, se convierte en una plataforma crítica desde la cual explorar la relación entre espacio, memoria y ficción. La serie no solo recupera escenarios emblemáticos del pasado teatral británico, sino que los transforma en espacios de experimentación simbólica donde se reactiva el sentido de comunidad, de historia y de performatividad. El teatro, en este contexto, no es solo un lugar donde se representa una obra: es el lugar donde se representa la posibilidad misma de la ficción como herramienta de conocimiento.

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TRATAMIENTO DE LA CATÁFORA COMO RASGO DE ORALIDAD FINGIDA EN LA TRADUCCIÓN DE TEXTOS DRAMÁTICOS EN ESPAÑOL, ITALIANO E INGLÉS

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Entre la extensa gama de rasgos responsables de la mímesis de la oralidad fingida en el texto escrito, en esta investigación nos centraremos en la catáfora presente en textos dramáticos. Para ello, nos proponemos estudiar su articulación en tres textos dramáticos, cada uno de ellos en tres lenguas de origen distintas (español, italiano e inglés), así como su traducción desde cada una de estas tres lenguas de origen a las otras dos lenguas restantes, tal y como se muestra en la siguiente tabla.

TABLA 1. *Nomenclatura empleada para hacer referencia a los textos originales y traducciones que conforman el corpus de este estudio*

Textos en lengua origen (TLO)	**Textos en lengua meta (TLM)**
Español (TLO1/SP)	Italiano (TLM1/IT)
	Inglés (TLM1/EN)
Italiano (TLO2/IT)	Español (TLM2/SP)
	Inglés (TLM2/EN)
Inglés (TLO3/EN)	Español (TLM3/SP)
	Italiano (TLM3/IT)

Fuente: elaboración propia

1.1. LA ORALIDAD FINGIDA EN TEXTOS DRAMÁTICOS

Brumme (2012, p. 33) define la oralidad fingida, término acuñado por Goetsch (1985), como el conjunto de "recursos que evocan una situación de inmediatez comunicativa", los cuales se utilizan principalmente

en los textos literarios o textos ficcionales donde se necesita plasmar o simular la oralidad espontánea mediante los recursos disponibles en el lenguaje escrito.

El texto dramático es un claro exponente de la oralidad, puesto que está pensado para ser recitado en un escenario. No obstante, hay que tener en cuenta que su origen es escrito, por tanto, esta oralidad siempre resultará artificial. Dicha oralidad artificial es la que Spang (1994, p. 259) denomina oralidad secundaria:

> Ello no impide que en muchos textos se cultive una especie de oralidad secundaria, es decir, que se intente crear la impresión de oralidad a través de lo escrito o mediante las formas de presentación, como ocurre, por lógica, en el teatro, dado que desde sus inicios escritos intenta aplicar estructuras orales a sus textos. Por su naturaleza hablada, el discurso dramático debería ser el discurso oral por antonomasia. Ahora bien, el mismo hecho de ser escrito previamente, luego la versificación, casi imprescindible en el teatro medieval y renacentista, aportan aspectos que si no son totalmente literales por lo menos constituyen un elemento de alienación del lenguaje; las réplicas del drama no dejan de ser expresión de una oralidad secundaria, un simulacro de conversación real y la representación teatral se puede considerar un ejercicio de "re-oralización".

También otros autores, como Lasso Osorio (2013) o Georgíeva Níkleva (2008), hacen mención a la oralidad presente en el texto dramático y, al igual que Spang (1994), añaden que no se trata de una oralidad real, sino de una imitación de la misma, condicionada por el hecho de ser un texto escrito.

> Se podría decir que esta oralidad intenta hacer una mímesis de las relaciones humanas que se pueden establecer en la vida real a través del habla. No obstante, la oralidad del diálogo en el teatro está condicionada por unas ejecuciones de estilo que le dan su carácter sintético de creación artística, es decir, el texto dramático está escrito para ser dicho como si no estuviese escrito (Lasso Osorio, 2013, p. 32-33).

> Sin embargo, no se puede estudiar la lengua hablada a través de los textos dramáticos ni en general a través de los escritos. Estos suelen ofrecer dialectos y sociolectos artificiales. Es la imitación que un autor concreto hace de la lengua hablada; se trata de una mimesis de lo hablado, de una oralidad fingida, producto de una previa elaboración consciente, con un destinatario determinado y con unas deficiencias inevitables (Georgíeva Níkleva, 2008, p. 219).

Una vez contextualizado el concepto de oralidad fingida en el marco de los textos dramáticos; resulta imprescindible llevar a cabo una breve revisión de las características propias presentes en los textos dramáticos, puesto que los distinguen de otras tipologías textuales y resultan un factor determinante a la hora de abordar su traducción.

Lapeña (2014, p. 153) propone las siguientes características del texto dramático:

- Oralidad. La oralidad es una característica diferenciadora del texto dramático que "a pesar de estar escrito tiene una clara vocación de ser recitado en voz alta, lo que lo alejará de otros textos cuya finalidad última sea la lectura, como una novela, una sentencia o un artículo científico" (Lapeña, 2014, p. 153).

- Inmediatez. La inmediatez hace referencia al momento de la representación teatral, que es único e irrepetible (Lapeña, 2014, p. 153). Esto implica que la persona que acude al teatro a disfrutar de una representación solo cuenta con ese preciso momento para comprender dicha obra teatral, la cual no vuelve hacia atrás en ningún momento, sino que siempre continúa hacia delante a lo largo de la representación.

- Multidimensionalidad. Con multidimensionalidad se hace referencia a la gran diversidad de signos verbales y no verbales, que alberga un texto dramático. El texto dramático se ve afectado por una serie de condicionantes escénicos (visuales, sonoros, culturales), lo cual complica en gran medida la labor del traductor, pues debe tener en cuenta estos condicionantes, además del discurso verbal.

- Publicidad. Esta característica se refiere al hecho de que la representación de un texto dramático es un acto comunicativo público, que se lleva a cabo entre el dramaturgo/ director y los espectadores mediante los actores, entre otros muchos profesionales.

- Teatralidad. La teatralidad es "lo que en la representación o en el texto dramático es específicamente teatral" (Pavis, 1983, como se cita en Arana, 2007, p. 80).

> ¿Qué es la teatralidad? Es el teatro sin el texto, es un espesor de signos y sensaciones que se edifica en la escena a partir del argumento escrito, esa especie de percepción ecuménica de los artificios sensuales, gestos, tonos, distancias, sustancias, luces, que sumerge el texto bajo la plenitud de su lenguaje exterior. Naturalmente la teatralidad debe estar presente desde el primer germen escrito de una obra, es un factor de creación no de realización (Barthes, 1954, p. 50, como se cita en Vilvandre de Sousa, 2000, p. 245).

– Representabilidad. Entendemos la representatibilidad como "el conjunto de aquellas características que hacen que un texto pueda ser llevado a escena con éxito" (Lapeña, 2014, p. 107).

1.2. La catáfora como rasgo de oralidad fingida

Esta investigación nos ha permitido comprobar la escasez de estudios centrados en el tratamiento de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad en el texto dramático. No obstante, hemos reunido algunas investigaciones que ahondan en el estudio de la catáfora como recurso utilizado para simular el discurso oral en el texto escrito, aunque no específicamente en el texto dramático. Sánchez (2006, p. 266) explica sobre este fenómeno lingüístico que "la catáfora consiste en la colocación del grupo nominal correferencial después del pronombre". La catáfora guarda una estrecha relación con la anáfora y, al igual que sucede con esta última, se establece una relación interpretativa entre dos elementos, pero en este caso, el primer elemento adquiere sentido por su relación con el que viene después. Se trata de un mecanismo de cohesión textual muy estudiado en el campo de la lingüística textual. Los principales elementos lingüísticos que cumplen una función catafórica son los sustantivos, los adjetivos y los pronombres.

El volumen de estudios que trata la catáfora como un rasgo utilizado para simular el discurso oral es muy inferior a los que contemplan la anáfora desde esta misma perspectiva. Uno de ellos es el de Blanco (2014: 16), quien incluye la catáfora como un rasgo prototípico de la lengua hablada coloquial italiana (*italiano parlato*). Por otro lado, Elvira (2002) se centra en el estudio de la catáfora paratáctica como un rasgo propio del discurso oral; "hoy día la catáfora paratáctica es un

fenómeno especialmente vinculado a la lengua oral, mucho más que a la lengua escrita" (Elvira, 2002, p. 69).

2. OBJETIVOS Y PREGUNTAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar las especificidades que plantea el proceso de traducción de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad en el texto dramático. Una vez establecido el objetivo principal de esta investigación, indicamos a continuación una serie de preguntas relacionadas con nuestro objeto de estudio, que van a guiar el trabajo y a las cuales trataremos de dar respuesta.

1. ¿Cómo se articula y qué función desempeña la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad en textos dramáticos originales (TLO)?

2. ¿Qué relación existe entre la catáfora y las características del texto dramático?

3. ¿Varía el uso de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad fingida en textos dramáticos originales (TLO) en función de la lengua en la que estén escrito (italiano, inglés y español), teniendo en cuenta la mayor o menor proximidad tipológico-cultural entre las mismas?

4. ¿Qué técnicas de traducción son las más empleadas para la traducción de la catáfora en textos dramáticos entre el italiano, el inglés y el español?

5. ¿Se producen similitudes o diferencias en la traducción de la catáfora según se trate de lenguas tipológica y culturalmente afines (español-italiano) o diferentes (español-inglés, italiano-inglés)?

6. ¿Afecta el perfil del traductor (formación académica en traducción o profesional del mundo del teatro) a la traducción de la oralidad fingida en textos dramáticos?

3. DISEÑO DEL ESTUDIO Y METODOLOGÍA

Esta investigación consiste en un estudio descriptivo de traducción, con un enfoque de tipo lingüístico-textual basado en el análisis de un corpus mediante una metodología de análisis mixta, cuantitativa y cualitativa.

La metodología seguida en esta investigación cuenta con cinco fases.

3.1. Fase 1. Revisión bibliográfica y estado de la cuestión

La revisión bibliográfica nos ha permitido comprobar la escasez de estudios centrados en el estudio de la traducción de la catáfora en textos dramáticos y, en consecuencia, demostrar la necesidad de ahondar en este campo de estudio mediante la elaboración de investigaciones como la presente.

3.2. Fase 2. Compilación del corpus

El corpus de esta investigación está formado por las siguientes obras dramáticas:

TLO1/SP y sus traducciones:

- *El cerco de Leningrado* ([1994] 2010), de José Sanchís Sinisterra
- *The Siege of Leningrad* (2003), traducción de Mary-Alice Lessing
- *L'assedio di Leningrado* (2004), traducción de Cristina Palmarini

TLO2/IT y sus traducciones:

- *Sotto paga, non si paga!* ([1974] 2007), de Dario Fo
- *Low Pay? Don't Pay?* (2010), traducción de Joseph Farrell
- *¡Aquí no paga nadie!* (2011), traducción de Carla Matteini y revisada por Franca Rame

TLO3/EN y sus traducciones:

- *The Homecoming* (1965), de Harold Pinter
- *Retorno al hogar* (1970), traducción de Luis Escobar
- *Il ritorno a casa* (1965), traducción de Alessandra Serra

El corpus de esta investigación está formado por nueve obras dramáticas: tres obras originales escritas en español, italiano e inglés, respectivamente, y sus traducciones a las otras dos lenguas, formando un total de seis traducciones. Contamos, por tanto, con un corpus de traducción paralelo, multilingüe y multidireccional, que permite estudiar la catáfora inter e intralingüísticamente.

3.3. Fase 3. Localización y recopilación de las catáforas

Hemos llevado a cabo la localización y el registro manual de todas las ocurrencias para las catáforas detectadas. Cada una de estas ocurrencias se ha anotado junto con el fragmento y la página en la que aparece en tres archivos Excel, uno por cada uno de los tres TLO del corpus.

3.4. Fase 4. Etapa de comprensión: análisis de la catáfora presente en los TLO

El estudio de la catáfora, como rasgo de oralidad, en la etapa de comprensión del texto original, consta de una cuantificación de todas las ocurrencias del rasgo de oralidad catáfora en cada uno de los tres TLO con el fin de poder establecer comparaciones entre ellos. Después, se ha llevado a cabo una reflexión sobre la articulación de este rasgo de oralidad fingida en los diferentes TLO.

3.5. Fase 5. Etapa de reexpresión: análisis de la catáfora en los TLM

El estudio de la catáfora como rasgo de oralidad en la etapa de reexpresión consiste en la selección de ocurrencias especialmente relevantes o representativas por la problemática traductológica que presentan. Para cada caso estudiado proporcionamos el fragmento en el que aparece la catáfora en el TLO y sus dos traducciones en los TLM, tratamos de determinar la técnica de traducción empleada, según la clasificación de

Molina y Hurtado (2002). Esta etapa se completa con un análisis cuantitativo de las técnicas de traducción utilizadas para la selección de casos expuestos en los distintos TLM con el fin de poder establecer comparaciones entre las traducciones.

Es importante aclarar que en este trabajo no se va a incluir un epígrafe dedicado específicamente al desglose de la fase de análisis. Esto resulta inviable debido a las limitaciones de espacio. Por tanto, es en el epígrafe dedicado a los resultados globales y su discusión donde mostraremos con mayor detalle toda esta información.

4. RESULTADOS GLOBALES Y DISCUSIÓN

4.1. Etapa de comprensión: balance

Procedemos en este epígrafe al análisis de los resultados globales y a su discusión. Para ello, retomamos las tres primeras preguntas de investigación planteadas al inicio de esta investigación.

1. ¿Cómo se articula y qué función desempeña la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad en textos dramáticos originales (TLO)?

En cuanto a la presencia y articulación de la catáfora en los TLO, mostramos a continuación una sencilla tabla en la que aparece el número de catáforas presentes en cada TLO.

TABLA 2. *Presencia del rasgo de oralidad catáfora en los TLO*

	TLO1	**TLO2**	**TLO3**
Catáforas detectadas	47	35	8

Fuente: elaboración propia

Como podemos observar en la tabla 2, el número de catáforas detectadas en los TLO1/SP y TLO2/IT son más próximas, 47 y 35, respectivamente, mientras que en el TLO3/EN, esta cifra cae hasta las 8 ocurrencias, lo que se debe a las similitudes existentes entre las dos lenguas romances, español e italiano, que comparten una gramática común frente a la del inglés. La afinidad tipológica y cultural de estas dos lenguas también se ve

reflejada en la variedad de elementos que desempeñan una función catafórica en los TLO: menor en los TLO1/SP y TLO2/IT, en los que se emplea principalmente el pronombre átono «lo»; muy superior en el TLO3/EN, con distintos tipos de pronombres y adverbios.

En cuanto al funcionamiento de la catáfora en los TLO, en el TLO1/SP, la catáfora se emplea como mecanismo para generar confusión durante el acto comunicativo, lo que contribuye a mantener, por un lado, la informalidad presente en la obra y, por otro lado, la improvisación tan característica del discurso oral espontáneo, tal y como se puede apreciar en los siguientes ejemplos:

(1)

NATALIA ¡Ya lo tengo!

Priscila ¿Qué?

NATALIA El nombre de esos bichos: carcoma. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 19)

(2)

NATALIA Por cierto, ¿lo has leído o no lo has leído?

PRISCILA ¿A qué te refieres?

NATALIA Al Capital. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 21)

(3)

PRISCILA Sospecho que nunca lo encontraremos.

NATALIA ¿Qué? ¿El libreto? (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 14)

Sin embargo, en los TLO2/IT y TLO3/EN, la catáfora no se emplea para generar confusión entre los interlocutores, sino como mecanismo para enfatizar determinada información y, en consecuencia, captar la atención del receptor (función fática o conativa), tal y como se puede apreciar en los siguientes ejemplos:

(4)

APPUNTATO Lo saprà anche lei, lo sanno tutti che oggi qui c'è stato un assalto al supermercato. (Fo, 2008, p. 26)

(5)

LUIGI Quello di cui parli sempre tu! Il metodo democratico del nostro Governo, che non ci lascerà mai soli e indifesi, a noi lavoratori, preda facile degli infami… (Fo, 2008, p.87)

(6)

TEDDY It's still there. My room. Empty. The bed's there. What are you doing? (Pinter, 1966, p. 21)

(7)

LENNY Well, Ted, I would say this is something approaching the naked truth, isn't it? It's a real cards on the table stunt. I mean, we're in the land of no holds barred now. Well, how else can you interpret it? To pinch your younger brother's specially made cheese-roll when he's out doing a spot of work, that's not equivocal, it's unequivocal. (Pinter, 1966, p. 64)

(8)

SAM Yes. Look what he gave me. He gave me a box of cigars. (Pinter, 1966, p. 12)

(9)

SAM You know what he said to me? He told me I was the best chauffeur he'd ever had. The best one. (Pinter, 1966, p. 13)

(10)

MAX Thanks, son. Listen. I want to tell you something. It's been wonderful to see you. (Pinter, 1966, p. 79)

2. ¿Qué relación existe entre la catáfora y las características del texto dramático?

La catáfora, igual que la anáfora, es un mecanismo que hace referencia a signos kinésicos o proxémicos (Bustos Tovar, 2001, p. 192), por lo que existe una relación entre la catáfora y la multidimensionalidad del texto dramático, una de las características de este tipo de texto, que engloba los signos verbales y no verbales propios de la representación. Entre estos signos destacan los kinésicos y proxémicos, a los que la catáfora hace referencia en el texto escrito, mediante el uso de elementos catafóricos (principalmente pronombres), que hacen referencia a objetos presentes en el «espacio textual» (Vilvandre de Sousa, 2000, p. 246-247), lo que relaciona este rasgo de oralidad con otra característica del texto dramático: la teatralidad. El espacio textual es el espacio que

imagina el dramaturgo y que refleja en el texto dramático a través de las acotaciones y los diálogos. En este caso, la catáfora hace referencia a elementos del espacio textual presente en el TLO1/SP; ejemplos (1), (2) y (3). Además de con la propia oralidad, la multidimensionalidad y la teatralidad, consideramos que la catáfora también guarda relación con la inmediatez, es decir, otra característica del texto dramático. La catáfora es un rasgo perteneciente al nivel sintáctico, cuya presencia en el texto dramático contribuye a mejorar la organización de la información y garantizar la cohesión del mensaje. Esto implica una mejora en la comprensión del texto dramático por parte del receptor durante su lectura y del espectador de la obra durante la representación del texto teatral, lo que, en ambos casos, juega a favor de la inmediatez de la representación escénica del texto.

Finalmente, dado que la catáfora contribuye al mantenimiento de la oralidad y la inmediatez en el texto dramático, damos por extendida su relación también con la representabilidad, dado que "la oralidad y la inmediatez son una parte más dentro de este macroconcepto que sería la representabilidad" (Lapeña, 2016, p. 135). La relación entre estas tres características se basa en que la representabilidad afecta a la elección, organización y materialización de todos los rasgos de oralidad (incluida la catáfora), en mayor o menor medida, en favor de la capacidad del texto dramático de ser representado en un escenario. Este concepto se equipara a veces a los de *speakability* o *playability* para hacer mención a la necesidad del texto dramático de ser fácilmente pronunciable con el objetivo de que se pueda comprender rápidamente durante su representación en un escenario (Espasa, 2009, p. 96).

3. ¿Varía el uso de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad fingida en textos dramáticos originales (TLO) en función de la lengua en la que estén escrito (italiano, inglés y español), teniendo en cuenta la mayor o menor proximidad tipológico-cultural entre las mismas?

Tras reflexionar acerca del uso de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad fingida en los TLO, hemos podido comprobar que este varía en función de la lengua en la que estén escritos, puesto que se

presenta de manera diversa en cada TLO escrito en una lengua distinta, ya sea entre lenguas más o menos próximas tipológica y culturalmente.

Por un lado, observamos cierta similitud entre los TLO1/SP y TLO2/IT, escritos en lenguas tipológica-culturalmente afines o próximas, que presentan un uso predominante del pronombre personal átono «lo» como mecanismo para materializar la catáfora en el sus respectivos textos dramáticos. Mientras que en el caso del TLO3/EN, texto escrito en una lengua tipológica-culturalmente menos próxima respecto a las otras dos lenguas de trabajo de esta investigación, existe un abanico mucho más amplio en cuanto a los pronombres que plasman este rasgo de oralidad en el texto escrito.

No obstante, a pesar de la similitud entre los TLO1/SP y TLO2/IT en cuanto a los recursos empleados para materializar la catáfora en ambos textos, observamos una importante diferencia en cuanto a su funcionamiento entre los TLO1/SP y el TLO2/IT. En el caso del TLO1/SP este recurso se emplea en situaciones comunicativas en las que se produce un malentendido entre el emisor y el receptor, mientras que en el caso del TLO2/IT se utiliza como elemento en diversas *dislocazione a destra*, construcción típica del italiano que no tiene equivalente ni en español ni en inglés, con el fin de enfatizar determinada información. Por tanto, teniendo en cuenta esta diferenciación, no hallamos una correspondencia determinante en cuanto al funcionamiento de la catáfora entre las lenguas que presentan mayor proximidad tipológica-cultural.

4.1. Etapa de reexpresión: balance

A continuación procedemos al análisis y discusión de los resultados globales de la etapa de reexpresión. Para ello, retomamos las tres últimas preguntas de investigación planteadas al inicio de esta investigación.

1. ¿Qué técnicas de traducción son las más empleadas para la traducción de la catáfora en textos dramáticos entre el italiano, el inglés y el español?

En la siguiente tabla, mostramos el número de ocurrencias y el índice de frecuencia de las técnicas de traducción utilizadas para traducir las

catáforas en los 24 casos seleccionados para su estudio durante la etapa de reexpresión.

TABLA 3. Técnicas de traducción utilizadas para traducir la catáfora en los casos seleccionados

		Número de ocurrencias	**Índice de frecuencia**
TÉCNICAS DE TRADUCCIÓN	Creación discursiva	7	29,17 %
	Equivalente acuñado	6	25 %
	Transposición	1	4,17 %
	Modulación	1	4,17 %
	Amplificación	1	4,17 %
NEUTRALIZACIONES	Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta	8	33,33 %
NÚMERO TOTAL		24	100 %

Fuente: elaboración propia

Como observamos en la tabla 3, la técnica de traducción más utilizada para traducir las catáforas presentes en la selección de casos significativos procedentes de los TLO del corpus es la creación discursiva (índice de frecuencia del 29,17 %). Sin embargo, la diferencia con la segunda técnica más utilizada es mínima, de hecho el equivalente acuñado cuenta con un índice de frecuencia del 25 %. Las siguientes técnicas de traducción más utilizadas son la transposición, la modulación y la amplificación que cuentan con un índice de frecuencia muy inferior respecto a los datos que muestran la creación discursiva y el equivalente acuñado, esto es, 4,17 %. Resulta especialmente notable el alto número de neutralizaciones debido a las normas de la lengua meta (índice de frecuencia del 33,33 %), lo que se explica principalmente por la dificultad que supone traducir las dislocaciones.

2. ¿Se producen similitudes o diferencias en la traducción de la catáfora según se trate de lenguas tipológica y culturalmente afines (español-italiano) o diferentes (español-inglés, italiano-inglés)?

Observamos ciertas similitudes y diferencias en cuanto a la traducción de la catáfora según se trate de lenguas tipológica y culturalmente afines o diferentes. En la traducción de las catáforas presentes en los TLO2/IT y TLO3/EN se tiende a eliminar este rasgo debido a las

diferencias de tipo sintáctico existentes entre las lenguas meta y la lengua origen. Se trata de casos en los que la catáfora se corresponde con un elemento característico de dicha lengua: dislocaciones en el caso del italiano (TLO2/IT) y uso obligatorio de pronombres para determinar el sujeto de la oración en la lengua inglesa (TLO3/EN). A continuación mostramos algunos casos ilustrativos:

TABLA 4. *Primer caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora*

	TLO2/IT	TLM2/SP	TLM2/EN
1	Appuntato Lo saprà anche lei, lo sanno tutti che oggi qui c'è stato un assalto al supermercato. (Fo, 2008, p. 26)	Sargento Todo el mundo sabe que hoy han asaltado el supermercado del barrio. (Fo, 2011, p. 31, tr. Matteini)	Sergeant Everybody knows that earlier today there was an assault on a supermarket. (Fo, 2010, p. 20, tr. Farrell)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta	Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 5. *Segundo caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora*

	TLO2/IT	TLM2/SP	TLM2/EN
2	Margherita Lo sapevo io che andava a finire così! (Fo, 2008, p. 41)	Margarita ¡Ya sabía yo que esto acababa así! (Fo, 2011, p. 53, tr. Matteini)	Margherita I just knew it was going to end up like this. (Fo, 2010, p. 39, tr. Farrell)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta	Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 6. Tercer caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora

	TLO3/EN	TLM3/SP	TLM3/IT
3	Teddy It's still there. My room. Empty. The bed's there. What are you doing? (Pinter, 1966, p. 21)	Teddy Está allí. Mi cuarto, vacío. La cama está ahí. ¿Qué haces? (Pinter, 1970, p. 56, tr. Escobar)	Teddy C'è ancora. La mia stanza. Vuota. C'è anche il letto. Cosa stai facendo? (Fo, 1996, p. 48, tr. Serra)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta	Rasgo neutralizado debido a las normas de la lengua meta

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 7. Cuarto caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora

	TLO3/EN	TLM3/SP	TLM3/IT
4	Lenny Well, Ted, I would say this is something approaching the naked truth, isn't it? It's a real cards on the table stunt. I mean, we're in the land of no holds barred now. Well, how else can you interpret it? To pinch your younger brother's specially made cheese-roll when he's out doing a spot of work, that's not equivocal, it's unequivocal. (Pinter, 1966, p. 64)	Lenny Bueno, Ted, diría que nos acercamos a la verdad sin tapujos, ¿no es así? A lo que se llama poner las cartas sobre la mesa. Estamos en el terreno de no ocultar nada. ¿O cómo quieres interpretarlo? Quitarle a tu hermano menor un bocadillo de queso hecho con sus propias manos, aprovechando que ha salido a hacer un trabajo, ahí no hay duda, no tiene vuelta de hoja. (Pinter, 1970, p. 114, tr. Escobar)	Lenny Teddy, credo che ci stiamo avvicinando al momento della verità, eh? Le carte sono già in tavola. Cioè siamo già scesi in campo. Sennò, come interpretare il tuo gesto? Fregare il panino al formaggio di tuo fratello minore propio mentre è fuori a fare un lavoretto, è tutto chiaro, inequivocabile. (Pinter, 1996, p. 78, tr. Serra)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Equivalente acuñado	Amplificación

Fuente: elaboración propia

Este rasgo de oralidad desaparece en las traducciones con independencia de la proximidad entre idiomas, es decir, observamos este hecho tanto en la traducción del italiano al español (lenguas tipológica y culturalmente afines) como en las traducciones del italiano al inglés y del inglés al español (lenguas más lejanas).

Asimismo, hemos detectado una tendencia a la creación discursiva y a la amplificación en los casos de traducción hacia la lengua italiana, en comparación con la traducción hacia el inglés y el español. Esto es algo que ya sucedía en el caso 4, anteriormente mostrado, y que también sucede en los siguientes casos:

TABLA 8. *Quinto caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora*

	TLO1/SP	TLM1/IT	TLM1/EN
5	Natalia ¡Ya lo tengo! Priscila ¿Qué? Natalia El nombre de esos bichos: carcoma. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 19)	Natalia Ecco! Priscila Cosa? Natalia Il nome degli animaletti: tarli. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2004, p. 21; tr. Palmarini)	Natalie I've got it! Priscilla What? Natalie The name of those bugs: termites. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2003, p. 8; tr. Lessing)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Creación discursiva	Equivalente acuñado

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 9. Sexto caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora

	TLO1/SP	TLM1/IT	TLM1/EN
6	Natalia Tú lo que quieres, es amargarme la fiesta. Priscila Yo, lo que quiero, es que pongas los pies en tierra. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 48-49)	Natalia L'unica cosa che vuoi, è rovinarmi la festa. Priscila L'unica cosa che voglio, è che torni coi piedi in terra. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2004, p. 59, tr. Palmarini)	Natalie But you, all you want is to sour this party for me. Priscilla What I want is to have you put your feet on the ground. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2003, p. 31, tr. Lessing)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Creación discursiva	Creación discursiva

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 10. Séptimo caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora

	TLO1/SP	TLM1/IT	TLM1/EN
7	Natalia Y lo de los pechos, tampoco… ¿Qué me decías?... «La revolución hará…» ¿Cómo era?... «La revolución hará más dulce la leche de las madres» (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 53)	Natalia E nemmeno la storia dei seni... Com'è che mi dicevi...? "La rivoluzione sarà..." Com'era? "La rivoluzione renderà il latte materno più dolce..." (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2004, p. 63, tr. Palmarini)	Natalie And not the part about my breasts, either… What were you telling me? "The Revolution will make…" How did that go? "The Revolution will make mother's milk sweeter." (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2003, p. 36, tr. Lessing)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Creación discursiva	Creación discursiva

Fuente: elaboración propia

Se trata de un fenómeno que se produce en la traducción hacia el italiano sea cual sea la lengua del TLO, y que no se produce al traducir al inglés o al español, independientemente de la lengua de origen, por lo que la mayor o menor afinidad tipológica y cultural entre las lenguas no parece ser un factor determinante en esta tendencia.

Finalmente, en la traducción de los casos de catáforas seleccionados en la combinación lingüística español→inglés e inglés→español, hemos detectado una clara tendencia al uso del equivalente acuñado (traducción de un pronombre por otro, especialmente se traduce el pronombre inglés «it» por el pronombre español «lo» y viceversa). Esto se puede apreciar en los siguientes casos:

TABLA 11. Octavo caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora

	TLO1/SP	TLM1/IT	TLM1/EN
8	Natalia Por cierto, ¿lo has leído o no lo has leído? Priscila ¿A qué te refieres? Natalia Al Capital. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2010, p. 21)	Natalia A proposito: lo hai letto o no? Priscila A cosa ti refirisci? Natalia Al Capitale. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2004, p. 23, tr. Palmarini)	Natalie To be sure. So, have you read it or haven't you? Priscilla What are you talking about? Natalie Das Kapital. (Sanchís Sinisterra, 2003, p. 10, tr. Lessing)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Equivalente acuñado	Equivalente acuñado

Fuente: elaboración propia

TABLA 12. *Noveno caso ilustrativo de traducción del rasgo de oralidad catáfora*

	TLO3/EN	TLM3/SP	TLM3/IT
9	Lenny Ah. You mean it's nothing else but a table. Well, some people would envy your certainty, wouldn't they, Joey? For instance, I've got a couple of friends of mine, we often sit round the Ritz Bar having a few liqueurs, and they're always saying things like that, you know, things like: Take a table, take it. All right, I say, take it, take a table, but once you've taken it, what you going to do with it? Once you've got hold of it, where you going to take it? (Pinter, 1966, p. 52)	Lenny Ah, quieres decir que no es más que una mesa. Pues mucha gente envidiaría tu certidumbre. ¿No es verdad, Joey? Tengo unos cuantos amigos a los que veo a menudo tomando copas en el bar del Ritz, y siempre están debatiendo lo mismo. Toma una mesa, tómala. Está bien, les digo yo, toma una mesa, tómala, pero una vez que la tienes, ¿qué haces con ella? Una vez que la posees, ¿qué vas a hacer? (Pinter, 1970, p. 100, tr. Escobar)	Lenny Vuoi dire che non è altro che un tavolo. Beh, c'è molta gente che potrebbe invidiare questa tua certezza, non credi, Joey? Per esempio, ho un paio di amici, ci sediamo spesso al bar del Ritz a bere un bicchiere, che dicono sempre cose di questo genere, tipo: prendi un tavolo, prendilo. E va bene, faccio io, lo prendo, prendo un tavolo, ma una volta che l'ho preso cosa me ne faccio? Una volta che l'hai preso dove te lo porti? (Pinter, 1996, p. 70, tr. Serra)
TÉCNICA DE TRADUCCIÓN		Transposición	Modulación

Fuente: elaboración propia

3. ¿Afecta el perfil del traductor (formación académica en traducción o profesional del mundo del teatro) a la traducción de la oralidad fingida en textos dramáticos?

Según los casos seleccionados para su estudio en esta investigación, el perfil del traductor (formación académica en traducción o profesional del mundo del teatro) no es un factor que afecte a la traducción de la oralidad fingida en los textos dramáticos aquí estudiados.

En las neutralizaciones producidas en las catáforas presentes mayoritariamente en los TLO2/IT y TLO3/EN, debido a las diferencias sintácticas existentes entre las lenguas meta y la lengua origen; el perfil del traductor, formado en traducción en el caso del TLO2/IT y director de obras teatrales en el caso del TLO3/EN, no parece ser un aspecto determinante. En estas ocasiones, podemos comprobar que son las particularidades de cada lengua las que dominan el proceso de traducción y, por lo general, están por encima del intento de mantener este rasgo de oralidad, con independencia del traductor que esté al frente de la traducción de cada texto.

Asimismo, en cuanto a la tendencia de traducción observada, y expuesta en la pregunta de investigación previa, en la que se tiende a la creación discursiva y a la amplificación en los casos de traducción hacia la lengua italiana, en comparación con la traducción hacia el inglés y el español; los traductores al italiano y al inglés de estos casos (5, 6, 7 y 4) son profesionales formados en el campo de la traducción, y en la traducción al italiano del caso 4, además de traductor, se trata de un profesional con experiencia en el montaje de obras teatrales; sin embargo, el perfil del traductor no se presenta como un factor determinante en esta tendencia.

5. CONCLUSIONES

Una vez completadas las etapas de esta investigación, vamos a finalizar presentando los avances logrados, lo que nos permitirá valorar la consecución del objetivo principal de esta investigación. Para facilitar la presentación de los avances logrados en esta investigación, vamos a presentar una serie de conclusiones específicas, numeradas, que se corresponden con las seis preguntas de investigación.

1. La catáfora contribuye a mantener, por un lado, la informalidad presente en la obra y, por otro lado, la improvisación tan característica del discurso oral espontáneo; así como mecanismo para enfatizar determinada información y, en consecuencia, captar la atención del receptor (función fática o conativa).

2. La catáfora se relaciona con diversas características del texto dramático como son la propia oralidad, la multidimensionalidad, la teatralidad, la inmediatez y la representabilidad.

3. El uso de la catáfora como rasgo para la mímesis de la oralidad fingida en textos dramáticos originales varía en función de la lengua en la que estén escritos con independencia de la mayor o menor proximidad tipológica-cultural entre las lenguas (italiano, inglés y español).

4. La técnica de traducción más empleada para la traducción de la catáfora en textos dramáticos entre el italiano, el inglés y el español es la creación discursiva seguida del equivalente acuñado, la transposición, la modulación y, por último, la amplificación.

5. La mayor o menor proximidad entre las lenguas implicadas en el proceso de traducción (español-italiano/inglés) no supone un factor determinante en la traducción de la catáfora.

6. El perfil del traductor (formación académica en traducción o profesional del mundo del teatro) no es un factor que afecte a la traducción de la oralidad fingida en los textos dramáticos.

Los avances presentados en estas conclusiones suponen una valiosa contribución al estudio de las especificidades que plantea el proceso de traducción de la catáfora como los rasgos de oralidad fingida en los textos dramáticos entre el español, el italiano y el inglés, lo que supone el cumplimiento del objetivo principal de esta investigación. La información lograda resulta novedosa y útil para el tratamiento de la catáfora como rasgo de oralidad fingida en el campo de la traducción.

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SECCION IV.

CULTURAL STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

THE TELL-TALE REMIX: REWRITING EDGAR ALLAN POE'S "THE TELL-TALE HEART" IN THE AGE OF FAN FICTION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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1. INTRODUCTION

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)'s fascinating works continue to generate interest despite the many years since the author's premature death at forty years old. Not only is Poe still a hot topic for academic debate and scholarship, his influence in popular culture, from *The Simpsons'* homage to "The Raven" ("Treehouse of Horror," season 2, episode 3), to new cinematographic adaptations, is still strong. To name but one, the movie *Extraordinary Tales* (2015) includes several fragments of Poe's stories. A large number of contemporary novels is also heavily influenced by Poe's Gothic atmosphere or even recreate Poe's life in a fictitious manner, such as *Edgar Allan Poe and the London Monster* by Karen Lee Street or *The Tell-Tail Heart* (no typo there) by Monica Shaughnessy, which has Poe's cat, Cattarina, investigating murders. Poe himself has become a character in several movies – he is one of the West Point cadets in the horror film *Raven's Hollow* (2022) and appears trying to solve a murder in the thriller *The Pale Blue Eye* (2022).

1.1. REWRITING EDGAR ALLAN POE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Before we approach how fan fiction writers have tackled the rewriting of Poe's works, we need to have a brief definition of what fan fiction is. How could fan fiction be defined? In a few words, a working definition would be as follows – if we are not satisfied with what happened in a beloved TV series, short story, novel, or film, we can go and rewrite

it according to our wishes or personal preferences. This is a basic definition of fan fiction. Fan fiction allows us to make any characters do whatever we want them to do, putting them in different situations, in a new context, making them behave in an "unpredictable" manner or in ways that would have horrified their original authors.

Stories with an open ending (such as best-selling novels *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell or *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier) or an unhappy one are far more likely to have fan fiction written in order to redress this "uncomfortable" ending (Gomez-Galisteo, 2011) than stories with a happy ending. Nonetheless, that is not a *sine qua non* requirement for fan fiction writers, given the fact that even stories with decidedly happy endings (such as Jane Austen's novels) have been subject to fan fiction (Gomez-Galisteo, 2018). Sometimes, it is not a need to redress a "wrong" ending, to make it happier or to provide closure to readers, but fan fiction writers want to expand a story – for instance, they cannot have enough of *Harry Potter* or *Twilight* (incidentally, F*ifty Shades of Grey*, later a successful trilogy on its own right, first originated as fan fiction of *Twilight*). That *Lord of the Rings*, quite a long series itself, is also a popular subject for fan fiction proves that the scarcity of original material is not a condition for the production of fan fiction.

In the case analyzed in the following pages, it can be seen that 216 years after his birth (and 176 years after his death), Edgar Allan Poe continues to be a source of inspiration for fan fiction writers to create their own fan fiction.

1.2. RESEARCHING FAN FICTION

Fan fiction is a peculiar "genre" (whose very existence as a genre is debatable) that can be difficult to approach because of its rather ephemeral character (fan fiction stories can be easily removed from the websites hosting them, leaving no trace at all) and its impermanence (as fan fiction is not published in printed format, sometimes there are no records of it, and the only possibly way to preserve these stories is by making print-outs of the websites).

Other difficulties of researching fan fiction is that stories can be updated (making them completely different from the version first uploaded) and even deleted. Sometimes fan fiction is posted across multiple sites (such as Wattpad and fanfiction.net), which makes that, at times, there are very different versions posted – as they may have been modified followed the feedback of the readers of that particular site, while the other site keeps the original version or that version has moved in a completely different direction as well.

The legal and moral regulation of fan fiction is a complex issue, as these "new" writers take characters or plots imagined by another (usually defunct) writer and use them for their own purposes. This begs the question whether fan fiction is daylight robbery or, on the contrary, if it constitutes fair use (Chander and Sunder, 2007). Chander and Sunder defend that the human brain can "hold multiple, even contradictory, meanings simultaneously" and that texts are open to be interpreted in multiple ways, especially if there are demeaning messages in the original (624-625).

Whether fan fiction should be free is also another matter of intense debate (De Kosnik, 2009), for fan fiction writers spend a considerable amount of their time writing and editing their stories for no material gain at all. However, by its very nature, fan fiction must be absolutely free – if there were to be an economic profit, it would generate a financial gain from a work that is not the fan fiction writer's own, legal property. Yet, in an interesting twist, despite fan fiction's lack of material benefit, the copyright owners do benefit financially from the interest in their products that is generated by fan fiction (De Kosnik, 2009). This is far from meaning that writers are enthusiastic about fan fiction derived from their works. Ann Rice or J. K. Rowling are among the authors who have publicly voiced their dissatisfaction at fan fiction.

The potential impact on literacy practices of fan fiction, especially on teenagers, is also a topic of rather intense discussion. For teenage readers, online fan fiction writing may have an important impact on their social practices, not only their literacy skills (Black, 2009; Thomas, 2007). Calls for new copyright legislation that regulates the "limbo" of fan fiction are numerous (Johnson, 2016) but, so far, no national or international legislation has dared to broach the subject.

1.3. EDGAR ALLAN POE AND FAN FICTION

Given that Poe has long been out of copyright (and no direct descendants of his exist, to express public outrage at a fan fiction writer's boldness in "defiling" their ancestors' works), Poe fan fiction authors are not to expect a "cease-and-desist" letter that some Anne Rice fan fiction writers have received, among others.

Usually, fan fiction is not published because of copyright issues. *50 Shades of Grey* started as *Twilight* fan fiction, but far-reaching changes had to be made before it could be published – so as not to be accused of plagiarism. But, if copyright protection is not the issue when dealing with Poe's work, this begets the question of why these Poe fan fiction works are not published commercially. As Poe's works have been for long into public domain, why the authors of fan fiction choose not to publish their works commercially is a point of special interest. Could it be a question of brevity, non-commercial interest, lack of literary quality…?

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this book chapter is to analyze the fan fiction produced using Poe's short story "The Tell-Tale Heart" as its source of inspiration. Issues such as relevance, quality, or topics addressed in these works will be addressed.

3. METHODOLOGY

What is our sample for this paper? We are going to resort to www.fanfiction.net. Advertised as "the world's largest fanfiction archive and forum where fanfic writers and readers around the globe gather to share their passion," it is the most popular repository of fan fiction by far. As their motto says, you can "unleash your imagination" and the vast number of works stored them testifies to their creative outlet. As of September 16, 2024, 270 stories categorized under "Edgar Allan Poe" were listed.

They are classified as follows:

50 of “The Raven.”

15 of “The Cask of Amontillado.”

17 of “The Tell-Tale Heart.”

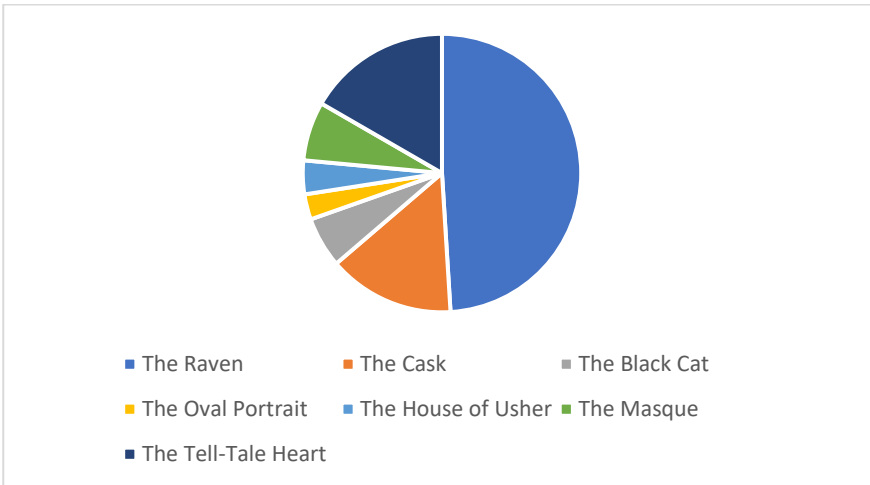
7 of "The Masque of the Red Death".

6 of “The Black Cat.”

4 of “The House of Usher.”

3 of “The Oval Portrait.”

GRAPH 1. *Short stories fan fiction is inspired by.*



Note: Own elaboration.

When it comes to the language in which the stories are written, we can break them down as follows:

238 in English.

23 in Spanish.

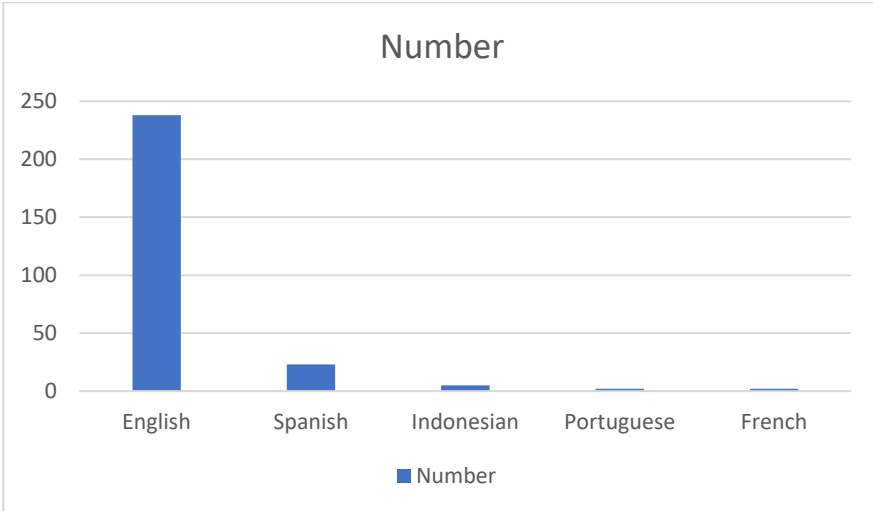
5 in Indonesian.

2 in French.

2 in Portuguese.

As we can see, English is the predominant language, maybe a reflection of Poe’s original language.

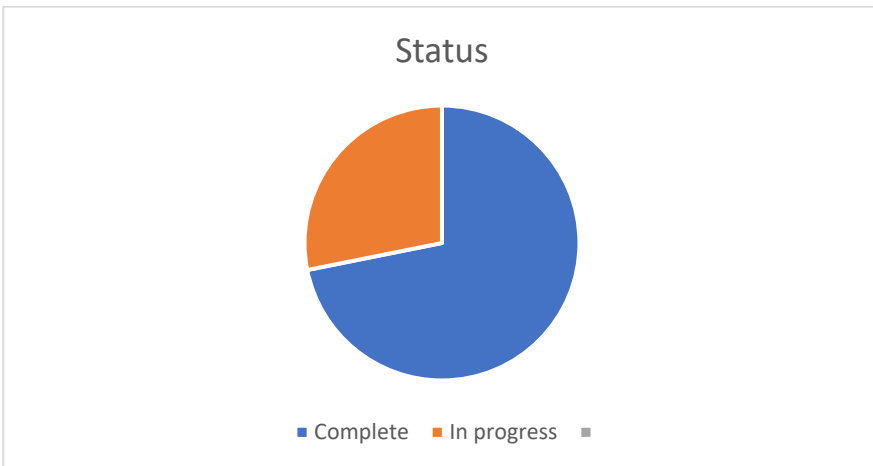
GRAPH 2. *Language of the fan fiction stories.*



Note: Own elaboration

Out of these stories, 194 are complete whereas 76 are still in progress. We must take into account that "in progress" sometimes means that the story is permanently left unfinished, as fan fiction writers often post their stories as they go writing and then abandon the project mid-way through the story.

GRAPH 3. *Status of completion of the fan fiction stories.*



Note: Own elaboration

When it comes to length, we realize that brevity is the norm. There are 232 stories which are shorter than 5,000 words (many around 1,000 / 2,000 words).

Other classifications in terms of word length are as follows:

5,000 – 9,999 words – 38 stories.

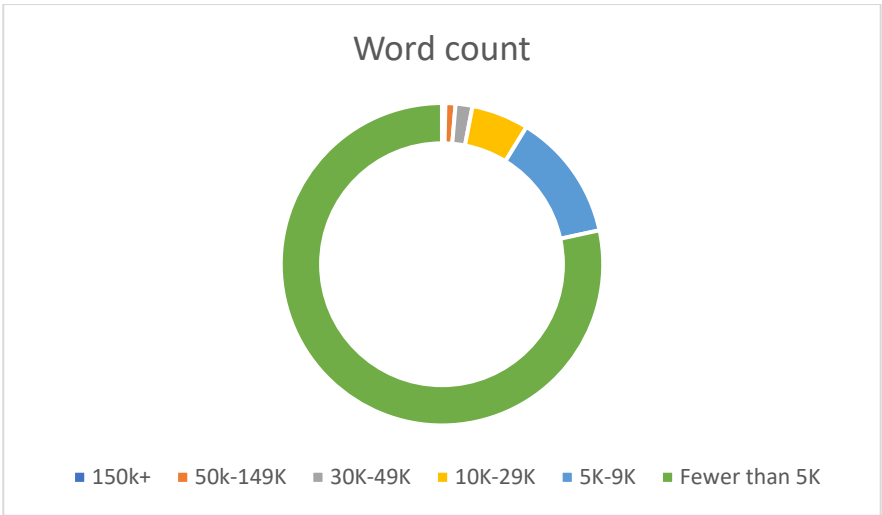
10,000 – 29,999 – 17 stories.

30,000 – 49,999 – 5 stories.

50,000 – 149,000 - 3 stories.

One over 150,000 words.

GRAPH 4. *Word count.*



Note: Own elaboration

3.1. CROSS-OVERS

The existence of cross-overs is particularly common in fan fiction, testament to their authors' creativity, which disregards genres or seemingly completely at odds pieces of fiction. A cross-over is a story that mixes the characters from one work (in this case, Edgar Allan Poe's works) with those of a different story / movie / novel. We can see

crossovers with (the number in parenthesis indicates the number of fan fiction stories of each kind):

> Harry Potter (15), Naruto (9), Doctor Who (5), Supernatural (5), Batman (4), Pokémon (4), Twilight (4), Lord of the Rings (3), My Little Pony (2), Star Wars (2), Star Trek (2), The Simpsons (1), Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1), Les Miserables (1), Silence of the Lambs (1), Peanuts (1), CSI (1), The Walking Dead (1), Frozen (1), Law and Order (1), NCIS (1), Orange is the New Black (1), Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter (1), Winnie the Pooh (1).

One must give credit to the creativity that establishes a connection between Poe's dark topics and the sweetness of *Winnie the Pooh* or the innocence of *My Little Pony.*

There is some overlap too between stories. For instance, "A Rose for Berenice" recreates three Poe stories – "The Black Cat", "The Oval Portrait", and "Eleonora".

3.2. SELECTION CRITERIA

"The Tell-Tale Heart" is Poe's work with the second largest number of fan fiction pieces written. It is a quite famous story among Poe's literary production and there are numerous references in popular culture. For instance, the episode "Lisa's Rival" in *The Simpsons* is a retelling of "The Tell-Tale Heart," in which Lisa Simpson takes credit for her rival's diorama but then confesses, plagued by guilt and remorse.

The original version of "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe is a short story of 2,162 words, first published in 1843. It is told from the point of view of an unreliable, first-person narrator who tells us how he murdered an old man. After the deed, the murderer ends up confessing in front of the police when he cannot stop hearing the beating of the victim's heart. There have been several adaptations of this story but maybe among the most salient ones we could find a mobile phone game, *Poe's Tell-Tale Heart: The Game. The Tell-Tale Heart* (2016) is its latest cinematographic adaptation up to date.

In this chapter, the stories analyzed are fan fiction recreating "The Tell-Tale Heart." This chapter is part of a larger project in progress, so I

have applied the criteria of manageability and space limitation to make a selection of the stories analyzed in this chapter.

In our sample, we have found 17 pieces, 16 having been written in English, while there is 1 in Spanish. Out of these 17 pieces, 12 are complete (11 in English, 1 in Spanish). The focus will be on the complete stories because they offer us more points for analysis. When we speak of word count of these completed stories, we have 5 stories with fewer than 1,000 words. In contrast, 7 stories have over 1,000 words.

A literary analysis and summary of the stories follows:

In "The Tell-Tale Spot" (1,130 words), Ainz, the main character of the manga *Overlord* series, is the protagonist of this piece, set on Halloween. Despite the stated rewriting of "The Tell-Tale Heart," it is hard to see the connection between the two works at times. It is rewritten in the form of poem, combining the Gothic elements of Poe's oeuvre with some elements of dark fantasy which are characteristic of the Overlord series. The most salient feature is its having been written in verse form, as the lyricism of the composition contrasts with the ominous atmosphere of the topic – a lust-and ambition-fueled assassination. The first-person narrator is kept, transmitting the feelings of paranoia and guilt upon committing this murder. Several metaphors contribute to convey the idea of death. The spot that gives the title to the poem is an erudite reference to Macbeth. All in all, this fan fiction piece could be read as completely independent from Poe's story, whose connection is rather vague other than their common exploration of the issue of guilt (Atheistbasementdragon, 2019).

"Toothbrushing with the Narrator of A Tell-Tale Heart" (252 words) is an attempt to recreate Poe's characteristic writing style while the narrator of the story is brushing his teeth by making use of Poe's characteristic dashes and italics. The style is quite similar, and this piece could be inserted into the original one. The author, Alpaca-Queen, has successfully recreated the protagonist's attention to minuteness to such a mundane process as brushing one's teeth. The style is reminiscent of Poe, with its varied use of adjectives and elaborate syntax. The use of repetitions conveys the paranoia and emotional overload of the original

narrator. Metaphors and comparisons give such a mundane activity an exaggerated importance. The insertion of this apparently inconsequential episode in the murderer's daily routine can be read in a humorous way (Alpaca-Queen, 2012).

"The Tell-Tale Heart" (2,230 words) by MasterCaster (2017) is a modern rewriting, with a first person narrator, but the language is more modern. In this case, the narrator is Lynn Loud, Jr., one of the main characters of *The Loud House*, a Nickelodeon cartoon series that first aired in 2016. Like Poe's narrator, this narrator wonders about his insanity. The story follows the structure of the original, only that in this case, the victim is the narrator's younger brother, Lincoln, for whom she develops an obsession. An innovation is that at the end of the story, we are told the whereabouts of the main characters – Lynn Jr. is being kept in a padded cell while her parents pray for her, and her sisters have turned their back on her. Thanks to the first-person narrator, the reader is immersed in Lynn Jr.'s mind, imitating the paranoia of the original work. Poe's suspense and Gothic atmosphere are preserved in this rewriting successfully incorporating the Loud family.

"Alternate Ending for A Tell Tale Heart" (328 words), despite the title, starts the action before the actual ending of Poe's tale, with a rather graphic description of how the narrator dismembered the body of his victim. In this case, it is not the beating of the victim's heart that makes the murderer confess, but the victim's eye, which the murderer had placed on his mantelpiece. The essence of the original is achieved thanks to the tension and psychological aspects that permeate the atmosphere of this story. The metaphor of the victim's eye is key to understanding the sense of being watched that besieges the murderer, incensing his paranoia. The vivid style and the use of repetition and personification help to heighten the sense of suspense and the narrator's increasing paranoia (ShyTales, 2012).

"Echoes" (1,790 words) deals with KakaSaku – the heterosexual relationship between two characters from the *Naruto* fandom (Kakashi Hatake and Sakura Haruno). Written as part of a KakaSaku contest, although it is supposed to be a rewriting of "The Tell-Tale Heart," again the connection with Poe's story is very loose and hard to identify. This

Naruto-inspired story is characterized by elements of psychological anguish in a dark, introspective atmosphere. The main elements of the story are the guilt and the inner conflict of the protagonist, Kakashi. The story reflects his mental exhaustion and his remorse, parallel to the mental decline of the protagonist of "The Tell-Tale Heart" (Zombiegait, 2011).

"Unbound" (2,505 words) is again part of a KakaSaku contest within the *Naruto* universe. A First-person narrator discusses his insanity while dealing with the relationship between Kakashi Hatake and Sakura Haruno to explore the topics of desire, paranoia and obsession. The story is beautifully written, making use of italics but without Poe's use of dashes. It is a love story more than a murder story, as there is no murder and no guilty conscience (Seoinage, 2011).

"Tell-Tale" (554 words) is a *Lord of the Rings* cross-over. The murder is there, but it is again hard to see how it relates to Poe's story, other than there being a murder involved. The writer, TolkienGirl, tries to imitate Poe's style in presenting the agonizing obsession of Gollum for the ring, with an internal monologue full of repetition and rhetorical questions. Gollum's description, reminiscent of Gothic style, brings him closer to the mental anguish and the cold reasoning process of the protagonist of the original story (TolkienGirl, 2013).

"Growth" (1,132 words) is a cross-over with the science fiction *StarCraft* franchise with a first-person narrator which mixes psychological horror with science fiction. Inspired by the quotation "it is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain" (from "The Tell-tale Heart"), the author constructs a story in which there is something (a growth) inside the narrator's brain. The brief sentences reflect the narrator's loosening grip on his sanity (Smurfkiller, 2005).

"The Tell Tale" (813 words) is a story featuring twin brothers Rin and Len (CV02), 14-year-old singers that are part of Japanese Vocaloid software voicebanks. A third-person narrator describes how Len kills himself for trying to kill Rin. Despite the author claiming that this was obviously inspired by "The Tell-Tale Heart," similarities are hard to find. Guilt, love and hatred are important themes in the story. It is especially Len's growing guilt that drives the story, which also includes

his jealousy and inferiority complex in regard to his brother (ichigomatsu, 2014).

"The Name's Rumplestiltskin" (1,492 words) is a cross-over with the TV series *Once Upon a Time* (2011-2018). Told by Rumplestiltskin, who serves as first-person narrator, it starts with a line from "The Tell-Tale Heart" but that is where the connection mostly ends, as the fairy story aspect of the narration soon takes over, diluting the connection with Poe's story. The origin of the story is a school assignment to start with a line from the story – "True! – Nervous – Very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; so close had she been to guessing my name last time" (Kelleigh-Siobhan, 2014).

"The Man with the Wicked Grin" (889 words) is a school assignment to tell Poe's story from the point of view of a mouse that observes the action of Poe's story. It is really interesting and quite well-written (520Nakita, 2012).

"The Tell-tale Heart" (3,126 words) by LadyLoba (2014) is written in Spanish. The narrator is a girl, Alice, who lives with her grandfather in a lovely house. When she is older, Mr. Poe comes to visit her grandfather. Mr. Poe stays for a rather prolonged visit and one night he kills the grandfather. Alerted by her grandfather's screams, Alice goes to his bedroom and discovers the grisly scene. Mr. Poe then confesses to having killed several people before and kills her in a rather gruesome way just for her to wake up – it was a nightmare caused by her having been reading "The Tell-Tale Heart" just before bed.

4. RESULTS

Creativity marks these fan fiction pieces, of which the titles are a good measure. One can find the original story rewritten in the form of poetry as well as short stories. While we have some stories that recreate Poe's style faithfully, others depart completely from Poe's characteristic style. Language at times is very modern and out of touch with the 19th century linguistic conventions.

5. DISCUSSION

Answering the question of why these works were not published, the main reason why Poe-inspired fan fiction is not published is because of the brevity of the pieces – the writings analyzed here range from 3,126 words to 252 words. Another major problem can be an uneven quality – while some writers do attempt to closely re-create Poe's writing style (with varying degrees of success, it must be said), in some cases the authors' style is definitely different, with no attempt at fidelity to Poe's writing style. Another point in question is that of crossovers. In some cases, the influence of the secondary text is so strong that the resulting piece bears little similarity to Poe's original story.

I asked ChatGPT to write an alternative ending to "The Tell-Tale Heart" and the results were outstanding. While I do not include the resulting story here so as not to receive a red flag in terms of Artificial Intelligence-generated content, I encourage readers of this chapter to do the same. The use of generative Artificial Intelligence opens the door for fan fiction being written by Artificial Intelligence in the future with little input from humans.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Just as Chat GPT and other Artificial Intelligence software are posing a big threat to academic writing, maybe it is also the case with fan fiction. Now we do not need to go online and try to see if somebody else has written an alternative version of a favorite story of ours, Chat GPT can do it for us.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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THE PRE-RAPHAELITE BRIDGE BETWEEN ART AND LITERATURE: CREATING A NEW MODEL OF WOMAN

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Independent scholar

1. INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the 19th century a group of young artists and intellectuals created in London the so called Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB), which meant an authentic artistic revolution. Their name itself connects them to the former paintings from the late medieval period and early Renaissance before the appearance of Raphael. This way, Pre-Raphaelites looked back to the past in search of purer values, and turned away from the present, as a reaction against the fast modernization brought about by the Industrial Revolution, with factories and machines which altered the speed of production and consequently the rhythm of life too.

2. OBJECTIVES

I aim to show how the Pre-Raphaelites revised and contributed to change the aesthetic canon of their time, through their visual representations of female characters from the literary tradition.

I will focus on the aspects related to the representation of females taken from the literature, such as Ophelia from William Shakespeare´s *Hamlet*, *The Lady of Shalott* from Alfred Tennyson's poem, and the Biblical Mary Virgin, to highlight the important role of literature in the artistic revolution developed by Pre-Raphaelites in the 19th century.

3. METHODOLOGY

Firstly, I will explain the origin, the tenets, and techniques of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, with an insight of their literary influences and their visual references. From a feminist and gender approach, I will study the relevance of women inside the Brotherhood, analyzing their role and influence.

I will survey the movement's most representative artworks, as Millais's *Ophelia*, Holden Hunt´s *The Lady of Shalott*, and Rossetti's *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, focusing on the Pre-Raphaelite revolution which established a bridge between art and literature, looking for the renewal of the Victorian female model.

4. DISCUSSING ABOUT THE PRE-RAPHAELITE REVOLUTION: ORIGIN, TENETS, AND TECHNIQUES

In her article about the Pre-Raphaelites, published in the British Library web section devoted to *Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians* (2014), Dinah Roe explains that the Brotherhood's art was "Inspired by the work of old masters such as Van Eyck, Memling, Mantegna, Giotto and Fra Angelico, and following a programme of 'truth to nature'" (2014, para. 3), thus seeking to modernize art through the return to a more authentic and pure concept of art, with the simplicity and sincerity of subject and style found in the practices of the Middle Ages.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood formed in 1848 and was determined to rebel against the conventions of the Royal Academy. For this reason, the movement's spirit has been compared to the Young British Artist of the 1990s. As Fiona MacCarthy points out in her article published in the digital edition of *The Guardian*, Pre-Raphaelites were clever and sardonic, as "their irreverence still makes them seem curiously modern" (2012, para. 5). She comments the last Tate Britain's exhibition held in 2012 which treated the Pre-Raphaelites as the first modern art movement, with rebellious ideas and revolutionary methods way ahead of their time, as Victorian Avant-Garde. MacCarthy explains that "They were radical in their ways of looking, viewing their subjects with an

intense psychological acumen. They were radical, too, in their techniques of painting. That pre-Raphaelite super-realism was achieved through meticulous attention to detail" (2012, para. 5). Therefore, we can affirm Pre-Raphaelites had the ability to use ancient techniques with a modern critical vision of the topics to paint.

The movement advocated for the unity of arts, all considered equal in importance. Thus, although Pre-Raphaelite paintings and drawings are their most popular artwork, they also created sculpture, architecture, photography, furniture, and textiles, but also poetry, showing the movement's revolutionary aims. These pioneering ideas have proved largely influential references on movements such as the Arts & Crafts, and the Bauhaus.

Pre-Raphaelites had literary works as their main source of inspiration, taking subjects from the Bible, medieval romances, Arthurian legends, Ovid, Chaucer and Shakespeare. Roe remembers their list of artistic heroes, "which included not only canonical writers such as Homer, Dante Alighieri and Boccaccio, but also recent predecessors and contemporaries such as Byron, Keats, Shelley, Longfellow, Emerson, Poe, Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, Robert Browning and Thackeray" (2014, para. 6). Both, classic and contemporary books were used as the raw material for their artistic creation, underlining the connection between art and literature in the Pre-Raphaelites movement.

The Pre-Raphaelites really built a bridge between literature and visual art. They published a magazine called *The Germ*, where their original manifesto on the true meaning of art first appeared, but they also published essays, reviews, and the poetry composed by some of their members. As Roe says, "Its eagerness to explore the interactions between words and images set a precedent for subsequent high-profile Pre-Raphaelite projects" (2014, para. 7), as the Moxon illustrated edition of Tennyson's *Poems* published in 1857, among other illustrations for magazines and books.

Their meticulous study of models and the slow and careful process of painting were also some of the features which related them to the work of the ancient artists from the Middle Ages. The laborious technique developed by the Brotherhood searched for bright, brilliant, and

memorable luminous results at the cost of long periods of work prolonged along even several years until getting the wished effects. But far from being isolated from the reality, Pre-Raphaelites were directly connected to the changes, taking part in the process of renovation of ideas which the Victorian period was undergoing.

As Jonathan Jones points out in his article "Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde at Tate Britain" (2012) published in the digital edition of *The Guardian*, "The Pre-Raphaelites were painting as Karl Marx was writing his revolutionary works in the Reading Room of the British Museum. Marx and Friedrich Engels published the Communist Manifesto in 1848, the same year the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood formed" (para. 5). Jones also affirms these new revolutionary ideas permeated their attitude, as "the young artists who joined this radical band saw through the hypocrisy of the factory owners who bought their paintings" (para. 5). Thus, Pre-Raphaelite artists were politically aware of the deep contradictions of Victorian society and loaded their paintings with that critical vision, despite the fact they also sold their artworks to the upper rich classes.

The rigid Victorian society saw the British Empire's growth and expansion, but it also witnessed the first cracks in its system, when social and political movements such as socialists and suffragettes started to fight for their rights, for the improvement of working conditions and salary, the abolition of restrictive laws; but above all, the women's right to vote, to decide and be taken into account. This was an unprecedented fight causing violent reactions but also unexpected adhesions. In this sense, Pre-Raphaelites could be considered as chroniclers of social changes through their art, while also reflecting the renewal in Victorian society.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais were the leaders of the movement. They were ambitious and serious artists and poets, and they were also very young men, around 20. The Pre-Raphaelites embodied protest and consequently they suffered the fierce critics from their contemporaries, for their eroticism, their blasphemy and the attack to cultural norms. MacCarthy emphasizes that Pre-Raphaelite artists were not afraid to tackle such problematic topics as poor law legislation, prostitution or the prevailing sexual double standards of Victorian society (2012, para. 8). In fact, according to MacCarthy,

"They were pioneers in the way that they embedded moral meaning within the visual message. What was startlingly unusual was their sheer conviction that art could alter society itself" (2012, para. 8). Therefore, they were convinced to develop a social art that could contribute to change the social status quo.

According to Roe's article (2014), when the second generation of artists, such as William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, and Ford Madox Brown, joined the Pre-Raphaelite movement, the last two were already teaching art classes with Rossetti and Ruskin at the Working Men's College in London, a Christian Socialist institution that sought to give working class men access to a liberal education. Pre-Raphaelite quite radical politics, as William Morris involvement in revolutionary socialism, has usually been omitted, giving a milder vision of their art. But in order to better understand them, we need to pay attention to the politics of art connected to social renewal and the contradictions of a movement that combined the love of history, mythology and the classics with the scientific study of natural phenomena, while refusing the contemporary artistic scene. It is really interesting to discover the deep connections in the Pre-Raphaelite movement between their obsessive work for the renewal of art, and the contemporary intellectual debates and practical ideals of social reform.

It is also relevant to take into account that even the so called Brotherhood was not only constituted by men, little attention has been usually paid to the influence and work of women. In fact, these women are better known as models of the Pre-Raphaelite men artists, but many of them were also artists as their male counterparts, although usually discarded or forgotten by history. Among the famous representatives of the Brotherhood there were also a quite great contingent of women artists too, whose names are less known but whose influence in the Pre-Raphaelite group is being proved as relevant.

5. DISCUSSING ABOUT THE BROTHERHOOD AND THE SISTERHOOD

Jan Marsh is a pioneer in the study of the role of Pre-Raphaelite women, offering in her book *Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood* (1995) an

unprecedented complete list of women artists connected to the Pre-Raphaelites, in a more direct or loose way. Elizabeth Lee summarizes in her later article "Pre-Raphaelite Women" (1997) this list, reminding the most famous women related to the Brotherhood were the models who posed for the male artists. Many of them had also personal relationships with the artists, as sisters like Christina Rossetti, Rosa Brett, Rebecca Solomon, Lucy and Catherine Madox Brown, or as lovers and wives like Lizzie Siddal, Jane Morris, Fanny Conforth, Emma Madox Brown, Euphemia Millais, Edith Hunt, Georgie Burne-Jones; and many others were also related by artistic or friendship links, such as Anna Eliza Blunden, Florence Claxton, Julia Margaret Cameron, Emma Sandys, Evelyn de Morgan, Mary Zambaco, Annie Miller, etc.

Therefore, as Marsh explains, these women were not simply the passive recipients of benefits conferred by virtue of their connections with the artists (1995, p. 359). Some well-known models, such as Elizabeth Siddal was a gifted watercolourist, not just the muse of Millais and Rossetti. Also Jane Burden, another famous model for Rossetti and Morris, was a recognized embroiderer too. There was a web of connections between women artists around the Pre-Raphaelite movement, intellectuals and feminists, forming what Marsh called an authentic Pre-Raphaelite sisterhood (1995, p. 11). Moreover, women had an active role in the art of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, greatly contributing to develop it.

It seems impossible to separate the Pre-Raphaelite art from the depiction of beautiful women, with large eyes, red lips, and long hair. The fact that women became Pre-Raphaelite's primary subject is a proof of their concern in the contemporary lives of Victorian women. According to Jan Marsh, "Within the Pre-Raphaelite circle the women found many encouraging, supportive, loving men, who were notable for their freedom from the overbearing chauvinism of their time. The women were offered opportunities denied to most members of their sex and class" (1995, p. 358). Thus, Marsh believes that in the artistic world they were freed from some restricting conventions, so they were able to pursue their own interests and participate in a wide range of activities.

Although Marsh affirms in The Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood, the romance and attention surrounding these women tended "both to glorify them,

raising them like Hollywood film stars above the level of ordinary mortals into a mythic realm of tragic heroines and fatal sirens"; she also believes this diminishes them, reducing their real, complex personalities to flat figures and taking away from them all sense of active life (1995, p. 3). However, I do not agree with this argument, because it is known that models and artists such as Siddal and Morris were active supporters of the suffragettes vindications, which was ultimately reflected into the art of the Pre-Raphaelites. As both women designed and saw the clothes they used to pose in the artists' studio, also campaigning in favour of wearing these loose dresses instead of the compulsory Victorian corset. So they had personal opinions and attitudes, but also an active participation in the process of painting, contributing to create and materialize some Pre-Raphaelite characters.

Notwithstanding, Marsh says among all these women "there was aspiration, ambition, determination and strength of character", and she thinks "its fascination lies in the sense of active struggle for identity and self-determination that shines from each phase of their lives" (1995, p. 359). Women were taken into account inside the Brotherhood, and as examples we can just consider the concrete models of the paintings I study more in depth in this work: Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal.

On the one hand, Christina Rossetti was Dante Gabriel's sister, and modelled for her brother in several paintings such as *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*. But she was also encouraged by her brothers to write poetry. Her poems were published in *The Germ*, and they also served as a source of inspiration for some of Rossetti's paintings. On the other hand, Elizabeth Siddal, the red-headed model for Millais's *Ophelia*, and Hunt´s *The Lady of Shalott*, was married to Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Siddal exemplifies the Pre-Raphaelite spirit, as she rendered her beauty for their art, but she also wanted to become an artist; so Rossetti taught her while John Ruskin fostered her career. As MacCarthy argues, the romantic ideal of the skilled woman as a mate in the workshop will be a feature of arts and crafts communities from William Morris on (2012, para. 19). Although, we should also recognize the ideal of the unity of arts as equal in importance, and the respect for their female counterparts in the Pre-Raphaelites artistic universe was originally in that movement.

6. CREATING A NEW MODEL OF WOMAN AS A RESULT OF REVISING LITERARY FEMALE CHARACTERS

The Pre-Raphaelite movement was not apart from the reality of their time; far from being isolated artists, they had an active spirit of social renewal. Pre-Raphaelite women defied the rigid Victorian behaviour code, which did not allow them to have a life on their own, express their opinions and pursue their aims. Victorian ideal of womanhood was based on the so called "Angel in the House", which related women's role to domestic labours and motherhood. Thus, Victorian society imposed as the only mission for every woman to keep chaste until getting married and have children, follow the dictates of her husband, and live a respectable life taking care of her family and her house.

Pre-Raphaelite women artists were involved in suffragettes' movement, fighting for women's right to vote, and this also transcended inside the Brotherhood. Both men and women artists chose, developed, and showed a new female model which was not the conventional in the Victorian era. For the first time, women look sexualized, fleshy, carnal, idealized in a way which searches to captivate, to trap through the alluring presence of extremely beautiful and real women, whose physicality seems to push them outside the frames of their paintings. Pre-Raphaelites represented women with a halo of mystery, empowering them, and projecting a decadent image of independent women who take their own decisions.

In this sense, it is interesting to reflect about the sources of inspiration often used by Pre-Raphaelite painters, as they basically took their topics from the literary tradition. They resorted to Bible's passages, Shakespeare's plays, and the Arthurian legends; but most topics exploited as artworks make reference to tragic female characters. This choice is not casual, as I believe there is a direct relationship between the topic to paint and the aesthetic and political principles which guided them.

Tragic characters had been seen just as a way of representing punishment for a wrong behaviour, or for a socially unacceptable conduct. But we could go further in the reading of their message, as choosing a female character who has a fatal ending not necessarily implies that she is forced to die because of a social or moral stigma. In the case of John

Everett Millais' *Ophelia* (1852), or John William Waterhouse's *The Lady of Shalott* (1888, 1894, 1915), both characters die but this seems to be their last choice. Far from trying to be an apologist of suicidal tendencies, I think in some occasions, as in those depicted, to choose when and how to die is the only true decision a human being could take. It could be considered a political act to decide to represent a specific scene showing the exact time when the women are going to die, when they precisely know their fate and accept it as a personal decision over their own body, their own life, and their own present.

In his article "Visual Representations of Hamlet, 1709-1900" (2015), published in *Hamlet Works* web, Alan R. Young puts Ophelia's death (4.5) among "those *Hamlet* subjects that most inspired artists and that in turn were most familiar to viewers". Undoubtedly, Ophelia is one of the most famous Shakespeare's tragic characters from his play *Hamlet* (1623), victim of the Prince of Denmark's disaffection and moody behaviour. In the nineteenth century, works depicting the mad Ophelia in a natural setting just before her death are very numerous. The long list of painters rendering Gertrude's description of Ophelia's death includes the Pre-Raphaelites John Everett Millais, William Morris Hunt, and John William Waterhouse, who painted the mad Ophelia by the brook three times, in 1889, 1894, and 1910.

According to Young, "No image of the drowning or drowned Ophelia has entered so strongly into our cultural consciousness as that produced by John Everett Millais" (2003, Visual Hamlet section). Millais has caught the moment just prior to Ophelia's death which is described by Gertrude. Ophelia is floating on her back in the brook, with a silver embroidered dress covered by flowers. Her eyes are open and her mouth parted, and both hands are slightly raised, but Young is who best describes this scene.

> There are flowers, both white and red, upon her dress, upon the surface of the water, and growing upon the side of the brook, and in the upper left side of the picture there is a small bird (a robin), which, it has been suggested, symbolically represents the exodus of Ophelia's soul (2003, Visual Hamlet section).

For Young, the picture emphasizes the natural beauty of Ophelia and the tragic pathos of her fate. The contrasting red and white colours in the flowers, and in her bright red lips and pallid face "offer mixed iconographic signals and, as in the later 1910 painting by Waterhouse, create an ambiguous mixed allusion to sexual passion and innocent purity" (Young, 2003, Visual Hamlet section). Precisely, that mixture of symbols is one of the main features of the Pre-Raphaelite art.

The tragic taint which Pre-Raphaelites decided to infuse to their muses also connects them to the Romantic tradition, when passions and intense life used to end in a fatal conclusion. But this fatal ending was almost always the decision of an independent and strong person, who decides to conclude life at an early stage as a final apotheosis which celebrates life itself and all the pleasures enjoyed along it. Similarly, to commit suicide as a political vindication act was used for the first time by suffragette Emily Wilding Davison in the derby of Epsom in 1913. This event caused a deep impact in Victorian society and was widely commented on the press of the time. Things would not be the same after this act, because an activist showed how powerful could be the suffragettes' struggle only resorting to their own lives as weapons, only using their bodies as shields.

Thus, the choice of the character, and the scene to depict, is the first step in the rendering of a new version from a literary model, which serves as a solid source of inspiration. However, the original model suffers a transformation in the transposition from the literary media to the visual image. Besides, in this process of adaptation from one media to another, some elements are lost while other features are added. In this addition, the influence of Pre-Raphaelite women had a relevant role, not only as the models who lent their bodies to the work of the artists, but as artists themselves and as conscious and influential women of their time, aware of the social movements of change and their implication in all spheres of Victorian life.

Another recurrent topic among Pre-Raphaelites is the Lady of Shalott, with the multiple visual representations done by male and female artists with different treatments. Tennyson's "*The Lady of Shalott*" (1832) is a poem in four parts which tells the Arthurian story of a cursed Lady

imprisoned in the tower of the island of Shalott, in the middle of the river near Camelot. She is forbidden to glance out of her window, and her only entertainment is weaving a tapestry that illustrates the outside world that she only sees reflected on her mirror. But when the Lady hears the voice of Sir Lancelot and looks out the window she gets the mortal enchantment, and then the Lady leaves the island on a boat to die.

Thomas L. Jeffers's article, "Tennyson's Lady of Shalott and Pre-Raphaelite Renderings: Statement and Counter-Statement" (2002), reveals that the visual re-imaginings of Siddal, Rossetti, Hunt, and Waterhouse took up the challenge of picturing the woman artist as Tennyson had previously described, while "moralizing". Thus, according to Jeffers, that combination of skillful picturing and moralizing makes these works significant, not as mere commentaries on Tennyson, but as "what Kenneth Burke might have called a series of fully realized counter-statements. Statement and counter-statement: poem and pictures continue to caress and snap at one another" (2002, p. 251). This kind of dialogue between arts seems a really good example of what I have coined as the Pre-Raphaelite bridge between art and literature, which have been already stated in this paper since its mere title.

In the *Victorian Web*, Erin Frauenhofer explains in "Men vs. Women: Illustrating *"The Lady of Shalott"*" (2006) that Tennyson's poem inspired many different versions by Pre-Raphaelite artists because of its tragic subject matter and treatment of the conflicted role of the artist. Through the popular topic of tragic unrequited love, the Lady of Shalott exemplified the unattainable woman, the cursed woman, and the woman sacrificing everything for a doomed love. Artists such as Hunt, Waterhouse, and Shaw emphasized these themes by illustrating the most tragic scenes of the poem, but Frauenhofer analyzes how differently that poem inspired some lesser-known female artists of the period, such as Elizabeth Siddal, Inez Warry, and Florence Rutland. Thus, she points out "These women's illustrations dramatized, romanticized, and sexualized the subject to a lesser extent than men's illustrations did" (2006, para. 2). Therefore, Pre-Raphaelite women artists showed a female perspective on the subject.

According to Frauenhofer, “the most striking difference between male artists’ representations of the Lady of Shalott and female artists’ representations occurred in the artists’ attitudes towards the Lady as a woman” (2006, para. 19). In this sense, for Frauenhofer we can appreciate how “male artists stressed the Lady’s position as an object of desire”, as they depicted her as an idealized, sensual and unattainable woman (2006, para. 19). In their renderings of Tennyson’s poem, artists seemed to have approached the topic in a different way according to their gender. Artists such as Hunt, Waterhouse, Rossetti, and Meteyard emphasized the tragic aspects of the Lady’s love and her place as an object of desire, while artists such as Siddal and Warry focused on the Lady’s position in relation to her surroundings and status. Florence M. Rutland, maybe the most interesting for me, mixed these differing methods, illustrating the Lady without renouncing to show her sensuality and emotional confusion, but in a more subtle way than male artists did.

From all pictorial versions, and from the three different variations of the topic by Waterhouse, his first painting made in 1888 is the only one which shows the Lady outside the tower but still alive, peacefully waiting for her death while floating on a boat covered by a tapestry representing her legend, with a candle fading as a symbol of her own extinguishing life, while going down the river surrounded by vegetation. Nowadays, the painting is in the Tate Britain, practically in front of Millais’s *Ophelia*, both scenes presenting their heroines mirroring each other in a similar attitude, facing calmly their imminent death. Both heroines took their own decisions and now accept the consequences. Even in a tragic ending like this, the independence of women is emphasized through the depiction of the scene, as they are not portrayed anguished inside a repressing closed space but outdoors, both appear beautiful in the exuberant nature, floating relaxed towards their end.

In the building of a bridge between arts, Dante Gabriel Rossetti showed a serious consideration for the composition of sonnets to accompany his paintings. As Brian Donnelly explains in his article about Rossetti’s *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*,“What is provoking about Rossetti’s engagement of both visual and verbal images to create meaning is the possible production of another kind of text, an intertext that is unique

to the painter-poet" (2010, p. 475). Thus, the connection between word and image develops towards unprecedented stages of creativity, which would pave the way for new future coming artistic avant-gardes.

In 1849 Rossetti's *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* was the first painting exhibited bearing the initials PRB, referring to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Rossetti wrote two sonnets for this painting which are inscribed together at the bottom of the frame, under the title "Mary's Girlhood (For a Picture)". According to Donnelly, "the paintings and the sonnets together provide an opportunity to develop a reading of the intertextual relationships at work in Rossetti's visual and verbal constructions" (2010, p. 475). Both, painting and poetry interact to establish new meanings beyond the only individual understanding of each of these arts.

For Donnelly, Rossetti's innovative deployment of the sonnet form extends his work beyond the word-image opposition, threatening the temporal-spatial division through which images and texts are normally separated, "which results in composite moments of representation that are neither solely literary nor solely visual, but both" (2010, p. 476). Thus, both reading and viewing are part of the total experience this kind of works provides, complementing and enriching each other, and being impossible to split them up. Donnelly explains this kind of interaction in detail.

> While Sonnet I provides a narrative of sorts for the scene depicted in the painting, Sonnet II addresses the symbols included in the design. Together the sonnets articulate the complex array of visual and verbal strategies Rossetti utilizes to construct meaning (2010, p. 478).

In this sense, it is very interesting the idea that the sonnets offer a conceptual frame for the paintings, indicating how we should understand them in relation to one another, this way looking at the painting and reading the sonnet together reveals much more about what they say.

Although the theme of the education of the Virgin was common in medieval and renaissance European painting tradition, Rossetti made an unusual variation on it, as Donnelly points out, because "Rather than showing Mary learning to read at her mother's knee, an image familiar in education scenes, Rossetti shows her working at embroidery in a stylized domestic setting" (2010, p. 477). Thus, again we can see how the

choice of topic and also its intellectual and pictorial treatments make a distinctive break with respect to the academic painting of Victorian time. It is unprecedented the systematic selection of female characters from the literary tradition, represented in unusual scenes which condense an ideological attitude and represents a political stance which marks a departure from the establishment of the time.

In Rossetti's *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, the education of women is emphasized taking as a reference a relevant biblical female character. The Virgin depicted as a young girl is used as a model, but Rossetti goes further as he decides to vary the topic showing Mary embroidering, not learning to read. This could be misunderstood as a misogynous treatment, but for the fact that Pre-Raphaelites considered the unity and equality of all arts, including textile ones. Thus, what Rossetti is really doing in his painting is empowering the role of women as creative beings, just as equal artists.

As Donnelly explains, in *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* the scene offers a double vision of the moment depicted, where the meeting of divine and secular is foregrounded by the presence of the angel, so referring to Mary as the chosen future mother of Christ (2010, p. 480). But she is also shown as a secular red-haired girl in her daily routine, when she gets conscious of her own fate. Rossetti's intertextual production offers an appraisal of the painting opened to both verbal and visual narratives of temporality, and according to Donnelly, the symbolic narrative of preordainment invoked in *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* relies on the fragile promise articulated through the word "until" in the sonnets of "Mary's Girlhood" (2010, p. 485). Thus, Rossetti represents such a controversial religious topic as the girlhood of the Virgin just in the previous moment when she is going to be appointed as the future mother of Jesus, as the angel painted in this artwork will announce it.

Therefore, for Donnelly, Rossetti articulates a reconfiguration of the theme of innocence and experience from "Mary´s Girlhood" to his sonnet "Found", so transcending the Victorian dichotomy between the pure and the fallen woman (2010, p. 484). That is, Rossetti chooses to show the Virgin still as an adolescent, free and concentrated on her own everyday life, unconscious of what the future will bring her soon.

Consequently, Rossetti's paintings emphasize the contrast between male and female in Victorian society, making it evident to show the contrast between the presumed male dominance in that time while he underlines female independence.

7.CONCLUSIONS

Pre-Raphaelites marked a change in the aesthetic canon of the Victorian time, and the ideological principles that supported it. Thus, they began a new era for women's representations, with the active participation of women inside the Brotherhood, although sometimes differing in their artistic approaches.

Though, full of contradictions as the Victorian society itself, the Pre-Raphaelite movement enacted an authentic revolution in their revision of women's role, through their artistic updating of female literary characters. Thus, offering a new model of women from literature to art and life.

Pre-Raphaelites could be studied from a new perspective, as chroniclers of social changes through their own style of artistic vindication, reflecting the aesthetical renewal of women´s roles in Victorian society.

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CHASING THE WHALE ACROSS WORLDS: *AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER* AND THE ECOLOGICAL AFTERLIFE OF *MOBY-DICK*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Few literary works have achieved the symbolic reach of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (2017/1851). The story of Captain Ahab's hunt for the white whale has long since evolved into a contemporary cultural myth, transcending its nineteenth-century whaling context. Its figures, including the monomaniacal captain, the doomed crew of the Pequod, and the enigmatic whale, have captured the global imagination as symbols of obsession, human ambition, and the terrifying power of nature. Artists, authors, and filmmakers have been revisiting this narrative for more than a century and a half, finding a vocabulary for the anxieties of their own age. Today, reading *Moby-Dick* means engaging with a cultural archive that is constantly being rewritten in new media and forms.

At first glance, James Cameron's *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) might seem distant from Melville's nineteenth-century epic. The story takes place on the planet Pandora, where the native Na'vi people fight against human colonizers who exploit both land and sea. The hunting of enormous, sentient sea creatures known as *tulkun*, however, is a remarkably familiar scene at the heart of this futuristic spectacle. The similarities to *Moby-Dick* are unmistakable. The tulkun hunters, with the objective of extracting a valuable anti-aging substance known as *amrita*, echo the capitalist demands that drive Melville's whaling world. While the brutality of the human whalers reminds us of Ahab's destructive obsession, the close relationship between the Na'vi youth Lo'ak and the exiled tulkun Payakan recalls Ishmael's openness and

meditative contemplation of the white whale. Although *Avatar* does not directly adapt Melville's novel, it does inherit and transform its main symbolic conflict, as the pursuit of the whale becomes the chase of the tulkun on planet Pandora.

This symbolic reimagining raises an important question. In the context of ecological collapse and planetary crisis, what does it mean to "chase the whale" in the twenty-first century? This chapter discusses how the figure of the hunted whale has evolved from a symbol of human challenge to nature to a marker of relational ethics and environmental preservation. The tulkun are not mute monsters but conscious beings whose suffering demands recognition. Therefore, the parallels with Melville are not the result of direct adaptation but of cultural reconfiguration, where the old myth is revived in an ecological key.

This chapter combines several theoretical perspectives to examine this transformation. According to Linda Hutcheon's (2006) theory of adaptation as cultural revision, films like *Avatar* modify symbolic structures so as to address new historical and ideological contexts, going beyond simply reusing plot elements. John Bryant's (2002) notion of the "fluid text" is equally pertinent for this study, as it highlights the way *Moby-Dick* has always been subject to revision and recirculation, becoming a living text that endures through its mutations. Greg Garrard's (2004) *Ecocriticism* provides a critical framework that explores how narratives mediate and construct our perception of nature. Together, these perspectives frame the following analysis and allow us to approach *Avatar* as a twenty-first-century intervention in the cultural afterlife of *Moby-Dick*.

Understanding how cultural myths change in response to ecological urgency is the primary reason why studying *Moby-Dick* and *Avatar: The Way of Water* together is interesting. If Melville's novel registered the rise of industrial modernity (its hunger for resources, its fascination with mastery, and its confrontation with nonhuman forces), Cameron's movie registers the contradictions of the Anthropocene. According to Steffen et al. (2007), the Anthropocene is the new geological epoch in which "human activities have become so pervasive and profound that they rival the great forces of Nature" (p. 614). Cameron stages the conflict between extractive capitalism and ecological survival on a

planetary scale, translating nineteenth-century visions of domination and exploitation into twenty-first-century anxieties about the environment and species extinction.

Thus, this chapter poses the following questions: how does the symbol of the whale migrate into a new context, and what new ethical work does it perform there? What happens to Ahab's quest when it is relocated to Pandora and reframed as a struggle over interspecies kinship and ecological balance? Can the tulkun be interpreted as cultural descendants of Melville's white whale, carrying forward a legacy of resistance to human domination while embodying new planetary concerns? Lastly, what does this symbolic reworking tell us about the role of fiction in shaping ecological imagination?

The following sections trace the ecological legacy of Melville's whale by placing *Moby-Dick* and *Avatar: The Way of Water* within a common symbolic genealogy. It is more fruitful to view Cameron's film as a site where elements of Melville's symbolic world are rewritten for modern audiences rather than as a derivative borrowing. In this process, the sea turns into a planetary ocean, the whale becomes tulkun, and the narrative flow changes from Ishmael's openness to Lo'ak's cross-species empathy. The pursuit of the whale across worlds is therefore not only a cinematic vision but also a cultural act of adaptation that speaks to the ecological precarity and storytelling of our time.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FLUID TEXTS, ADAPTATION, AND ECOCRITICAL TOOLS

This chapter discusses *Moby-Dick* and *Avatar: The Way of Water* together through a set of critical theories that make possible a comparative, ecocritical reading: (1) a fluid-text approach to literary transmission; (2) adaptation as cultural revision; (3) ecocritical attention to how narratives shape environmental perception and responsibility; and (4) historical attention to whaling and capitalist extraction as material contexts that continue to inform symbolic afterlives of literary works. Each of these strands offers a different analytical lens. Together, they enable

us to observe how the whale as symbol migrates, condenses, and acquires new ethical valences in Cameron's movie.

The first point of reference is John Bryant's work on textual revision and the fluid text. According to Bryant (2013), literary works are dynamic artifacts that are constantly being revised, circulated, and recontextualized; what we refer to as a single text is actually a network of versions and a site for later rewritings, including adaptations (p. 202). In addition, Bryant (2013) explores how *Moby-Dick* functions as a cultural meme, a symbolic unit whose motifs and tensions replicate and mutate across generations of adaptation and criticism (p. 205), making it possible, for example, to recognize a story akin to that of Ahab, Ishmael, and the whale in the bond between Lo'ak and Payakan, the vanished tulkun. For Bryant, *Moby-Dick* is more than just a nineteenth-century novel and can be seen as a living symbolic reservoir that subsequent creators reshape. Treating Melville's whale as part of a fluid textual archive opens the possibility of asking what elements are kept, what are removed, and how different historical periods recode the ethical valences of the whale.

Linda Hutcheon's (2006) theory of adaptation develops a similar perspective to Bryant's (2002, 2013), since both approaches place great emphasis on process and transformation. Hutcheon (2006) argues that adaptations are not derivative reproductions but creative transformations, or, in her own words, "Adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication. And there are manifestly many different modes of engagement" (p. 4). In the case of *Avatar: The Way of Water*, when James Cameron stages tulkun and tulkun-hunting, the director is not simply borrowing Melville's plot; he is performing a revision that selects, reinterprets, and sometimes changes the symbolic logic of the source. Hutcheon's model helps us see adaptation as a form of cultural argument, showing how filmmakers' choices about what to keep and what to transform constitute ideological as well as aesthetic acts.

The ethical and hermeneutic framework required to interpret such revisions in terms of the environment is then provided by ecocriticism. One of the focuses of contemporary ecocritical scholarship is on how narratives construct our understanding of nonhuman agency, species

boundaries, and our responsibilities to living systems (Garrard, 2004). From this vantage point, the whale/tulkun figure is less an inert sign and more a node in a network of affect, knowledge, and cultural practice (rituals, stories, and habits) that inform public perceptions of marine life and human entanglement with nonhuman worlds.

Posthuman and ecomaterialist thought further nuance the picture by destabilizing human-centered dichotomies and by arguing that bodies, technologies, and environments all participate in shared agencies. Stacy Alaimo's concept of trans-corporeality (2010, pp. 2, 61–62) proves particularly productive for reading the sequel to *Avatar*. Using this lens, human and tulkun bodies can be understood as porous and mutually entangled through material exchanges that register their participation in ecological networks. The filmic depiction of bodily connection, loss, and mourning in *Avatar* can be interpreted as staging trans-corporeal relations that invite ethical reflection. This gives cinematic encounters with the tulkun a material as well as a symbolic dimension. Rosi Braidotti (2022), from posthuman theory, similarly insists that ethical thinking in the Anthropocene has to attend to relationality, permeability, and shared vulnerability across species and media.

A final theoretical strand grounds the symbolic work of the whale in its economic and technological history. The work of scholars of whaling and of Melville's historical context helps understand how the material economy of whale oil, spermaceti, and international maritime networks conditioned both the novel and the following cultural imaginaries (Ruggiero, 2002; Irwin, 2021). Attention to that economic base prevents aesthetic readings from losing sight of the extraction regimes that historically gave the whale hunt its significance. Ruggiero's (2002) criminological perspective shows how whaling, though lawful in its time, operated in the gray zone between economic gain and systemic violence. *Avatar: The Way of Water* and its tulkun-hunt illustrate a similar logic, in which an officially sanctioned practice generates wealth at the cost of ecological devastation and ethical transgression.

Combining these frameworks results in a useful methodology for the analysis that follows. First, *Moby-Dick* is considered a living archive whose motifs and structures circulate into new cultural forms. Second,

Avatar: The Way of Water is seen as an adaptive revision that inherits and redirects Melville's symbols. Third, the analysis uses ecocritical and posthuman tools to examine how the movie's images and affective dynamics produce ethical orientations toward nonhuman life. Fourth, the discussion pays close attention to political economy, pointing out that the representation of extraction in Pandora inherits rhetorical patterns that we can trace from nineteenth-century whaling to modern global capitalism.

Operationally, then, this chapter reads *Avatar* scenes and narrative decisions as condensed episodes in a cultural reworking of *Moby-Dick*. It examines ethical and bodily relations, tracks formal transformations, and situates the movie within past and current panoramas of capital and extraction. This combined frame makes clear how the whale's symbolic energy migrates into the tulkun and what kinds of ethical and political reorientations that migration entails for audiences in the twenty-first century. These tools are used sequentially in the following sections, first tracing the condensation of whale to tulkun, then looking at narrative and ethical shifts, and finally reflecting upon the potential of cinematic reimaginings to shape ecological imagination.

3. FROM WHALE TO TULKUN: CONDENSATION AND CULTURAL MEME

The transformation from Melville's white whale to the tulkun in *Avatar: The Way of Water* involves both visual and narrative echoes of whaling. Among the most evident ones, we can find the relentless chase, the wounding, and the symbolic weight attached to the hunted body. In *Moby-Dick*, Ahab's hunt, his mutilated leg, and his obsession with retribution define a narrative of human hubris and resistance. In *Avatar*, this is reflected in tulkun-hunting scenes: Payakan, labeled an outcast after surviving an assault by the RDA's tulkun-hunting fleet, bears the trauma of injury and exclusion. The continuation of its story (its bond with Lo'ak and its decisive return in the counterattack against the human hunters) changes the narrative arc from one of persecution to one of restored balance and interspecies kinship. These echoes serve

not just as homage but as condensation that contains symbols distilled from Melville's whale.

The concept of a cultural meme can explain why certain symbols from *Moby-Dick* persist in a variety of culturally diverse works. Religious tales, maritime folklore, and artistic traditions have all long featured the whale's larger myth. This background includes the biblical Leviathan from Job 41, Jonah's encounter with the great fish, and the apocalyptic sea beasts described in Revelation (Alter, 2011). There is a long history of oceanic monsters, as evidenced by the Norse Jörmungandr or the medieval stories of whales that are mistaken for islands (Waugh, 1961). These myths acquire a new form in Melville's novel, where the whale serves as a vehicle for human obsession as well as a monstrous other. Since then, the whale is no longer only a biblical or folkloric figure but part of a modern cultural archive that has been reexamined and reinterpreted by later artists. Today, we can spot references to Melville's tale in unexpected contexts, like comic books, movies, or even individual characters who exhibit characteristics of Ahab, Ishmael, or the whale itself.

In "Wound, Beast, Revision: Versions of the Melville Meme," Bryant (2013) contends that *Moby-Dick* functions as more than a story about a whale, identifying it as a symbolic unit whose motifs of wound, beast, obsession, and otherness replicate and mutate in literature, film, comics, and vernacular culture (pp. 204–206). This is what allows audiences to perceive what he calls the "Melville meme," a pattern that is identifiable even in the absence of some of its most iconic elements, like the whale or Ahab. To illustrate how this meme works beyond explicit adaptations of *Moby-Dick*, Bryant (2013, pp. 207–208) cites *The Amazing Spider-Man* (Webb, 2012), where Doctor Connors, who loses an arm and transforms into a beastly figure, mimics Ahab's horrific wound and the whale's monstrous presence. We might add the figure of Monstro in *Pinocchio* (Collodi, 1883/2002), a story where the whale-like monster swallows the protagonists and represents both danger and the possibility of rebirth, a rebirth that recalls Jonah's deliverance and Ishmael's intellectual survival after the sinking of the Pequod. The image of the whale evokes human struggle and confrontation with the nonhuman, even in this seemingly distant children's story. In *Avatar: The*

Way of Water, the Melville meme reappears in a science-fiction setting to address current ecological concerns, continuing this pattern of recurrence and change.

Many of the elements of the Melville meme are passed down to the second installment of *Avatar*. The wound motif (found in the hunted tulkuns and in the body of the exiled Payakan, whose harpooned flesh and scars evoke Moby Dick's marked body) and the pursuit (humans tracking them for amrita) echo Ahab's obsession and reframe it. The moral terrain is further complicated by the sense of otherness present in the tulkuns, as they are beings distinct from both humans and the Na'vi but deeply bound to Pandora's ecosystem. The relationship between the Na'vi and the tulkuns evolves from survival to mutual recognition through Payakan's bond with Lo'ak. Both the outcast tulkun and the misunderstood youngest son find in one another a mirror of rejection and a path toward belonging. *Avatar* spreads concern among several agents, as opposed to Ahab's single, monomaniacal drive. The Na'vi, Lo'ak, and other beings take part in resistance, healing, and mourning. Through these shared acts, the tulkun ceases to be just a victim or a reflection of human aggression and becomes a symbol of reciprocity and an ethic of kinship and coexistence within Pandora's oceanic world.

Visually, *Avatar: The Way of Water* emphasizes this shift. Scenes of the hunted tulkun being dragged, bleeding, or entangled recall the whale's suffering. Payakan's injury turns into a visual metaphor for colonial violence and environmental damage. However, there are also scenes of tenderness in the movie where the Na'vi care for the tulkuns, touch their flesh, and put them back in the water. This juxtaposition of images of harm and healing performs the meme's transformation from a symbol of domination to a site of relational network.

In *Moby-Dick*, Melville's white whale is both monstrous and sublime. In *Avatar*, the tulkun becomes more than the problem and emerges as a being with agency and social presence among the Na'vi. The meme has evolved, and obsession and dominance are no longer the main stories. The narrative now includes responsibility, mutual recognition, and collective grief. This is a cultural condensation, the myth refined into a symbol that can convey ecological ethics in a popular, cinematic

format. The whale myth is replayed in *Avatar*, but the movie does so with variation or, in Hutcheon's (2006) words, "without replication" (p. 4). The movie chooses which parts of Melville's symbolism to emphasize, which to soften, and which to reverse. *Avatar* does not simply remake *Moby-Dick*; it repurposes specific elements of the Melville meme, its tensions, and the moral spectacle of the novel, for our moment of ecological crisis.

The power of cinema consists in its capacity to reactivate the whale myth in the collective imagination. Films function visually, emotionally, and communally, in contrast to texts, which require slow projection and analysis. Viewers can easily feel the suffering of the hunted and experience injustice on screen. Moreover, through fan discussions, climate activism, and popular imagery of suffering marine life, viewers of *Avatar* channel this immediacy, bring the meme back to life, and embed it in global circuits.

The transition from whale to tulkun implies more than just a species change. It is a shift in ethics from obsession and isolation to connection and mutual accountability. In this chapter, the Melville meme works as a moving cultural archive, a framework that allows for imagining new ecological beings, replaying symbolic tensions (wound, otherness, beast), and preserving memory (of environmental violence and colonial extraction). If we trace this condensation, we can see how *Avatar: The Way of Water* revitalizes the mythology of whaling for an Anthropocene audience.

4. NARRATIVE AND ETHICAL SHIFTS IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Avatar: The Way of Water transforms the moral core of the hunt from an individual drama to a communal experience by replacing Melville's whale with the tulkun. James Cameron's film depicts the oceanic hunt as a collective process of harm and repair, in contrast to Ahab's pursuit in *Moby-Dick*, which centers on the captain's obsessive will and desire to control nature. Every action demonstrates that moral consequences are shared among entities that must react to one another, whether it is Lo'ak's disobedience of his father, Jake Sully, Payakan's exile, or the

clan's grief. Lo'ak risks punishment to defend Payakan, who in turn protects him in the final battle. Neytiri, Jake's mate and mother of Lo'ak, and Ronal, the matriarch of the Metkayina reef clan, share grief and rage as mothers who experience loss. These interactions turn empathy into action and demonstrate that every being participates in restoring the balance that others have broken. Compared to *Moby-Dick*, in *Avatar*, knowledge and power emerge more from learning how to listen, heal, and live with other forms of life. This moral vision replaces solitary heroism with attentive coexistence, in which ethical understanding is defined by the capacity to perceive and repair connection with others. The film enacts this transformation in three linked moves: it treats interspecies relations as embodied practices, it presents care as a moral substitute for extraction, and it places the tulkun-hunt within the same political economy that historically supported nineteenth-century whaling.

First, the film goes beyond showing interspecies relations as an abstract idea. The relation is made tangible through the body. The Na'vi establish a connection with the ecosystem of Pandora through the braided neural link of their queue, a bodily interface that allows direct sensory exchange. When Lo'ak bonds with Payakan, the tulkun's memories flood his perception. Lo'ak sees the slaughter of Payakan's relatives, the explosion that severed its fin, and its isolation beneath the reefs. Through this exchange, the audience learns Payakan's past as a recalled experience transmitted across species. Kiri, the adolescent human–Na'vi hybrid, experiences a similar exchange when she connects to the underwater tree of souls. Her breathing slows, light pulses through her veins, and she hears Eywa's heartbeat merging with her own, a moment that first hints at Eywa's role as the planet's living consciousness. These scenes leave aside control and portray connection with other species as mutual responsiveness, expressed through gestures of touching, vocalizing, and submerging together.

This connection that the Na'vi experience is the most literal expression of Alaimo's (2010) notion that bodies register ecological histories through material exchanges, as human and nonhuman forms entangle through porous exchange. The connections between the Na'vi and Pandora's plants and animals are material, nerve-to-nerve, breath-to-

breath, carrying remnants of past violence that are exchanged and repurposed into care. Under Eywa's encompassing presence, a planetary consciousness that circulates life and memory among all species, the Na'vi's bodily bonds with the fictional ecosystem of *Avatar* also visualize the posthuman ethics proposed by Rosi Braidotti (2022), which calls for relationality and shared vulnerability. The suffering shared by Lo'ak and Payakan, and their later reunion through the joint defense of the clan, show this ethic in action. Thus, connection functions as a learned practice because characters acquire knowledge, responsibility, and the impulse to repair by entering the bodily lives of others.

After this first move, which establishes interspecies relation as an embodied practice, the second move focuses on care, grief, tending, and ritualized healing as a viable ethical alternative to the epic logic of pursuit. Through this focus, Payakan's exile and wounds highlight the physical and psychic costs of predatory violence. Rather than letting the wounded creature remain solely a symbol of human hubris, the film reworks the meaning of the wound from a sign of conquest to an opportunity for restoration by staging communal rituals of tending and restoration, such as immersion, touch, and coordinated rescue. This move reframes mourning as part of a civic practice of care instead of a private response. As a result, the movie makes the case that, in a time when environmental damage seems irreversible, to respond ethically requires practices of attention and repair, not only laws or data.

The third move connects this ethics of care to the political economy of extraction. As historical studies of whaling show, whale fisheries in the nineteenth century were part of capitalist networks that transformed natural life into commodities, converting spermaceti into lighting fuel, lubricants, and industrial profit. Historians and critics show that these material practices influenced cultural imaginaries and literary forms (Ruggiero, 2002; Irwin, 2021). This same logic can be seen in *Avatar*, where the human hunt for amrita appears as the successor to spermaceti capitalism.

Ruggiero's (2002) description of maritime capitalism foregrounds how extraction rationalizes violence in tulkun-hunt. For Ruggiero, whaling, while lawful in its historical context, occupied a liminal position between legality and violence because it normalized the large-scale killing of

intelligent creatures under the guise of economic necessity (p. 96). Similar to this, the tulkun-hunt in the film is officially approved by corporate and scientific authorities, but is ethically corrosive because it disguises brutality as progress. The film thus reactivates the moral contradiction that Ruggiero identifies: when profit and technological advancement (like the extraction of amrita to produce an anti-aging serum) define the boundaries of justice, legality becomes a mask for systemic harm.

Irwin's (2021) work on spermaceti clarifies another dimension of the continuity in the mechanics of extraction that *Avatar* shows. Spermaceti was more than just an industrial good; it developed into material capital with cultural significance that impacted both economic practices and creative writing (Irwin, 2021, p. 45). By bringing up that past, *Avatar* exposes how the economies that once profited from the whale's body are inextricably linked to symbolic reverence for the whale. The film, therefore, evinces that in the twenty-first century, the aesthetic fascination and extraction are still intertwined. However, *Avatar: The Way of Water* does not conform to revisiting the logic of extraction in Melville's time; it imagines the possibility of resistance through collective acts of protection, as seen in the alliance between the Metkayina reef clan and the tulkun during the final battle, where empathy becomes a weapon against unchecked exploitation.

These three movements suggest what could be called an emotional pedagogy of ecology. Scenes of shared mourning, coordinated rescue, and embodied recognition serve as gentle forms of ethical education. Cinematic emotion cannot replace political action, but it does encourage reflection on how images and narrative feeling influence the ways communities imagine what ethical response might imply. Literary and cultural forms, according to Garrard (2004), both mirror and mold environmental imaginaries and can contribute to how societies perceive and respond to the living world. Stories that foster shared feeling and attentive awareness, therefore, become ethically significant in the Anthropocene, when human actions have a profound impact on the planet because they help translate abstract planetary change into lived, emotional understanding.

Finally, comparing Ahab and Lo'ak highlights the change of moral tone. Ahab's pursuit is a sharp example of individualist, Promethean mastery, whereas Lo'ak's path is apprenticed, collective, and reparative. That contrast is not a straightforward moral reversal. The film recognizes the power and danger of human drive, yet it uses rituals of care, bonds of solidarity, and collective acts of defense to transform aggression into protection and channel that energy toward restoration. The anxieties about industrial modernity that appear in *Moby-Dick* are translated into questions about planetary care and shared accountability. The tulkun's symbolic transmutation, consequently, stages a more comprehensive ethical reorientation that goes from heroic conquest to an ethic of attention and cohabitation in an entangled oceanic world.

5. PLANETARY ETHICS AND THE ROLE OF FICTION

Fiction has a unique capacity to weave ecological memory and the possibility of change in ways that raw data or law often cannot. Data may quantify damage, and law may attempt repair, but narrative creates the shared meanings that make care authentically imaginable. In *Avatar: The Way of Water*, the story of the tulkuns does much more than show crisis on the screen. The movie invites audiences to feel and think within it, and, in this way, it shapes emotional and ethical frameworks through which coexistence becomes thinkable.

Symbols in literature and film are marks that point beyond themselves, signifying ideas, emotions, and histories that cannot always be captured by facts alone (Baldick, 2008). The term "symbol" comes from the Greek *symbolon*, meaning emblem or token. A symbol stands for something other than itself through cultural association and repeated narrative use (Baldick, 2008). In *Moby-Dick*, the white whale symbolizes inscrutability, divine nature, and human obsession. When Ishmael ponders the whiteness of Moby Dick, he concludes that it is the "absence of color" and "all-color of atheism" (Melville, 2017, p. 157), a symbol of metaphysical anxiety that resists concrete meaning. Ishmael's failure to define it is part of its power, for the whale exceeds comprehension and cannot be defeated or intellectually comprehended.

In *Avatar*, the tulkun carries many layers of symbolic weight, but, in contrast to the white whale, the tulkun is legible, emphatic, and social. Its first underwater encounter with Lo'ak is a scene of mutual recognition. The young Na'vi and the creature use gestures, body language, and touch to establish kinship. In the movie, the tulkun is a contextual symbol, as it acquires meaning from its cultural and narrative environment. Though the creature evokes Melville's whale, it revises its essence. The tulkun functions literally as a cetacean creature, but figuratively as a beacon of ecological crisis and the possibility of interspecies kinship. Unlike Melville's whale, the tulkun's meaning emerges through its social ties with Lo'ak, with the Na'vi, and with the planetary network of Eywa. This process shows fiction working as a cultural translation, carrying the memory of one symbol into another time and ecology.

Environmental data describe facts but rarely alter imaginaries. When the film shows the brutal harpooning of a tulkun and the extraction of its amrita, the viewer is confronted with grief and outrage, two feelings much more effective than statistics on extinction. Scenes like these turn violence into felt knowledge and demonstrate that, when well implemented, emotion is not necessarily sentimental excess but can function as ethical pedagogy, often triggering moral understanding more effectively than abstract reasoning. Later, the collective mourning ritual for the fallen tulkun offers an audiovisual spectacle of singing, touching, and bioluminescent communion, a vision of repair that no law could legislate. When the film shows Payakan's scars, or Kiri touching water plants, or Lo'ak submerged with the tulkun pod, it does more than illustrate harm; it invites viewers to feel their own vulnerability and complicity. Those moments open moral spaces that laws seldom do, governed by empathy, shared loss, and aesthetic astonishment.

In comparison, Ishmael in *Moby-Dick* struggles with the spectacle of nature, while Lo'ak achieves understanding through embodied relation. This shift is important because our environmental crises are not simply policy failures; they are also crises of imagination, that is, a failure to see the planet as a network of mutually reinforcing life rather than a background for human action. Fiction reestablishes that creative potential by narrating coexistence as a lived possibility.

Kiri's sensory communion with Pandora (her ability to hear Eywa through water and coral) embodies a posthuman ethics in which perception is shared with other creatures, not centered on the human. When she connects to the undersea tendrils, her heartbeat synchronizes with the living reef. This imagery visualizes the kind of trans-corporeality that Alaimo (2010) describes: the recognition that bodies, waters, and worlds interpenetrate. Payakan, marked by exile and suffering, transforms the legacy of the white whale from fatal encounter to mutual survival. Lo'ak, for his part, discovers that pain can become alliance. When he releases the tulkun from the harpoon line, their bond reveals that reconciliation can start with their common vulnerability and mutual care. The biological and narrative oceanic web serves as a model for planetary coexistence in which ethics are grounded in relation instead of hierarchy.

Fiction adds texture and emotional appeal to science and policy, but it does not replace them. Stories like *Avatar: The Way of Water* assist in converting abstract awareness into lived imagination in a time when humans are changing entire ecosystems. They reveal that climate change is as much about culture, memory, and feeling as it is about chemistry and figures.

The final scenes revert to the image of submersion as conflict gives way to grief and rebirth. Jake and Neytiri hold their children as light filters through water, framed by Eywa's pulse, as though the planet's and the family's heartbeats were one. Kiri, Payakan, and the coral network symbolize and enact connection, and, through them, *Avatar* proposes that humanity must unlearn conquest and learn cooperation. To achieve this objective, fiction can be a rehearsal space for ethical coexistence.

6. CONCLUSION

More than one hundred and seventy years after the publication of *Moby-Dick*, Melville's whale has not vanished from cultural memory. In new forms, the whale continues to circulate across media, transformed by changing environmental imaginaries. The tulkun brings the legacy of *Moby-Dick* back to life in the alternative world of *Avatar: The Way of Water*, where extraction, resistance, and kinship define the moral

terrain. The film rewrites the symbolic coordinates of Melville's masterpiece, transforming Ahab's oceanic obsession into a reflection on care and reciprocity at a planetary level. Through this transformation, the cultural archive of *Moby-Dick* remains open to revision and responsive to ecological urgency. It originated in ancient tales of the whale, was rearticulated through Melville's novel, and now, in the twenty-first century, this evolving archive extends into new planetary narratives that imagine kinship and care across species.

As Bryant (2002) suggests, literary works persist as evolving networks of versions and interpretations. Cameron's film participates in this ongoing movement by translating Melville's imagery and moral inquiry into a new medium of environmental storytelling. The whale's moral power endures even after it has turned digital. It continues to ask how humans (or, more generally, sentient beings) define themselves in relation to the living world, and the tulkun carry forward the whale's capacity to be both prey and prophetic mirror.

The Way of Water does not imitate the novel but, as Hutcheon (2006) argues happens in adaptations, reactivates the literary work as a resource for imagining planetary ethics. The film condenses centuries of extractive history into a single narrative of amrita hunting, turning the pursuit of profit into a critique of human exceptionalism. This task entails not just literary homage but also the performance of cultural memory. It asks how empathy and responsibility might take the place of conquest and possession, relocating the whaling myth within a global ecology of feeling.

The tulkuns symbolize the possibility of shared consciousness across species. They are not metaphors for nature as passive abundance. Their communication through song and memory transforms the ocean into a network of relations that sharply contrasts with the frontier of domination of works that feature the "man versus the beast" motif. In order to foster an imagination in which planetary life is conceivable as a form of kinship, the movie invites viewers to inhabit that network.

In conclusion, the symbolic migration from whale to tulkun is an example of how fiction participates in environmental thought. This

cultural legacy remains fluid, as literature and film continually reshape the ethical imagination of the planet. Many of the elements of *Moby-Dick* survive, but *Avatar* incorporates the call to reconsider what it means to live with others in a world of interdependence. In *Avatar: The Way of Water*, that call now echoes through the oceans of planet Pandora and shows that the symbolic afterlife of the whale continues to provoke reflection.

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THE FIGHT FOR THE CIVIL RIGHTS THROUGH AFRICAN AMERICAN ART CONNECTED TO LITERATURE: ART AS MIRROR OF RACIAL CONFLICT AND WEAPON FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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1. INTRODUCTION

The starting point which has marked American history is the Diaspora caused by the development of the slavery system as the main basis of its economy. Black African American slaves, reduced to the category of animals, were caught, sold, bought, possessed, abused, killed. Toni Morrison's dedication page in *Beloved* (1987) to the memory of the sixty million and more who died under the institution of slavery is a reflection upon a dark period of history in the United States, and the implications it really has had until nowadays. This is a reflection that many African American artists have also undertaken by showing through their art the poisonous legacy of the slavery in the shape of segregation and violence.

After Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 abolishing slavery during Civil War, the pervading ideas and stereotypes affecting racial differences in American society have been in force for many decades. Thus, the stereotyped image and the discriminatory perception of white society toward black people have had an enduring prevalence along time, so perpetuating racist language and attitudes. From a common past of slavery and all types of abuses, for African American people there was a long way to walk to become not only free but equal in rights and opportunities in the U.S.A. society. After the Emancipation Act, the truth was that in everyday life almost nothing

had changed, as whites continued to exert direct discrimination, more than often resorting to brutal violence. This commonplace reality was especially evident in the southern states, but also in a comparatively milder way it was a fact in the North too.

From the late 19th century, state and local governments passed segregation laws, known as Jim Crow. The name was commonly used as a pejorative expression to call African Americans, so the racial discriminatory rules were also known as Jim Crow laws. This meant that the abolition of slavery did not bring instant equality between white and black American citizens. In fact, African Americans were usually considered second-class people, forced to use different sections in transport and public places, and suffering all kind of discriminations and abuses.

After the World War II, there was a black middle class who wanted to access to the American Dream, but it was banned for them to fully participate in American society because of their skin colour. Even black soldiers, who had fought for freedom in Europe, were once again treated as second-class citizens once back in the States. In 1955, the brutal murder of Emmett Till, a young Chicago boy lynched while spending holidays in Mississippi, turned the public attention on racial violence in the South and helped to launch the modern civil rights movement. African Americans had to find new ways to struggle against segregation and discrimination.

In the long run for freedom and equality, the black community lacked even the right to express themselves, at the cost of their lives. So in their process of liberation, all forms of creativity and expression should be considered both as a way of searching for their own identity, different from that imposed by segregationist society, and as a means of empowering themselves in front of white oppression.

Art can be considered as a political weapon for social change, and also as a mirror of racial conflict in the U.S.A. society. Thus, art is a key medium for showing racial conflicts, rising consciousness among American society, and empowering the African American movement for equality.

In the representation of historical facts and figures related to the recent U.S.A. history and culture, African American artists are often the first to begin reflecting the reality as it was, including images which were not conventional, and showing scenes in the margins of the official history. Thus, these unconventional visions helped to change the focus of studies, and finally the opinion of society.

2. OBJECTIVES

The present work objectives are:

- To study some relevant artworks from black artists and their connection with important books written by black writers.
- To analyze the mutual relationship of these artworks and books in the creation of an original means of expression for Black Americans.
- To study the socio-political impact of these artists' works in the context of the fight for the Civil Right in the U.S.A.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present work will study some representative African American artworks related to the fight for the Civil Rights, connecting them to iconic pieces of literature to analyze how they mutually reinforce each other in their claim for freedom and equality. This paper focuses on the deep connections between art and the black liberation movement, to better understand its role as a means of expression to denounce the discriminatory situation of the black community, and also widespread the new ideals among American society in order to contribute to change it. This work's methodological approach will combine the study of both black art and black literature to prove their commitment as mirror of racial conflict in the U.S.A. and as intellectual weapon for social change.

4. DISCUSSING ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICAN ART AS A NEW WAY OF EXPRESSION

It is especially relevant the connection between art and the civil rights fight, both as a reflection of the historical reality of African Americans, and as a true effort for creating a new way of art proper to express the ideals of the struggle for equality, and to address the African American community.

Racism and violence were present in everyday life for African Americans, especially in segregated public transport such as city buses, where black people suffered not only the humiliation of losing their seats in favour of whites, but also the constant harassment and assaults by drivers and customers. This situation burst when black activist Rosa Parks refused giving her seat to a white man on a bus of Montgomery, Alabama. Activist fellow women organized a mass meeting to protest, and this time was the first massive speech by Reverend Martin Luther King, who encouraged people to extend their action beyond that day.

Thus, the bus boycott began the next day and lasted more than a year, until finally the long and sustained protest forced authorities to desegregate buses in all the states of the South (Painter, 2007, pp. 271-272). Reverend King was inspired by Gandhi and the nonviolent movement for independence in India, as he and many other black activists understood their cause was part of a worldwide movement of colonized people toward independence, so starting a new massive political action to change the status quo.

Walking by Charles Alston (1958) was inspired by the early civil rights marches, paying homage to the unknown women who mobilized and took part on them, as a precursor to the 1960s civil rights movement. The painting was inspired by the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which represented the beginning of the modern civil rights movement with the insurgence of the unstoppable strength of African Americans in their struggle for full equality. The boycott started at the grassroots level and was organized through black churches, with the important participation of women who daily avoided taking buses and walked to work (Johnson, 2014, p. 100). As black women workers were the main users of

public transport, their political activism to refuse to use it as a means of protest for their systemic discrimination, almost caused the bankrupt of the company.

In Walking Alston depicts a long row of women in bright colours to give volume to the bodies, while he uses geometric forms of cubist style and African inspiration. The elongated necks and the faces like masks reflect the African art influence on Alston's style. In his own style, as representative of African American avant-garde, Alston takes a positive perspective within his artwork, so capturing the hope and the determination of women walking as the essence of struggle within the daily lives of African Americans.

As Pearlie M. Johnson explains, "Art is concrete; it is a tangible record of time. Art provides us with interpretations of historical periods where people expressed profound messages about the human condition. Art is also narrative of the contemporary society in which we live" (2014, p. 116), therefore, art gives us a chronicle of past and present times to take into account seriously. Furthermore, for Johnson, "Works of art that address problems related to segregation and inequalities provide a visual of this history" (2014, p. 116). Thus, African American art provides a narration of black history in the U.S.A. through powerful and poignant images.

5. DISCUSSING ABOUT THE RECOVERY OF THE SILENCED PAST

While the Great Migration of around six million black Americans was taking place from the rural South to the northern big cities in search of a better standard of living, the differences between the socio-economic and political status of whites and blacks were reinforced across the nation by the segregation rules of Jim Crow passed by state and local authorities from the late 19th century until the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Jacob Lawrence was born in the North and raised in the Harlem of the Renaissance time, but he came from one of those black families of southern immigrants during the First World War. So he learnt from the oral narrations the horrors suffered by his own parents, and the memories of their journey looking for a promised land while escaping from

Ku Klux Klan violence, though they had to face discrimination in the North which usually resulted in race riots.

Lawrence chronicled the exodus of African Americans with a really narrative art which was used to give voice to his people, in a similar way to Toni Morrison's narrative. As in Morrison's books, Lawrence's paintings show the untold collective events and forgotten shared experiences which form part of African American history, and which have also contributed to shape the whole American culture.

All Lawrence's research about the past is especially present in the sixty paintings included in his *Migration Series* (1940-41), created as a whole as he searched for a quick and cheap technique to work on them as a continuum. So he sketched figures and scenes over these panels and painted them using basic colours to depict simple but highly symbolical scenes, as *Panel 1* which opens the series with a crowd rushing towards the rail station gates to Chicago, New York, and Saint Louis. These places massively attracted southern immigrants, who were forced to settle in only black districts, as it was the case of Lawrence's family. As Lawrence recalls in another of his panels, with caption 58: "*In the North the Negro had better educational facilities*"; but this did not mean the same opportunities as white people, as segregation in education sent black children to crowded schools with less facilities and worse conditions.

The presence of violence was a constant threat which formed part of daily life for African American people, so Lawrence used his own simple and symbolical way of depicting the suffering and discrimination of the black community, as in his scenes from segregated restaurants, and especially in the devastating landscape shown in *Panel 15* which refers to a lynching. The impact of this panel is conveyed through what is absent, the lynching itself; showing just the result of it, the desolation of the remaining figure in the background. Thus, instead of showing the hanging corpse at the centre of the painting, there is only a branch with a rope in its ending, so Lawrence focuses on the figure who mourns in the background, drawing attention to the aftermath of the lynching. This anonymous figure shows only his or her back, head bowed, and crouched pose. The mournful figure is a symbol of the anguish

produced by the murder of thousands of black citizens, being one of the main causes for the migration to the North.

Artists and writers such as Lawrence and Morrison had to create a new way of telling, a language rooted in the oral tradition of black people, but also based on the African American testimonies in the margins of the official American history. This way, Lawrence created his own pictorial language, taking the essence from his African American roots but also mixing new avant-garde trends which in different aspects could remind Klee or Chagall, so developing a simple and effective narrative style.

Lawrence and Morrison give voice to the oppressed, so recovering the silenced past, alluding directly to the American national identity, with the U.S.A. contradictory history as representative of democratic values but also as colonizing and slavery supporter in the 19th century. In this sense, they seem to point that the ghost of slavery is still haunting American consciousness, and it only will be exorcized when true recognition and acceptance of past facts serve to change today´s attitudes towards racial discrimination.

Thus, Lawrence is not only important because of his artistic value, but also as a collector of lost memories and a fighter for equality. In 1941, when segregation rules were still in force, Lawrence became the first African American artist whose work was acquired by MOMA, so breaking a racial barrier and helping visualize black art as equally relevant as that created by white artists. He managed to transcend with his art and his attitude the social borders, so helping others also to transcend the inner limits which were applied to African American people.

6. DISCUSSING ABOUT DIFFERENT VISIONS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Despite some significant victories such as declaring segregation unconstitutional in transportation and education, the racism and violence did not end. High schools became battle fields where supremacists brutally attacked black students, so finally the federal troops were sent to protect them in the process of desegregation.

In the South, Ku Klux Klan and white supremacists continued bombing and assaulting, killing black people with total impunity. But this unbearable situation caused much anger and the growing of more radical attitudes such as the black nationalist Nation of Islam, whose members were Muslims for opposition to white Christianity.

While Reverend King believed in nonviolence as the means for black liberation, Malcolm X questioned his methods opting for a more combative strategy. Malcolm converted in prison to the Nation of Islam, changing his surname to X, as symbol of his unknown real African name. In the 1950s Malcolm X became the most eloquent and charismatic of all Black Muslims, advocating for black power, black pride, self-education, and self-defense against attacks from white racists.

Along the 1960s, African Americans and their white allies organized marches, demonstrations, sit-ins, boycotts, and all kind of massive protests, while white supremacists and police brutality exerted violence on peaceful protesters, so replying nonviolence with blood and arrests. In 1963, on the one hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, anti-segregation campaign intensified and a great March on Washington was organized. Martin Luther King's speech "*I Have a Dream*" in front of Lincoln Monument made the Reverend the most prominent figure of the Civil Rights movement. But violence continued with the assassination of President Kennedy, in 1963, in Dallas; and the murder of three volunteers registering black voters in Mississippi, in 1964.

Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam while assuming Pan-Africanism, as he understood African American liberation was part of the international struggle of colonized people against imperialism. Consequently, he opposed publically the Vietnam War, as Reverend King, iconic boxer Muhammad Ali, and the Nation of Islam also did.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 dismantled the legal basis of segregation, but white backlash and the war in Vietnam limited the implementation of civil rights laws (Painter, 2007, pp. 303-304). High black soldiers death rate in Vietnam, unemployment, withdrawal of city services, pervading segregation, and police brutality, caused urban riots especially from 1964 to 1968, also

coinciding with the assassination, first of Malcolm X, and later of Reverend King. Only after these riots broke down the status quo African Americans could access political power significantly.

In The First One Hundred Years: He Amongst You Who is Without Sin Shall Cast the First Stone: Forgive Them Father For They Know Not What They Do, Archibald J. Motley Jr. uses two quotations from the Bible to title his painting, so charging it with a tremendous allegorical power. Motley painted it from 1963 to 1972, as a symbolical representation of the first 100 years of American history after the Emancipation Proclamation abolishing slavery during the Civil War, seen from the point of view of African Americans. Motley himself lived through the development of rapid industrialization and the migration to the North, the Great Depression, World War II, the Jazz Age and Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, and the struggle for the civil rights.

This painting reminds Steven Hahn's book, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (2003), winner of the Pulitzer Prize in History in 2004, which deals with the history of African- American power in the United States from the end of the Civil War to the Great Migration from the Southern States to the North, thus giving a black perspective from slavery to political awareness and the fight for the civil rights.

This is Motley's most openly political painting on the history of race relations in America, and marks a radical artistic break from his previous works. In fact, he is best known by his portraits and paintings of Chicago urban street scenes and jazz cabarets, depicting black people in a new and dignified way, as full modern American citizens, rather than in the often stereotypical or caricatured ways of white artists. Motley's *The First One Hundred Years* is maybe the best summary of African American history any artist has ever painted, so showing the most relevant and tragic moments of the first century of the U.S.A. history after the Civil War. He worked on this painting for almost a decade, chronicling historical and political events as well as his own personal experiences during the time of the civil rights movement.

The First One Hundred Years not only summarizes both Motley's personal experience and national history, but he also pays homage to the fallen fighters for freedom, with the heads of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. hanging allegorically from a tree, and Abraham Lincoln's head on the roof of a Southern house. He depicts a ghostly nocturnal landscape crowded with symbolical scenes and figures that emerge from the nightmarish gloomy blue atmosphere. The painting is dominated in the foreground by a big tree with the hanging body of a lynched black man in front of the Statue of Liberty. In the background the painting is presided by a haunted house which seems an old antebellum plantation mansion dripping blood, with a broken stained glass window representing attacks to black churches, with the devil in the front door and a Confederate flag hanging on the porch. Between both scenes the Ku Klux Klan followers are bringing the rope for the lynching and a burning cross, police is assaulting demonstrators and there is a field planted with banners with segregationist messages and slogans from the civil rights fight. The whole American history is condensed into a painting which summarizes it from the eyes of an old African American survivor.

7. RESULTS: BLACK POWER AND BLACK PRIDE

According to Painter, Black Power ideals became more widely known with the assassination of Malcolm X in 1965, but the ultimate assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King, the apostle of nonviolence, in 1968 gave these ideas a tremendous boost (2007, pp. 325-328). Disillusionment with non-violent tactics changed the direction of the movement when, in 1966, activist student Stokely Carmichael used the words "Black Power" at a rally in Mississippi, claiming for self-definition and self-defense. This term quickly became popular as a catalyst of Malcolm X's rhetoric and the ideals of other black nation's supporters.

Developing Malcolm X's Pan-Africanism, Black Power activists called themselves "black", "African American", or "Afro-American", so rejecting the word "Negro" to define them, as part of the colonialist language applied by the white American "cultural terrorism" (Painter, 2007, p.

320). Thus, for the first time black Americans created a proper expression to call themselves which could identify them in a positive way.

In 1966, two other African American college students formed the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California, spreading the black liberation movement across the country, opposing the Vietnam War as a colonial conflict, carrying weapons for self-defense, and implementing a whole social programme to improve life in black communities.

Although highly controversial since the beginning until its end in the late 1970s, the Black Power era changed the situation of black people, being greatly influential in the intellectual and cultural aspects, so helping to establish black studies at universities, and also giving rise to the appearance of the Black Arts movement. Thus, the foundation of the Organization of Black American Culture (OBAC), with Jeff Donaldson as the leading figure, was crucial to the development of a true black art to empower African American people. Donaldson contributed to define a black aesthetic, different from the white standards of the middle-class mainstream, to share the truth and beauty of black self-identity, so challenging racism and accentuating the positive aspects.

When disagreement developed between OBAC members, Donaldson formed COBRA (Coalition of Black Revolutionary Artists) in 1968; and by 1970, the organization changed its name adopting Afri as a reference to the African Diaspora, becoming AfriCOBRA (the African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists) a collective of African American visual artists founded in Chicago to explore and define the black aesthetic that must also educate and instruct.

7.1. ART AS FIGHT

The Black Arts movement included a wide array of artist working in words, images, and sound, to create art to further the black liberation struggle. From the mid-1960s the number of black artists increased dramatically, and according to Painter, themes related to African American history became attractive to artists who saw themselves as part of the Black Arts movement (2007, p. 338). The Black Power movement included art as its visual branch, with the aim to create an aesthetic that

would empower black people. So, Black art developed a black aesthetic according to the principles of the movement, which exposed the white establishment and the capitalist society as the enemy (Johnson, 2014, p. 108). Therefore, black culture and African roots equated artistic truth against white capitalism.

Thus, the *Wives of Shango* are the means to express the new black aesthetic which Jeff Donaldson greatly contributed to create. Donaldson depicts a new kind of sacred trinity, with three black women in an urban guerrilla style, close to the aesthetic of the Black Panther Party. They are wearing African influenced colourful mini-skirts and great Afro hairdos, while holding shotguns on their shoulders, with ammunition belts around their bodies. They are the image of the new empowered black women, as representative of the black liberation movement.

This African aesthetic related to the empowerment of women in the Black Power movement engages with Angela Davis black feminism in works such as *Women, Race and Class* (1981) and his political activism, including her sympathy for the Black Panther Party in the 1970's. Furthermore, the painting *Wives of Shango* also connects with the work of Audre Lorde, especially with her famous speech from 1984, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House", collected in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (2007, pp. 110-114), where she deals with race and gender issues explaining the impossibility to dismantle white patriarchy structures inside the feminist movement without asking for real equality for black women.

The *Wives of Shango* is a powerful image which seems to apply Malcolm X's words, "by any means necessary" to reach freedom and equality. Donaldson emphasized the African tradition not only with the aesthetic but also with the symbolical meaning conveyed, as Shango is the God of Thunder and Lightning, original from the Yoruba people in Nigeria, which was carried from Africa together with the trade of slaves. Shango was once the fourth king of Yoruba people from Nigeria, who was immortalized after death and had three wives: Oya, Oschun, and Oba. As Johnson reminds us, the matrilineal tradition of women organizing families and communities comes from Africa, and women continued with this type of "Africana womanism", as Hudson-Weems coined

it, during life on the plantation (Johnson, 2014, p. 108). Thus, in the *Wives of Shango* Donaldson focuses on women as cultural warriors and protectors of their families and their community, so recognizing their importance in African American history.

7.2. Creating a black mythology

The creation of a kind of mythological pantheon of heroes and martyrs was crucial to have historical references to respect and role models to imitate, in the process of building a strong differentiated African American identity, which helped black people feel free and proud of their race and their own culture. Connected to this need, murals depicting black heroes appeared all around American cities, but one of the first and most lasting influential was the *Wall of Respect*, painted in Chicago in 1967.

The *Wall of Respect* was a collaboration of various artists whose theme was to celebrate Black heroes. The workshop was led by Jeff Donaldson, Bill Walker, and Sylvia Abernathy, with the direct collaboration of the neighbourhood. It was a 20 x 60 foot mural (6.10 x 18.29 metres) executed on the exterior wall of an inner-city liquor store located at 43rd and Langley Streets on the South Side of Chicago. According to Johnson, it was one of the first outdoor murals created especially for the masses, who did not visit galleries or museums (2014, p. 105). The *Wall of Respect* was also viewed as a facilitator of the Black Arts movement, inspiring African American artists and other racial and social minorities from around the country to create murals for their own communities.

The Wall was a powerful statement of racial pride and progress, as it portrayed highly relevant figures honoring African American heroes and martyrs in different areas of black culture, such as Malcolm X, Nina Simone, or James Brown, among many others, all distributed around the triumphant popular figure of boxing world champion Muhammad Ali in the centre of the mural. The fact of painting big public portraits of black people was a radical act in itself, when African American figures rarely appeared in mass media, or just did it but charged with a negative image. Thus, the *Wall of Respect* was a self-affirmation of the rich African American cultural, intellectual, and political heritage.

This idea of building a proper African American mythology to give proud references to black people connects with Ta-Nehisi Coates in his work *Between the World and Me* (2015), where he underlines the fact that it seems there are no black equivalents of white artists and authors in black culture. Although this is due to historical discrimination to access to education and culture, he concludes that there are artists and authors that deserve to be known and enjoyed.

The *Wall of Respect* lived short and suffered several changes, it was damaged by a fire and later demolished; but through online and photo archives it continues to represent a powerful act of community art and history writing, which redefined the notion of public protest. The *Wall of Respect*'s 50th anniversary was in 2017, and many events in the Chicago area commemorated it. Although, it only could survive a few years, it has inspired a community movement painting black pride murals around the country, and also Latino and Asian American artists in their neighbourhoods.

8. CONCLUSION

In the history of the African American community and their fight for racial equality, art can be considered as a political weapon for social change, and also as a mirror of racial conflicts in American society. Thus, art has greatly contributed to show those conflicts, rising consciousness among American citizenship, while empowering the Afro-American movement for racial equality.

Obama's speech, "*A more perfect union*", expressing the common aspiration of equal citizenship and freedom, contrasted in a positive way the slavery past of American history and the ideals reflected in its Constitution, as an example of progress and evolution in the U.S.A. society and politics. But as Obama himself recognized in his speech, racial inequality is far from ending, remembering that the history of the United States is a long way of difficulties and sufferings among African American people, especially in previous generations under slavery and the segregation rules of Jim Crow.

Nowadays, when political changes pose a fierce menace for supposedly granted rights, it seems especially necessary to remember the long march of those who came before us and fought for a more equal world. A long and unfinished march that should be continued, and now, as then, culture should be a tool for liberation, as Malcolm X believed. Thus, in the words of black poet Amir Baraka, Art "must force change, it must be change" (1965, p. 4).

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"I'LL TRY NOT TO BE WORLDLY-MINDED AND MARRY WITHOUT LOVE":[22] YOUNG WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S GOTHIC THRILLER "A NURSE'S STORY" AND IN *WORK*: *A STORY OF EXPERIENCE*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Because of the immense popularity of *Little Women* (1868), her most famous work by far, Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) has been frequently hailed as a champion of domesticity. Her reputation as the "Children's Friend" cemented her literary persona as an advocate for traditional families and conservative moral and social values. Yet, her larger body of work, going beyond *Little Women* and her subsequent children's books, reveals deep ambivalence regarding women's experiences. Particularly interesting is her treatment of marriage and its relation to issues such as trauma, female autonomy, and labor. Especially significant when it comes to a better and more profound understanding of Alcott and her authorial intentions is the examination of her Gothic thrillers, whose existence was unknown until well into the twentieth century (Alcott published them either anonymously or using a variety of pseudonyms), alongside her more "canonical" works. In order to show how Louisa May Alcott uses both Gothic and realist modes to question traditional expectations of women's roles in 19th-century American society, the following chapter analyzes the theme of the professional and peer-to-peer options available to female characters in the Gothic short story "A Nurse's Story" (1865; published in 1991) and the

[22] Alcott, 2003, n.p.

semi-autobiographical, sentimental novel *Work: A Story of Experience* (1873; edition used in this chapter – 2003 Gutenberg Project edition).[23]

2. OBJECTIVES

Through a close textual analysis and contextual grounding in Alcott's life and times, this chapter critically examines how the author, in "A Nurse's Story" and *Work*, explored the limited professional and personal options available to middle-class, white, single women in 19th-century America. Other than the possibility of marriage, which was the usual outcome in most 19th-century novels, both texts acknowledge the alternative paths in women's lives in connection with work, self-sufficiency, female friendship, and moral fortitude, rather than presenting marriage as the logical (or even inevitable) goal for female characters. By dramatizing the respective protagonists' single status in a way that conveys that it is not an unacceptable condition, Alcott allows her women characters to expand their roles and experience lives that do not conform to the ideal of the home. When viewed in this light, these literary works challenge the dominant gender norms and, instead, present female characters who are looking for identity, autonomy, and purpose outside of marriage.

3. METHODOLOGY

In the 19th and 20th centuries, Alcott's credit to literary fame was based almost exclusively on *Little Women* and its three other sequels. However, this uniformity in recognizing this novel as her most famous work by far obscures the fact that she went from public and critical acclaim to scholarly neglect (despite consistently enjoying readers' favor) by the end of her lifetime, a situation that continued well into the 20th century. A reevaluation of Alcott as a writer followed when in the 1940s it was revealed that she had previously authored a number of "sensation stories" (or "blood-and-thunder" tales, in her own words) in several popular periodicals. These stories were regarded as extremely

[23] To further illustrate the general public's ignorance of Alcott's Gothic thrillers, "A Nurse's Story" was not published in Spain until 2014, translated as *Un cuento de enfermera.*

scandalous in the light of "the association of the author of *Little Women* with tales of feminist passion and sexual power struggles, narcotics addiction, revenge and murder" (Stern, 1991, p. 1) but they would remain virtually unknown to the public in general until the publication of *Behind a Mask* in 1975.

In subsequent years, more of these stories, which are more fittingly defined as Gothic thrillers, have been located and published. Alcott's exhaustive records of her income, listing each of the stories she sold, were an invaluable tool for scholars to know of the existence of many of them (Stern, 1991, p. 5). Nevertheless, the ephemeral character of the newspapers where these stories were printed makes scholars worry that, although many more probably existed, the chances of ever finding them are rather slim (Stern, 1991, p. 21).

Alcott did not acquire fame until she began writing sentimental novels which she published under her own name. However, these previous stories revealed that she had previously cultivated the Gothic genre, or more specifically, the subgenre of the female Gothic, which employs "specific themes, tropes and conventions of the Gothic, to reflect and address female concerns such as marriage, inheritance, and patriarchal empowerment" (Hoeveler quoted in Festa, 2024, p. 223). Alcott's Gothic stories "are tales of passion and madness, of dark terror and drug addiction – and of strong-minded women who seize life with both hands" (Blackburn, 1980 101). With their doses of violence, insanity, and unleashed emotions (Festa, 2024, p. 223; Stern, 1991, p. 1), they show Alcott at her most defiant and reveal a complexity that is missing from her later, post-*Little Women* literary production of moralistic tales for young audiences (Blackburn, 1980, p. 101).

Before financial stability came to Alcott with the publication of the blockbuster *Little Women* in 1868, Alcott had been writing Gothic thrillers for years to support her family, but also because the genre appealed to her. Alcott admitted as much: "I think my natural ambition is for the lurid style. I indulge in gorgeous fancies and wish that I dared inscribe them upon my pages and set them before the public" (quoted in Dowson, 2012, p. 1). Yet, she kept her authorship a secret because she knew that these works would meet the censure from her father

particularly and, more extensively, from other illustrious Concord residents and friends whom she greatly admired, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson. In her journal, in an entry written in the summer of the year 1862, Alcott recorded her writing pursuits: "wrote two tales... I enjoy romancing to suit myself, and though my tales are silly, they are not bad, and my sinners always have a good spot somewhere. I hope it is good drill for fancy and language, for I can do it fast; and Mr. L. says my tales are so 'dramatic, vivid, and full of plot,' they are just what he wants" (quoted in Stern, 1991, p. 16).[24]

Other than for their important contribution to the Alcott family's financial well-being or their pandering to Alcott's personal tastes, these Gothic stories play a most important function – "by crossing the limits of what is socially or morally acceptable, Gothic works are able to imagine a world without social and moral rules, reject that world, and reinforce the mores they seemingly questioned" (Dowson, 2012, p. 12). More importantly, Alcott re-used many of her Gothic plotlines in later works (Stern, 1991, p. 1). In this chapter, we will see the connections between the Gothic thriller "A Nurse's Story" and the sentimental novel *Work*.

The Gothic tropes of confinement, madness, and secrets are used in "A Nurse's Story" to highlight the perils of patriarchal control and the suppression of women's desires. The narrative emphasizes the psychological and physical costs of women's subjugation while cautioning against romantic idealization. Marriage does appear, but for a secondary female character, not for the two female protagonists. *Work*, on the other hand, follows Christie Devon, the main character, on her lengthy path to independence and fulfilling work. Although there is a happy conclusion in the book, it comes only after Christie has suffered from illness, loss, and almost gone bankrupt. Her marriage is a hard-won union founded on respect for one another and common values rather than a reward for female submission.

"A Nurse's Story" was written in 1865 and originally titled "The Carruths." When it was published in the periodical *Frank Leslie's Chimney*

[24] Mr. L. was Alcott's editor, Frank Leslie.

Corner in six installments in late 1865, it was given the title of "A Nurse's Story," though. It was largely based on Alcott's experience as a companion in Europe to Anna Welde (Stern, 1991, pp. 5-6) and her time as caretaker of an invalid girl, Alice Lovering, as "Alcott's method … was the interweaving of imaginary incidents and characters around the nucleus of an actual experience or observation" (Stern, 1991, p. 19).[25]

In this story, Miss Kate Snow secures a post as a nurse to the Carruths' invalid daughter, Elinor "Nell." Kate, the protagonist-narrator, is an Englishwoman, an orphan who is brokenhearted because of a failed engagement. At first, she is impressed by the family's wealth, misinterpreting wealth and happiness: "'the Carruths must be a happy family," I thought, sighing over the loneliness and poverty of my own lot" (Alcott, 1991, p. 30). Their well-off position contrasts with Kate's modest goals for herself: "I only want a home, and a little sum to make me independent of charity" (Alcott, 1991, p. 32).

Kate's charge suffers a mental malady and is prone to violent attacks. Moreover, she won't allow her mother to get close to her. Nell grows upset whenever her mother is mentioned – "I cannot hear the sound of her name, for she is the cause of all I suffer" (Alcott, 1991, p. 38). She hates her mother for marrying her father out of ambition and greed in spite of having known in advance that insanity runs in his family. Nell's condition is intermittent, but she cannot enjoy her rare periods of serenity, as she knows her illness is looming. As she tells Kate, "how can I [be happy], when I know that this horror will come again and again, and haunt me till I die?" (Alcott, 1991, p. 35). Nell, who broke off her engagement when she was told that insanity ran in her family, cannot understand how her younger sister, Amy, is about to get married. Amy's fiancé, Carrol, does not seem to mind much either for the threat of insanity, though, for he is marrying Amy for her money – "having squandered his own fortune, was ready to sell himself for another. Amy had secured the prize, and seemed quite satisfied with her purchase" (Alcott,

[25] It would be too simplistic to claim that Alcott drew solely from her autobiographical experiences to write her fiction. She found inspiration in her real life but also in other books, since "her reading was an integral part of her life" (Stern, 1991, p. 22).

1991, p. 64). Thus, Alcott is ready to criticize that while women (such as Mrs. Carruth) enter mercenary marriages for money, so do men.

Kate is puzzled about the constant presence of a mysterious man, Mr. Steele, who seems to control the family and whom she sees arguing with the two Carruth sons. Mrs. Carruth endorses Kate's help to try to get rid of Mr. Steele, who is Mr. Carruth's firstborn son by his marriage to a Frenchwoman whom he abandoned. Back in America, Mr. Carruth married his current wife, conveniently forgetting that he was already married and thus committing bigamy, which makes his four younger children illegitimate. Now Mr. Steele threatens to expose the secret of Mr. Carruth's bigamy in collaboration with his mother, known as *madam*. However, Kate finds out that his mother died (*madam* is actually his aunt), which absolves Mr. Carruth from bigamy. Before Kate can expose their lies, Mr. Steele, who has had a change of heart after falling in love with Kate, reveals *madam*'s identity and confesses their ploy to swindle Mr. Carruth. When he learns that his plot had already been discovered by Kate, who only pretended to like him for the sake of her investigation, he leaves, outraged at her betrayal and broken-hearted himself. Amy marries and Nell, who was unable to prevent the wedding, commits suicide. A few years later, Amy and Mr. and Mrs. Carruth have all died and Kate lives with the two remaining sons as a sort of surrogate sister. In a visit to an asylum, Kate finds out that Mr. Steele is a patient there. She takes him home and he dies surrounded by the love and care of his half-brothers and Kate.

Keeping secrets, concealing their real personalities, inherited insanity, or adopting a new identity are recurrent topics in Alcott's Gothic thrillers. They certainly appear in "A Nurse's Story," where Mr. Steele and *madam* conceal their true identities to adopt new ones. The big secret in the novel is that Mr. Carruth became a bigamist when he married his American wife, but this is a secret within a secret, for Mr. Steele and *madam* pretend that she is the first Mrs. Carruth. Madness (and sending sufferers to the asylum) were recurrent topics in Gothic fiction in order "to illustrate the immorality of women in patriarchal society, as well as female resistance to oppression" (Festa, 2024, p. 227). Yet, Alcott is different from other writers in that she presents a humane, sympathetic

vision of insane people. Nell is not sent away to an asylum, as her mother prefers to keep her at home – even though her very presence is a constant reminder of Mrs. Carruth's sin in marrying Mr. Carruth for ambition and material gain, disregarding the very real possibility of their children being insane. Kate treats Nell compassionately, speaking to her normally and insisting on higher standards of cleanliness and respect being held.

In *Work*, Christie decides to leave her aunt and uncle's farm, rejecting the possibility of marrying a local man, Joe, to pursue a professional career. Her first position as a maid in a middle-class residence ends disastrously after causing an accidental fire. Christie next tries her luck at being an actress. This is a most successful experience, but she leaves when she starts fearing her moral integrity is becoming imperiled. Her next job takes her to work for a society lady, Mrs. Saltonstalls, and her two children, but she leaves after turning down a marriage proposal from Mrs. Saltonstalls' brother. She works next as a companion to Helen Carroll, a young woman who suffers from mental problems and ends up taking her own life.

Following Helen's death, Christie begins working at a sweat shop. When her coworker Rachel is fired after it is discovered that she used to be a prostitute, Christie ardently defends her:

I don't reproach you, dear: I don't despise or desert you, and though I'm grieved and disappointed, I'll stand by you still, because you need me more than ever now, and I want to prove that I am a true friend. Mrs. King, please forgive and let poor Rachel stay here, safe among us. (Alcott, 2003, n.p.).

Unluckily, the only thing that she achieves is getting fired herself too.

With no job and little money, Christie slowly loses hope and thinks about ending her life, but Rachel providentially saves her. Christie then goes to live with Mrs. Wilkins, a washerwoman, and later with Mrs. Sterling, a Quaker, whose son David she meets. She is attracted to David, but she leaves him out of jealousy after catching him flirting with another woman. After that, Christie becomes Reverend Power's secretary and meets Philip, a young man. Despite the growing social pressure to marry, she is advised not to marry Philip, as she does not love him.

Eventually, David and Christie reconcile and get married. The outbreak of the Civil War (1861-1865) separates the couple just as they have gotten married. David's death in the battlefield is a terrible blow for Christie. Nonetheless, she recovers and runs a florist's, raises their daughter and establishes a circle of women who provide mutual aid to one another. The end of the novel is a promising one for women's opportunities:

I am not tired yet: I hope I never shall be, for without my work I should fall into despair or ennui. There is so much to be done, and it is so delightful to help do it, that I never mean to fold my hands till they are useless. I owe all I can do, for in labor, and the efforts and experiences that grew out of it, I have found independence, education, happiness, and religion. (Alcott, 2003, n.p.)

Some of the Gothic elements that appeared in "A Nurse's Story" reappear in *Work* – Rachel lives under an assumed identity, as she is the Sterlings' long-lost daughter. Seduced and swiftly abandoned by her lover, she could not return to the family home and adopted a new identity, hiding the secret of her being a "fallen woman." The topic of inherited insanity is exemplified by Helen Carrol. For these reasons, *Work* can be considered a rewriting of "A Nurse's Story" up to a certain point (Stern, 1991, p. 18).

4. RESULTS

At the beginning of *Work*, we see the limited options that are available for women. If she stays on at her aunt and uncle's farm,

Christie plainly saw that one of three things would surely happen, if she lived on there with no vent for her full heart and busy mind. She would either marry Joe Butterfield in sheer desperation, and become a farmer's household drudge; settle down into a sour spinster, content to make butter, gossip, and lay up money all her days; or do what poor Matty Stone had done, try to crush and curb her needs and aspirations till the struggle grew too hard, and then in a fit of despair end her life, and leave a tragic story to haunt their quiet river. (Alcott, 2003, n.p.)

Work is a largely autobiographical work, the closest we have to an autobiography of Alcott's (Maragou, 2005, n.p.), although some readers have ignored this in order to read *Little Women* as Alcott's "true" autobiography, with Jo March becoming a thinly disguised alter ego for Alcott herself, in the minds of many. Many of the jobs that Christie holds are occupations that Alcott herself pursued.

Work, being a sentimental novel, was derogatorily dismissed and found fault with because of the very conventions of the genre. Nevertheless, beyond the sentimental novel's particularities, it shares a number of similarities with "A Nurse's Story." We should be careful not to make a reductionist reading of both works, saying that the same topics that are covered by means of the Gothic genre in "A Nurse's Story," are again covered in the more "serious" *Work*. Similarities go beyond thematic connections, for, as illustrated in the quotation at the beginning of this section, in *Work* "Alcott depicts gender determinism, a central component of Gothic naturalism, at its most obvious and explicit" (Metz, 2016, p. 87).

Other instances of Gothic naturalism occur in *Work* when it comes to the suicide of Helen Carroll, the invalid young woman that Christie takes care of or Christie's own suicide attempt after she is fired from the sweatshop and is destitute (Metz, 2016, p. 90). In particular, Helen's tragic death is aligned with Gothic naturalism in that Helen, afflicted by a mental illness, decides to kill herself to free herself from this hereditary curse (and to avoid passing it on to her future children) (Metz, 2016, p. 91). In *Work*,

by including a discussion of the illness, its transmission, and the possible ways in which its onset might be forestalled or even prevented, Alcott introduces a form of biological determinism through heredity. At the same time, the novel clarifies that such determinism need not be a hard one and avows that individuals have agency in how they respond to this disease. The discussion of mental illness, coupled with the decay of Helen's familial bloodline, creates a stark Gothic naturalist interlude within Christie's narrative. (Metz, 2016, p. 91)

Women's life and professional choices were a topic close to Alcott's heart throughout all her life. Alcott rejected the possibility of getting married and famously declared that "I'd rather be a free spinster and paddle my own canoe" (quoted in "Alcott: Not the Little Woman You Thought She Was", 2009, n.p.). Nonetheless, although she could establish herself as a professional writer (a member of that "damned mob of scribbling women" which writer Nathaniel Hawthorne despised), she was certainly aware that the possibilities for contemporary working women were certainly limited. Throughout her writings, Alcott attacked the paradox that 19th-century American society raised women to be beautiful without any real chances at a formal education, but then women did not have the formation to have a professional career and, instead, were forced to enter marriage out of economic considerations rather than out of love (Strickland, 1985, p. 113).

In *Work*, we have the promise of a companionate marriage, but it is a promise that is not actually fulfilled. When David and Christie get married, we can anticipate that it is going to be a marriage of equals, but they only spend a few hours together before he leaves for the battlefront, never to return. Whether Alcott really upheld that companionate marriage was the solution for women's trials or not, is debatable, for it could be nothing but a literary solution and a way for Alcott to gain approval from the cultural elite (Strickland, 1985, p. 113).

Work, with its ending of a powerful circle of empowered women, without men, can be read as feminist, but, still, it does not denounce or attack marriage (Strickland, 1985, p. 113). Rather the opposite, for it espouses an egalitarian marriage based on love (Strickland, 1985, p. 113). However, the fact that David dies without getting to live with Christie first, exemplifies Alcott's difficulties in envisioning a successful marriage based on love that would allow the wife enough freedom and autonomy.

Alcott was not totally satisfied with how *Work* had turned out (the long writing process, of over a decade, has much to do with the uneven quality of the novel, with the two parts being quite different), but still, its value must be recognized (Gomez-Galisteo, forthcoming, n.p.). In the words of Strickland,

Work represents her most thoughtful and mature statement about marriage and the family, and thus serves as a standard against which to measure and evaluate her more popular work. … *Work* is an eloquent plea for women like Christie (and Alcott) who wish, no less than men, to hold on to their integrity and independence, and who deserve men who will both love and respect them as human beings. (1985, p. 113)

Women's possibilities also get slimmer as they age, and Christie sees her chances of getting married reduced. Having tried several career paths which have led to nowhere, she even regrets not having accepted the relative safety of living at her aunt's or having accepted Joe's marriage proposal:

I'm growing old; my youth is nearly over, and at thirty I shall be a faded, dreary woman, like so many I see and pity. It's hard to come to this after trying so long to find my place and do my duty. I'm a failure after all, and might as well have stayed with Aunt Betsy or married Joe. (Alcott, 2003, n.p.)

If marriage is problematical in *Work*, presenting a companionate, egalitarian one that is not put into practice because of the spouses' separation first and because of David's death later on, marriage is no less problematical in "A Nurse's Story." Mr. Carruth is presented as insensible, for having married twice, fathering children who may suffer from insanity. Mrs. Carruth, aware of her husband's family's dangerous inheritance, is presented as callous and greedy, preferring to secure a rich husband rather than think about the nefarious consequences for her offspring. The issue of marriage for the younger generation is complex too. In the case of Kate, after breaking off her engagement, her chosen career is that of nursing (one that Christie tries and abandons), making a positive impact on the way that Nell is treated. After the death of Nell, she becomes a surrogate daughter/sister to the Carruths, first taking care of the parents and, once they die, of the sons. She fulfills the role of caretaker of all of them, renouncing marriage (as do the two Carruth sons). The only Carruth child to get married is Amy, but her marriage is presented as inadequate and impulsive, as she prefers to turn a blind eye to the possibility of her future children suffering from her family's insanity and there is no love on the part of her fiancé.

5. DISCUSSION

Taken together, these two works demonstrate Alcott's nuanced and evolving vision of marriage – not as an endpoint of female development, but as a complex choice shaped by social experience, economic survival, and moral conviction. It is interesting that neither Kate nor Christie follows creative pursuits, thus not addressing the question of the woman as artist that alcott would explore in other works, such as *little women* itself or the unfinished "Diana and Persis." Their comparison also helps us to better appreciate the value of Alcott's gothic tales, which cannot be paired only with her sentimental fiction, for they "are perhaps the most interesting complement to her juvenile fiction" (Blackburn, 1980 101).

Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the influential bestselling novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, celebrated Alcott's domestic fiction. She wrote in praising terms in a letter she wrote to Alcott in 1872:

> In my many fears for my country and in these days when so much seductive and dangerous literature is pushed forward, the success of your domestic works has been to me most comforting. It shows that after all our people are all right and that they love the right kind of thing. (quoted in Hendler, 1991, p. 698)

Stowe was blissfully unaware of the existence of Alcott's Gothic thrillers. These previous works complicate the somewhat sugar-coated vision of Alcott as defender of the home and domestic values that many have tried to read in *Little Women,* for in her Gothic stories, "the domestic sphere, often depicting female tragedies, narratives of revenge, confinement, subjugation and rebellion" is far from being a safe haven for women (Festa, 2024, p. 223).

The rediscovery of Alcott's Gothic thrillers, or, rather, their publication, occurred at a fortunate moment, for the academic recognition of the value of the Gothic genre, "for long dismissed as the dark and dissolute underside of Romantic writing or as the popular frippery of 'horrid novels' and melodramatic theater," occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, coinciding with the growth of feminist literary theory and criticism (Horner and Zlosnik, 2014, n.p.). It is worth analyzing Alcott's Gothic

production, which, for the most part, has received scarce critical and popular attention. More importantly, it is necessary to study these Gothic thrillers alongside the rest of her literary production, not in isolation, for common threads can be revealed.

6. CONCLUSIONS

By contemplating Alcott's literary corpus as a whole, we can see that the importance she gave to expanding women's roles in society is a topic at the core of all her works, in one way or another. Her female protagonists show strength in the face of adversity and restrictive social rules. Nonetheless, Alcott, who chose to remain single and could enjoy a long, successful career that gave her economic independence (and, what is more, which allowed her to support her family), was aware of the publishing market's constraints as well as of the pressures put on young women. She knew the book market well and managed to convey her advanced, feminist messages in her fiction, even if later her writings took the form of children's fiction.

Her Gothic thrillers show the making of a professional writer (Stern, 1991, p. 22). Alcott could convey in them her views more successfully than in a semi-autobiographical novel such as *Work*. Gothic fiction allowed her more freedom, not only for the very conventions of the genre, but because of the use of pseudonyms. In Gothic fiction she could write at her heart's content, without worrying about society's or her family's and friends' opinions.

On the strength of her Gothic thrillers, it is clear that the label "the Children's Friend," when applied to Alcott, is misleading, or, to say the least, it falls short from offering an accurate, well-rounded characterization of Alcott's literary stature. By rights, Alcott's name should be recognized within Gothic Studies, as Teresa A. Goddu contends (Festa, 2024, p. 223). Her literary production is better understood when we take into consideration that it "is a quilt-like narrative that is pieced from a wide range of contradictory cultural and psychosexual scripts" (Fite, 2009, p. 176). Far from being a short-lived phase, "Alcott's literary pursuit of darkness was long lasting," as we can see it in her later literary

production (Stern, 1991, p. 1), which should be studied alongside her Gothic works, not apart from them.

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LA ACCIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA DE TRADUCCIÓN COMO OBJETO Y SUJETO DE PODER: ANÁLISIS DE LA TRADUCCIÓN AL ESPAÑOL DE UN DEBATE PRESIDENCIAL ESTADOUNIDENSE

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

El debate presidencial entre Joe Biden y Donald Trump, celebrado el 26 de junio de 2024 y retransmitido en directo por la cadena de televisión CNN, supuso un punto de inflexión en las elecciones a la presidencia de EE. UU. de 2024, ya que fue determinante para la caída del candidato demócrata de la carrera presidencial y su sustitución por Kamala Harris. Asimismo, sirve como ejemplo paradigmático de la transformación del discurso político estadounidense en la era digital, con el objetivo de conectar con las emociones de un electorado crecientemente polarizado. Finalmente, la posición hegemónica de EE. UU. en la esfera occidental otorga a este debate una proyección global que abarca desde transmisiones en directo en varios idiomas a la presencia de contenidos relacionados con el debate en espacios destacados de los medios de comunicación escritos internacionales y que constituye el objeto de estudio de este capítulo. El impacto de las diferentes soluciones de localización del debate en la jerarquía de poder mediático y político de la sociedad de destino constituye una prueba fehaciente del papel de la traducción como herramienta crucial y vital (Robinson, 1997, p.29) para modelar el proceso de globalización que caracteriza a la era actual.

2. HIPÓTESIS Y OBJETIVOS

Este capítulo busca demostrar la capacidad de las acciones lingüísticas de traducción del discurso político estadounidense de influir en la

correlación de fuerzas políticas y mediáticas de las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes. Para ello, procede a:

- Analizar la relación bidireccional entre poder y traducción, examinando cómo la jerarquía política influye en las decisiones traductológicas y cómo estas, a su vez, impactan en la percepción pública y el nivel de poder obtenido por los líderes políticos analizados a nivel global.
- Identificar el empleo de estrategias de omisión, adición y adaptación en localizaciones de medios de comunicación hispanohablantes y estudiar la influencia en su diseño y elección de diversos agentes mediáticos y políticos de la sociedad de destino con intereses en dicha labor de localización.
- Explorar medidas para fortalecer la autonomía del traductor y promover una toma de decisiones de localización alineada con los estándares éticos y profesionales establecidos por el campo de traducción.

3. LA ACCIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA DE TRADUCCIÓN Y EL DISCURSO POLÍTICO ESTADOUNIDENSE

Esta aproximación práctica examina el recién presentado debate presidencial estadounidense a partir de un cuerpo teórico interdisciplinar compuesto por obras de referencia procedentes de las siguientes áreas de estudio:

3.1. Traducción como sujeto y objeto de poder

Autores como Foucault (1980), Bourdieu (1985), Potter (1996) o Baker (2006) analizan la acción lingüística como constructo social a la vez objeto y sujeto de poder. La noción de la microfísica de poder de Foucault defiende que toda emisión está determinada por una red global de poder de la que el emisor es producto y nodo productor. Nociones bourdieuanas como mercado simbólico, campo o eficacia simbólica (Bourdieu, 1985, p.28) permiten un análisis pormenorizado de dichas presiones bidireccionales en los casos aquí analizados. Potter y Baker, finalmente,

estudian las estrategias retóricas para dotar a un texto de la emotividad y facticidad que maximizan dicha eficacia simbólica, entre las que destacan, por su relevancia para este capítulo, el uso del detalle para maximizar la credibilidad de una descripción según la doxa (Bourdieu, 1985, p.96) vigente; y el empleo de narrativas para organizar los elementos discursivos emitidos de forma que su recepción redunde en el interés (Potter, 1996, p.123) o beneficio simbólico y económico del emisor.

Los estudios de traducción se nutren de la visión de estos autores para analizar la traducción como caso particular de la acción lingüística. Ya a finales del siglo XX, Vidal Claramonte (1998) partía de la visión de la acción lingüística foucaultiana para resaltar la importancia de realizar un estudio genealógico y arqueológico de las sociedades de origen y destino para la realización de traducciones o estudios traductológicos intelectuales. La autora apunta también al mecenazgo (Vidal, 1998, p.125) como herramienta del mercado de traducción para influir en las soluciones de localización que alcanzan visibilidad: como se verá a lo largo del capítulo, los medios de comunicación ofrecen recompensas en forma de capital económico (Bourdieu, 1985) a aquellas transediciones (Caimotto, 2020) con la suficiente eficacia simbólica (Bourdieu, 1985) para preservar sus intereses en la sociedad de destino. Diversos traductólogos contemporáneos, finalmente, estudian el papel del traductor como agente capaz de influir tanto en el mercado en el que opera como en la sociedad en la que vive: por su relevancia para su objeto de estudio, este capítulo prestará especial atención al estudio de la responsabilidad tanto retrospectiva como prospectiva o social de sus acciones (Hebenstreit, 2020); a la relación bidireccional entre digitalización y localización (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024), en la que se enmarcan la expansión de la traducción automática o la influencia de los algoritmos sobre el discurso tanto original como traducido; y a las medidas para subsanar la actual falta de autonomía del campo de traducción (Gambier, 2007).

3.2. Traducción como negociación

El análisis de la acción lingüística (incluida la de traducción) a partir de términos como capital simbólico, capital económico o eficacia simbólica (Bourdieu, 1985, p.40) es el fruto de la incorporación a los estudios de

lingüística y traducción contemporáneos de herramientas procedentes de la disciplina económica. Desde este paradigma interdisciplinar, tanto los textos políticos analizados como sus traducciones son el resultado del problema de optimización de la función de utilidad (Mankiw, 1998, p.410) económica y simbólica al que se enfrenta su emisor. En el marco de un debate presidencial como el analizado en este capítulo, la maximización del capital simbólico y económico de ambos contendientes implica la obtención del voto del mayor número posible de los receptores estadounidenses de su mensaje. Paralelamente, Eco (2000, p.10) se centra en el estudio de la acción lingüística de traducción como el resultado de un proceso de negociación entre el traductor y el resto de los agentes con intereses (Potter, 1996, p.123) en su labor, todos ellos con la intención de maximizar sus respectivos beneficios dentro del mercado en el que operan.

Finalmente, la aplicación del paradigma económico para el estudio de las soluciones de traducción resulta de gran utilidad para el estudio de los puntos críticos de la muestra: la distancia entre las traducciones reales y el repertorio de soluciones que el campo de traducción considera aptas desde un punto de vista ético y profesional se explica a partir de la posición de este último en dicho mercado, en el que está subordinado a actores con una mayor capacidad de otorgar recompensas e imponer penalizaciones y restricciones al traductor individual según sus intereses. Más allá de señalar a la rentabilidad como motivo de la existencia de traducciones no profesionales y no éticas, también proporciona herramientas para diseñar las sanciones y recompensas en forma de capital económico (mediante el pago de un salario) o simbólico (por ejemplo, a través de una visibilidad que aumenta la reputación del traductor en el mercado) que un campo traductológico autónomo (Gambier, 2007) debe explorar para promover soluciones de localización más ajustadas a sus estándares.

3.3. Análisis crítico del discurso político estadounidense

Este capítulo incorpora también conclusiones procedentes de obras del análisis crítico del discurso político contemporáneo de especial relevancia para su objeto de estudio. Uno de los consensos extraídos de su lectura es la creciente primacía de la función emotiva del lenguaje político estadounidense sobre su función referencial: la corrección política

y el lenguaje cultivado (Grijelmo, 2019) se han visto desbancados por la privatización del discurso público (Lakoff, 2005, p.174; Sclafani, 2017, p.16) abanderada por figuras como Donald Trump. En consecuencia, debates políticos como el aquí analizado se acercan al *infotainment* (Sclafani, 2017, p.16) que copa los programas políticos de medios tradicionales; y al agonismo (Hodges, 2020, p.132; Tannen, 1999) que impera en el discurso político de las redes sociales, que han contribuido a dividir a la esfera pública en bandos y convertirlos en silos (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p.116-118) estancos, erigiéndose así en actor fundamental del campo político estadounidense en el siglo XXI.

Este marco social y mediático aumenta la importancia del miedo como determinante fundamental de las decisiones humanas (Barthes, 2015), entre las que figura la de voto (Altheide, 2017): en unas elecciones binarias como las estadounidenses, inocular el miedo al adversario se erige en herramienta imprescindible para la obtención del poder político asociado al sillón presidencial. Esta visión de la política como un juego de suma cero desemboca en una guerra sin cuartel en la que ambos bandos están dispuestos a instrumentalizar la mentira para desacreditar y hasta deshumanizar al adversario: la eliminación de la otrora inapelable restricción de veracidad a la hora de construir narrativas se traduce en la creciente importancia de narrativas verosímiles pero falsas que buscan minimizar la legitimidad del bando contrario (Oborne y Roberts, 2017, p.25).

Finalmente, otro de los consensos del análisis crítico del discurso político estadounidense con una gran relevancia para este capítulo es la tendencia a la simplificación del lenguaje de los candidatos a la casa Blanca a lo largo de la última década: bajo este paraguas caben elementos presentes en los puntos críticos que serán analizados en páginas posteriores como el uso de la repetición (Bakhtin, 1981); el vocabulario limitado y la parataxis (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p.52); la sinécdoque (Baumann y Gingrich, 2004); o la narrativa conceptual (Baker, 2006) huntingtoniana (2004) que divide a los EE. UU. en dos bandos: por un lado, la decreciente mayoría *wasp* (a la que Donald Trump pertenece), descrita como el colectivo que llevó a los EE. UU. al estatus de primera potencia mundial; por el otro, la creciente minoría de

inmigrantes de culturas y razas diferentes, a los que culpa de la decadencia que el colectivo *MAGA* pretende dejar atrás.

3.4. Traducción del discurso político estadounidense

Este capítulo estudia los retos que la localización del discurso político estadounidense plantea a sus traductores. A las dificultades y restricciones habituales que el mercado simbólico impone a cualquier labor de traducción e interpretación, hay que sumar el impacto en la responsabilidad del traductor de enfrentarse a textos originales cuyos emisores son los principales líderes políticos de una potencia hegemónica como los EE. UU.: desde el punto de vista retrospectivo, por el desequilibrio de poder entre los socios emisor y traductor; y desde el punto de vista prospectivo, por su enorme impacto político y mediático en la gran mayoría sociedades de destino a nivel global.

Por añadidura, traductólogos contemporáneos como Anderson (2019), Svamberk (2019), Levenson (2020) o Caimotto (2020) estudian las dificultades que la evolución del discurso estadounidense a lo largo de la última década plantea para su localización. Como se verá en los puntos críticos (Munday, 2012) analizados más adelante, el traductor se ve ante la tesitura de elegir entre un amplio rango de soluciones que oscilan entre la fidelidad a la literalidad o la intención del original y la resistencia al discurso hegemónico estadounidense. Las soluciones fieles al original, si bien evitan las repercusiones de enfrentarse a tan poderosos emisores, suelen contribuir a la globalización del miedo, la polarización y el agonismo. Asimismo, asumen el riesgo de recibir un daño reputacional: ciertos receptores de sociedades de destino acostumbradas a un lenguaje político cultivado (Valdeón, 2008) podrían culpar al traductor de la pobreza del lenguaje del texto traducido. Al contrario, los traductores que optan por soluciones de resistencia pueden alejarse de los elementos discursivos del original contrarios a sus estándares éticos y profesionales; sin embargo, su visibilidad y rentabilidad dependerán de su alineación con los intereses de medios de comunicación cuyo mecenazgo tiene la contrapartida del ejercicio de un control sobre su labor que Valdeón (2020) denomina *gatekeeping* institucional.

4. METODOLOGÍA Y SELECCIÓN DE MUESTRA

Para probar la capacidad de las acciones lingüísticas de traducción del discurso político estadounidense de influir en la correlación de fuerzas políticas y mediáticas en las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes, este capítulo recurre al análisis de interpretaciones y traducciones al español de dos fragmentos del texto original del debate entre Donald Trump y Joe Biden analizado que, dada su capacidad de revelar la ideología del traductor o intérprete que las emite, encajan en la definición de puntos críticos de Jeremy Munday (2012, p.1).

En particular, el estudio se centra en las interpretaciones simultáneas realizadas por NMás (2024) y CNN en español (2024) del punto crítico seleccionado emitido por Joe Biden; y en las traducciones escritas de *Semana* (2024) y *La Sexta* (2024) del punto crítico de la muestra emitido por Donald Trump. El proceso de selección de los medios analizados responde a dos criterios: su gran visibilidad e impacto en el mundo hispanohablante y su capacidad de representar en conjunto a una gran parte del espectro ideológico de la sociedad de destino.

Por último, el cuerpo teórico presentado en el anterior apartado servirá para comprender el empleo por parte de los intérpretes y traductores de estrategias de omisión, adición y adaptación (Valdeón, 2008) para localizar el texto original en la cultura de destino hispanohablante como el resultado de las presiones ejercidas por parte de diversos actores dotados de poder político y mediático; y las consecuencias del uso de dichas estrategias tanto para la jerarquía de poder político y mediático de la sociedad de destino como para el traductor individual, el mercado en el que negocia su solución y el campo en el que se integra.

5. ANÁLISIS DE LOCALIZACIONES DE LOS PUNTOS CRÍTICOS

5.1. Punto crítico 1: just inject a little bleach in your arm

El presente apartado versará sobre la localización de la siguiente descripción recogida en la intervención inicial de Joe Biden en el debate presidencial analizado:

> "The pandemic was so badly handled, many people were dying. All he said was, it's not that serious, just inject a little bleach in your arm". (CNN, 2024)

Biden recurre a varias herramientas retóricas para maximizar el impacto emotivo de esta descripción, cuyo objetivo primario es la utilización de una tan célebre como controvertida emisión de Donald Trump durante su primera presidencia para impedir su segundo desembarco en la Casa Blanca. El candidato demócrata presenta a Trump como figura que desprecia el campo científico, que goza de una elevada (aunque decreciente) reputación en gran parte del electorado estadounidense como árbitro de la facticidad o no de una descripción y de su acceso al estatus de doxa (Bourdieu, 1985, p.96); lo retrata como amenaza para la salud pública y, por ende, para la supervivencia personal de cada votante; y recurre al uso del detalle (Potter, 1996, p.118) para maximizar su peligro: la palabra "bleacher" contribuye a generar en la mente del receptor una imagen nítida de la ineptitud de Donald Trump como presidente. En una elección binaria en la que el miedo inoculado al adversario es el principal determinante de la decisión de voto, el éxito de esta narrativa es una de las principales vías a la victoria del candidato demócrata.

La paulatina sustitución de un lenguaje mesurado y políticamente correcto por este tipo de retórica ofensiva (Potter, 1996, p.121) es un fenómeno relativamente reciente en la cúspide del campo político estadounidense y plantea retos de nuevo cuño para su localización. La interpretación simultánea del canal NMás (2024) opta por la siguiente solución en español:

> "Mucha gente se estaba muriendo decía que no estaba tan mal y que se inyectara uno blanqueador en el brazo"

Esta solución opta por la fidelidad a la intención del texto original, expandiendo el miedo a Donald Trump a la audiencia del canal, en su mayoría compuesta por estadounidenses hispanoparlantes y latinoamericanos no residentes en EE. UU. Su literalidad palabra por palabra (Svamberk, 2019, p.8) traslada además la imagen nítida (y el consiguiente impacto emocional) de Trump como enemigo del discurso normalizador científico y peligro para la salud pública. Por añadidura, esta solución permite al intérprete cumplir los estándares éticos y

profesionales establecidos por parte del campo de traducción y del medio de comunicación NMás.

No obstante, la solución elegida tiene también desventajas para el intérprete. Cabe señalar que, al igual que Biden se rebaja al terreno de juego discursivo de Trump para maximizar sus opciones de ganar las elecciones, la solución de localización de NMás contribuye a frenar la globalización del autoritarismo a costa de expandir el agonismo y la polarización del discurso político estadounidense a la audiencia hispanohablante del canal. En segundo lugar, sectores simpatizantes con Donald Trump con peso en el mercado simbólico de la traducción de la sociedad de destino utilizarán todo su capital simbólico y económico para restar visibilidad tanto en medios como en redes sociales a soluciones de traducción que perjudican su imagen. Cabe señalar que un campo de traducción autónomo sería aquel dotado del suficiente capital económico y simbólico para compensar este tipo de daños que podrían disuadir al intérprete de ofrecer soluciones responsables no solo desde el punto de vista retrospectivo, sino también desde el prospectivo.

En cambio, la interpretación simultánea de CNN en Español construye la siguiente solución de localización del punto crítico seleccionado:

> "Mucha gente estaba muriendo, todos decían que no era muy serio" (CNN en Español, 2024)

La dificultad intrínseca a toda labor de interpretación parte de la restricción temporal impuesta por el mercado que la rige, aceptada por los profesionales del campo, y que reduce a escasos segundos el tiempo concedido al intérprete para resolver el problema de optimización al que se enfrenta. En este caso de estudio, hay que sumar a esta dificultad intrínseca la presión adicional ejercida por la condición de miembros del metapoder (Foucault, 1980) global de los emisores del texto político, Donald Trump y Joe Biden: existe una alta probabilidad de que el intérprete, consciente de la repercusión de cada una de sus palabras, dedique más tiempo del habitual a sopesar su idoneidad. En especial, cuando la labor de interpretación del discurso incluye la comprensión y localización de descripciones alejadas de la corrección política a la que está habituado. En definitiva, los factores recién mencionados ofrecen

la explicación más plausible de la decisión de localización de CNN en español: el intérprete agota el tiempo para acceder a opciones preferibles del repertorio disponible y se ve forzado a emplear la estrategia de omisión del original "bleacher".

El paradigma analítico presentado en el cuerpo teórico proporciona las herramientas necesarias para comprender la elección de esta solución también desde un punto de vista económico. El silencio acarrea al intérprete un evidente coste simbólico por su ausencia de fidelidad al original (Svamberk, 2019, p.8), penalizada tanto por su campo profesional como por varios actores relevantes en el mercado en el que opera, incluidos su empleador, CNN en español; los actores políticos y mediáticos de la sociedad de destino que desean retratar a Trump con la descripción del texto original; y gran parte de la audiencia del canal, que a día de hoy, dispone además de una gran facilidad de acceso a la traducción automática del original. Sin embargo, la solución adoptada por el intérprete de CNN en español es la que minimiza sus pérdidas en términos de capital simbólico en el momento de tomar la decisión: si no tiene la certeza absoluta de haber comprendido correctamente el original, la sanción que el mercado en el que opera y el campo en el que se integra imponen a la omisión es menor a la aplicada sobre una traducción errónea potencialmente contradictoria con la intención del emisor y dotada de una elevada carga emotiva para el receptor; o sobre una localización plagada de titubeos, cuya importancia en la evaluación del emisor político por parte del votante ha quedado patente en este mismo debate presidencial[26]. Asimismo, esta estrategia concede al intérprete más tiempo para centrarse en las siguientes descripciones del debate presidencial. Por añadidura, cabe incluso la posibilidad de que actores de poder de la sociedad de destino afines a Donald Trump prefieran visibilizar esta solución cuya estrategia de omisión evita retratar a Trump con la traducción literal de su propia controvertida descripción.

26 La intervención de Joe Biden en el debate presidencial analizado en este artículo propició su sustitución como candidato demócrata a la presidencia. Más allá de sus propuestas políticas o su legado presidencial, sus titubeos y dificultad para completar ciertas frases constituyeron las principales razones aducidas como prueba de su incapacidad para asumir de nuevo el cargo.

Finalmente, la existencia de soluciones publicadas que no se ajustan por completo a los estándares profesionales del campo de traducción revela la posición de debilidad de este último en el mercado en el que operan sus integrantes. Dado que el resto de las variables permanece constante, una de las explicaciones plausibles para la mayor velocidad de reacción del intérprete de Nmás con respecto al de CNN en español es un estudio más exhaustivo del estado actual del discurso en el campo político estadounidense por parte del primero. La visión de la traducción como proceso de negociación aplicada en este capítulo permite la identificación de medidas que un campo dotado de autonomía en términos de capital simbólico y económico podría poner en marcha para promover una traducción más acorde a sus estándares éticos y profesionales. En este escenario, la recompensa en términos de reconocimiento o dinero al intérprete de NMás, cuya solución demuestra la previa realización del trabajo arqueológico y genealógico requerido para el ejercicio de su labor, que garantiza una reducción del tiempo necesario para comprender y localizar una descripción tan controvertida como la del original.

5.2. Punto crítico 2: open borders, luxury hotels y killing our citizens

En el debate presidencial objeto de estudio de este artículo, Donald Trump recurre a descripciones como el siguiente fragmento del texto original:

> "And he opened it up. And these killers are coming into our country. And they are raping and killing women. We have to get them out fast because they're going to destroy our country. Just take a look at where they are living. they living in luxury hotels in New York city and other places are veterans are on the street." (CNN 2024)

En este fragmento pueden identificarse varias de las características de la evolución del discurso estadounidense presentadas en el cuerpo teórico del capítulo. En primer lugar, se ajusta al requisito de simplicidad que no solo facilita la labor de emisión, al ajustarse a la perfección al "stream of consciousness" (Levenson, 2020, p.3) de Trump, sino que maximiza su alcance mediante el uso de vocabulario elemental y en ocasiones repetido como "they are"; la parataxis de frases cortas que evita cualquier tipo de subordinación y emplea puntos incluso entre

oraciones coordinadas por un "and"; o el uso de "we" o "they" para activar la narrativa binaria huntingtoniana que divide a los EE. UU. en dos bandos, aglutinando a la audiencia en torno a un Donald Trump que privatiza su discurso para dirigirse a los votantes como si fuera uno más de ellos y presentar a los inmigrantes como el bando enemigo. En otras palabras, el lenguaje político oralizado de Trump facilita a la mayor parte del electorado estadounidense las tareas de comprensión, memorización y diseminación de sus narrativas.

Esta muestra discursiva revela también tanto la primacía de la función emotiva sobre la referencial en el lenguaje político estadounidense como uno de sus corolarios: el uso del miedo al adversario como arma discursiva capaz de agitar emocionalmente al electorado e inclinar su voto en favor del emisor. En este caso, la indignación generada por la sinécdoque que presenta a todos los inmigrantes ilegales como privilegiados a costa del capital económico del contribuyente estadounidense parte del uso de detalles cuya falsedad está probada, como los bulos publicados sobre el alojamiento de algunos de ellos en "luxury hotels"; para reforzar la narrativa huntingtoniana previamente tratada, Trump enfrenta al colectivo inmigrante con los "veterans" que, a pesar de la credencial (Potter, 1996, p.124) que el colectivo *wasp* les otorga por haber arriesgado su vida por el país, malviven en las calles: de nuevo un detalle, en este caso real, dota de verosimilitud a la descripción en su conjunto y maximiza el impacto emocional de una descripción que busca agitar el miedo al diferente y, por ende, a un Joe Biden que, supuestamente, permite la entrada de inmigrantes sin control en el país. Finalmente, cabe destacar que la eficacia simbólica del uso de la mentira en el caso particular aquí tratado se debe en gran parte a una de las características de la sociedad estadounidense del siglo XXI presentadas en el cuerpo teórico del capítulo: la compartimentación de la esfera pública estadounidense en silos estancos llevada a cabo por los algoritmos de las redes sociales ha contribuido a que los receptores reciban exclusivamente información que les reafirma en su ideología, dificultando su exposición a la labor de verificación realizada por los actores mediáticos tradicionales, en virtud de su papel de guardianes de la ética y la razón.

La Figura I muestra la transedición del punto crítico analizado en el titular de una noticia del portal colombiano *Semana*. El *gatekeeping* institucional se refleja en la omisión de los fragmentos del debate que *Semana* no considera relevantes para el titular; en la traducción literal de "they living in luxury hotels", detalle que Trump utiliza para maximizar el impacto emocional de su intervención; y en el uso de las comillas de dicha traducción literal para legitimar la adición de un resumen periodístico del debate que completa el titular y de la noticia que introduce.

FIGURA 1. *Noticia sobre el debate entre Joe Biden y Donald Trump publicada por el medio de comunicación colombiano Semana.*



Fuente: *Semana* (2024)

La responsabilidad prospectiva del traductor que participa en esta transedición es elevada: la traducción literal del bulo de Donald Trump sin nota explicativa alguna cuestionando su veracidad contribuye a corroborar y globalizar la narrativa antiinmigración de Trump, que entronca con narrativas similares impulsadas en el mundo hispanohablante por actores mediáticos afines a Trump, como se observa en la Figura 2.

FIGURA 2. *Noticia del diario español La Gaceta de la Iberosfera sobre la inmigración africana a Canarias*



Fuente: García-Valdecasas (2025)

La transedición de *Semana* contribuye también prospectivamente a reforzar narrativas contra la inmigración impulsadas por usuarios de las redes sociales en las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes. En un campo político dominado por algoritmos que favorecen la visibilidad de la repetición, su solución literal evidencia que todo un candidato presidencial de una potencia hegemónica como los EE. UU. corrobora estas narrativas, lo cual contribuye al aumento del capital simbólico de sus emisores, hasta hace poco marginales. Cabe señalar que la división en silos estancos que caracteriza a la esfera pública estadounidense se

ha extendido a las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes: a modo de ejemplo, esfuerzos realizados por medios de comunicación para denunciar la falsedad de estas narrativas como los de la Figura 3 o la Figura 4 son descartados de antemano por los simpatizantes de Trump en España por haber sido realizado por *RTVE* y *La Sexta*, medios de comunicación que sitúan en el bando enemigo.

FIGURA 3. *Comprobación realizada por el canal público español RTVE de la falsedad de una narrativa similar a la impulsada por Trump que se expandió en redes sociales de la sociedad de destino española.*



Fuente: *RTVE* (2020)

Figura 4*. Fragmento de noticia del medio de comunicación La Sexta sobre el debate entre Joe Biden y Donald Trump.*

Trump, por su parte, se ha convertido en una máquina de lanzar falsedades y ha exhibido una vez más un **discurso antiinmigración xenófobo** y apoyado en bulos, llegando a esgrimir que los migrantes **"viven en hoteles de lujo" y que "la gente está entrando y matando"** a los ciudadanos estadounidenses.

Fuente: *La Sexta* (2024)

En la Figura 4, *La Sexta* opta por una transedición del punto crítico analizado alternativa a la de *Semana*: si bien conserva la traducción literal de "they living in luxury hotels", su recurso a la estrategia de adición sirve para demostrar el compromiso de la solución de transedición en su conjunto con la responsabilidad prospectiva que supone negar la veracidad del detalle utilizado por Donald Trump para maximizar el impacto emocional de su intervención en el debate y, por ende, socavar la narrativa contra la inmigración que impulsa.

Finalmente, cabe añadir que un campo de traducción dotado del capital simbólico y económico suficiente para garantizar la independencia del traductor permitiría la adición de notas del traductor cuyo contenido viniera determinado por sus propios criterios de buena praxis, en vez de depender del *gatekeeping* emanado de la línea editorial de mecenas mediáticos como *Semana* o *La Sexta*, con los que el traductor necesita aliarse para dar visibilidad y rentabilidad a ambas soluciones estudiadas, tanto la hegemónica como la activista.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Las muestras de interpretación y traducción del debate entre Joe Biden y Donald Trump analizadas prueban la capacidad de las acciones lingüísticas de traducción del discurso político estadounidense de influir en la correlación de fuerzas políticas y mediáticas en las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes. Asimismo, el capítulo refleja la débil posición negociadora del traductor en el ámbito de la traducción política y explora posibles medidas para fortalecer la autonomía del traductor y fomentar la toma de decisiones de localización alineada con los estándares éticos y de calidad establecidos por el campo de traducción en las situaciones que constituyen su objeto de estudio.

Entre las limitaciones de este estudio, cabe destacar que su extensión máxima impide la obtención y análisis de la muestra de traducciones representativa del sector necesaria para la concreción de las sanciones y recompensas que un campo de traducción autónomo debe establecer en pos de una traducción responsable según sus propios criterios. En todo caso, el empleo de un enfoque interdisciplinar eminentemente

traductológico pero enriquecido con componentes procedentes de la disciplina económica abre la puerta a futuras vías de investigación sobre la aplicación de herramientas económicas para la consecución de dicho objetivo. Entre ellas, la función de preferencias indiferentes (Mankiw, 1998, p.428) agregada del sector revelaría el número de unidades de capital simbólico a las que el traductor medio está dispuesto a renunciar a cambio de una unidad de capital económico: es decir, permitiría establecer la cantidad de dinero o el nivel de reputación que el campo de traducción debe ofrecer como recompensa a sus miembros para que opten por traducciones más acordes a sus estándares éticos y profesionales. Asimismo, el lagrangiano (Méndez, 1981) de la misma función permitiría el cálculo de la sanción en términos de capital simbólico y económico que debe imponer el sector para disuadir a un traductor individual de optar por soluciones rentables contrarias a la buena praxis del campo.

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«EL REVERSO DE LA MEDALLA»: RECEPCIÓN Y TRADUCCIONES TEMPRANAS DE KATHERINE MANSFIELD EN ESPAÑA

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Figura central del canon modernista en lengua inglesa, Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) ha sido una figura poco estudiada desde el punto de vista de los estudios traductológicos y son especialmente escasas las publicaciones sobre sus traducciones en lengua española. El presente estudio pone los cimientos de un proyecto en marcha con el que pretendemos colmar dicha laguna bibliográfica. Así, presentamos la historia de las traducciones y la recepción tempranas en lengua española de Mansfield desde los años 1920, con la primera versión publicada, hasta el fin del franquismo.

Desde un enfoque que conjuga los estudios descriptivos de la traducción con los estudios literarios, planteamos un recorrido diacrónico y panorámico de traducciones y de la recepción de la obra de la neozelandesa a lo largo de medio siglo.

2. OBJETIVOS

Con esta investigación, que se inscribe en el marco de un proyecto más amplio de recuperación de las versiones tempranas de Mansfield en España, formulamos dos objetivos principales. En primer lugar, pretendemos poner a disposición de la comunidad académica y los lectores interesados en Mansfield y en la historia literaria un sumario catálogo

descriptivo de aquellas primeras traducciones, así como contextualizarlas teniendo en cuenta los agentes humanos e institucionales que participaron en ellas. En segundo lugar, nos proponemos trazar unas primeras pinceladas sobre la complejidad de los textos fuente y meta mediante el análisis comparado de uno de los cuentos de Mansfield y varias de sus versiones traducidas. Así, con el análisis microtextual del cuento «The Fly» («La mosca») y dos de sus primeras versiones elaboradas en dos momentos distintos (1925 y 1957) y por dos traductores diferentes (Miguel de Zárraga y Manuel de la Escalera), ofrecemos una primera aproximación que permita comprender los distintos enfoques literarios de cada traductor a la obra de Mansfield, así como su complejidad estética modernista.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Para llevar a cabo nuestra investigación, hemos recurrido a un corpus documental compuesto por los textos fuente y meta[27], los paratextos correspondientes —principalmente, introducciones y prólogos— y las menciones a Mansfield en varios archivos hemerográficos. El estudio conjunto de los tres tipos de documentos permite reconstruir una microhistoria literaria, traductológica y social que arroja luz sobre cómo evoluciona el interés por Mansfield a ambos lados del Atlántico. No en vano, entre 1925 y 1975, la mayoría de libros y cuentos de Mansfield fueron publicados por diversas editoriales argentinas, chilenas y españolas, con traducciones a cargo de firmas tan prominentes y diversas cultural y políticamente como Leonor Acevedo, Ester de Andreis, Manuel de la Escalera y José María Souvirón, que en ocasiones ofrecen claves sobre su afinidad con Mansfield en los paratextos.

[27] Hemos considerado las obras publicadas en España, así como aquellas provenientes de Hispanoamérica que pudieran tener difusión transatlántica. Para ello, hemos consultado los fondos de tres catálogos amplios y que abarcan sendos ámbitos complementarios, a saber, el del Catálogo de la Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), el de la Red de Bibliotecas Universitarias y Científicas (REBIUN), y el Catálogo Colectivo de las Bibliotecas Públicas Españolas (CCBIP).

Con todo esto, pretendemos trazar, a continuación, una panorámica de la recepción de la obra de Mansfield.

3.1. Las primeras traducciones

Si bien la publicación en inglés del primero de los cinco libros de cuentos de Mansfield (*In a German Pension*) data de 1911, de acuerdo con los catálogos bibliográficos consultados, en España no se publicaron libros suyos hasta 1940. Por otra parte, aquel primer volumen traducido no era de género narrativo, sino su *Diario*. Ahora bien, ello no significa que no apareciesen en España libros vertidos con anterioridad a esa fecha: en 1937, Edicions de la Rosa dels Vents había publicado *La garden-party*, un pequeño volumen con la versión catalana de dos relatos («La garden-party» y «A la badia») en traducción de Josep Ros-Artigues.[28]

Es más, considerando otros medios de difusión de traducciones distintos de los libros, la obra de Mansfield llegó a España mucho antes: de acuerdo con el corpus hemerográfico de referencia, es 1925 la fecha en que se publica la versión en español del cuento «La mosca» («The Fly»), en la revista *Blanco y Negro*. Esta traducción pionera corrió a cargo de Miguel de Zárraga, agente cultural hoy poco conocido que en la Edad de Plata se desempeñó como periodista, cineasta y ocasional dramaturgo y traductor. Aparte de esta traducción pionera, no consta ninguna otra versión de Mansfield en el corpus consultado durante los años de la dictadura de Primo de Rivera y la Segunda República. Ello no implica, no obstante, que en las décadas de 1920 y 1930 no hubiese en España un interés incipiente hacia la obra de Mansfield, como se verá más adelante en el análisis de su recepción.

Durante la posguerra, se suceden varios proyectos editoriales por los que, a uno y otro lado del Atlántico, se traduce y publica al español la mayoría

[28] Mansfield fue leída y apreciada de forma temprana en el campo cultural catalán, tanto en el interior (véase este primer libro traducido) como, más adelante, en el exilio, como muestra la gran afinidad de Mercè Rodoreda por la autora neozelandesa, cuyo influjo ha estudiado Enric Balaguer (1995). En lo sucesivo, sin embargo, no se publicaron nuevas traducciones de las obras de Mansfield al catalán hasta los años 1980, si bien existe una inédita a cargo de Rosa Leveroni, que probablemente data de entre 1941 y 1960. Para profundizar en las traducciones catalanas de Mansfield, recomendamos consultar Alsina (2023).

de los cuentos de Mansfield, así como sus textos personales, a saber, su dietario y su correspondencia. Entre 1940 y 1959, podemos hablar de un verdadero *boom* hispánico de traducciones de la autora: el primero de estos volúmenes es el *Diario*, dado a la imprenta en 1940 por la barcelonesa Librería Mediterránea con traducción a cargo de Ester de Andreis.

A De Andreis, escritora italiana radicada en Barcelona, donde animó tertulias literarias durante el primer franquismo, le debemos no solo la traducción del *Diario*, sino también las de dos libros publicados a lo largo de la década de los 1940: *La casa de muñecas*, dado a la imprenta en 1944 en Ediciones Mediterráneas; y *Felicidad*, que apareció en 1946 en el sello José Janés. Se trata de traducciones republicadas en varias ocasiones, que incluso siguen a la venta en la actualidad, por ejemplo, en la edición de los cuentos completos de Mansfield reeditada por la editorial Alba en 1999.[29] De acuerdo con Ripoll (2020), Mansfield fue precisamente la autora que motivaría a De Andreis a adentrarse en la práctica profesional de la traducción, y a ella volvió varias décadas más tarde, cuando vio la luz su traducción de *En una pensión alemana*.

Volviendo a los años 1940, de forma simultánea a estas traducciones de De Andreis y alguna otra de menor difusión en distintas editoriales barcelonesas,[30] surgen varios proyectos de publicación de la obra de Mansfield en Hispanoamérica, entre los que destaca el de la editorial santiaguina Zig-zag. En el bienio 1944-1945, el sello chileno da a la imprenta tres pequeñas antologías de cuentos de Mansfield, todas en traducción de José María Souvirón: *La fiesta en el jardín* y *Las hijas del coronel*, ambas en 1944; y, al año siguiente, *Felicidad. Preludio*. Souvirón constituye un caso prototípico de las relaciones transatlánticas en el mundo editorial de

[29] El volumen de Alba, publicado originalmente en 1999 y reeditado en 2001, 2010 y 2022, incluye una introducción de Ana María Moix, los prólogos de John Middleton Murry a los tres libros de relatos póstumos de Mansfield, y los cinco volúmenes de relatos de la autora neozelandesa, con las traducciones históricas de Ester de Andreis, y otras de finales de siglo xx de Clara Janés, Francesc Parcerisas y Alejandro Palomas.

[30] Entre estas, se cuenta *Matrimonio moderno*, publicada en 1945 por Mateu Editor con traducción de J. Valdivieso, así como varios relatos incluidos en antologías colectivas, como «La mosca», a cargo de J. Vallvé (*ca.* 1950) e incluida en *Los mejores novelistas ingleses contemporáneos*, o bien piezas sueltas, como «El hombre apático», incluido en una traducción anónima de 1963 en *La Hora XXV al servicio del médico*, un boletín mensual que combinaba piezas literarias con publicidad farmacéutica dirigida a facultativos.

posguerra. Hoy bastante olvidado por la historiografía de la traducción,[31] este malagueño coetáneo de los más jóvenes del 27, se estableció en Santiago de Chile en 1932, donde impartió clases de literatura española y dirigió la Editorial Zig-zag antes de regresar a España en 1951.

En paralelo, al otro lado de los Andes y a lo largo de las décadas de 1940 y 1950, ve la luz una serie de traducciones en distintas editoriales bonaerenses; nos encontramos, por ejemplo con *En la bahía*, publicada en 1943 por Losada con traducción de Leonor Acevedo; *Una taza de té*, dada a la imprenta por La Isla en 1954, a cargo de María Antonia Oyuela de Grant; *La niña y el padre*, publicada por Ediciones La Reja en 1954 y con traducción de Isabel de la Hoz; y *La evasión*, que apareció en Troquel en 1955, en versión de Elva de Lóizaga. Si bien la traducción ha sido una profesión relativamente feminizada, resulta significativa la amplísima proporción de mujeres entre quienes tradujeron a Mansfield durante este primer período, incluidas estas cuatro argentinas. No solo eso, sino que algunas de ellas (Leonor de Acevedo entre las porteñas y Ester de Andreis desde el lado europeo) se cuentan entre los grandes nombres de la historia de la traducción. Es posible que todo ello tenga relación con las lecturas protofeministas que de la autora se hicieron en la prensa española a mediados de siglo, como exponemos en el apartado siguiente.

Por otra parte, algunos de estos libros van precedidos de prólogos o introducciones que sitúan la lectura en unas coordenadas concretas. Por ejemplo, la traducción de Acevedo de *En la bahía* para Losada viene presentada por un texto del crítico y poeta ultraísta español Guillermo de Torre, firmado en 1938, cinco años de la publicación del libro por Losada. En su introducción, De Torre presenta a Mansfield desde un posicionamiento que, si bien quizá no la considera una autora feminista, sí la aborda en clave de género (De Torre, 1943 [1938]: 7-8):

> Precisamente los nombres femeninos no escasean actualmente en esa literatura [la británica], y junto a los ya aludidos de Virginia Woolf y Edith Aitwell cabe fácilmente agrupar los de Clemence Dane, Rosamund Lehmann, Margaret Kennedy, Mary Webb, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Victoria Sackville-West, Stella Benson, Rose Maucalay… Pero siendo

[31] A pesar de haber traducido, además de a Mansfield, a otras grandes plumas del canon occidental como Melville y Maupassant.

> todas ellas tan fieles sentimentalmente a su sexo, la voz de Katherine Mansfield resuena aún quizá con un matiz más puramente femíneo. Porque no se trata simplemente de que Katherine Mansfield sienta y escriba como mujer, sino que llega a crear todo un universo nimbado de extraordinaria poesía por lo mismo que es ordinariamente verídico, haciéndonoslo comunicable con una sorprendente simplicidad de medios.

Ya a finales de los cincuenta, encontramos otro agente implicado en el proceso editorial que pone de relieve los continuos trasvases transatlánticos: Manuel de la Escalera, el traductor que en 1957 vertió *Fiesta en el jardín y otras narraciones* para el sello barcelonés Juventud. De este traductor, nacido en México y llegado a España al inicio del siglo XX, Oñate Méndez (2020) indica que se dedicó a traducir relatos de Mansfield durante el período que pasó en la cárcel por su apoyo a la causa republicana durante la Guerra Civil Española.

Asimismo, data de este lustro un hito doble en la historia de las traducciones al español de Mansfield: la publicación de dos obras narrativas completas, la primera, *Novelas y cuentos completos*, en 1956, en la bonaerense Schapire, a cargo de Francisco Gurza, y la segunda, *Obras [completas]*, en 1959, en la barcelonesa Plaza & Janés, que recopila las versiones anteriores de Ester de Andreis, Manuel de la Escalera y añade otras de María Dolores Raich. Cabe citar que 1959 es precisamente el año de la fundación de Plaza & Janés, el gran grupo resultante de la fusión de las editoriales Germán Plaza y José Janés que imperó en la edición hispana durante varios lustros. Que las obras completas de Mansfield pasen a integrar el catálogo de una editorial de tal importancia desde sus inicios da una idea de su posición en el polisistema literario y editorial español de la época.

Si durante el primer franquismo abundaron las traducciones y retraducciones de la obra de Mansfield, en la segunda etapa de la dictadura escasean las nuevas versiones. De hecho, solo hemos documentado una nueva traducción en los catálogos de referencia, procedente de Hispanoamérica: *El nido de palomas*, publicada por el Centro Editor de América Latina y a cargo de Amelia Castro y Alberto Manguel. Ahora bien, que no apareciesen nuevas traducciones de Mansfield no significa que su obra no circulara durante la década de 1960 y 1970. Al contrario, podemos asumir que la publicación de sus obras completas por parte de

Plaza y Janés en 1959 aseguró una amplia distribución a lo largo de los años y posiblemente décadas siguientes, de modo que es probable que, gracias a las republicaciones y a la difusión de dicha editorial, la obra de la neozelandesa continuara disponible en las librerías españolas hasta el comienzo del siguiente *boom* en los años 1980.

3.2. Recepción de la obra y figura de Mansfield

En paralelo a la publicación de traducciones, la obra de Mansfield es valorada en España en distintos foros, tanto en libros de crítica y teoría literaria como en la prensa. Entre los primeros, constan análisis extensos de su narrativa en ensayos escritos en español, así como en obras de estudiosos extranjeros traducidas, como el volumen *Mágicos y lógicos. Nueve biografías de escritores ingleses contemporáneos*, de André Maurois, publicado originalmente en 1935 y, en español, en 1943, en que el crítico y escritor francés analiza la obra de nueve autores de principios del siglo XX en lengua inglesa. Sobre Mansfield, apunta lo siguiente (Maurois, 1943: 256):

> Su método no es el de los novelistas ingleses que pintan una historia desde el momento en que nace el protagonista y la conducen a paso lento a través de una serie continua de episodios […] Mansfield escoge una familia, un medio ambiente, da un corte en el tiempo y nos describe las impresiones de las personas durante el breve momento elegido, sin enseñarnos otra cosa de ellas que sus pensamientos y las conversaciones que tienen entre sí.

Así, Maurois lee a Mansfield desde una perspectiva que, a grandes rasgos, sigue vigente hoy en día, en tanto que la valora por su particular aproximación fragmentaria a la realidad narrada. Por otra parte, el caso de Maurois resulta ilustrativo de un fenómeno que aún es crucial en los años 1940: el papel mediador del polisistema francés entre la literatura anglófona y el polisistema hispano. Sin embargo, también hubo críticos españoles que posaron su mirada en Mansfield, como Ricardo Gullón. En su libro de 1945 *Novelistas ingleses contemporáneos*, el estudioso leonés se centra en el aspecto humanista de la neozelandesa (Gullón, 1945: 100):

> Cuando su mirada se posa en el hombre, descifra el secreto de esos movimientos íntimos, de esos sutiles cambios fibra a fibra registrados en su

> corazón, hasta percibir, por ejemplo, cómo un vivo dolor, el sufrimiento por el recuerdo de una desventura no muy reciente, se evapora a merced de cierta menuda distracción [y] observar aquella mosca afanándose por escapar a la muerte de modo tan complejo que instantes más tarde no conseguirá el hombre recobrar el rastro de su anterior preocupación.

Sumado al *boom* editorial al que antes nos referíamos, este texto de Gullón da cuenta del interés por la obra de Mansfield en la España del primer franquismo. En paralelo a estos estudios extensos publicados en libros de crítica y teoría literaria, la obra y —a menudo— la figura de Mansfield fueron objeto de debate en las páginas de la prensa periódica. Con ella se aprecia un fenómeno similar al que se da con otros autores extranjeros a lo largo de la historia de la recepción literaria —y, por lo tanto, de la traducción— en España:[32] antes de que se conociera a fondo su obra, empezó a aparecer su nombre, ya fuera por cuestiones anecdóticas o por apariciones puntuales producto del azar.

La prensa histórica es y ha sido siempre una fuente de información clave para comprender distintos aspectos en el ámbito de la recepción literaria extranjera; no solamente porque permite rastrear aquello que se dijo de un autor o autora en determinado momento, sino también porque en ocasiones revela traducciones ausentes de los anales de la recepción literaria y de la literatura comparada. Es lo que sucede precisamente con Katherine Mansfield, cuyo nombre consta, en los archivos de la *Hemeroteca Digital de la Biblioteca Nacional de España*, en artículos que reivindican su valor literario en años en que su obra era aún poco conocida. Así, entre las primeras ocurrencias en el corpus hemerográfico consultado, se encuentra su primera traducción en territorio español, la del cuento «La mosca» («The Fly») en un número de la revista *Blanco y Negro* de 1925 (Mansfield, 1925: 42-46). Una década después, el diario *La Vanguardia* se refiere a la autora en la sección «Memento. Literatura general» para anunciar la impresión del libro biográfico *Katherine Mansfield*, publicado por quien fuera editor y marido

[32] Véase, por ejemplo, la historia de la recepción de autores alemanes como Friedrich Hölderlin o Novalis (Gasó, 2024), cuyos nombres aparecieron ya incluso en la prensa decimonónica a pesar de que su obra aún permaneciera inédita en español; o bien el caso de Gertrude Stein, escritora modernista como Mansfield, de quien la prensa española se ocupó profusamente antes de que se tradujera la mayor parte de su obra (Carrillo del Saz, 2025).

de la entonces ya fallecida autora: John Middleton Murry. En la noticia se anuncia únicamente el volumen en lengua inglesa, a la sazón inédito en español (S. A., 1935: 9)

Al margen de la recepción de su obra —documentada ya en el subapartado «Las primeras traducciones» de este trabajo— se encuentra un fenómeno que merece atención tanto por la época en que tiene lugar como por las características con las que se presenta: de la década de 1940 datan textos periodísticos mujeres de perfil independiente e intelectual que, entre otras cosas, reivindican el valor literario de Mansfield, a quien consideran a la altura de otras escritoras del talante de Virginia Woolf. Es el caso, por ejemplo, de un reportaje de la actriz, traductora y escritora Conchita Montes, aparecido en el número 190 de la revista cinematográfica *Primer Plano* (1940-1963) en 1944. Montes no solamente hace gala de sus atributos intelectuales y sus profundos conocimientos de la lengua inglesa, sino que declara conocer la obra de Mansfield, a quien lee en versión original (C. Montes, 1944: 6):

> Hay una autora que me gusta mucho, que es lady Sackville West, […] y es que las mujeres están bien representadas en la literatura inglesa: Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Wolff [*sic*] y Rosamond Lehemann son buena prueba de ello.

Días antes de que se imprimiera esta entrevista-reportaje, el diario *La Vanguardia* incluía en sus páginas una colaboración del periodista y ensayista Eugenio Montes dedicada a la actualidad literaria internacional en la que, entre otras cosas, traza un sucinto retrato de la autora neozelandesa (E. Montes, 1944: 3):

> Mas, ante todo, ¿dónde están nuestros antípodas? Si miramos un globo terráqueo, nos encontramos con que debemos situarlos en Oceanía, entre Nueva Zelanda y Filipinas. […] La única persona neozelandesa de la que tengo noticia es Katherine Mansfield, que en tiernos, delicados, húmedos cuentos evocaba las praderas de su infancia y luego, adolescente, vino a vivir en los círculos literarios europeos, a transirse [*sic*] de civilización […] No, pobre Katherine, doliente Rosalía de Castro del paralelo austral.

Estos testimonios son solo unos cuantos de los muchos que aparecerían en las páginas de boletines y periódicos, muy seguramente a raíz de la publicación de *Diario*, que Mansfield elaboraría entre 1910 y 1922, y

que, como señalábamos más arriba, se publicó en versión española en 1940. Es esta interés excepcional lo que hemos calificado anteriormente como el *boom* de Mansfield.

En cuanto vieron la luz otras obras de la autora neozelandesa en España —como los libros *La casa de muñecas* (1944) o *Felicidad* (1946), por citar solo dos volúmenes exentos—, empezaron a abundar las notas, reseñas y críticas sobre la narradora; entre las muchas ocasiones en que su nombre se imprimió en las páginas de mayor actualidad cultural y literaria, quizá una de las más memorables sea la que el crítico Ángel Zúñiga hiciera para *La Vanguardia* nuevamente en 1947. En su contribución titulada «Mujeres» y dedicada al *modus escribendi* de autoras diversas, Zúñiga subraya la calidad y cantidad de obras literarias escritas por mujeres en las primeras décadas de la centuria (Zúñiga, 1947: 4):

> La parte que corresponde a la mujer en el juego de las letras es muy importante. Sorprenden las últimas o, para ser más exacto, penúltimas floraciones de nombres femeninos dispuestos a hacerse respetar.

El crítico navarro se refiere a escritoras españolas, como Carmen Conde, así como a anglófonas, como Mary Webb y Emily Brontë, pero es a Mansfield a quien más atención dedica, con aseveraciones como esta (Zúñiga, 1947: 4):

> En Katherine Mansfield nos encontramos con el reverso de la medalla. En ella lo sensual, la vida de los sentidos permanece inhibida por un espíritu que hace en todo momento su vela. Lo que Mansfield tiene de pequeño genio, lo hallamos en la vida imperceptible, en esos átomos que nos rodean y que solo la mujer presiente […] Tenemos, pues, en la Mansfield [*sic*] una sensibilidad tan agudizada, tan enfermiza, que se hace voluntad de sufrimiento por ese exceso de percepción, tan mujeril, que hiere y atraviesa los acontecimientos.

No obstante, el momento álgido de la recepción de Mansfield en la prensa se da ya en la década de 1950, cuando, a pesar de misoginia imperante, algunas mujeres periodistas conquistan un espacio en la vida cultural española desde el que ejercen la crítica literaria y valoran la recepción de autoras extranjeras. Este es el caso de Amparo Pidal, quien en 1952 publica, para el diario *ABC* de Madrid, una semblanza de extensión considerable y da a conocer a aquella enigmática autora que

hasta hacía unos diez años había pasado relativamente desapercibida para el gran público (Pidal, 1952: 11):

> Caminando con una rosa en la mano, los ojos tendidos hacia el mundo y un murmullo de versos en sus labios, Katherine Mansfield pasa de un siglo a otro brevemente, fijando para siempre su personalidad. Su nombre está, sin duda, prendido en todas las imaginaciones femeninas. ¿Quién no ha leído las *Cartas* de Katherine Mansfield; su *Diario*; la *Garden Party* o *Bliss*, su mejor novela corta?

Independientemente de lo que entonces se hubiera publicado en lengua española, el nombre de la escritora ya resuena en el ámbito de la literatura femenina y, detrás de ella, el de los primeros trujamanes que se ocuparon de ell, entre ellos, Ester de Andreis, Manuel de la Escalera o Miguel de Zárraga. Y es a este último a quien debemos la primera traducción española de un texto de Mansfield.

3.3. Análisis de dos traducciones de «The fly»

El 11 de enero de 1925, la revista cultural madrileña *Blanco y Negro* publica en sus páginas el cuento de Katherine Mansfield «La mosca» («The Fly») en traducción de Miguel de Zárraga. El relato, originalmente publicado en 1922 en el diario británico *The Nation and Atheneum* e incluido un año después en el volumen póstumo *The Dove's Nest and other Stories*, cuenta la historia de un empresario que recuerda dolorosamente a su hijo, fallecido en el frente durante la Primera Guerra Mundial; el duelo se ve interrumpido cuando el protagonista detecta, dentro del tintero, la presencia de una mosca, hecho que lleva a la culminación del relato en un desenlace completamente inesperado.

De Miguel de Zárraga sabemos que dedicó gran parte de su vida al periodismo —se desempeñó, por ejemplo, como reportero desde Estados Unidos para medios como el diario *ABC*—, así como que estuvo vinculado al mundo del cine (Sánchez Jiménez, 2021: 122). Se desconoce cuál fue su interés por traducir el relato de Mansfield o si la versión fue fruto de un encargo específico; lo que sí podemos constatar es que, de acuerdo con los catálogos bibliográficos y hemerográficos consultados, esta es la primera traducción española de la autora, fallecida tan solo dos años antes.

La versión que De Zárraga ofrece de «La mosca» constituye, pues, el primer muestrario de las decisiones que podían llegar a tomarse en torno a los retos traductológicos que los textos de Mansfield planteaban a quienes osaron traducirla desde el primer período de su recepción. Veamos algunos fragmentos.

Al inicio de la historia, Mansfield describe a un hombre, Woodifield, que visita al protagonista del relato en el despacho de este (Mansfield, 1922: 74):

> So there sat old Woodifield, smoking a cigar and staring almost greedily at the boss, who rolled in his office chair, stout, rosy, five years older than he, and still going strong, still at the helm.

De Zárraga resuelve este fragmento de la siguiente manera (Mansfield, 1925: 42):

> […] se podía encontrar al viejo Woodifield fumándose un cigarro en amable compañía del *boss*, del antiguo jefe, de su ex amo, fuerte, sanísimo, rebosante de vitalidad, a pesar de haber cumplido seis años más que él, y todavía en la brega del batallar diario con toda su energía.
>
> La traducción muestra algunas decisiones cuestionables, como la extranjerizante conservación de la voz inglesa *boss* en un contexto que podía perjudicar a la inteligibilidad de los receptores españoles del primer tercio del siglo XX; por otro lado, De Zárraga transforma *five years* en *seis años*, lo que puede clasificarse como error de traducción.[33]

Si nos fijamos en una versión posterior, la de Manuel de la Escalera de 1957, veremos que las decisiones son otras (Mansfield, 1957: 162):

> Por tanto, el viejo Woodifield fumaba su puro allí sentado, mirando casi avariciosamente al jefe, que en su silla giratoria se volvía de aquí para allá. Era robusto y colorado, le llevaba cinco años, pero se conservaba fuerte y aún seguía empuñando el timón.

Tanto semántica como estilísticamente, el fragmento de «The Fly» / «La mosca» en versión de Escalera dista menos del texto de partida; traduce, por ejemplo, «still at the hell» por «aún seguía empuñando el timón», al contrario que De Zárraga, que reformula esa estructura con la amplificación «todavía en la brega del batallar diario con toda su

[33] Esta observación se hace con cierta reserva, dado que se desconoce el texto de partida que utilizó De Zárraga para llevar a cabo la traducción.

energía». Así, mientras que la versión inglesa y la que ofrece Escalera caracterizan —sin insistir en ello— al personaje como un empresario maduro que sigue al mando de su negocio, en la traducción de De Zárraga, este queda retratado como una figura que afronta su labor con una actitud de resonancias casi épicas. Examinemos otro fragmento del relato (Mansfield, 1923: 76):

> The boss turned the bottle and lovingly showed him the label. Whisky it was.
>
> "D'you know," said he, peering up at the boss wonderingly, "they won't let me touch it at home." And he looked as though he was going to cry.

El texto presenta dificultades diversas, entre las que destaca la introducción de un diálogo en el que falta información referente al trato que se dispensan ambos personajes. Sabemos que quien interviene en este apartado es un antiguo empleado, pero Mansfield no proporciona información sobre el grado de proximidad entre los dos hombres. Los traductores hacen lecturas muy distintas; De Zárraga versiona el fragmento de la siguiente manera (Mansfield, 1925: 44):

> El *boss* dio media vuelta a la botella para mostrarle la etiqueta. Era *whisky*, efectivamente.
>
> —Usted sabe —exclamó el enfermo en tono de súplica— que en casa no me lo dejan probar.

A primera vista ya se observa que el traductor ha omitido una parte del texto de partida, aquel que se refiere al lado emocional del personaje («And he looked as though he was going to cry»).

En cuanto a la versión de Escalera, este recurre a un tenor más informal o de trato más cercano entre ambos personajes (Mansfield, 1957: 163):

> El otro dio vuelta al frasco para mostrarle la etiqueta. Era whisky.
>
> —¿Sabes que en casa no me dejan probarlo?— y miraba con asombro al jefe, como si estuviera a punto de echarse a llorar.

El uso de la segunda persona del singular relaja la tensión entre los dos personajes que en el texto de partida se muestran distantes. No obstante, Escalera respeta el contenido y no tiene reparo alguno en referirse al lado emocional del personaje que está a punto de llorar.

Finalmente se presenta aquí un fragmento de mayor complejidad temática, referido al retrato del difunto hijo del protagonista, en el que Woodifield, el jubilado que está de visita, no repara (Mansfield, 1923: 75):

> But he did not draw old Woodifield's attention to the photograph over the table of a grave-looking boy in uniform standing in one of those spectral photographers' parks with photographers' storm-clouds behind him. It was not new. It had been there for over six years.

De Zárraga vierte el pasaje de la siguiente manera (Mansfield, 1925: 42):

> Pero no conseguía que el viejo Woodifield apartase su atención de la fotografía que se hallaba sobre el escritorio. Era el retrato de un muchacho hermoso y serio, vestido de uniforme militar, en un gran marco dorado. Llevaba sobre la mesa cerca de seis años.

En esta traducción se aprecia un cambio de sentido con respecto al texto de partida: De Zárraga interpreta que el visitante tiene la mirada fija en el retrato. Además, modifica la descripción de la imagen: el *photographers' park* y las *storm-clouds* del fondo de la fotografía se transforman en un marco dorado.

Escalera, en su versión —si bien no perfecta— se ciñe más al texto de partida (Mansfield, 1957: 163):

> Pero no atrajo la atención del viejo Woodifield hacia la fotografía que había encima de la mesa: la foto de un muchacho de aspecto serio con uniforme militar, que estaba en pie en medio de uno de esos espectrales parques de fotógrafo, con unas fotográficas nubes de tormenta tras él. Llevaba allí más de seis años.

4. RESULTADOS

Gracias al estudio hemerográfico con vistas a rastrear la presencia de Katherine Mansfield en la prensa, se ha podido determinar que se habló de ella antes de que en España se publicasen las traducciones de sus obras. Así, los archivos muestran que ha habido épocas de gran interés hacia la autora neozelandesa, en particular, a partir de las primeras traducciones de sus obras.

En las sucintas muestras de las versiones españolas aquí presentadas hemos querido dar a conocer un primer caso de traducción —el de la revista *Blanco y Negro*, de 1925—, a cargo de Miguel de Zárraga, que ha pasado

desapercibido en el ámbito de la traducción y la recepción de Mansfield en España. También hemos procurado rescatar del olvido —como ya hiciera Oñate Méndez en 2020— la figura de Manuel de la Escalera como traductor: su versión del relato «La mosca» y la de De Zárraga no solo ofrecen un interesantísimo muestrario del trabajo traductológico de dos épocas y contextos diferentes, sino que también ponen de manifiesto dos aproximaciones muy distintas a la narrativa de Mansfield.

5. DISCUSIÓN

El elevado interés que Mansfield despierta entre los críticos y periodistas españoles, sobre todo en las dos décadas centrales del siglo, se debe con toda probabilidad a dos factores principales: por un lado, a la proliferación de sus obras versionadas al español a partir de la década de 1940, por el otro, a la consideración de la neozelandesa como autora de prestigio internacional, que se integra parcialmente en el canon de la literatura traducida.

Dicha integración, a su vez, se produce por medio de estrategias políticas de intelectuales como Amparo Pidal, que reivindican la literatura de mujeres desde el seno del régimen y a pesar de la criptoginia imperante, pero no solo gracias a ellas. A la difusión de Mansfield y a su recepción como autora de prestigio también contribuyeron los esfuerzos, de signo no necesariamente feminista, de intelectuales como Ricardo Gullón, quien, varias décadas antes de las guerras del canon, ya formuló listas de autores con planteamientos similares a los canónicos, en las que aparecía Mansfield y ocupando, junto a otras mujeres, un lugar preponderante.

6. CONCLUSIONES

La recepción temprana de la obra de Mansfield tuvo su culmen en España a partir de 1940 —a raíz de la traducción de su *Diario*—, lo que a lo largo de las décadas de 1940 y 1950 daría paso a un *boom* en el que proliferaron las traducciones y retraducciones de sus obras a ambos lados del Atlántico. Durante los años 1960 y 1970, en cambio, prácticamente dejan de publicarse nuevas traducciones, si bien es probable que la autora

neozelandesa tampoco cayera en el fondo de los anaqueles de la literatura extranjera ni quedara relegada al olvido, pues siguieron reeditándose sus obras completas. Sobre la investigación de este y otros aspectos de la recepción de Mansfield en el segundo franquismo, esperamos tener ocasión de publicar próximamente resultados que complementen a los preliminares aquí expuestos, que constituyen una primera aproximación, particularmente centrada en las décadas centrales del siglo.

A través de la reconstrucción de su llegada a la lengua española y del rescate de un primer cuento, traducido ya en 1925, resituamos a una autora que no solo cuenta con una extensa obra narrativa de inconmensurable interés, sino que también representa un hito en la historia de la literatura y las lenguas comparadas: su proyecto estético y narrativo es y será siempre aire fresco para las letras.

Este proyecto, aún incipiente, aspira a determinar los motivos lógicos de sus traducciones, del *boom* de mediados del siglo XX y del relativo declive del interés por la autora modernista durante los años 1960 y 1970 en los territorios de habla española. El nombre de Mansfield debería figurar a la altura de otras autoras que tuvieron gran trascendencia en el siglo XX, y es parte de nuestro cometido situarla en el lugar que le corresponde no solo en la historia de la literatura, donde ya se ganó un merecido lugar preeminente hace tiempo, sino también en la historia de la traducción.

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TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING: BREAKING BORDERS THROUGH HISTORY

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1. INTRODUCTION

The task of making communication possible is a very rewarding job, and it is as old as humanity. However, history has marked many differences in the evolution of the translation field and its present situation around the world.

Times have shown that commercial, social, religious or military exchanges were the driving force for intercultural evolution, and they implied the need for a linguistic liaison which was never easy. Different historic landmarks made professionals aware of the need for proper training, which encouraged them to establish translation and interpreting schools and create their own associations.

The trade of translators and interpreters gained importance in those regions with intense exchanges. A good example of this would be the Mediterranean countries, among which we should mention the case of Egypt, in Africa, or Spain, in Europe, whose Toledo School of Translators, founded in the 12th and 13th centuries, served as a model to other countries.

On the other side of the spectrum, the role of translators and interpreters was minimal in those territories where international presence was limited, or even forbidden, as it was the case in Japan during the *sakoku*, a period of over two centuries (from 1603 to 1868) under the Tokugawa shogunate. The arrival of missionaries to Japan brought the Eastern languages and culture to the country, and thus, a religious and political tension; the consequence was the virtually complete isolation of this Asian archipelago.

Nowadays, the digital revolution and AI have marked and still influence our reality as translators, interpreters.

1.2. JUSTIFICATION

When approaching a field of study, it is important to understand its origins and its evolution; translation studies is a good example of this.

Santoyo (1999), Hurtado (2001), Navarro (1996), Valero (2000) or García Yebra (1987, p. 11), all have emphasised the importance of knowing the history of translation and interpreting. However, the history of translation is not easy to retrace.

Lieven D'Hulst (1994, p. 13) says: "[learning about its history] is practically the only way to give unity to a discipline, showing the differences between traditions of thought and divergent activities, bringing the past and the present closer together."

D'Hulst and Delisle are probably the two theorists who have best conveyed the importance of knowing the history of translation and interpreting. D'Hulst explains exhaustively why and for what purpose the history of translation should be studied. He presents the following arguments in favour of its study (D'Hulst, 1994, pp. 12-14): for the neophyte, history is an excellent gateway to a discipline, and for researchers, it provides them with the intellectual flexibility necessary to adapt their ideas to new ways of thinking.

Knowing history makes us more tolerant when faced with differing or opposing ways of thinking about translation. This will make us more objective, enabling us to judge whether there has been real progress and we are faced with something new (like AI), or whether, on the contrary, it is a reformulation of an existing theory. Also, it is practically the only way to achieve unity within a discipline, by showing similarities and comparing divergent traditions of thought and activity, bringing the past and the present closer together.

These arguments can be summarised in two fundamental ideas: firstly, studying history serves to scientifically consolidate and provide

necessary unity to translation studies; and, secondly, it contributes to putting the achievements of current theories into perspective (*ibid*.).

Jean Delisle (2003, 2005) brilliantly explains the importance of understanding the history of translation and interpreting in his works. He writes the following:

One could even say that history is to translation studies what perspective is to pictorial art. […] It allows us, as the expression goes, to "put into perspective" the theoretical notions of translation studies, to present them in all their dimensions by placing them in a broader context than that defined by any theoretical approach. In our opinion, this historical perspective offers the best protection against simplistic explanations, overly simplistic definitions and hasty conclusions in matters of fidelity, for example. Above all, it protects us against any form of dogmatism (Delisle, 2003, p. 7).

Obviously, history has unfolded differently in each country and continent, and therefore the development of translation and translation studies has followed different paths and paces. However, despite the significant historical differences we find between the paradigms presented in this work (Egypt, Japan and Spain), we will see that there are some common features related to translation and interpreting that unite us as a profession and consolidate our trade as an essential intercultural sector along history.

2. EGYPT

Historically, Egypt has played an important role as an early center for translation. Ancient Egyptians used translation for political, economic, and diplomatic relations.

Modern Egypt played a pivotal role in modernising the Arab world through translation and continues to be a leader in official, technical, and audiovisual translation today. Actually, it is a major hub for the Arab world's translation industry. Egypt is estimated to produce a volume of translated material that exceeds the rest of the Arab world combined.

2.1. Historical Background: The New Kingdom, late 18th Dynasty

The late 18th Dynasty of Egypt (c. 1390–1295 BCE) occurred during the New Kingdom period, a time of significant territorial expansion and cultural achievements. Some key figures were Amenhotep III, Akhenaten, Nefertiti and Tutankhamun.

The dynasty saw the peak of Egyptian imperial power, with its territory stretching from Syria to Nubia. This expansion demanded a great deal of exchanges, and the importance of interpreters was already recognised. To cope with the intercultural communication demands raised by Egypt's considerable external dealings in Africa and the Middle East, ancient Egyptians instituted the role of interlingual mediator in their bureaucracy (Kurz, 1985, 1986; Salevsky, 2018).

Actually, for the first time in history (14th century BCE) an interpreter is artistically depicted, as we can still appreciate on the bas-relief of the tomb of Horemheb, in Saqqara, ancient Memphis.



Source: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden (Netherlands)
Bas-relief in the tomb of Horemheb

Horemheb (1323–1295 BCE) was the last member of the 18th Dynasty. He was an exceptionally clever man who rose from the rank of

commoner to become general of the Egyptian army, and eventually pharaoh. He was in charge of foreign affairs, and thus one of his duties was to convey the pharaoh's reply to foreign delegations, and this was only possible through the interpreters who were kept at court in Memphis.

The bas-relief in the tomb of Horemheb depicts an interpreter mediating between the general (later pharaoh) Horemheb and several foreign envoys from Libya, Nubia, and Syria, who were begging the Egyptians to send their armies and turn their countries into protectorates (Kurz, 1986). It shows the interpreter facing both directions to represent the act of conveying a message from one interlocutor to the other.

This beautiful scene of a diplomatic oral act, which is a unique glimpse into the role of interpreters in ancient Egypt, is nowadays fragmented into multiple pieces displayed in different museums in Berlin, Leiden, and Vienna (Kurz, 1986).

For centuries, Egyptians had a monolingual mindset and never felt the need to learn foreign languages, for them, it was non-Egyptians who had to adjust and learn Egyptian (Hermann, 1956).

However, in order to be able to manage and supervise the business of interpreting, they created an interpreter corps of foreigners who were not only bilingual but also knowledgeable about Egyptian culture and tastes. For this, sons of foreign royal families came to Egypt at an early age to learn the Egyptian language and develop the required abilities to become interlingual mediators (Kurz, 1986).

This situation changed when the Egyptian empire began to decline (6th century BCE); Egyptians started to learn foreign languages, and they would send their children to live with Greek families so that they could learn their language and culture. The Greek historian Herodotus reports that: “by the 4th century BCE, their descendants had congealed into an interpreter caste, whose status ranked between that of merchants and seafarers”: the dragomans (*ibid*.).

2.2. The Ptolemaic dynasty

The Ptolemaic dynasty was a Macedonian royal family that ruled Ptolemaic Egypt from 323 to 30 BCE. It was founded by Ptolemy I, a general and successor of Alexander the Great. They built Alexandria, including the Lighthouse of Alexandria and the Great Library of Alexandria. The dynasty ended when Rome conquered Egypt in the reign of Cleopatra VII. This dynasty, who presented themselves as both Greek kings and Egyptian pharaohs, reshaped Egyptian culture and society, began a period of Hellenization, and made Alexandria the center of the Hellenistic world (King, 2024).

The starting point of the history of (written) translation in Egypt dates back to the 3rd century BCE, when Ptolomeo Filadelfo, pharaoh of the Ptolemaic dynasty, commissioned a Hebrew into Greek translation of the Holy Scriptures from 72 wise men who were experts in these languages. It is called the Alexandrian Canon and is the first known translation project in history (Hurtado, 2007).

2.2.1. Cleopatra

Cleopatra VII Thea Filopátor (69 BCE-30 BCE), Queen of the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt from 51 to 30 BC, was the last active Hellenistic pharaoh. Her first language was Koine Greek, and she is the only Ptolemaic ruler known to have learned the Egyptian language, among several others. It is thought that Cleopatra spoke nine languages to varying levels: Greek, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Aramaic, Syriac, Median, Parthian, an Arabic language and the Troglodyte language.

According to Plutarch's Life of Antony (pp. 3-4):

> In her interviews with Barbarians she very seldom had need of an interpreter but made her replies to most of them herself and unassisted. […] She spoke Ethiopian, the language of the "Troglodytes", Hebrew (or Aramaic), Arabic, the "Syrian language" (perhaps Syriac), Median, and Parthian, and she could apparently also speak Latin, although her Roman contemporaries would have preferred to speak with her in her native Koine Greek.

Aside from Greek, Egyptian, and Latin, these languages reflected Cleopatra's desire to restore North African and West Asian territories that once belonged to the Ptolemaic Kingdom.

3. JAPAN

Today, the translation market in Japan is very dynamic, but this has not always been the case. If we go back in time, we find a period of complete isolation that interrupted both oral and written linguistic exchanges with other countries. To understand the reality of Japan, it is necessary to know its history, and especially that relating to its *sakoku* (鎖国) period.

3.1. Historical Background

Japan has been an empire since approximately 200 AD in which Japanese emperors were considered deities until 1946. However, from 1186 to 1867, real power was in the hands of the *shoguns*: the Minamoto, Ashikaga and Tokugawa clans, who dominated the country militarily, although formal sovereignty remained with the emperor (Kondo and Wakabayashi, 2009, p. 468).

If we go back further, to the historical origins of Japan, we find an archipelago inhabited since the Paleolithic era, some 35000 years ago. Its earliest inhabitants were the Ainu. In prehistoric times, there were several migratory movements from the Asian continent. Some of the first immigrants were Tungusic peoples from the northeast of the Asian continent; other invaders were probably Chinese, Korean, Malayan, and Mongolian peoples, who gave rise to a homogeneous society resulting from racial fusion.

Before the 4th century AD, the Yayoi Chinese culture, spread from south to north in the Japanese archipelago. Within this context, we find the first translated document: a diplomatic letter sent by the Japanese King Bu de Wa to the Chinese emperor Shun de Liu Song in 478.

Buddhism was introduced in 587 and, during the reign of Emperor Skotoku (593-622), it became the official religion, although the

imperial practised cult continued to be Shinto (神道). The Nara, Heian, Kamakura and other periods followed chronologically after this historical period.

As we can see, cultural, religious and linguistic exchange was intense in the early days of Japan.

3.2. First Language Exchanges with Europe

From the early 15th century, trade with China, Macao, Taiwan, the Kingdom of Siam, Cochinchina and the Philippine island of Luzon flourished. It was in this context that the first Portuguese arrived, almost by accident, on the island of Tanegashima (Kyushu) in 1543 (Junqueras i Vies *et al*., 2012, pp. 176-177).

Spanish traders followed in 1584, then Dutch traders in 1600, and finally, English traders in 1613. Even though trade was important, the most important European contribution was the introduction of Christianity by the Spanish Jesuit Saint Francis Xavier, who arrived in Japan in 1549 (Hane, 2003, p. 67).

Japan began to experience political and military anarchy. The daimyos of the southern coast wanted to obtain Portuguese weapons and products, so they accepted the presence of merchants and missionaries. However, their relations subsequently deteriorated in favour of Dutch and English merchants, whose relations had nothing to do with religion (Zamora *et al*., 2012), and religious translation went into decline.

3.2.1. Saint Francis Xavier

Saint Francis Xavier played a very important role in the spread of Christianity in Asia, and we find it particularly interesting that he preached with the help of interpreters. Between June and December 1547, he lived in Malacca (Malaysia), where he met a Japanese man named Yahiro or Anjiro, a samurai who had fled Japan on a Portuguese ship after being convicted of several crimes. The friendship they developed awakened in Xavier the desire to travel to Japan. Saint Francis Xavier returned to Goa (India) where Anjiro and two of his servants studied Portuguese and prepared to be his interpreters. The four of them, along with two Spanish

Jesuits, set sail for Japan on April 15th 1549, and on August 15th, they reached the coast of Kagoshima, on the island of Kyushu, in southern Japan, marking the beginning of what is known as the Christian Century of Japan (1549-1640) (Fundación San Francisco Javier).

St. Francis Xavier spent two years and three months in Japan evangelising and had the work *Declaration of the Articles of Faith* translated, which he learned by heart and would recite on street corners. (Mujika, 2007).

3.2.2. João Rodrigues

Another important interpreter was João Rodrigues, a Portuguese missionary who arrived in Japan in 1577. Rodrigues was a merchant, diplomat, politician, and chief interpreter of the mission, serving as a liaison between the Japanese and foreign navigators.

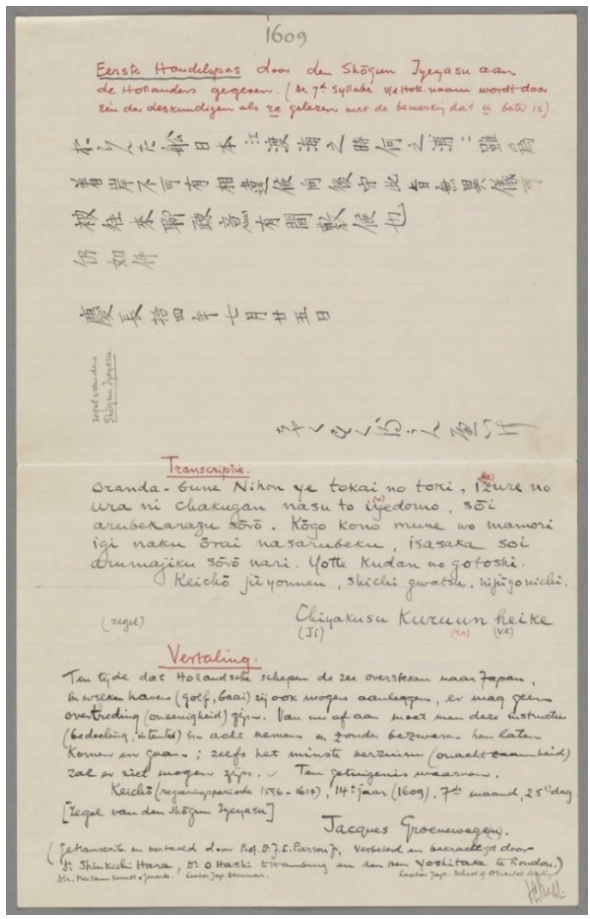
In 1591, he interpreted different conversations with *shogun* Hideyoshi. He also wrote the following works: *Vocabvlário da Lingoa de Iapam*, the first *Japanese-Portuguese dictionary* (1603), *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*, the *First Grammar of the Japanese Language* (1604) and *História da Igreja no Japão*. In his more linguistic works, he wrote about the difficulties of translating from Portuguese into Japanese and recommended translating the meaning rather than word for word (Cooper, 1974).

Probably following Rodrigues' theory, in 1593, the first non-religious Western work was translated: *Aesop's Fables.* This translation was quite free, replacing European objects that were unknown in Japan with the most similar Japanese equivalents; unfortunately, the identity of the translator is unknown.

3.2.3. William Adams (Miura Anjín)

In June 1598, at the age of 34, Adams was sent with five Dutch ships from Rotterdam to the East Indies (now Indonesia). The fleet encountered several storms, and in April 1600, Adams' ship, the Liefde ("Charity"), the only ship to survive the dangerous expedition, with its 20 sick and dying crew members, anchored off the island of Kyushu in southern Japan, becoming the first ship from northern Europe to reach that country (Hane, 2003).

The battered crew was assisted by Portuguese Jesuit priests who thought it was a pirate ship and considered that the crew should be crucified as pirates. They were imprisoned with a pending execution order, but Adams was fortunate enough to meet the daimyo of Mikawa and the future *shogun* of Japan, Tokugawa Ieyasu. Ieyasu questioned him in Osaka, and impressed by his vast knowledge, especially about ships, made him one of his confidants. Years later, he became his personal advisor on Western affairs and replaced the Jesuit priest João Rodrigues as the *shogun*'s official interpreter (Chifflet, 2015).


1609

Eerste Handelspas door den Shōgun Ijeyasu aan de Hollanders gegeven. (de 7de syllabe yetsoh waarin woordt door zin der deskundigen als ze gelezen met de bemerking dat ij beter is).

Transcriptie:

Oranda-bune Nihon ye tokai no tori, Izure no ura ni chakugan nasu to iyedomo, sōi arubekaraqu sōrō. Kōgo konō mune wo mamori igi naku ōrai nasarubeku, isaaka soi dumajiku sōrō nari. Yotte kudan no gotoshi.

Keichō jūyonnen, shichi gwatsu, nijūgonichi.

(regel) Chiyakusu Kurusun Heike (Ji) (Ka) (Ve)

Vertaling:

Ten tijde dat Hollandsche schepen de zee overkomen naar Japan, in welken haven (golf, baai) zij ook mogen aanleggen, er mag geen overtreding (onregelmatigheid) zijn. Van nu af aan moet men deze instructie (bedoeling, intentie) in acht nemen en zonder bezwaar. Een Kater Koman en gaan; zeeën het minste verzuim (onachtzaamheid) zal er niet mogen zijn. Ten getuigenis waarvan.

Keichō (regeringsperiode 1596-1615), 14de jaar (1609), 7de maand, 25ste dag

[Zegel van den Shōgun Ijeyasu]

Jacques Groenewegen.

(Getranscribeerd en vertaald door Prof. B.J.O. Plasschaert, verbeterd en uitgebreid door Dr. Shinkichi Hara, Dr. O Hashi (Strassburg) en den heer Yoshitaka G. Rondon)

Source: National Archives of the Netherlands (Nationaal Archief)
Letter translated by Adams for *shogun* Tokugawa

Shogun Tokugawa even granted him samurai status, and Adams, or Miura Anjin, as the *shogun* named him, received the title of *hatamoto* (旗本), which meant that he was a samurai in the direct service of the shogunate, a prestigious position in the *shogun*'s court, demonstrating the importance of interpreters at that time.

Adams wrote and translated letters (as the one we can see below) on behalf of the *shogun*, inviting Dutch and English merchants to come to Japan, and acted as a mediator between the shogunate and the merchants who began to visit the country (*Ibid.*).

In this document, which is of great value as it is one of the earliest preserved translations, the original text appears in ancient Japanese, first in traditional writing (reading from right to left) in *kanji* (漢字) or Japanese ideograms, then in *romaji* (ローマ字) or Roman characters, and finally translated into Dutch and signed by the translator.

William Adams, who was considered one of the most influential foreigners during Japan's first period of openness to the West, died in May 1620 (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

3.3. THE *SAKOKU* (鎖国): 1639-1853 AND THE *ORANDA TSUJI*

The *sakoku* (closure of the country) is a policy of controlled and very limited external contact imposed by the Edo *bakufu* (幕府), Japan's last military government, which ruled from 1603 to 1868 under the power of the Tokugawa family.

The *bakufu* considered the significant influence of religious texts on society to be dangerous, so a series of seclusion orders that banned Christianity and the presence of European missionaries and merchants in the country were issued, except for the Dutch, as they did not intend to preach. With this decision, the already scarce translations of Western literature were reduced to the point of practically disappearing.

In the 17th century, when in 1641 the Dutch had to move to Dejima, an artificial island in Nagasaki, this province became the only one with official translators and interpreters, called *Oranda tsuji* (Dutch interpreters), who were also in charge of customs. Torikai (2009, pp. 29-30)

describes these *Oranda tsuji* as professional civil servants who not only translated or interpreted, but also carried out administrative tasks related to diplomacy, government and international relations.

The position of *tsuji* was hereditary and passed from father to son, so when an interpreter did not have a male heir, it was common to adopt a child who could inherit the position. During the Edo period, some 20 families with a high cultural level held these positions in the Japanese government. It was a highly organised system with a hierarchical structure in which they followed a code of conduct with an *oh-tsuji*, who was a chief interpreter who supervised the profession.

Despite being well paid, the *tsuji* did not always have a good reputation. They were sometimes accused of stealing foreign goods, other times criticised for their poor language skills, and some were even arrested for making mistakes in their interpreting work. The situation improved at the end of the 18th century, when the *tsuji* already had a good training system in place. Interpreters had to undergo this training, which began in their childhood. The future *tsuji*, began learning Dutch at the age of ten and later had to pass an exam. Then, they became professional interpreters and could rise through the ranks of the *tsuji* (Sugimoto, 1990). There were about 50 *tsuji* in the country, and each year, two of the most experienced ones accompanied the representative of the Dutch settlement to Edo (Tokyo) to meet the *shogun* and deliver a report on overseas affairs. They also interpreted during this meeting with the *shogun* and with some intellectuals eager to learn about what was happening outside Japan.

The *Oranda tsuji* contributed to establishing intercultural contacts during the *sakoku* period through their work, such as the historic meeting between Arai Hakuseki, an advisor to the *shogun* considered to be one of Japan's greatest thinkers, and Giovanni Battista Sidotti, a missionary from Rome (Katagiri, 1995). Imamura Genemon led the team of interpreters in all meetings with Sidotti. These meetings are considered a milestone in Japan's intellectual history (Semizu, 2001, p. 144).

The nature of the texts translated by the *tsuji* was, in most cases, not literary. Apart from texts related to trade, the first works to be translated were medical texts. Some translators who specialised in medical

translation were Motoki Ryoi (17th century) and Kaitai Shinsho (18th century). Medical texts were followed in importance and frequency by translations of natural science and military texts, with translations of texts related to the humanities being relegated to last place. These types of translations were done into classical Chinese, not Japanese, and it was often necessary to coin terms to name new concepts, for which Chinese words were frequently used.

Apart from translating and interpreting, those *tsuji* who were more academic played a very important role in teaching Dutch and transmitting knowledge about Western culture. We must highlight, for example, the work carried out by Motoki Yoshinaga (1735-1794), who translated works related to astronomy and introduced Copernicus' heliocentric theory to Japan. But Yoshinaga was especially important to us because at the end of his life he wrote a volume explaining his translation method. This was almost certainly the first high-quality essay on translation techniques in Japan (Sugimoto, 1990, p. 132). This work compared the structures of Dutch and Japanese, discussed translation problems, explained how to transcribe foreign words, and brought various approaches to translation. However, the most prominent *tsuji* in linguistic and academic terms was Shizuki Tadao (1674-1728), who wrote nine books on the Dutch language that included topics related to translation.

At the beginning of the 19th century, in 1808, Baba Sajuro, a talented young *tsuji* who had just begun his career, settled in Edo under the orders of the shogunate, as there was no one in the capital who could read or translate Dutch correctly. There, the young *tsuji*, apart from translating many Dutch grammar books and teaching the language to Japanese scholars, undertook the translation of the Dutch version of a French encyclopedia entitled *Kosei Shimpen* (New Volumes for Public Welfare) into Japanese. This project, which began in 1811, consisted of 70 fascicles to be translated and, although it was never completed, it has been, to date, the largest translation project ever undertaken in Japan. Baba adopted an accessible style in his translation of the encyclopedia and added notes with comments, which was a common practice among *tsuji* at the time, as there was a widespread feeling that the Japanese were unfamiliar with many aspects of Western culture. That year, the

government established a national office to oversee this translation project. This national office, whose name underwent several changes, would be the predecessor of the current University of Tokyo.

The last known *tsuji* of Nagasaki were Moriyama Einosuke and Hori Tatsunosuke, who worked in diplomacy after the arrival of Commodore Perry and the signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854 (events that marked the end of isolation), and who also compiled dictionaries and wrote textbooks in the early Meiji period. It is not known exactly when and why the *tsuji* disappeared from the Japanese diplomatic sphere (Roland, 1982, p. 98).

The Treaty of Kanagawa, which would change the course of Japan's foreign policy, was made possible by the work of translators, interpreters, and *tsuji*. Perry's interpreters were Dr. S. W. Williams, Dr. Bettelheim, both missionaries, and Mr. Anton Portman, an American diplomat who could speak Dutch. On the Japanese side, the interpreters were Nakahama Manjiro, a fisherman who had lived in the United States for several years after being rescued from a shipwreck, and the *tsuji* Hori Tatsunosuke, Hatshisuko Tokushumo, and Moriyama Einosuke.

The arrival of figures such as Sir Ernest Mason Satow (1843-1929), an exceptional linguist with a deep knowledge of the Japanese language and a great collector of Japanese books and manuscripts, made it possible for Dutch to cease to be used as a *lingua franca* (Baker and Saldanha, 2009, pp. 469-472).

Thus, Japan's *sakoku* isolation came to an end, as did the *tsuji*'s monopoly on work as translators and interpreters. With the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), Japan underwent a major political and social change. This marked the end of the shogunate, the return to power of the emperor, and the country's entry into the modern era.

4. SPAIN

History of translation in Spain is very rich, from the translation of the Bible from Latin into Spanish in the 13th century and the Arab and

Jewish influence, to the Renaissance and the translations of the Spanish Golden Age (1492-1659).

Some authors like Pym (2003) and Lafarga and Pegenaute (2004) have numerous publications on the history of translation and interpreting in Spain, from translations of the Koran and the Bible to the King Alfonso X and the Toledo School of Translators, or the highly significant translations of Alfonso de Cartagena, who translated Cicero and Seneca in the 15th century; López de Ayala, who translated Boccaccio and other classic authors such as Titus Livius in the 14th century; Ortega y Gasset, with his 1937 essay *Misery and Splendor of Translation*; and Íñigo López de Mendoza, 1st Marquis of Santillana, who promoted the translation of Italian humanists in the 15th century.

4.1. Historical Background and Early Translations

Spain's geographical location and the successive invasions it suffered meant that it was always exposed to great cultural and linguistic diversity. The pre-Roman languages of the Iberian Peninsula, such as Iberian, Celtic, and Basque, ended up coexisting and evolving with the arrival of Latin during romanization. This plurality and the subsequent expansion of Islam created a context of translation and linguistic diversity.

During the Middle Ages, Spain found itself in a position of cultural, technical, and scientific superiority over the rest of Europe. Toledo stood out for its cosmopolitan character, and its political importance grew throughout the Middle Ages. The Visigoth king Atanagildo established Toledo as the capital of his kingdom in the 6th century, and under King Recaredo, Spain converted to Catholicism. With the Muslim conquest of Spain in 711, Islam also became established in Toledo, where numerous mosques were built.

One century later, the first known Christian Arabic text appeared, dating from the year 889. It is a verse translation of the Book of Psalms, carried out by Hafs ibn Albar al-Qutí, known as the Goth, with the help of Valente, bishop of Cordoba. He is also credited with an Arabic version of Paulo Orosio's *Historia adversus paganos*. As for the translation of other biblical material, Ibn Hazm (994-1064) states that there were

quite a few Arabic texts in circulation in the 10th century, especially translations of the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul (López de Coca, 2008, pp. 271-297).

In the 12th century, Greek texts were translated into Latin, such as those of Galen by Burgundio of Pisa. Jewish civilization also flourished significantly, and in fact, ten synagogues were built in Toledo, which at that time was an example of cultural coexistence and for this reason was called "the Toledo of the Three Cultures." This multiculturalism implied multilingual coexistence, which significantly promoted linguistic exchanges and, therefore, the practice of translation and interpreting.

4.2. The Toledo School of Translators

As we mentioned before, multicultural Spain became a center of intellectual exchange. It was in this context that the Toledo School of Translators emerged: a school of Latin-Arabic studies with Hebrew mediation, founded in the capital of the kingdom in the second quarter of the 12th century by the Archbishop of Toledo, Don Raimundo.

The School of Translators experienced two periods of splendor, the first during the time of the aforementioned Don Raimundo, and later, in the 13th century, under King Alfonso X. All kinds of documents from the most diverse sciences were translated there, including works of special significance for world culture. The School of Translators made Toledo the capital of European culture.

During the philosophical, artistic, scientific, and literary renaissance of the 12th and 13th centuries, the Andalusians were one of the most influential peoples in Europe, particularly in philosophy, astronomy, medicine, and literature (González Palencia, 1942, p. 15). Only Italy could rival Spain in areas such as religion and translation. This development was due, as we have already explained, to the antagonism between two cultures: the Latin Christian and the Arab-Muslim, to the competition between these two dogmatically different religions, and to the emergence of a third monotheistic religion: Judaism.

Religious thought at this time was concentrated in certain monasteries, such as Cluny, and in the military orders. These military orders —the

Order of Calatrava, the Order of Santiago, the Order of Alcántara, and the Order of Montesa— had Muslim and Jew translators, who were generally prisoners or slaves. Thanks to them, communication and the exchange of ideas between the three faiths were fluid (González Palencia, 1942, p. 21).

At the same time, from the mid-10th century onwards, in more northern cities such as Huesca and Tarazona, and later in Leon, Pamplona, Segovia, and Barcelona, translation work had a combative purpose. When Archbishop Raimundo, who led the Church of Toledo from 1125 to 1152, arrived, he encouraged translators to combat Islam on an ideological level. Don Raimundo instructed them to translate in accordance with his ideas, and translation thus became a widespread task.

The Toledo School of Translators was not a school as we understand it today, but rather a group of scholars sharing procedures and working in the same place. These scholars translated from Arabic into Castilian Romance, and from Castilian Romance into Latin. Normally, it was the Mozarabs, Christians whose mother tongue was Arabic, who read the Arabic works and interpreted them into Romance, while other clergymen were responsible for transferring what they heard in Romance into Latin.

Two of the most prominent translators at the Toledo School were Domingo Gundisalvo (who translated from Romance languages into Latin) and Juan Hispano (who worked from Arabic into Romance languages). In this way, Toledo and the Spanish kingdoms became the great transmitters of classical culture to the rest of Western Europe.

In the 13th century, the Toledo School of Translators entered a new phase thanks to the patronage of King Alfonso X, byname the Wise. The works translated in this second phase used the vernacular, that is, Castilian, as the working language, apparently on the initiative of Jewish translators. This way, the Old Testament was translated into Castilian and so were many historical and scientific works, which led to the dissemination of culture among all social strata that could read and write.

The impetus given to culture by King Alfonso X was fundamental for the Castilian language. The king saw the scientific and pragmatic need to transfer the cultural heritage of the time from Latin to Castilian, thus spreading Greek philosophy and science (works of Al Kindi, Algacel,

Aristotle, Plato, Euclid, Galen, Ptolemy, and Alexander of Aphrodisias, among others) through translations. Furthermore, the king himself wrote numerous works on a variety of subjects: law, astronomy, history, poetry, etc. His interest in culture and translation was evident, making this city an important intellectual center at the European level.

In addition to Toledo, we must bear in mind that there were other centers of translation in Spain in the Middle Ages, such as Santa María de Ripoll, Astorga, where the translator Hermán, known as "the German" stood out, and Pamplona, where Robert of Chester carried out his translation work (El-Madkouri Maataoui, 2006). Although we know the names of these translators, historical evidence suggests that translation at this time was carried out as a team and that the target language texts were always reviewed by a proofreader.

The convergence of religions and cultures is very important not only in Spain, but also in the Mediterranean region, this is why many translation centers sprang up on its shores. One notable example is the School of Amalfi, south of Naples, where significant intellectual and commercial activity took place between Italy and the East. This translation school had branches in Mount Athos, Cairo, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, and was so important that, in the 11th century, it dominated cultural exchanges between the Greek East and the Latin West (Berschin, 1991, p. 163).

As we can see, translation was very important in the Middle Ages in Spain, the Mediterranean, and Europe, and it developed wherever there was a crossroads of cultures or religions, as a means of transmitting knowledge, facilitating commercial exchange, and promoting peace in times of war. Translation played a very important role in education and the acquisition of Greek and Arabic knowledge, and we can say that universal knowledge arose, in large part, from translation.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From an epistemological point of view, translation has always been a key element in the transmission and preservation of knowledge, it has served as a tool for consolidating cultural identity and has been a major factor in the evolution of language. Translation has evolved from being

a craft to becoming an academic discipline and a regulated profession, with the creation of professional associations, university studies and the publication of specialised journals.

In our globalised world, it is essential that communication flows between individuals at all levels and in all areas. This inherent human need is not something new. García Yebra (1985) mentioned it in his inaugural speech at the Royal Spanish Academy on January 27th 1985: "For thousands of years, translation has been one of the most important processes, perhaps the most important, for the spread of culture, the creation and development of new literatures, and the enrichment of the languages used for translation".

In this article, we have seen three paradigms corresponding to three different countries and cultures, three different periods in history, and a wide variety of languages, however, in every single case, translation and interpreting were always a cornerstone for communication and evolution.

As we have explained, the Egyptian history led to the creation of a cast: the dragomans, who were trained since childhood to become interpreters, translators, and official guides between Turkish-, Arabic-, and Persian-speaking countries first, and then, the linguistic mediators for the Middle East and European embassies, consulates, vice-consulates and trading posts.

These professionals were so respected, and their work proved to be so relevant, that the term was exported to name them all over the world: ترجمان (tarjumān) in Arabic, *tercüman* in Turkish, ትርጓም (t-r-gw-m) in Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic), *dragman* in Middle English, δραγομάνος (dragoumanos) in Middle Greek, *trujamán, trujimán* and *truchimán* in Spanish,… and so on in many more languages and cultures. And, of course, we find an array of common features with the figure of the *Oranda tsujis* in Japan.

As we have seen, we can confirm that regardless of the country, at any point in history, translation and interpreting have been present, serving as indispensable witnesses to the evolution of the world. Their role has been vital in the evolution of mankind, in education and the acquisition

of knowledge, essential to bring the seeds of thought around the world, to develop commerce and science, to start and stop war.

Developed wherever there was a crossroads of cultures or religions, as a means of transmitting knowledge and promoting peace, we can proudly say that universal knowledge arose, in large part, from translation.

Given their significance, translators and interpreters must know their history so that "they know where they come from and where they must go […]. And so that they believe in what they do, which is to unite nations and languages" (Pérez Blázquez, 2013, p. 117).

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LA TRADUCCIÓN Y REPRESENTACIÓN DEL TURISMO RELIGIOSO EN LA CAMPAÑA *SPAIN MARKS*

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Una campaña publicitaria se define como el «conjunto de acciones coordinadas con las que una organización promociona un producto, servicio o marca» (Universidad Europea, 2024). Las campañas publicitarias presentan al receptor como objetivo principal, partiendo de unas características lingüísticas y estilísticas que aboguen por una persuasión asegurada. Para obtener dichos rasgos, es primordial la existencia de una buena sintonía entre los elementos que confluyen, como pueden ser el propio producto o servicio que se pretende ofrecer y dar a conocer, la audiencia a la que se dirige, el mensaje que se pretende transmitir y los medios o canales de comunicación elegidos para la transmisión de dicho mensaje (Universidad Europea, 2024).

La finalidad de una campaña integra una serie de objetivos comunes y de menor magnitud, pero que terminan por reforzar la seña de identidad de la empresa o entidad creadora de la misma. Algunos de los mismos, a su vez útiles para este análisis, pueden dar a conocer la marca, ofrecer información al público y marcar diferencias con la competencia (Universidad Europea, 2024).

La campaña aquí analizada tiene por nombre *Spain Marks* y es resultado del Instituto de Turismo de España (en adelante, Turespaña). Esta campaña es definida por la propia entidad como:

Campaña de publicidad rompedora, que basa su eje creativo en considerar a España como un destino turístico con personalidad propia, una forma de entender la vida que no deja indiferente al visitante, que queda

marcado por su huella. Se trata de una campaña original, con algún componente de ironía, y de gran belleza estética, con imágenes en blanco y negro que contrastan con el eslogan sobreimpresionado en rojo (Turespaña, 2025).

Más allá de los elementos estilísticos de la misma, cabe destacar el uso de una campaña publicitaria para la difusión del conocimiento, en este caso, de valores, tradiciones y otros elementos culturales que conforman la identidad colectiva de los españoles. Es decir, la temática principal de la campaña es la utilización de los rasgos representativos de la sociedad española como elementos de atracción para el turista.

Entre los rasgos representados en los distintos carteles, el interés de este estudio recae sobre el ámbito cofrade, entendido como aquel que conforma actividades relacionadas con una hermandad o cofradía y que asocia fieles con fines religiosos, de culto público y de asistencia. En otras palabras, es un espacio donde se comparte la fe, siendo su punto culmen la participación activa con procesiones en Semana Santa. Así es como este ámbito, representado en un cartel de dicha campaña, muestra una notable importancia social, artística y económica en la sociedad española actual y, por consiguiente, en la sociedad de tiempos atrás, que viene conformando y creando su auge actual. A su vez, se destaca el uso de la comunicación para dar a conocer con mayor detalle este ámbito, especialmente en el panorama internacional, donde algo tan propio de la sociedad española destaca en el resto de Europa y del mundo.

Por otro lado, la publicidad cofrade y religiosa internacional no juega un gran papel, no solo por la rareza de este ámbito fuera de España, sino también por la complejidad de comunicar la emoción y la fe a través de recursos visuales y narrativos que respeten la devoción y que llame la atención del público. A pesar de que tal representación sea puramente simbólica, se pretenden transmitir valores como la fe, la comunidad o la identidad. Ya por la década de los 40, Turespaña muestra en la campaña publicitaria *Visit Spain* los primeros tópicos de Semana Santa, siendo a su vez predominantes dentro de esta misma campaña junto con el flamenco (Medrano, 2017).

Por lo tanto, dado el continuo uso de campañas publicitarias, cada vez más importantes dentro de una sociedad consumista y, más concretamente, llamada impulsivamente a viajar a distintos lugares del mundo, y a su vez, dado el auge del ámbito cofrade en la sociedad española y su gran relevancia cultural a nivel internacional, surge la necesidad de llevar a cabo esta investigación. No solo desde un punto de vista estilístico, sino también y más relevante, desde un punto de vista lingüístico. Las estrategias comunicativas necesitan de un análisis exhaustivo para la búsqueda de recursos que permitan identificar la religiosidad popular sin derivar en erratas. Esto permitirá obtener mayor eficacia ante el impacto mediático deseado, así como una nueva mirada en las estrategias de comunicación. El fenómeno del ámbito cofrade y religioso es poco estudiado, por lo que será de ayuda para conocer más detalladamente una forma de comunicarlo y expresarlo.

2. OBJETIVOS

Para la correcta elaboración de este estudio, se establecen los siguientes objetivos generales (OG) y específicos (OE):

- OG1: Describir la finalidad comunicativa de la campaña.
- OG2: Observar el papel de la imagen y de la lengua como mecanismos de construcción de significado.
- OE1: Analizar el texto que acompaña al cartel cuya temática trata de turismo religioso y cofrade.
- OE2: Determinar hasta qué punto los términos empleados se adecúan al proceso de traducción y a las culturas de llegada.

3. METODOLOGÍA

La metodología adoptada para llevar a cabo este estudio combina un análisis textual y semiótico del anuncio con una perspectiva traductológica en el par de lenguas inglés-español. Por lo tanto, se diferencian una serie de fases para desarrollar el mismo. Se establecen, pues, las siguientes fases:

Fase 1. Se realizará un examen a las propuestas de traducción elegidas en cada caso, prestando especial atención a las connotaciones culturales que puedan perderse, transformarse o cambiar su significado en el proceso de trasvase a la cultura de llegada.

Fase 2. Se buscará el significado propio de cada palabra objeto de estudio con el fin de mostrar el mismo con mayor detalle en ese proceso de traducción.

Fase 3. Se considerarán los desafíos de la misma traducción, observando las distintas realidades culturales específicas que se presentan, como pueden ser la propia Semana Santa o las tradiciones cofrades, para las que en numerosas ocasiones es evidente la falta de equivalentes exactos en otras lenguas o contextos socioculturales.

Durante todas las fases de la investigación, se contextualizará la campaña dentro del ámbito de la comunicación, atendiendo a distintos elementos como la imagen y la lengua para la construcción de significado, donde la unión de ambas permite comprender con mayor exactitud el contexto religioso y cofrade en el que se enmarca el cartel propuesto para el análisis.

4. RESULTADOS

4.1. Finalidad comunicativa de la campaña

Esta campaña nace con la finalidad primordial de presentar España como un país con numerosos atractivos culturales, a la vez que un destino turístico valioso en el mercado. Esto también ha ocurrido con otras campañas presentadas por Turespaña. Pero, antes de continuar, es necesario destacar la importancia que tiene crear una campaña con historia ligada a una cultura.

Según Caro (2006) citando a distintos autores, menciona que «construir imagen de marca es lo más importante que puede hacer una campaña de publicidad». También destaca que dar identidad a aquello que se quiere anunciar, otorga independencia a la campaña y crea un "mundo imaginario" sostenido por los productos anunciados. Para poder obtener esta personalidad en la campaña, es necesario implicar distintos

factores procedentes de diferentes sectores, como son el público y el privado. Ahora bien, cuando lo que se quiere promocionar involucra a todo un país, en este caso a España, es necesario recurrir a aquellos estereotipos que estén asociados y destaquen del país. Tras estos elementos, se observa con detenimiento la reputación y la imagen que el país ofrece al resto, conformando así su identidad y, del mismo modo, la "marca país", del inglés *nation branding* (Gómez Campos, 2017).

Entonces, ¿qué supone la creación de una marca país? El impacto directo sobre el turismo y la influencia en las exportaciones, así como política y cultura, son algunos de los beneficios de este sello de identidad. Además, podría considerarse, desde un punto de vista discursivo, una manera de controlar y gestionar lo que se quiere transmitir al contexto internacional, sirviendo esto como una forma de promover la identidad propia de la cultura. Podría considerarse una forma de influenciar y condicionar al mundo sobre la imagen del país (Gómez Campos, 2017).

Por otro lado, desde un punto de vista comunicativo y publicitario, la marca país supone un efecto diferenciador. Esto se da gracias a distintas técnicas y estrategias del marketing en las que se fusionan los conceptos de imagen e identidad como punto de partida. Para conseguir tal distinción y marca país, se crean anuncios, productos, logotipos o eslóganes, de modo que la identidad sea propia y única. Asimismo, no es efectivo tal esfuerzo de creación si no se realiza un análisis previo en la mente de aquellos turistas o consumidores. En las creencias que ellos ostentan sobre un país, se ubica la clave para la correcta creación de la imagen que se muestra a la competencia internacional y que, a su vez, diferencia a una nación del resto (Gómez Campos, 2017).

En el caso de la marca España, se observa un trabajo de largo recorrido, ya que son varias las campañas que se pueden observar donde se pretende crear la marca España. Como bien indica Gómez Campos (2017), la marca España está «sujeta a diversos periodos de tiempo». Sin embargo, su expansión ha sido notable, así como la durabilidad de algunas de las temáticas elegidas para proyectar dicha imagen al exterior, asociadas al turismo mayormente.

La marca España es conocida como «auténtica, divertida, amigable, tradicional y única» (Gómez Campos, 2017). No obstante, nuestro país sigue siendo desconocido en muchos ámbitos culturales que siguen despertando curiosidad. Asimismo, se encuentra envuelta en estereotipos que dificultan la posibilidad de mostrar una imagen más actualizada y avanzada.

La campaña turística *Spain* Marks, creada en la década de los 2000, nace con la finalidad de convertir España «en uno de los destinos turísticos más atractivos del mercado» (Gómez Campos, 2017). En ella se muestra España a través de elementos culturales representados con imágenes, de tal modo que construyen una personalidad propia del país.

FIGURA 1. *Campaña "Spain Marks"*



Fuente: E-turismo.com

De este modo, este estudio pretende acercarse a la forma en la que la campaña da a conocer España a otras zonas geográficas del mundo, analizando elementos como la ironía, componente esencial de su originalidad, la combinación de imagen y texto o el eslogan, entre otros.

4.2. Imagen y lengua como mecanismos de construcción de significado

Para poder examinar cómo la imagen y la lengua coexisten en esta campaña publicitaria, es necesario profundizar y conocer cómo ambos componentes se crean en el ámbito publicitario. Además, cabe destacar la necesidad de meditar y profundizar sobre los mismos, ya que serán el canal de transmisión del mensaje hasta llegar a la construcción de significado con el resultado final.

En primer lugar, el lenguaje publicitario se compone de unos rasgos que lo componen y lo diferencian del resto. Entre los más destacados están el carácter persuasivo del mismo, el uso de la función apelativa, la posibilidad de utilizar recursos retóricos o, dicho de otro modo, de la función poética, entre otros. El lenguaje, en su capacidad pragmática, busca influir en el comportamiento del receptor, de modo que todas sus características apelan directamente al uso de recursos persuasivos (Rodríguez, 1994). Asimismo, a nivel estilístico, el texto que se quiere plasmar, sufre de alteraciones en la forma, el tamaño, el color, lo que supone un campo del lenguaje, cuya redacción puede sufrir factores como elisiones o alteraciones ortográficas, pero siempre con un grado de consciencia para que no se pierda su carácter apelativo y tampoco la coherencia del mismo (Rodríguez, 1994). Por lo tanto, el lenguaje se convierte en la vía más directa de comunicación, siendo eficaz e innovador. Sus objetivos funcionales permiten una mejora de la economía informativa, así como el uso de distintos signos que contribuyen satisfactoriamente a su adaptabilidad en diferentes contextos.

No obstante, cabe destacar que el lenguaje otorga el carácter multilingüe a la publicidad actual, dándole una mejor posición en el campo lingüístico (Ramos, 2010).

En segundo lugar, aparece el elemento de la imagen como claro componente de la función referencial, en la que se hace visible aquello que se pretende anunciar. En otras palabras, la imagen hace alusión a la realidad. Esto permite informar al receptor y a la vez persuadirlo de aquello que se le quiere mostrar (Rodríguez, 1994).

En el momento en el que el elemento lingüístico y el elemento de imagen se unen, se establece un hilo argumental de mayor coherencia y cohesión. El mensaje obtiene mayor brevedad y fluidez, permitiendo un estilo que facilita la comprensión del receptor ante el anuncio (Medrano, 2017).

En el caso de las campañas de Turespaña, se encuentran recursos lingüísticos que abogan por un registro más coloquial (Gómez Campos, 2017). En la campaña aquí analizada, *Spain Marks*, se observan rasgos comunicativos que incitan a la diversión, optando por el humor como un fenómeno para llamar la atención. El sector del turismo está marcado por un humor informal. De este modo, esta campaña propone la marca España, o la propia personalidad de nuestro país, como una forma distinta de comprender la vida y de captar el interés del visitante. El eje central de la campaña es su visión creativa e irónica. Para lograr este efecto, se proponen las imágenes de un turista que ha sido marcado física o emocionalmente tras visitar España. Así es como el uso de imágenes permite crear un sentimiento o emoción en el receptor, de forma que pueda recordarlas con facilidad. Esta característica se puede intuir a simple vista, ya que las imágenes no se componen de elementos reales sino de dobles sentidos y un toque irónico (Porres Guerrero, 2018).

La descomposición de la campaña es clara: mensaje visual (imagen) y mensaje verbal (texto). Ambos con la finalidad de destacar las tradiciones españolas, tratan también de demostrar la forma en la que España puede "marcar" al visitante tras vivir la experiencia.

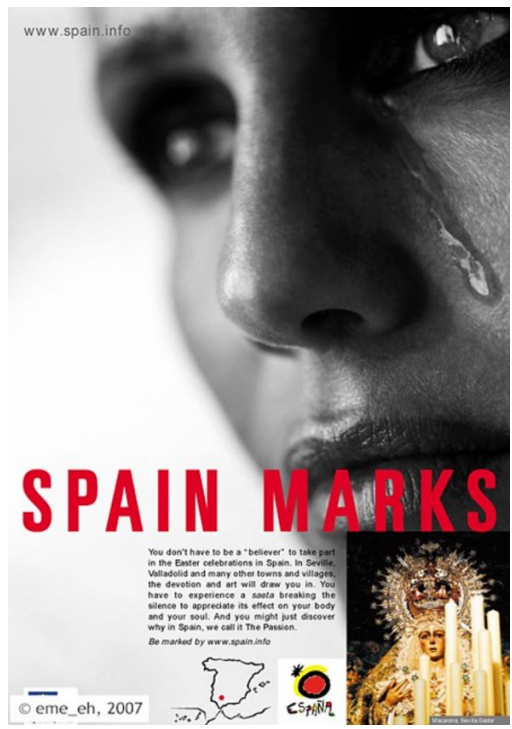
Como indica Porres Guerrero (2018), en el caso del mensaje visual, se muestra «una fotografía en blanco y negro, el logo de Turespaña que es el sol de Miró, la silueta del mapa de España y una pequeña fotografía a color». Todos estos elementos constituyen un atractivo para captar la atención del receptor, haciéndole ver el impacto emocional y físico que ha dejado España en ellos. También se podría destacar el orden de los elementos, cambiando su tamaño y plano para otorgar mayor importancia y no romper una armonía de espacio y color (Porres Guerrero, 2018).

En el mensaje verbal, se hace más claro el contenido del anuncio, ofreciendo un contexto social y cultura, principalmente, basado en la imagen proyectada (Porres Guerrero, 2018). Asimismo, presenta otro esencial

como es el uso de la traducción a otros idiomas, en este caso el inglés, para permitir una mayor transmisión y expansión del mensaje y un carácter internacional que rompa las barreras geográficas (Ramos, 2010).

Además, la misma finalidad de la campaña supone la creación de un mensaje que pueda ser comprendido por distintos grupos de edades y diferentes culturas. De modo que esta elaboración permite una mayor comprensión por parte del receptor, aunque algunos de los anuncios no necesiten del mensaje verbal para ser comprendidos (Porres Guerrero, 2018). Así es como el destinatario es un elemento común para la creación de estos carteles anunciadores, así como la necesidad de crear un buen mecanismo de comunicación, donde es evidente la importancia del elemento iconográfico, pero, a su vez, la necesidad de un elemento textual para una mayor comprensión (Déniz Suárez, 2018).

FIGURA 2. *Cartel de la campaña "Spain Marks" anunciador de la Semana Santa.*



Fuente: Flickr.com

Ahora bien, concretamente, el cartel que se presenta como objeto de estudio aquí y hace referencia directa al ámbito cofrade, también consta de características generales del mensaje visual y del mensaje verbal, así como características propias adecuadas al ámbito que se pretende mostrar, pero siempre guardando relación con la campaña creada. Entonces, se presenta así:

En cuanto al lenguaje, se observan recursos que lo introducen de una forma natural, con un tratamiento hacia el receptor que pretende evitar la distancia social y física (Medrano, 2017). El elemento del humor no es tan palpable aquí, sino que busca apelar a las emociones que se evoca en un ámbito cofrade y religioso. Además, crea una necesidad de texto en la imagen en la que se observan las lágrimas de una mujer durante la Semana Santa (Porres Guerrero, 2018), en similitud con la imagen real situada en segundo plano en la esquina inferior derecha del anuncio, en la que se muestra a María Santísima de la Esperanza Macarena de Sevilla.

Así es como el mensaje visual y el mensaje verbal se unen para trasmitir las emociones vividas en España con las hermandades y cofradías, apelando a los sentimientos que podría tener un turista al experimentar tales acontecimientos.

5. ANÁLISIS

Para este análisis, se ha partido de un análisis preliminar realizado por Narváez y Zambrana (2014), en el que se trata como una técnica de asimilación la traducción del español al inglés del fragmento que aparece en este objeto de análisis. En él, se observa información necesaria para que el turista comprenda de qué trata la Semana Santa, además de motivar unas emociones evocadas por dicha celebración, enmarcada en un cuadro religioso. Antes de comenzar con el análisis textual del cartel aquí propuesto, es interesante examinar, desde un punto de vista traductológico, el eslogan de la campaña, destacando en mayúsculas y en rojo para representar estereotipos y simbología española. Esta campaña fue distribuida en 17 países, lo cual supuso la traducción de la misma a 10 idiomas diferentes. De tal modo, siguiendo a Porres Guerrero (2018), se observa que el efecto polisémico que se pretende hacer con el eslogan a

través de la palabra *marks*, y la definición de "marca" como huella física o sentimental que deja en las personas, se pierde en una mala traducción al inglés. El eslogan "España Marca" se trasvasa como una mala interpretación de tal expresión, lo que a su vez crea un problema de comunicación. El eslogan adquiere connotaciones peyorativas por lo que el mensaje se malinterpreta y la campaña pierde parte de su finalidad. El autor, así, propone una traducción como "Spain's indelible mark".

Tras esto, este estudio adquiere mayor sentido y se ve necesario, en este caso, aplicado al turismo religioso, que pueda ser de utilidad para futuras campañas sobre Semana Santa, lugares sagrados o peregrinaciones.

A continuación, se muestra el texto tanto en su versión española como en la inglesa, siendo esta última la que aparece en el cartel anunciador y resultado final de la campaña:

> ES: No hace falta ser *creyente*[34] para vibrar con la Semana Santa española. En Sevilla, en Valladolid, y en otras muchas ciudades y pueblos, no podrás quedarte al margen de tanta *devoción*, de tanto arte. Ven a sentir, en cuerpo y alma, el efecto de una *saeta* rompiendo el silencio. Quizás descubras porqué aquí, a esta fiesta, le llamamos *Pasión.*
>
> EN: You don't have to be a "*believer*" to take part in the Easter celebrations in Spain. In Seville, Valladolid and many other towns and villages, the *devotion* and art will draw you in. You have to experience a *saeta* breaking the silence to appreciate its effect on your body and your soul. And you might just discover why in Spain, we call it *The Passion.*

Se puede destacar el uso de numerosos sustantivos, así como de términos propios del ámbito cofrade o religioso, como son *creyente* o *saeta*. Además, aparece una palabra ligada a la misma imagen que se muestra en representación a esta fiesta, como es *Pasión*. Otro término a destacar es *devoción*.

Antes de comenzar con el análisis traductológico de los mismos, se procederá a la búsqueda de su definición a través del Diccionario de la Real Academia Española de la Lengua. Las acepciones aquí mostradas están ligadas al ámbito cofrade y religioso:

[34] En cursiva se muestran los términos de especial relevancia.

– CREYENTE (Real Academia Española, s.f.)[35]: 1. Que cree. Apl. especialmente a quien profesa determinada fe religiosa.

– DEVOCIÓN (Real Academia Española, s.f.)[36]: 1. Amor, veneración y fervor religiosos. 4. Costumbre devota, y, en general, costumbre buena. 5. Prontitud con que se está dispuesto a dar culto a Dios y hacer su santa voluntad.

– PASIÓN (Real Academia Española, s.f.)[37]: 2. Por antonom. pasión de Jesucristo. 8. Sermón sobre los tormentos y muerte de Jesucristo que se predica el Jueves y el Viernes Santo. 9. Parte de cada uno de los cuatro Evangelios que describe la pasión de Cristo.

– SAETA (Real Academia Española, s.f.)[38]: 5. Palo flamenco consistente en una jaculatoria o copla que una persona dedica a las imágenes de las procesiones.

Todos los términos pueden parecer de difícil traducción en cuanto a la carga cultural que ostentan, pero lo cierto es que no con todos se da el mismo caso, por lo que no se deben abordar con la misma técnica y estrategia de traducción.

En el caso del primer término, *creyente*, se observa una distinción con el resto ya que, no solo se trata de una solución acertada, sino que la misma se nutre de siglos de historia en los que había una creencia extendida por alguna divinidad, de tal modo que las personas *creyentes* eran comunes y estaban en gran número de países. Esto quiere decir que esa misma acepción también se recogía en la evolución de otras lenguas, como es el caso del español, hasta llegar a la actualidad. Esto se puede observar en la propia etimología de la palabra, derivada del latín *credens*, participio presente del verbo *credere*, que significa "tener fe, creer". Los participios

[35] https://dle.rae.es/creyente

[36] https://dle.rae.es/devoción?m=form

[37] https://dle.rae.es/pasión?m=form

[38] https://dle.rae.es/saeta?m=form

de presente indicaban "el que hace la acción", esto quiere decir que, etimológicamente, la palabra *creyente* significa "el que cree".

Asimismo, este término se encuentra ligado a *devoción*, presentando una casuística similar o igual. Proviene del latín *devotio*, en este caso, del participio pasado de *devovere*, que significa "consagrarse a" o "dedicarse a". Esto quería decir que había una dedicación o voto a algo o alguien, y con el tiempo, se adhirió a un significado de fervor religioso, dedicación y amor hacia lo divino.

Hasta aquí, ambos términos parecen presentar un equivalente en lengua inglesa. De un modo más directo, se puede observar en el caso de *devoción*, donde la misma raíz latina se ajusta a esta lengua para proporcionar el equivalente. En el caso de *creyente*, se puede prestar atención a las comillas presentes en el texto objeto de estudio, las cuales otorgan un significado especial a la palabra. Estas comillas afectan a la traducción en tanto que se redirige el significado de la misma. Según el Cambridge Dictionary (s.f.), *believer*[39] significa "a person who has a religious belief or who strongly believes that something is right or good". La definición se compone de dos partes, siendo la primera la que se pretende enfatizar en el uso de esas comillas, no necesarias en el caso del español ya que el significado de la palabra es claro y conciso.

No del mismo modo ocurre con *saeta*, término que además de no presentar un equivalente, no siempre puede ser comprendido. Este término no solo presenta características cofrades, sino que también comparte elementos culturales provenientes del flamenco. Esto dificulta aún más su compresión y hace que carezca de una explicación en contexto con preguntas como: ¿Qué elementos conforman una saeta? ¿Qué diferencia a una saeta del resto de cantes? ¿Cuándo se canta una saeta? Lo más adecuado sería seguir la técnica de amplificación (Hurtado Albir, 2001). No obstante, cabe destacar el espacio dedicado al mensaje verbal en esta campaña y la adecuación con la extensión del texto, por lo que, en el caso de emplear dicha técnica, debería abordar unas características de brevedad y eficacia, sin perder rasgos esenciales del lenguaje

[39] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-spanish/believer

publicitario como persuadir, informar, y en este caso, trasvasar el mensaje de la cultura española correctamente. De otro modo, destacar que la posible traducción de *saeta* como *sacred song* que aparece en determinados diccionarios, podría dar lugar a un falso sentido ya que su traducción literal como *canción sagrada* podría ser parte esencial de otras celebraciones del ámbito religioso y cofrade, como las liturgias, pero no podría adecuarse al significado cultural y específico que presenta *saeta*.

Por último, de una forma similar, pero a su vez distinta, ocurre con el término *pasión*. No solo está relacionado directamente con nuestra cultura, sino que también puede darse fuera de ella y presentar versatilidad a la hora de ser transmitido como una emoción. Atendiendo a las acepciones de esta palabra en el Diccionario de la Real Academia Española, se observa la obligatoriedad del contexto para descubrir si se trata de la pasión de Jesucristo, un sermón de días propios de la Semana Santa o la parte de los Evangelios donde se narra la pasión de Cristo. Tanto la palabra española como su equivalente, derivan del latín *passio*, que significa sufrimiento, que a su vez deriva del verbo *patior*, "sufrir, soportar", a su vez relacionada con páthos (πάθος) del griego, y significa "sufrimiento" o "padecimiento". Asimismo, este término cierra el texto presente en el cartel y es la carga comunicativa de la imagen representada, por lo que no sería necesaria una explicación concreta. Sin embargo, se observa una pequeña diferencia en su traducción al inglés, como es la adición del artículo determinado *The*. Este artículo es el que permite obtener el equivalente adecuado en inglés, característica no presente en español. Mientras que, en la lengua románica, se necesita de contexto para poder diferenciar la acepción que indica, la lengua germánica utiliza el artículo para marcar la distinción y poder significar, según el Cambridge Dictionary (s.f.)[40], "in Christianity, the suffering and death of Jesus Christ". En este caso, la traducción es adecuada, siempre pudiendo ser doblemente interpretada como el sentir de la misma pasión y aquí, unir el significado de la palabra a la emoción que supone el ámbito cofrade y que, a su vez, pretende reflejarse en la imagen principal del cartel.

[40] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-spanish/passion

6. CONCLUSIONES

Los resultados revelan que, si bien la campaña logra transmitir una imagen reconocible y atractiva del turismo religioso español, se observan ciertos desajustes en la traducción de términos clave. La ausencia de referentes equivalentes genera ambigüedades o interpretaciones limitadas. Este hallazgo pone de relieve la necesidad de estrategias de traducción más contextualizadas y sensibles a la diversidad cultural de los receptores. Además, se destaca el valor de la traducción no solo como acto lingüístico, sino también como mediación cultural en la proyección internacional de una marca turística. Las campañas de este tipo deben ofrecer un diálogo constante entre emisor y receptor.

No obstante, los objetivos de este estudio han sido satisfechos adecuadamente, asumiendo una lectura detallada de cada aspecto a destacar del propio objeto de estudio, así como una serie de elementos que posicionan las campañas en una elaboración más compleja y distante de un simple resultado.

Finalmente, el análisis de *Spain Marks* permite reflexionar sobre la importancia de integrar la traducción y la comunicación intercultural en el diseño de campañas de promoción turística. Solo así se asegura que los elementos más emblemáticos de la identidad española, como el turismo religioso, se transmitan de manera eficaz y respetuosa en un escenario globalizado y culturalmente diverso. Por lo tanto, este tipo de análisis es necesario para poder llevar a cabo un trabajo eficaz. Solo así es posible que la traducción, la comunicación efectiva, la economía del lenguaje, el valor de la imagen y el mundo actual y globalizado funcionen conjuntamente con el fin de promover una sociedad con mayor conocimiento de rasgos culturales.

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EL LENGUAJE BIOSANITARIO Y SU TRADUCCIÓN EN ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES: ANÁLISIS DE LOS TEXTOS DEL SITIO WEB DE LA OMS

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Hay tantos tipos de lenguajes especializados como especialidades diferentes. Esto hace que cada uno de ellos tenga unas características propias, pero también que sea muy difícil delimitarlos. El lenguaje biosanitario, que indudablemente se puede englobar dentro del científico-técnico, puede definirse como el lenguaje empleado en textos y temas relacionados con la salud, lo que lo convierte en un tipo de lenguaje especializado muy extenso y con una rica terminología. Además, comprenderá múltiples subramas de la ciencia y serán muchos los tipos de texto que se podrán catalogar como biosanitarios.

Al respecto, seguramente el organismo internacional con una mayor producción textual relacionada con la salud sea la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Fundada en 1948 como uno de los principales organismos de las Naciones Unidas, en la actualidad cuenta con un sitio web[41] en el que recoge toda la actualidad sanitaria del planeta, así como una serie de apartados en los que se explican diferentes cuestiones relacionadas con la salud.

Cabe suponer que el hecho de que se trate de un organismo internacional se verá reflejado en los textos publicados, en los que el lenguaje empleado estará regido por una serie de directrices y será diferente del

[41] https://www.who.int/es

que encontraremos en otros medios de comunicación y, por supuesto, también del lenguaje general.

2. OBJETIVOS

En nuestra investigación, el objetivo será analizar la dimensión científica de los textos publicados en el sitio web, su dimensión institucional, el tipo de redacción y cómo esta se ve afectada por el hecho de pertenecer a un organismo internacional.

Para ello, nos hemos centrado específicamente en un apartado del sitio web, relativo a los Temas de salud.[42] En él se recoge una serie de textos breves que, como su propio nombre indica, estarán relacionados con diferentes cuestiones sanitarias. Aunque muchos de estos textos solo están disponibles en inglés, nos centraremos en los que están publicados en español. Esto nos permitirá no solo analizar el tipo de lenguaje empleado, sino también valorar qué proporción de textos se pueden consultar en español en comparación con el inglés y otras lenguas oficiales de la OMS, y cómo esto se ve reflejado en la redacción y otras características textuales.

3. METODOLOGÍA: ANÁLISIS DEL SITIO WEB DE LA OMS Y DEL LENGUAJE EMPLEADO

3.1. La Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS)

La Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) es uno de los principales organismos de las Naciones Unidas. Fue fundada en 1948 con el objetivo de «promover la salud, preservar la seguridad mundial y servir a las poblaciones vulnerables, de modo que todo el mundo, allá donde esté, pueda alcanzar el más alto nivel posible de salud».[43]

La OMS es, probablemente, el organismo internacional con la mayor y más relevante producción de textos de carácter biosanitario. Además, su sitio web contiene información disponible en los seis idiomas

[42] Health topics

[43] https://www.who.int/es/about

oficiales de las Naciones Unidas (árabe, chino, español, francés, inglés y ruso) e incluye numerosos apartados. Esto lo convierte en un reservorio muy interesante de textos de carácter biosanitario a los que se les presupone una elevada calidad.

3.1.1. El sitio web de la OMS: página de inicio

En este apartado explicaremos brevemente cómo está estructurado el sitio web y de dónde hemos extraído los textos en que hemos basado esta investigación.

Comenzamos por la página de inicio (en español), en la que vemos lo siguiente (Fig. 1).

FIGURA 1. *Página de inicio del sitio web de la OMS*



Fuente: Organización Mundial de la Salud

En la barra superior, hay dos apartados a la izquierda: sitio web mundial y sitios web regionales. El sitio web mundial es al que accederemos por defecto, pero es importante ser conscientes de que también existen los sitios web regionales, que son los siguientes (Fig. 2):

- África
- Américas
- Sudeste Asiático

– Europa

– Mediterráneo oriental

– Pacífico Occidental

FIGURA 2. *Sitios web regionales de la OMS*



Fuente: Organización Mundial de la Salud

Esta división no es muy intuitiva en su uso, ya que algunos nos redirigen a sitios web diferentes (es el caso de América), mientras que otros nos mantienen en el sitio web de la OMS, aunque limitando el contenido (y los idiomas en que está disponible). Aquí vemos, además, las primeras cuestiones lingüísticas interesantes: por ejemplo, el término «Américas» resulta impropio en la variante de español de España, en la que el concepto «América» hace referencia a todo el continente (a diferencia del inglés, sobre todo el americano, en el que *America* se refiere, por norma general, a los EE. UU., y en el que *North America* y *South America* se consideran dos continentes diferentes, lo que motiva la necesidad del plural *Americas*). Probablemente, el uso de «Américas» en el sitio web será reflejo de la influencia del inglés, pero también puede deberse a directrices internas de la OMS. Por otro lado, vemos inconsistencia en el uso de mayúscula inicial en los adjetivos que acompañan a las zonas geográficas: «Sudeste Asiático», «Mediterráneo oriental» y «Pacífico Occidental».

La RAE, en su *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* (2025), establece que se escriben con mayúscula inicial «Los sustantivos y adjetivos que

forman parte del nombre de zonas geográficas que abarcan varios países y se conciben como áreas geopolíticas con características comunes» y los puntos cardinales «cuando formen parte de una expresión que así lo exija»,[44] lo cual encaja con nuestra división. Por otro lado, podría ser comprensible el uso de minúsculas al tratarse de adjetivos. Cabe destacar, por tanto, la inconsistencia en el uso, indicativo de que ni siquiera la información publicada en el sitio web de un organismo tan importante estará exenta de posibles errores.

Por último, volviendo a la página de inicio, aún en la barra superior, esta vez en la parte derecha, hay un cuadro de búsqueda y un desplegable con todos los idiomas oficiales de la OMS (independientemente de que el contenido no siempre estará disponible en todos ellos): el inglés, el árabe, el chino, el español, el francés y el ruso.

En cuanto a la parte central de la página de inicio del sitio web, vemos los siguientes apartados:

- Temas de salud
- Países
- Centro de prensa
- Emergencias
- Datos
- Acerca de la OMS

Desde cada uno de ellos accederemos a textos de diferente tipo, con un gran de contenido. En nuestra investigación, nos centraremos específicamente en los primeros, los temas de salud.

3.1.2. El sitio web de la OMS: Temas de salud

Este apartado del sitio web de la OMS (en inglés, *Health topics*), al que se puede acceder desde la página de inicio, incluye breves textos sobre diferentes temas sanitarios. Hay un total de 197 (a fecha de septiembre de 2025) y entre los temas que se abordan se pueden enumerar los siguientes ejemplos: cáncer, contaminación atmosférica, desnutrición, dieta sana, gripe estacional, resistencia a los antimicrobianos, salud

[44] mayúsculas | Diccionario panhispánico de dudas | RAE - ASALE

mental o tabaquismo. Vemos que son temas muy variados pero que, indiscutiblemente, están relacionados con la salud de una forma u otra.

En el buscador se dividen en los siguientes grupos: comportamiento humano, condiciones, desastres, determinantes sociopolíticos, enfermedades no transmisibles, enfermedades transmisibles, enfermedades y condiciones, entorno físico, intervenciones conductuales, intervenciones fisiológicas, intervenciones sanitarias, lesiones, poblaciones y demografía, salud y bienestar, sistemas de salud, sustancias y otros. Esta división puede ayudar al usuario a localizar una determinada información, aunque también se puede buscar por palabra clave. Si bien la búsqueda por palabra clave puede ser más intuitiva, es interesante ver los diferentes tipos en que la OMS divide los textos, e incluso algunas cuestiones lingüísticas relevantes, como el empleo del término «condiciones», sobre el que volveremos más adelante.

Como ya hemos mencionado, hay un total de 197 temas en el sitio web en inglés, pero no todos están escritos (o traducidos) también en el resto de las lenguas oficiales de la ONU. De hecho, el número de temas que aparecen en cada uno de los idiomas es el siguiente:

- español: 38 (19,29 %);
- francés: 38 (19,29 %);
- chino: 35 (17,77 %);
- ruso: 33 (16,75 %);
- árabe: 32 (16,24 %).

Estos porcentajes pueden parecer bajos para ser un medio de comunicación tan importante, pero cabe destacar que el contenido del sitio web es muy extenso y nuestras fuentes de la OMS nos confirman que el número de traductores del que dispone la Organización es reducido.

También cabe destacar que los números pueden variar ligeramente con el tiempo, ya que algunos de los enlaces no siempre siguen activos y puede que se hayan ido sumando otros nuevos.

3.1.3. El sitio web de la OMS: otras secciones

Si ampliamos la búsqueda de textos a otros apartados del sitio web, vemos que la situación lingüística es similar. En el resto de los apartados (Países, Centro de prensa, Emergencias, Datos y Acerca de la OMS), hay parte del contenido traducido a otros idiomas. No obstante, sigue habiendo una cierta inconsistencia en la proporción de contenido traducido, así como en los idiomas en los que está disponible. Además, algunos de los enlaces están disponibles en idiomas diferentes de los oficiales, como pueden ser el portugués o el alemán.

3.2. Análisis del lenguaje empleado en el sitio web de la OMS: dimensión biosanitaria

Como hemos comentado en la introducción, definiremos el lenguaje biosanitario como un tipo de lenguaje especializado, englobado dentro del lenguaje científico o científico-técnico, cuyo contenido girará en torno a la salud como hilo conductor.

Basándonos en esta breve definición, podemos afirmar que se tratará de un tipo de lenguaje que abarcará numerosas subramas de la ciencia, y dentro del cual podremos contar múltiples tipos de textos diferentes. Todo esto hace que sea un tipo de lenguaje muy difícil de delimitar, pero que, a grandes rasgos, cumplirá las características propias del lenguaje científico o científico-técnico.

Entre estas características, enumeradas por Gutiérrez Rodilla (1998) y comúnmente aceptadas, podemos destacar las tres principales: la precisión, la neutralidad y la economía del lenguaje. La precisión hará referencia a la concisión del contenido, y es lo que hace que el lenguaje científico priorice el uso de términos monosémicos y busque la univocidad siempre que sea posible. La neutralidad es la ausencia de valores y connotaciones subjetivas, también deseable en todo texto con una función objetiva y el propósito te transmitir información o conocimientos. Por último, la economía del lenguaje se puede definir como la expresión de los conceptos con el menor número posible de palabras. Esta última característica es la que hace que también sea habitual el uso de tablas,

gráficos, imágenes, etc. Claros Díaz (2016: 7), por su parte, las sintetiza en veracidad y concisión.

Por último, como lenguaje de especialidad, podríamos mencionar que se dará un abundante uso de tecnicismos, entendidos como «cada una de las voces técnicas empleadas en el lenguaje de una ciencia» (Muñoz Martín, 2002: 71), e incluso «elemento central del discurso de especialidad» (Vivanco Cervero, 2006: 11). También cabe destacar que la densidad terminológica en este tipo de textos, definida como «la cantidad de formas léxicas especializadas respecto del total de formas léxicas de un texto» (Rodríguez Tapia, 2020: 75), será elevada.

3.3. Análisis del lenguaje empleado en el sitio web de la OMS: dimensión institucional

El uso del lenguaje también estará condicionado por otros muchos factores, más allá del contenido y del área de conocimiento en que se enmarque. Influirán, por ejemplo, la temática del texto, el contexto, los potenciales receptores y el lugar donde será publicado.

En el caso de los organismos institucionales, es habitual que se siga una línea editorial, y son muchos los que cuentan con un libro de estilo. Sin ir más lejos, la Unión Europea cuenta con un *Libro de estilo interinstitucional* (Martorell, 2014: 135) desde 1997, que además había sido precedido por el *Vademécum del editor* (*ibidem*). Este libro de estilo, que se puede consultar en internet, incluye convenciones aplicables a todas las lenguas, convenciones específicas para la lengua española e incluso normas de redacción.

Estas convenciones y normas incluyen un preámbulo, once puntos en torno a los cuales se articulan las directrices y hasta unos cuadros recapitulativos. Especialmente interesantes son el punto 3 (Normas de

redacción),[45] el punto 5 (Estructura de una publicación)[46] y el punto 6 (Indicaciones tipográficas y revisión del texto).[47]

Aunque se trata de información muy valiosa, no debemos olvidar que estas normas están dirigidas a textos de la UE y que, por tanto, no tienen por qué aplicar para los de la OMS. Sin ir más lejos, la UE estipula que todos «Los textos destinados a publicarse en el Diario Oficial deben existir en cada una de las lenguas oficiales de la UE», algo que, como hemos adelantado, no ocurre en la OMS. En la misma línea, la UE establece unas directrices para las enumeraciones, mientras que en los textos de la OMS vemos inconsistencias al respecto: por ejemplo, en el texto Coronavirus, hay enumeraciones con puntuación final y sin ella.[48]

Del mismo modo, cabe destacar que, en uno de los puntos, la UE aclara que se recomienda aplicar la Ortografía de la lengua española de la Real Academia Española y de la Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española, algo se puede presuponer que todo traductor, redactor o revisor de la OMS tendrá también en cuenta.

Como ya hemos comentado, en el sitio web de la OMS, al contrario de lo que ocurre con la UE, no encontramos un libro de estilo. Sí que existen una serie de documentos que se deben seguir, como el CIE-11 (Clasificación Estadística Internacional de Enfermedades y Problemas Relacionados con la Salud),[49] para integrar la terminología médica. Además, podemos apreciar que se siguen algunas de las directrices que sí recogen los libros de estilo de la Unión Europea y que se respetan las reglas ortográficas y gramaticales del español.

Visto todo lo anterior, otras características que se pueden extraer del análisis de los textos de la OMS para conseguir un estilo consistente son unas enumeraciones más exhaustivas, un lenguaje aséptico, un gran

[45] 3. Normas de redacción - Libro de estilo interinstitucional - Publications Office of the EU

[46] 5. Estructura de una publicación - Libro de estilo interinstitucional - Publications Office of the EU

[47] 6. Indicaciones tipográficas y revisión del texto - Libro de estilo interinstitucional - Publications Office of the EU

[48] Coronavirus

[49] https://www.who.int/es/standards/classifications/classification-of-diseases

respeto por la terminología y la consistencia y una mayor aparición de repeticiones léxicas cuando son necesarias.

4. RESULTADOS DEL ANÁLISIS DEL LENGUAJE BIOSANITARIO E INSTITUCIONAL EN EL SITIO WEB DE LA OMS

Una vez hemos explicado qué características cabe esperar de los textos del sitio web de la OMS, en su calidad de textos biosanitarios y también institucionales, procederemos a determinar cómo estas características se reflejan en la producción de textos el lenguaje empleado.

4.1. Adaptación del lenguaje al medio y al público receptor

En primer lugar, cabe destacar que los textos analizados, aunque se puedan considerar especializados, son asequibles para un público general, al que están dirigidos. Así, los conceptos más complejos suelen añadir explicaciones o recurrir a sinónimos más propios del lenguaje cotidiano. Por ejemplo, en el texto de la Viruela símica[50] encontramos frases como las siguientes: «La viruela símica (mpox) es una enfermedad vírica causada por el virus de la mpox, un ortopoxvirus», «La transmisión se produce por exposición a líquidos corporales, a lesiones en la piel o en las mucosas internas (como las de la boca o la garganta), a partículas respiratorias y a objetos contaminados» o «En las zonas donde hay animales que portan el virus, la mpox es una enfermedad zoonótica, lo que significa que puede transmitirse a los seres humanos». Si este mismo texto estuviera dirigido a profesionales especializados en la materia, la redacción sería diferente y muchas de las explicaciones e incisos no serían necesarios. Esto se debe a que los textos de la OMS tienen el doble objetivo de informar y educar (algo que, por otra parte, es habitual en el ámbito biosanitario).

A pesar de esta relativa sencillez en la expresión de los conceptos, también vemos que son frecuentes los tecnicismos, en línea con la elevada densidad terminológica que suele estar presente en los textos especializados. Entre los posibles ejemplos, podemos destacar el texto sobre

[50] Mpox

enfermedades cardiovasculares,[51] con frases como «Estas enfermedades agrupan una serie de trastornos del corazón y los vasos sanguíneos, como la cardiopatía coronaria, los accidentes cerebrovasculares y las cardiopatías reumáticas» o «Los efectos de los factores de riesgo conductuales pueden manifestarse en forma de hipertensión, hiperglucemia e hiperlipidemia, además de sobrepeso y obesidad». En la primera, las cardiopatías mencionadas pueden considerarse de un registro más elevado o de un campo más especializado, pero el mensaje del texto llega claramente al receptor, quien tampoco tiene por qué conocer las vicisitudes de cada una de ellas. En la segunda, se ha elevado el registro con términos como «hiperglucemia» o «hiperlipidemia», que podrían haberse expresado de una forma más accesible a los lectores legos, como «nivel elevado de glucosa en sangre» o «exceso de lípidos en la sangre».

En la misma línea, en el texto sobre Cáncer[52] encontramos la siguiente frase: «Los tipos de cáncer más comunes en los hombres son: pulmonar, prostático, colorrectal, estomacal y hepático, y los más comunes entre las mujeres son el mamario, colorrectal, pulmonar, cervical y tiroideo». Es cierto que el registro puede ser algo elevado, ya que en el lenguaje general se hablaría probablemente de «cáncer de estómago», «cáncer de pulmón», etc., pero no se compromete la legibilidad.

A pesar de estos aspectos, podemos afirmar que los textos disponibles en el apartado de Temas de salud del sitio web de la OMS cumplen con la precisión y neutralidad mencionadas por Gutiérrez Rodilla (1998) como características del lenguaje científico-técnico. También nombra la economía del lenguaje, que en este ámbito se puede conseguir con el uso de imágenes, gráficas o incluso números.

Aunque el propio formato de los textos de Temas de salud dificulta en cierta medida la inclusión de imágenes o gráficas (que sí son habituales en otros apartados del sitio web de la OMS, como el de Países), encontramos

[51] Enfermedades cardiovasculares

[52] Cáncer

muchos números en algunos de los temas. Por ejemplo, el texto de Salud de los refugiados y migrantes[53] empieza con el siguiente párrafo:

> «En la actualidad hay unos 1000 millones de migrantes en el mundo, lo que supone aproximadamente 1 de cada 8 personas. Entre ellos hay 281 millones de migrantes internacionales y 82,4 millones de desplazados forzosos (48 millones de desplazados internos, 26,4 millones de refugiados y 4,1 millones de solicitantes de asilo)».

Podría debatirse si los números menores de veinte no deberían ir en letra. No hay consenso definitivo, ya que la *Ortografía* de la RAE establece que es preferible el uso de letras cuando el número se puede expresar con una sola palabra, pero son muchos los autores que justifican, e incluso defienden, el empleo de las cifras en textos de corte científico o técnico (Claros, 2016: 39-40), para facilitar la claridad de interpretación. Por otro lado, es indudable que ayudan a conseguir una gran precisión y una mayor economía del lenguaje, además de transmitir el mensaje de una forma más visual. También es interesante traer a colación la directriz de la UE al respecto: se recomienda no mezclar en un mismo pasaje números escritos con cifras y números escritos con palabras.[54]

Si seguimos profundizando en las características del lenguaje biosanitario para aplicarlas a los textos analizados, podemos añadir que está constituido principalmente por sustantivos y verbos, que es rico en formantes clásicos —es decir, raíces procedentes del griego y el latín— (Gutiérrez Rodilla, 1998: 28), que recurre con frecuencia a abreviaturas y acortamientos de otros tipos y que son habituales los neologismos (*ibidem*).

En el caso de los textos de la OMS analizados para este trabajo, estas características se siguen cumpliendo. Si volvemos a tomar el ejemplo de las frases del texto de Enfermedades cardiovasculares,[55] vemos que el peso del contenido recae en sustantivos y locuciones nominales, como «enfermedades», «trastornos» o «factores de riesgo» y que los

[53] Salud de los refugiados y migrantes

[54] 10.3. Números - Libro de estilo interinstitucional - Publications Office of the EU

[55] «Estas enfermedades agrupan una serie de trastornos del corazón y los vasos sanguíneos, como la cardiopatía coronaria, los accidentes cerebrovasculares y las cardiopatías reumáticas»; «Los efectos de los factores de riesgo conductuales pueden manifestarse en forma de hipertensión, hiperglucemia e hiperlipidemia, además de sobrepeso y obesidad».

términos más técnicos incluyen raíces y formantes clásicos (cardiopatía, hiperglucemia, etc.), que a su vez podrían considerarse neologismos de forma, muy habituales en el lenguaje científico.

Es cierto, por otro lado, que en los textos de Temas de salud no son tan habituales los acortamientos y abreviaturas, que también hemos mencionado como característicos del lenguaje científico. Esto responde al hecho de que son recursos que pueden dificultar la comprensión del público lego, al que, en principio, van dirigidos los textos de este sitio web. Con todo, sí que vemos casos como los siguientes, en el texto de Cobertura sanitaria universal:[56] «La cobertura sanitaria universal (CSU) consiste en que todas las personas tengan acceso al conjunto de servicios de salud de calidad que necesiten, cuando y donde los necesiten, sin sufrir dificultades económicas por ello» y «La atención primaria de salud (APS) es la forma más eficaz y costoeficiente de conseguirlo». En el mismo texto, se utilizan dos siglas que, eso sí, van convenientemente desarrolladas en su primera aparición.

4.2. Adaptación del lenguaje según las convenciones y uso de una terminología específica

Como ya se ha comentado, hay una serie de características que podemos extraer al analizar los textos del sitio web de la OMS: uso de un lenguaje aséptico, enumeraciones más exhaustivas, mayor presencia de repeticiones léxicas y respeto por el uso de una terminología específica.

Esta última es especialmente importante. Insistimos en que el lenguaje científico en general, y el biosanitario en particular, tratará de buscar la univocidad siempre que sea posible y renunciar a los términos polisémicos. Por ello, en los textos del sitio web de la OMS veremos, en general, una gran consistencia en el uso de la terminología. Esto, a su vez, puede hacer que se den más reiteraciones léxicas o repeticiones de lo que sería permisible en otros contextos, pero que en este caso están justificadas.

[56] Cobertura sanitaria universal

Así, los mismos conceptos se expresarán siempre con los mismos términos, en ocasiones alejados de los del lenguaje general. Formas como «países de ingresos bajos y medianos» serán las que se utilizarán en toda aparición en el sitio web, sin recurrir a sinónimos ni elipsis. Algo similar podríamos decir de «sistemas de salud», que será el que se emplee siempre, en lugar de sinónimos como sistema sanitario, en parte debido a que es uno de los grupos en que están divididos los textos.

En la misma línea, podemos rescatar el uso de «condición», que también aparecía en el buscador de temas. La forma «condición» como sinónimo de enfermedad se considera un calco del inglés y son muchos los expertos y recursos especializados que desaconsejan su uso como traducción del inglés *condition*, priorizando otras formas. Tanto el *Libro Rojo de traducción médica inglés-español*, de la plataforma Cosnautas,[57] como el *Diccionario de Términos Médicos* (DTM) de la Real Academia Española de Medicina[58] lo marcan como error. El *Libro rojo*, además, propone alternativas, «como enfermedad, proceso, dolencia, afección, cuadro clínico, padecimiento, trastorno, alteración o anomalía» (Navarro, 2025).

No obstante, presuponemos que la OMS ha optado por «condición» para marcar una distinción con respecto a otros tipos de enfermedades. Efectivamente, si vemos qué temas aparecen al buscar por condición, el que nos aparece es Muerte prematura, que difícilmente podría considerarse una enfermedad. Si buscamos en inglés, están catalogadas como *conditions* también la anemia, la sordera y la pérdida auditiva, la depresión, la infertilidad y la obesidad.

Volviendo al uso de terminología específica, vemos en otros textos, como el de Cáncer, las siguientes frases, que recoge precisamente algunos de los términos mencionados y que incluye una enumeración exhaustiva, para conseguir esa deseada precisión: «La carga de morbilidad por cáncer sigue aumentando en todo el mundo, y ello genera una enorme tensión física, emocional y financiera para las familias, las comunidades y los sistemas de salud» o «Muchos sistemas de salud de

[57] Cosnautas - Recursos terminológicos en ciencias de la salud

[58] Real Academia Nacional de Medicina: Buscador

países de ingresos bajos y medianos están muy poco preparados para gestionar esa carga de morbilidad, y un gran número de pacientes de cáncer de todo el mundo carecen de acceso oportuno a medios de diagnóstico y tratamiento de calidad».

4.3. Influencia del inglés en el contenido en español del sitio web de la OMS

Si bien la escritura de los textos que hemos tratado está condicionada por numerosos factores lingüísticos (la inclusión de términos con un cierto grado de especialización, el uso de un registro concreto por tratarse de un organismo institucional, etc.), es innegable que también se apreciará una cierta influencia del inglés.

Como ya hemos visto, hay un porcentaje relativamente bajo de contenido en español en los Temas de salud, sobre todo en comparación con el inglés, lo cual nos lleva a deducir que, probablemente, gran parte de ese contenido en español sea traducción del inglés, con lo que ello conlleva. Recordemos que nuestras fuentes internas nos confirmaron que la OMS cuenta con traductores en plantilla, y que también colabora con otros profesionales lingüistas externos. Añaden, además, que el equipo es relativamente pequeño, mientras que la cantidad de textos es ingente. Por ello, no será sorprendente que la redacción pueda ser calificada, en algunos puntos, de anómala, no solo por la redacción de corte institucional y la temática biosanitaria, sino también por una cierta presencia de calcos y otros usos del español que podríamos considerar impropios y que podrían deberse a la influencia del inglés.

Entre los posibles calcos que hemos visto en los diferentes textos del sitio web, además del ya mencionado «condición», destacan otros como «evidencia» (y sus derivados), muy extendidos ya en el español biosanitario e incluso en el lenguaje general. En el caso de «evidencia», tanto el *Diccionario de Términos Médicos* como el *Libro Rojo* admiten que, a pesar de ser un calco del inglés *evidence*, su uso es abrumador. El *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* de la Real Academia Española de

la lengua, por otro lado, ya recoge la acepción de «Prueba determinante de un proceso» en su entrada Evidencia.[59]

Por último, comentaremos el curioso caso de «desnutrición» y «malnutrición». El término inglés *malnutrition* se ha traducido tradicionalmente por «desnutrición» como equivalente en español. Sin embargo, la propia raíz etimológica de *malnutrition* permite incluir tanto los casos de enfermedad por deficiencia de nutrientes como por exceso, algo que el prefijo des- en español no hace. Así, los traductores que se encuentren con *malnutrition* se enfrentan a un dilema: optar por el término «desnutrición», más normativo en español, pero tal vez más restrictivo en su significado, o por la forma impropia «malnutrición». Curiosamente, en el sitio web de la OMS vemos que se utilizan los dos en diferentes textos, y de forma algo confusa: por un lado, un texto lleva el título de Desnutrición, y la define como «deficiencias o excesos en la ingesta de nutrientes, desequilibrio de nutrientes esenciales o alteración de la utilización de nutrientes»,[60] lo cual puede resultar confuso por el prefijo des-, incluso contradictorio. Por el contrario, en otro texto vemos la siguiente frase: «Las tasas de malnutrición alcanzan niveles alarmantes en Gaza», lo cual constituye un uso casi paradójico de un término que, en principio, es impropio en español y cuyo significado en esa frase puede incluso causar confusión.

Otro caso en el que la influencia del inglés ha dado lugar a una redacción anómala es la siguiente frase, del tema Tabaquismo: «se estima que el costo económico total del consumo de tabaco (combinados los gastos en salud y la pérdida de productividad) asciende a unos US$ 1,4 billones por año». En este caso, por anteponer la divisa a la cifra, algo que se hace en inglés, pero no en español. Confirmamos, eso sí, que el «billones» es una correcta traducción del inglés *trillions*.

[59] Diccionario de la lengua española | Edición del Tricentenario | RAE - ASALE

[60] Desnutrición

5. DISCUSIÓN

En este estudio, se ha analizado el lenguaje empleado en una serie de textos concretos de la página web de la OMS desde una perspectiva lingüística, buscando tanto las características propias de textos biosanitarios como de textos institucionales. La investigación también nos ha llevado a detectar una serie de particularidades, desde la presencia que tiene el español en dicho sector hasta la influencia del inglés.

Insistimos en que no es posible marcar de una manera absoluta los límites del lenguaje biosanitario, ni respecto a otros lenguajes de especialidad ni respecto al lenguaje general. Algo similar se podría afirmar del lenguaje institucional o del empleado por organismos internacionales, adaptado en este caso a un público general, ya que el sitio web está accesible para todo el mundo.

Así, encontramos en los textos de Temas de salud de la OMS un estilo propio y, podríamos decir, único, que bien merece un análisis más exhaustivo.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Tras haber leído los textos del apartado Temas de salud del sitio web de la OMS, hay una serie de conclusiones que podemos extraer en cuanto al uso del lenguaje.

En primer lugar, vemos que se cumplen las características esperables por ser textos de carácter biosanitario, englobados dentro del lenguaje científico: precisión, neutralidad y economía del lenguaje. Por otro lado, vemos que también se siguen, en gran medida, las pautas que cabría esperar de los textos institucionales de un organismo internacional, toda vez que se adapta el lenguaje para que el mensaje llegue al receptor.

Esto se refleja en el uso de una terminología precisa, que prioriza la univocidad de los términos empleados, en una redacción exhaustiva y desarrollada, para llegar a un público amplio, o en una cierta presencia de reiteraciones léxicas, que ayudan a alcanzar la precisión deseada y a evitar ambigüedades.

Al mismo tiempo, el propio contenido del sitio web nos lleva a pensar que los textos escritos en español son, muy probablemente, traducciones del inglés. Esto tiene, a su vez, una serie de consecuencias, entre las que destacan una cierta influencia del inglés en los textos en español, que puede ser debida al hecho de que se trata de traducciones, o al propio lenguaje marcado por la OMS. No obstante, se puede afirmar que la mayoría de los usos anómalos no pueden apenas ser catalogados de errores y, en cualquier caso, serán prácticamente imperceptibles para el lector lego, que no esté especializado en lenguaje biosanitario.

Para finalizar, por tanto, podemos concluir que el lenguaje empleado en el los Temas de salud del sitio web de la OMS, pese a estar sometido a un cierto encorsetamiento, cumple su propósito de informar y educar al lector, en la búsqueda de la Organización de «promover la salud, preservar la seguridad mundial y servir a las poblaciones vulnerables, de modo que todo el mundo, allá donde esté, pueda alcanzar el más alto nivel posible de salud».

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ANEXO: LISTA DE TEMAS DE SALUD CITADOS EN EL ARTÍCULO

- Cáncer
- Coronavirus
- Desnutrición
- Dieta sana
- Enfermedades cardiovasculares
- Gripe estacional
- Muerte prenatal
- Resistencia a los antimicrobianos
- Salud de los refugiados y migrantes
- Salud mental
- Tabaquismo

LA TRANSFORMACIÓN DEL ALEMÁN Y DEL ESPAÑOL DEBIDO A LA INFLUENCIA DEL INGLÉS Y SU REPERCUSIÓN EN LA TRADUCCIÓN

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En las últimas décadas se ha hecho un gran esfuerzo en la investigación con el fin de mejorar el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, especialmente del inglés (Pastor Cesteros, 2006; Larsen-Freeman y Marti Anderson, 2015). En Europa prácticamente todos los jóvenes tienen que aprender inglés desde edades tempranas. En la didáctica de la enseñanza del inglés se han conseguido grandes avances y un número muy respetable de aprendices alcanzan niveles similares a los de la lengua materna. Existen programas y ejercicios específicos que fomentan el pensamiento y la comunicación en inglés, aparte de la posibilidad de una estancia en un país de habla inglesa. Aunque no todos los aprendices perseveran y alcanzan un nivel que se puede confundir con el de la lengua materna, no cabe duda de que, en general, los conocimientos y las habilidades lingüísticas de los aprendices han alcanzado unas destrezas de comunicación muy buenas en comparación con la primera mitad del siglo XX (Pastor Cesteros, p. 158).

El inglés es tan importante, como bien sabemos, porque se ha convertido en la lengua vehicular de nuestro planeta. Una lengua común facilita el comercio o los negocios. Por otra parte, la ciencia crea términos en inglés que, como mucho, se traducen o se adaptan a otras lenguas.

Gracias a la importancia del inglés, otras lenguas se transforman porque incluyen los términos de origen inglés en su idioma. En el caso del alemán, allí no termina la transformación de la lengua, sino hay personas

de habla alemana que usan verbos u otros grupos de palabras en inglés y modifican estructuras según las reglas gramaticales inglesas.

En este estudio nos centramos en los cambios que está sufriendo el alemán (Sick, 2013) debido a la influencia del inglés. El fenómeno de mezclar el alemán con el inglés cuando ambas lenguas se usan para pensar sea por comodidad o por motivos de creatividad lingüística, lleva a nuevas formas de expresarse que con el tiempo sustituyen o complementan las habituales, como, por ejemplo, *shoppen* que ya se usa junto con la palabra *kaufen* (comprar en español). *It makes sense* se ha transformado en lo que hasta hace unos años hubiese sido un error grave, *es macht Sinn*, en lugar de usar la construcción *Es ist sinnvoll* con el adjetivo alemán *sinnvoll* (Sick, 2013, p. 47).

Estos cambios tan radicales en relativamente pocos años repercuten también en la traducción. La RAE defiende el español en su integridad, pero tiene que admitir cada vez más términos procedentes del inglés, muchos de ellos sin cumplir las reglas ortográficas y fonéticas. El traductor tiene que valorar cómo se enfrenta a los textos alemanes con un gran número de extranjerismos procedentes del inglés, porque suena mejor.

2. OBJETIVOS

El *corpus* creado contiene la transcripción de diferentes vídeos emitidos por la ARD y RTL+, respectivamente, y textos o vídeos publicados en revistas de automóviles, blogs sobre informática, así como los vídeos de algunos *youtubers* que tienen su propia temática. Después de la creación del *corpus* nos planteamos los siguientes objetivos:

- Mostrar que el inglés está presente en lengua alemana en prácticamente todos los textos del *corpus*.
- Comparar en qué medida y de qué forma se usa vocabulario procedente del inglés en las diferentes fuentes del *corpus*.
- Hacer una reflexión sobre cómo debemos reflejar los resultados obtenidos en las traducciones del alemán al español.

3. METODOLOGÍA

El presente estudio es empírico. La metodología aplicada pertenece a la investigación cualitativa. Obtenemos los resultados a partir de un análisis comparativo de diferentes textos incluidos en el *corpus*.

Antes de presentar los resultados, incluimos una breve descripción de los conceptos de anglicismo, extranjerismo y terminología en relación con el alemán y el español.

3.1. Anglicismos

Los anglicismos son palabras o expresiones que provienen del inglés y se han incorporado en otras lenguas como consecuencia del predominio político, económico y cultural del mundo anglosajón en época moderna.

Por una parte, tenemos los términos o tecnicismos, que amplían constantemente la lengua alemana debido a las Ciencias, la técnica y la tecnología. Este fenómeno afecta también al castellano. En las últimas décadas, la mayoría de los términos procede del inglés por ser la lengua dominante y vehicular en este ámbito. Encontramos múltiples ejemplos en el ámbito tecnológico, en el sector turístico, y en la comida. El mundo de los negocios y la economía, el deporte, la música son otras áreas donde el inglés ha tenido una fuerte influencia en otras lenguas. Aparte de los anglicismos, llama la atención la existencia de los falsos amigos y la introducción de términos que suenan como los ingleses y aparentemente lo son, pero que no forman parte de la lengua inglesa. Por ejemplo, *Handy* en alemán (teléfono móvil) significa *mobile phone* en inglés y *cell phone* en inglés estadounidense.

La creación de palabras nuevas dentro de la lengua son los neologismos, mientras que, la inclusión o adaptación de palabras procedentes de otras lenguas en la propia son los extranjerismos o préstamos.

3.2. Extranjerismos

Los extranjerismos o préstamos que se han incluido en la propia lengua pueden ser extranjerismos o préstamos adaptados, como, por ejemplo, la adaptación de la palabra inglesa *to surf*, que es *surfear* (navegar) en

español y *surfen* en alemán. En ambas lenguas, la adaptación cumple con las características de los verbos de cada idioma. Existen también extranjerismos crudos o no adaptados, por ejemplo, *software*, que se usa en las tres lenguas siendo el inglés el original y el español y alemán las que usan el préstamo crudo, eso sí, con la ligera adaptación de la mayúscula al principio en alemán.

Siempre han existido extranjerismos. En lo que se refiere al español y en función de cada época histórica, contamos con arabismos, galicismos, italianismos o indigenismos. Con el paso del tiempo, estas palabras ya no se reconocen como préstamos, sino forman parte del lenguaje, igual que las demás palabras que son de origen latino en su mayoría.

En alemán, la historia marca también algunas épocas donde la lengua fue enriquecida o estropeada por extranjerismos. En el Barroco, en 1617, se fundó en Weimar la primera sociedad lingüística alemana, la *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* (Sociedad Fructífera) para fomentar la productividad lingüística alemana frente a la francesa y para sustituir el vocabulario procedente del francés por palabras de origen alemán. Más adelante, en 1871, cuando se fundó el Imperio Alemán, ya existía el *Hochdeutsch* (alemán alto). A partir de 1885, con la *Asociación General de la Lengua Alemana* (Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein), se convirtió el patriotismo lingüístico del Barroco en un nacionalismo lingüístico bajo el gobierno del káiser Wilhelm II (Lobin, 2021). La misma organización patriota en un principio se transformó en una herramienta del nacionalsocialismo porque en la época hitleriana llegó a controlar el racismo lingüístico. Hoy en día, el mayor invasor lingüístico es el inglés, y en este caso, la *Asociación de la Lengua Alemana* (Verein Deutsche Sprache), fundada en 1997, se dedica a la sustitución de las palabras inglesas cuando el concepto ya existe y también una denominación en alemán (Lobin, 2021).

En España, el órgano que controla y cuida el desarrollo del español es la Real Academia Española (RAE), que, aparte de dar recomendaciones en relación con el uso del castellano, supervisa, adapta y determina lo que corresponde al uso correcto del español y, específicamente, de los extranjerismos. Son recomendaciones cuando no se ha establecido ninguna decisión aún, adaptaciones gramaticales y fonéticas en muchos

casos, preferencias de expresiones españolas frente los préstamos cuando estos no sean necesarios y, cuando el concepto es novedoso, su forma de presentarlo o usarlo. Aunque este control evita la inclusión de cualquier palabra ajena a la lengua asentada de forma caótica, no impide el desarrollo natural de la lengua porque, al fin y al cabo, el uso frecuente de determinadas palabras o expresiones a menudo puede más que las reglas reconocidas por los lingüistas.

En el caso del alemán, el control no es tan riguroso, pero, como veremos más adelante, la voluntad de optar por cuidar lo que propiamente corresponde al idioma alemán frente a la invasión incontrolada y masiva del inglés tiene su efecto también en la lengua germánica.

3.3. La terminología

Por terminología se entiende el «conjunto de términos o vocablos propios de determinada profesión o disciplina» (RAE). En este caso, el uso suele ser delimitado o, por lo menos más frecuente por parte de los especialistas que pertenecen a una determinada profesión o disciplina. Podemos observar que la terminología tiene características propias como, por ejemplo, los términos médicos, de la anatomía o las enfermedades que, en su mayoría tienen una procedencia grecolatina. Esto es así, tanto en lo que se refiere al español como al alemán, aunque el alemán suele tener otra denominación auténticamente germánica, que es la que se usa en la comunicación general, mientras que el término de origen grecolatina corresponde a la jerga o jerga técnica, *Fachsprache* en alemán.

En español, no siempre se aplican las recomendaciones generales al ámbito especializado como es el caso de *baipás* según el Diccionario de la Lengua Española (RAE) y la versión inglesa (DPTM), cuyo uso es el recomendado en los textos especializados, eso sí, escrito con letra cursiva por ser una palabra inglesa. Puede gustar o no, pero el empleo de *bypass* se ha consolidado en la medicina.

En la técnica y tecnología observamos con frecuencia que la terminología de los catálogos que ofrecen los productos al mercado no coincide con artículos cuidados sobre la misma temática. El adjetivo «cuidados»

no es superfluo porque existen también páginas en internet o blogs donde se redacta tal como se habla sin cuidar el lenguaje.

Aunque podemos confirmar que ambas lenguas, el español y el alemán, se ven afectados por la inclusión masiva de extranjerismos de origen inglés en cuanto a la terminología tecnológica, el número de términos no adaptados es mayor en alemán y también el número total. Lo podemos comprobar tomando como base y ejemplo la lista de vocabulario informático alemán-español publicada en Lexicool, donde encontramos muchos términos en alemán que son los ingleses, lo que no es así en el caso del español, aunque algunos términos se están usando también en español (López, 2025).

En relación con la comunicación dirigida a un lector no especializado sobre una temática tecnológica, como, por ejemplo, en el sector automovilístico o las novedades del mercado de la informática escrita en alemán, nos planteamos dos cuestiones: en primer lugar, cómo se emplea la terminología y, en segundo lugar, si el entorno tecnológico inspira a emplear, además de la terminología procedente del inglés, también otro vocabulario de origen inglés.

4. RESULTADOS

Hemos formado un *corpus* de textos en alemán que consta de varios géneros textuales y temáticas, especialmente artículos de diferentes páginas web y la transcripción de vídeos.

El *corpus* contiene textos especializados, pero dirigidos a un público lego sobre temas relacionados con la informática o el mundo del automóvil. Otros textos contienen noticias o comentarios sobre temas o programas de la actualidad. Estos textos o vídeos se dirigen a cualquier interesado o a un público juvenil.

A continuación, se sigue el análisis de algunos de estos textos o transcripciones de vídeos para poder mostrar si se usa el inglés de forma indiscriminada o solo los extranjerismos ya asentados, y si hay un criterio a la hora de emplear el lenguaje inglés dentro de la lengua germánica.

4.1. El comienzo de un vídeo

Para empezar, elegimos un vídeo de una *youtuber* (o youtubera). Optamos por la difusión de recetas de cocina de Sally en el canal de Sallys Welt, en concreto, la preparación de un pastel de manzana (*Apfelkuchen* en alemán). La preparación de pasteles, tartas u otros dulces es una tradición en Alemania que sigue siendo actual y compartida por todas las generaciones. El vocabulario no requiere de extranjerismos y comprobamos que realmente no hay palabras inglesas en la parte explicativa del vídeo. Sin embargo, y esto es lo que llama la atención, al principio antes del saludo formal, Sally pronuncia: «Ja, ich bin *ready*.», en lugar de decir «Ja, ich bin bereit.», en español «Sí, estoy lista». Es un ejemplo donde se sustituye una palabra alemana por una inglesa sin ninguna necesidad en un contexto informal, se supone, para llamar la atención o por costumbre.

4.2. Comentario de un episodio de *First Dates*

First Dates es un programa televisivo que procede del Reino Unido y que, entretanto, se transmite también tanto en Alemania como en España. La trama central del programa gira en torno a una primera cita a ciegas entre dos personas que buscan pareja. El productor del programa en Alemania es VOX, un canal televiso de Alemania, fundado en 1993, que emite para todo el país y pertenece al Grupo RTL (*Radio Télévision Luxembourg*), un canal privado de televisión con sede en Colonia. *First Dates* y también los comentarios de Ceddo, un *influencer* alemán, se emiten en RTL+, que es la plataforma de entretenimiento *crossmedia* de RTL.

Hemos elegido el episodio: *Zwei Teens! Wer zahlt das Essen?* Los protagonistas de este episodio de *First Dates* son muy jóvenes, adolescentes, donde se crea la expectativa sobre quién paga la cena. La chica busca a una pareja tradicional y, por lo tanto, Ceddo plantea el momento del pago de la cena como señal para la chica. Finalmente, el chico no considera necesario invitar a la chica y, aunque no sea por este motivo, no quieren concertar una segunda cita.

FIGURA 1. *Zwei Teens! Wer zahlt das Essen? First Dates*



Fuente: Daily ceddo, 2024, YouTube

El lenguaje del moderador es un lenguaje coloquial, casual, cercano y juvenil. En el vídeo elegido llama la atención el uso de palabras inglesas de forma improcedente, tal como lo hemos visto en el apartado anterior, pero, en este caso, durante la transmisión de todo el vídeo, que son unos quince minutos.

En la figura 2 se ve los anglicismos del vídeo en función del tiempo (minutos y segundos). Las palabras entre paréntesis forman parte del *Duden*, es decir, son extranjerismos ya incorporados en la lengua germánica. Como se puede ver, *girl*, *after hours*, etc. son palabras cotidianas en inglés que no forman parte de la lengua alemana, pero ayudan a conseguir un estilo cercano y actual. Estas y las demás palabras en negrita se podrían sustituir fácilmente por sus equivalentes en alemán. Hay otras palabras, inglesas también, que, a pesar de estar incluidas en el *Duden*, no pertenecen a la lengua general, sino a un contexto especializado, como, por ejemplo, *Commitment.* En el caso de *auschecken*, el significado del vídeo corresponde a *to check out* como *überprüfen*

(comprobar) y no al equivalente de *check-out* en un contexto turístico. En resumen, podemos afirmar que el estilo del moderador llama la atención por su deliberada mezcla del alemán con el inglés y su preferencia de términos ingleses cuando estos no son necesarios.

FIGURA 2. *Anglicismos en el vídeo de Daily ceddo*

0:12 First Dates ***reactions***	3:50 **after hours**	10:20 **real** Talk
0:48 (auschecken)	4:12 hi	10:50 (To-do-Liste)
0:52 Podcast	4:34 (hat sehr gut *gematched*.)	11:29 (Konversation)
1:47 (ein bisschen *cringen* Small Talk)	4:39 Datepartner	12:08 (ein komplettes *Goal*)
1:49 **let's go**	6:54 (gecheckt hat)	12:11 (Gentleman)
2:29 (Gag)	7:04 (super)	12:17 **Starboy**
2:37 (Workshops)	7:08 (cool)	14:23 (*Commitment* zeigt)
2:45 (Model)	7:56 **what**	14:56 ein Mem (inglés: meme)
3:15 **girl**	7:58 (mein *Dad*)	14:58 ein zweites Date
3:17 (cool)	8:02 das ***Surrender***, aber witzig	15:18 **young boy**
3:23 Das wär ***too much*** gewesen.	9:13 Flirt	

Fuente: elaboración propia

4.3. TAGESSCHAU

En este apartado contrastamos el estilo de Ceddo de RTL+ con el de la ARD. El siguiente vídeo titulado *Tagesschau* son las noticias diarias que se emiten en la televisión de la ARD o *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Asociación de emisoras públicas de radiodifusión de la República Federal de Alemania). La ARD se fundó en 1950 con el primer canal televisivo (*Erstes Deutsche Fernsehen*), que a partir de 1996 se denomina *Das Erste* (La primera [televisión]). Son nueve emisoras regionales que forman parte de esta asociación y, como décimo miembro, también la emisora internacional Deutsche Welle (DW), que se financia con fondos públicos. Las noticias se emiten a diferentes horas a lo largo del día siendo las principales las de las 20:00 horas que emite *Das Erste* durante quince minutos. Hemos escuchado el programa del sábado, 25 de octubre de 2025 a las 9:50 horas. En las noticias no hay ningún extranjerismo en inglés. Todas las palabras de procedencia inglesa son

términos o vocablos asentados en la lengua germánica. No hemos podido detectar ninguna palabra inglesa, ningún préstamo «superfluo», sino se nota la intención de usar un buen alemán y cuidar el estilo y el empleo de la propia lengua. Podemos considerar que el motivo obedece al tipo de comunicación, dado que las noticias se transmiten de forma objetiva, clara y fáctica. Por otra parte, cabe suponer que, al tratarse de una asociación pública, no se permitiría un «uso inapropiado» o un «abuso» del inglés dentro de la expresión en alemán.

FIGURA 3. *Las noticias de la ARD*



Fuente: *Tagesschau* a las 09:50 horas, 25-10-2025, Das Erste

Para aclarar la duda, revisamos otra programación de la misma asociación, que es un podcast con una programación diaria donde los periodistas presentan noticias o temas de la actualidad desde ángulos diferentes en un formato que no se parece a la transmisión clásica de las noticias (Tagesschau). Los presentadores son un hombre y una mujer que juntos comentan los temas previstos de una manera amena y cercana. Intentan ser imparciales y entretenidos al mismo tiempo. Es una iniciativa de Jörg Schönenbrunn, el director de la emisora regional WDR (Westdeutscher Rundfunk, en español: Radiodifusora del Oeste Alemán) de información, ficción y entretenimiento y tiene mucho éxito. Se trata de *15 Minuten. Der Tagesschau-Podcast am Morgen* (15 minutos. El podcast de la *Tagesschau* por la mañana).

FIGURA 4. *Oktoberfest-Start / Verzögerung beim Autobahnausbau / Einsamkeit (Comienzo del Oktoberfest / retraso en la ampliación de las autopistas / la soledad)*



Fuente: *15 Minuten. Die Tagesschau am Morgen*, 19-09-2025, YouTube

En este vídeo se comentan tres noticias. Primero hablan del comienzo del Oktoberfest, una fiesta popular de Múnich, después del retraso en la ampliación de las autopistas y, por último, de la soledad. Es muy ameno, pero es un alemán cuidado y los anglicismos se reducen a términos procedentes del inglés y algunas palabras acuñadas, excepto la palabra *sober* (sobrio), que no forma parte del *Duden*, como se puede ver en la siguiente figura.

FIGURA 5. *Anglicismos en 15 Minuten. Die Tagesschau am Morgen*

1:01 Online-Fragebogen

1:13 klicken/ super

4:24 Oktoberfest, ***sober***

8:02 Deutschlandticket

9:54 Suizid

10:19 Job

12:24 Mobbing

12:31 Care-Arbeit/ Carearbeit

13:23 Kinderdisko/ Kinderdisco

13:28 Ü60-Party (Party für über Sechzigjährige)

1:01 Online-Fragebogen

Fuente: elaboración propia

4.4. Revistas de coches

En este apartado partimos de lo que publican las revistas de coches *Autozeitung* y *auto motor und sport* en su versión on-line y lo comparamos con un artículo de la revista telemática *Car* publicado en español.

En el artículo elegido de la revista *Autozeitung*, la marca Volkswagen ha modificado la nomenclatura de sus modelos eléctricos. ID, que significa «diseño inteligente» (*Intelligentes Design* en alemán), ha dado nombre al nuevo prototipo ID.Polo, previsto para el próximo año, el cual sustituirá el conocido ID.2all. La editora del artículo ha cuidado el uso del idioma; aun así, se percibe la influencia del inglés en este ámbito. Las palabras señaladas podrían sustituirse por otras más tradicionales.

FIGURA 6. *Baldige ID. Polo-Premiere. Fünf Fakten zum VW Polo (Próximo estreno del ID. Polo. Cinco datos sobre el VW Polo)*



Fuente: Adele Moser, 19-09-2025, www.Autozeitung.de

En segundo lugar, elegimos una entrevista de la Fórmula 1 en México publicada en la revista *auto motor und sport* en un vídeo. El editor es Joel Lischka, que realiza la entrevista con el experto de la Fórmula 1 Michael Schmidt. La siguiente figura muestra los anglicismos empleados.

FIGURA 7. *Formel 1. Norris zockt alle ab (Fórmula 1. Norris gana a todos)*

0:12 Qualifying (Q)	2:04 Low Grip Grenzstrecke	4:36 wenn man ein *Upgrade* gebracht hat.
0:18 FP zwei (Free Practice two, freies Training, entrenamiento libre)	2:09 Teamchef	5:18 total gekillt
0:30 auf *Speed* sein	2:11 Stints (Etappen)	5:56 ein klasse *Qualifier* ist
0:52 Pole	2:34 Set-up/ Setup	6:34 Top Autos
0:57 Pole Position	3:08 *Our Focus is to stop the Momentum* auf Verstappen.	7:05 der Pole Position Mann
1:15 Grip	3:45 Sprint	7:40 super Timing
1:20 Limit	4:29 Longrun	

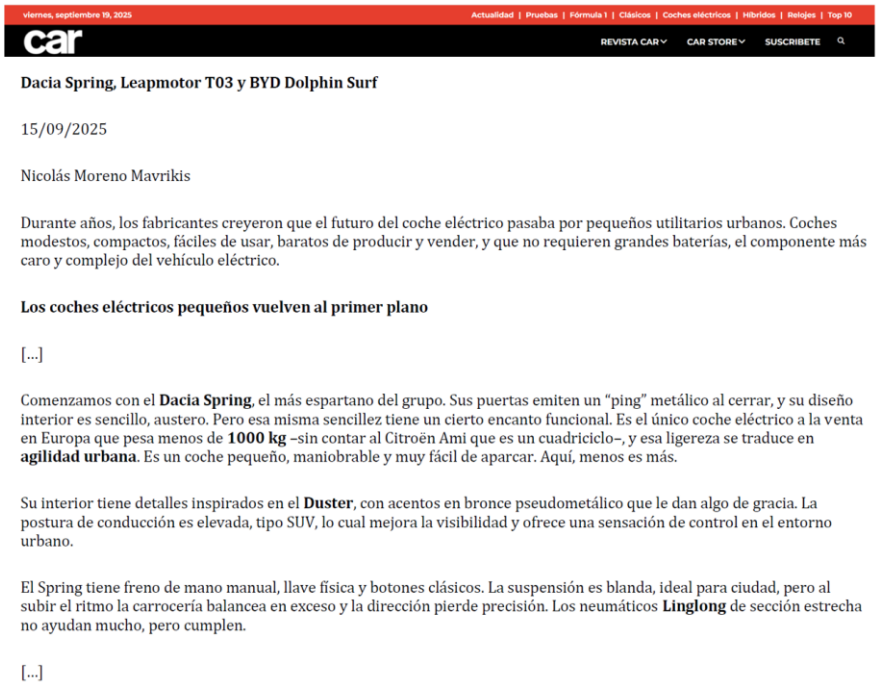
Fuente: Joel Lischka, 26-10-2025, auto motor und sport

Los anglicismos usados son en su gran mayoría términos específicos de la Fórmula 1. Las demás palabras son anglicismos asentados e incluidos en el *Duden*. Cabe destacar que, aunque se trata de términos técnicos del ámbito deportivo y, por lo tanto, de expresiones utilizados en muchos países, en español no existen tantos anglicismos como en alemán. Un ejemplo es la primera palabra, *Qualifying*, que es la palabra inglesa, que se usa también en alemán, mientras que en español se habla de *calificación*. Por otra parte, en el caso de *Pole Position*, en español, *pole position*, ambos idiomas usan el término inglés. Este vídeo nos muestra la importancia del inglés en la jerga de la Fórmula 1, que pertenece al automovilismo y al mismo tiempo al deporte.

Aparte de lo comentado sobre el vídeo de la Fórmula 1, el extracto de un artículo de la revista *Car* confirma que la influencia del inglés, en el español en comparación con el alemán, es mínima. En el fragmento analizado, la única huella del inglés se aprecia en el uso de las comillas inglesas en lugar de las españolas.

En resumen, podemos afirmar que, en el caso del español, por una parte, tenemos la RAE que supervisa la lengua, aunque no puede ignorar el uso real de la lengua. Sea este el motivo o simplemente el hablante español, el fenómeno del anglicismo se limita a la terminología y no se extiende al resto del vocabulario donde no se carece de medios lingüísticos.

FIGURA 8. *Dacia Spring, Leapmotor T03 y BYD Dolphin*



viernes, septiembre 19, 2025

Actualidad | Pruebas | Fórmula 1 | Clásicos | Coches eléctricos | Híbridos | Relojes | Top 10

car

REVISTA CAR CAR STORE SUSCRIBETE

Dacia Spring, Leapmotor T03 y BYD Dolphin Surf

15/09/2025

Nicolás Moreno Mavrikis

Durante años, los fabricantes creyeron que el futuro del coche eléctrico pasaba por pequeños utilitarios urbanos. Coches modestos, compactos, fáciles de usar, baratos de producir y vender, y que no requieren grandes baterías, el componente más caro y complejo del vehículo eléctrico.

Los coches eléctricos pequeños vuelven al primer plano

[...]

Comenzamos con el **Dacia Spring**, el más espartano del grupo. Sus puertas emiten un "ping" metálico al cerrar, y su diseño interior es sencillo, austero. Pero esa misma sencillez tiene un cierto encanto funcional. Es el único coche eléctrico a la venta en Europa que pesa menos de **1000 kg** –sin contar al Citroën Ami que es un cuadriciclo–, y esa ligereza se traduce en **agilidad urbana**. Es un coche pequeño, maniobrable y muy fácil de aparcar. Aquí, menos es más.

Su interior tiene detalles inspirados en el **Duster**, con acentos en bronce pseudometálico que le dan algo de gracia. La postura de conducción es elevada, tipo SUV, lo cual mejora la visibilidad y ofrece una sensación de control en el entorno urbano.

El Spring tiene freno de mano manual, llave física y botones clásicos. La suspensión es blanda, ideal para ciudad, pero al subir el ritmo la carrocería balancea en exceso y la dirección pierde precisión. Los neumáticos **Linglong** de sección estrecha no ayudan mucho, pero cumplen.

[...]

Fuente: Nicolás Moreno Mavrikis, 25-09-2025, Revista Car

En relación con los términos, se puede observar que los intentos de prever términos traducidos al español en lugar de los correspondientes ingleses no siempre son posibles. A menuda se escucha *link* en lugar de enlace, a pesar de que, de momento, el Diccionario de la RAE solo incluye *enlace*.

4.5. WENN DENGLISCH ZUR SUCHT WIRD

El último vídeo que incluiremos es una autocrítica al uso exagerado o incluso al abuso del inglés en la comunicación en alemán. Phil Laude ha creado un vídeo humorístico titulado *Wenn Denglisch zur Sucht wird* (Cuando el *Denglisch* [la mezcla de inglés y alemán] se convierte en una adicción), en el que utiliza tantas palabras y expresiones inglesas que, al final, irrita a su novia y consigue que la gente de la calle deje de entenderlo.

La transcripción durante los primeros 26 segundos es así: «Ja, *hi*, ich bin Phil Laude, und ich bin einfach so *crazy*, nee, *extremely*... Ach komm, *fuck it*, ich bin einfach *spot-on*, *full frontal addicted to* Denglisch. Eigentlich hat's total harmlos angefangen. Ja, ich habe einen Job angenommen in einem *hippen Start-up* in einem belgischen Viertel. Und da wars einfach so, Teil der *Company Culture*, ja. Es gab *Meetings*, es gab *Deadlines*, es gab *Brainstormings*.» El vídeo dura unos seis minutos más donde el número de anglicismos va incrementando, al mismo tiempo que el inglés empleado resulta cada vez más difícil de entender para alguien que no domina esta lengua.

En español, la transcripción del comienzo del vídeo significa lo siguiente: «Sí, hola, soy Phil Laude, y estoy tan loco, no, extremadamente... Venga, joder, estoy totalmente enganchado al *Denglisch*. En realidad, todo empezó de forma totalmente inocente. Sí, acepté un trabajo en una nueva empresa en un barrio belga. Y allí era simplemente parte de la cultura de la empresa, sí. Había *meetings* (reuniones), *deadlines* (plazos), *brainstormings* (lluvias de ideas) […]».

En el original, *Job* es también un anglicismo, pero no lo hemos marcado porque se trata de una palabra consolidada en el alemán. *Hi* y *crazy* se usan a menudo en contextos coloquiales, *extremely* no, pero se entiende, mientras que *fuck it*, *spot-on*, *full frontal addicted to* no se suelen mezclar con el alemán. Los términos más técnicos, en cambio, sí forman parte del vocabulario alemán, sobre todo, *Start-up*, *Meeting*, *Deadline* y *Brainstorming* y también el adjetivo *hip*. En cambio, en el Diccionario de la RAE no se encuentra ninguna de las palabras inglesas citadas.

5. DISCUSIÓN

Una vez analizados los textos y vídeos en lengua alemana en relación con los anglicismos, podemos confirmar que se trata de una invasión masiva en contextos no formales o incluso coloquiales. Esto no ocurre en castellano. Gran parte del vocabulario inglés ya se ha incluido en el *Duden*, el diccionario de referencia alemán. En cambio, el Diccionario de la RAE solo permite la inclusión de los anglicismos imprescindibles, o porque no existe ningún término equivalente en español, o por su uso

frecuente. Además, se preocupa por la adaptación gramatical y fonética. No olvidemos que el *Duden* no tiene la misma función, sino refleja la realidad de la lengua actual. Por otra parte, los mismos hablantes de alemán son conscientes de la modificación que padece su lengua y, por este motivo, existe también en Alemania una lucha por parte de los lingüistas para mantener el idioma reconocible.

En cuanto a la traducción de textos del alemán al español, nos enfrentamos a un fenómeno que requiere una reflexión.

En lo que se refiere a la traducción, una clave ha sido siempre ser fiel al texto original de acuerdo con la intención del autor. Por otra parte, las diferentes teorías de la traducción como la teoría del «Skopos» se han enfocado cada vez más hacia el texto de llegada y su función.

En el caso de la traducción directa de un texto en alemán plagado de anglicismos «innecesarios», la versión en español no mantendría dichos anglicismos, salvo cuando se trate de términos ya incorporados al uso del español.

La traducción inversa, por su parte, daría lugar a un texto en alemán con un tono más juvenil, pero sin recurrir a palabras inglesas superfluas. Cabría la posibilidad de incluir algunas expresiones muy extendidas y consolidadas, pero nada más.

En el caso de los textos técnicos, no existe el mismo problema. Los anglicismos alemanes suelen corresponder a anglicismos españoles, aunque no siempre. Existen casos en los que se puede evitar la palabra procedente del inglés y optar por el término equivalente en español, tal como recomienda la RAE. No obstante, en ciertos contextos, sobre todo cuando se trata de ofrecer productos o servicios, parece que el inglés «se vende mejor», también en España.

6. CONCLUSIONES

El análisis de diferentes textos y transcripciones de vídeos publicados en internet nos ha permitido comprobar en qué medida los anglicismos han invadido la lengua alemana.

Tanto la lengua alemana como el castellano han incorporado numerosos anglicismos en sus respectivas lenguas porque la mayor parte de los términos nuevos proceden del inglés. Se ha comprobado que tanto la lengua alemana como la lengua española padecen una modificación de su lenguaje debido a los términos nuevos sin equivalentes, procedentes del inglés y, aunque no siempre, la falta de su adaptación a la propia lengua en lo que se refiere a la ortografía y fonética.

En el caso del español, hay algunas palabras o términos que, aunque exista un equivalente en español, se prefiere usar en inglés.

En referencia al alemán, no existe prácticamente ninguna resistencia al uso de términos ingleses. Asimismo, la lengua alemana se está ampliando constantemente debido a la inclusión de vocabulario inglés general con una adaptación incompleta. Este fenómeno se observa especialmente en el lenguaje de los jóvenes o en comunicaciones dirigidas a un público juvenil. Corresponde a una moda que tiene mucho éxito.

Existe también un grupo de personas que critican la mezcla aparentemente arbitraria del inglés con el alemán y procuran usar solo los anglicismos imprescindibles, tal como lo hemos visto en los vídeos emitidos por la ARD. No por eso, son menos interesantes. El empleo abusivo del inglés dentro del alemán se compara incluso con un comportamiento vicioso.

Sin embargo, no existe ningún órgano oficial que prohíba o controle la tendencia de hacer uso del inglés en conversaciones o textos alemanes.

Sobre todo, entre los jóvenes o la comunicación dirigida a ellos, se opta por la mezcla del alemán con el inglés.

Podemos concluir que en el caso del alemán existe un cierto peligro de perder la identidad de la propia lengua debido a la inclusión masiva de palabras o expresiones inglesas en contextos donde el inglés no hace falta. Este problema no existe en España. Por otra parte, en contraposición a esta tendencia, existen publicaciones que conscientemente renuncian al inglés y solo usan anglicismos inevitables.

En lo que se refiere a la traducción, los textos alemanes que contienen mucho inglés perderían este matiz en la traducción al español. Los

distintivos que marcan la actualidad del texto se sustituirían por expresiones españolas equivalentes.

En la traducción inversa se renunciaría a la inclusión de anglicismos «innecesarios» limitándose a los medios lingüísticos disponibles en la lengua alemana.

Por último, la traducción especializada no resulta problemática, ni la directa ni la indirecta.

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LA AUTONOMÍA EN EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS: UN ESTUDIO COMPARATIVO ENTRE ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS DE MÉXICO, HONDURAS Y ESPAÑA

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Autonomía es una competencia necesaria para la vida y clave para el éxito académico, especialmente en el aprendizaje de idiomas. Definida por Benson (2011) como la capacidad de tomar el control sobre el propio aprendizaje, esta destreza se desarrolla según las características individuales, el contexto y los objetivos del aprendiente.

La autonomía en el aprendizaje fue impulsada por la pandemia, que provocó un giro digital global y aceleró el uso de plataformas educativas, haciendo de la tecnología un componente clave. La diversidad de recursos digitales demostró que aprender una segunda lengua no se limita a un espacio físico ni depende exclusivamente de la instrucción presencial, ampliando así las oportunidades para la práctica y el estudio independiente.

El aprendizaje de lenguas ha adquirido un rol fundamental en la formación académica y profesional. Por ello, la enseñanza del inglés es una prioridad estratégica que forma parte del currículo en todos los

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programas educativos de la Universidad Veracruzana (UV), la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (UNAH) y la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca (UPSA).

En el contexto actual, las universidades ofrecen diversas modalidades para cursar inglés, siendo la presencial la más común. Esta modalidad está dirigida por un docente en un aula, con horario fijo y libertad de cátedra para diseñar las sesiones. No obstante, ha crecido el interés por la modalidad autónoma, impulsada por la flexibilidad que ofrece. Estos cursos no interfieren con el horario formal, lo que permite a los estudiantes avanzar en su trayectoria académica o compaginar sus estudios con un empleo.

Los cursos de modalidad autónoma, mediados por tecnología, se caracterizan por la ausencia de un espacio físico y horario fijo. No hay clases en tiempo real y se desarrollan mediante plataformas digitales. En este formato, el estudiante asume la gestión de su propio aprendizaje. El contenido, los objetivos por nivel, actividades, tareas, materiales de apoyo, criterios, rúbricas y fechas de entrega están disponibles en línea.

Cada institución emplea una infraestructura tecnológica específica. En la UV se alojan en Eminus, con asesoría presencial o virtual. En la UNAH se usan cursos virtualizados en Moodle, sin interacción directa con el docente, aunque existe una hora semanal para tutoría sincrónica opcional. En la UPSA se emplea un modelo combinado con Moodle y Blackboard Collaborate, con sesiones síncronas no obligatorias que pueden recuperarse en diferido.

Lo que define estos cursos es la centralidad del estudiante como agente activo. En este contexto, el estudiante es considerado un "aprendiente", es decir, alguien que se forma de manera independiente. Holec (1981) destaca que el aprendizaje autónomo se fortalece mediante la exploración personal y la resolución de problemas, con o sin apoyo docente, lo que implica un cambio significativo en la concepción de la enseñanza.

Sin embargo, poco se sabe sobre cómo los estudiantes perciben su participación en estos cursos autónomos de inglés mediados por tecnología. Por ello, este estudio comparativo analiza las percepciones de estudiantes universitarios de México, Honduras y España sobre su

autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés. Se examinan la autogestión, la motivación, el uso de recursos y los desafíos que enfrentan. Comprender estas percepciones permitirá identificar áreas de mejora y asumir, como docentes, la responsabilidad de generar estrategias que fortalezcan una enseñanza centrada en el estudiante y alineada con los principios del aprendizaje autónomo.

2. MARCO TEÓRICO

2.1. Autonomía en el aprendizaje de lenguas

La autonomía en el aprendizaje ha sido objeto de amplio estudio desde diversas perspectivas teóricas, lo que ha permitido comprender su importancia en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera. Uno de los referentes fundamentales es Holec (1981), quien define la autonomía como la "capacidad del aprendiz para asumir la responsabilidad de su propio aprendizaje". Esta concepción marcó el inicio de un enfoque centrado en el estudiante, al plantear una transformación del rol del docente, que pasa de ser transmisor de conocimiento a facilitador del proceso formativo.

Posteriormente, Holec (1992) profundizó en esta idea al subrayar que la autonomía no depende únicamente de la habilidad del estudiante, sino también de su voluntad para implicarse activamente en la gestión de su aprendizaje. Esta gestión abarca la definición de objetivos, la elección de estrategias y la autoevaluación, posicionando al aprendiente en el centro del proceso educativo.

En esta línea, Benson (2011) amplía el concepto al considerar la autonomía como una competencia multidimensional, cuyas manifestaciones varían según el contexto, las características individuales del estudiante y el grado de control que ejerce sobre su aprendizaje. Se expresa desde decisiones sobre métodos y tiempos de estudio, hasta la comprensión de normas, expectativas y valores de la comunidad educativa. Además, Benson destaca que no se transmite directamente, sino que se promueve mediante entornos que favorecen la participación activa y el compromiso.

El desarrollo de la autonomía implica también componentes psicológicos y metacognitivos complejos. Dickinson (1987) destaca el papel de factores como la motivación, las creencias o las percepciones, que pueden influir positiva o negativamente en la gestión del aprendizaje. Por su parte, Wenden (1991) resalta la importancia del conocimiento estratégico y de las tareas, mientras que Ellis y Sinclair (1991) subrayan la influencia del contexto cultural y lingüístico.

Un enfoque complementario es el de Little (1991, 2007), quien sostiene que la autonomía no debe entenderse como aislamiento, sino como una capacidad que puede y debe desarrollarse en contextos colaborativos. Ser autónomo implica tanto la capacidad de tomar decisiones de forma independiente como la voluntad de participar activamente en comunidades de aprendizaje. En este sentido, el rol del docente como orientador es clave, sobre todo en la promoción de habilidades metacognitivas que permitan al estudiante reflexionar críticamente sobre su propio proceso de construcción del conocimiento.

En conjunto, la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés trasciende la simple idea de estudiar por cuenta propia. Se trata de una combinación compleja de responsabilidad, autorregulación, motivación y participación activa, que debe ser cultivada deliberadamente y acompañada desde el entorno educativo.

2.2. Motivación y autodeterminación como factores clave

Comprender por qué algunos estudiantes desarrollan la autonomía con mayor eficacia que otros exige ir más allá de las prácticas educativas observables. Una vía teórica especialmente útil para explicar estas diferencias es la Teoría de la Autodeterminación (TAD), formulada por Ryan y Deci (2000), que ofrece un marco sólido para analizar los procesos motivacionales implicados en el aprendizaje autónomo. Esta teoría distingue dos tipos fundamentales de motivación: la intrínseca —vinculada al interés genuino o al disfrute de la tarea— y la extrínseca, que responde a recompensas externas o presiones del entorno. No obstante, más allá de esta clasificación, la TAD sostiene que el compromiso sostenido con el aprendizaje requiere satisfacer tres necesidades psicológicas básicas: autonomía (control sobre las decisiones), competencia

(sentimiento de eficacia personal) y relación (conexión interpersonal y pertenencia a un grupo).

La evidencia empírica muestra que, cuando estas necesidades están satisfechas, los estudiantes tienden a mostrar mayor persistencia, esfuerzo y compromiso, así como un bienestar subjetivo más elevado, todos ellos elementos esenciales en entornos que promueven el aprendizaje autónomo. Sin embargo, es importante señalar que la forma en que estas necesidades se expresan y se satisfacen puede variar según múltiples factores: las diferencias individuales, los recursos disponibles y, de forma significativa, el contexto sociocultural.

En este sentido, la cultura institucional y los marcos educativos nacionales —como los existentes en México, Honduras y España— pueden actuar como factores que facilitan o limitan la percepción de autodeterminación de los estudiantes. Las dimensiones culturales propuestas por Hofstede (2001), como el grado de individualismo, la distancia al poder o la aversión a la incertidumbre, permiten comprender cómo ciertos valores culturales condicionan la forma en que los estudiantes responden ante propuestas pedagógicas orientadas a la autonomía. Como señalan Olafsen y Deci (2020), estas variables inciden tanto en el tipo de motivación que se desarrolla como en el nivel de satisfacción de las necesidades psicológicas fundamentales. En conjunto, estos enfoques teóricos permiten analizar con mayor profundidad las condiciones que potencian el aprendizaje autónomo, así como los desafíos que enfrentan los estudiantes en contextos culturales diversos.

2.3. Entornos virtuales, interacción y control

En el ámbito de la educación superior, resulta imprescindible analizar cómo la evolución de las Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC) ha transformado los entornos de aprendizaje, especialmente aquellos que fomentan la autonomía estudiantil. Facundo-Díaz (2005) identifica cuatro niveles progresivos en esta evolución: un primer nivel centrado en el uso de TIC exclusivamente en la docencia; un segundo nivel que incorpora recursos digitales como videos, audios y materiales interactivos, aunque con comunicación unidireccional; un tercer nivel en el que se integran plataformas virtuales que permiten

mayor interacción entre los agentes educativos; y un cuarto nivel que describe una mediación total, en la que la tecnología estructura integralmente el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Esta categorización permite entender cómo los entornos digitales pueden, según su diseño, facilitar o limitar la autonomía. En una actualización de esta perspectiva, Muñoz-Rojas (2016) analiza la transición institucional desde modelos de acceso limitado hacia entornos plenamente mediados por tecnología. En tales contextos, el rol del docente se redefine: deja de ser un transmisor de contenidos para convertirse en facilitador, orientador o tutor virtual. El estudiante, por su parte, asume un rol activo como responsable de su propio proceso formativo. Esta transformación resulta especialmente significativa en los cursos de inglés en modalidad autónoma, donde la tecnología no solo actúa como canal, sino que configura y condiciona el entorno de aprendizaje en su totalidad.

Los entornos mediados por TIC permiten personalizar la experiencia educativa, ampliar el acceso a materiales pertinentes y promover el desarrollo de competencias comunicativas alineadas con los intereses individuales del estudiante. Este enfoque hace que el aprendizaje de idiomas resulte más significativo y relevante, al tiempo que potencia la motivación, el compromiso y la confianza (Shadiev & Wang, 2022).

Desde un punto de vista teórico, la Teoría de la Distancia Transaccional propuesta por Moore (1989) introduce tres variables fundamentales para comprender el aprendizaje mediado por tecnología: la autonomía del estudiante, el diálogo educativo y la estructura del curso. Según esta teoría, cuando un curso presenta una estructura rígida y escasa interacción, se incrementa la distancia transaccional, lo que puede reducir la percepción de control del estudiante. Por el contrario, entornos flexibles y dialógicos fortalecen la autonomía y enriquecen la experiencia formativa. Este modelo permite analizar cómo estudiantes de contextos diversos —como universidades latinoamericanas y europeas— perciben su autonomía en función del grado de acceso, estructura y acompañamiento tecnológico.

En línea con esta visión, White (2003) sostiene que, en entornos donde el estudiante gestiona activamente su aprendizaje, la autonomía no solo

es posible, sino indispensable. No obstante, para que esta sea efectiva, es esencial contar con materiales pedagógicos bien diseñados, apoyo institucional adecuado y oportunidades frecuentes de interacción significativa. Estos elementos consolidan la dimensión social del aprendizaje autónomo y previenen la sensación de abandono institucional que puede surgir en modalidades excesivamente desasistidas.

La literatura reciente ha demostrado que el aprendizaje de lenguas mediado por tecnología genera efectos positivos no solo a nivel cognitivo, sino también en las dimensiones afectiva, lingüística y sociocultural. Más allá de facilitar el acceso a contenidos, las TIC promueven habilidades de autorregulación y metacognición, aspectos clave para una autonomía sostenida y eficaz (Requejo et al., 2022; Stickler, 2022).

En este contexto, los cursos autónomos de inglés mediados por tecnología que se ofrecen en universidades de México, Honduras y España —objeto del presente estudio comparativo— constituyen una estrategia eficiente. Al prescindir de espacios físicos y horarios fijos, estas modalidades optimizan recursos institucionales y amplían el acceso educativo. Además, se alinean con la concepción clásica de autonomía de Holec (1981) y con la visión de Benson (2011), quien subraya el papel de la tecnología como mediadora del aprendizaje y promotora de una formación centrada en el estudiante.

2.4. Perfil del estudiante Autónomo y Estrategias para el Aprendizaje en Construcción

Resulta importante conocer las cualidades que definen al estudiante autónomo y cómo estas se articulan con el uso intencionado de estrategias para fomentar y sostener su autonomía en el aprendizaje. El perfil del estudiante autónomo se distingue por su capacidad para gestionar su propio proceso de aprendizaje con responsabilidad, iniciativa y autorregulación. Este tipo de estudiante establece metas claras, elige estrategias adecuadas, monitorea su desempeño y reflexiona críticamente sobre los avances, desde un enfoque activo y consciente. Ser un estudiante autónomo no significa estudiar en soledad o sin apoyo institucional. Por el contrario, la autonomía supone un conjunto complejo de competencias que trascienden el trabajo individual. De acuerdo

con Ruiz-Pastor (2016), este estudiante toma decisiones informadas sobre su aprendizaje, lo que implica un alto grado de autoconciencia y autorregulación.

Además, no se limita a la obtención de resultados académicos, sino que cultiva actitudes como la motivación intrínseca, la perseverancia y la curiosidad. Aprende porque desea aprender, no solo por obligación. En este proceso, las estrategias constituyen un puente esencial en el desarrollo de la autonomía, ya que permiten tomar decisiones informadas sobre cómo abordar, procesar, retener y aplicar la información de forma significativa. El uso intencionado de estas estrategias, junto con las oportunidades que el entorno educativo le ofrezca para participar activamente en su formación, fortalecerá su capacidad para construir conocimiento (Rubin, 1987).

La autonomía en el aprendizaje de lenguas ha sido ampliamente estudiada, y diversas investigaciones han derivado en distintas clasificaciones de estrategias que la favorecen (Ruiz Pastor, 2016). Estas estrategias están estrechamente vinculadas al desarrollo de la autonomía, en tanto que ayudan al estudiante a tomar el control de su aprendizaje. Según Ruiz Pastor (2016), esta relación se evidencia en la intención consciente del estudiante por alcanzar objetivos claros, gestionar su actividad cognitiva, valorar rutas de acción y tomar decisiones fundamentadas acorde a su contexto.

Entre las estrategias más relevantes para el aprendizaje autónomo se encuentran las cognitivas, que facilitan el procesamiento de la información y su almacenamiento a largo plazo. Incluyen actividades como la práctica repetida, la memorización, el razonamiento lógico o la elaboración de resúmenes (Rubin, 1987; Oxford, 2008). Aunque se trata de procesos mentales internos, tienen un impacto directo en la adquisición de la lengua.

Las estrategias metacognitivas, por su parte, permiten planificar, monitorear y evaluar el aprendizaje. A diferencia de las anteriores, son observables en acciones como la organización del tiempo de estudio, el seguimiento de avances y la adaptación de métodos según las necesidades (Rubin, 1987).

También son clave las estrategias afectivas, orientadas a regular emociones y mantener una actitud positiva. Estas incluyen la gestión de la ansiedad, la automotivación y el trabajo colaborativo. Ruiz Pastor (2016) destaca que los estudiantes más autónomos combinan estas estrategias de forma equilibrada, utilizando herramientas cognitivas y metacognitivas para estructurar su estudio, y recurriendo a las afectivas para mantenerse motivados y resilientes.

2.5. Centros de Autoacceso como Facilitadores de la Autonomía

En conjunto, estas estrategias no solo optimizan el aprendizaje, sino que fortalecen la autoconfianza del estudiante y su capacidad para aprender de forma independiente. Se ha documentado que los Centros de Autoacceso contribuyen significativamente al aprendizaje autónomo.

Los Centros de Autoacceso (CAA) surgieron en los años ochenta, influenciados por los trabajos de Holec (1981), con el objetivo de fomentar la autonomía y facilitar el aprendizaje de lenguas mediante recursos, orientación y condiciones físicas y tecnológicas que permiten al estudiante asumir la responsabilidad de construir su conocimiento. Estos espacios ofrecen materiales físicos y digitales (audio y video), acceso a computadoras y actividades clasificadas por idioma, destreza (lectura, audio, conversación, escritura) y nivel. La orientación que se brinda depende de los objetivos y necesidades del aprendiente.

Según Ordoñez Román (2013), los usuarios del CAA de la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales de la UAM perciben el centro como un espacio de apoyo al aprendizaje de idiomas que favorece su formación integral, ya que les permite practicar, complementar, mejorar y reforzar diversas habilidades. El autor destaca la importancia de promover los CAA como espacios de autoformación en procesos metacognitivos que impulsen la autonomía. Asimismo, propone generar ofertas atractivas que motiven a los estudiantes a asistir con regularidad. Ordoñez Román también señala que la autonomía se desarrolla de forma gradual y que varía según el contexto del individuo, por lo que requiere compromiso, disciplina y motivación.

En España, los CAA están orientados al aprendizaje autónomo y a la individualización del proceso: es el estudiante quien marca su propio ritmo.

Un estudio de Ruiz de Zarobe (1997) indica que estos centros fueron concebidos para atender a estudiantes con objetivos particulares, como aprender un idioma por razones laborales, académicas o para participar en eventos internacionales. En ellos, el estudiante selecciona los contenidos y estrategias que desea emplear. Además, debe completar una ficha por cada visita, donde indica sus objetivos, la actividad realizada, lo aprendido y sus sugerencias. Estas fichas fomentan la reflexión sobre el proceso de aprendizaje, que puede comentarse con un orientador que lo acompañe y le brinde apoyo para mejorar. Ruiz de Zarobe también advierte que algunos estudiantes llegan con cierta desconfianza, pensando que se trata de una prolongación del aula, pero la orientación personalizada facilita su avance y refuerza su independencia como aprendientes.

Actualmente, muchas universidades mexicanas cuentan con CAA destinados al aprendizaje autónomo de lenguas. En la Universidad Veracruzana, estos Centros forman parte de los Centros de Idiomas, un proyecto impulsado en 2006 por la Secretaría de Educación Pública, en colaboración con el British Council, que se encargó de capacitar y actualizar al personal responsable. La dinámica es muy similar a la descrita por Ruiz de Zarobe: el estudiante decide qué, cómo y cuándo estudiar.

Asimismo, la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, a través del Departamento de Recursos de Aprendizaje, dispone del Centro de Recursos de Aprendizaje (CRA), donde los estudiantes tienen acceso a un Jardín Tecnológico. Allí pueden utilizar computadoras durante una hora diaria, de 8:00 a 15:30, de lunes a domingo. Estos espacios resultan propicios para la autorregulación y la práctica autodirigida (Benson, 2011).

3. OBJETIVOS

A través de un enfoque comparativo y exploratorio, este estudio se propone alcanzar los siguientes objetivos:

- Identificar similitudes y diferencias en torno a la representación de la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés, prestando especial atención a los aspectos de autogestión, motivación y uso de recursos por parte de los estudiantes.

– Analizar los principales obstáculos enfrentados y las estrategias empleadas por los estudiantes participantes para desarrollar habilidades lingüísticas de forma autónoma.

4. METODOLOGÍA

El estudio emplea un diseño mixto, ya que el instrumento combina ítems cuantitativos con preguntas abiertas de tipo cualitativo. Se trata de una investigación no experimental, pues no se manipula variables, sino que únicamente se observa el fenómeno en cuestión en su contexto natural (Hernández Sampieri et al., 2022). Esta investigación es descriptiva y de corte transversal al haber recogido los datos en un único momento temporal (Guevara et al., 2020).

Se llevó a cabo un análisis comparativo de los datos recolectados a través de un cuestionario semiestructurado compuesto por 20 preguntas, diseñado para conocer las percepciones de los estudiantes universitarios de los tres países en relación con la autonomía de la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés y distribuido por correo electrónico a los estudiantes de las tres universidades.

Este instrumento fue desarrollado tomando en cuenta cuatro dimensiones clave de la autonomía, como se muestra en la Tabla 1.

TABLA 1: *Dimensiones, fundamentos teóricos y aspectos analizados en el instrumento de evaluación*

Sección del instrumento	Dimensión	Base teórica	Aspectos explorados
1- Autonomía en el aprendizaje	Capacidad de autorregulación	Holec (1981), Benson (2011)	Toma de decisiones, uso de estrategias, planificación
2- Motivación y percepción del aprendizaje	Motivación y autodeterminación	Ryan & Deci (2000)	Tipos de motivación, persistencia, percepción de control
3- Recursos y apoyo en el aprendizaje	Entorno digital e institucional Apoyo docente y pedagógico	Moore (1989), White (2003) Little (2007), White (2003)	Interacción, estructura, recursos y brecha digital Acompañamiento, retroalimentación, variedad y uso de materiales

Fuente: elaboración propia

El cuestionario incluyó tres secciones de 5 preguntas tipo Likert en una escala del 1 al 5 (1= totalmente en desacuerdo y 5= totalmente de acuerdo), lo que facilitó identificar las diferencias y similitudes entre los estudiantes. Las secciones abordaron tres dimensiones específicas:

1. Autonomía en el aprendizaje
2. Motivación y percepción en el aprendizaje
3. Recursos y apoyo en el aprendizaje

Además, se incluyeron dos preguntas abiertas que aportaron datos cualitativos para detectar obstáculos y estrategias, así como otras preguntas de opción múltiple sobre el perfil y las preferencias del alumnado.

La muestra de participantes estuvo conformada por 101 estudiantes universitarios de los tres países (66 mujeres y 34 hombres), distribuidos de la siguiente manera:

1. 42 % de la Universidad Veracruzana (México)
2. 44 % de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras
3. 15 % de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca (España)

Las tres instituciones comparten el compromiso de formar profesionales con competencias en lenguas extranjeras; sin embargo, sus contextos y condiciones tecnológicas, pedagógicas y organizativas son diversos. Estas diferencias inciden directamente en las oportunidades y formas en que la autonomía puede desarrollarse en el marco de los cursos de inglés en modalidad autónoma en cada una de ellas.

Los participantes fueron seleccionados bajo la técnica de selección de muestreo no probabilístico a conveniencia, que se caracteriza por elegir a la población en función de su disponibilidad en el momento del estudio (Hernández, 2022). El criterio de inclusión fue estar cursando de manera autónoma una experiencia de inglés mediada por tecnología. Los participantes pertenecían a diferentes programas educativos de pregrado y cursaban diferentes semestres. El 70 % de los participantes cursaban por primera vez inglés en formato de curso autónomo mediado por tecnología, el 15 % declaró encontrarse en el segundo curso, el 5 % lo hacía en el tercer curso en esta modalidad y el 8 % había realizado

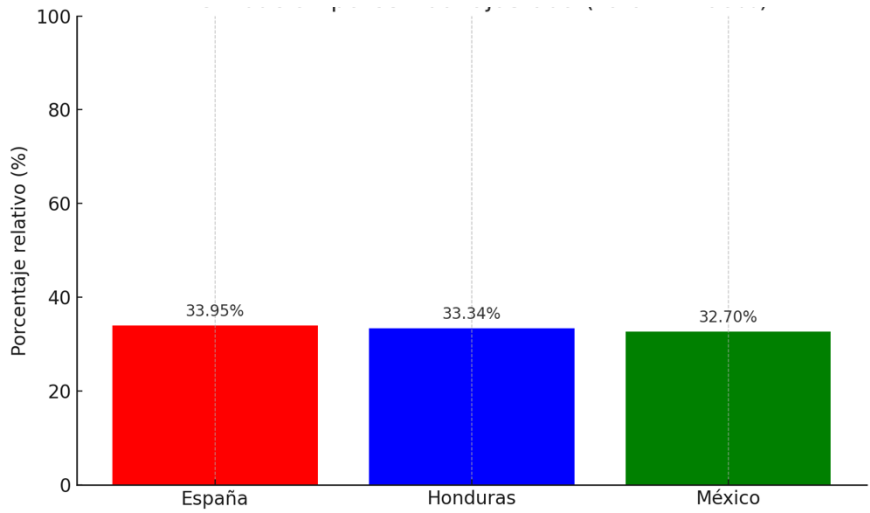
más de tres cursos en esta modalidad. El 73 % de la población manifestó tener un nivel de inglés básico, el 20 % un nivel intermedio y el 7 % un nivel avanzado.

5. RESULTADOS

Los datos muestran que el 68 % del total de los estudiantes participantes en México, Honduras y España eligieron cursar inglés en modalidad autónoma debido a la flexibilidad horaria y la libertad que ofrece esta opción para gestionar su propio proceso de aprendizaje. Este dato refleja una clara preferencia por entornos que promueven la autonomía y la adaptabilidad, factores clave para estudiantes universitarios con agendas académicas y personales exigentes. Los datos cualitativos complementan este hallazgo al ofrecer información reveladora sobre las condiciones percibidas por los aprendientes. En los tres contextos, la mayoría de los participantes fueron mujeres, lo cual abre líneas de análisis relevantes sobre el posible vínculo entre género y elección de modalidades autónomas de aprendizaje.

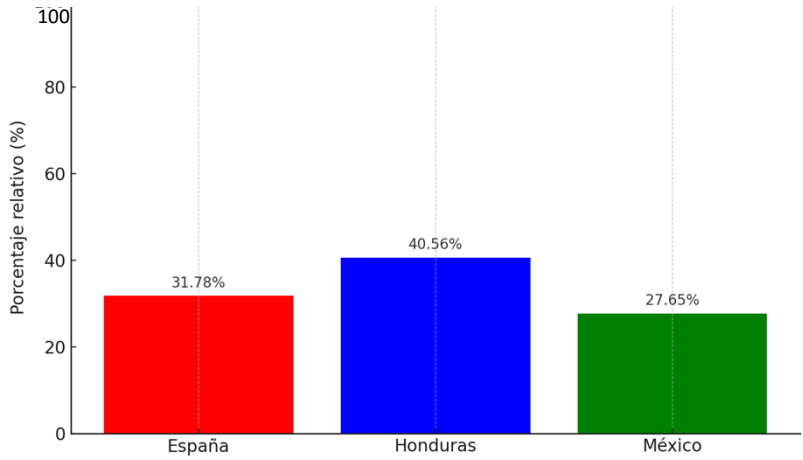
La **Figura 1** presenta una comparación general del porcentaje acumulado de respuestas positivas (de acuerdo y totalmente de acuerdo) de la sección 1: "Autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés". Se puede observar que España muestra el porcentaje más alto de percepción positiva (33.95 %). Esto refleja un entorno más estructurado en cuanto a estrategias pedagógicas para fomentar la autonomía, así como un mayor acceso a recursos tecnológicos y culturales que favorecen la autorregulación. Honduras, con una puntuación muy cercana (33.34 %), revela que sus estudiantes también valoran altamente la autonomía, a pesar de posibles limitaciones tecnológicas. México presenta una percepción ligeramente menor (32.70 %), lo cual puede explicarse por una heterogeneidad en el acceso a infraestructuras, por diferencias regionales y por las variaciones en la implementación de metodologías centradas en el alumno.

FIGURA 1. *Autonomía en el aprendizaje*



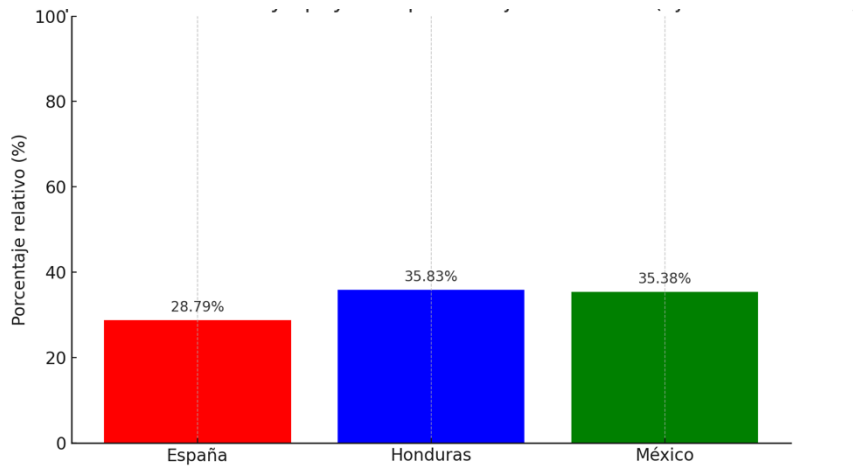
La **Figura 2** compara el porcentaje acumulado sobre los cinco ítems de respuestas positivas (de acuerdo y totalmente de acuerdo) de la sección 2: "Motivación y percepción del aprendizaje autónomo", entre los estudiantes de España, Honduras y México. Honduras encabeza la percepción positiva de motivación y aprendizaje autónomo (40.56%). Este resultado se explica por una fuerte motivación intrínseca ante entornos menos estructurados, en consonancia con la Teoría de la Autodeterminación (Ryan & Deci, 2000). España, con un entorno más estructurado y apoyos pedagógicos definidos, refleja una percepción moderada y estable (31.78%), en concordancia con los modelos de autonomía guiada (Little, 2007). México, aunque con experiencias de aprendizaje autónomo, muestra una percepción ligeramente menor (27.65%). Factores como la diversidad regional, las desigualdades en el acceso a recursos digitales o las diferencias en las prácticas docentes explican esta tendencia.

FIGURA 2. *Motivación y percepción del aprendizaje*



La **Figura 3**, correspondiente a la sección "Recursos y apoyo en el aprendizaje", muestra el porcentaje acumulado de respuestas positivas (de acuerdo y totalmente de acuerdo) en cinco ítems entre los estudiantes de España, Honduras y México. Honduras (35.85%) y México (35.30%) tienen la percepción más alta con gran similitud en cuanto a la disponibilidad y la utilidad de recursos para el aprendizaje autónomo. Esto sugiere que, a pesar de posibles limitaciones tecnológicas, los estudiantes reconocen y valoran el apoyo institucional, como los Centros de Autoacceso, las herramientas digitales accesibles y la orientación de los docentes, en el caso de México principalmente. España (28.79%) presenta la proporción más baja, lo cual se atribuye a una expectativa más alta respecto a los apoyos institucionales o a un uso más crítico de los recursos disponibles. Esta diferencia puede estar influida por una cultura académica que prioriza la planificación formal y el acompañamiento más estructurado. Cabe mencionar que las expectativas del estudiante respecto a lo que significa "apoyo" y "recurso" pueden variar según el país, afectando así su percepción en función del contexto nacional.

FIGURA 3. *Recursos y apoyo en el aprendizaje*



En cuanto al nivel de competencia lingüística, el 73% de los participantes sujetos de estudio se identifica con un dominio básico del inglés, mientras que el 20% lo hace con un nivel intermedio, y el 7% con un nivel avanzado. España, aunque tiene una muestra menor (15), destaca por tener la proporción más alta de estudiantes que se perciben con un nivel avanzado (26.6 %); solo 6 se consideran en nivel básico. De los 44 participantes hondureños, el 75 % se percibe dentro del nivel básico, y solo 2 estudiantes se identifican con nivel avanzado. De los 42 participantes de México, el 83.3 % se autopercibe con un nivel básico, con apenas un estudiante en nivel avanzado. Estos resultados indican que la percepción general del nivel de inglés es baja, especialmente en México y Honduras, lo cual puede tener implicaciones importantes para la planificación de estrategias de apoyo en el aprendizaje autónomo del idioma. Asimismo, reflejan diferencias en la exposición, formación previa o autoconfianza lingüística entre los contextos educativos de los tres países.

A partir del análisis cualitativo de las respuestas abiertas proporcionadas por los estudiantes, se identificó que el 75 % de los participantes afrontan diversos retos en su proceso de aprendizaje autónomo del inglés. Estos desafíos se agruparon en cinco categorías, organizadas de mayor a menor frecuencia:

1. Obstáculos académicos (n = 26), relacionados con dificultad lingüísticas o didácticas;
2.Obstáculos personales (n = 19), vinculados a aspectos psicológicos o hábitos de estudio;
3. Problemas de gestión del tiempo y organización (n = 14);
4. Limitaciones tecnológicas y de acceso a recursos (n = 9)
5. Obstáculos motivacionales (n = 8), asociados a la falta de interés o persistencia.

Esta clasificación permite una visión más precisa de las áreas que requieren atención para fortalecer la autonomía en el aprendizaje del idioma. La pronunciación, el vocabulario limitado y la comprensión auditiva fueron los obstáculos más relacionados con los aspectos académicos. Le siguen la distracción, el miedo a equivocarse y la vergüenza como parte de los obstáculos personales. El 48.5% de los que reportaron tener obstáculos, mencionaron haber superado el inconveniente mientras que el 51.5% no lo ha superado.

Ante la pregunta sobre cómo lograron superar los obstáculos en su aprendizaje del inglés, el 95 % de los estudiantes proporcionaron una respuesta específica. Estas respuestas se agruparon en tres categorías principales según el tipo de acción mencionada:

1. El 34 % reportó el uso de estrategias cognitivas (como la práctica intensiva, la memorización o el uso de materiales complementarios).
2. El 28 % mencionó estrategias metacognitivas (como la planificación del estudio, el auto-monitoreo o la búsqueda de feedback).
3. El 7 % declaró usar estrategias afectivas (como la automotivación, el manejo de la ansiedad o el apoyo emocional).

Sin embargo, un 27 % de las respuestas no pudieron clasificarse debido a la falta de una acción clara, y el 5 % restante no respondió a la pregunta. Estos datos sugieren que los estudiantes inscritos en cursos autónomos requiren orientación adicional para conocer, identificar y aplicar estrategias de aprendizaje efectivas.

El análisis desagregado por país muestra diferencias relevantes en el tipo de estrategias utilizadas para afrontar estos obstáculos. En México, el 40 % de los estudiantes indicaron haber utilizado estrategias metacognitivas, seguido por un 36 % usaron estrategias cognitivas, mientras que el 24 % no especificó una acción concreta o señaló no haber superado el obstáculo. En el caso de Honduras, el 36.3 % empleó estrategias cognitivas, el 11.3 % metacognitivas y el mismo porcentaje utilizó estrategias afectivas; sin embargo, un 39 % no reportó ninguna acción específica y un 2 % no respondió. Por su parte, entre los estudiantes españoles, el 40 % mencionó haber utilizado estrategias metacognitivas, el 20 % cognitivas y el 13.3 % afectivas, mientras que el 26.6 % indicó no haber superado el obstáculo o no describió ninguna acción concreta. Estos hallazgos evidencian no solo la diversidad en las formas de afrontar las dificultades en el aprendizaje autónomo del inglés, sino también la necesidad de fortalecer el acompañamiento docente y la formación en estrategias de aprendizaje. Es importante que los estudiantes logren identificar mecanismos efectivos para superar sus desafíos, para poder brindarles apoyo institucioal y asistencia continua en el uso de esta modalidad formativa.

Otro factor relevante en el contexto del aprendizaje autónomo es la existencia de Centros de Autoacceso (CAA). El 83 % de los estudiantes mexicanos y el 59 % de los estudiantes hondureños reportaron contar con un el apoyo de un CAA en sus universidades, lo que representa un recurso fundamental para el desarrollo de su capacidad de autorregulación. En contraste, el 67 % de los estudiantes españoles indicaron no contar con este tipo de espacios, lo que podría incidir ya no solo en su percepción del apoyo institucional, sino también en su práctica de la autonomía en este contexto. Estos espacios tendrán un impacto positivo cuando sean considerados por el estudiante como un lugar de autoformación y no solo de consulta, como menciona Ruiz de Zarobe (1997).

6. DISCUSIÓN

Los hallazgos sobre la percepción de la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés se obtuvieron mediante un cuestionario estructurado en tres

secciones de cinco ítems cada una, lo que permitió explorar diferentes dimensiones del fenómeno estudiado. Esta estructura favoreció una visión integral de cómo los estudiantes de México, Honduras y España experimentan y valoran el aprendizaje autónomo mediado por tecnología. Los datos obtenidos, tanto cuantitativos como cualitativos, permiten reflexionar sobre los factores que influyen en el desarrollo de la autonomía, así como sobre las diferencias y similitudes observadas entre contextos institucionales y nacionales.

6.1. Autonomía en el aprendizaje

Los resultados evidencian que la percepción de la autonomía está profundamente influida por la cultura institucional de cada país. Las diferencias observadas coinciden con los planteamientos de Little (1991) y Holec (1981), quienes señalan que la autonomía no depende únicamente de la disposición personal del estudiante, sino también de un entorno que la facilite y fomente. Benson (2011) refuerza esta idea al subrayar que la tecnología puede actuar como catalizadora del desarrollo autónomo, permitiendo al estudiante gestionar su aprendizaje conforme a sus necesidades, ritmos y estilos.

En este sentido, se observa que muchas universidades de México y Centroamérica han impulsado programas de tutoría, espacios de autoacceso y acompañamiento semipresencial o autónomo como parte de sus políticas de equidad educativa (Cassany, 2012). Esto ha contribuido a crear entornos más propicios para el ejercicio de la autonomía, especialmente en modalidades digitales.

6.2. Motivación y percepción del aprendizaje

En cuanto a la dimensión motivacional, los datos muestran que Honduras presenta la percepción más alta de motivación y aprendizaje autónomo. Este resultado puede explicarse desde la Teoría de la Autodeterminación (Ryan & Deci, 2000), ya que muchos estudiantes hondureños parecen desarrollar una fuerte motivación intrínseca como respuesta a entornos menos estructurados, donde la autodirección cobra mayor protagonismo.

Por su parte, los estudiantes de España muestran una percepción motivacional estable, aunque más moderada. Este patrón resulta coherente con contextos donde se promueve una autonomía guiada (Little, 2007), acompañada de apoyos institucionales definidos y estructuras pedagógicas más formales.

México, aunque con experiencias activas de aprendizaje autónomo, refleja una percepción ligeramente inferior. Entre los factores que podrían explicar esta tendencia destacan las desigualdades regionales en el acceso a recursos tecnológicos, las diferencias en las prácticas docentes y la heterogeneidad de los entornos virtuales empleados.

6.3. Recursos y apoyo del aprendizaje

En cuanto a la percepción sobre los recursos y el apoyo para el aprendizaje autónomo, Honduras y México presentan niveles similares y más altos que España. Este dato sugiere que, a pesar de ciertas limitaciones tecnológicas, los estudiantes en estos países valoran positivamente el acompañamiento docente, los recursos digitales de fácil acceso (como Vocaroo, traductores automáticos o plataformas de video) y los espacios institucionales que facilitan el aprendizaje independiente.

En contraste, los estudiantes españoles reportan una percepción más crítica respecto al apoyo institucional disponible. Esto puede deberse a expectativas más altas sobre la calidad de los recursos y el tipo de seguimiento ofrecido, propias de un entorno académico que prioriza la planificación formal y la estructuración rigurosa del proceso formativo.

7. CONCLUSIONES

La autonomía es una competencia esencial en el aprendizaje de lenguas, y aunque no se limita exclusivamente a factores internos, sí se ve influida por condiciones tanto personales como contextuales. Su desarrollo responde, en última instancia, a la necesidad de logro y al deseo de tomar control sobre el propio proceso formativo.

Este estudio comparativo ha revelado que, si bien los estudiantes universitarios de México, Honduras y España valoran positivamente la

modalidad autónoma como vía para aprender inglés, sus formas de ejercer la autonomía varían significativamente en función del contexto institucional, tecnológico y sociocultural en el que están inmersos. La modalidad autónoma mediada por tecnología se confirma como una vía eficaz para facilitar el aprendizaje de idiomas, especialmente por la flexibilidad que ofrece a los estudiantes. No obstante, dicha flexibilidad no garantiza, por sí sola, un aprovechamiento óptimo del proceso si no se acompaña de habilidades de autorregulación y orientación pedagógica adecuada.

Las diferencias observadas entre países pueden atribuirse a factores como la disponibilidad de recursos digitales, el tipo de acompañamiento docente, el acceso a plataformas tecnológicas y la cultura institucional respecto a la autonomía del estudiante. En particular, se detecta que la elección de los cursos autónomos está motivada principalmente por la gestión del tiempo, pero no siempre se acompaña de una preparación adecuada para afrontar los desafíos que esta modalidad implica.

Entre los principales retos detectados, destacan la producción oral y la comprensión auditiva, competencias que requieren una atención específica en el diseño de materiales didácticos y en las dinámicas de tutoría dentro de los entornos virtuales. En consecuencia, se recomienda fomentar el uso de recursos didácticos interactivos y estrategias pedagógicas personalizadas, especialmente dirigidas a aquellos estudiantes que presentan menor confianza en su desempeño o que enfrentan barreras tecnológicas. Solo a través de un enfoque integral, que combine accesibilidad, acompañamiento y formación estratégica, será posible potenciar el desarrollo de la autonomía de manera sostenible y equitativa en contextos educativos diversos.

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SECCION V.

TRANSLATION STUDIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH SHORT STORIES IN EFL EDUCATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of literature in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom has been the subject of considerable academic debate. While many researchers support its pedagogical value, critics contend that literary texts often present challenges due to their complex structures, abstract concepts, and culturally specific references (Yimwilai, 2015). As a result, some argue that literature may not effectively align with the practical aims of grammar instruction or the functional language needs of learners in academic contexts (Kay, 1982). For EFL teachers, the use of literature in the classroom is no simple task; many find themselves constrained by textbooks or overwhelmed by the challenge of creating engaging materials and resources that meet students' needs. However, the integration of literature into the EFL classroom can serve as a rich and valuable resource (Kooy and Chiu, 1998). Van (2009) highlights several pedagogical advantages of incorporating literature into EFL education contexts. These include its capacity to offer an authentic learning context, expose students to varied vocabulary and language styles, stimulate imagination or foster critical thinking skills. The use of authentic literary texts also supports the communicative and intercultural approaches to foreign language teaching.

Literature offers both students and teachers a valuable opportunity. For students, it fosters the development of reading habits, enhances fluency and accuracy in a foreign language, and contributes to their growth as well-informed individuals. For teachers, it enables the delivery of engaging and relevant lessons. When combined with pertinent themes that

stimulate meaningful discussion, novels, short stories, poetry, and various other literary texts serve as valuable tools for teaching EFL students about the intrinsic relationship between language and culture. Nonetheless, its use as a pedagogical resource is not without its challenges, such as the accessibility of texts to students' language levels, the necessity of aligning with official curricular requirements, and the possibility that students' interests may diverge from the themes explored in literary works (Kooy and Chiu, 1998). Incorporating literature written in English into non-native learning environments can present other challenges, as students may struggle to fully comprehend the texts due to unfamiliar historical and sociocultural references (Mujumdar, 2010).

This paper explores the use of short stories that critically engage with the theme of racial discrimination. Short stories are generally more accessible and well-suited to the constraints of an academic year due to their brevity. This facilitates students' understanding of the narrative and maximises the chances to explore and learn from a wider range of texts than would typically be possible with longer literary works. Additionally, the theme of racial discrimination has the potential to contribute to fostering a sense of tolerance and acceptance towards different cultures, lifestyles, and traditions—qualities that are essential in helping students become open-minded citizens. Given the significant emphasis placed on the concept of democratic citizenship across Europe, it is essential that learners are equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to become individuals who promote and uphold equality, freedom and active civic engagement. Therefore, it is argued that this theme is particularly well suited to classroom exploration, as it encourages students to become critical, democratic and interculturally competent citizens capable of analysing and questioning the current social system (Council of Europe, 2016).

Moreover, in such a multilingual and globalised community as Europe, English —and literature written in the English language— serve as powerful tools for developing students' intercultural understanding by helping them navigate linguistically and culturally complex situations. In order to foster cultural tolerance and appreciation, it is vital that other cultures are represented within the classroom, and the EFL context is

particularly well-suited for this purpose. This can be achieved by exposing students to authentic literary works produced in foreign cultures, offering them external representations of their own culture and encouraging reflection on their own potentially biased views of other societies.

1.1. The Communicative and Intercultural Approaches

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980) originated in the 1970s with the aim of improving learners' capacity to use language effectively and appropriately in authentic communicative situations, thus prioritising meaning over formal accuracy. This approach emphasises the importance of employing language in ways that are culturally and socially appropriate. This approach considers communication to be the fundamental principle of language teaching. Language is regarded as a social instrument used to interact with others; thus, learners are encouraged to use the language for a variety of purposes throughout the different stages of their learning process (Abate, 2014). CLT is premised on the notion of communicative competence —introduced by Hymes in the 1970s— which encompasses not only grammatical knowledge about a language, but also its sociocultural, discourse and strategic dimensions (Savignon, 1997). Additionally, Brown (1994) emphasised that communicative teaching techniques ought to be designed "to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes", and that the ultimate objective for students is "to use the language, productively and receptively" (p. 245). This proposal highlights the importance of recognising the communicative and interactive dimensions of language as a tool for exploring the world, with meaningful content acting as the main driving force behind its design.

Further developments and research in foreign language teaching and learning gave rise to the intercultural approach (Byram, 1997), which underscores the importance of developing skilled 'intercultural speakers' rather than aiming for the unrealistic goal of native-speaker proficiency that was emphasised in earlier approaches. As Byram and Morgan discussed in their book *Teaching and Learning Language and Culture* (1994), awareness about the target culture is "an integral part to

language learning and vice versa" (p.5). Byram's model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has become one of the most relevant approaches in FL education. It encompasses 5 savoirs or abilities: savoir être (attitudes of relativizing one's self, curiosity and openness or valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviours), savoir s'engager (critical cultural awareness), savoirs (knowledge of the self and the other and knowledge of how interaction occurs), savoir comprendre (skills to interpret, relate and develop new perspectives through comparison) and savoir apprendre/faire (skills to discover and/or to interact).

These communicative and intercultural approaches to language teaching, grounded in the principles of authentic communication, collaboration and cultural awareness, hold particular relevance within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Given the status of English as the global lingua franca and the growing emphasis on language and culture learning across Europe, literature emerges as a highly effective tool for introducing students to diverse cultural perspectives while simultaneously developing their intercultural and communicative skills and enhancing their linguistic competence. In line with the principles of CLT and ICC, this proposal provides learners with authentic reading practice through the use of unadapted short stories which enable them to understand the globalised society where they live; thus, fostering intercultural awareness and attitudes of respect towards cultural diversity.

This paper can be of particular interest to EFL teachers and researchers who are interested in integrating short stories into their classroom. Teachers or researchers from different universities across the world are invited to bring the materials and resources proposed in this paper into practice within their own educational contexts and share their experiences or pedagogical recommendations with the community.

1.2. The use of literature in the EFL classroom

Literature has often been a marginalised resource in EFL environments despite numerous attempts to provide theoretical and practical frameworks for its integration (Jones & Carter, 2012). However, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2020) advocates the use of literature for the achievement of its

language learning goals, socio-cultural knowledge and aesthetic enjoyment of language. As Jones and Carter (2012) highlight, "if we are to judge a learner's competence against the CEFR, literature should play a much less marginalised role in the classroom." (p. 70). The authors also reveal that EFL teachers participating in their study believe literature could play a significant role in the EFL context but are worried about how their students would react to its incorporation into the classroom.

Lazar (1993) points out that there is no single teaching method to use literary texts in the classroom, as sociocultural and educational contexts may differ significantly. EFL teachers hold the responsibility of combining a range of pedagogical methods and approaches in order to adapt their literature instruction to the specific needs, interests, and proficiency levels of their students, rather than relying exclusively on a single framework (Berrarbi & Bahous, 2018). A variety of pedagogical approaches have been developed to integrate literature into the EFL classroom, each reflecting differing educational priorities and learner needs. Recent methodologies align with the principles of the aforementioned communicative and intercultural approaches which highlight literature's potential not only as a linguistic resource but also as a means of fostering deeper cultural insight and learner autonomy. In line with these two approaches, literary texts offer authentic examples of language use and communicative situations while allowing for multiple interpretations and learning possibilities. However, other approaches have also emerged that broaden the scope of literary instruction in the EFL classroom.

The Integrated Approach, also known as the multidisciplinary approach, combines the use of literature with other subject areas, skills or techniques in a cohesive manner. This integration can be done within or across disciplines, combining the various linguistic competences or bringing information from other disciplines into the classroom (Aina, 1979). Instead of using literature as an isolated component, it proposes the integration of literary texts into broader educational goals, which enables students to make connections and transfer knowledge among disciplines (Lucan, 1981). It is beneficial for language learning, cultural exploration and personal development.

Carter and Long (1991) identified three different models for the integration of literature into the EFL classroom: the cultural, language and personal growth models. The language model or language-based approach, is the most widely used approach to teaching literature. It invites students to reflect and discuss specific linguistic features, which promotes a deeper engagement with the artistic and stylistic features of the text. Numerous activities traditionally used in EFL environments are possible within this approach, such as creative writing, jumbled sentences or role play activities (Yimwilai, 2015). Meanwhile, the cultural model prioritises the exploration and interpretation of the historical and cultural contexts of the literary texts as a means of promoting intercultural awareness, sensitivity and understanding. This fosters critical thinking and a deeper reflection on the meaning and communicative purpose of the literary piece, thereby encouraging an understanding of diverse cultures and real-world social issues. Finally, the personal growth model, or enrichment model, supports students in relating the experiences of the characters to their own lives by combining key features of the two other models. It allows the reader to interact with and enjoy the story as well as to acquire knowledge and language through the various themes that are tackled in the texts. Carter and Long reflect this idea when they write that this third model allows learners to "achieve an engagement with the reading of literary text [...] and helping them to grow as individuals" (p.3). Overall, this pedagogical proposal advocates for the use of short stories in a way that it integrates the three principal models outlined by Carter and Long (1991), as recommended by other researchers in this field (Yimwilai, 2015). These varied methodologies reflect a growing recognition of literature's versatility as a tool for both linguistic development and holistic education.

As proposed by these approaches to teaching literature in the EFL classroom, literary texts have the potential to broaden students' intellectual horizons by combining a focus on language, meaning and cultural context. Unlike traditional textbooks, literature provides genuine examples of both cultural and linguistic content. Through such exposure, students can learn to understand and appreciate other cultures and reflect on their own values and intercultural attitudes. Likewise, the use of short stories

offers an opportunity to cultivate students' interests and personal goals that go “beyond the classroom” (Nagendra, 2013, p.5). By engaging with diverse narratives and perspectives, students are encouraged to connect language learning with their broader cultural understanding and real-life experiences, fostering motivation and lifelong learning beyond formal education. Additionally, the combination of various approaches introduces students to literary texts as a means to observe “language in action through analysis” and offers them the opportunity to explore intercultural encounters, thereby exposing them to “models for their own language performance” (Morrow & Schocker, 1987, p. 249).

Moreover, research has shown that reading multicultural stories can foster vicarious learning by immersing students in 'otherness' —an experience which fosters intercultural awareness, personal enrichment, and empathy, key to the cultural and personal growth models described above (Rodríguez & Puyal, 2012). In fact, Vandrick (1997) advocates the use of literature because it motivates students “to explore their feelings through experiencing those of others” (p.1). Overall, approaching English through consistent reading and reflective thinking has the potential to transform the language into a natural pathway to access new knowledge and can help foster sustained reading habits. Ultimately, students will come to view language and literature not as abstract sets of rules and texts, but as tools for discovery and exploration of other cultures.

In literature teaching, it is important to consider the literary genre we select for our students. Various researchers promote the teaching of literature through short stories in the EFL classroom (Collie & Slater, 1987; Berrarbi & Bahous, 2018). However, the use of short stories —defined as “a narrative that can be read at one sitting of from one-half hour to two hours, and that is limited to ‘a certain unique or single effect,’ to which every detail is subordinate” (Poe as cited in Abrams, 1970, p. 158)— teachers need to consider various aspects in order to be successful. Though short stories can “provide quality text content which will greatly enhance English language teaching courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency”, it is of paramount importance to make an appropriate selection and exploit their content effectively (Murdoch, 2002,

p.9). Further, authentic short stories that suit learners' interests, characteristics and level should be prioritised (Thiyagarajan, 2014).

2. OBJECTIVES

This proposal offers a pathway to explore the communicative and cultural dimensions of the English language by engaging with three distinct cultures through authentic short stories that address the issue of racial discrimination. Through the perspectives of three mixed-race authors, students are immersed in three distinct cultures and explore conflicting attitudes towards different ethnicities, historical events, cultural stereotypes, examples racial discrimination and ways in which writers from these cultures represent their cultural identity through literature. As stated by Rodríguez and Puyal (2012), literary texts have the potential to "enhance [students'] affective response by causing them to vicariously experience other attitudes and values" (p.108). Learners are encouraged to question their own beliefs and preconceptions about these cultures and empathise with the main characters. These benefits of using literature are in line with the cultural and personal growth models outlined by Carter and Long (1991), as well as with the intercultural approach to foreign language education (Byram, 1997).

In line with communication-oriented EFL education as well as research-based pedagogical recommendations for the use of short stories, the primary criteria for selecting the stories was their subject matter, the suitability to students' interests and characteristics, as well as the linguistic and cultural complexity of the input they contain. In addition, the selected stories were deliberately chosen from authors of African, Japanese and Amerindian descent to avoid reinforcing a Eurocentric perspective and to provide students with insights into racial discrimination from the standpoint of those who have experienced it first-hand, rather than offering an external observer's perspective. This proposal features stories that lie outside the traditional literary canon, originating from and reflecting diverse cultural traditions. These texts offer alternative perspectives that enrich students' understanding of global contexts and contribute to the development of intercultural awareness. Likewise, the

themes explored in the stories are expected to entertain and engage students, particularly as two of the narratives feature children or teenagers as protagonists. This aligns with the personal growth model, which emphasises the reader's emotional engagement and capacity for self-identification with the characters and themes presented in the story.

The proposal was specifically designed for upper secondary education students in Spain. However, it can easily be adapted to other sociocultural or educational contexts while other short stories can be selected to suit different groups of students. The selected materials were specifically designed for learners at B1–B2 levels of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020), corresponding to intermediate to upper-intermediate English proficiency. At these levels, students possess sufficient language skills to engage with authentic texts, reflect on cultural content, and participate in meaningful discussions, making the short stories and study guides well-suited for the intercultural aims of the proposal.

This educational intervention advocates the use of study guides to accompany the reading of the literary texts, both to accommodate diverse learning needs and styles, and to enhance language acquisition, cultural understanding, and personal development. Study guides provide an opportunity for students to learn in a "constructive, dynamic (affective and cognitive), and interactive" way (Hollingshead et al, 2004, p. 57). Studies have shown that learners using study guides as a complement to other pieces of classroom work increased their scores by up to 30% and their reading comprehension performance, including those with learning disabilities (Hollingshead et al, 2004).

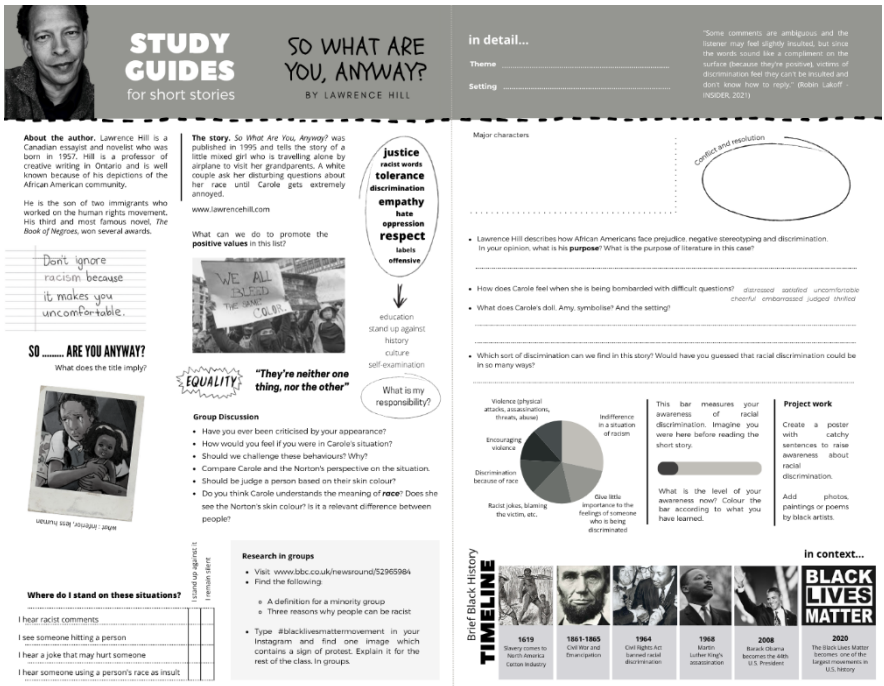
Practising the negotiation of meaning and creating tasks based on information gaps has frequently been emphasised in the communicative and intercultural approaches which shape this proposal. However, as Morrow and Schocker observe, this strategy limits the range of literature we can use in the classroom (Morrow and Schocker, 1987). This is why the proposed study guides (Alonso, 2021) offer pre-reading, reading or post-reading activities which allow the teacher to develop an entire task cycle —pre-task, task and post-task (Willis, 1996)— tailored to students' needs, thereby fostering flexibility and a learner-centred approach. They include a wide range of "response formats", types of

student participation, and various strategies for students to acquire knowledge, as recommended by Hollingshead et al (2004). Among these, particular emphasis can be placed on opportunities for brainstorming, discovery learning, discussion, quizzes, fact-finding, role play, opinion exchange, problem solving, critical thinking, classification, matching, comparison, and other activities that involve the use of ICTs or social media. Additionally, the study guide proposals include forms of written communication that align with the two types of literature identified by McRae (1997): Literature with a capital "L", referring to canonical literary texts, and literature with a small "l", which encompasses everyday texts rooted in real-life language use. In this context, short stories are complemented by other materials that engage students in the reading of advertisements, puns, famous quotations, and other brief communicative texts. This integration not only supports language development but also exposes learners to a broad spectrum of textual genres and registers, enhancing both their linguistic and cultural competence. This combination can reinforce their comprehension through shorter, more accessible text forms and multimodal resources.

The first story, "So What Are You, Anyway?" by Lawrence Hill (1995) is intended to expose deep-rooted prejudices against individuals of African descent. The story implicitly explores the concept of colour-blindness and addresses themes such as ignorance, narrow-mindedness, indifference and active resistance to xenophobia. As shown in Figure 1, the study guide proposed for this reading encourages students to critically explore issues of racism, discrimination, identity, and empathy, reflect on their personal experiences and analyse social dynamics through group discussions that deepen their understanding of racial and cultural issues.

The second story, "Indian Education", by Sherman Alexie (1993) aims to draw attention to the segregation of the Amerindian community. It exposes cultural prejudices within a context of bullying and examines the coping strategies employed by victims to face racial hatred, all conveyed with a touch of satirical humour. This story also looks at how those individuals who are oppressed due to their ethnicity nonetheless take pride in their heritage.

FIGURE 1. *Study Guide 1: So What Are You, Anyway?*

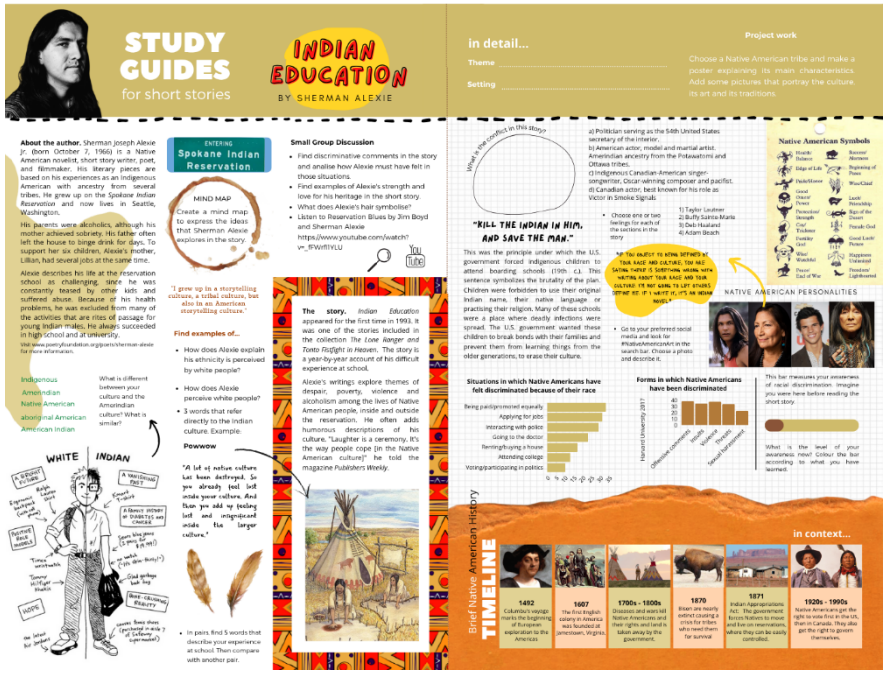


Fuente: elaboración propia (Alonso, 2021)

As shown in Figure 2, the study guide proposed for this reading helps students analyse how the author uses autobiographical storytelling to critique systemic racism, stereotyping, and identity struggles faced by Native American youth in the U.S. Through reflection questions, group discussions, statistical information and historical context, it encourages students to discover the Native American community and to explore the impact of discrimination from an indigenous perspective.

The third story, "Wilshire Bus", by Hisaye Yamamoto (1988), addresses the issue of indifference in a discriminative act against people of Asian descent. Each story includes elements of a different culture and portrays differences between white and non-white communities from the perspective of the latter —essential to foster empathy and understand their experiences.

FIGURE 2. *Study Guide 2: Indian Education*



Fuente: elaboración propia (Alonso, 2021)

As shown in Figure 3, the study guide proposed for this story invites students to reflect on subtle forms of racism and the psychological effects of prejudice on marginalised communities. Grounded in the Asian American experience —particularly in the post–World War II era— it encourages students to discover the Japanese American community and to reflect on social responsibility, fostering group critical discussion.

The specific objectives of this proposal focus on the promotion of cultural, linguistic and personal development. Firstly, this proposal aims to foster students' intercultural understanding and tolerance through the exploration of real-world social issues such as racial discrimination. Secondly, this proposal aspires to stimulate literary sensitivity, facilitate the understanding of sociolinguistic elements in written texts, and to nurture an awareness of diverse behaviour and communication styles across different cultures through written texts. Thirdly, the intervention

enables students to engage with the experiences presented in the literary texts, thereby fostering empathy and an understanding of the experiences lived by victims of racial discrimination.

FIGURE 3. Study Guide 3: Wilshire Bus



Fuente: elaboración propia (Alonso, 2021)

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology proposed for this plan of pedagogical intervention follows the principles of the Communicative and Intercultural approaches as well as Task-based Learning (TBL) for the design and implementation stages. In his book, *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom* (1989), Nunan states that a task "involves communicative language use in which the user's attention is focused on meaning rather than linguistic structure [...]. It is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language." (p.10). According to Willis, the framework of a task typically includes a pre-task, a task-cycle, and a

language focus part (1996). The short story guides were developed according to these principles and with the aim of allowing teachers and students to freely explore the theme of racial discrimination. As a result, study guides contain a variety of information, tasks and prompts that can be arranged and completed in different ways, depending on learners' needs, interests and classroom limitations.

3.1. Setting and Participants

The use of short fiction combined with short study guides was put into practice at a Spanish public school with a group of 27 students aged sixteen to nineteen. After signing consent forms, students were given a copy of the story "So What Are You, Anyway" (Hill, 1995) to be read individually at home. Their English proficiency level ranged from A2 to B2, according to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020). Three sessions were allocated to explore the short story and its respective study guide over the course of two weeks.

In the first session, the activities that were developed into tasks were a comparison between two images that represented prejudice and social exclusion, as the pre-task (teacher-led); and a self-reflection quiz about the students' personal involvement in situations of discrimination was the task cycle (group work). A group discussion about the symbolism in the story's title and a classification of words were the final activities in the language focus part.

In the second session with the same group, some students were asked to read aloud the Brief History Timeline section as a pre-task activity. Then, in pairs, they were required to search for particular hashtags using Instagram, choose an image that contained a protest sign in English, and plan an explanation of it. Subsequently, they reported their findings back to the rest of the class. This was interesting, as they found signs that contained puns, which lead to the language focus part. During these two sessions, a higher engagement was observed in the activities that involved working with social media and the self-reflection quiz. The latter was effective to check students' biases and to inform them about the relevance of reflecting on our society in order to become more tolerant.

In the third session, we used the section that contains an explanation of the story and its sociocultural and historical context as a pre-task (The Story section). For the task cycle we asked students to look at a pie graph and compare it with the story's plot. They were all able to give valuable explanations and contrast the newly acquired information from the graph with their previous knowledge about racial discrimination and cultural prejudice.

3.2. Data collection and analysis

In order to discover the impact that the use of short stories can have on EFL learners' attitudes, a brief survey was conducted. It consisted of 10 three-point (1-Disagree, 2-Neutral and 3-Agree) Likert scale items, which simplified the approach to gauge responses and identify areas of agreement and disagreement. Despite its potential to introduce response bias, the three-point scale was deemed appropriate due to its simplicity, ease of use and suitability for contexts where respondents may be discouraged or confused by more complex response formats, as was the case for the participants in this study. The survey also included one open-ended question about the students' overall opinion on the experience of using short stories as part of their English lessons at school. It was administered in paper format and completed by students at the conclusion of the final session. The quantitative dataset obtained from this brief survey was analysed using measures of central tendency as part of a descriptive statistical analysis.

4. RESULTS

Participants' responses reveal that most students express a willingness to use literature to learn about other cultures and to learn English through short stories that address a variety of subject matters. This implies that the proposed pedagogical intervention has the potential to succeed in other EFL environments. More concretely, 64.10% of participants agreed that they would enjoy learning English through the use of short stories about various themes. This challenges previous research conducted on the use of short stories in EFL education, which shows a significant proportion of students who regard literature as having little

to no importance in foreign language learning possibly due to perceiving literary texts as unrelated to language acquisition or finding them challenging to engage with (Berrarbi & Bahous, 2018). However, these findings are consistent with studies which showed students prefer short stories to other literary genres due to their length and simplicity (Berrarbi & Bahous, 2018). Additionally, 66.66% of participants would like to learn about the diversity of ethnicities and lifestyles around the world through literature which also points to the potential of short stories for the development of communicative and intercultural skills.

The findings also demonstrate that students are eager to use pieces of literature that are authentic examples of communication in the target language. The prevalence of textbook fatigue and the scarcity of authentic materials and communication-oriented lessons are evident within the school's context. Results suggest that students desire to put their foreign language skills into practice and that short stories have strong potential as tools for meaningful reading practice. More specifically, 71.79% of respondents would enjoy sessions more if they had a clear purpose of communication as opposed to learning from a textbook. Likewise, 84.61% of students agreed that English can be learned through authentic materials instead of adaptations. This means that an emphasis on authentic materials, such as short stories that tackle real-world social issues is likely to motivate students more as compared to traditional textbook materials and lead them to perceive English as a means of communication, rather than a set of rules they are forced to learn in the classroom.

A number of participants reported that using short stories and brief study guides in the EFL classroom was helpful in various ways. Most participants mention that this pedagogical intervention allowed them to be creative, learn about a subject which matters to society and feel that they were using the language with a clear purpose. The following student responses to the survey's open-ended question illustrate these ideas:

> The sessions were more dynamic and interactive with the debates, the short story and information about an important subject matter (STUD17 - translated from Spanish).

> I think we need different activities, something in teams and with a purpose, not only studying the textbook and taking exams, something more creative like this (STUD24 - translated from Spanish).
>
> I liked doing fun things and not only things from the textbook, and also speaking the language more (STUD14 - translated from Spanish).

Overall, these results highlight a clear preference for engaging, authentic, and socially relevant learning experiences among students. The data suggest that the use of short stories as a pedagogical tool not only enhances motivation and participation but also supports the development of linguistic and intercultural awareness. In this sense, the intervention appears to align with current pedagogical trends that promote meaningful communication and cultural understanding through creative and interactive language learning practices.

5. DISCUSSION

Reading short stories, more so than other genres, may encourage learners to explore other perspectives, practice the foreign language with an authentic communicative purpose and engage in dynamic and interactive debate in the classroom. To achieve this, it is desirable to use brief study guides that complement the reading of stories and maximise the benefits of literature teaching. This paper posits that literary texts provide an ideal pedagogical tool for learners to explore both the language and culture of others while simultaneously reshaping their own identities through engagement and interaction with the text. Furthermore, short stories offer a valuable opportunity for intercultural encounters, fostering awareness of social issues and stimulating the reader's intellectual development.

In broader pedagogical terms, these findings reinforce the idea that literature—particularly short fiction—can bridge the gap between linguistic competence and cultural understanding in EFL contexts. Incorporating short stories into language education encourages critical thinking, empathy, and creativity, while making classroom learning more personally and socially meaningful.

6. CONCLUSION

In EFL education, the goal is helping students achieve a level that enables them to interact and negotiate meaning with other speakers effectively and appropriately (Lázár, 2007). Thus, it is vital to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to achieve this goal and become communicative and interculturally competent individuals. The findings have shown that approaching short stories from an intercultural and communicative approach can potentially increase motivation and interest in exploring "real-world" social issues. The study revealed that students desire to use the foreign language for communicative purposes and to explore short texts as a way to learn about other cultures. Unlike overly simplified textbook dialogues, literature includes idiomatic expressions, varied registers, and subtle uses of grammar and vocabulary in meaningful communicative contexts. It exposes students to a wide range of dialects, sociolects, and stylistic choices, providing opportunities for EFL learners to engage with diverse social, cultural, and emotional realities. Short stories, in particular, have the perfect length for an academic term and are easy to handle for students, regarding both length, cultural and linguistic complexity. To maximise their benefits, it is essential that literary texts are complemented with educational resources such as study guides in order to first help them to construct and engage and thus actively process the text. This is in line with what Carter (1996) describes as the "activity principle" whereby "students actively participate in making the text mean" (p.3).

Likewise, racial discrimination and intercultural understanding remain issues of increasing concern across Europe. It is therefore appropriate to introduce young learners to topics such as intolerance, multiculturalism, and human rights through the use of short stories, as a means to foster the development of active democratic citizenship (Council of Europe, 2016). The use of short stories coupled with mentoring and scaffolding through pedagogical resources such as study guides is therefore essential to ensure the effectiveness of literary texts in tackling complex subjects like discrimination or human rights and encouraging students to become more interculturally competent citizens. Young students can benefit from this scaffolding when using complementary study guides

which offer guidance, reading support and level-appropriate opportunities for discussion and reflection. Additionally, when these guides are designed to allow for freedom and flexibility, as is the case of the proposed materials in this study, teachers can cater for a number of learning disabilities, widening access to the resources and fostering inclusion in the EFL classroom.

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PLAN BOLONIA Y FORMACIÓN EN LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS EN EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR: DEL IDEAL EUROPEO A LA REALIDAD DE LOS GRADOS UNIVERSITARIOS. VOCES DE COORDINADORES, ESTUDIANTES Y ALUMNOS EN PRÁCTICAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE CÁDIZ

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La sociedad del siglo XXI se define por la globalización, la internacionalización del mercado laboral y una acelerada evolución tecnológica. Estos factores han transformado el papel de las universidades, que deben adaptarse a un entorno cada vez más dinámico y complejo. En este contexto, la universidad no puede limitarse a la mera transmisión de conocimientos. Debe actuar como un espacio activo de generación, aplicación y transferencia del saber, formando a un estudiantado capaz de desenvolverse con eficacia en un mundo interconectado y tecnológicamente avanzado. Por ello, resulta fundamental que las universidades integren en sus planes de estudio la formación en lenguas modernas, entre otras competencias, garantizando que el alumnado adquiera habilidades comunicativas que le permitan desenvolverse con éxito en entornos académicos y profesionales internacionales.

Desde la implementación del Plan Bolonia, la educación superior en Europa ha centrado sus esfuerzos en promover la internacionalización, facilitar la movilidad académica y aumentar la empleabilidad en entornos multiculturales. Entre los referentes más importantes se encuentran el *European Qualifications Framework* (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2008) y la Declaración Ministerial de París

(European Ministers responsible for Higher Education, 2018), que destacan la importancia de incluir el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras en los currículos universitarios. Asimismo, La política lingüística de la Unión Europea considera el multilingüismo un pilar estratégico para fortalecer la competitividad y la cohesión social, estableciendo como meta que los ciudadanos dominen al menos dos idiomas extranjeros además de su lengua materna (European Parliament, n.d.). Por su parte, el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES) recomienda que los egresados adquieran competencias lingüísticas funcionales que les permitan desenvolverse con soltura en contextos académicos y profesionales multilingües.

Internacionalizar la educación superior significa incorporar de manera consciente una dimensión internacional e intercultural en las funciones principales de la universidad, como la docencia, la investigación y la transferencia de conocimiento (Knight, 2004). Sin embargo, este proceso puede quedarse en lo superficial si no se acompaña de políticas en lenguas extranjeras claras y sostenidas (De Wit, 2020).

En España, la Conferencia de Rectores de las Universidades Españolas (CRUE) subrayó en 2017 la importancia de intensificar la promoción del plurilingüismo en la educación superior en nuestro país. Esta recomendación dio lugar a diversas iniciativas orientadas a mejorar las competencias en lenguas extranjeras en todos los ámbitos universitarios. El documento resultante (CRUE, 2017, p. 6) resalta la necesidad de formar al estudiantado en lenguas extranjeras como parte del proceso de internacionalización.

El inglés, como lengua franca en ámbitos académicos y profesionales, resulta fundamental para acceder a oportunidades laborales internacionales. Más del 80 % de las interacciones empresariales a nivel mundial se producen entre hablantes no nativos (Graddol, 2006), lo que evidencia la importancia de desarrollar competencias comunicativas, pragmáticas e interculturales en lenguas extranjeras (Clares et al., 2019). En España, la única obligación vinculada a lenguas extranjeras en la educación superior es acreditar competencias generales en alguna de ellas, requisito para obtener el título de grado, participar en programas de movilidad Erasmus o acceder a estudios de posgrado (Real Decreto 822/2021). Sin embargo, los planes de estudio oficiales de los grados

no filológicos no tienen por qué incluir necesariamente una formación sistemática en idiomas extranjeros ni una orientación hacia contextos académicos o profesionales especializados, lo que limita el acceso a competencias comunicativas específicas y puede llevar al alumnado a tener que buscar formación complementaria fuera de la universidad.

El Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE) se configura como un enfoque metodológico clave para atender estas necesidades. Se centra en desarrollar competencias lingüísticas adaptadas a contextos profesionales y académicos concretos. Dudley-Evans y St John (1998) destacan que se basa en un análisis riguroso de las necesidades reales del alumnado y en la contextualización del lenguaje, priorizando el uso comunicativo efectivo frente a la enseñanza gramatical general. Hyland (2022) añade que el IFE contribuye también a la construcción de la identidad profesional de los estudiantes, permitiéndoles percibirse y actuar como miembros competentes de su comunidad académica o laboral.

En España, la falta de coherencia entre los compromisos institucionales y la realidad curricular se refleja en una escasa formación en lenguas extranjeras especializadas, lo que limita el desarrollo de competencias clave en el estudiantado (Doiz, Lasagabaster y Sierra, 2012). En este contexto, la autonomía universitaria está reconocida por el marco normativo, que otorga a las universidades la capacidad de definir y planificar sus ofertas académicas. Este principio se recoge en la Constitución Española (1978, art. 27.10) y se ve ampliado por la Ley Orgánica 2/2023 del Sistema Universitario, que faculta a las universidades para organizar su estructura y determinar su programación académica. Esta autonomía ha hecho que, en algunos casos, las asignaturas de Lenguas Extranjeras para Fines Específicos se ofrezcan solo como optativas o incluso se eliminen de los planes de estudio, según las decisiones de cada programa de grado. Como consecuencia, se reduce la oportunidad del estudiantado de desarrollar competencias lingüísticas especializadas, esenciales para conseguir un puesto de trabajo y ejercer sus tareas sin problemas de comunicación en empresas con personal y/o clientes internacionales.

La Universidad de Cádiz manifiesta un firme compromiso con la internacionalización. Según la información proporcionada por el Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización, esta dimensión transversal se integra en

las políticas y estrategias institucionales, actuando como principio y método en todas las áreas estratégicas. Este enfoque involucra a toda la comunidad universitaria: al personal docente e investigador, al personal técnico, de gestión y de administración y servicios, así como al estudiantado, lo que evidencia un enfoque inclusivo. Por su parte, la política lingüística de la UCA subraya la necesidad de fortalecer las competencias del alumnado en lenguas extranjeras, con especial atención al uso del lenguaje técnico y profesional específico de cada disciplina (Universidad de Cádiz, 2014). Asimismo, establece, en el Boletín Oficial de la Universidad de Cádiz (BOUCA nº 171), la necesidad de incorporar competencias transversales en el currículo universitario, entre ellas la competencia en lenguas extranjeras. Esta directriz coincide con el consenso académico y profesional sobre la importancia de dichas competencias para afrontar los retos del mercado laboral internacional (Universidad de Cádiz, 2014).

2. OBJETIVOS

La investigación de este estudio tiene como propósito abordar dos objetivos relacionados con la enseñanza de Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE): en primer lugar, analizar la oferta y distribución de asignaturas de IFE en diecisiete universidades españolas seleccionadas al azar, con el fin de evaluar su presencia y alcance dentro de los planes de estudio.

En segundo lugar, analizar la integración de la enseñanza del inglés especializado en la estrategia de internacionalización de los estudios de grado de la Universidad de Cádiz, valorando en qué medida el alumnado adquiere las competencias previstas por el Proceso de Bolonia y el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior y, en consecuencia, determinar cómo se desarrolla la formación en habilidades de inglés especializado necesarias para afrontar las demandas del mercado laboral actual.

El trabajo examina la presencia y el alcance de la formación en Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE) en las titulaciones de la Universidad de Cádiz, excluyendo los grados filológicos. El análisis también se centra en el alumnado de las asignaturas Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas (ADE) e Inglés para Ingenieros. Asimismo, se

incorpora la opinión de exalumnos que actualmente realizan prácticas en empresas, con el fin de conocer la aplicabilidad real de los conocimientos adquiridos. Finalmente, se incluye la perspectiva de los coordinadores de las titulaciones analizadas, quienes aportan información directa sobre la estructura y contenido de los planes de estudio.

A partir de este planteamiento, se formulan las preguntas de investigación que orientan el estudio.

Preguntas dirigidas al alumnado de las asignaturas Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas (ADE) e Inglés para Ingenieros:

- ¿Cómo valoran los estudiantes de los cursos de Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas y de Inglés para Ingenieros la inclusión de contenidos específicos en sus planes de estudio?
- ¿Cuál es su percepción respecto a la importancia de fortalecer las competencias comunicativas en inglés para su inserción profesional en un contexto internacional?

Preguntas dirigidas a los coordinadores de todos los grados de la Universidad de Cádiz, a excepción de los grados filológicos:

- ¿Cuál es la opinión de los coordinadores respecto a la oferta y situación actual de las asignaturas de IFE en sus respectivos grados?
- ¿Consideran los coordinadores que la formación en inglés para fines específicos es importante dentro de sus grados para preparar adecuadamente al alumnado de cara a su futuro laboral?

La elección de la Universidad de Cádiz como caso de estudio responde a motivos tanto metodológicos como prácticos. Su tamaño y la representatividad de su oferta académica dentro del sistema universitario público español permiten abordar esta problemática en un contexto que refleja dinámicas de alcance nacional. Además, mi condición de profesor e investigador vinculado a los cursos analizados, así como mi estrecha relación con la institución, me ha proporcionado un acceso privilegiado a la información y una comprensión detallada de la realidad

docente en esta universidad. Esta combinación de representatividad y acceso facilita un análisis integral, garantizando la pertinencia y profundidad de los hallazgos.

3. METODOLOGÍA

El estudio adopta un enfoque descriptivo y exploratorio. Esta estrategia metodológica resulta pertinente para investigaciones desarrolladas en contextos naturales que no pretenden intervenir en los fenómenos observados, sino describirlos y comprenderlos. Además, permite identificar patrones o tendencias emergentes en situaciones donde aún no existe un marco teórico plenamente consolidado (Veiga de Cabo, Fuente Díez & Zimmermann Verdejo, 2008).

En una primera fase, se llevó a cabo un estudio exploratorio a partir del análisis de la información disponible en las páginas web de 17 universidades públicas españolas, seleccionadas de forma aleatoria. El objetivo de esta etapa era obtener una visión general sobre cómo se integra el Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE) en los planes de estudio de grados no filológicos. Se prestó especial atención a la presencia y distribución de asignaturas de inglés especializado, con el fin de conocer mejor la situación actual a nivel nacional. Este primer acercamiento permitió establecer un punto de partida más amplio y fundamentado, que sirvió como referencia para el análisis posterior del caso de la Universidad de Cádiz.

Tras la primera fase exploratoria, centrada en el análisis de la oferta de Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE) en distintas universidades españolas, se abordó con mayor profundidad el caso de la Universidad de Cádiz**.** Con el propósito de obtener una visión amplia y contrastada del fenómeno investigado, se diseñó una estrategia de recogida de información que incluyó al alumnado de las asignaturas anteriormente mencionadas, el visionado de las sesiones en el aula y la realización de una entrevista semiestructurada con exalumnos de Inglés para ADE e Inglés para Ingenieros, además de la recopilación de datos proporcionados por el personal coordinador de treinta y seis titulaciones**.** La combinación de diferentes fuentes y perspectivas resulta especialmente valiosa en los estudios institucionales, pues

permite la triangulación de datos como estrategia para reforzar la validez del análisis (Aguilar Gavira y Barroso Osuna, 2015).

3.1 CUESTIONARIO AL ALUMNADO DE AMBAS ASIGNATURA

Los datos sobre el alumnado se obtuvieron mediante un cuestionario administrado al finalizar ambas asignaturas específicas, que habían sido diseñadas siguiendo un modelo de buenas prácticas, con contenidos adaptados a las necesidades profesionales de cada ámbito y un enfoque centrado en la aplicación del inglés en contextos laborales reales.

El cuestionario aplicado al estudiantado incluía preguntas destinadas a evaluar la percepción sobre la utilidad práctica de los contenidos, el grado de satisfacción con la formación recibida y sus opiniones sobre la oferta de este tipo de asignaturas en sus grados. Las preguntas eran de formato cerrado. El uso de cuestionarios en la evaluación de programas formativos cuenta con un sólido respaldo en la literatura metodológica (Meneses & Rodríguez-Gómez, 2011).

3.2 PRESENTACIÓN DE EXALUMNOS Y PREGUNTAS DEL ALUMNADO EN EL AULA

En una segunda fase, la observación se incorporó como una herramienta clave del estudio, ya que permitió analizar las situaciones en su contexto real. Esta observación tuvo lugar durante las sesiones en las que exalumnos de ambas asignaturas fueron invitados a conversar con los estudiantes del curso académico 2024 y a contar sus experiencias profesionales, tanto positivas como negativas, sobre el uso del inglés en sus puestos de trabajo. Mi presencia como espectador no participante en el aula hizo posible recoger las reacciones y comentarios del alumnado mientras escuchaba los testimonios de antiguos compañeros, apreciando sus preguntas, reflexiones sobre la utilidad del inglés en su futuro profesional y su lenguaje no verbal. Esta fase ofreció una perspectiva más directa y humana sobre el valor práctico del inglés especializado y permitió vincular la formación recibida con las demandas comunicativas reales que los egresados enfrentan en el ámbito laboral.

3.3 CUESTIONARIO A LOS COORDINADORES DE GRADOS NO FILOLÓGICOS SOBRE LA FORMACIÓN EN INGLÉS ESPCIALIZADO

Finalmente, en una tercera fase, se diseñó un cuestionario dirigido al personal coordinador de las titulaciones de la Universidad de Cádiz, salvo en los grados donde una parte importante de las asignaturas se centraba en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, como en los estudios filológicos. Este cuestionario solicitó información sobre la existencia de formación orientada al desarrollo de competencias comunicativas en inglés especializado dentro de sus programas y, en caso afirmativo, requirió especificar el tipo de formación, su inclusión en el plan de estudios, el carácter de esta formación (optativo u obligatorio) y su duración expresada en años académicos. Esta fase complementa la recogida de datos realizada con el alumnado y permite analizar la posición que ocupa el inglés especializado dentro del diseño curricular formal de los programas de grado.

La recolección de estos datos se llevó a cabo entre abril y junio de 2024. Todos los cuestionarios fueron anónimos y se garantizó el consentimiento informado tanto del alumnado como del personal consultado. El respeto a los principios éticos en la investigación educativa, confidencialidad, consentimiento informado y uso exclusivo de los datos con fines académicos, resultó fundamental para asegurar la integridad del proceso investigador.

A posteriori, se realizó un análisis comparativo de las respuestas obtenidas de ambos grupos, con el fin de identificar posibles diferencias y coincidencias entre la percepción institucional y la del estudiantado respecto al papel del inglés con fines específicos en los estudios universitarios. Este contraste entre el alumnado, que experimenta la formación directamente, y los coordinadores académicos, responsables del diseño curricular, permitió obtener una comprensión más completa y enriquecida de los procesos formativos desde diversas perspectivas y niveles de responsabilidad dentro del sistema educativo.

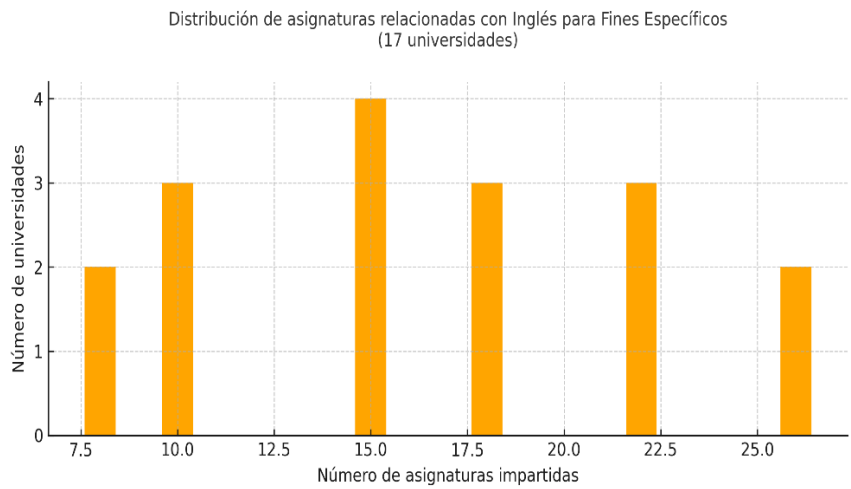
4. RESULTADOS

Los resultados que se detallan a continuación permiten comprender con mayor profundidad las tendencias y percepciones identificadas en el estudio.

4.1. INGLÉS PARA FINES ESPECÍFICOS EN UNIVERSIDADES ESPAÑOLAS

Con el fin de ampliar la perspectiva del estudio y no limitarlo al caso de la Universidad de Cádiz, se contabilizó el número de asignaturas relacionadas con el inglés para fines específicos en diecisiete universidades españolas seleccionadas al azar. El propósito fue conocer la presencia de esta formación en los planes de estudio y contar con una referencia general sobre su implantación.

GRÁFICO 1: *Distribución de asignaturas relacionadas con Inglés para Fines Específicos (17 universidades)*



Entre todos los grados que las universidades seleccionadas al azar y analizadas imparten, solo en un número reducido de ellas se incluyen asignaturas de inglés para fines específicos. La mayoría ofrece entre 10 y 18 asignaturas en sus grados, siendo más frecuente el caso de 14 asignaturas (4 universidades). Un número similar de universidades (3) imparte 10, 18 o 23 asignaturas, entre las que se encuentra la Universidad de

Cádiz, mientras que pocas se sitúan en los extremos, con 8 asignaturas (2 universidades) o 27 asignaturas (2 universidades). Esto evidencia que la oferta de inglés para fines específicos en muchas universidades resulta claramente insuficiente, lo que dificulta cubrir adecuadamente las necesidades reales del alumnado para enfrentarse al mundo laboral actual.

4.1. INTRODUCCIÓN EN INGLÉS PARA FINES ESPECÍFICOS: ALUMNADO DE INGLÉS PARA ADMINISTRACIÓN Y DIRECCIÓN DE EMPRESAS E INGLÉS PARA INGENIEROS

En esta sección se presentan los datos obtenidos del análisis sobre la percepción del alumnado en relación con el inglés especializado recibido en sus estudios.

GRÁFICO 2. *Género del alumnado de IFE: Administración y Dirección de Empresas*

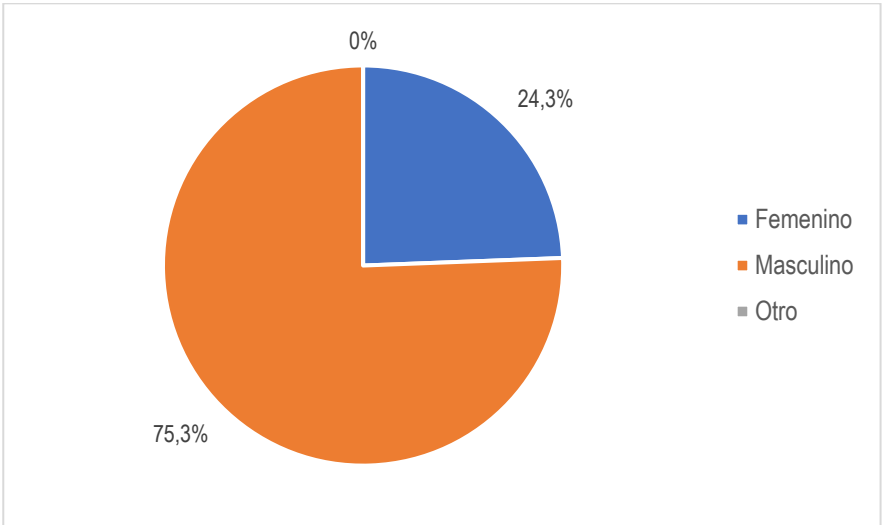
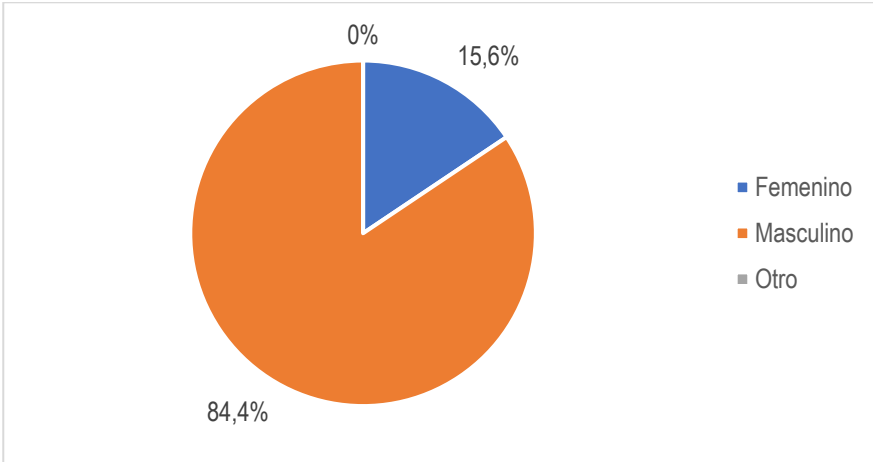


GRÁFICO 3. *Género del alumnado de IFE: Inglés para Ingenieros*



En cuanto al género del alumnado, predomina el masculino en ambos cursos. En Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas, el 75,7 % del alumnado es masculino y el 24,3 % femenino; en Inglés para Ingenieros, el 84,4 % es masculino y el 15,6 % femenino.

GRÁFICO 4. *Nivel de inglés acreditado: alumnado de IFE para Administración y Dirección de Empresas*

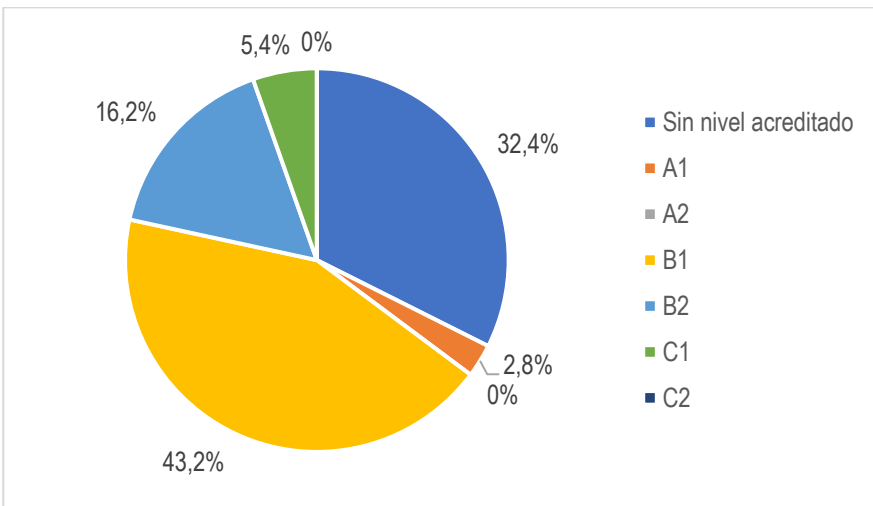
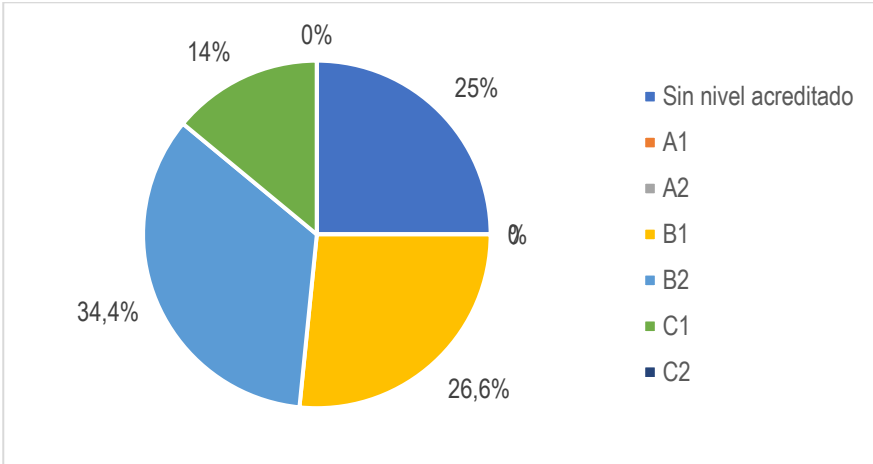


***GRÁFICO 5**. Nivel de inglés acreditado: alumnado de Inglés para Ingenieros*



Los gráficos indican que, en la asignatura de Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas, la mayoría del alumnado tiene un nivel B1 acreditado (43,2 %), seguido de un 16,2 % con B2 y un 5,4 % con C1. Un 2,7 % posee nivel A1 y un 32,4 % no cuenta con certificación oficial. En Inglés para Ingenieros, el 34,4 % dispone de un B2, el 26,6 % de un B1 y el 14,1 % de un C1, mientras que el 25 % no tiene acreditación.

GRÁFICO 6. *Asignatura de Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas: obligatoria u optativa*

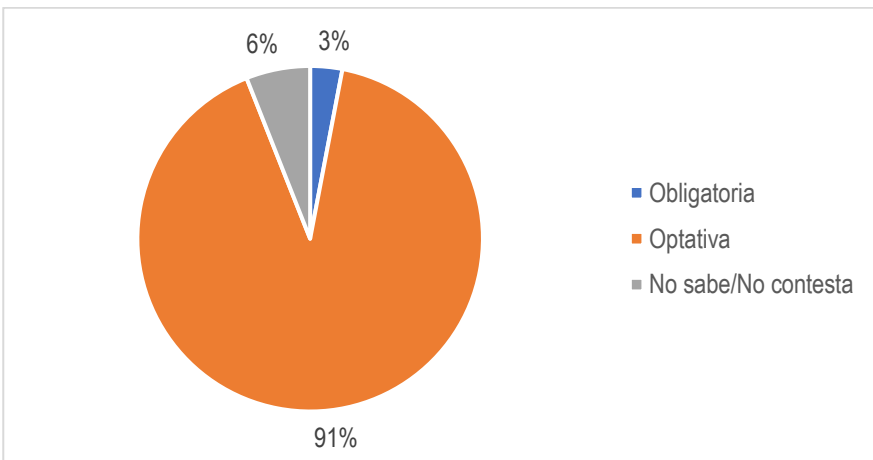
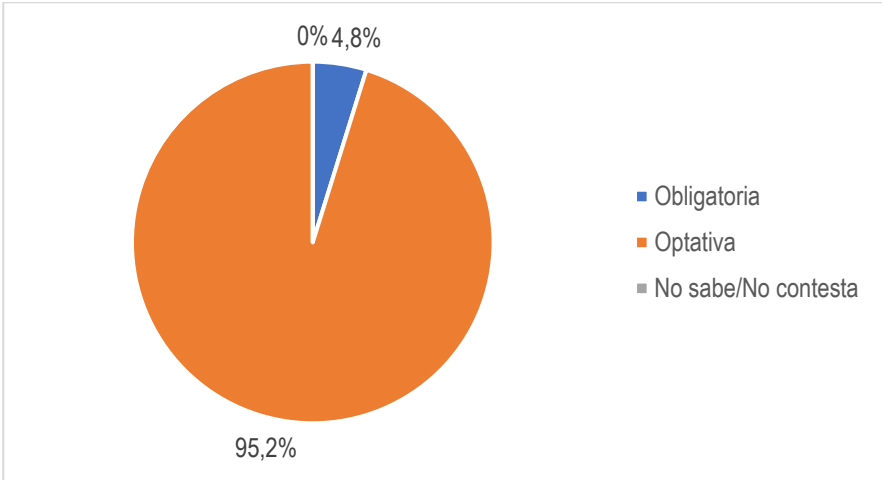


GRÁFICO 7. *Asignatura de Inglés para Ingenieros: obligatoria u optativa*



En Inglés para ADE, el 91,9 % del alumnado considera la asignatura optativa, aunque algunos la creen obligatoria o lo desconocen. En Ingeniería, el 95,2 % la identifica como optativa, con menos confusión. En ambos casos se aprecia falta de información, lo que sugiere mejorar la comunicación institucional sobre el plan de estudios.

GRÁFICO 8. *Curso(s) en los que puede cursar la asignatura: Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas´*

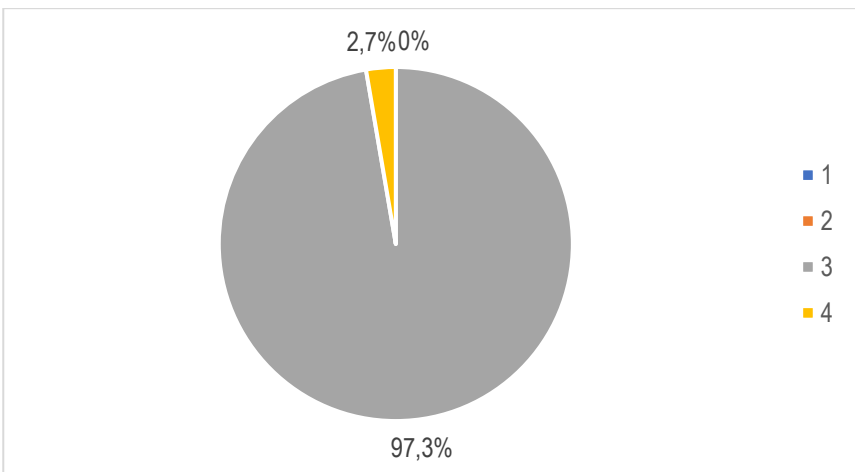
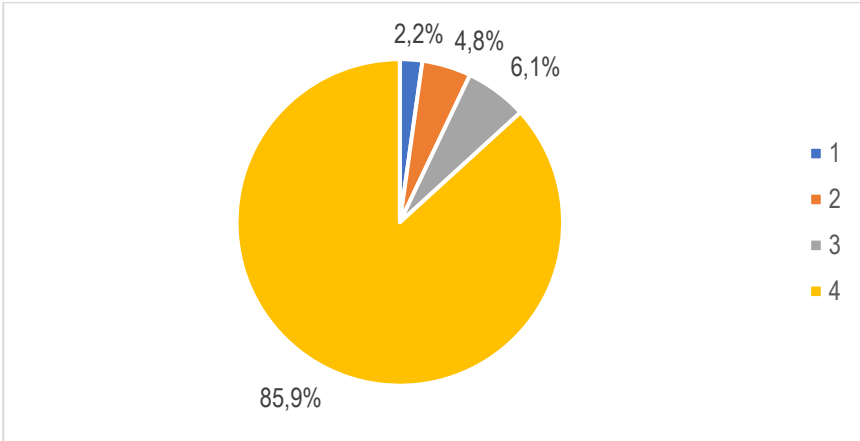


GRÁFICO 9. *Curso(s) en los que puede cursar la asignatura: Inglés para Ingenieros*



En Inglés para ADE, el 97,3 % del alumnado cree que la asignatura se cursa en tercero, y unos pocos en cuarto. En Ingeniería, el 85,9 % la ubica en cuarto curso, con menciones aisladas a otros niveles. En general, la mayoría sabe cuándo debe cursarla, aunque todavía hay algunas confusiones que muestran la necesidad de una orientación académica más clara.

GRÁFICO 10. *Existencia de otras asignaturas de IFE en su grado: Administración y Dirección de Empresas*

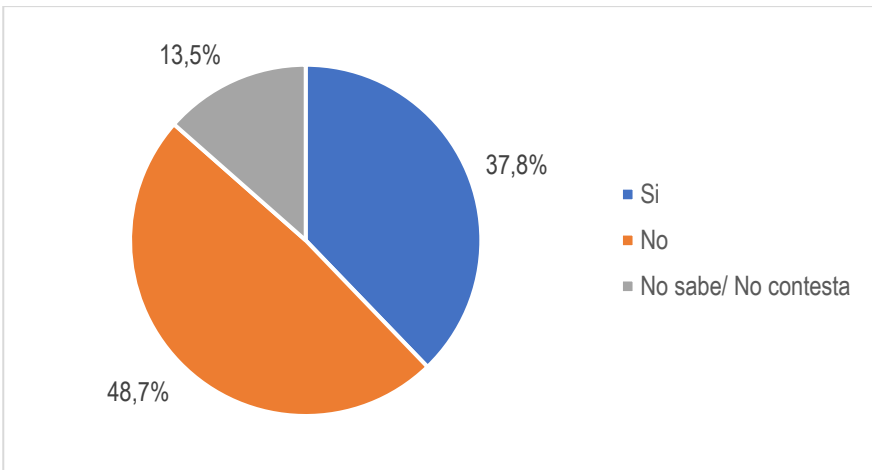
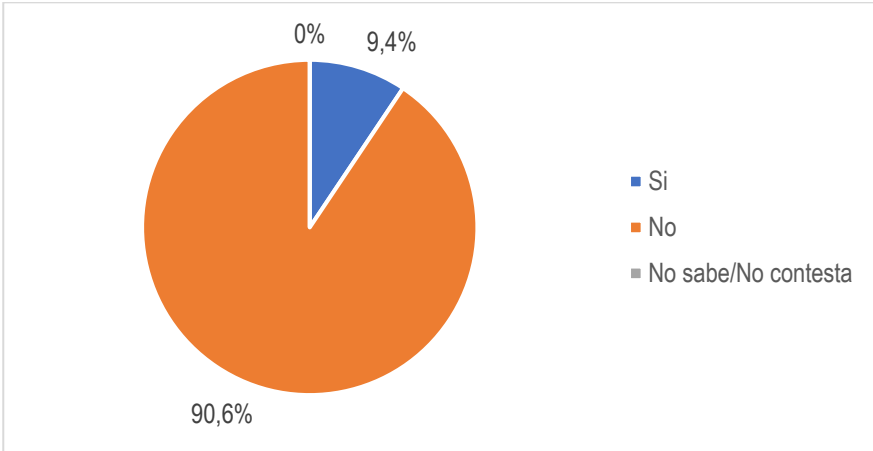


GRÁFICO 11. *Existencia de otras asignaturas de Inglés para Fines Específicos en su grado: Ingeniería*



Los gráficos muestran diferencias entre ADE e Ingeniería en relación con el acceso a Inglés para Fines Específicos. En ADE, el 37,8 % del alumnado cree tener más opciones, el 48,6 % lo niega y el 13,5 % no responde. En Ingeniería, el 90,6 % indica que no existen. Estos datos vuelven a reflejar cierta confusión entre el alumnado de ambos grados, ya que en ninguno de ellos se ofrece otra asignatura de inglés para fines específicos que pueda cursarse.

GRÁFICO 12. *Beneficios de la Asignatura IFE: Administración y Dirección de Empresas*

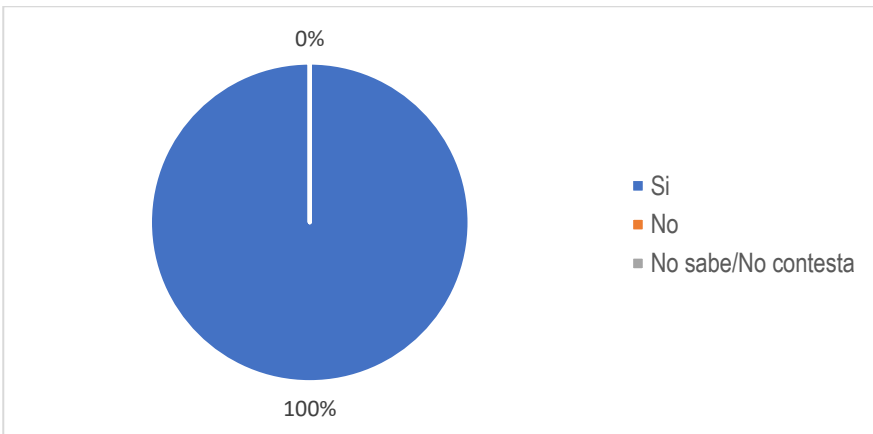
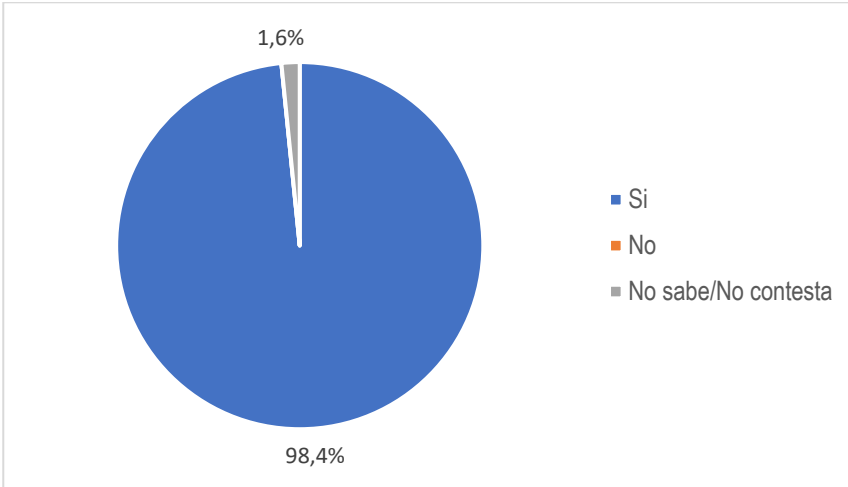


GRÁFICO 13. *Beneficios de la Asignatura IFE: Ingeniería*



En ambas áreas se observa una valoración casi unánime de la importancia del inglés especializado: el 100 % del alumnado de ADE y el 98,4 % de Ingeniería lo consideran relevante para su futuro profesional.

GRÁFICO 14. *Inclusión de más asignaturas IFE en grado: Administración y Dirección de Empresas*

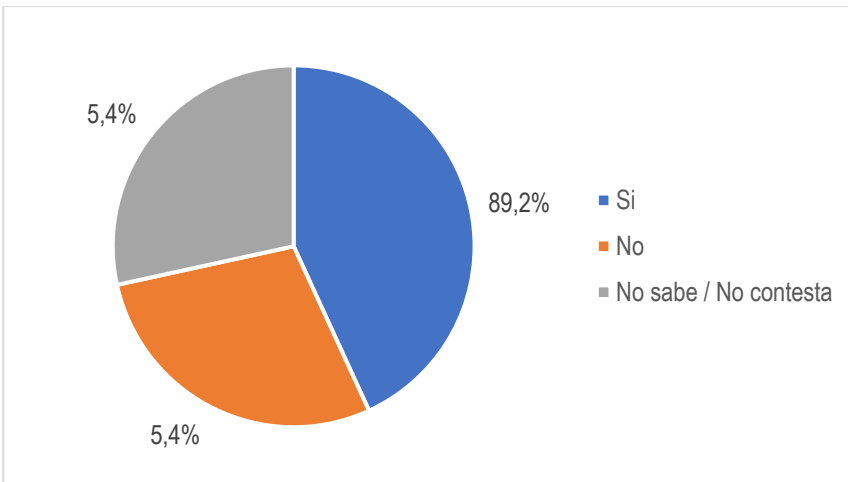
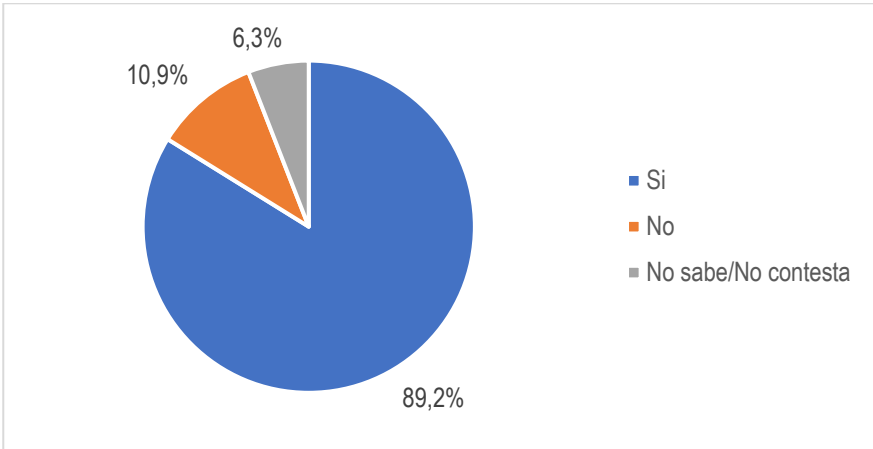


GRÁFICO 15. *Inclusión de más asignaturas de IFE en su grado: Ingeniería*



Según los datos mostrados en los gráficos, una amplia mayoría del alumnado de las titulaciones de Administración y Dirección de Empresas e Ingeniería manifiesta un claro interés en aumentar la oferta de asignaturas de Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE). En el caso de los estudiantes de ADE, el 89,2 % considera beneficiosa esta ampliación, mientras que un 5,4 % se opone y otro 5,4 % no se pronuncia. Por su parte, el 82,8 % del alumnado de Ingeniería también apoya un incremento en la oferta de asignaturas de IFE con contenidos complementarios, aunque un 10,9 % no lo considera necesario y un 6,3% no respondió.

3.2. EXPERIENCIAS DE EXALUMNOS DE LA ASIGNATURA ACTUALMENTE EN PRÁCTICAS O TRABAJANDO

Tras aplicar el cuestionario en ambos cursos, contacté con estudiantes de ediciones anteriores de las asignaturas para que ofrecieran una breve charla al alumnado del curso objeto de este estudio, con el propósito de compartir sus experiencias y fomentar la interacción entre participantes. Finalmente, acudieron dos exalumnos: uno del grado en Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas y otro del grado en Inglés para Ingenieros, ambos habían cursado las asignaturas el año anterior y aceptaron participar en una sesión con los estudiantes en el aula. Les facilité una estructura para sus intervenciones con el fin de que se mantuvieran

centrados en la temática y evitar posibles desviaciones hacia otros asuntos. Asimismo, les pedí que destacaran, al inicio de sus charlas, el nivel de inglés para fines generales con el que comenzaron sus asignaturas. Estos fueron los aspectos más relevantes de sus comunicaciones dirigidas al alumnado de ambos grados:

Exalumno de Inglés para ADE: "Cuando empecé el curso de inglés para ADE, ya tenía un nivel B2 certificado y pensé que sería un curso sencillo y poco relevante para mí. Sin embargo, conforme avanzaban las clases, me di cuenta de que el contenido práctico y específico para el ámbito empresarial me ayudó mucho a mejorar mis habilidades comunicativas. Al comenzar mis prácticas profesionales, noté que, aunque tenía una buena base general, me faltaba confianza y fluidez para expresarme en situaciones reales de negocios, sobre todo en presentaciones y reuniones. Este curso me ayudó a ganar seguridad y a mejorar aspectos clave como la pronunciación y el vocabulario técnico. Además, terminé valorando lo beneficioso que habría sido contar con más cursos así durante toda la carrera."

Exalumno de Inglés para Ingenieros: "Cuando comencé el curso de inglés para ingenieros el año pasado, ya tenía una certificación de nivel C1. Pensaba que el curso sería fácil y poco útil. Lo escogí solo para aprobar. Sin embargo, al terminarlo, comprendí cuánto me había ayudado a mejorar. Durante mis prácticas profesionales, me di cuenta de todo lo que aún me queda por aprender en inglés técnico. Aunque después obtuve el nivel C2, tuve dificultades con temas específicos como los circuitos, especialmente en la expresión oral y la pronunciación. No podéis imaginar cuánto me ha ayudado este curso. Además, al finalizar los estudios, te das cuenta de lo difícil que es encontrar este tipo de formación fuera de la universidad y de lo necesario que habría sido contar con más cursos así durante el grado."

Tras las intervenciones de los exalumnos, los estudiantes que estaban en el aula expresaron opiniones como las siguientes:

- "Tengo un nivel certificado C1 y me he dado cuenta de que no me capacita para mantener conversaciones sobre temas específicos de ingeniería."

- “El curso me ha ayudado a repasar aspectos importantes del idioma en contextos concretos, especialmente porque en mi programa de grado no se imparte inglés.”
- “He aprendido vocabulario básico y necesario en el campo de la ingeniería y a utilizarlo para mantener conversaciones fluidas, además de mejorar mi pronunciación.”
- “Dado que el inglés es la “lengua internacional”, puede abrir puertas a oportunidades laborales en todo el mundo.”
- “En el ámbito empresarial, donde suele haber necesidades de comunicación con personas de otros países, el inglés funciona como un buen punto en común.”
- “Al trabajar en una empresa, dominar términos técnicos en inglés añade credibilidad a los argumentos durante las discusiones de proyectos.”
- “Comencé el curso con mucha confianza, ya que tengo un nivel C1, pero a medida que avanzaba me sorprendía cada vez más lo poco preparado que estoy para abordar temas tan específicos, especialmente en lo que respecta a la pronunciación de palabras básicas y esenciales en mi campo laboral.”
- “Me parece muy interesante que en clase también trabajamos aspectos de la cultura básica de los países de habla inglesa. El profesor nos da ejemplos de cómo ciertas formas de comportamiento típicas de nuestro país pueden generar malentendidos allí.”
- “He intentado buscar clases particulares para seguir formándome como en estas clases, pero no consigo encontrar nada.”

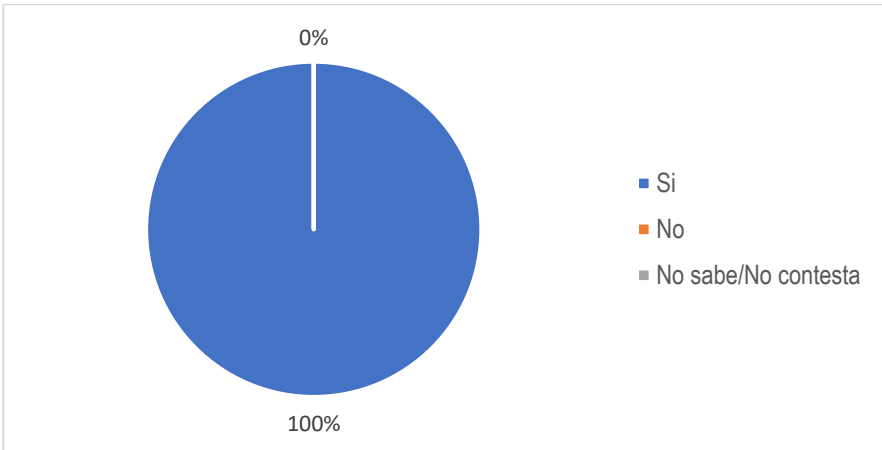
3.3 COORDINADORES DE GRADO: FORMACIÓN EN INGLÉS ESPECIALIZADO EN LOS CURSOS ACADÉMICOS DE LOS GRADOS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE CÁDIZ

Para obtener una visión integral de la formación en inglés especializado en la Universidad de Cádiz, se llevó a cabo una segunda fase de recogida de datos. Esta consistió en el diseño y distribución de una encuesta

dirigida a los coordinadores de todos los grados, exceptuando aquellos directamente vinculados a la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras.

La tasa de respuesta alcanzó el 86,1 %, garantizando la representatividad de los datos obtenidos. A continuación, se presentan los resultados de esta encuesta, que serán contrastados con la información proporcionada por el alumnado de los cursos analizados previamente. Este enfoque metodológico facilita una evaluación más completa y rigurosa del estado actual de la formación lingüística especializada en la institución.

GRÁFICO 16. *Coordinadores de Grados no Lingüísticos de la UCA: Positividad en que su alumnado desarrolle habilidades comunicativas en Inglés Específico en su área de estudio*



El 100 % de los coordinadores encuestados valora positivamente que los estudiantes adquieran habilidades comunicativas en inglés para el entorno profesional, lo que refleja un consenso claro sobre la importancia de esta competencia.

El gráfico muestra que, pese a la unanimidad en la valoración de la importancia del inglés específico en el entorno laboral (como se indicó en la gráfica anterior), existe una brecha notable en la oferta de esta formación a nivel de grado. Casi la mitad de los respondientes señala que sus programas no incluyen esta formación especializada.

GRÁFICO 17. *Su grado oferta formación en inglés especializado en su área de estudio al alumnado de su grado*

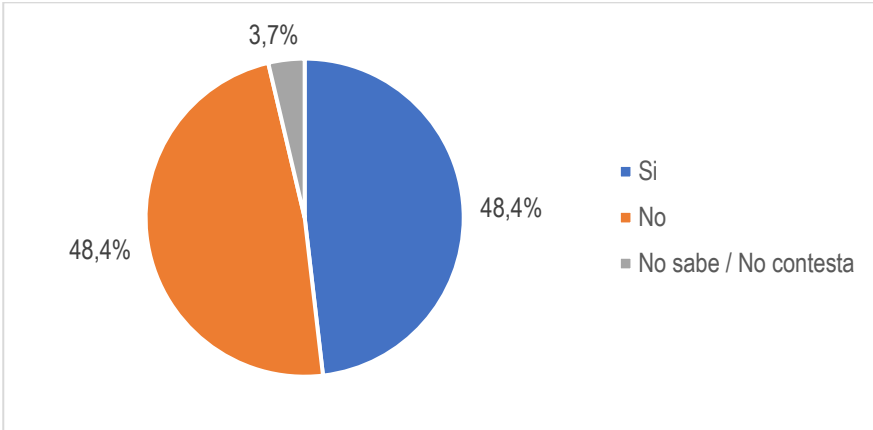
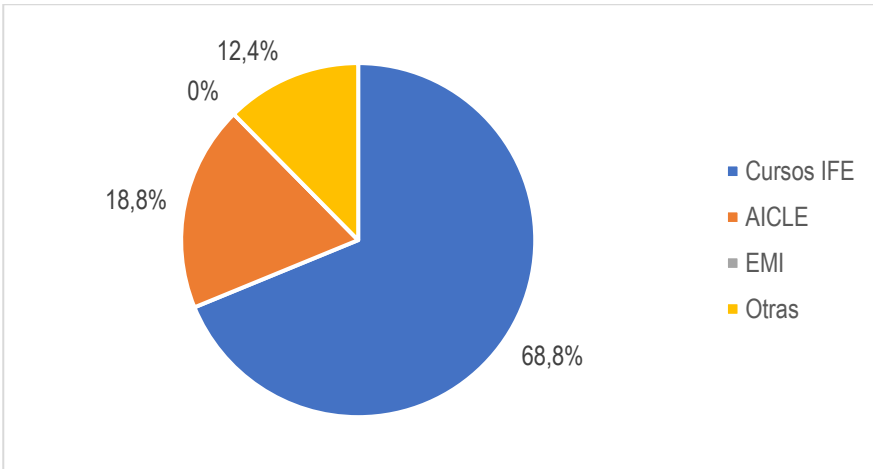


GRÁFICO 18. *En caso afirmativo, metodología de enseñanza del inglés especializado que se usa en su grado*



Según los datos de 16 respuestas, esta gráfica muestra que la formación en inglés específico en los grados que la ofrecen se basa principalmente en asignaturas de IFE. La metodología AICLE ocupa un segundo lugar con un 18%, mientras que otras modalidades de formación son mucho menos frecuentes.

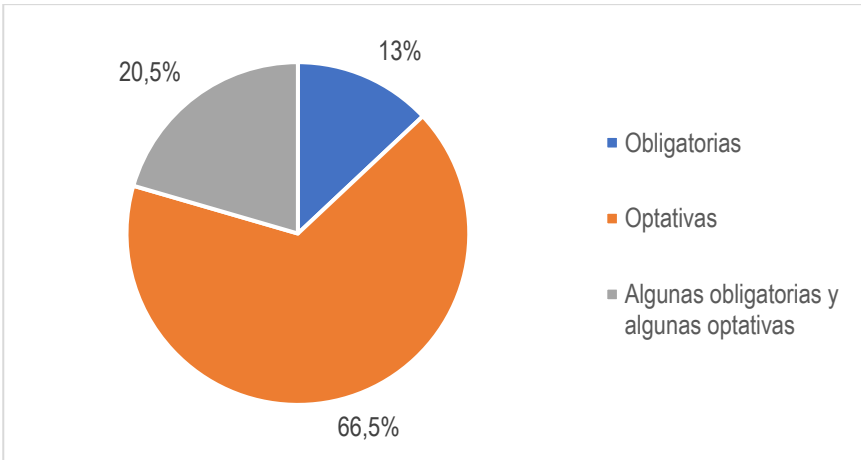
TABLA 1. *Número de asignaturas de Inglés para Fines Específicos que se pueden cursar en su grado*

¿A cuántas asignaturas de Inglés para Fines Específicos tienen acceso los estudiantes en su grado? 16 respuestas

Porcentaje de grados	Número de asignaturas
70,5 %	1 asignaturas
11,8 %	2 asignaturas
11,8 %	3 asignaturas
5,9 %	4 asignaturas

La información proporcionada por los coordinadores de los programas de grado que respondieron dentro del 48 % que impartía formación en inglés especializado indica que la mayoría (70,5 %) ofrece un solo curso con este enfoque. Además, el 11,8 % imparte dos cursos, otro 11,8 % ofrece tres, y el 5,9 % restante dispone de cuatro cursos.

GRÁFICO 19. *Optatividad u obligatoriedad de las asignaturas de IFE en su grado*



El gráfico muestra que la enseñanza de inglés específico es mayoritariamente optativa. además, resalta que más de una cuarta parte de los grados no cuentan con asignaturas de este tipo, mientras que la formación obligatoria en inglés específico es la modalidad menos común.

5. DISCUSIÓN

La discusión de los resultados se organiza en función de las preguntas planteadas al inicio de este capítulo. En primer lugar, se analizan las valoraciones del alumnado sobre la inclusión de contenidos específicos en sus planes de estudio y su percepción de la importancia del inglés especializado para la inserción profesional internacional. A continuación, se examinan las opiniones de los exalumnos que participaron en las sesiones con el grupo, compartiendo sus experiencias laborales, así como las observaciones que el propio alumnado expresó durante dichas presentaciones. Posteriormente, se presentan las opiniones del personal coordinador acerca de la oferta y la situación actual de las asignaturas de Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE), y su relevancia en la preparación del alumnado para el mercado laboral. Por último, se abordan las limitaciones del estudio y se proponen posibles implicaciones para la mejora de la formación lingüística especializada.

Con respecto a la primera pregunta, sobre cómo valoran los estudiantes la inclusión de contenidos específicos en sus planes de estudio, los resultados indican que el alumnado de los cursos de Inglés para Ingenieros y de Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas percibe como relevante la incorporación de formación lingüística especializada acorde a sus perfiles académicos. La valoración crítica que hacen de la limitada presencia de estas asignaturas evidencia una brecha entre sus necesidades comunicativas y la oferta curricular disponible, coincidiendo con hallazgos previos en contextos universitarios (Dafouz, 2025). Esto sugiere que, aunque los estudiantes son conscientes de la importancia de la formación especializada, la estructuración de los planes de estudio aún no responde plenamente a estas necesidades.

En relación con la segunda pregunta, los estudiantes reconocen que el inglés general no cubre completamente las exigencias comunicativas

del ámbito profesional. Sin embargo, se observa cierta confusión entre inglés general e inglés para fines específicos, lo que lleva a que algunos consideren suficiente el dominio del inglés general para afrontar situaciones complejas. Esta percepción subestima la necesidad de formación específica y destaca la importancia de reforzar la distinción y la comprensión del papel del IFE dentro de la formación universitaria. En consecuencia, los estudiantes asocian un mayor enfoque en IFE con una preparación más adecuada para desenvolverse en entornos profesionales internacionales, reafirmando la relevancia de estas competencias.

Respecto a la tercera pregunta, los coordinadores reconocen que el inglés constituye una herramienta clave para la empleabilidad del alumnado, pero señalan que las asignaturas de IFE suelen ser optativas, limitando su alcance y relevancia académica. Esta situación refleja una desconexión entre la intención institucional de internacionalización y la realidad formativa, en la que el acceso a la formación depende en gran medida de la elección individual de los estudiantes. Además, la dispersión en la oferta de IFE entre distintos grados y la falta de coordinación entre departamentos contribuyen a una integración parcial de estas competencias en los planes de estudio.

En cuanto a la cuarta pregunta, los coordinadores consideran que la formación en inglés especializado es fundamental para la inserción profesional del alumnado. No obstante, su implementación se ve limitada por factores estructurales, como la autonomía universitaria para la configuración de planes de estudio, la rigidez de los currículos existentes, la escasez de recursos para contratación de profesorado especializado y desarrollo de materiales, así como la priorización insuficiente del IFE frente a otras competencias disciplinares. Estas limitaciones subrayan la necesidad de establecer políticas lingüísticas claras y coordinadas que garanticen una formación más completa y funcional en inglés especializado.

Finalmente, es importante señalar que los datos proceden únicamente de la Universidad de Cádiz, lo que restringe la generalización de los hallazgos a otros contextos institucionales. Además, aunque la muestra es representativa dentro del caso analizado, futuros estudios podrían ampliarla para incluir una mayor diversidad de titulaciones y perfiles estudiantiles. Reconocer estas limitaciones permite contextualizar los

resultados sin restar validez a los hallazgos, que evidencian una brecha persistente entre la valoración explícita del IFE y su integración efectiva en los planes de estudio. Esta brecha muestra que, aunque tanto alumnado como coordinadores reconocen la importancia del inglés especializado, su consolidación curricular requiere medidas estratégicas y coordinadas a nivel institucional.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Los hallazgos de este estudio permiten extraer varias conclusiones relevantes en relación con las preguntas planteadas.

En primer lugar, en España, el Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE) está presente de manera limitada y desigual en los planes de estudio de los grados no filológicos. En la Universidad de Cádiz, algunas asignaturas como Inglés para ADE e Inglés para Ingenieros destacan, pero no todas las titulaciones cuentan con formación especializada ni está siempre vinculada con las competencias que requiere el mercado laboral internacional.

En segundo lugar, al analizar las percepciones tanto de exalumnos como de quienes estaban cursando la asignatura durante ese año académico, salta a la vista una confusión persistente: la diferencia entre el inglés de uso general y el inglés diseñado para fines específicos. Es habitual que muchos estudiantes consideren que la obtención de una certificación de nivel C1 o C2 en inglés general les proporciona todas las competencias necesarias para desenvolverse con eficacia en contextos laborales internacionales. Sin embargo, al participar en cursos de inglés especializado, se enfrentan a una realidad distinta: la necesidad de desarrollar habilidades lingüísticas específicas y contextualizadas, estrechamente vinculadas con su ámbito profesional. Este proceso de toma de conciencia resulta esencial para que su formación continua se ajuste de manera más precisa a las demandas reales del mercado laboral. Cabe señalar que esta confusión no afecta únicamente al alumnado, sino que puede extenderse también a parte del personal docente o coordinador de los grados, particularmente entre quienes no están familiarizados con el enfoque del Inglés para Fines Específicos, sus particularidades y su importancia en la formación universitaria.

En tercer lugar, el alumnado de los cursos de Inglés para Ingenieros y de Inglés para Administración y Dirección de Empresas valora positivamente la inclusión de contenidos específicos en sus planes de estudio y demanda una formación lingüística especializada que se ajuste a sus perfiles académicos. Sin embargo, la limitada presencia de estas asignaturas evidencia una brecha entre necesidades y oferta curricular, lo que señala la necesidad de revisar la estructura de los planes de estudio para responder mejor a las demandas del alumnado. Esta escasa posibilidad de acceder a una formación especializada puede llevar a los estudiantes a buscar alternativas en espacios extracurriculares, generando desigualdades y contraviniendo los principios del ODS 4, que promueve una educación inclusiva y equitativa.

En cuarto lugar, por lo que respecta a los coordinadores, se constata que reconocen la relevancia del IFE para la empleabilidad, aunque su implementación se ve limitada por la optatividad de las asignaturas, la dispersión de la oferta, la falta de coordinación y restricciones estructurales. Esto evidencia que, a pesar de la valoración institucional positiva, la integración efectiva del IFE en los planes de estudio requiere políticas claras, coordinación interdepartamental y apoyo a la formación del profesorado.

Finalmente, estas conclusiones ponen de manifiesto que, para que el alumnado adquiera competencias lingüísticas aplicables y se prepare de manera adecuada para el mercado laboral worldwide, las universidades deben incrementar la presencia de IFE en el currículo, garantizar su carácter inclusivo y fortalecer enfoques integrados como AICLE o EMI. Solo mediante un enfoque estratégico y coordinado se puede asegurar una formación lingüística sólida, equitativa y alineada con las demandas profesionales internacionales.

7. AGRADECIMIENTOS

Quiero agradecer a mis alumnos de los cursos de Inglés para Ingenieros e Inglés para administración y Dirección de empresas por su colaboración en la recogida de datos, así como a los alumnos en prácticas por compartir información tan valiosa. extiendo también mi gratitud a los

coordinadores de los distintos grados por dedicar su tiempo a completar el cuestionario. sin la generosidad y el esfuerzo de todos ellos, este capítulo no habría sido posible.

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PERCEPCIÓN Y COMPETENCIA EN INGLÉS JURÍDICO: UN ESTUDIO LONGITUDINAL EN EL GRADO DE DERECHO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE CÁDIZ

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En los planes de estudios de diferentes carreras universitarias se incluyen al menos una asignatura de inglés para fines específicos (en adelante, IFE) pudiendo ser de carácter obligatorio u optativo. Según Basturkmen (2010), la instrucción del inglés para fines específicos se ajusta a las necesidades particulares de los alumnos en el contexto académico o profesional. Esto explica por qué este tipo de enseñanza se ha vuelto cada vez más común en los programas académicos de universidades europeas. En el caso que nos compete los alumnos del Grado de Derecho deben superar una materia de IFE en el segundo semestre del cuarto curso de su Grado. En el marco de la Universidad de Cádiz, la asignatura Terminología Jurídica Básica en Lengua Inglesa es de carácter obligatorio y forma parte del plan de estudios correspondiente. Su docencia se imparte en las sedes de Algeciras y Jerez, con una asignación de 6 créditos ECTS (*European Credit Transfer System*), de acuerdo con lo establecido en el Real Decreto 1125/2003, de 5 de septiembre, por el que se regula el sistema europeo de créditos y el sistema de calificaciones en las titulaciones universitarias de carácter oficial y validez en todo el territorio nacional (Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre).

Los objetivos más relevantes de esta asignatura son que los alumnos sean capaces de comprender textos jurídicos en lengua inglesa, así como conocer las particularidades léxicas, sintácticas y de estilo del inglés jurídico (Universidad de Cádiz, 2025). Por ello, la asignatura se enfoca en la enseñanza de terminología legal inglesa, así como en el

uso adecuado de ésta en diferentes contextos cumpliendo con una competencia general y transversal en el proceso de formación y aprendizaje establecidos en la memoria de dicha asignatura (Universidad de Cádiz, 2019, pp.85-86). Según indica Hyland (2002), para que el aprendizaje de IFE sea efectivo, los contenidos deben relacionarse directamente con los contextos disciplinares de los estudiantes, lo cual mejora su comprensión y motivación.

A pesar de que la inclusión de esta materia se ha pensado como una forma de fomentar la internacionalización del plan de estudios promovido por la implantación del Plan Bolonia en el momento en el que los estudiantes están a punto de finalizar sus estudios y comenzar su carrera profesional; este hecho no se percibe de igual forma por los alumnos involucrados en esta situación ya que la introducción de IFE se ha considerado más un obstáculo para finalizar su carrera que una ventaja para adquirir conocimiento sobre la terminología jurídica inglesa. En estudios de la misma índole como el de Contero, C. (2019, p.1) ya se planteaban la misma cuestión provocada por la actitud negativa del alumnado al respecto de la inclusión de IFE con el objetivo de cumplir con la internacionalización en la universidad. Esta controversia ha generado en los docentes una preocupación inminente basada en la actitud negativa generalizada de los estudiantes hacia lo que se consideraba un beneficio y no un obstáculo:

With this being thought as a way to foster the internationalization of their curriculum once there are about to finish their studies and start their professional career, a considerable number of students have identified this insertion of ESP teaching in their undergraduate programme as an obstacle to terminating their degree. This controversial situation has made teachers concerned about the rationale behind these specific students' negative attitude towards what was intended to be a benefit rather than a disadvantage.

Sin embargo, en estudios previos de Martinovi´c & Poljakovi´c. (2010, p.13) los resultados arrojan actitudes positivas hacia el profesor, el método de evaluación y hacia el estudio del inglés.

The results reveal that students have a positive attitude toward the teacher and evaluation method (Factor 1), toward English (Factor 2), and a positive affective attitude toward learning English (Factor 3). This is surprising as it was assumed that student apathy in most classes was the consequence of a negative attitude toward these elements.

Este estudio es revelador ya que el autor constata que la apatía del alumnado se debe en la mayoría de los casos por tener una actitud negativa hacia estos factores, por ello podemos concluir que el papel del profesor juega un papel clave en la docencia de IFE, así como el método de evaluación y metodologías usadas en la enseñanza. En este sentido, Hutchinson y Waters (1987) enfatizaban la importancia de una perspectiva centrada en el aprendiz para enseñar idiomas con propósitos específicos, ya que tanto las estrategias pedagógicas como la pertinencia de los contenidos son esenciales para que el proceso de aprendizaje sea exitoso.

Teniendo en cuenta nuestra experiencia en la impartición de la materia este estudio pretende identificar las principales dificultades a las que se enfrentan los estudiantes en la comprensión y uso de la terminología jurídica en inglés, examinando la relación entre la exposición al inglés jurídico fuera del aula y el nivel de competencia alcanzado tras cursar la asignatura, además de determinar qué recursos y estrategias (lectura de textos legales, podcasts, cursos en línea, entre otros) son los más utilizados por los estudiantes para mejorar su nivel de inglés jurídico y finalmente, proponer estrategias para mejorar el aprendizaje del inglés jurídico dentro y fuera del aula. Para conseguir nuestro objetivo, se lleva a cabo una evaluación diagnóstica del inglés jurídico al principio del segundo semestre y al final del mismo para valorar la relevancia de la asignatura de IFE en el ámbito laboral del alumnado, así como para constatar la eficacia de los métodos de enseñanza-aprendizaje en el aula.

2. OBJETIVOS

El objetivo general planteado en esta investigación es:

- Analizar el nivel de competencia lingüística en inglés jurídico de los alumnos de 4º del Grado de Derecho de la asignatura Terminología Jurídica Básica en Lengua Inglesa en la

Universidad de Cádiz (Sede de Algeciras) antes y después de haber cursado la asignatura.

Además, se han planteado una serie de objetivos específicos tales como:

- Mencionar los métodos de aprendizaje autónomo que los estudiantes emplean para mejorar su conocimiento del inglés jurídico fuera del aula.
- Identificar las principales dificultades que enfrentan los estudiantes en la comprensión y uso de la terminología jurídica en inglés.
- Exponer la percepción del alumnado sobre la relevancia de la asignatura de inglés jurídico para su futura práctica profesional.
- Proponer estrategias para mejorar el aprendizaje del inglés jurídico dentro y fuera del aula.

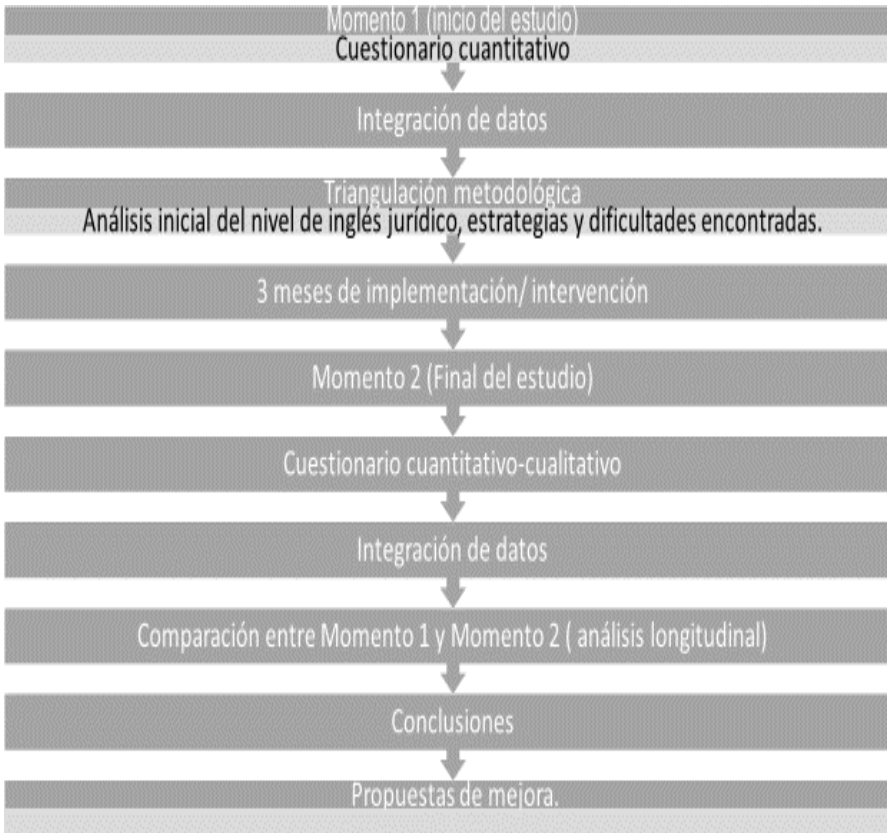
3. METODOLOGÍA

Para la obtención de los resultados se ha llevado a cabo un estudio longitudinal basado en una metodología mixta cuantitativa - cualitativa con el fin de obtener información relevante acerca del nivel de inglés jurídico de los estudiantes involucrados en el estudio, así como de las estrategias de aprendizaje autónomo de los mismos y satisfacción de los estudiantes. Tras el análisis de los datos obtenidos se lleva a cabo la propuesta de mejora. A través de este tipo de enfoque permite una comprensión de la realidad educativa del alumnado.

3.1. Diseño mixto

El estudio se ha llevado a cabo mediante un diseño mixto longitudinal con triangulación en dos puntos temporales, separados por un intervalo de tres meses (febrero a mayo de 2025). A través de la metodología de triangulación el estudio muestra una mayor validez y fiabilidad, mejora la comprensión de los datos obtenidos y enriquece la investigación.

FIGURA 1. *Elaboración de triangulación metodológica.*



Fuente: Elaboración propia

3.2. PARTICIPANTES

La muestra incluye un total de 31 estudiantes los cuales están cursando la asignatura Terminología Jurídica Básica en Lengua Inglesa durante el segundo semestre en la Universidad de Cádiz (Sede de Algeciras) en el curso académico 2024-25. En este caso, nuestro estudio se basa en los resultados obtenidos a través de dos cuestionarios realizados por el alumnado de los cuales el 61,3% son mujeres y el 38,7% son hombres. En cuanto a la competencia lingüística general inicial, el 64,5% cuenta con una certificación oficial de idioma extranjero (en este caso, inglés: niveles B1, B2 y C1) mientras que el 35,5% aún no poseen el mínimo exigido por el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (Plan Bolonia).

En este proceso de internacionalización las universidades han adoptado nuevas exigencias lingüísticas en sus planes de estudios debidas a la entrada en vigor del Plan Bolonia aprobado por el Real Decreto 1393/2007 de 29 de octubre. Es por esta causa por la que actualmente se requiere que los estudiantes finalicen su carrera con un nivel mínimo de competencia en una lengua extranjera equivalente al B1 definida en el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER).

3.3. INSTRUMENTOS

Los instrumentos para la recolección de datos son dos cuestionarios diseñados para evaluar diferentes aspectos del aprendizaje del inglés jurídico:

1. Conocimiento léxico-jurídico: Mediante preguntas tipo opción múltiple sobre terminología legal inglesa. Los cuestionarios se diseñan en base a los estándares de competencia en inglés jurídico y teniendo como referencia el material bibliográfico usado en clase.

2. Evaluación diagnóstica y comparativa: Ambos cuestionarios – uno inicial y otro final- permiten observar el progreso del alumnado a lo largo del semestre.

3. Hábitos y estrategias de estudio: Se plantean preguntas de opción múltiple que nos relevan como los estudiantes fomentan su aprendizaje en inglés fuera del aula; además se usan preguntas de tipo escala Likert para conocer la frecuencia de estudio de inglés jurídico fuera del entorno educativo y sobre la satisfacción global de la muestra.

4. Satisfacción y percepción: También se usará este tipo de método para evaluar la dificultad del alumnado al realizar el test antes y después de haber cursado la materia y para conocer la satisfacción que dicha muestra posee tras haber estudiado terminología legal inglesa.

5. Mejoras: Además, se recogen necesidades, experiencias y sugerencias de mejora a través de ítems adicionales con preguntas abiertas en el segundo cuestionario.

Los cuestionarios también contienen preguntas de tipo sociodemográficas para contextualizar los datos en función del perfil lingüístico y académico del estudiantado

3.4. PROCEDIMIENTO Y ANÁLISIS DE DATOS

Los formularios fueron aplicados en un entorno controlado a los estudiantes en formato digital en distintos momentos del curso académico lo cual nos permiten observar los cambios más relevantes en el objeto de investigación. Uno es realizado el primer día de clase el 11 de febrero de 2025 y contiene tres bloques.

- Bloque 1: Datos sociodemográficas (información personal: nivel de inglés, certificaciones, años de estudio de lengua inglesa, entre otros).
- Bloque 2: Evaluación sobre el conocimiento de terminología jurídica básica en lengua inglesa a través de preguntas con opciones.
- Bloque 3: Valoración de la dificultad del test sobre conocimiento lingüístico legal inglés a través de escala Likert.

El segundo cuestionario se realiza de la misma manera el último día de clase, el 14 de mayo de 2025. Este formulario contiene los bloques uno y dos mencionados anteriormente y se añade algunas excepciones y bloques nuevos.

- Bloque 1: Datos sociodemográficas (información personal: nivel de inglés, certificaciones, años de estudio de lengua inglesa, entre otros).
- Bloque 2: Evaluación sobre el conocimiento de terminología jurídica básica en lengua inglesa a través de preguntas con opciones.
- Bloque 3: Conocimiento sobre la satisfacción con la impartición de la asignatura a través de escala Likert.
- Bloque 4: Valoración de la dificultad del test sobre conocimiento lingüístico legal inglés a través de escala Likert.

– Bloque 5: Plan de mejora: Análisis de futuras estrategias de mejora metodológica para el aprendizaje del inglés jurídico a través de preguntas abiertas.

Los datos cuantitativos obtenidos serán analizados mediante técnicas estadísticas diferenciando niveles de competencia, métodos de aprendizaje autónomos utilizados, satisfacción del estudiante tras haber cursado la asignatura, entre otros. En cuanto a la parte cualitativa del estudio, será analizada identificando actitudes y exponiendo sugerencias relevantes por parte del alumnado.

4. RESULTADOS

Si nos centramos en las valoraciones acerca de las dificultades encontradas en resolver el test de conocimiento lingüístico legal sin haber cursado la asignatura y después de haberla cursado, se obtienen resultados relevantes e importantes acerca del aprendizaje obtenido tal y como vemos en las gráficas obtenidas.

GRÁFICO 1. *Evolución del conocimiento lingüístico del alumnado respecto a terminología jurídica básica en lengua inglesa.*

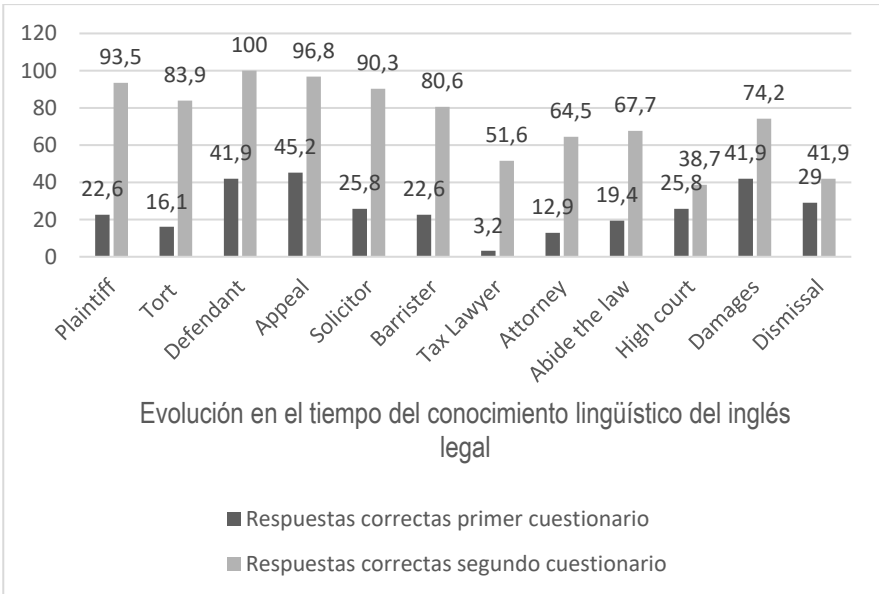
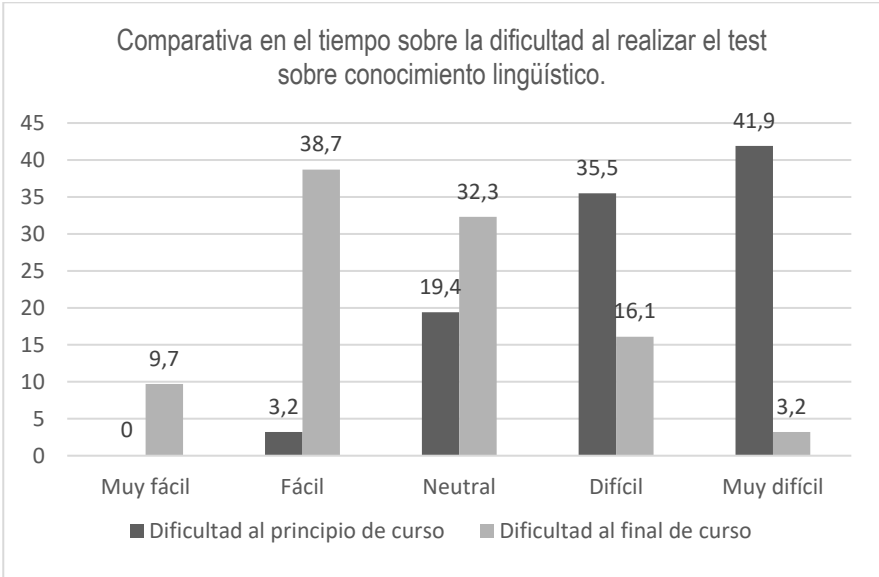
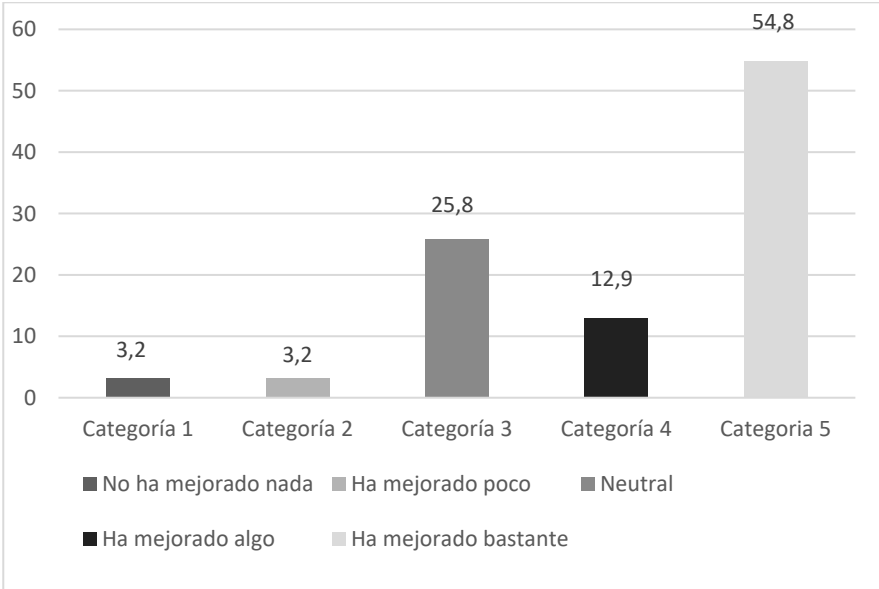


GRÁFICO 2. *Dificultad para resolver el test sobre conocimiento lingüístico (al principio y al final de curso).*



Las gráficas (figuras 1 y 2) muestran un claro desarrollo positivo acerca de la resolución del test tras haber cursado la asignatura ya que al principio de curso el 41,9% de los estudiantes contestaron que les resultó muy difícil responder al test. Al finalizar la asignatura tan solo el 3,2% de los estudiantes manifestó la misma percepción. Estos resultados encajan a la perfección con la resolución del test de opciones múltiples cuyos resultados podemos observar en la figura 1. Se percibe como el conocimiento sobre la materia ha mejorado en el segundo test en comparación al primero realizado el primer día de clase ya que el 83,3% de las preguntas del segundo test son respondidas correctamente por más de la mitad de la clase. A pesar de que la mayoría de los alumnos poseen una certificación de nivel de inglés podemos resaltar la complejidad inherente sobre el lenguaje técnico especializado y la necesidad de una formación adecuada en este ámbito.

GRÁFICO 3. *Percepción de mejora del nivel de inglés jurídico.*



En la gráfica se resumen los datos obtenidos una vez terminado el curso acerca de la mejora de nivel en inglés jurídico. La figura nos ofrece la siguiente información: más de la mitad del alumnado (54,8%) afirman que su nivel de inglés jurídico ha mejorado bastante. Este hecho se alinea con uno de los objetivos de formación establecidos para la materia como una de las competencias generales y evidencia un aprendizaje efectivo en cuanto a la adquisición de terminología y comprensión de textos especializados.

La frecuencia de estudio de inglés jurídico fuera del aula antes y después de cursar la asignatura muestra un claro aumento e interés por parte del alumnado ya que el 64,5% de la muestra se posicionaba en nada al principio de curso, mientras que ese porcentaje se reduce al 19,4% después de cursar la materia. Este cambio evidencia un aumento importante en la implicación de los estudiantes respecto al aprendizaje autónomo, posiblemente motivado por la metodología empleada en clase y la percepción de utilidad de la asignatura.

GRÁFICO 4. *Desarrollo de la frecuencia del estudio autónomo.*

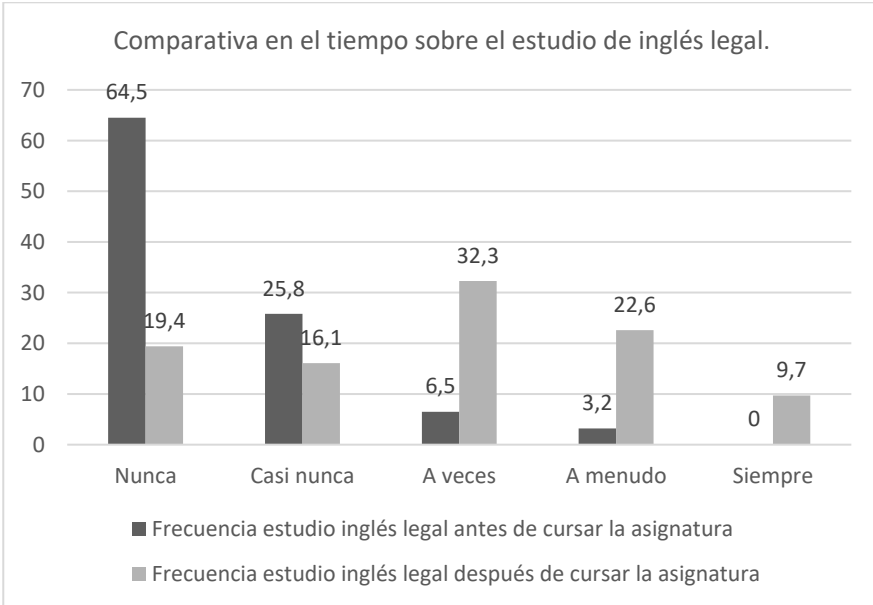


GRÁFICO 5. *Estrategias utilizadas para mejorar el conocimiento legal en inglés.*

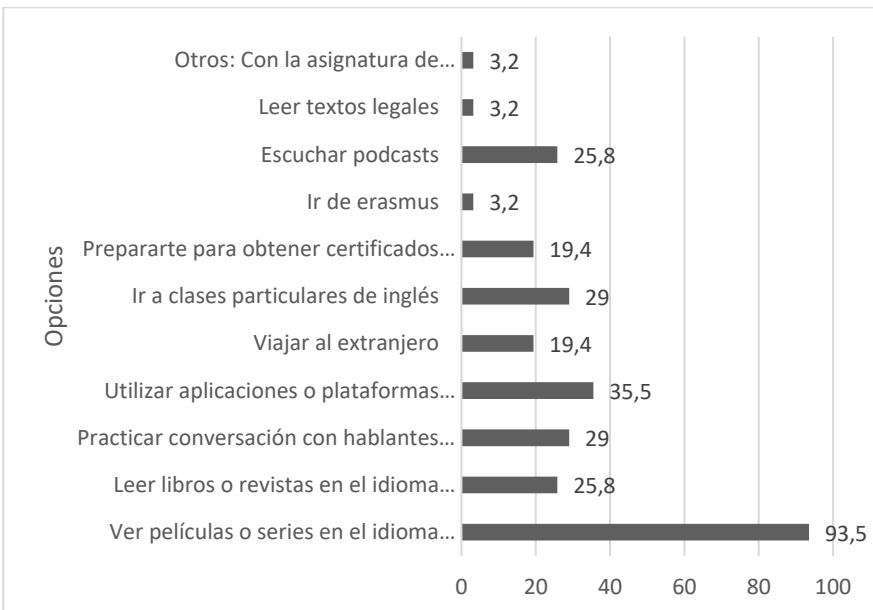
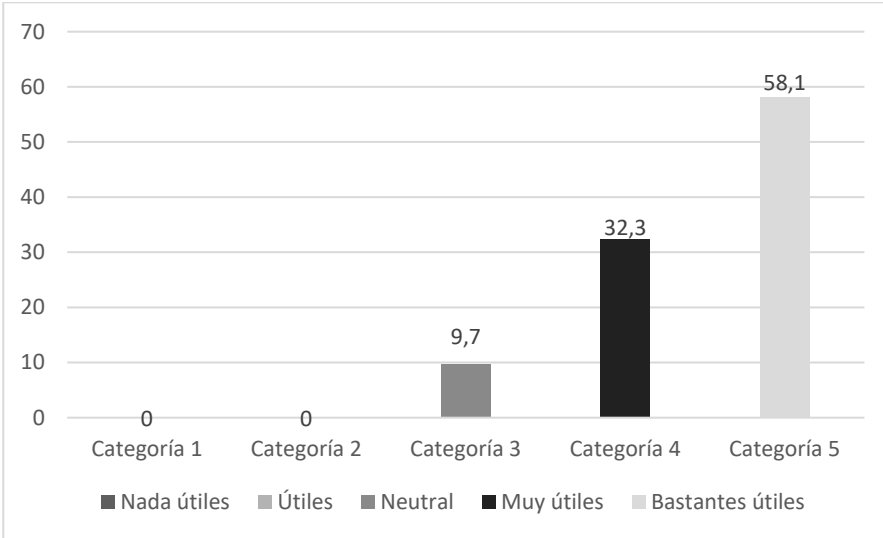
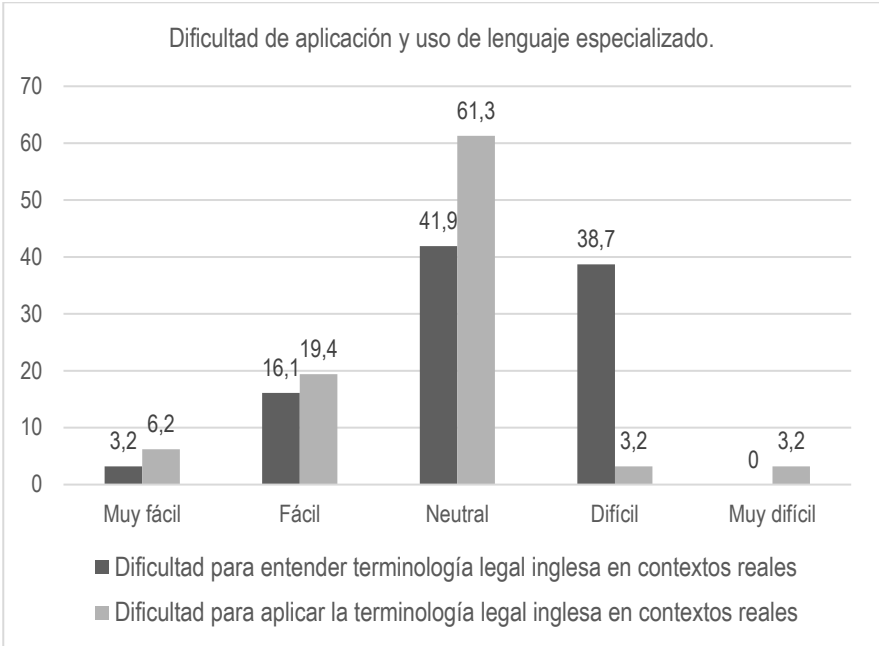


GRÁFICO 6. *Aprendizaje autónomo.*



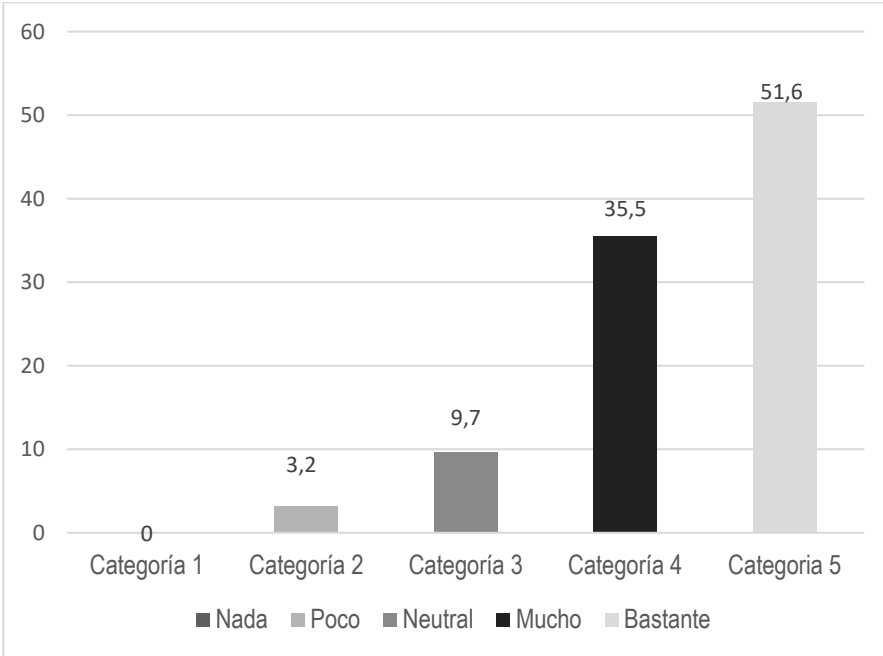
En cuanto a estrategias autónomas de aprendizaje del alumnado fuera del aula, la gráfica 5 muestra una clara implicación de estos en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera ya que la mayoría de los estudiantes usan alguna estrategia de estudio y práctica autónoma fuera del aula. Observamos que el 93,5% de los estudiantes declara usar estrategias de aprendizaje fuera del aula, destacando el visionado de películas, el uso de plataformas digitales y la lectura de textos legales adaptados. Tan solo el 3,2% indica que basa su aprendizaje exclusivamente en los contenidos impartidos en la clase, lo que pone de manifiesto una alta implicación autónoma que se corrobora con los datos obtenidos a través de la figura 6 donde el 58,1% piensa que el aprendizaje autónomo es bastante útil ya que este se ha vuelto una condición prioritaria en las últimas décadas debido a la búsqueda de objetivos personales y al ritmo de vida actual donde la tecnología es un elemento fundamental que nos permite familiarizarnos con el idioma, la cultura y los hablantes nativos de la lengua meta facilitándonos el proceso de aprendizaje en lenguas extranjeras.

GRÁFICO 7. *Dificultad de comprensión y uso de la terminología jurídica en inglés.*



Teniendo en cuenta la valoración de las dificultades encontradas por el alumnado en la práctica de la terminología jurídica inglesa se obtienen los siguientes resultados: la mayor parte del alumnado (80,6%) considera que entender la terminología especializada legal inglesa en situaciones prácticas se encuentra entre la escala tres y cuatro (neutral y difícil); al igual que el 64,5% los cuales optan por la misma valoración a la hora de aplicarla en contextos reales. Más de la mitad de la case, en ambas situaciones, optan por estas opciones probablemente por el débil desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa y escrita que poseen, por la falta de exposición a contextos reales o simulados, por el uso de tecnicismos y en otros casos por la falta de confianza que genera el usar una lengua extranjera, en este caso especializada.

GRÁFICO 8. *Práctica de inglés jurídico fuera del aula.*



La figura corrobora que el alumnado cree que la exposición fuera de aula en contextos legales de habla inglesa mejoraría su competencia lingüística implicando este factor un claro ejemplo de aumento de confianza en la competencia escrita y oral en los estudiantes. Estos datos refuerzan la importancia de incorporar experiencias reales o simuladas en el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje.

Se observa que la satisfacción y valoración positiva del alumnado con la asignatura (figura 9) es bastante alta ya que el 80,6% de la muestra se sienten muy satisfechos por haber cursado esta materia. Además, el 64,5% (figura 10) del alumnado posee un alto nivel de recepción de la misma ya que piensan que es una asignatura de gran utilidad para su futuro laboral.

GRÁFICO 9. *Grado de satisfacción alumnado.*

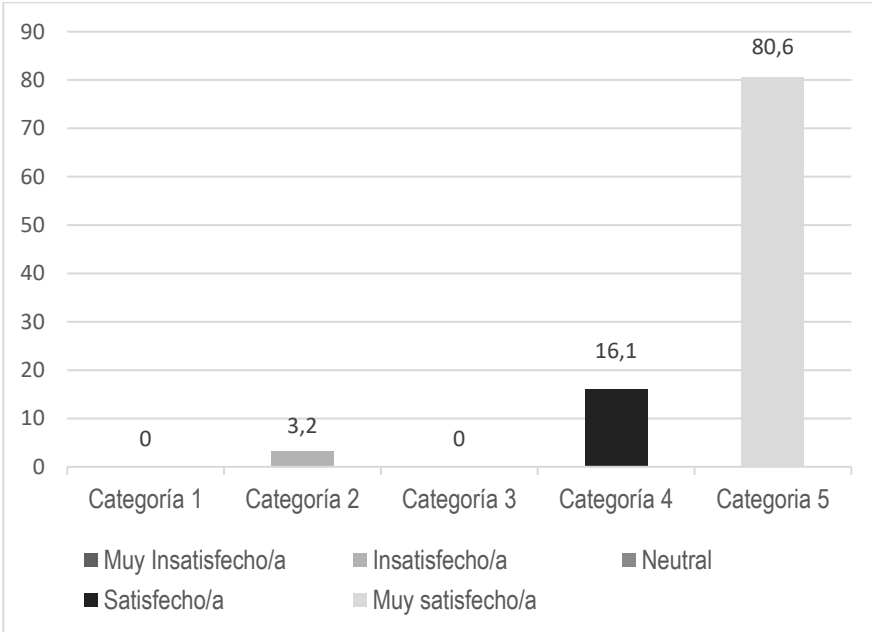
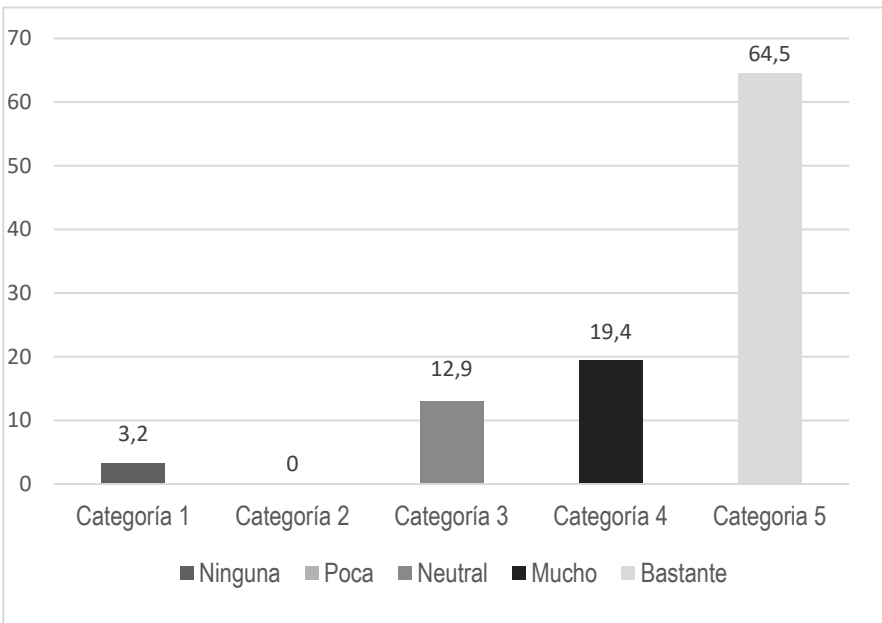
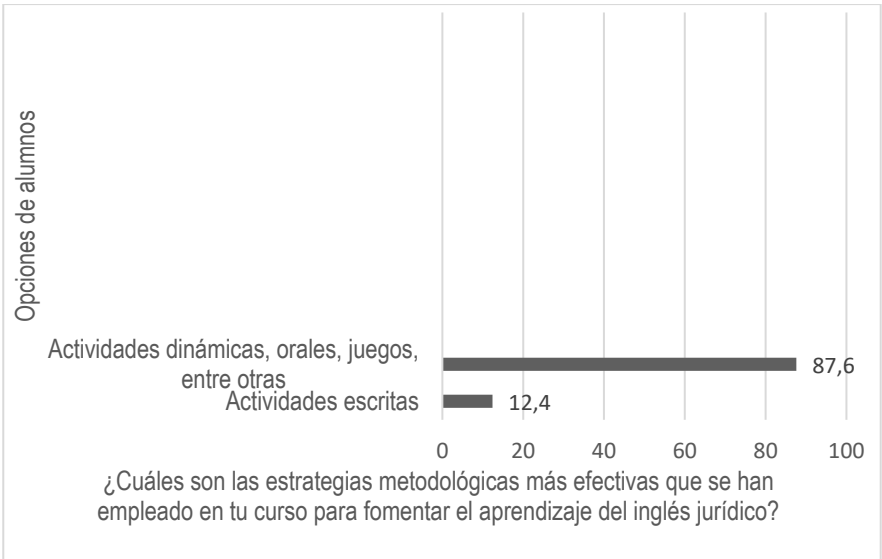


GRÁFICO 10. *Utilidad de la asignatura según el alumnado*



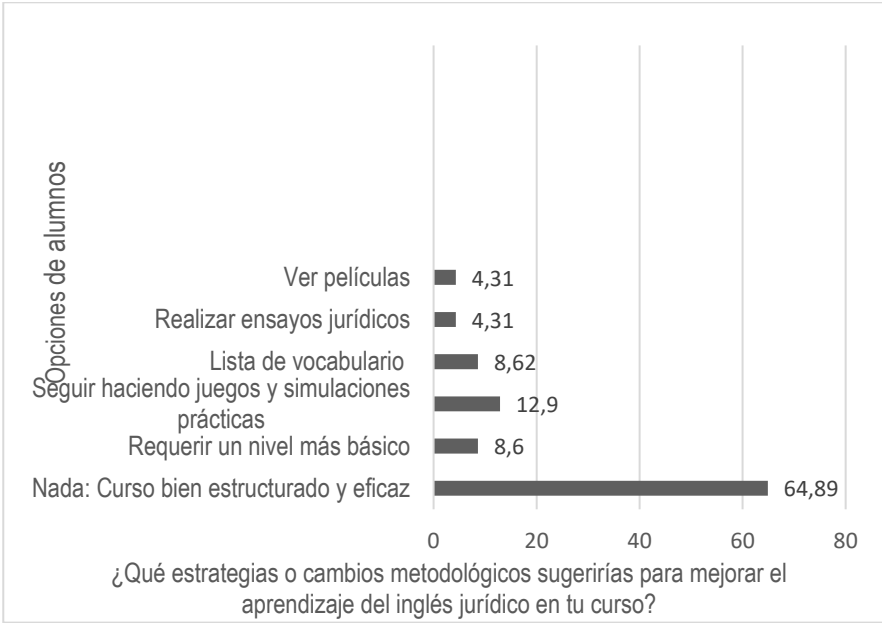
Por otro lado, respecto a la parte cualitativa de la investigación se le plantean al alumnado dos preguntas de tipo abierta para recoger opiniones sobre las estrategias metodológicas más relevantes usadas por el profesor en clase para lo cual los alumnos han respondido de manera muy positiva a las actividades propuestas para la enseñanza del inglés jurídico. Entre ellas encontramos los siguientes resultados:

GRÁFICO 11. *Estrategias metodológicas más efectivas según el alumnado.*



Las metodologías más acertadas y que la mayoría de los estudiantes valoran en esta sección son los juegos y actividades dinámicas en clase las cuales han sido resaltadas por el 87,6% de los participantes; mientras que las actividades de escritura ocupan un mínimo porcentaje en la metodología usada (12,4%).

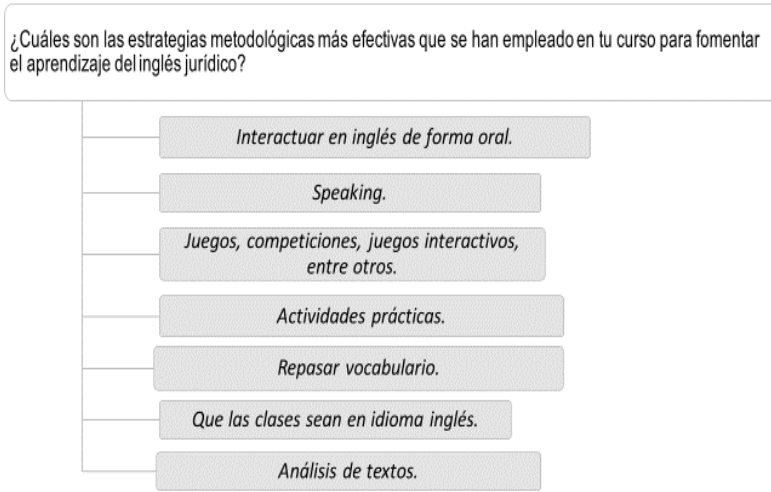
GRÁFICO 12. *Estrategias metodológicas sugeridas por el alumnado.*



Teniendo en cuenta los cambios metodológicos para el aprendizaje del inglés legal en el curso el 69,1% respondió que el curso ha sido bastante eficaz y ha estado bien estructurado, mientras que el 30,9% sugiere que se debería requerir un nivel mínimo más alto que el A2 teniendo en cuenta la complejidad de la asignatura de lengua especializada (requisito que está establecido en la ficha de la asignatura "*Requisito previo: Para poder cursar esta asignatura con garantías de éxito es necesario que el alumno/a posea un conocimiento de partida de la lengua inglesa equivalente al nivel A2 del MCERL*") o que se debería de empezar desde un nivel más básico adaptando los materiales, las situaciones, las actividades, los textos, entre otros a la idiosincrasia de cada grupo. Otras sugerencias incluyen: incluir simulaciones prácticas, facilitar una lista con el vocabulario, entre otras.

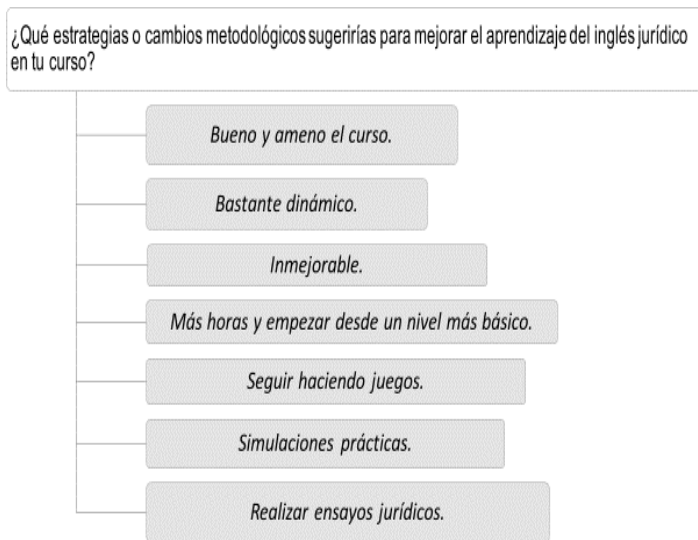
A continuación, se exponen un resumen sobre los comentarios extraídos de esas dos preguntas abiertas que se les propusieron a los estudiantes:

FIGURA 2. *Comentarios extraídos de las preguntas abiertas de los cuestionarios sobre estratégicas metodológicas.*



Fuente: Elaboración propia

FIGURA 3. *Comentarios extraídos de las preguntas abiertas de los cuestionarios sobre cambios en cuanto a la metodología empleada en clase.*



Fuente: Elaboración propia

5. DISCUSIÓN

En el presente artículo se ha abordado la cuestión de si el alumnado de cuarto curso del Grado de Derecho de la sede de Algeciras de la Universidad de Cádiz mejora su competencia lingüística en inglés legal tras haber cursado la asignatura de IFE establecida en la memoria de dicho Grado. Los resultados obtenidos muestran que los estudiantes presentan un domino aceptable de vocabulario jurídico en contextos controlados tras haber cursado la asignatura, sin embargo, existen dificultades notables en la producción oral y el uso contextual adecuado del léxico especializado.

Además, en este estudio longitudinal también se han valorado la opinión de los estudiantes referente a la metodología usada por el profesor en clase para de este modo conocer como cada enfoque usado a la hora de enseñar puede colaborar de forma positiva o negativa en la enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma, así como en la motivación del alumnado hacia un aprendizaje de un idioma especializado con el que en la mayoría de los casos observados no habían tenido ninguna relación hasta el momento de impartición. La finalidad de este estudio no solo abarca cuestiones metodológicas, sino también mostrar el progreso del alumnado en cuanto a competencias lingüísticas y exponer los desafíos a los que se enfrentan a la hora de aprender terminología legal inglesa.

Sobre los resultados, destacan las opiniones positivas respecto a la metodología empleada en clase a través de la cual el alumnado siente que ha aprendido a la vez que ha disfrutado, demostrando este factor lo que proponía Martinovi´c & Poljakovi´c. (2010, p.13): tanto el profesor como la metodología activa, dinámica y gamificada usada en clase desempeñan un factor clave en la motivación y recepción por parte de los estudiantes. Los hallazgos evidencian que el enfoque tradicional basado en la gramática no es suficiente para desarrollar una competencia comunicativa eficaz en el ámbito jurídico.

La falta de confianza expresada por los estudiantes en relación a la producción oral puede deberse a la no familiaridad con estructuras sintácticas complejas propias del lenguaje legal. La interacción oral en contextos profesionales constituye uno de los principales desafíos identificados en este estudio, por ello una necesidad urgente de incorporar

metodologías más comunicativas basadas y orientadas a tareas reales en el aula para que el estudiante pueda desarrollar confianza y competencia en situaciones reales de ámbito jurídico sería una de las áreas de mejora respecto a la impartición de este tipo de lenguaje técnico.

Sin embargo, en contraste con lo que sugería el estudio de Contero C. (2019, p.1) acerca de la negatividad del estudiante hacia la inclusión de IFE en los Grados de Gestión y Administración de empresas y el Grado de Derecho, en nuestra investigación observamos cómo el alumno de Derecho, en cuestión de cinco años, ha cambiado su actitud hacia esta negatividad enfatizando que esta asignatura, en concreto, supone una gran ventaja para su futuro profesional. Se pone de manifiesto la necesidad de reforzar la enseñanza del inglés jurídico en los planes de estudio del Grado de Derecho, no solo como herramienta instrumental, sino como competencia profesional clave en un contexto jurídico cada vez más internacionalizado.

Por otro lado, también se observa un incremento de actividades autónomas para el aprendizaje, lo que supone una gran implicación del alumnado en su propio desarrollo, reforzando la autonomía como competencia transversal en la formación universitaria.

Teniendo en cuenta los resultados obtenidos se proponen varias líneas de mejora para reforzar la enseñanza del inglés jurídico:

a. Fomentar actividades prácticas en contextos reales y profesionales: Los resultados de este estudio nos sirven de guía para futuras investigaciones que analicen los distintos enfoques pedagógicos, como el aprendizaje basado en casos o que se ejecuten simulaciones de procedimientos judiciales en inglés con el objetivo de mejorar y fortalecer el desempeño lingüístico en contextos jurídicos reales. Podrían incluirse prácticas del alumnado en bufetes de abogados internacionales, juicios simulados, análisis de casos reales, redacción de documentos legales, convenios con instituciones jurídicas o en entornos laborales internacionales del ámbito jurídico donde el estudiante estuviese en contacto con la terminología jurídica en lengua inglesa, entre otros.

b. Ampliar la duración de la materia: otra de las sugerencias y necesidades del alumnado es el hecho de aumentar las horas de enseñanza de terminología inglesa legal además de empezar desde un nivel más bajo; por ello se recomienda la inclusión de la asignatura en ambos cuatrimestres e incluso extendiéndola a otros cursos del grado con el fin de proporcionar una competencia lingüística lo suficientemente consistente para su futuro laboral así como una exposición más amplia al conocimiento del idioma legal inglés dado el volumen y la complejidad del contenido. A través de esta medida se podría trabajar de forma más progresiva las competencias requeridas y asegurar un aprendizaje más consolidado.

c. Establecer niveles progresivos de aprendizaje y adquisición del idioma especializado: esta propuesta estaría vinculada con la anterior ya que la idea de extender la asignatura a más cursos ofrece la oportunidad de establecer diferentes niveles de aprendizaje empezando desde un nivel más bajo e ir incrementando la dificultad que el lenguaje técnico requiere. O bien, sería conveniente adaptar el nivel mínimo exigido para cursar la asignatura al B1 del MCERL, u ofrecer un módulo o algún tipo de formación específica introductoria previo para que el alumnado sea consciente de la dificultad que conlleva la asignatura y que este hecho no afecte a la desmotivación de estos cuando tienen contacto por primera vez con la materia.

d. Fomentar el aprendizaje experiencial y basado en proyectos: a través de la incorporación de metodologías activas y prácticas como el aprendizaje basado en casos (*case-based learning*) o el aprendizaje basado en proyectos (*project-based learning*), lo cual favorecen y ayudan a la retención de vocabulario y al desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas. Este tipo de metodologías también contribuyen a reforzar la motivación, la autonomía y la capacidad de resolución de problemas en contextos reales.

e. Facilitar recursos didácticos: el estudiantado también ha expresado la utilidad de disponer de algún listado de vocabulario por ello sería conveniente facilitarles glosarios temáticos, herramientas digitales y materiales accesibles para su estudio autónomo. La implementación de repositorios digitales o plataformas con materiales de apoyo podría facilitar este proceso al mismo tiempo que refuerza el aprendizaje fuera del aula.

6. CONCLUSIONES

En definitiva, se constata que los hallazgos encontrados responden a los objetivos expuestos, revelando áreas específicas de mejora en la formación lingüística de los futuros juristas. La inclusión del inglés legal se presenta como una necesidad en los contextos jurídicos crecientemente internacionalizados. Además de enfatizar las metodologías comunicativas, el estudio sienta las bases para futuras investigaciones que analicen el impacto de enfoques innovadores en el aula y su repercusión en la competencia profesional del alumnado de Derecho.

7. AGRADECIMIENTOS/APOYOS

Quisiera expresar mi más sincero agradecimiento a los estudiantes de 4º curso del Grado en Derecho de la sede de Algeciras de la Universidad de Cádiz (curso 2024-2025) por su valiosa participación en esta investigación. Ha sido un verdadero placer compartir con vosotros las actividades de aprendizaje interactivo y los juegos educativos en clase, experiencias que no solo enriquecieron el proceso de enseñanza, sino que también nos permitieron disfrutar y aprender de manera conjunta. Sin vuestra implicación, entusiasmo y dedicación, este capítulo no habría sido posible; vuestra colaboración ha sido fundamental para la realización de este trabajo, y por ello os estoy profundamente agradecida.

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RIESGOS DEL SIGNIFICADO DEL LÉXICO JURÍDICO-PENAL: PÉRDIDAS Y GANANCIAS Y FALSOS AMIGOS. PROPUESTA DIDÁCTICA PARA EL TRATAMIENTO DE LA TERMINOLOGÍA JURÍDICO-PENAL INGLÉS-ESPAÑOL EN EL AULA DE LENGUAS PROFESIONALES

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En el ámbito de la didáctica de las lenguas extranjeras, la interferencia léxica constituye uno de los obstáculos más persistentes y complejos para la adquisición de una competencia comunicativa precisa. Dentro de esta problemática general, los llamados "falsos amigos" —vocablos con similitud formal entre dos idiomas, pero con significados divergentes — se revelan especialmente perniciosos cuando el objeto de estudio es una terminología especializada como la jurídica, y, más concretamente, la penal.

Por lo que respecta al ámbito político, el proceso de la integración europea, el incremento de las relaciones internacionales en el campo comercial y judicial, etc. han potenciado, en la actualidad, la importancia del inglés jurídico. Este panorama internacional ha motivado que el mundo de los juristas advierta cada vez más la necesidad de traducir textos jurídicos escritos en lengua inglesa.

El presente estudio se centra en una variedad profesional de la lengua inglesa muy peculiar y fecunda, el inglés jurídico. En particular, el objetivo fundamental de este trabajo es comparar, mediante un análisis de contrastes, varios términos del Derecho penal inglés y español identificando

falsos amigos y señalando pérdidas y ganancias en las equivalencias de dichos términos. Se ha elegido el Derecho penal por su universalidad y por su presencia en la vida diaria. Nuestro interés por el componente léxico se debe a que, como se describirá en el apartado 1.2, el vocabulario de esta variedad del inglés es uno de sus rasgos más peculiares.

1.1. EL INGLÉS JURÍDICO COMO LENGUAJE PROFESIONAL

El inglés jurídico es un lenguaje profesional cuya singularidad ha propiciado en las últimas décadas un gran interés en disciplinas como la lingüística, la traducción, la filosofía, la sociolingüística, la etnografía, el análisis del discurso, la semiótica, etc. Dicho interés se debe fundamentalmente a razones culturales, políticas y lingüísticas. Las primeras vienen determinadas por la naturaleza propia del sistema jurídico inglés que se asienta principalmente en el *common law* (derecho común) con instituciones jurídicas inglesas de gran originalidad como el jurado. Por lo que respecta a las razones lingüísticas, conviene mencionar principalmente dos de ellas. En primer lugar, el hecho de que el lenguaje (tanto en su vertiente hablada como en la escrita) es el soporte del fenómeno jurídico. Como prueba de ello, en todas las sociedades, el derecho es formulado, interpretado y aplicado, y la mayor parte de todos estos procesos se realiza a través del lenguaje. De acuerdo con esta idea, el jurista norteamericano David Mellinkoff (1963) describía el derecho como *a profession of words*. En la misma línea, el filólogo Frederick Philbrick (1946) analiza el poderoso uso del lenguaje de los juristas destacando su poder en los tribunales (p. 6).

La segunda de las razones lingüísticas que explica el interés que despierta este lenguaje profesional radica en la extrema formalidad de su registro y en sus características morfológicas, sintácticas, léxicas y pragmáticas, las cuales suponen un reto para el lingüista. De entre todas ellas, destaca por sus acusados rasgos el léxico jurídico cuyas peculiaridades se describirán sucintamente en el siguiente apartado.

1.2. EL LÉXICO DEL INGLÉS JURÍDICO: RASGOS GENERALES

Aprender derecho implica, en parte, aprender su vocabulario específico. La terminología propiamente dicha del inglés jurídico está formada por

los términos técnicos de la disciplina (llamados en inglés *terms of art*) como *trial*, *litigation*, c*onvict*, *verdict*, etc. Ahora bien, el léxico del inglés jurídico no está formado sólo por términos unívocos. A estos efectos, Alcaraz (1994; 2001) distingue tres bloques en el vocabulario jurídico: el primero engloba los términos estrictamente jurídicos (*trial*, *remand*, *committal*); el segundo bloque corresponde a aquellos términos que pertenecen al lenguaje cotidiano y adquieren un significado especializado al ser utilizados en el contexto jurídico (*information* significa "denuncia" en la expresión *lay an information*, o el verbo *bring* cuyo significado es interponer [una demanda] *en bring an action o bring a charge*); y finalmente, el tercero de los bloques incluye los términos jurídicos que han pasado al lenguaje cotidiano (*verdict, auction, proceedings*).

Otros aspectos peculiares de este vocabulario son, por ejemplo, su arcaísmo marcado por expresiones y términos latinos (*bona fide*, *writ of fieri facias*, *prima facie*), términos franceses (*feme sole*, *lien*, *puisné judge*) y términos del inglés antiguo (*right, murder, manslaughter, swear*).

Asimismo, merecen mención sus destacadas polisemias como las halladas en *case* (sumario, caso, argumentos jurídicos de la defensa) o *action* (intervención, acción de protesta, actuación judicial, acción legal) (Alcaraz, 1994; Tiersma, 1999).

1.3. EL ANÁLISIS CONTRASTIVO INGLÉS-ESPAÑOL DEL LÉXICO JURÍDICO: PÉRDIDAS Y GANANCIAS DE SIGNIFICADO Y FALSOS AMIGOS

El contraste cultural existente entre el sistema jurídico inglés y el español representa una de las causas más frecuentes por las que se encuentran problemas de equivalencia entre ambos lenguajes jurídicos. El primero es un derecho centralizado y común (*common*) a todo el país, y está basado en decisiones judiciales (*case law*) con carácter vinculante. Por el contrario, el sistema jurídico español está basado en el derecho continental donde los precedentes pueden tener gran influencia persuasiva, pero no vinculan siendo la ley escrita la fuente principal del derecho.

El léxico jurídico-penal del inglés, cuya idiosincrasia responde a las estructuras conceptuales del *common law*, posee una densidad semántica y una tradición interpretativa propias, a menudo intransferibles de

forma directa al sistema jurídico de base romanista que rige en los países hispanohablantes. Esto origina problemas de equivalencia surgidos como consecuencia de la existencia de lagunas léxicas con las consiguientes pérdidas y ganancias de significado que se producen.

En este sentido, el enfoque metodológico del análisis contrastivo puede arrojar luz sobre aquellas parcelas del léxico jurídico que presentan problemas para lingüistas y traductores. Siguiendo este enfoque, conviene destacar trabajos como el de Expósito (2023) que analiza las interferencias lingüísticas y los errores léxico-semánticos en la traducción del francés al español, o el de Pêsková (2015) que centra su interés en analizar conceptos jurídicos checos y españoles con el fin de demostrar y recalcar que la traducción de los textos de contenido jurídico entre dos lenguas tipológicamente -y culturalmente- conlleva riesgos s no se conocen adecuadamente el alcance del significado de los términos. Del mismo modo, Ferrán (2004) advierte sobre el peligro que conlleva el literalismo en la traducción de documentos jurídicos.

De lo anterior se deduce que las pérdidas y ganancias de significado constituyen uno de los fenómenos más reveladores de todo estudio contrastivo o de cualquier actividad relacionada con la traducción, dado que es imposible que exista una correspondencia completa entre dos lenguas. En el caso que nos ocupa, el análisis contrastivo inglés-español muestra ciertos términos como *sentence*, *magistrate* o *judge* que pueden inducir al error en procesos de traducción, redacción o interpretación jurídica, si no se aborda su aprendizaje desde una perspectiva rigurosamente contrastiva.

Otro ejemplo de pérdida y ganancia de significado, como veremos en el apartado 4.4, se encuentra en la distinción terminológica existente en inglés entre *barrister* (abogado de la acusación y la defensa que ejerce en los tribunales superiores) y *solicitor* (abogado que ejerce en los tribunales inferiores y es el encargado de preparar el expediente de la causa que servirá para la defensa que hará el *barrister*). Como se puede apreciar, dicho contraste se pierde en el término equivalente español de carácter más genérico «abogado».

En el terreno del análisis de contrastes, conviene también destacar otro rasgo del léxico jurídico: los falsos amigos. El término «falso amigo» o también llamado «término cognado» normalmente se aplica a aquellas palabras o expresiones que existen en dos lenguas con una evidente similitud formal, pero con significados diferentes. Alcaraz Varó, Hughes y Gómez (2014) los definen como «aquellas palabras pertenecientes a distintas lenguas que, aunque procedan de la misma fuente, han conservado o han adquirido diferentes significados, de manera que no se traducen adecuadamente entre sí» (p. 86). La problemática de los falsos amigos merece especial consideración en el ámbito de la traducción de términos jurídicos, ya que es necesario mantener la precisión terminológica para plasmar la rigurosidad de los conceptos.

Entre los términos cognados más comunes del léxico jurídico, podemos destacar *jurisprudence* que significa «filosofía del derecho» y no «jurisprudencia»; *legal*, que no significa «legal» sino «jurídico»; o *magistrate*, cuyo significado equivale a «juez de paz» (Alcaraz Varó, 1994: 90) (Cruz, 2001a) (Cruz, 2001b).

En la misma línea, Junceda (2018) y Jowers (2021) recopilan una lista extensa de falsos amigos en la traducción jurídica, destacando cómo ciertos términos pueden inducir a error si se traducen literalmente sin considerar el contexto legal específico. Por otro lado, Recio y Torijano (2017) destacan dificultades inherentes a los falsos amigos en el ámbito de la traducción. En el ámbito digital, también se han realizado importantes contribuciones relacionadas con el léxico jurídico. Una de ellas es el diccionario en línea de falsos amigos de Becerra (*online*), o también la plataforma *Boethius Translations* que identifica falsos amigos en el inglés jurídico.

2. OBJETIVOS

El análisis contrastivo llevado a cabo en este trabajo pretende cumplir los siguientes objetivos:

- Poner de manifiesto la importancia del referente histórico y cultural de estos lenguajes profesionales.

– Mostrar las pérdidas y ganancias de significado tras contrastar el léxico penal inglés y español en áreas determinadas como la denominación de los jueces, la clasificación de los delitos, o la abogacía.

– Identificar los términos «falsos amigos» más representativos del léxico jurídico penal inglés.

– Diseñar una secuencia de actividades para estudiantes de nivel B2, con un enfoque activo y comunicativo. Las herramientas digitales complementan este trabajo, permitiendo al estudiante interactuar con datos reales, recibir feedback y desarrollar autonomía terminológica.

3. METODOLOGÍA

La base empírica de nuestro estudio parte de un corpus formado por términos jurídico-penales ingleses pertenecientes a áreas jurídicas como la judicatura, la abogacía, el delito y el proceso penal. El enfoque metodológico adoptado consiste en el análisis cualitativo de los términos del corpus. Dicho análisis identifica, por un lado, las posibles pérdidas y ganancias de significado que surgen del contraste de los términos, y por otro, señala los falsos amigos más representativos del léxico jurídico recopilado. Los resultados que arroja el mencionado análisis nos han guiado para elaborar una propuesta didáctica destinada al nivel B2 del MCER y fundamentada en la reflexión metalingüística, el análisis terminológico y la práctica contextualizada. El objetivo no se limita al reconocimiento superficial de falsos amigos y a la identificación de las pérdidas y ganancias de significado, sino que aspira a fomentar una competencia léxica crítica que habilite al estudiante —especialmente aquel con perfil profesional o académico en el campo jurídico— para discernir matices, prever ambigüedades y operar con precisión en entornos multilingües. Entre las actividades propuestas destacan los ejercicios de traducción inversa, los estudios de caso con ambigüedades léxicas simuladas, las dramatizaciones de juicios orales y el uso de tecnologías lingüísticas avanzadas, como asistentes impulsados por

inteligencia artificial y glosarios bilingües dinámicos, capaces de ofrecer retroalimentación inmediata sobre errores terminológicos.

En última instancia, esta intervención didáctica persigue integrar tres dimensiones habitualmente compartimentadas: la lingüística, la jurídica y la tecnológica. Solo desde una articulación coherente de estos tres ejes resulta posible avanzar hacia una formación verdaderamente eficaz en lenguas para fines específicos. Se trata, en suma, de dotar al futuro jurista de herramientas no solo lingüísticas, sino también epistemológicas, para enfrentar con solvencia los desafíos de un mundo jurídico crecientemente globalizado, multilingüe y tecnológicamente mediado.

4. RESULTADOS Y DISCUSIÓN

Los términos jurídico-penales seleccionados cubren parcelas centrales del derecho penal en ambas lenguas, inglés y español. Nos referimos a *offence*, *judge*, *courts of law*, *lawyer* y *accused* y sus correspondientes equivalentes en español. Para realizar el estudio contrastivo de dichos términos se han consultado varios diccionarios especializados y monografías sobre el sistema jurídico inglés y español, cuyas referencias se encuentran relacionadas en el apartado final de la bibliografía.

4.1. *OFFENCE* Y DELITO

Si observamos los términos *offence* y «delito», se puede apreciar que tiene lugar un hecho paradójico: en español existen dos términos claramente diferenciados para establecer dos tipos de infracciones penales, con diferencias importantes en su gravedad y las consecuencias legales que acarrea su comisión: nos referimos a delito y falta. Los «delitos» son conductas más graves, normalmente castigadas con penas más severas, mientras que las «faltas» son infracciones de menor importancia, con sanciones más leves. En inglés, la distinción terminológica se logra con la modificación del término genérico *offence*. Así aparece en las distintas categorías de delitos como *summary offence* (delito menor), *indictable offence* (delito grave), o *triable either way offence (*delito intermedio), entre otros.

Sin embargo, y aun utilizando un término tan genérico como *offence*, se aprecian más ganancias de significado con la opción inglesa. Si tomamos como ejemplo la expresión *summary offence*, se puede observar que su significado denota los siguientes aspectos:

- (1) El enjuiciamiento del delito se hará por el procedimiento abreviado que en inglés es llamado *summary*.
- (2) El procedimiento abreviado supone que el delito es de naturaleza no muy grave.
- (3) El delito no grave enjuiciado por procedimiento abreviado es además un non *arrestable offence*, es decir, un delito cuya perpetración no permite una detención sin autorización judicial.

Después de todo lo dicho, se puede concluir que los equivalentes ingleses a «delito» y «falta» suponen una considerable ganancia del significado dada la acusada profusión de términos que, a estos efectos, existe en inglés.

Asimismo, el término jurídico-penal *offence* supone un falso amigo para el español, ya que su significado es delito y no ofensa. De la misma manera, *crime*, sinónimo de *offence* también supone ser un falso amigo pues no se refiere a "crimen", sino a "delito".

4.2. *JUDGE* Y JUEZ

La variedad terminológica que distingue las categorías de los jueces es más destacada en inglés que en español, debido a que la carrera judicial inglesa está más estratificada que la española. Este hecho se refleja en el lenguaje, por lo que, al tratar de buscar equivalencias entre ambas lenguas, aparecerán pérdidas y ganancias de significado. Si tomamos como referencia el término inglés *judge* de las expresiones *High Court Judge* y *Circuit Judge* podría equivaler a «magistrado» y «juez» respectivamente, dado que la estructura judicial española distingue entre esas categorías en función del órgano jurisdiccional en el que se actúa. Por otro lado, también existe en inglés el término *Justice*, que se aplica para designar dos categorías: la de los jueces que actúan en el Tribunal

Supremo (*Supreme Court Justice)* y la de los jueces del tribunal de apelación (*Lord Justice of Appeal*).

Finalmente, el término inglés *magistrate* no encuentra equivalente preciso en el léxico español jurídico, aunque su significado es similar a «juez de paz». Sin embargo, el *magistrate* inglés no es un juez de carrera, condición indispensable en la carrera judicial española, por lo que se comporta como un falso amigo.

4.3. *THE COURTS OF LAW* Y LOS TRIBUNALES DE JUSTICIA

Las pérdidas y ganancias de significado entre los términos *courts of law* y «tribunales de justicia» se centran en torno a la palabra *court* y sus posibles equivalentes «juzgado», «audiencia» y «tribunal».

En inglés se utiliza *court* para referirse tanto a los juzgados como a las audiencias o los tribunales. Según esto, por ejemplo, en el sistema jurídico inglés, el *Magistrates' Court* es el tribunal de primera instancia, por lo que podría ser equivalente al término español «juzgado de instrucción».

Igualmente, los tribunales superiores de justicia en Inglaterra son denominados con el término *court,* como así aparece en las expresiones *Crown Court*, *High Court* y *Court of Appeal*. En español, sin embargo, la distinción terminológica se logra por medio de distintas lexías como «juzgado», «audiencia» y «tribunal».

Después de todo lo dicho, se puede llegar a la conclusión de que en inglés se prefiere la modificación de términos genéricos, como *court*, mientras que, en español, es más usual encontrar términos de significado más preciso y específico que no requieren modificación alguna. Además de los matices de equivalencia apuntados antes, el término genérico *court* es falso amigo, ya que el español jurídico no incluye la denominación «corte judicial», sino «tribunales de justicia» u «órganos jurisdiccionales».

4.4. *LEGAL PROFESSION* Y LA ABOGACÍA

Si contrastamos los términos que se agrupan bajo la denominación de *legal profession* y los que se refieren a la abogacía en español, se

aprecia una mayor profusión terminológica en inglés. Por ejemplo, en Inglaterra se da la peculiaridad de que existen dos categorías entre los abogados: se distingue entre *barrister* (abogado que actúa ante los tribunales) y *solicitor* (abogado, procurador que prepara el expediente para la defensa que hará el *barrister*). Cada uno de estos abogados pertenece a distintos colegios profesionales, *The Bar* y *The Council*, respectivamente. Se aprecia, en este caso, una pérdida de significado en la parte española, ya que el término «abogado» es el equivalente a la pareja inglesa dado que en la abogacía española no se distingue jerarquía alguna. No obstante, es conveniente recordar que esta distinción no se da fuera de Gran Bretaña. En el resto de los países de lengua inglesa se utilizan términos genéricos como *lawyer* o *counsel* cuyo equivalente en español es «abogado».

El término español «abogado», asistido por la modificación de otros sustantivos o grupos preposicionales, se utiliza para hacer referencia a gran parte de las funciones o situaciones que pueden darse en el mundo de la abogacía: «abogado defensor», «abogado de la acusación», etc.

4.5. *THE DEFENDANT* Y EL ACUSADO EN EL PROCESO PENAL

La denominación de la figura del acusado varía en español según la fase del proceso en la que nos hallemos. En inglés, aunque también existen términos específicos para cada una de esas fases, se da la circunstancia de que se prefiere utilizar con más frecuencia términos genéricos como *accused* o *defendant* para todas ellas.

Para el análisis de las pérdidas y ganancias de significado, tomaremos como referencia los términos españoles y a partir de ellos propondremos sus posibles equivalentes en inglés, encuadrándolos en las distintas fases del proceso que son la instrucción, el juicio oral y la fase de ejecución de la sentencia.

Antes de que se inicie formalmente el proceso penal, en la investigación policial, la parte acusada es llamada «sospechoso/a» que se define como «el individuo que por su mala conducta causa sospecha». En inglés, el sospechoso es llamado *suspect*. Al igual que ocurre en español, no se trata de un término estrictamente jurídico, sino que pertenece al lenguaje

cotidiano. Sus significados se pueden considerar equivalentes, no observándose ninguna pérdida o ganancia de significado entre ambos.

En la fase de instrucción, la palabra que se prefiere en español para denominar al sujeto pasivo es «imputado». El término «imputado» posee un significado más preciso, pues implica que existe una acusación formal contra el acusado y, por lo tanto, el proceso ya está iniciado. No hallamos un sustantivo equivalente en el proceso penal inglés, donde es más común utilizar el verbo *charge* (imputar) en construcciones pasivas con sustantivos genéricos como *accused* o *defendant*. Así lo encontraríamos en expresiones como *the accused has been charged with two offences* (al acusado le han sido imputados dos delitos).

Al final de la fase de instrucción, si así procede, se dicta el auto de procesamiento, tras el cual el imputado pasa a ser denominado «procesado». En este caso, en inglés ocurre un fenómeno similar al que antes comentábamos. No se encuentra o, al menos, no es frecuente su uso, un sustantivo equivalente a «procesado», sino que se suele utilizar la forma pasiva del verbo *indict* (procesar) de tal forma que se diría *the accused has been indicted.*

Para el término «acusado», encontramos varios equivalentes en inglés. En primer lugar, los términos *accused* o *defendant*. Si contrastamos el término español y sus equivalentes ingleses, observamos que con la versión española se obtienen ganancias de significado ya que ésta es más específica porque los juristas emplean «acusado» para referirse al sujeto pasivo en la fase de juicio oral, mientras que los términos ingleses *accused* o *defendant*, al ser genéricos, pueden utilizarse para cualquier fase del proceso. Otro posible equivalente sería *prisoner at the bar* que se utiliza exclusivamente durante el transcurso del juicio oral, cuando la defensa, la acusación o el juez se dirigen al acusado.

Una vez culminado el juicio oral, comienza la fase de ejecución de la sentencia y si el acusado es declarado culpable del delito que se le imputa, éste puede ser llamado en español «reo», «condenado», «penado» o «convicto». Todos estos términos encuentran su equivalente inglés en la palabra *convict* que se aplica al acusado una vez que se ha dictado sentencia condenatoria.

Después de todo lo dicho, se puede concluir que en español es más frecuente el uso de términos con significado preciso y específico, en lugar de otros más genéricos como «encartado», «encausado» o «inculpado». Por el contrario, entre los juristas ingleses es más común utilizar palabras como accused o defendant para designar a la parte acusada en cualquiera de las fases del procedimiento penal, matizando, cuando es preciso, sus significados con verbos más específicos como charge o indict.

4.6. PROPUESTA DIDÁCTICA DE LA TERMINOLOGÍA JURÍDICO PENAL INGLÉS-ESPAÑOL EN EL AULA DE LENGUAS PROFESIONALES

Tras el análisis realizado en los anteriores apartados, proponemos desde una doble vertiente, lingüística y didáctica, una secuencia de actividades para estudiantes de nivel B2, con un enfoque activo y comunicativo. Las herramientas digitales complementan este trabajo, permitiendo al estudiante interactuar con datos reales, recibir feedback y desarrollar autonomía terminológica.

Actividad 1: Traducción inversa

En esta actividad, el alumno traduce una frase del español al inglés, y luego debe comprobar si la versión inglesa conserva el significado original. Lo interesante aquí es el «auto-descubrimiento del error» y la detección de la interferencia, pues se enfrentan directamente con los límites de la traducción literal. Este ejercicio no solo mejora la competencia traductológica, sino que refuerza la conciencia de los matices semánticos en el lenguaje jurídico penal. Por ejemplo, la oración «Fue condenado a cinco años de prisión» se presenta con dos posibles traducciones al inglés;

> He was sentenced to five years of sentence (traducción incorrecta).
>
> He was sentenced to five years of imprisonment (traducción correcta).

Actividad 2: Simulación de juicio oral

Este ejercicio se basa en la dramatización de un juicio, con asignación de roles: juez, fiscal, defensa, testigos, etc. y pretende desarrollar el uso contextual del léxico penal. Cada participante debe emplear con

corrección el léxico jurídico correspondiente a su función. Se simulan errores léxicos y se reflexiona sobre sus consecuencias. Así, el estudiante no solo practica vocabulario, sino que también desarrolla habilidades discursivas, toma conciencia de la precisión terminológica y aprende a manejar la presión comunicativa.

Actividad 3: Estudio de caso con ambigüedades léxicas

Esta actividad presenta un caso real o ficticio en el que se han incluido a propósito errores terminológicos derivados de falsos amigos. El alumno debe identificar, analizar y corregir dichas ambigüedades.

Actividad 4: Glosario bilingüe personalizado con IA

La actividad integra la tecnología, ya que el alumno crea un glosario personal de términos problemáticos, usando una herramienta de IA que proporciona ejemplos reales, traducciones contrastivas y correcciones automáticas. Esto favorece un aprendizaje individualizado, contextualizado y dinámico gracias al uso de asistentes lingüísticos con retroalimentación en tiempo real. Entre las herramientas que se pueden emplear podemos destacar Nation AI o ChatGPT, entre otras.

6. CONCLUSIONES

Tras el estudio realizado, el análisis contrastivo ha mostrado las pérdidas y ganancias de significado al poner en contacto el léxico penal inglés y español. En este sentido, los datos obtenidos destacan la profusión terminológica del inglés en áreas determinadas como la denominación de los jueces, la clasificación de los delitos, o la abogacía.

Del mismo modo, ha quedado de manifiesto la importancia del referente histórico y cultural de estos lenguajes profesionales. El sistema jurídico, marco indiscutible de su lenguaje, determina, en gran medida, su naturaleza. En este sentido, y desde una perspectiva global cuyas limitaciones asumimos, podríamos concluir que el léxico jurídico-penal inglés tiende a ser más preciso que el español. El carácter vinculante del derecho común obliga a que este lenguaje trate de reflejar tal precisión.

Sin embargo, la naturaleza de un derecho continental como el nuestro, que otorga la autoridad al texto articulado, impone la necesidad de conferir cierta flexibilidad al lenguaje que se utiliza en la redacción de esos textos. Esa flexibilidad se logra, entre otros recursos, por medio del léxico.

Asimismo, creemos que el trabajo también ha puesto de relieve la singularidad del lenguaje profesional jurídico, singularidad que viene dada por razones culturales e históricas y, sobre todo, por sus peculiaridades lingüísticas. Por lo tanto, una de las diferencias más notables del lenguaje jurídico con respecto a otros lenguajes profesionales radica en su carácter conservador y en su carencia de universalidad en contraste con otros lenguajes especiales como el científico o el informático. En general, los lenguajes de especialidad son muy innovadores y poseen un acusado dinamismo debido a los continuos y rápidos avances tecnológicos. Sin embargo, las exigencias de precisión y fiabilidad propias del lenguaje jurídico le obligan a que su evolución no sea tan rápida.

También, esperamos que los resultados obtenidos en el presente estudio contribuyan, en alguna medida, a profundizar en el conocimiento del fenómeno de las pérdidas y ganancias de significado del léxico de dos lenguajes profesionales como el español y el inglés jurídico.

Para concluir, desde la perspectiva didáctica, queremos destacar que este enfoque contrastivo no solo puede contribuir a una mejor comprensión del léxico jurídico-penal, sino que también prepara al estudiante para enfrentar los retos del discurso profesional multilingüe. La precisión terminológica no es un lujo en el ámbito jurídico; es una necesidad. Esta propuesta didáctica aspira a integrar la dimensión lingüística, jurídica y tecnológica, formando así profesionales más competentes, críticos y adaptados a un entorno jurídico cada vez más globalizado.

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SECCION VI

MISCELLANEOUS APPROACHES TO ANGLISTICS IN THE ANGLOPHONE SPHERE

CRUZANDO FRONTERAS: EL INTERCAMBIO VIRTUAL COMO HERRAMIENTA PEDAGÓGICA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En el siglo XXI, la educación superior enfrenta una transformación profunda impulsada por la globalización, la digitalización y la necesidad de formar ciudadanos capaces de desenvolverse en un mundo interconectado. La movilidad internacional de estudiantes y docentes, que durante décadas fue considerada la vía principal para adquirir competencias interculturales, ha encontrado en la tecnología un complemento que amplía el acceso a experiencias globales. En este panorama, los Intercambios Virtuales (IV) se han consolidado como una práctica educativa innovadora que permite conectar a estudiantes de diferentes contextos culturales y lingüísticos mediante herramientas y entornos digitales de colaboración.

El IV no solo responde a los cambios tecnológicos, sino también a las exigencias pedagógicas de una educación más inclusiva, participativa y orientada a la acción. En la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, esta metodología lleva tiempo ofreciendo oportunidades para la práctica comunicativa en contextos reales y para el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa intercultural, entendida según Byram (1997) como la capacidad de interactuar de manera efectiva y apropiada con personas de diferentes orígenes lingüísticos y culturales. Según su modelo, esta competencia no se limita al dominio lingüístico, sino que integra un conjunto

de actitudes, conocimientos y una conciencia cultural crítica que permiten comprender, interpretar y relacionarse con la diversidad cultural.

Por otra parte, el aprendizaje de una lengua ya no puede concebirse únicamente como la adquisición de estructuras gramaticales y vocabulario. Aprender una lengua va más allá e implica aprender a relacionarse, a interpretar matices culturales, a negociar significados y a colaborar con personas de diferentes contextos culturales. El IV brinda a los estudiantes un espacio de interacción en línea donde pueden practicar su comunicación oral y escrita en una lengua extranjera desde el confort de su habitación y al mismo tiempo, desarrollar sus competencias lingüísticas, digitales e interculturales.

Este capítulo tiene como propósito ofrecer una visión panorámica del IV como herramienta pedagógica, con especial atención a su aplicación en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera y en el contexto del inglés como lengua franca. Tomando como ejemplo ilustrativo un estudio concreto, el objetivo es acercar el concepto de IV a docentes e investigadores que deseen comprender sus fundamentos y potencialidades.

1.1. El inglés como lengua franca y el nuevo paradigma educativo

El inglés se ha consolidado como la lengua franca global de la comunicación internacional. Más de mil millones de personas lo utilizan diariamente para trabajar, estudiar o relacionarse, y la mayoría de ellas no son hablantes nativos. Este fenómeno, ampliamente documentado por autores como Jenkins (2007) y Seidlhofer (2011), ha cambiado radicalmente la concepción del inglés y su enseñanza en nuestra sociedad.

En los contextos donde el inglés se utiliza como lengua franca, la lengua se usa principalmente para facilitar la comunicación entre hablantes de orígenes lingüísticos diversos. Por tanto, el objetivo no es reproducir el modelo nativo de un país concreto (como el inglés británico o estadounidense), sino alcanzar una inteligibilidad compartida que permita la comprensión mutua. En este sentido, la competencia comunicativa se amplía para incluir la flexibilidad, la tolerancia al error y la capacidad de adaptación. Así, la efectividad comunicativa en estos contextos depende menos de seguir modelos nativos y más de la habilidad de los

hablantes para construir entendimiento común en situaciones interculturales dinámicas y diversas (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011).

Este cambio de paradigma ha tenido un impacto notable en la enseñanza. Durante mucho tiempo, las aulas de inglés se centraron en la corrección gramatical, la pronunciación perfecta y la imitación de modelos nativos. Sin embargo, el contexto actual de globalización demanda el desarrollo de estrategias comunicativas interculturales que permitan a los estudiantes interactuar con hablantes de múltiples variedades del inglés de forma efectiva. De esta manera, enseñar inglés hoy implica enseñar a gestionar la diversidad lingüística y cultural, y no a suprimirla u obviarla, puesto que es parte de la reciente globalización de nuestra sociedad. Esto supone un reto para el profesorado, acostumbrado a trabajar con libros de texto y materiales educativos basados en contextos anglófonos homogéneos, pero también una oportunidad para re-conceptualizar el aula como un espacio global. El inglés se convierte, entonces, en un medio para la colaboración y no en un símbolo de dominio lingüístico.

El IV surge como una respuesta pedagógica idónea a este nuevo escenario. Al conectar a estudiantes de diferentes países mediante el inglés como lengua de comunicación común, se genera un contexto de uso lingüístico auténtico que refleja las condiciones reales de la comunicación internacional. En estos intercambios, los participantes practican la lengua, pero también aprenden a gestionar malentendidos, a negociar significados y a reconocer la pluralidad de acentos y estilos comunicativos que caracterizan al inglés global.

1.2. Origen y fundamentos de los intercambios virtuales

El concepto de Intercambio Virtual (IV) —también conocido como *telecolaboración* u *online intercultural exchange*— tiene una historia de más de tres décadas. Las primeras experiencias surgieron en los años noventa, cuando la expansión de Internet permitió a docentes conectar aulas de distintos países mediante correo electrónico o foros en línea. Uno de los proyectos más emblemáticos fue el Cultura Project (Furstenberg et al., 2001), que unía a estudiantes de Estados Unidos y Francia para comparar percepciones culturales y reflexionar sobre las

diferencias entre sus sociedades. Con el avance de las TIC y las nuevas tecnologías, el IV ha evolucionado hacia plataformas más interactivas, herramientas de videoconferencia y entornos digitales colaborativos que facilitan la comunicación sincrónica y asincrónica, promoviendo metodologías innovadoras de aprendizaje intercultural y colaborativo.

O'Dowd (2018) lo define como un término general que engloba diversas iniciativas de aprendizaje en línea y enfoques pedagógicos que reúnen a estudiantes de distintos lugares geográficos en experiencias de aprendizaje colaborativo en línea, como parte de su formación académica y bajo la orientación de facilitadores o docentes. La clave no es solo la tecnología, sino el diseño pedagógico: las actividades deben tener objetivos de aprendizaje claros, tareas que permitan a los estudiantes colaborar con un objetivo común y espacios de reflexión crítica. En cuanto a su implementación, el IV puede integrarse de manera flexible en distintos contextos educativos y perfiles de estudiantes, adoptando formatos diversos que se combinan entre sí. El informe del proyecto FRAMES (Pittarello et al., 2020) identifica cuatro escenarios principales: como actividad independiente, parte de un curso, componente de movilidad combinada o actividad preparatoria o de seguimiento.

Últimamente, el IV se ha convertido en un enfoque pedagógico ampliamente reconocido en la educación superior. Esto se debe en parte a los efectos de la reciente pandemia (Marinoni et al., 2020), que tuvo un gran impacto en los programas de movilidad internacional y en el aprendizaje en línea (O'Dowd, 2022). Como resultado de este rápido crecimiento, el IV ha experimentado un notable aumento del apoyo institucional, así como una mayor complejidad y diversidad en su implementación, especialmente en el ámbito de la educación superior (O'Dowd & Dooly, 2020). Hoy, el IV ofrece a las instituciones de educación superior la posibilidad de democratizar la experiencia internacional, al brindar a todos los estudiantes —independientemente de sus recursos económicos o ubicación geográfica— la oportunidad de participar en un diálogo intercultural auténtico que promueve la inclusión y el entendimiento global.

Esta práctica se suele apoyar en varios marcos teóricos complementarios que guían su enfoque pedagógico. Desde el constructivismo social

(Vygotsky, 1978), se entiende que el conocimiento se construye a través de la interacción y la co-construcción de significado. El aprendizaje colaborativo (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) enfatiza el trabajo conjunto hacia metas comunes, promoviendo la responsabilidad compartida y habilidades comunicativas. A su vez, el aprendizaje experiencial (Kolb, 1984) destaca la importancia de la experiencia directa, la reflexión y la aplicación práctica, presentes en la comunicación intercultural auténtica que ofrece el VE. Finalmente, el aprendizaje intercultural (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006) orienta el proceso hacia el desarrollo de actitudes de sensibilidad, apertura, curiosidad y respeto hacia otras culturas. En síntesis, el IV combina tecnología, pedagogía y humanismo.

El IV promueve un conjunto de competencias integrales que trascienden lo puramente lingüístico y responden a las demandas de la educación del siglo XXI (Helm & Van der Velden, 2020). Diversos proyectos de investigación han demostrado que el IV puede contribuir al desarrollo del conocimiento cultural sobre los países participantes y sobre cuestiones de índole social (Stevens Initiative, 2019, 2022; EVOLVE Project Team, 2020), así como a una mayor conciencia sobre la diversidad cultural (The EVALUATE Group, 2019; EVOLVE Project Team, 2020), el fortalecimiento de la sensibilidad intercultural (European Commission et al., 2020) o el desarrollo de habilidades de investigación e interacción intercultural (O'Dowd, 2007). También favorece el desarrollo de las competencias necesarias para desenvolverse en entornos multimodales y globales, al involucrar a grupos de estudiantes en múltiples contextos comunicativos y entornos multimodales (Guth y Helm, 2010). Además, el IV desarrolla la competencia digital y colaborativa, al requerir habilidades en plataformas en línea, videoconferencias y recursos multimedia, promoviendo la autonomía y la responsabilidad compartida (EVOLVE Project Team, 2020). Además, el IV estimula la reflexión crítica sobre la identidad lingüística y las dinámicas de poder en la comunicación global (Ware & Kramsch, 2005), y fortalece habilidades transversales como la autonomía, la adaptabilidad y la resolución de problemas (The EVALUATE Group, 2019). En conjunto, estas competencias convierten el IV en una práctica formativa integral y transformadora.

1.3. El Intercambio Virtual en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras

La enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras ha perseguido frecuentemente la autenticidad comunicativa como uno de sus principales objetivos. Desde la introducción del enfoque comunicativo en los años setenta (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980) hasta el desarrollo del aprendizaje basado en tareas (Ellis, 2003), las metodologías de enseñanza de lenguas han evolucionado con el propósito de reproducir en el aula situaciones reales de comunicación y acercar el aprendizaje al uso real del idioma. En esta línea, el IV representa un paso más hacia la comunicación real y significativa, ya que permite a los estudiantes interactuar con hablantes reales de otros países, empleando una lengua extranjera con un objetivo comunicativo y en situaciones interculturales reales (O'Dowd, 2018; Helm, 2020).

En la práctica, los proyectos de IV en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras adoptan múltiples formatos que favorecen la interacción intercultural y el aprendizaje significativo. Entre ellos destacan los intercambios de escritura colaborativa, en los que los estudiantes crean conjuntamente blogs, ensayos o productos digitales, negociando el contenido y revisando los textos de manera cooperativa. También son comunes las conversaciones sincrónicas o asincrónicas, que se desarrollan a través de videollamadas, foros o plataformas de mensajería, donde los participantes debaten temas culturales, académicos o de actualidad, fomentando la fluidez y la competencia intercultural. Los proyectos basados en tareas implican resolver problemas reales, diseñar productos o elaborar propuestas conjuntas, lo que requiere el uso funcional del idioma y habilidades de trabajo en equipo. Finalmente, los tándems lingüísticos permiten que los estudiantes se apoyen mutuamente en la práctica de sus lenguas meta, fortaleciendo la autonomía, la reciprocidad y la conciencia intercultural. En conjunto, estos formatos promueven un aprendizaje activo, comunicativo y colaborativo, adaptado a las necesidades del contexto global y digital actual.

Por otra parte, el componente reflexivo es esencial. Los estudiantes no solo deben participar en sus interacciones interculturales, sino reflexionar críticamente sobre ellas. Dedicar tiempo a la reflexión guiada sobre las

experiencias interculturales puede contribuir a involucrar a los estudiantes a un nivel más profundo y a desarrollar una postura intercultural crítica (Helm, 2015). Esta metacognición permite transformar la experiencia comunicativa en aprendizaje intercultural. Por ello, los facilitadores de estas experiencias suelen incorporar diarios reflexivos, portafolios o debates, donde los participantes analizan las diferencias culturales percibidas, las estrategias comunicativas empleadas y los aprendizajes obtenidos.

Los beneficios del IV en la enseñanza de lenguas están ampliamente documentados. En los últimos años se han publicado numerosos informes y estudios que analizan los beneficios del uso del IV y presentan datos cualitativos y cuantitativos sobre los resultados de aprendizaje que pueden derivarse de este enfoque pedagógico. Estas investigaciones revelan el potencial del IV como herramienta para el desarrollo de la competencia lingüística (O'Dowd, 2022; EVOLVE Project Team, 2020; Helm & Van der Velden, 2020) y comunicativa (Kurek, 2015), el aprendizaje intercultural (Stevens Initiative, 2022; EVOLVE Project Team, 2020) y, además, las competencias transversales (The EVALUATE Group, 2019; EVOLVE Project Team, 2020; Stevens Initiative, 2022). Además, el IV puede favorecer la reducción de la ansiedad comunicativa, ya que los estudiantes interactúan desde la comodidad de su propio entorno, en un espacio de apoyo mutuo por parte de otros estudiantes y sin las presiones del aula tradicional. Este entorno en línea ofrece a los estudiantes la oportunidad de practicar una lengua extranjera con libertad y de una manera intencionada, lo que puede aliviar su ansiedad y aumentar su confianza (EVOLVE Project Team, 2020; O'Dowd, 2022).

Estos beneficios dependen en gran medida del diseño cuidadoso de las tareas, que permiten a los estudiantes enfrentar desafíos colaborativos y comunicativos y salir de su zona de confort (O'Dowd, 2022). Según O'Dowd y Lewis (2016), los intercambios virtuales no solo favorecen el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, sino que también contribuyen a adquirir competencias generales y transferibles que resultan valiosas en el entorno profesional. Entre ellas se encuentra la habilidad para interactuar de manera efectiva con personas ubicadas en diferentes lugares, utilizando tanto herramientas asíncronas, como el correo electrónico, como síncronas, con video llamadas. O'Dowd (2022) sostiene que

el valor del IV reside especialmente en su dimensión humana y en la interacción intercultural real que promueve, ofreciendo a estudiantes y docentes una exposición directa a la comunicación y colaboración del mundo real, lo que es especialmente relevante para la sociedad global y el mercado laboral de hoy en día.

1.4. El enfoque del Intercambio Virtual de Lengua Franca

Dentro de la amplia tipología del IV, el Intercambio Virtual de Lengua Franca ocupa un lugar particular. En estos proyectos, los participantes se comunican mediante una lengua compartida que no es la materna de la mayoría. En la enseñanza del inglés, esto implica que todos los estudiantes lo utilizan como herramienta para comunicarse, no como objeto de corrección. El valor pedagógico de este formato radica en que elimina las jerarquías lingüísticas. Nadie posee la autoridad del hablante nativo; todos son usuarios legítimos que contribuyen desde su repertorio plurilingüe. Este equilibrio promueve la confianza, la empatía y la comprensión de la diversidad lingüística. La investigación en este ámbito sugiere que los estudiantes tienden a sentirse menos ansiosos, así como más cercanos entre sí cuando interactúan con otros hablantes no nativos utilizando una lengua franca (Lindner, 2011; Guarda, 2013; Helm, 2015). Este enfoque parece no solo aumentar la confianza de los estudiantes en sus interacciones interculturales, sino que también fomenta un sentido de apoyo mutuo, cohesión de equipo y cercanía entre los participantes, creando una experiencia de intercambio más positiva y colaborativa. Además, en este tipo de IV se fomenta el desarrollo de estrategias comunicativas globales como parafrasear, confirmar significados, usar ejemplos o apoyos visuales, simplificar la sintaxis cuando es necesario, o recurrir al humor para aliviar tensiones durante las interacciones en línea. Estas estrategias, propias de la comunicación internacional real, rara vez se practican en las aulas tradicionales.

En este contexto, el inglés, o la lengua que se utilice como vehículo de comunicación para el intercambio, deja de ser una meta idealizada y se convierte en una herramienta para la colaboración intercultural. La prioridad no es hablar como un nativo, sino lograr entendimiento mutuo y construir conocimiento conjunto. Este enfoque, además de humanizar

el aprendizaje, prepara a los estudiantes para entornos laborales y académicos donde el inglés se usa de manera muy diversa y flexible, adaptándose a distintos registros, contextos socioculturales y modos de comunicación. Asimismo, puede fomentar competencias transversales como la colaboración intercultural, la resolución de problemas, la creatividad digital y la gestión de proyectos en entornos virtuales, habilidades cada vez más demandadas en un mundo globalizado e interconectado. De esta manera, este tipo de IV no solo fortalece la competencia lingüística, sino que también desarrolla capacidades clave para el desempeño profesional y académico en contextos internacionales.

2. OBJETIVOS

El presente capítulo tiene como objetivo general analizar y poner en valor el potencial del IV como herramienta pedagógica para el desarrollo de la competencia lingüística, intercultural y global en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, con especial atención al inglés como lengua franca. Se pretende ofrecer una visión integradora que permita a docentes e investigadores no especializados comprender qué es el IV, cuáles son sus fundamentos teóricos y cuáles son sus aportes al aprendizaje en contextos universitarios actuales.

Entre los objetivos específicos se incluyen, en primer lugar, describir el marco conceptual y pedagógico que sustenta el IV, evidenciando cómo se articula con enfoques comunicativos, colaborativos e interculturales, comunes en la enseñanza de lenguas. En segundo lugar, se busca presentar un modelo de IV basado en la lengua franca, mostrando su aplicabilidad, su potencial como herramienta de preparación para experiencias de movilidad y los beneficios formativos que los participantes suelen obtener de este tipo de experiencias.

Asimismo, se persigue reflexionar sobre los desafíos que plantea la implementación del IV en las instituciones de educación superior, incluyendo cuestiones de coordinación interinstitucional, formación docente e inclusión digital. A través de esta reflexión, se pretende ofrecer pautas prácticas y teóricas que sirvan de orientación a docentes e investigadores interesados en incorporar este tipo de experiencias en sus cursos.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio adopta un enfoque cualitativo de carácter exploratorio, orientado a explorar los contextos de IV en contextos de lengua franca y a proporcionar una visión general de esta práctica como recurso pedagógico para docentes e investigadores. El diseño metodológico se fundamenta en la observación y el análisis de experiencias reales de colaboración online e internacional entre estudiantes universitarios de distintos países, quienes participaron en actividades comunicativas en línea con fines académicos y formativos. Este tipo de aproximación permite explorar las percepciones, estrategias comunicativas y procesos de adaptación cultural que emergen de la interacción virtual, prestando especial atención a la construcción conjunta de significados y al desarrollo de la competencia intercultural.

Dado que el análisis completo de los datos aún está en desarrollo, los resultados no se presentan en este capítulo. Su descripción se reserva para una publicación posterior dedicada específicamente a los hallazgos empíricos. Aquí, el propósito es ofrecer una visión general del diseño metodológico y beneficios de los intercambios virtuales de lengua franca que sirva de referencia a docentes e investigadores interesados en explorar el potencial pedagógico de esta práctica.

4. RESULTADOS

Con el objetivo de preparar a los estudiantes para interacciones interculturales en contextos de movilidad internacional, se desarrolló un modelo de IV que utiliza el inglés como lengua franca. Este modelo tiene como objetivo preparar a los estudiantes para una experiencia de estudios en el extranjero, fortaleciendo sus competencias lingüísticas, interculturales y habilidades transversales, esenciales para una comunicación intercultural efectiva y apropiada al contexto. El modelo brinda oportunidades para el diálogo intercultural a una gran variedad de estudiantes, convirtiéndose así en una herramienta potente para promover la equidad y la inclusión, adaptándose a estudiantes con distintos niveles de idioma, necesidades educativas diversas, limitaciones económicas o provenientes de culturas generalmente subrepresentadas,

ofreciéndoles un espacio compartido para el diálogo y la comprensión intercultural (Alonso-Morais, 2025). Gracias a su sencillez y formato de lengua franca, el modelo también puede adaptarse fácilmente a diversos contextos socioculturales y académicos. Además, contribuye a maximizar los beneficios de las experiencias de movilidad internacional, fomentar la diversidad cultural y lingüística y apoyar la participación en programas de movilidad física, al promover activamente la movilidad estudiantil y el diálogo intercultural.

Durante ocho semanas, los estudiantes colaboraron en equipos internacionales. Cada semana abordaron una tarea temática: la vida universitaria, las percepciones culturales, la gestión de estereotipos o los desafíos de vivir en otro país. Estas tareas seguían el modelo del aprendizaje basado en tareas (TBL), en el que cada actividad tenía un objetivo comunicativo real, como diseñar una mini guía para estudiantes extranjeros o comparar los diferentes sistemas académicos de las universidades participantes. La interacción combinó momentos sincrónicos (videollamadas) y asincrónicos (foros y documentos colaborativos). Además, los participantes completaron portafolios reflexivos, donde analizaron sus aprendizajes y experiencias interculturales. Un equipo docente de cinco países europeos acompañó el proceso mediante mentorías y feedback semanal, lo que impactó positivamente la motivación y el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes.

Lo más destacable de este intercambio fue la transformación actitudinal. Gracias al contexto de lengua franca del IV, los participantes comenzaron a verse a sí mismos no como meros aprendices de inglés, sino como usuarios globales de una lengua compartida y capaces de interactuar con interlocutores de diversos orígenes lingüísticos y culturales. Esta reconfiguración de la identidad lingüística permitió además un enfoque más flexible y realista hacia el aprendizaje del idioma, fomentando la autonomía, la confianza en sus habilidades comunicativas y la apertura intercultural. La experiencia mostró que este tipo de intercambios no solo desarrollan competencias lingüísticas, sino que también transforman la manera en que los estudiantes se perciben como comunicadores y ciudadanos de un mundo globalizado.

5. DISCUSIÓN

A pesar de su potencial, la implementación de IV suele presentar desafíos que deben abordarse para consolidarlo como una práctica sostenible en la educación superior. Uno de los principales retos es la coordinación interinstitucional. El IV requiere colaboración entre instituciones con calendarios, estructuras y contextos muy variados, lo que hace que la búsqueda de socios compatibles y la planificación conjunta sean tareas que demandan tiempo y compromiso institucional. Se recomienda establecer redes de cooperación estables y repositorios de proyectos previos para facilitar futuras implementaciones (O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016; Helm & Van der Velden, 2020). En este contexto, la sostenibilidad y éxito del IV dependen en gran medida de su integración en el currículo formal. Cuando los estudiantes, docentes e instituciones perciben relevancia en la actividad y ésta cuenta con reconocimiento académico, el compromiso de todos puede aumentar. En este contexto, la sostenibilidad requiere la institucionalización del IV para evitar que se perciba como una actividad adicional y asegurar que se convierta en una parte estructural de los programas de educación superior, particularmente en el ámbito de la enseñanza de lenguas (O'Dowd, 2022).

Otro aspecto fundamental es la formación de los docentes involucrados en esta práctica. Los docentes necesitan competencias específicas para diseñar, implementar y evaluar un IV además de conocimientos y habilidades que les permitan guiar a los participantes en su aprendizaje intercultural y lingüístico. Estas competencias incluyen, por ejemplo, habilidades tecnológicas, sensibilidad intercultural y conocimiento de metodologías colaborativas. O'Dowd (2018) señala la importancia de crear comunidades de práctica docente donde se compartan recursos, estrategias y experiencias, fortaleciendo la capacidad institucional para implementar intercambios virtuales de calidad.

La inclusión y equidad digital constituyen otro desafío clave. Las desigualdades en el acceso a la tecnología pueden limitar la participación de algunos estudiantes. Es fundamental asegurar el acceso equitativo a herramientas digitales accesibles y promover tanto la flexibilidad horaria como la variedad de modos de comunicación síncrona y asíncrona,

de manera que todos los participantes puedan involucrarse plenamente. Estas medidas son clave para evitar la exclusión por motivos técnicos o lingüísticos y garantizar que el IV se mantenga como una práctica verdaderamente inclusiva y participativa dentro de la educación global (EVOLVE Project Team, 2020).

De cara al futuro, el IV se proyecta como una herramienta clave para la internacionalización de la educación superior. Las nuevas tecnologías —como la realidad virtual, la inteligencia artificial y la traducción automática— ampliarán sus posibilidades, pero el valor central del IV seguirá siendo humano: el diálogo, la empatía y la construcción de entendimiento entre personas de contextos diversos. La realidad virtual permite experiencias de aprendizaje inmersivas, exponiendo a los estudiantes a distintos entornos culturales y educativos, lo que resulta especialmente útil para el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras o el desarrollo de habilidades interculturales (Chun, 2022). Por su parte, la inteligencia artificial puede facilitar la colaboración en tareas con un objetivo comunicativo significativo.

Asimismo, en el futuro veremos una mayor cantidad de iniciativas de movilidad combinada (blended mobility), ya que pueden ampliar el acceso y la inclusión, ofreciendo experiencias internacionales a estudiantes que no podrían participar en programas tradicionales por motivos económicos, personales o profesionales (Sabzalieva et al., 2022). En conclusión, el IV no debe verse como un reemplazo de la movilidad física ni como un competidor de los programas tradicionales, ya que esto podría aumentar las desigualdades existentes (Schueller and Şahin, 2022). Según O'Dowd (2022), el IV puede utilizarse como complemento a la movilidad física, ampliando el abanico de experiencias internacionales que una institución ofrece y constituyendo una herramienta eficaz para el aprendizaje intercultural y lingüístico si se implementa con un diseño de tareas cuidadoso y estratégico. De este modo, contribuye a la internacionalización de la educación superior y a la mejora de la calidad educativa para todos los estudiantes.

6. CONCLUSIÓN

El IV representa una revolución en la enseñanza de lenguas y en la internacionalización de la educación. En lugar de depender de la movilidad física, ofrece la posibilidad de dialogar de manera online accesible, sostenible e inclusiva. Al conectar estudiantes de todo el mundo mediante proyectos colaborativos, el IV transforma las clases de lengua extranjera en un laboratorio de ciudadanía global. El inglés, como lengua franca, se convierte en un puente para la comunicación y no en una meta inalcanzable. Los estudiantes aprenden que hablar inglés no significa imitar a un hablante nativo, sino usar la lengua para entender y ser entendido, para construir conocimiento y relaciones. En este sentido, el IV encarna la educación del siglo XXI: global, digital, intercultural y reflexiva.

Para docentes, investigadores e instituciones, el desafío consiste en integrar el IV de forma sistemática en los programas de formación, adaptándolo a las necesidades y contextos de sus estudiantes. Esto implica repensar los objetivos del aprendizaje lingüístico, priorizando la competencia comunicativa global sobre la corrección formal. Como señala O'Dowd (2021), el intercambio virtual no surge como sustitución a la movilidad, sino que sirve como herramienta para complementarla y democratizarla. A través de modelos como el propuesto en este capítulo, se demuestra que es posible construir puentes entre culturas, desarrollar empatía y preparar a los estudiantes para un mundo en el que la colaboración intercultural es una necesidad real y no un lujo.

En definitiva, el IV no es solo una forma de innovar en la enseñanza de lenguas, sino una pedagogía del encuentro que está disponible para una gran parte de la población estudiantil. Su valor reside en la posibilidad de que, a través de la palabra y la escucha, los estudiantes aprendan a habitar el mundo desde la comprensión, la tolerancia y la cooperación. En tiempos de fragmentación, división y distancia, el IV nos recuerda que la educación —online o presencial— sigue siendo, ante todo, un acto de comunicación humana y una herramienta para comprender mejor nuestro mundo.

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TRADUCCIONES DEL CASO KILMAR ÁBREGO GARCÍA: DONALD TRUMP, NAYIB BUKELE Y LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE IDENTIDADES ETNOCULTURALES EN REDES SOCIALES

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Este capítulo estudia el tratamiento en plataformas digitales de la deportación de Kilmar Ábrego García, un inmigrante indocumentado salvadoreño detenido en EE. UU. por las autoridades encargadas de implementar la nueva política de seguridad fronteriza impulsada por la administración Trump.

La proliferación de narrativas políticas que señalan a los inmigrantes indocumentados como chivos expiatorios ha experimentado un auge a nivel global. En EE. UU., Donald Trump ha instrumentalizado incidentes aislados supuestamente protagonizados por inmigrantes ilegales para crear una identidad etnocultural que vincula la inmigración con la criminalidad. Este discurso ha sido extraordinariamente efectivo en términos de obtención de poder, ya que ha aglutinado a un gran número de ciudadanos estadounidenses en torno a su política de seguridad fronteriza (The White House, 2025); contribuido a auparlo por segunda vez a la Casa Blanca; y legitimado sus medidas para librar una guerra contra la inmigración ilegal que, a menudo, se libra a expensas de poblaciones vulnerables. Desde la perspectiva de la administración Trump, la detención y deportación de Kilmar Ábrego García a El Salvador se justifican por su supuesta pertenencia a la banda MS-13 y sirven como ejemplo de las medidas que se deben implementar para contener la también supuesta violencia en la que desemboca la inmigración ilegal

incontrolada. Sin embargo, la oposición a Donald Trump denuncia la conculcación de los derechos del arrestado durante dicho procedimiento de detención y deportación y la falsedad tanto de las pruebas que lo incriminan como de la narrativa que establece una relación causal entre inmigración y criminalidad y legitima su expulsión.

2. OBJETIVOS

La hipótesis que este capítulo intenta demostrar es la existencia de una relación entre las traducciones en redes sociales de textos emitidos en torno al caso Kilmar Ábrego García y el nivel de expansión global de los distintos discursos políticos en torno a la inmigración. Para ello, el estudio recoge una muestra de textos publicados sobre el caso que contribuye a construir la identidad etnocultural de las comunidades inmigrantes en EE. UU.; estudia cómo el peso político y mediático de agentes dotados de poder como Donald Trump, Nayib Bukele o las redes sociales influyen en los procesos de traducción que contribuyen a la globalización de los discursos sobre inmigración y la polarización que acarrean; y explora vías para una traducción activista que amplifique las voces de los migrantes en entornos digitales y refuerce su posición frente a los actores que promueven la globalización del discurso de odio.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Para la demostración de la hipótesis del capítulo, se selecciona un corpus muestral de la población de discurso político según dos criterios principales: en primer lugar, su capacidad para ejemplificar patrones claros de cómo tanto actores institucionales como de base reformulan el discurso para reforzar o socavar (Potter, 1996) narrativas sobre inmigración; en segundo lugar, su actualidad: la extracción de muestras procedentes de redes sociales dominantes en el ámbito de contenido audiovisual a nivel global (en especial de TikTok) permite a este proyecto extraer conclusiones válidas y extrapolables al campo de traducción y político de nuestros días.

La amplia definición de traducción y el enfoque *outwards* multimodal presentados nos permiten examinar estas muestras de discurso

audiovisual como traducciones intralingüísticas e interlingüísticas de un flujo fragmentado y discontinuo de numerosos micro-mensajes (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024, p. 11) sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García emitidos en redes sociales y resemiotizados por sus usuarios. Entre las primeras, figuran las retextualizaciones y recontextualizaciones para adaptar mensajes como el emitido en inglés por Donald Trump en la red social Truth Social a las convenciones definidas por los defensores y detractores de su narrativa que buscan imponer su visión política a la audiencia estadounidense que se informa en TikTok. Entre las segundas, caben los mensajes emitidos por medios y usuarios que recurren al uso del español para adaptar la narrativa en inglés sobre el caso a las convenciones impuestas por diversas redes sociales en culturas de destino hispanohablantes.

La visión del traductor como objeto y sujeto de poder nos permite comprobar los efectos de figuras como Donald Trump, el senador demócrata Chris van Hollen, Nayib Bukele o actores de poder en el mundo digital tanto en la labor de traducción de textos sobre el caso como en su resemiotización en la sociedad de destino. Asimismo, permite analizar cómo las traducciones y las narrativas conceptuales que impulsan reconfiguran las identidades de Kilmar Ábrego García y el colectivo inmigrante, y su impacto en términos políticos tanto en la sociedad estadounidense como en las de destino. Finalmente, habilita la exploración de vías para promover una traducción activista. La retórica de las traducciones multimodales analizadas está modelada por algoritmos cuyo código recoge la primacía del lenguaje emotivo sobre el referencial y contribuye a la mayor visibilización de discursos de odio como el antiinmigración o los intentos más contundentes de denunciarlo. Solo el traductor dotado de la conciencia multimodal necesaria para comprender los tecnogéneros presentados podrá desafiar a actores que promueven la globalización del discurso de odio como Trump o Bukele, y abogar por soluciones de traducción capaces de dar visibilidad a narrativas digitales que den voz en redes sociales a las comunidades vulnerables afectadas.

El análisis realizado a lo largo de este capítulo se basa en un cuerpo teórico compuesto por elementos conceptuales procedentes de varias disciplinas que atraen la atención de los estudios de traducción contemporáneos, entre los que destacan los siguientes:

3.1 Definición amplia de traducción: traducción intralingüística e interlingüística

Vidal (2019) defiende que la realidad no es una verdad objetiva, sino una traducción que depende de la subjetividad del traductor, influida a su vez por el entorno que le rodea. Este capítulo parte de esta definición amplia de traducción para analizar los textos sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García seleccionados como traducciones intralingüísticas e interlingüísticas (Rodríguez Arcos, 2024). En todo caso, esta perspectiva eminentemente traductológica no es óbice para una mirada "outwards" (Vidal 2019) que fomenta la integración de elementos de otras disciplinas para una mejor comprensión de la realidad.

3.2 Narrativas sobre inmigración en EE. UU.: Samuel Huntington

Donald Trump se aleja del mito del sueño americano y de la historia de unos EE. UU. cuya misma fundación remite a pioneros que emigraron de otros países en busca de oportunidades. Al contrario, impulsa la narrativa conceptual de Huntington (1996; 2004), que describe el país como el resultado de un juego de suma cero entre dos bandos enfrentados entre sí: la decreciente mayoría *wasp*, artífice del ascenso de los EE. UU. al estatus de primera potencia mundial y que comparte con Trump lo que él mismo cataloga como "good genes" (Svamberk, 2019, p.8); y las minorías racializadas constituidas por colectivos como el inmigrante, relegados al papel de villanos de esta narrativa ya que, según el autor, minan los valores y usurpan los derechos de la mayoría *wasp*, acelerando el imparable declive de la nación que justifica la reacción MAGA (Hodges, 2020, p.115).

3.3 Narrativas sobre inmigración en EE. UU.: herramientas retóricas

Para la construcción de una narrativa antiinmigración huntingtoniana, Trump recurre a varias estrategias retóricas. En primer lugar, la de la deshumanización de los delincuentes, a los que llega a describir como virus o depredadores (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton 2020, 334). Asimismo, el actual presidente de los EE. UU. refuerza la causalidad de la narrativa que une inmigración y delincuencia mediante la técnica de

manipulación ontológica (Potter, 1996), ya que únicamente incluye en su discurso crímenes perpetrados por inmigrantes, dejando de lado los cometidos por individuos *wasp;* a continuación, recurre a relatos de estos sucesos, reales o ficticios, que incluyen "motifs" (Baker, 2006, p. 78) o temas recurrentes como los siguientes: inmigrantes que atacan a víctimas estadounidenses; detalles y verbos descarnados para dejar clara la agencia e intencionalidad del criminal y generar un miedo (Altheide 2006) atávico en el receptor; y detalles que dejan claro que la amabilidad de la víctima y de la población estadounidense en general hacia los inmigrantes facilitan el crimen. A modo de ejemplo:

> Think of it. They butcher those little girls. They kidnap, they extort, they rape, and they rob. They prey on children. They shouldn't be here. They stomp on their victims. They beat them with clubs. They slash them with machetes, and they stab them with knives. They have transformed peaceful parks and beautiful, quiet neighborhoods into blood-stained killing fields. They're animals. All across our nation, innocent Americans have been killed by illegal immigrant criminals who should never have been in our country.
>
> (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p. 435)

Finalmente, Trump refuerza su versión mediante la adopción de la estrategia lingüística de corroboración de Potter (1996), al afirmar que este tipo de sucesos forman parte del día a día de "All across our nation, innocent Americans", convirtiendo historias excepcionales de criminalidad en la norma: mediante esta sinécdoque (Baumann y Gingrich, 2004), ejemplo de efecto literario que genera una ilusión de relación entre significantes mediante la superposición de una relación lingüística, equipara a la totalidad de los miembros de minorías raciales con los delincuentes que (supuestamente) forman parte de ellas. Por consiguiente, la totalidad de integrantes del colectivo inmigrante pasa a ser tratado como animales o virus que "infest our Country" (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p.443).

3.4 Globalización de narrativas sobre inmigración: la traducción como herramienta activista

Autores como Tymoczko (2002; 2009) o Schäffner (2012) señalan al traductor como figura cuyos textos inevitablemente revelan su compromiso

político. La corriente funcionalista, en la que se sitúan autores como Hebenstreit (2020), estudia tanto los mecanismos a través de los cuales se construyen y amplifican narrativas políticas como la responsabilidad y la tarea social del traductor. Traductólogos como Bandia (2020) prestan especial atención al papel de la traducción como medio de resistencia al discurso político hegemónico, con el objetivo de promover localizaciones activistas que sirvan para amplificar la voz de los colectivos desfavorecidos. Finalmente, diversos autores analizan la falta de autonomía del traductor para optar por ese tipo de soluciones: como integrante de un pseudocampo (Simeoni, 2007) que en ocasiones ve su papel postergado al de paria (Prunč, 2007) al albur de los intereses de campos más poderosos con intereses en su labor (como el político, el económico o el mediático), el traductor activista debe explorar vías para reforzar su posición mediante alianzas con socios alineados con sus intereses y capacitados (Gambier, 2007) para promover una traducción ética y profesional.

3.5. Globalización de narrativas sobre inmigración: digitalización y multimodalidad

En la actual era de la digitalización y la globalización, las redes sociales, lejos de ser espacios neutrales, desempeñan un papel fundamental en la traducción de textos políticos y la consiguiente globalización de las narrativas que impulsan. Su preeminencia en el ámbito político se debe fundamentalmente a su capacidad de incorporar al discurso propio del campo uno de los escasos elementos de comunicación intersubjetivos en plena decadencia de los consensos: el entretenimiento (Sclafani, 2017, p.9).

La "argument culture" (Tannen, 1999) o agonismo (Hodges, 2020, p. 132) irrumpe como una de las formas de entretenimiento más rentables para las redes sociales. Sus algoritmos buscan maximizar el tiempo de exposición de los usuarios a su contenido, con el consiguiente beneficio económico publicitario y simbólico para sus propietarios. De ahí la viralidad del contenido de líderes políticos como Donald Trump o Nayib Bukele, cuyo discurso tiene la capacidad de entretener tanto a partidarios como a detractores y generar un gran número de reacciones, tanto positivas como negativas. Sin embargo, esta preeminencia de las redes sociales acaba por contribuir a la división de las sociedades en silos

(McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p.116) y a una polarización (Hall et al., 2016) que aviva el odio contra colectivos vulnerables.

Traductólogos como Gambier y Lautenbacher (2024) adoptan una mirada "outwards" (Vidal Claramonte, 2019) para articular un enfoque interdisciplinar capaz de analizar los efectos de la digitalización en la producción y circulación del discurso político entendido como caso particular de traducción de la realidad, entre los que destaca la capacidad que otorga a todo usuario de redes sociales para vehicular contenido multimodal.

Kress y van Leeuwen (2001) definen la multimodalidad como la interacción de elementos visuales, verbales y acústicos, y defienden su superioridad con respecto al texto lineal a la hora de maximizar los efectos retóricos persuasivos en la audiencia. Gambier y Lautenbacher (2024, p.11) consideran que el estudio de mensajes multimodales requiere actualizar las definiciones de texto y contexto: así, introducen la noción de texto digital como flujo de micro-mensajes que constituyen los estímulos que los receptores, influidos por el entorno que les rodea, resemiotizan para completar el proceso comunicativo (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024, p.11). Desde esta perspectiva, todo mensaje puede estudiarse como una traducción que consiste en una retextualización y recontextualización de micro-mensajes extraídos del flujo textual relacionado con el caso Kilmar Ábrego García.

Asimismo, ambos autores identifican a las plataformas de redes sociales como actores que, lejos de ser neutrales, desempeñan un papel activo en la primacía de la función emotiva del lenguaje y el entretenimiento en la comunicación política y, por ende, en la producción y difusión de sus textos, así como de las narrativas políticas que impulsan. El "rhetorical feedback" (McIntosh y Mendoza-Denton, 2020, p.40) resultante maximiza además la polisemia (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024, p.6) de los mensajes emitidos: los algoritmos, los diseños de interfaz, las herramientas y efectos digitales, los sonidos o los subtítulos provistos por la traducción automática acaban por articular nuevos tecnogéneros que no solo reconfiguran la experiencia de emisión a todos los niveles sino también la de recepción, dando pie a tantas resemiotizaciones del flujo textual como receptores existen.

Finalmente, Gambier y Lautenbacher (2024) actualizan el análisis de la traducción como sujeto y objeto de poder en la era digital. Su noción de "stakeholders" (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024, p.6) no solo sirve para comprobar cómo las redes sociales contribuyen a la acumulación de poder de ciertos actores políticos, sino para estudiar la irrupción de nuevos actores de poder tanto en la escena política como en la comunicativa, como los creadores de contenido cuyos vídeos alcanzan gran difusión en redes sociales o los propietarios de estas.

4. RESULTADOS

La metodología recién presentada se aplica demostrar la relevancia política de la muestra de traducciones tanto intralingüísticas como interlingüísticas presentadas a continuación:

FIGURA 1. *Mensaje de Donald Trump en Truth Social sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García.*



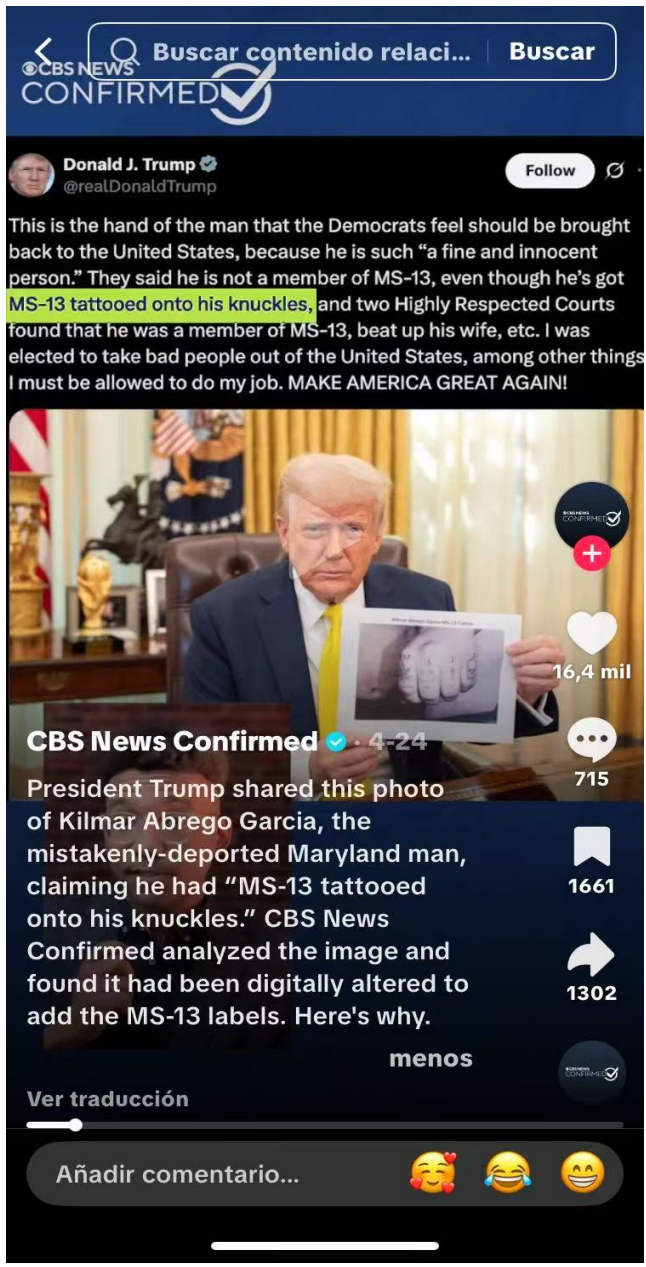
Fuente: Truth Social [@realDonaldTrump]. (2025)

FIGURA 2. *Retextualización y recontextualización del mensaje de Trump presentado en la Figura 1 por parte de VIkodlakfl, uno de sus partidarios, en la red social TikTok.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025a)

FIGURA 3. *Retextualización y recontextualización del mensaje de Trump presentado en la Figura 1 por parte de CBS News, medio de comunicación no afín a Donald Trump, en la red social TikTok.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025b)

FIGURA 4. *Traducción intralingüística realizada por el usuario de TikTok Chuck e funn de un mensaje multimodal sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García emitido por Nayib Bukele en X.*



Fuente: TikTok. (2025c)

FIGURA 5. *Traducción intralingüística en TikTok de un corte del directo que Xokas, creador de contenido popular en España, emite en la red social Twitch.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025d)

FIGURA 6. *Documental sobre la prisión CECOT emitido en Youtube por el creador de contenido Luisito Comunica*



Fuente: Youtube (2025a)

FIGURA 7. *Podcast sobre las políticas de seguridad de Nayib bukele emitido en Youtube por el creador de contenido Jordi Wild*



Fuente: Youtube (2025b)

FIGURA 8. *Traducción interlingüística al español de la reunión entre Donald Trump y Nayib Bukele en la Casa Blanca, en la que ambos responden a preguntas sobre el tema Kilmar Ábrego García, realizada por Telemundo51 Miami en su cuenta de TikTok.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025e)

FIGURA 9. *Traducción interlingüística de una muestra de contenido audiovisual relacionada con el caso Kilmar Ábrego García grabada por la secretaria de seguridad de la administración Trump en la prisión CECOT publicada por la cuenta de TikTok del diario El Español.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025f)

FIGURA 10. *Traducción interlingüística al español de flujo textual sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García publicada por el usuario DeWito en TikTok.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025g)

FIGURA 11. *Traducción interlingüística sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García publicada por el usuario Fuera de Línea en TikTok.*



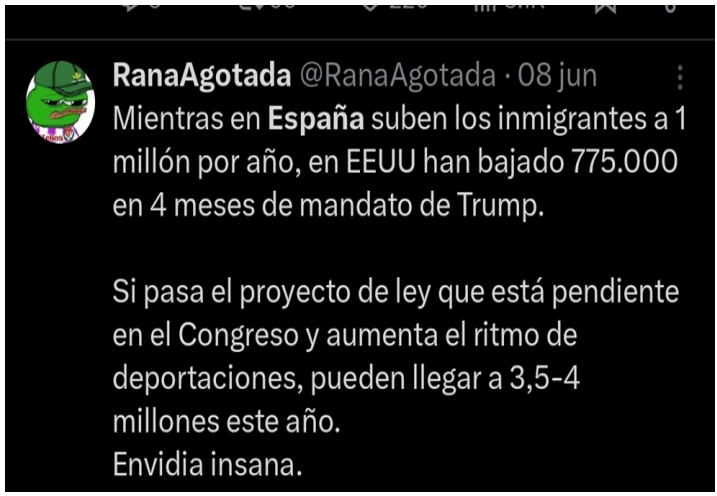
Fuente: TikTok (2025h)

FIGURA 12. *Traducción interlingüística sobre el caso de Kilmar Ábrego García publicada por el usuario VeroTeInforma en TikTok.*



Fuente: TikTok (2025i)

FIGURA 13. *Publicación sobre inmigración del usuario RanaAgotada en X*



Fuente: X @RanaAgotada (2025)

FIGURA 14. *Publicación de los usuarios Jhonf Fonseca y Avalitos jr sobre Nayib Bukele en X*



Fuente: X @JhonFonseca (2025)

5. DISCUSIÓN

5.1 Donald Trump y Kilmar Ábrego García

En consonancia con los postulados presentados en apartados anteriores, Donald Trump aviva el miedo a Kilmar Ábrego García en particular y al inmigrante en general mediante mensajes multimodales como el de la Figura 1. Elecciones léxicas como "beat up his wife" o "bad people" y *motifs* visuales como los tatuajes supuestamente identificativos de la pandilla MS-13 contribuyen a la descripción de Kilmar Ábrego García como un criminal cuya peligrosidad justifica cualquier conculcación de sus derechos y la política fronteriza estricta de la administración Trump; a impulsar una estrategia de estigmatización metonímica que incorpora su narrativa ontológica a la narrativa conceptual del choque de civilizaciones de Huntington; y a ejercer violencia simbólica (Bourdieu, 1985, p.25) para parasitar (Anderson, 2019, 5) y deslegitimar (Oborne y Roberts, 2017, 25) la versión demócrata del caso. Finalmente, cabe destacar que Trump, conocedor de la importancia de las redes sociales como *stakeholders* en el campo político y de los entresijos del tecnogénero, elige su propia red social, Truth Social, cuyos algoritmos y herramientas controla, para publicar este mensaje.

La polarización y el agonismo previamente presentados no solo contribuyen a la viralización de este mensaje en Truth Social: un gran número de medios de comunicación convencionales y redes sociales publican retextualizaciones y recontextualizaciones de micro-mensajes de los que se compone este mensaje. En particular, TikTok se ha consolidado como un actor de primera magnitud en la reescritura y recirculación del discurso político multimodal tanto estadounidense como global (CNBC, 2025) y, por consiguiente, *stakeholder* con intereses en este proceso de traducción. La recontextualización de micro-mensajes de texto lineal sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García con signos visuales y melodías populares crea estímulos que adquieren un papel protagonista en la expansión o contracción de narrativas políticas entre usuarios a priori no interesados en el discurso político. Entre las traducciones intralingüísticas del mensaje para adaptarlo a las convenciones de TikTok, están las de los mensajes de las Figuras 2 y 3. Estos estímulos

conducen a resemiotizaciones en sentidos políticos opuestos que sirven como ejemplo de la polisemia de las diversas traducciones intralingüísticas de los micro-mensajes de un mismo mensaje original en Truth Social a un nuevo tecnogénero. En la Figura 2, partidarios de Trump recurren a una transcripción del mensaje de Trump en el contexto TikTok: si bien el texto lineal permanece invariable, su recontextualización permite a creadores de contenido que simpatizan con Trump añadir estímulos tanto visuales (formato *story*) como auditivos (música) que dotan al mensaje de una dosis de entretenimiento adicional para adaptarlo a la audiencia de TikTok, acostumbrada a estímulos multimodales. Asimismo, proporciona las herramientas para diseminar la narrativa republicana sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García en dicha plataforma, la favorita de una audiencia joven que el propio Trump considera vital para su victoria electoral (Bdnews24.com, 2025).

Por otro lado, como se puede ver en la Figura 3, medios tradicionales como *CBS News* adaptan su contenido a la multimodalidad del tecnogénero TikTok para acceder a la audiencia joven que no simpatiza con las narrativas de Donald Trump. En este caso, el medio recurre a una fotografía del mensaje de Trump que no solo muestra la transcripción literal de su mensaje, sino que reproduce el tecnogénero Truth Social, dejando claro que la fuente del mensaje es el propio Donald Trump. A continuación, *CBS News* ejerce violencia simbólica contra dicho mensaje, negando que Kilmar Ábrego García tenga tatuado "MS-13" en sus nudillos y socavando así la legitimidad del *motif* y la narrativa que reducen a los inmigrantes hispanos a una única identidad étnica que representa una amenaza existencial para la dominación cultural *wasp*. Un segundo texto lineal que sigue las convenciones de TikTok opta por una línea activista que recoge el trabajo de verificación del medio y contradice la descripción del actual presidente de los EE. UU., socavando la diseminación en TikTok de su narrativa antiinmigración y dando voz a un colectivo desfavorecido como el migrante. Por consiguiente, *CBS News* se muestra como un posible socio para dar visibilidad a traducciones activistas que el pseudocampo de traducción no logra promover por sí mismo.

5.2 Nayib Bukele, creadores de contenido y Kilmar Ábrego García

El discurso de mano dura contra colectivos desfavorecidos ha creado escuela más allá de los EE. UU.: el ascenso en un gran número de países de líderes políticos con un discurso y propuestas políticas similares a las defendidas por Trump es prueba fehaciente de su performatividad y abren la puerta a la "transnational business masculinity" (Connell, 2016) que intenta impulsar Donald Trump. Uno de los máximos exponentes de este discurso es Nayib Bukele: el actual presidente de El Salvador ha utilizado las redes sociales para cultivar una imagen de hombre fuerte, posicionándose como el líder que logró acabar con el crimen en San Salvador gracias al arresto masivo de pandilleros y el duro tratamiento dispensado a los detenidos en la prisión denominada CECOT.

Nayib Bukele se erige en *stakeholder* clave de las traducciones intralingüísticas e interlingüísticas de los micro-mensajes del caso analizadas por varias razones: en primer lugar, su colaboración en el proceso de extradición de Kilmar Ábrego García a dicha prisión y con la expansión de la narrativa de Trump sobre el caso, incluidos ataques a la narrativa demócrata que dan pie a traducciones intralingüísticas como la de la Figura 4. El usuario Chuck e funn retextualiza y recontextualiza un mensaje multimodal sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García emitido por Nayib Bukele (X@NayibBukele, 2025) para adaptarlo al tecnogénero TikTok. En dicho mensaje, el presidente salvadoreño aprovecha las herramientas multimodales a su disposición para elaborar una calculada estrategia semiótica capaz de parasitar la narrativa demócrata: así, acompaña una foto tomada durante la reunión entre Kilmar Ábrego García y el senador demócrata Chris Van Hollen, que viajó a El Salvador para mostrarle su apoyo, de un texto lineal en inglés (que acepta como *lingua franca*) en el que cuestiona tanto los motivos humanitarios del viaje del senador como el supuesto maltrato recibido por los detenidos en el CECOT. Además, Bukele instrumentaliza la ironía y los estereotipos de Latinoamérica como destino turístico mediante el uso textual y visual de la margarita[64], que funciona como un estímulo visual con la dosis de

[64] Según Chris Van Hollen, que se muestra como unos de los actores dotados de poder capaces de dar voz al colectivo inmigrante y visibilidad a las traducciones activistas sobre el caso aquí analizado, agentes gubernamentales de El Salvador pusieron las margaritas en la mesa

entretenimiento necesaria para adaptarse a la retórica de TikTok y hacerse un hueco entre los contenidos más visualizados en EE. UU.

TikTok ha acelerado la tendencia que Gambier y Lautenbacher (2024, p.9) denominan *GILT* (*Globalización, Internacionalización, Localización y Traducción*), al naturalizar el contenido en inglés como culturalmente neutral y recontextualizarlo mediante subtítulos automáticos interlingüísticos para su difusión global. Así, el vídeo de la Figura 4, que presenta una traducción automática al español del mensaje en inglés de un líder político hispanohablante, gana tracción algorítmica entre usuarios hispanos gracias al segundo factor que convierte a Nayib Bukele en *stakeholder* clave en el proceso de resemiotización de las traducciones no solo intralingüísticas sino interlingüísticas de los micro-mensajes del caso Kilmar Ábrego García analizados: su popularidad en la esfera digital hispanohablante, debida en gran parte a la retextualización y recontextualización de elementos de su narrativa de hombre fuerte por parte de destacados creadores de contenido digital que acumulan un gran número de seguidores en las sociedades de destino y expresan públicamente su simpatía por la figura del líder salvadoreño. En la Figura 5, Xokas, creador de contenido en Twitch y TikTok que acumula gran número de seguidores en España, utiliza vocablos de la lengua vernácula propia de la audiencia mayoritaria de las redes sociales como "puto amo" o "basado" para describir elogiosamente a Nayib Bukele, acercando su figura a la generación Z. En la Figura 6, Luisito Comunica, primer *youtuber* en documentar una visita a la prisión CECOT en El Salvador, ha obtenido decenas de millones de visitas con un contenido multimodal que justifica la existencia de la institución penitenciaria como elemento fundamental de las políticas para atajar la violencia pandillera desarrolladas por Nayib Bukele. En la Figura 7, Jordi Wild, presentador del podcast más descargado de España, dedica uno de sus episodios a la política de "mano dura" de Nayib Bukele. Este espacio, en el que explora diferentes temas a través de un formato de entrevista o debate con invitados cuyo discurso e imagen cumplen con las convenciones de informalidad propias de las redes sociales que atraen a la

en torno a la cual se reunió con Kilmar Ábrego García, y ninguno de los dos bebieron de ellas (Morgan Music, 2025).

generación Z y hablan de política sin autodenominarse como "expertos", contribuye a la normalización de discursos y medidas políticas rechazados por la doxa (Bourdieu, 1985) científica y social. El traductor de micro-mensajes pertenecientes a las narrativas del caso Kilmar Ábrego García preocupado por su responsabilidad prospectiva y consciente de su falta de autonomía comunicativa, consecuencia del pseudocampo al que pertenece, debe estar dotado de la conciencia multimodal suficiente como para comprender la influencia que Nayib Bukele, impulsado por creadores de contenido como los recién analizados, tendrá en la resemiotización de todo texto sobre el caso en la sociedad de destino española y tenerla en cuenta a la hora de diseñar soluciones de traducción que den voz a los colectivos afectados por la popularización del discurso de mano dura en España.

5.3 Medios tradicionales y Kilmar Ábrego García

El 14 de abril de 2025, Donald Trump y Nayib Bukele mantuvieron una reunión en la Casa Blanca. La rueda de prensa posterior, emitida en directo, resulta de especial interés para este capítulo, ya que los dos principales actores políticos analizados respondieron a preguntas sobre el tema Kilmar Ábrego García, con el objetivo de imponer la narrativa que ambos mandatarios comparten como verdadera. En la Figura 8, se puede ver la traducción interlingüística al español de dicho contenido multimodal realizada por Telemundo51 Miami, medio de comunicación de habla hispana. El dominio global de TikTok en el discurso político contemporáneo ha obligado a medios tradicionales como Telemundo51 Miami a establecerse en la plataforma y adaptar su contenido televisivo a las convenciones y herramientas del nuevo tecnogénero, como el formato abreviado, el pie de vídeo o los subtítulos automáticos: el medio utiliza estas herramientas para reforzar la credibilidad de la opinión incluida en el texto a través tanto del titular (propio del estilo televisivo pero fácil de incorporar al contenido audiovisual de TikTok) como del resumen del texto que forman parte del pie de vídeo.

Más allá de adaptarse a las convenciones de TikTok, las traducciones interlingüísticas de los medios deben ser “aceptables y relevantes” según sus propios estándares editoriales (Gambier y Lautenbacher, 2024, p.

10). Esto posiciona a los dueños de medios como socios en el proceso de localización y como *stakeholders* clave en la representación de las comunidades migrantes. La polarización mediática para proteger intereses de estos medios que compiten entre sí se exporta a las redes sociales, creando una vez más nichos para traductores activistas que promueven soluciones éticas. Un ejemplo es el uso del modo visual o del pie de vídeo propios del tecnogénero TikTok para incluir paratextos o intervenir directamente en el texto (Irving, 2020, p.120) con opiniones como "deportado por error", que se desmarca del discurso y la narrativa que Trump y Bukele intentan impulsar en la reunión cuyo vídeo traduce la noticia para describir a Kilmar Ábrego García como víctima de la administración Trump. En este caso, Telemundo51 se erige en socio necesario para dar visibilidad a una traducción activista que el traductor no puede visibilizar al mismo nivel de manera autónoma, dada la debilidad en el mercado mediático del pseudocampo del que forma parte.

En todo caso, el algoritmo de TikTok visibiliza también soluciones de traducción hegemónicas de textos relacionados con el caso, fomentando así el agonismo que maximiza el número de visualizaciones e interacciones. En la Figura 9, la traducción literal de la narrativa trumpista sobre la deportación de Kilmar Ábrego García publicada por la cuenta de TikTok del diario El Español, contribuye a la globalización de la narrativa que vincula inmigración y criminalidad y sirve para disuadir a la audiencia hispanohablante de emigrar a EE. UU. Por añadidura, la fotografía de la prisión CECOT utilizada para inocular el miedo en la audiencia maximiza la deshumanización de los presos, retratados como animales encerrados en jaulas bajo control directo de la secretaria de Estado estadounidense:

5.4 Usuarios convencionales de redes sociales y Kilmar Ábrego García

TikTok ha democratizado la producción audiovisual, poniendo al alcance de cualquier creador de contenido herramientas de edición y publicación de contenido multimodal antes reservadas a los medios de comunicación. Además, estos usuarios convencionales no están sujetos a las exigencias en términos de calidad o responsabilidad social impuestos por los estándares periodísticos o traductológicos. Por ello, pueden

instrumentalizar sin traba alguna los elementos visuales, acústicos y de entretenimiento disponibles en la plataforma para viralizar sus traducciones interlingüísticas de fragmentos de la narrativa de Kilmar Ábrego García. En la Figura 10, se puede observar cómo el usuario DeWito recurre a efectos visuales y de IA disponibles en TikTok para conseguir exprimir las posibilidades del tecnogénero TikTok con el objetivo de maximizar el impacto emocional en la audiencia de su mensaje multimodal sobre el tema. La polarización que se apreciaba entre partidos políticos y medios de comunicación de signo opuesto se manifiesta también entre creadores de contenido particulares que logran amasar un gran número de seguidores, cuyas traducciones interlingüísticas se sitúan en uno de los dos bandos del espectro narrativo del caso. En la Figura 11, la cuenta Fuera de Línea difunde la versión de Donald Trump, enfatizando que Kilmar Ábrego García fue denunciado por violencia doméstica. En la Figura 12, VeroTeInforma opta por la reescritura activista que describe la detención y deportación como un error de la administración Trump y presenta a Kilmar Ábrego García como víctima del proceso.

Finalmente, cabe destacar que el impacto emocional de las traducciones del discurso de odio analizadas no solo ayuda a globalizar narrativas conceptuales antiinmigración como la de la Figura 13, en la que el usuario de X RanaAgotada critica el elevado número de inmigrantes que supuestamente entran cada año en España en comparación con la supuesta reducción del número de inmigrantes que entran en EE. UU. en los primeros meses de mandato de la segunda legislatura de Trump; la polisemia de estos relatos abre la puerta a interpretaciones de usuarios que justifican la violencia contra otras minorías asociadas a la criminalidad: en la Figura 14, el usuario de X Avalitos jr resemiotiza los estímulos recibidos para publicar en la red social X una respuesta racista y agresiva contra inmigrantes que, más allá del miedo que se inocula en su contra, no tienen relación alguna con los salvadoreños detenidos en la prisión CECOT.

6. CONCLUSIONES

La adopción de una definición amplia y outwards de la traducción y de unas definiciones fluidas de texto y contexto adaptadas a la nueva realidad

digital y multimodal permiten analizar los mensajes sobre el caso Kilmar Ábrego García que componen la muestra analizada como traducciones intralingüísticas e interlingüísticas. Este marco teórico interdisciplinar construido a partir de los estudios de traducción contemporáneos ha servido para mostrar cómo cada publicación en redes sociales de la muestra contribuye a la contracción o expansión a nivel global de identidades etnoculturales que vinculan inmigración y criminalidad. Asimismo, este capítulo identifica a Donald Trump, Nayib Bukele, Chris Van Hollen, los medios tradicionales y los creadores de contenido con mayor o menor número de seguidores como actores con un papel fundamental tanto en la labor de traducción como en la resemiotización de su contenido en las sociedades de destino hispanohablantes; y resalta la importancia de desarrollar una conciencia multimodal que incluya la comprensión del proceso mediante el cual sus emisiones en redes sociales impulsan o frenan narrativas que desembocan en la implantación de políticas que recortan los derechos y libertades de diversos colectivos desfavorecidos a nivel global. Además de facilitar este análisis descriptivo, la aplicación de los estudios de traducción contemporáneos a este caso sirve para explorar soluciones de traducción alternativas a las automáticas GILT para dar voz a colectivos desfavorecidos en las sociedades de destino.

Por último, urge reconocer varias limitaciones importantes que afectan al alcance de los hallazgos del estudio. En primer lugar, una muestra más amplia permitiría el estudio de una mayor diversidad de traducciones procedentes de una también mayor variedad de redes sociales en diferentes espacios temporales que redundaría en una mayor probabilidad de extrapolación válida de las conclusiones extraídas. Asimismo, la naturaleza opaca de los algoritmos de las plataformas dificulta rastrear con precisión ciertos patrones de difusión de la muestra de discurso analizada. Finalmente, si bien el capítulo realiza una modesta aportación al diagnóstico de los problemas a los que se enfrenta el traductor que busca tender puentes entre un colectivo vulnerable como el inmigrante y las sociedades de acogida analizadas, la implementación de las medidas propuestas para su solución reviste gran dificultad: los actores institucionales hegemónicos poseen recursos mucho mayores para dar forma y visibilidad a sus narrativas en la sociedad digitalizada, lo cual reduce

la probabilidad de que las soluciones de traducción activistas, incluso aquellas apoyadas por empleadores como los medios de comunicación, sean sancionadas por la audiencia con el marchamo de realidad.

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INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE CÁDIZ: FORMACIÓN CONTINUA EN INGLÉS FUNCIONAL Y ESPECIALIZADO Y EN METODOLOGÍAS PARA EL PERSONAL DOCENTE E INVESTIGADOR

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La universidad es un espacio donde se construye nuestra realidad social y se fomenta el conocimiento. A lo largo de los años, esta institución ha sabido adaptarse a los cambios de cada época, respondiendo a las necesidades de la sociedad y consolidándose como un motor de cultura, aprendizaje e innovación que nos impulsa a avanzar como comunidad educativa (Colomo Magaña & Esteban Bara, 2020).

Durante su evolución, la universidad ha enfrentado momentos de profunda crisis originados por factores económicos, sanitarios, sociales, políticos o tecnológicos (Brenes, 2025). En cada uno de estos contextos, las instituciones universitarias se han visto obligadas a reajustar su funcionamiento para continuar cumpliendo su misión de educar, generar conocimiento y contribuir al progreso social.

Un ejemplo reciente de esta necesidad de adaptación fue la pandemia de la COVID-19, que supuso un impacto significativo en el ámbito educativo a escala mundial. Su irrupción obligó a las universidades a renunciar a la presencialidad y a redefinir métodos, roles, actividades y sistemas de evaluación para garantizar la continuidad del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje (Valencia, 2023, pp. 159–176). Este escenario de incertidumbre exigió respuestas inmediatas y llevó al profesorado y al alumnado a familiarizarse con tecnologías educativas hasta entonces

no muy conocidas por todos, manteniendo la actividad académica en línea como una de las pocas alternativas viables (Delgado et al., 2021).

En todos los momentos de crisis o de cambios importantes, el personal universitario ha debido hacer frente a nuevas condiciones, enfrentando los cambios que cada situación imponía. Su capacidad de ajuste ha sido fundamental para garantizar la continuidad de las funciones académicas y administrativas y para continuar desarrollando su labor educativa, investigadora y de compromiso con la sociedad.

En este contexto de transformación constante, las universidades afrontan hoy un nuevo reto: la internacionalización. En este proceso, las universidades buscan reforzar su presencia y proyección exterior y exige armonizar los sistemas educativos, revisar los planes de estudio desde una perspectiva internacional, adecuar los contenidos y competencias de los grados a las demandas del mercado laboral, redefinir los criterios de admisión, validar titulaciones, fortalecer los departamentos de relaciones internacionales y fomentar las competencias en lenguas extranjeras en todos los niveles de la institución. Aunque estas exigencias representan un esfuerzo considerable, la internacionalización también ofrece beneficios importantes a las universidades, como el impulso económico, la mejora de la calidad académica, el fortalecimiento de la investigación y el estímulo de la innovación y el emprendimiento (De Wit, 2011).

En el marco de este proceso de internacionalización, el personal universitario ha de asumir de nuevo cambios en sus funciones, metodologías y formas de interacción, al mismo tiempo que desarrolla competencias comunicativas en inglés como lengua franca para atender las exigencias de un entorno educativo cada vez más a nivel mundial.

Diversas normativas nacionales y autonómicas insisten en la formación continua como elemento esencial para mejorar el desempeño del personal público y favorecer la modernización administrativa (Jefatura del Estado, 2007). En el ámbito andaluz, la nueva Ley Universitaria para Andalucía (LUPA) impulsa la internacionalización del sistema universitario al promover la movilidad, la cooperación académica y la proyección exterior de las universidades de la región (Junta de Andalucía,

2025), implicando ello el refuerzo de este compromiso con la mejora y la formación del personal universitario.

Dentro del proceso de transformación y adaptación de las universidades, y en relación con la temática de este capítulo centrada en la formación en lenguas extranjeras, la Conferencia de Rectores de las Universidades Españolas (CRUE) muestra un claro compromiso con el impulso del plurilingüismo en el ámbito universitario. Este compromiso incluye tanto la mejora de la competencia lingüística del personal universitario como la ampliación de la oferta de titulaciones impartidas en otros idiomas (CRUE Universidades Españolas, 2017).

La Universidad de Cádiz (UCA), comprometida con su desarrollo institucional y con mantenerse a la altura de un entorno universitario cada vez más internacional, elaboró un documento de política lingüística que contempla, entre otros aspectos, la formación en lenguas extranjeras del Personal Docente e Investigador (PDI) (Universidad de Cádiz, 2014).

En este marco, la UCA ofrece cursos de idiomas modernos para fines generales a través de su Centro Superior de Lenguas Modernas (CSLM), dirigidos al alumnado universitario, a personas no universitarias mayores de 16 años, al Personal Técnico, de Gestión y de Administración y Servicios (PTGAS) y al Personal Docente e Investigador (PDI) de la Universidad de Cádiz. Además, los departamentos de los estamentos mencionados pueden solicitar programas más especializados, como cursos de lenguas para fines específicos o formación metodológica. Estos programas son evaluados por el Área de Innovación Docente y, una vez aprobados, se imparten con financiación completa. de la matrícula por parte de la universidad (Universidad de Cádiz, 2025).

2. OBJETIVOS

A partir de la reflexión sobre los procesos de adaptación y los retos actuales de las universidades, este capítulo se centra en cómo se ha diseñado un modelo de trabajo que responde a las solicitudes de los departamentos del PDI para la organización de cursos de inglés en sus distintas modalidades.

Los objetivos de la investigación son, por un lado, analizar al Personal Docente e Investigador de la Universidad de Cádiz, identificar sus necesidades, intereses y expectativas en el aprendizaje del inglés, y elaborar un protocolo para el diseño de cursos que adapte objetivos, contenidos y metodología a las demandas y necesidades del PDI. Este protocolo busca conseguir promover un aprendizaje continuo, reforzar la implicación y la motivación del profesorado, y contribuir al avance de la internacionalización institucional.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Este estudio se desarrolló siguiendo un enfoque metodológico mixto, que combinó técnicas cuantitativas y cualitativas. La investigación se estructuró en tres fases principales: administración de un cuestionario, análisis cualitativo de las necesidades del PDI en cada curso académico y realización de entrevistas semiestructuradas con los coordinadores de los distintos departamentos del PDI pertenecientes a titulaciones no filológicas.

En primer lugar, se aplicó un cuestionario a 145 docentes de titulaciones no lingüísticas, todos ellos participantes en cursos de inglés para fines específicos. El objetivo era conocer su perfil y sus prioridades formativas en relación con la enseñanza de idiomas. Se recogieron variables como el rango de edad, la categoría académica y la motivación para participar en los cursos. El cuestionario se realizó a través de una plataforma digital, y a todos los participantes se les informó previamente sobre la protección de datos personales y la confidencialidad de la información proporcionada. Los datos obtenidos se estructuraron en tablas y gráficos, cuyo análisis se presenta en la sección de Resultados.

Antes de realizar las entrevistas semiestructuradas con los coordinadores, se llevaba a cabo cada año académico un análisis del contexto universitario. En esta fase se revisaban posibles cambios institucionales, necesidades formativas del profesorado y exigencias de la Universidad de Cádiz que podían tener impacto en la figura del PDI, lo que permitía identificar áreas de mejora y orientar la planificación de los cursos. Estas actuaciones constituyen buenas prácticas en la formación en lenguas extranjeras, ya que aseguran que la oferta formativa responda a

necesidades reales del personal docente y se adecue al marco del proceso de internacionalización, garantizando su pertinencia y sostenibilidad a lo largo del tiempo.

A continuación, se realizaban entrevistas semiestructuradas con los coordinadores de los distintos departamentos. Estas entrevistas combinan una estructura de preguntas previamente definida con un grado de flexibilidad que permite adaptar la conversación según las respuestas del entrevistado. El entrevistador sigue una guía con los ejes principales, pero puede modificar el orden de las preguntas, profundizar en determinados aspectos o reconducir la conversación para garantizar la obtención de la información necesaria (Karatsareas, 2022, p. 100).

Los encuentros con los coordinadores se solían celebrar unos meses después de la finalización del curso, de manera que pudieran preparar la documentación requerida para solicitar una nueva edición cuando Innovación Docente publicase la convocatoria del año siguiente. Cada entrevista comenzaba con una revisión general del curso finalizado, con el objetivo de recopilar la opinión del profesorado y detectar áreas de mejora para futuras ediciones. Se recomendaba que los coordinadores hubieran mantenido previamente una reunión con su equipo docente para reunir retroalimentación y sugerencias que facilitaran el diseño del siguiente curso.

Estas entrevistas, además de servir como espacio de evaluación y reflexión, constituyen un instrumento de análisis de necesidades, ya que permiten identificar las demandas formativas actuales y orientar la planificación del curso de manera ajustada a la realidad del PDI. El análisis de necesidades es un elemento clave en la enseñanza de lenguas para fines específicos, dado que su objetivo es optimizar el proceso de aprendizaje mediante la definición de objetivos realistas que guíen el diseño y desarrollo del curso (Bocanegra Valle, 2015).

El modelo de preguntas que se utiliza en las entrevistas incluye, entre otros, los siguientes bloques temáticos:

Percepción general de la formación concluida

1. ¿Cómo valoráis la utilidad del curso que acabamos de terminar?
2. ¿Qué aspectos han funcionado mejor?
3. ¿Qué aspectos deberían mejorarse o modificarse para la próxima edición?
4. ¿Qué necesidades o demandas habéis detectado tras finalizar el curso?
5. ¿Pensáis que el próximo año deberíamos seguir en la misma línea de enfoque del curso que ha finalizado?

Cambios en el contexto académico

1. ¿Han surgido nuevas exigencias en su área o en la universidad que justifiquen un cambio en el objetivo del próximo curso?
2. En caso afirmativo, ¿consideráis que sería conveniente un enfoque diferente para la siguiente edición?

Definición de objetivos

1. ¿Qué objetivos y competencias consideráis más relevantes para desarrollar en la próxima edición (lingüísticas, comunicativas, culturales, metodológicas, tecnológicas…)?

Evaluación y seguimiento

¿Cómo valoráis el sistema de evaluación utilizado hasta ahora? ¿Modificaríais algo? (Este aspecto es relevante, porque, en casos excepcionales en los que algún miembro del profesorado no participe o no supere la evaluación formativa sin justificación, podría no ser incluido en futuras ofertas formativas; sin embargo, esta situación es muy poco frecuente).

Cuando los coordinadores no contaban con propuestas concretas para los objetivos y contenidos del curso siguiente tras haber consultado al profesorado de sus grupos, se les presentaban las sugerencias elaboradas durante la fase anterior, basada en el análisis del contexto universitario que se había realizado. A continuación, compartían estas sugerencias con el profesorado y, mediante un proceso colaborativo de diseño,

llegaban a un acuerdo final que dejaba la propuesta formativa lista para la solicitud de la nueva oferta académica.

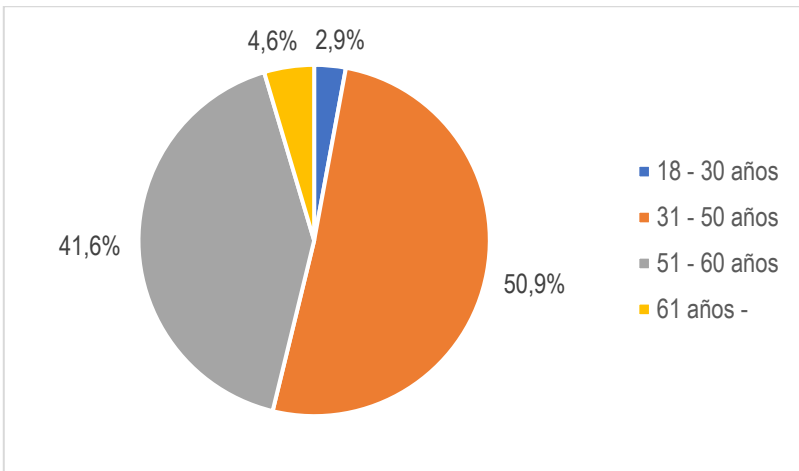
4. RESULTADOS

En este apartado se presentan los resultados obtenidos a partir del cuestionario del profesorado participante en los cursos, del análisis del contexto universitario y de las entrevistas semiestructuradas realizadas a los coordinadores de los distintos grados.

4.1 CUESTIONARIO

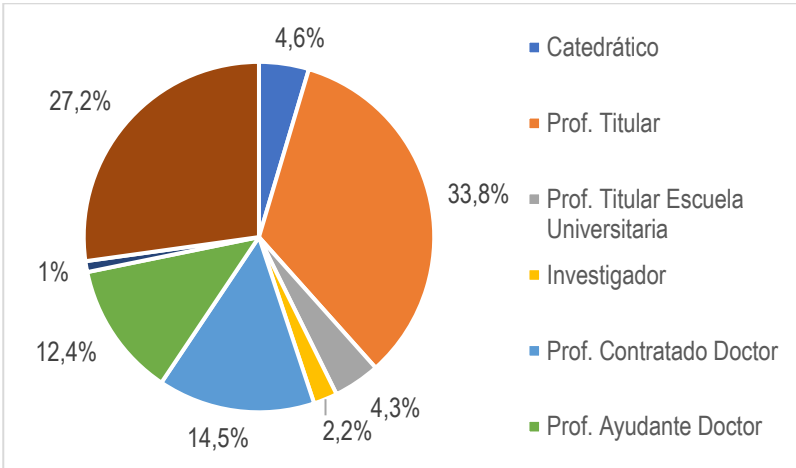
En esta sección se presentan los resultados obtenidos a partir de los cuestionarios completados por el profesorado.

GRÁFICO 1. *Rango de edad*



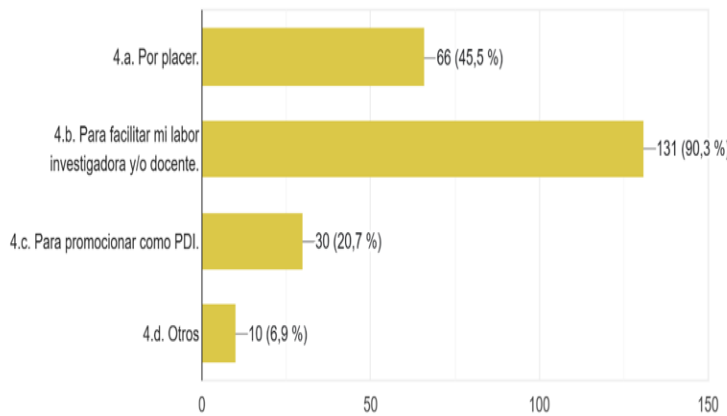
Según los datos del gráfico, la mayoría del profesorado participante tiene entre 31 y 50 años (50,9 %), seguido del grupo de 51 a 60 años (41,6 %). Los menores de 31 años y los mayores de 61 representan solo el 2,9 % y el 4,6 %, respectivamente, lo que muestra un cuerpo docente predominantemente de mediana edad.

GRÁFICO 2. *Categorías académicas de los participantes en los cursos*



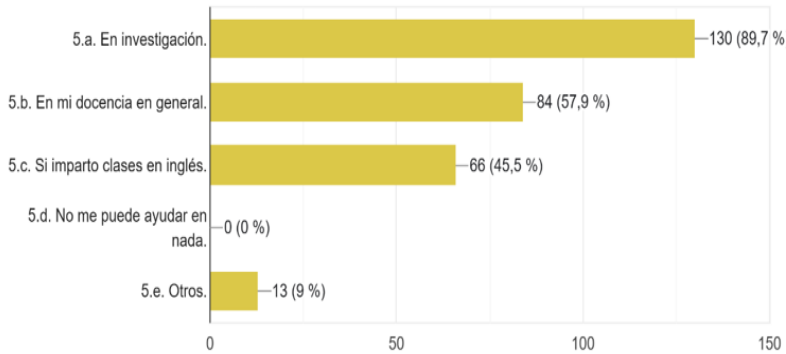
El gráfico muestra la distribución del profesorado participante, con predominio de Titulares y Contratados, seguidos de Sustitutos Interinos, Ayudantes Doctores e investigadores. La presencia de todas las categorías evidencia el interés general por formarse y refleja la diversidad del cuerpo académico que participa en los cursos.

GRÁFICO 3. *Categorías académicas de los participantes en los cursos. Puede escoger más de una opción*



Los resultados de la encuesta muestran que la prioridad principal de los encuestados es la faceta profesional y académica, ya que un 90,3 % (131) seleccionó "Para facilitar mi labor investigadora y/o docente". En segundo lugar, el interés personal motivó al 45,5 % (66), mientras que la promoción como PDI fue relevante para un 20,7 % de los participantes. Cabe recordar que en esta pregunta se ofrecía la posibilidad de escoger más de una opción, por lo que los porcentajes reflejan la selección múltiple de motivaciones.

GRÁFICO 4. *Beneficios por la asistencia a los cursos. Puede escoger más de una opción*



Al revisar las respuestas del profesorado sobre los ámbitos en los que la formación en inglés puede serles de utilidad, se aprecia una clara inclinación hacia la investigación, mencionada por el 89,7 % de los participantes. Un 57,9 % considera que el aprendizaje del idioma le resulta útil en su labor docente en general, y un 45,5 % lo asocia con la impartición de clases en inglés. Ningún participante indica que la formación no le aporte beneficios, mientras que un 9 % señala otros usos. En conjunto, los resultados muestran que el profesorado percibe el inglés como un apoyo importante para su desarrollo académico y profesional.

4.2. ANÁLISIS DEL CONTEXTO UNIVERSITARIO

Para este tipo de formación, el análisis del contexto universitario resulta especialmente relevante, pues permite identificar los enfoques más adecuados para la formación en lenguas extranjeras dirigida al PDI. En los últimos años, esta formación se ha centrado principalmente en la internacionalización institucional y ha respondido a las exigencias derivadas

de dicho proceso, asegurando que satisfaciera las necesidades del profesorado y sea pertinente.

En este contexto, se identifican elementos clave para la planificación de la formación:

a. Mejora de la destreza de escritura de artículos científicos.
B. La necesidad de que el profesorado desarrolle competencias comunicativas en inglés para fines específicos, lo que les permite participar en la impartición de asignaturas en grados y másteres bilingües.
C. La acreditación lingüística exigida, dado que se requiere un nivel C1 acreditado para poder tomar parte en la docencia bilingüe.
D. El apoyo metodológico necesario para adaptar materiales y estrategias a la enseñanza en inglés. Estos aspectos reflejan cómo la internacionalización condiciona el contexto en el que se diseña la formación lingüística y orienta la planificación de los cursos hacia el desarrollo de competencias específicas del PDI.

4.3. ENTREVISTAS SEMIESTRUCTURADAS: COORDINADORES DE LOS DEPARTAMENTOS INTERESADOS EN FORMACIÓN EN INGLÉS

Desde que el área de Innovación Docente de la UCA comenzó a ofrecer cursos específicos para el PDI, las decisiones sobre los contenidos y objetivos de cada curso se han basado en entrevistas semiestructuradas con los coordinadores de los departamentos. Estas entrevistas, realizadas tras una reunión previa con el profesorado para tratar la temática de los próximos cursos, permiten diseñar cada año programas totalmente ajustados a las necesidades de cada grupo, evitando cualquier generalización. A partir de ellas se determina el tipo de curso más adecuado, su formato y objetivos, garantizando que la formación responda de manera precisa a las demandas del profesorado.

A lo largo de los años, estas solicitudes han seguido una evolución clara:

– Los primeros cursos se centraron en la comprensión y expresión oral, con especial atención a la pronunciación de términos

específicos de cada asignatura, incluyendo retroalimentación individualizada y material de apoyo.

- Posteriormente, surgió la demanda de cursos enfocados en la escritura de artículos científicos, proporcionando herramientas adaptadas al contexto académico y a la publicación internacional.
- Con la exigencia de acreditar un nivel C1 para impartir clases en grados y másteres bilingües, los cursos se orientaron durante varios años a alcanzar esta certificación.
- Más tarde, los docentes solicitaron formación en metodología AICLE, preparando y ofreciendo sesiones aplicando este enfoque y recibiendo retroalimentación para consolidar competencias lingüísticas y pedagógicas.

A continuación, se introdujo EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction), centrado en el lenguaje del aula y en la elaboración de sílabos, descripciones de asignaturas y documentación de evaluación en inglés especializado.

Con la pandemia de COVID-19, la formación incluyó enseñanza online mediante simulacros de clases y sesiones de laboratorio, en los que el profesorado debía guiar al alumnado ante distintas situaciones problemáticas usando las plataformas digitales disponibles.

Estos ejemplos muestran cómo el trabajo colaborativo con el profesorado ha permitido garantizar la continuidad y mejora de la formación en inglés, adaptando los cursos a las necesidades reales del PDI y del contexto universitario, al tiempo que se mantiene su implicación y motivación. Cada curso se diseñaba de manera específica para responder a las demandas del profesorado recogidas en las entrevistas semiestructuradas.

Los primeros cursos de esta tipología fueron *English for Analytical Chemistry*, impartido en la Facultad de Ciencias de la Universidad de Cádiz con la participación de doce profesores, e *Inglés para Ayuda a la Docencia*, desarrollado en la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales. Este último se organizó en tres grupos según el nivel de competencia lingüística inicial: un grupo de nivel A2 (ocho profesores),

otro de nivel B1 (diez profesores) y un tercero de nivel B2 (seis profesores). Este fue el punto de partida.

Con el tiempo, la demanda y el éxito de esta modalidad formativa crecieron, incorporándose numerosos cursos, entre ellos *Academic Writing for Scientific Publications*, *English for Engineering*, *English for Physical Chemistry*, *English for Psychologists*, *English for Law*, *English for Environmental Science*, *English for Naval Engineering*, *Moving towards CLIL* y *English as a Medium of Instruction*.

Los cursos no solían limitarse a una única edición. Los cursos Inglés para Ayuda a la Docencia en la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, English for Biotechnology en la Facultad de Ciencias, English for Engineering en la Escuela Superior de Ingeniería y English for Law en la Facultad de Derecho alcanzaron un notable éxito, manteniendo su actividad formativa de manera ininterrumpida durante siete años y enlazando curso tras curso con distintos objetivos

Esta oferta formativa se extendió más allá del personal docente e investigador, generando interés también entre el personal técnico, de gestión y de administración y servicios (PTGAS), que comenzó a solicitar cursos específicos como Inglés para Relaciones Internacionales e Inglés para Conserjerías.

5. DISCUSIÓN

La internacionalización de las universidades se ha convertido en un objetivo ineludible en el contexto educativo, económico y social actual. Alcanzarla requiere que todos los estamentos de las instituciones universitarias trabajen de manera coordinada, implicando esfuerzo, dedicación y formación continua. Entre las competencias clave que deben desarrollar los miembros de estas universidades destacan las comunicativas en lenguas extranjeras, ya que la internacionalización implica interactuar con usuarios, colegas y organizaciones de cualquier parte del mundo, y la comunicación no puede representar un obstáculo.

La Universidad de Cádiz es un ejemplo de institución que integra la internacionalización como uno de sus objetivos estratégicos, tal como

se refleja en su Plan Estratégico (Universidad de Cádiz, 2025), donde se contempla la implementación de un modelo formativo integral.

El estudio sobre la formación del personal docente e investigador aporta información relevante para optimizar la oferta de cursos de inglés en este contexto:

La oferta de cursos de inglés en el contexto de la internacionalización:

- La edad media del profesorado indica que conviene aplicar estrategias de enseñanza centradas en el aprendizaje de adultos. Knowles (1980, pp. 33-34) describe la educación de adultos como un "conjunto social discreto" compuesto por individuos e instituciones que comparten el objetivo de promover la instrucción y el aprendizaje continuo. En nuestro estudio, los docentes organizan su proceso de aprendizaje de acuerdo con las demandas derivadas de sus funciones y responsabilidades dentro de la Universidad de Cádiz.

- En la mayoría de los cursos dirigidos a estos profesores, que no buscan acreditación oficial de idiomas, el tipo de formación más adecuado es el basado en Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE). Dudley-Evans y St John (1998) señalan que el IFE se concibe como un inglés diseñado para alcanzar objetivos concretos, planificado a partir de un análisis de las necesidades profesionales y académicas de los participantes.

- Dentro de los cursos de IFE, el análisis de necesidades resulta fundamental para adaptar la programación a cada grupo y a las particularidades de cada curso. Robinson (2000, pp. 196-197) afirma que este proceso permite conocer la “situación meta” del estudiante y orientar los contenidos, objetivos y materiales. Omitirlo puede generar desajustes entre el curso y las necesidades reales, afectando además la motivación del alumnado. En este estudio, el análisis se llevó a cabo mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas, apoyadas en un cuestionario previo que sirvió de guía.

– La preparación del material del curso debe tener en cuenta que cada grupo de profesorado es distinto, tanto por el grado al que pertenecen como por las asignaturas que imparten. Por ello, conviene evitar el uso de materiales generalizados, como los manuales tipo *English for Engineering*, que no siempre se ajustan a las características de los participantes. Estos cursos se centran en las necesidades concretas de cada grupo, por lo que el material deberá elaborarse, en la mayoría de los casos, directamente por el docente que lo imparta.

– En lo que respecta al profesorado, uno de los retos más importantes es encontrar docentes de inglés con formación en áreas concretas. A menudo, necesitan la colaboración de especialistas en la materia para elaborar juntos el plan de estudios (Basturkmen, 2010, p. 7). En algunos casos, esos especialistas son los propios profesores que participan en los cursos, quienes pueden aportar contenidos útiles y orientar sobre cómo abordar la información de su área. Es importante recordar que quienes imparten IFE poseen, en esencia, la misma formación que los que enseñan Inglés para Fines Generales, por lo que enfrentarse a contenidos técnicos o complejos supone un esfuerzo adicional. Esto explica la dificultad de encontrar docentes preparados para impartir cursos de IFE en distintas disciplinas.

– Es muy útil establecer sesiones periódicas en las que los participantes puedan dar su opinión sobre cómo está yendo el curso, qué necesitan o qué cambiarían. Generar un ambiente de confianza facilita que este feedback sea sincero y nos permita mejorar el curso mientras todavía está en marcha, porque recibirlo solo al final ya no sirve para hacer ajustes durante el desarrollo.

– Finalmente, usar una evaluación formativa en lugar de sumativa ha sido mucho más valorado por el profesorado. Este tipo de evaluación permite fijarse en el interés, el esfuerzo y el progreso de cada participante. Hay que recordar que los docentes asisten a estos cursos por su propia decisión, sin obligación y sin preocuparse por aprobar exámenes, y por eso este enfoque resulta especialmente adecuado y bien recibido.

En síntesis, para que los cursos de inglés sigan motivando al profesorado y resulten realmente útiles, es clave trabajar junto con los docentes que participan, adaptar la programación a las necesidades de cada grupo y crear materiales propios que respondan a esas necesidades, de modo que el aprendizaje sea significativo y pueda contribuir de forma real a los objetivos de internacionalización de la Universidad de Cádiz.

6. CONCLUSIONES

El estudio muestra que los cursos de inglés que la Universidad de Cádiz ofrece al personal del PDI han ido aumentando tanto en número como en duración. Esto ha fomentado una formación continua, evitando cursos con objetivos demasiado generales que no consideran las particularidades ni los requerimientos específicos de cada grupo. Adaptar los cursos a las necesidades reales del profesorado resulta, por tanto, fundamental.

La motivación del profesorado, que participa de manera voluntaria, se mantiene cuando los cursos incorporan sus peticiones específicas, el diseño se centra en contenidos útiles, los materiales están adaptados a sus necesidades, se aplica una evaluación formativa y se les ofrecen espacios para expresar opiniones y recibir retroalimentación. Involucrar a los participantes desde el inicio, definiendo objetivos y contenidos según cada grupo y área de conocimiento, hace que el aprendizaje sea más efectivo, aumenta la motivación y garantiza que el curso cumpla con su propósito.

En conjunto, estos elementos mejoran la experiencia de aprendizaje del profesorado y, a la vez, contribuyen de manera concreta a los objetivos de internacionalización de la universidad, asegurando que la comunicación en inglés no sea un obstáculo en su labor docente y profesional.

7. AGRADECIMIENTOS

Quisiera expresar mi más sincero agradecimiento a todos los profesores de la Universidad de Cádiz que han participado en los cursos a lo largo de los años, así como a los coordinadores de los distintos departamentos con los que he tenido la oportunidad de reunirme curso tras curso mientras trabajaba en el Centro Superior de Lenguas Modernas de la UCA.

La Universidad de Cádiz puede sentirse orgullosa de contar con un profesorado comprometido con su formación, digno de admiración por su constancia y dedicación.

Deseo hacer extensivo mi más sincero agradecimiento al Centro Superior de Lenguas Modernas por brindarme la oportunidad de crecer como docente y de participar en un proyecto que ha supuesto una mejora tanto profesional como personal.

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EL INGLÉS MARÍTIMO COMO HERRAMIENTA ESTRATÉGICA EN EL ENTORNO PORTUARIO GLOBALIZADO: EL CASO DEL PUERTO DE ALGECIRAS

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

El comercio marítimo globalizado exige profesionales capacitados en competencias lingüísticas especializadas, siendo el inglés marítimo un requisito estratégico para la eficiencia y la seguridad en operaciones portuarias. El Puerto de Algeciras, como uno de los puertos más importantes de Europa por su enclave geoestratégico, requiere que su personal maneje terminología técnica y normativa internacional en inglés para garantizar operaciones fluidas y competitivas.

Según datos obtenidos del blog de Ministerio de Transportes, Movilidad y Agenda Urbana de España (2024), el Puerto de Algeciras fue construido entre 1913 y 1916 y tiene una superficie de 4.827.800 m2. Destaca como líder en tráfico de mercancías del sistema Portuario Español y como uno de los puertos europeos más importantes entre los que se encuentran los puertos de Rotterdam, Amberes y Hamburgo. Además, según datos obtenidos del World Bank, este puerto también destaca por su gran actividad en el transporte y operaciones de contenedores. Ubicado en la Bahía de Algeciras, constituye el principal hub del Mediterráneo Occidental en tráfico de contenedores que mantiene una conexión directa con 200 puertos del mundo a través de 142 servicios regulares y 23 líneas navieras.

De acuerdo con los datos recopilados en Autoridad Portuaria de la Bahía de Algeciras, (2023, párr. 3), en 2022 el puerto mantuvo un tráfico elevado de contenedores y mercancías y registró un crecimiento significativo

en el intercambio de productos con Marruecos y un alto movimiento de pasajeros en el puerto de Tarifa tras la reapertura de la frontera:

El Tráfico de Contenedores roza los 4´8 millones de Teus (-0´7%), leve descenso compensado por el incremento en un 7% de los contenedores con carga de importación/exportación. En cuanto a los tráficos del Estrecho, ha destacado el crecimiento en un 10% del intercambio de mercancías con Marruecos que se materializa en los 432.205 camiones movidos en la línea Algeciras-Tánger Med. Por su parte, el Puerto de Tarifa ha acabado el año con 790.818 pasajeros en la única línea que conecta Europa con Tánger Ciudad tras dos años sin actividad por el cierre de la frontera durante la pandemia.

Posee un Puesto de Control Fronterizo (en adelante, PCF) de primera categoría ya que está operativo las 24 horas del día y los 7 días de la semana con el objetivo de garantizar la seguridad alimentaria europea. Actualmente, la Autoridad Portuaria se encuentra trabajando en un proyecto de ampliación en un 150% de las puertas destinadas a inspección vegetal del PCF, pasando a 30 puertas- 18 más que las 12 actuales-.Además el puerto trabaja actualmente con el Ministerio de Transportes y Movilidad Sostenible para conseguir una mejora en conectividad terrestre, tanto viaria como ferroviaria (Ministerio de Transportes, Movilidad y Agenda Urbana, 2024).

Por todos estos motivos, en este estudio se analiza el papel del inglés marítimo y su impacto en el desarrollo profesional y la internacionalización portuaria debido al carácter de suma importancia que posee el puerto en cuestión.

1.1. EL CONCEPTO DE GLOBALIZACIÓN

Según el estudio de Vega-Miranda (2020), existe una amplia y diversa literatura referente al concepto de globalización. No obstante, la autora distingue dos grupos diferenciados por los factores económicos y por la importancia económica que tiene respecto a los cambios sociales.

En el primer grupo la autora posiciona a García (1998) y Stiglitz (2002), ellos posicionan al crecimiento económico como una forma actual de la globalización facilitado por la disminución de los gastos en

transporte y comunicación, así como por la eliminación de obstáculos en el movimiento de productos, servicios, dinero e información.

Según Moreno (2001, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020) considera que la globalización es el resultado de la era moderna y actual la cual establece un sistema económico universal.

Por su parte, Beck (1998, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020) sostiene que la globalización es un fenómeno irreversible donde los Estados se relacionan transaccionalmente dando lugar a modificaciones de poder, tendencias y orientaciones sociales.

En el segundo grupo, nos encontramos con Giménez (2007, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020) que destaca este fenómeno como un proceso de desterritorialización el cual impacta de manera significativa en la cultura y en las interacciones sociales. Por su parte, Olivé (2008, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020) plantea que la globalización surge del avance tecnológico y se extiende desde el ámbito económico hasta el informático, promoviendo el intercambio de información y conocimiento entre países.

Castell (2008, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020) sostiene que la globalización al igual que ha dado lugar a ventajas respecto a la economía global, también ha creado exclusión social en el caso de países en desarrollo. En base al estudio de Jalife-Rahme (2007, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020), la globalización real se caracteriza por seis aspectos: concentración de ingresos, procesos antidemocráticos, interdependencia, costos sociales laborales, pérdida de soberanía nacional y crisis ambiental. Sin embargo, Wild & Wild (2018) y Cruz (1999), ambos citados en Vega-Miranda (2020), mantienen que la globalización va más allá de las transacciones comerciales y financieras; consideran que esto es un hecho histórico que fomenta la creación de un espacio común en la sociedad.

Por otro lado, Reich (1998) y Lee & Vivarelli (2006), citados en Vega-Miranda (2020), opinan que se debe investigar este acontecimiento desde un enfoque que aúna sus efectos tanto económicos como sociales, en vez de basarnos en posturas a favor o en contra de este hecho.

Por último, Galbraith (2013, citado en Vega-Miranda, 2020), manifiesta que no existen investigaciones concluyentes acerca de la relación

entre la globalización y el mercado laboral, aunque un patrón global de crecimiento de desigualdad es observado.

1.2. LA GLOBALIZACIÓN Y SU IMPACTO EN LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES

El fenómeno de la globalización ha tenido una repercusión crucial en el desarrollo de las relaciones laborales, favoreciendo la relación y comunicación entre empleados y profesionales que provienen de diferentes contextos culturales. Uno de los efectos más llamativos de la globalización es la expansión transfronteriza de empresas multinacionales (Osterhammel y Petersson, 2019). En sectores clave como los portuarios y el transporte marítimo, la comunicación a nivel internacional es un componente fundamental para garantizar el funcionamiento de las actividades económicas y operativas. En este marco, según Sassen (2014), el conocimiento del inglés técnico especializado se convierte en una habilidad esencial, ya que asegura tanto la seguridad en operaciones como en aspectos legales, además de la eficacia en la realización de las tareas laborales propias de esos entornos; de igual manera, la globalización afecta a las estructuras laborales. Por ello, el dominio del inglés marítimo se ha convertido en una condición fundamental para poder garantizar una seguridad laboral tanto en relaciones laborales como de actuación portuaria (International Maritime Business School, 2024).

En la actualidad, las fronteras geográficas tienden a volverse menos definidas, lo que conduce a una interconexión social y un dinamismo social sin precedentes. Basándonos en Giddens (1999), debido a este fenómeno, las estructuras económicas y laborales se van entrelazando más en un sistema global que se caracteriza por su transformación constante y la interdependencia entre países, empresas y trabajadores. Giddens resalta la idea de que el humano es uno de los ejes centrales de las relaciones internacionales, por ello quiere promover que el individuo tome conciencia de este hecho y adopte una mayor autonomía.

El progreso tecnológico y el crecimiento de las redes de comunicación han sido factores cruciales en la apertura de los sistemas económicos y en el fortalecimiento de los mercados globales. De igual manera, Castells (1996), afirmó que la globalización ha promovido la coordinación de las cadenas de suministro, el intercambio de capitales y la conexión

de los mercados financieros, creando un sistema económico interrelacionado y de alta competitividad.

Según Vega-Miranda (2020), la globalización ha transformado las relaciones laborales y ello nos permite reconocer tanto las oportunidades como los desafíos que este fenómeno conlleva, además nos ayuda entender cómo estas dinámicas aportan una percepción más amplia del tejido económico y social de las sociedades actuales. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de este análisis es proporcionar una visión global sobre cómo la globalización ha transformado las relaciones laborales y ha enriquecido los procesos de intercambio cultural en el ámbito laboral.

1.3. EL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA VEHICULAR

En los últimos años, según Gutiérrez y Ariel (2010) el dominio del inglés ha dejado de ser una ventaja distintiva para convertirse en *lingua franca* debido a fenómenos como la globalización y la ruptura de barreras culturales, académicas y laborales.

Actualmente, el inglés se ha establecido como lengua vehicular en diferentes y múltiples contextos de los cuales podríamos resaltar la educación superior, la comunicación científica y los contextos internacionales. Según Crystal (2013), debido a factores históricos y al dominio actual en áreas como la ciencia y la tecnología, este idioma se ha expandido globalmente. Este hecho ha dado lugar al proceso del *English as a Lingua Franca* (en adelante, ELF), un enfoque que define el uso del inglés como medio de comunicación entre hablantes no nativos de diferentes lenguas, tal y como señala Jenkins (2009). No obstante, aunque el uso del inglés facilita la comunicación global, también se han planteado cuestiones acerca de la igualdad lingüística y la diversidad cultural como describían Kubota y Pennycook (1999).

1.4. LA IMPORTANCIA DEL INGLÉS PARA FINES ESPECÍFICOS

El dominio del inglés para fines específicos (en adelante, ESP) se ha convertido en una herramienta clave en un mundo cada vez más globalizado y especializado y sobre todo en contextos profesionales y técnicos para asegurar una comunicación efectiva. Según Hutchinson & Waters (1987),

el inglés especializado no solo nos ayuda a la comprensión de una terminología técnica, sino que también nos facilita el desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas contextualizadas. Este enfoque ha sido muy relevante en el campo de la medicina, la ingeniería, la aviación y de forma más destacada en el ámbito marítimo donde el inglés es la lengua franca internacional que garantiza la seguridad y la eficiencia operativa.

Teniendo en cuenta a Dudley-Evans y St John (1998), gracias al ESP el estudiantado tiene acceso a una enseñanza centrada en las exigencias comunicativas reales y que gira en torno al estudiante y a las necesidades prácticas ya que la enseñanza de estas lenguas de especialidad se basa en los objetivos laborales o académicos del entorno donde su usa la lengua.

Por ello, el inglés marítimo se considera una variante clave dentro del ESP al estar regularizado por organismos internacionales los cuales establecen protocolos lingüísticos de actuación normalizados para la navegación, la cooperación internacional, operaciones comerciales, seguridad y cumplimiento normativo.

Los datos indican que, en el sector portuario, el inglés marítimo es destacado como un factor muy relevante por varias fuentes, entre ellas se encuentran los *Standard Marine Communication Phrases* (en adelante, SMCP), publicados por la Organización Marítima Internacional (en adelante, OMI), así como el convenio internacional *Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers* (en adelante, STCW), que regula la formación, certificación y guardia de la gente de mar. Además, cabe mencionar que existen numerosos centros de formación marítima como academias náuticas y escuelas especializadas que incluyen en sus programas cursos de inglés técnico orientados a la seguridad y a las operaciones portuarias. En el caso de España, la Fundación Campus de Excelencia Internacional del Mar (CEI·MAR), liderada por la Universidad de Cádiz, prioriza como requisito el conocimiento del inglés para acceder a ciertos puestos de trabajo en el sector portuario ofreciendo cursos de carácter intensivo con una duración de entre 20-40 horas, y también ofrecen cursos semestrales o modulares con una duración de 6- 120 horas. Por otra parte, las empresas y centros marítimos imparten también cursos de lengua inglesa especializada ya que en el sector portuario el hecho de dominar el inglés marítimo es

crucial debido al entorno internacional donde se desarrolla. Estos cursos se basan en los siguientes aspectos:

1. Importancia del vocabulario náutico y portuario: tipos y partes de barcos, maniobras y operaciones de carga y descarga.
2. Frases estandarizadas (SMCP) establecidas por la OMI relevantes para la comunicación entre tripulaciones, puertos y el control marítimo.
3. Impartición de protocolos de seguridad y emergencias en inglés para la prevención de accidentes.
4. Estudio de la documentación técnica en inglés, redacción de informes, bitácoras y certificados, entre otros.

Por ende, estos cursos son de vital importancia para garantizar que tanto la tripulación como el personal portuario trabajen de manera coordinada y favorezca a la reducción de riesgos laborales y el cumplimiento de regulaciones internacionales como los que aparecen en el Convenio internacional sobre normas de formación, titulación y guardia para la gente de mar.

1.5. EL INGLÉS MARÍTIMO COMO LENGUA DE ESPECIALIZACIÓN EN EL SECTOR PORTUARIO

La lengua inglesa ha sido establecida como el idioma oficial de uso para las comunicaciones portuarias, según la OMI mediante convenios como el de STCW. Al mismo tiempo, esta organización desarrolló las SMCP (Organización Marítima Internacional, 2001) las cuales establecen un marco normativo en el que se obliga a los capitanes, oficiales, operadores de tráfico marítimo y personal portuario, capacitación lingüística en lenguaje de especialidad internacional. El objetivo no es otro que evitar malentendidos en contextos que pueden resultar críticos tales como emergencias, maniobras de atraque o inspecciones aduaneras.

El sector portuario de Algeciras posee un entorno multicultural por ello, en este contexto, la capacidad de comprender y redactar en inglés técnico posee un carácter esencial para prevenir ambigüedades legales,

errores de comunicación y posibles incumplimientos normativos por carencia de competencia lingüística tanto escrita como hablada.

En la zona de Gibraltar la formación en este tipo de idioma especializado se ha convertido en un requisito fundamental. Para ello, existen algunos centros en la zona como Consemar Academy, Euroinnova u Orion Formación, los cuales poseen programas de formación basados en las necesidades y demandas del sector y abarcan la enseñanza de terminología especializada náutica, así como simulaciones reales de comunicación por radio, redacción de informes técnicos y comprensión de manuales de seguridad. Debido a la falta de competencias en este ámbito, el acceso o la estabilidad en puestos de trabajos concretos se ve afectada.

Según Muñoz (2010), en su estudio de la Fundación Campus Tecnológico de Algeciras, indica que el personal del puerto del Algeciras presenta carencias en formación en lengua inglesa especializada. El dominio del inglés resulta indispensable debido a la internacionalización, por ello, la formación lingüística está siendo reforzada por diversas entidades del sector.

De acuerdo con Bocanegra (2025), más del 90% de las tripulaciones no poseen el inglés como lengua materna, pero lo usan como idioma común vehicular para la comunicación profesional. Por consiguiente, podemos destacar que la formación en lengua de especialidad es una necesidad y que el domino de frases estandarizadas en el convenio de la OMI es primordial para la seguridad y la comunicación clara.

Por lo tanto, podemos afirmar que el conocimiento del inglés marítimo en este caso aporta beneficios ya que gracias a ello se puede evitar el hecho de cometer errores de comunicación resaltando situaciones críticas mediante el uso de frases como: "*Stand by on channel"* o "*Proceed to berth"* las cuales pueden dar resultado a una maniobra exitosa o a un incidente. Además, hay un claro beneficio respecto a la coordinación con servicios internacionales; asimismo, mejora la resolución de conflictos contractuales y contribuye al cumplimiento de las normas ISO, acrónimo de Organización Internacional de Normalización, cuyos orígenes se remontan al 1946. Estas normas fueron creadas para tener un conjunto de normativas estándares con el objetivo de establecer

homogeneidad en relación a la gestión, prestación de servicios y desarrollo de productos (GlobalSuite Solutions, 2025).

No solamente el inglés técnico es necesario para una efectiva comunicación, sino que también abarca ámbitos tecnológicos como los del Port Community Systems (en adelante, PCS) una herramienta de software que opera en inglés para la gestión de control de tráfico marítimo. El objetivo no es otro que el de optimizar, gestionar y automatizar los procesos portuarios y logísticos para hacerlos más eficientes, mejorando la competitividad de la comunidad portuaria (CustomsCity, 2020).

Cabe mencionar que actualmente hay varias entidades que han introducido el inglés técnico como una competencia transversal en sus cursos formativos en el Puerto de Algeciras tales como:

- Total Terminal International Algeciras: en este caso la terminal ha mostrado su compromiso respecto a la formación de su personal ofreciendo cursos basados en la mejora comunicativa y capacitación lingüística para la mejora comunicativa en un entorno multicultural.

- APM Terminals Algeciras ofrece cursos de especialización para su personal de idiomas (especialmente inglés y francés), tal y como se recoge en el Boletín Oficial de Cádiz.

- Por otro lado, la Autoridad Portuaria Bahía de Algeciras propone cursos marítimos-portuarios con el fin de que los profesionales adquieran habilidades comunicativas efectivas, hecho que implica el manejo del inglés técnico ya que la comunicación se desarrolla en un ámbito internacional.

- La Formación Profesional Dual en el campo de Gibraltar la cual se imparte en centros como por ejemplo IES Isla Verde, también incluye formación en inglés técnico que se encuentran inmersos en los currículos de ciclos formativos de Comercio Internacional, Transporte y Logística.

En conclusión, el dominio del inglés específico en el ambiente portuario de Algeciras es más que una simple habilidad lingüística: se ha

establecido como un requisito fundamental para la competitividad, la seguridad y la integración a nivel internacional. En un sector que se globaliza cada vez más, una adecuada formación en idiomas no solo optimiza la eficiencia de las operaciones, sino que también es un elemento clave para el posicionamiento estratégico del puerto en los mercados mundiales y para lograr un desarrollo sostenible.

1.6. EL INGLÉS COMO EJE FORMATIVO Y CLAVE PARA LA EMPLEABILIDAD EN EL ENTORNO PORTUARIO

El uso del inglés se ha convertido en una herramienta indispensable en todos los ámbitos del sector portuario tales como los recursos humanos, la atención al cliente, la administración o la prevención de riesgos; además de en los perfiles más técnicos. Esta necesidad ha conllevado la transformación en la educación introduciendo la enseñanza del inglés técnico en la formación profesional, especialmente en la FP Dual del campo de Gibraltar. A parte de la formación ofrecida por IES Isla Verde, el Máster Internacional en Gestión Portuaria y Logística, que se imparte en inglés, también forma parte del currículo universitario.

Gracias a este tipo de formaciones el inglés no solo mejora la empleabilidad, sino que se reconoce como un factor estratégico en la inserción laboral en los sectores logísticos e industriales; de hecho, se ha convertido en una competencia transversal en el sector portuario. En el caso que nos compete, este hecho es ya una realidad en entornos tan internacionalizados como el Puerto de Algeciras donde la diversidad y la naturaleza global de las operaciones exigen una lengua común para asegurar la eficiencia, la seguridad y la competitividad.

1.6.1. Aplicación profesional del inglés en los distintos perfiles portuarios

Para la realización profesional de los diferentes perfiles vinculados a la actividad portuaria del puerto algecireño, el inglés técnico-marítimo es un requisito fundamental. En el caso de los oficiales de la marina mercante, la normativa internacional, concretamente el Código STWC y el convenio *Safety of Life at Sea* (en adelante, SOLAS), establece la lengua inglesa como lengua de trabajo con carácter obligatorio, tanto en la navegación como en las operaciones de seguridad y comunicación con

otros buques o autoridades. Por un lado, los capitanes y primeros oficiales tienen que dominar reglamentos y publicaciones técnicas redactadas en inglés, integrando su uso en la cultura profesional del sector. Este requerimiento se refuerza mediante la aplicación de las SMCP de la OMI, las cuales estandarizan las comunicaciones en maniobras críticas y situaciones de emergencia. Teniendo en cuenta el ámbito local, la Autoridad Portuaria Bahía de Algeciras ha establecido estas disposiciones en sus protocolos de selección y formación, garantizando una operación segura, eficiente y alineada con los estándares internacionales de la navegación marítima.

Por otro lado, a los gestores de logística y comercio internacional, los inspectores de seguridad marítima y los operadores de tráfico portuario también se les exige competencias sólidas en inglés técnico y administrativo. Con respecto a los gestores, estos deben usar la lengua inglesa para la gestión documental, la negociación contractual y el uso de plataformas digitales de control de mercancías. Los inspectores usan este idioma para interpretar reglamentaciones internacionales como el Código Internacional para la Protección de los Buques y de las Instalaciones Portuarias (en adelante, ISPS) y para coordinar auditorías con equipos multinacionales. Por último, los operadores de tráfico lo usan como una herramienta operativa diaria con el fin de coordinar el tráfico marítimo, emitir instrucciones precisas y garantizar la seguridad en maniobras portuarias.

En síntesis, el inglés no solo se usa como medio de comunicación, sino también como elemento estructural del sistema portuario de Algeciras. Esto refuerza su posición como punto estratégico, seguro y competitivo en el contexto del comercio marítimo internacional.

2. OBJETIVOS

El objetivo general del estudio es analizar la relevancia del inglés marítimo como herramienta estratégica en el Puerto de Algeciras. Asimismo, se han planteado una serie de objetivos específicos:

1. Analizar el papel del inglés marítimo en la logística y seguridad del Puerto de Algeciras.

2. Mencionar las competencias lingüísticas requeridas por su personal.

3. Proponer estrategias de formación en inglés marítimo adaptadas a las necesidades profesionales del entorno portuario.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Se ha llevado a cabo una metodología con enfoque cualitativo, basado exclusivamente en revisión documental de fuentes tales como: informes oficiales del Puerto de Algeciras, normativa internacional, literatura académica sobre inglés marítimo y materiales de formación profesional. A través de ello, no solo se ha realizado un análisis crítico de documentos para identificar competencias lingüísticas, necesidades formativas y brechas de conocimiento; sino que también con este tipo de enfoque se fundamenta en la interpretación de fenómenos complejos basándonos en análisis del discurso, teorías académicas y normativas institucionales.

A través de este estudio hemos obtenido información acerca de la relevancia, funcionalidad y transcendencia del inglés específico en contextos profesionales, principalmente en el Puerto de Algeciras.

3.1. INSTRUMENTOS

Para la obtención de datos se han llevado a cabo las siguientes técnicas de recolección y análisis documental, propias de un enfoque cualitativo.

1. Revisión bibliográfica y documental: tras esta revisión basada en autores como Vega-Miranda (2020), Sassen (2014), Giddens (1999) y Castells (1996), obtenemos información referente a la globalización y su impacto y repercusión en puestos de trabajo dominados por contextos internacionales. Además, tras las aportaciones de Gutiérrez y Ariel (2010), Crystal (2013), Jenkins (2009) y Kubota y Pennycook (1999), el inglés se enmarca como lengua vehicular en las relaciones internacionales tanto profesionales como personales. Por último, se han investigado fuentes específicas sobre la enseñanza del inglés con fines profesionales como son las de

Hutchinson & Waters (1987), Dudley-Evans y St John (1998), en las cuales se fundamenta la relevancia del conocimiento del idioma especializado.

2. Análisis de normativas internacionales: se ha consultado documentación jurídica y técnica de organismos internacionales, como la Organización Maritima Internacional (OMI), en particular los convenios *Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers*, las *Standard Marine Communication Phrases* y el convenio *SOLAS* con el fin de comprender las exigencias lingüísticas en el sector marítimo.

3. Análisis documental contextual: Este análisis se ha basado en fuentes institucionales, normativas y profesionales de alto valor contextual. Se han examinado:

    a. Informes de formación y documentación institucional de entidades relevantes del puerto, como Total Terminal International Algeciras, APM Terminals Algeciras y la Autoridad Portuaria Bahía de Algeciras, en los que se recoge su compromiso con la capacitación lingüística del personal en entornos multiculturales e internacionales.

    b. Información contenida en boletines oficiales y convenios colectivos, como el publicado por el Boletín Oficial de Cádiz, que evidencian la inclusión de formación en idiomas como parte de la especialización del personal portuario.

    c. Programas de Formación Profesional Dual desarrollados en centros educativos del Campo de Gibraltar, como el IES Isla Verde, donde se integra el inglés técnico dentro del currículo de ciclos como Comercio Internacional o Transporte y Logística.

    d. Finalmente, se ha consultado la oferta formativa de entidades privadas como Consemar Academy, Euroinnova y Orion Formación, que ofrecen programas específicos de inglés técnico con simulaciones reales, terminología náutica y competencias comunicativas aplicadas.

4. Estudios académicos y sociolingüísticos como los de Muñoz (2010) y Bocanegra (2025), los cuales aportan evidencia sobre la necesidad creciente de formación en inglés especializado para el desempeño profesional en el ámbito marítimo-portuario, especialmente ante el uso generalizado del idioma como lengua vehicular en entornos internacionales.

5. Selección de fuentes documentales: Las fuentes seleccionadas y consultadas han sido elegidas debido a su relevancia en el ámbito académico, institucional y profesional. Se ha recurrido a literatura científica, estudios sociolingüísticos, informes técnicos, legislación internacional y artículos especializados relacionados con el uso del inglés en contextos marítimos y portuarios.

6. Integración del marco teórico con el análisis contextual: la investigación se basa en un equilibrio entre el análisis teórico aportado por la literatura académica y la legislación internacional y el análisis práctico que deriva de la realidad laboral del sector portuario algecireño. Con todo ello, obtenemos una amplia y completa visión del fenómeno de estudio.

En resumen, cabe destacar que, a la hora de seleccionar los materiales, se ha priorizado que fueran actuales y aplicables al contexto del Puerto de Algeciras y del Campo de Gibraltar. A través de esta estrategia de estudio se ha podido construir una base sólida para analizar cómo se integra el inglés especializado en la formación y en la actividad laboral de los profesionales del servicio portuario.

4. RESULTADOS

Al estudiar las fuentes académicas, normativas e institucionales, se comprueba que el inglés técnico-marítimo se establece como una habilidad crucial y generalizada en el contexto portuario de Algeciras. La documentación analizada muestra que, en concordancia con los estándares internacionales fijados por la OMI en los convenios SMCP y STCW, tanto las empresas operadoras principales- como APM Terminals y Total

Terminal International Algeciras- como la Autoridad Portuaria Bahía de Algeciras han adoptado competencias lingüísticas claves, en particular el dominio del inglés técnico, como un criterio para la selección y capacitación de su personal. Esta perspectiva de formación se concreta en programas orientados a la seguridad operativa, a la comunicación durante las maniobras en puertos y a la administración internacional.

Igualmente, se constata que el empleo del inglés especializado no se restringe al campo técnico, sino que abarca varias áreas de funcionamiento del puerto, desde la logística y el comercio exterior hasta la gestión de recursos humanos, la atención al cliente y la gestión administrativa. Los datos recogidos indican que la formación profesional dual en el Campo de Gibraltar y las acciones universitarias, como el Máster Internacional en Gestión Portuaria y Logística, han incorporado el inglés técnico como una habilidad clave para ser contratado.

En el ámbito operativo, para asegurar comunicaciones eficaces y seguras, los inspectores de seguridad marítima, los operadores de tráfico portuario y los expertos en la marina mercante deben tener un conocimiento completo de la terminología y las expresiones estandarizadas. Bocanegra (2025) sostiene que el inglés marítimo se distingue por su alto nivel de especialización y por la gran frecuencia con la que emplea tecnicismos. Los informes que emiten organismos internacionales, como la Comisión Permanente de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes Marítimos (CIAIM) en España, el Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) en Reino Unido y el National Transport Safety Board (NTSB) en los Estados Unidos, exhiben diversos ejemplos de incidentes, accidentes y siniestros donde un mal uso del inglés ha sido la causa principal o un factor desencadenante del desastre (Bocanegra, 2025).

En resumen, los resultados evidencian que el inglés marítimo desempeña un papel fundamental en la profesionalización, la seguridad y la competitividad internacional del Puerto de Algeciras, lo cual lo convierte en un referente logístico a nivel mundial.

5. DISCUSIÓN

Los resultados demuestran que el inglés especializado en el entorno marítimo-portuario no es una habilidad adicional, sino una competencia fundamental que afecta la operación, la gestión y la seguridad en contextos internacionales. Su dominio en el Puerto de Algeciras es crucial para la competitividad empresarial, el cumplimiento de las regulaciones y la eficiencia del tráfico, además de facilitar que los profesionales se integren a redes globales controladas por entidades como la OMI.

El inglés técnico es fundamental en campos relacionados como los recursos humanos, el comercio exterior, la gestión de aduanas y la logística, ya que sirve como idioma vehicular para las plataformas digitales, la regulación y la documentación. Por lo tanto, la capacitación profesional —tanto empresarial como académica— debe incluir el inglés marítimo de forma transversal, fusionando teoría y práctica en el trabajo real. Sin lugar a dudas, el inglés específico es una estrategia de desarrollo profesional, seguridad y competitividad que mejora la posición del puerto de Algeciras y del sistema logístico español en el comercio marítimo internacional.

Para abordar los desafíos identificados se proponen varias líneas de mejora tales como:

a. Implementar programas de capacitación en inglés marítimo adecuados al perfil profesional del puerto de Algeciras. Se recomienda crear talleres y cursos específicos que aborden las responsabilidades de los diferentes profesionales del puerto, entre ellos capitanes, inspectores de seguridad, operadores de tráfico y personal administrativo. La terminología técnica, la comunicación operativa y las regulaciones internacionales deberían ser tratados en estos programas, fusionando teoría y práctica y ajustándose a los diferentes grados de experiencia y requerimientos funcionales del personal. La personalización de la capacitación posibilitará su aplicación directa en las operaciones diarias, mejorando así la seguridad y la eficiencia del puerto.

b. Promover el aprendizaje independiente a través de simulaciones de situaciones reales, glosarios y materiales digitales. Se aconseja proveer a los empleados de recursos adicionales que hagan más fácil la práctica continua fuera del aula. Los glosarios temáticos, las plataformas digitales de aprendizaje, los simuladores de operaciones portuarias y las simulaciones de estas mismas operaciones brindarán a los alumnos la oportunidad de conocer la terminología técnica y practicar situaciones reales con independencia. Este método mejora la retención de conocimiento, fortalece la confianza en la comunicación profesional y ayuda a solidificar las habilidades lingüísticas que se aplican a las operaciones portuarias. De hecho, ya Bocanegra (2025) presentó ejemplos de plataformas para la práctica del lenguaje marítimo. Mediante posts y reels en Instagram, muchos subtitulados que permiten a trabajadores e interesados practicar la lengua y mejorar el vocabulario técnico. Algunos ejemplos son MarineInsight, o plataformas como MarEng o SeaTALK, gratuitas, accesibles online y desarrolladas por proyectos de investigación internacionales financiados por la Unión Europea.

c. Además, para asegurar un aprendizaje sólido y aplicado, se deben establecer niveles progresivos de competencia lingüística. Para garantizar que la capacitación sea eficaz, sería apropiado poner en marcha un sistema de niveles que inicie con un entendimiento básico del inglés técnico y progrese a grados más especializados. Esto puede incluir módulos iniciales para el personal con menos experiencia y formación más avanzada para aquellos con perfiles que necesitan habilidades específicas. La evolución paulatina posibilita la incorporación organizada de un vocabulario complejo, previene el exceso cognitivo y propicia que los profesionales se integren en contextos internacionales.

d. Otra recomendación sería el documento de Frases Normalizadas para las Comunicaciones Marítimas que la OMI ha elaborado para que los trabajadores conozcan la terminología

específica y la fraseología que comúnmente se utilizan para la manipulación de la carga a bordo y en el muelle, el mantenimiento y la reparación de los equipos, instrucciones sobre estiba y sujeción del cargamento, o la manipulación de mercancías peligrosas. Algunas páginas en internet presentan estas Frases junto con su pronunciación y su traducción al español, lo que las hace más accesibles para un aprendizaje y práctica individualizados (Bocanegra, 2025).

e. Por último, fomentar la internacionalización del personal a través de intercambios, cooperación con otros puertos y participación en programas a nivel mundial. El hecho de colaborar con puertos y organismos marítimos de otras naciones, así como la movilidad internacional, posibilita que el personal obtenga experiencia práctica en contextos multiculturales y multilingües. La asistencia a seminarios internacionales, las visitas técnicas y los programas de intercambio no solo refuerzan las habilidades lingüísticas, sino que también promueven la adopción de prácticas operativas óptimas y el establecimiento de redes profesionales a nivel mundial. Esta perspectiva ayuda a fortalecer la posición estratégica del Puerto de Algeciras en el comercio marítimo global.

6. CONCLUSIONES

En conclusión, el inglés marítimo se consolida como una competencia estratégica imprescindible en el contexto globalizado del sector portuario. El respaldo de la OMI al uso del inglés como lengua común en el ámbito marítimo, a través de la de la Resolución de la Asamblea A22/Res.918, emitida el 25 de enero de 2002, y su incorporación en el Convenio STCW78/95, evidencia la importancia de esta lengua en la seguridad, la comunicación y la estandarización de prácticas operativas. La revisión documental evidencia la necesidad de formación especializada y progresiva, que combine teoría y práctica, para fortalecer tanto la comunicación como la seguridad portuaria y la competitividad internacional.

Finalmente, los resultados establecen las bases para futuras líneas de investigación enfocadas en la creación de modelos educativos integrados que fortalezcan el inglés técnico como herramienta de calidad y cohesión en entornos marítimos y portuarios.

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LAS CRUCES DE MAYO AS A DIDACTIC RESOURCE IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traditions are a fundamental part of the cultural life of societies. They convey values, beliefs, and collective memory, and are recognised as part of a community's identity. According to the principles set out by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2003), celebrations and other social practices are considered essential elements of living heritage, as they help preserve continuity across generations and strengthen a shared sense of belonging. These are expressed through multiple forms, including visual representation, artistic expression, and ritual performance. Among these, language is a powerful vehicle for transmitting that richness. In the town of *Almuñécar*, *Las Cruces de mayo* is one of the most visited spring festivities. It includes floral decorations, food, music, and religious symbolism. Although firmly established in local celebrations, this performance also offers opportunities to connect language learning with students' social and cultural context (something vital in areas such as Tourism, where the ability to interpret and communicate cultural content is considered indispensable). In this context, English is called to be the key language, specifically, English for Specific Purposes (ESP). On this regard, it is commonly included in university programmes, particularly those linked to precise professional contexts. However, the materials used in class are often disconnected from students' interests. This lack of bond can reduce motivation and limit opportunities to use the language in realistic ways. Familiar cultural elements can be introduced into learning activities to help bridge this gap and encourage participation (Enesi et al., 2021).

This article presents a teaching proposal for the English subject in the first year of the Degree of Tourism. The activity used *Las Cruces de mayo* as the basis for a set of ESP tasks. Working in small teams, students explored different aspects of the festivity and created materials: audio visual presentations and guided tour scripts.

2. ESP: KEY CONCEPTS

ESP is a branch of English language teaching that responds to the specific needs of learners in relation to their academic or professional context. Rather than offering a broad and general perspective to language instruction, it focuses on preparing students to use English effectively in particular situations that they are likely to find in their future careers (Hyland, 2022). This approach differs from English for General Purposes (EGP), which is aimed at providing learners with a wide language competence without necessarily linking it to a concrete discipline. While EGP tends to follow standardised contents and activities applicable to a wide audience, this field is planned taking into account learners' goals, roles, and expected communicative functions within a particular domain. A defining feature of this type of language learning is its orientation toward practical and purposeful communication. Language learning is not seen as an end in itself, but as a tool for carrying out tasks in real contexts. In areas such as tourism, business, engineering, or medicine, it prepares learners to use language accurately and effectively within their professional environment. One of the foundational steps in programme an ESP course is conducting a needs analysis. This process helps identify the communicative situations, text types, and the most relevant lexicon. It also considers the level of formality, register, and intercultural competence required to function effectively in those situations. This method typically includes specialised terminology, specific materials (such as brochures, technical manuals, reports, or emails), and communication strategies that reflect people daily interactions in the selected contexts. The attention is not only on linguistic forms, but also on discourse patterns, pragmatic functions, and the expectations of the professionals. Several authors

have contributed to the development of this area. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) introduced a learner-centred perspective and pointed out the role of motivation, context, and purpose. Later, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) gave a more detailed classification of ESP types and teaching strategies, showing the flexible nature of the methodology and its dependence on background.

2.1. ESP IN THE DEGREE OF TOURISM

English is not only a tool for basic communication, but a working language used daily in professional interactions. As Crystal (2003) highlights, English has become the most widely spoken language globally, serving as a bridge for communication in various professional fields. In line with this, Jenkins (2007) mentions that English functions as a lingua franca in international workplaces, enabling non-native speakers to interact effectively across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Consequently, students in the Degree of Tourism are expected to develop communicative competence that allows them to carry out duties such as welcoming visitors, describing places and events, explaining cultural practices, and managing situations in an international context. This requires not just EGP, but also the ability to adapt vocabulary, and register to specified situations. ESP contributes to this goal through the selection of language content directly connected to real functions in the tourism sector. Learners handle with situations they may face during internships, guided visits, customer service roles, or promotional events. These include interactions with tourists, the writing of informative texts, and oral explanations of local heritage and traditions. However, in many cases, course books lack real materials that reflect students' necessities. This distance often leads to disengagement and difficulties in transferring knowledge to professional contexts. To address this, course planning must consider learners' needs and draw on originality and cultural realities which describe actual tourism experiences. When ESP is developed around relevant topics, students reinforce two required areas: first, they improve language competence for professional use, and second, they build a clearer understanding of how language functions as a tool for presenting cultural identity to international

audiences. This combination is especially important in the Spanish economy, where, according to the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (2024), tourism accounts for more than twelve percent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provides employment to over two and a half million people.

3. DIDACTIC RESOURCES

The materials used during the teaching process that support both the learning of knowledge, and the development of skills can be defined as didactic resources. These include printed texts, audiovisual contents, digital tools, and authentic items. Regarding language teaching, this concept includes any element purposefully used by teachers or learners to facilitate language acquisition, whether in physical or digital format, and regardless of whether they were originally designed for educational objectives (Tomlinson, 1998). The shift from textbook to a more communicative and task-based approaches has brought renewed attention to how materials are selected and used in class. The aim is no longer limited to mastering grammar and vocabulary in isolation, but rather to promoting interaction, developing cultural awareness, and chasing real communicative purposes. According to an investigation conducted by Sanz Barrio et al. (1991) (cited in Marchena, 1996, p.1), retention in the learning process depends on the way learners interact with content. Learners tend to remember approximately 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, and 30% of what they see. When visual input is accompanied by discussion, the percentage increases to 50%. The most efficient learning occurs when learners are both speaking and doing something related to the subject, in which case retention can reach 90%. Furthermore, seen that last dimension or learning-by-doing is the best learning approach, the more accurate teachers were in the selection of resources the more impact has those in the students' training. That is why is vital a deep reflection on what material is needed to cause an effective class. From this point of view, ESP requires *ad hoc* resources that represents the conditions in which learners will eventually use the language. Such tools help them become familiar with both the linguistic

and cultural implications of professional practice. Unlike EGP, which is broader and less contextualised, ESP demands precision, clarity, and functionality in the design of classroom tasks.

3.1. AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AS PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS

Authentic materials are those resources originally produced for real-life communication, not for an educational reason. They include texts and media such as advertisements, websites, menus, audio recordings, videos, etc., all intended for native audiences. Following Gilmore (2007), the relevance of these materials lies in their ability to present language in a natural and contextually rich form, exposing learners to genuine usage across different communicative situations.

In the Degree of Tourism, these materials are particularly valuable because they introduce learners to the determined vocabulary, structures, and expressions found in professional environments such as hotels, travel agencies, cultural institutions, different events, etc. This exposure contributes to the development of functional language skills and communication. For instance, a triptych describing *Las Cruces de mayo* in *Almuñécar* offers much more than cultural information. It includes descriptive language, persuasive elements, and references to local traditions. Students can work with this type of document to identify key information, translate relevant sections for international visitors, or design similar content for other festivities. Booking platforms, local transport pages, or restaurant websites also serve as useful tools to simulate workplace scenarios and strengthen subject-related vocabulary. Exercises based on authentic materials motivate learners to observe how language is adapted to different public, points, and formats. These experiences allow students to rehearse professional tasks in a safe setting, increasing their confidence and accuracy in communication. Moreover, they help students understand how cultural elements influence language choices, a key aspect in the tourism industry.

In summary, the inclusion of these materials in ESP classes provides practical input that convey their future reality. It upgrades classroom

work with true examples extracted from their topic and prepares them to handle communicative actions with greater confident and clarity.

3.2. CULTURAL TRADITIONS AS DIDACTIC RESOURCES

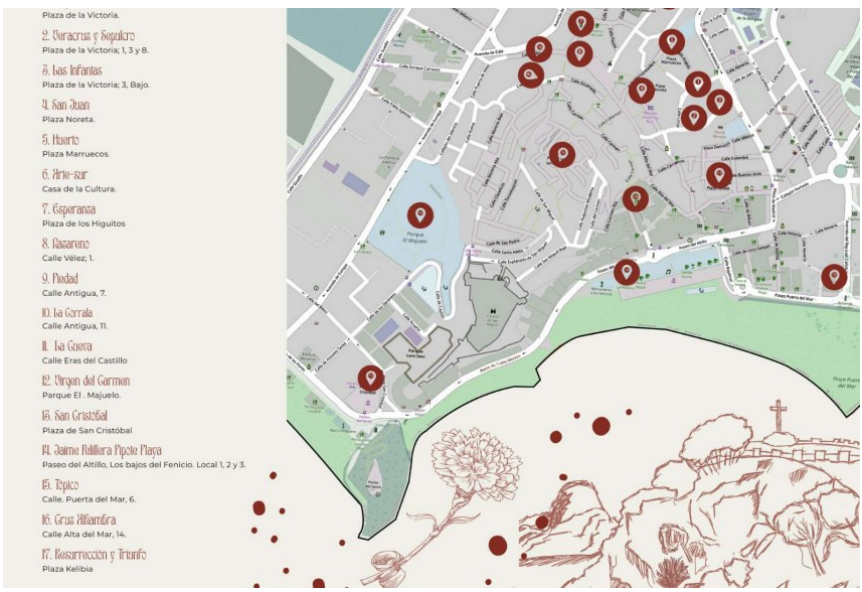
Cultural traditions are shared practices, symbols, and events passed down within communities to preserve a collective sense of identity. They may take the form of festivals, rituals, food-related usages, or oral expressions that mark significant moments in community life. In the classroom, these elements can support learning through rich knowledge that joins with students' experiences and backgrounds. As noted by Saville-Troike (1978), traditions and manners are part of broader cultural systems that reproduce the beliefs, values, and behaviours commonly accepted by a given community. Their presence in the classroom can influence how learners interpret meaning, relate to content, and learn communicative strategies. When culture is treated not as a distant object of study but as a living framework familiar to students, it cultivates both motivation and comprehension.

As it is being argued, traditions offer an opportunity to explore real communication When learners are encouraged to describe a celebration, explain a festival, or present a local practice in English, they not only practise linguistic skills but also develop their ability to interpret and communicate cultural meaning. In the case of ESP, where the aim is to prepare students for real-life interactions in professional fields, cultural content allows the simulation of tasks they may face in the workplace. Instead of focusing on abstract topics, students work with materials that show their surroundings and carry social relevance. When the content is familiar and professionally meaningful, learners tend to feel more actively and develop deeper relations with the language tasks. There are plenty of cultural performances suitable for being applied as didactic resources in ESP. From the most commonly used, such as Christmas or Halloween to the lesser, such as Holy Week Processions, or the decorated Crosses, *Las Cruces de mayo*. All of them represents a great opportunity to generate good learning.

3.3. *LAS CRUCES DE MAYO* IN THE ESP CLASS

Local events give a huge opportunity for teachers of ESP. The realia produced to promote these festivities include authentic linguistic performances that are very valuable for students. *Las Cruces de mayo*, a traditional festivity in *Almuñécar*, a coastal town in the south of Spain, belonging to the province of Granada in the Andalusia region. It is famous for its beaches and has long been a popular destination for people spending their holidays. It is an example of how local heritage can become a didactic resource in the classroom. This event involves a public contest of decorated crosses displayed in different neighbourhoods, accompanied by music, food and popular celebrations. The town council publishes printed and digital materials such as brochures, maps (Figure 1), event listings and public notices, all directed at visitors. Students can work with this material in different ways to practise communication tasks that reflect the demands of their academic and professional environment.

FIGURE 1. *Authentic triptych with the official itinerary*



Source: Ayuntamiento de Almuñécar

For example, they can prepare and present a short itinerary in English for international tourists who want to visit the most relevant crosses. They can translate and adapt it into English, write brief descriptive

texts, or design a leaflet for foreign visitors. It is also possible to plan a walking route using the map published on the municipal website, taking into account factors such as distance, accessibility or thematic links between locations. Furthermore, the class with authentic copies of the map (showing the location of the crosses), the list of participating groups, and the public spaces involved in the celebration, can analyse how the visual layout and cultural content of the documents aim to attract and guide tourists, connecting with the kind of communicative tasks they will be required to handle in their future roles. These real promotional files, designed for both local and visiting audiences, represents a clear case of genuine material that can be directly transferred to the classroom. Students, so far, can use this to practise various professional skills. Another useful task is to simulate a conversation between a tourist information assistant and a visitor who is asking about the celebration. The activities described before permit students to explore the linguistic and cultural dimensions of the event while applying vocabulary and structures used in real service situations. At the same time, they help them to develop practical abilities connected with guiding, informing and promoting local traditions in an international context. The use of *Las Cruces de mayo* in the ESP class creates a space where language, culture and professional identity meet.

4. THE DIDACTIC PROPOSAL

A didactic proposal is an organized plan that leads the teaching-learning process to achieve concrete educational objectives. It covers the selection and organisation of content, the teaching methods to be used, and the evaluation of results, aiming to create meaningful and effective learning experiences (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). On this regard, a didactic proposal, in language teaching, tackles with not only linguistic skills but also cultural, pragmatic, and professional aspects essential for communication in real contexts (Nunan, 2004). This section focuses on the development of language skills relevant to students' academic and professional context. It incorporates authentic materials, contextualised tasks, and learner-centred approaches that support both language proficiency and specialised knowledge. The

plan presented here builds on the cultural and real resources discussed previously, offering a practical framework for teaching ESP.

4.1. CONTEXT

In the Faculty of Business and Tourism, the Degree of Tourism incorporates, in its first year, the subject of *Inglés I*. It is a one-semester course with a total academic load of 60 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits. This approach is designed to a group of 45 students in order to improve people's linguistic abilities for their future jobs. Given the regional significance of tourism and the cultural richness of *Almuñécar*, this proposal involves *Las Cruces de mayo* as a local resource using both authentic and other resources. This combination facilitates relevant learning experiences through a cooperative methodology. This approach lets students to practice language that they will manage in their academic life and future work environments.

4.2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The main objective for students in this didactic proposal is:

a. To describe orally the distinctive features of *Las Cruces de mayo*.

In order to achieve it, others specific objectives have been planned:

a. To acquire linguistic vocabulary and structures used in this festivity.
b. To learn from other students cooperatively.
c. To prepare a guided tour.
d. To write a script for the cultural route.
e. To use the software *Padlet.*
f. To learn how to use a recording device.

On one hand, these aims improve both linguistic ability and practical communication about cultural heritage, increase students' understanding of local traditions, and prepare them for future careers. On the other hand, they will also be able to study a topic collaboratively, organising the work in groups, which will increase their teamwork and time

organizations skills while they promote a great understanding of the practical aspect of the topic.

4.3. CONTENT SELECTION AND PREPARATION

As it was explained in the previous sections, the selected materials contain official brochures, maps, digital resources and pictures published by the town council, which serve as original linguistic and cultural inputs. The key vocabulary related to the festivity includes:

- May cross (*cruz de mayo*), floral decoration (*decoración floral*), nets (*redes*), mantles (*mantos*), apple and knife (*manzana y cuchillo*), offering (*ofrenda*), Stew (*potaje*), broth (*caldo*), palm-shaped pastry (*palmera*), dates (*dátiles*), aroma (*aroma*), herbs (*hierbas*).

- The apple pierced with scissors (Figure 2) is a symbol meaning "without criticism to the cross," representing humility and reminding visitors not to be hard on criticism.

Functional sentences help students describe and present the festivity:

- This is the May cross of the fishermen's brotherhood, or from the neighbourhood. (*Esta es la Cruz de mayo de la cofradía de los pescadores, o del barrio).*

- Here it is presented dressed and decorated with a floral mantle. (*Aquí se les presenta vestida y adornada con un manto de flores).*

As you can see, around it you can observe typical objects and utensils from Granadian culture, specifically from Almuñécar. (Como pueden ver, a su alrededor pueden observar objetos y utensilios típicos de la cultura granadina y concretamente de la de Almuñécar).

The apple and the scissors stuck into it symbolize the calming of bad criticism. (La manzana y las tijeras clavadas en la misma tienen una simbología de aplacar las malas críticas).

You can observe how around the May cross chairs and tables have been set up to enjoy typical drinks and food of this season. (Pueden observar

cómo alrededor de la Cruz de mayo se han montado unas sillas y mesas para poder degustar bebidas y comidas típicas de esta época).

It is tradition to leave a small donation to cover the expenses of this event. (Es tradición dejar un pequeño donativo para sufragar los gastos que supone la realización de este evento.)

FIGURE 2. *The apple and the scissors stuck into it*



Source: Own authorship

4.4. METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

This didactic project is designed as a transversal activity integrated into the *Inglés I* course. Students dedicate 30 minutes each week, from September to December, to work on the project alongside the mandatory course contents. They are grouped into teams of five to motivate the students' cooperative learning. The first stage of the project involves

presenting the topic. For this reason, a brief brainstorming is designed. Using *Padlet* (Figure 3), they are called to answer the following questions:

– Do you know what *Las Cruces de mayo* is?

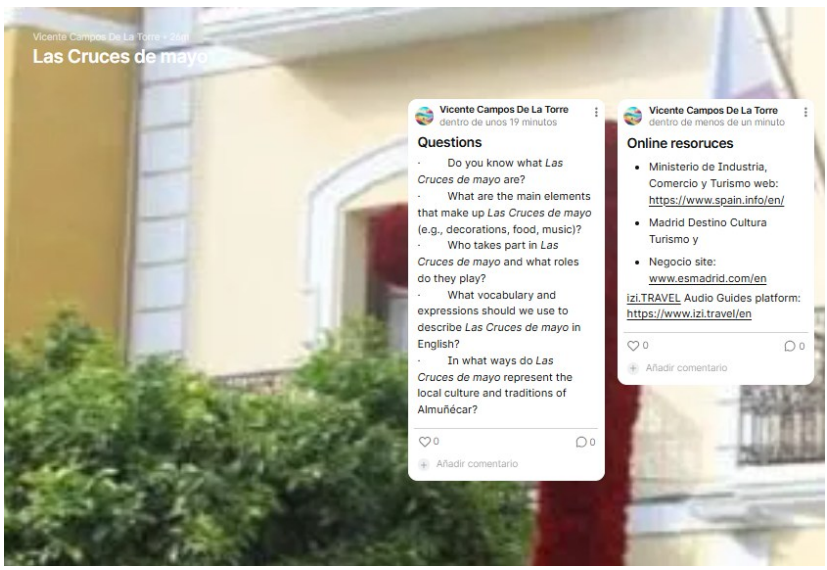
– What are the main elements that make up *Las Cruces de mayo* (e.g., decorations, food, music)?

– Who takes part in *Las Cruces de mayo* and what roles do they play?

– What vocabulary and expressions should we use to describe *Las Cruces de mayo* in English?

– In what ways do *Las Cruces de mayo* represent the local culture and traditions of the town?

FIGURE 3. *Brainstorming and Online resources with Padlet*



Source: Own authorship *Padlet*

Following the questionnaire, a series of images and brief videos must be cast to spark interest of *Las Cruces de mayo*. Before ending up, the next step is to consolidate common ideas about the theme. Each group will assign one member as the speaker, who will answer one of the previously proposed questions based on the information gathered.

Following this, the comparison of their responses will ensure the accuracy and quality of their learning.

After the presentation, another stage begins. Nowe people, in groups, are assigned to collect of information about official tourist guided tours. They are encouraged to use the authentic material they are given such as the triptych with the official itinerary, the itinerary, some pictures as well as to explore several online resources, including official tourism websites and audio guide platforms, such as:

- Ministerio de Industria, Comercio y Turismo web: https://www.spain.info/en/
- Madrid Destino Cultura Turismo y Negocio site: www.esmadrid.com/en izi.TRAVEL Audio Guides platform: https://www.izi.travel/en

Through this research, students study various aspects of these: vocabulary, sentences, duration, target audience, number of participants, and the typical length of the presentations. Finally, students consult another website, such as the *Ayuntamiento de Almuñécar's* page (https://www.visitalmunecar.es/eventos/cruces-de-mayo/), to get authentic vocabulary, cultural elements, and useful expressions related to the event. This makes it possible for students to work with materials based on real cultural settings and everyday language, using examples taken from real-life situations. To help them collect and organize their findings, students will be instructed to use more in detail on the *Padlet* application to create separate columns for each aspect of their research (e.g., vocabulary, target audience, cultural elements). As they put together the information, they will paste relevant excerpts, quotes, and vocabulary directly into the corresponding section on the software. For example, when students find useful phrases or words on the official website, they will add them to the "vocabulary" section. Moreover, they should link to any relevant resources, such as maps or event schedules, and provide brief notes explaining how the information relates to the event. This method allows students to track their progress and keep all the information organized for easy access and future reference. By the end of the research, each group will have a well-structured collection

of resources that they can use for their project tasks as well as for the evaluation of their learnings. Upcoming, students practise the new vocabulary, its pronunciation, and functional phrases through oral rehearsals, group discussions, and written drafts. This phase helps students gain confidence in using the target language in realistic settings, while also improving fluency and pronunciation. They are required to write and record their work each week to integrate all the elements they have learned and refine their texts. Following these practices, students present their tourist guide drafts orally in class. This stage allows them to further develop their presentation skills, focusing on aspects such as pronunciation, intonation, and clarity. Peer feedback and instructor input provide opportunities for self-assessment and further improvement. Finally, students record their guides to be submitted to the subject's virtual classroom and present them orally in front of the class, followed by group discussions and constructive feedback. This final speaking provides a platform for students to demonstrate their progress in both linguistic and cultural mediation skills.

In summary, this methodology helps the progressive acquisition of language skills, authentic language use, and cooperative learning. It links theoretical knowledge with practical application, preparing students to communicate effectively in real-life professional tourism contexts. The project not only develops students' linguistic competence but also gives them valuable experience in cultural mediation, public speaking, and content creation, skills that will be directly applicable in their future careers.

4.5. EVALUATION

Assessment is a systematic and rigorous process used to establish how far students reach the designed learning objectives. According to Scriven (1991), educational evaluation focuses on determining the value and effectiveness of educational programs and activities, providing essential information for making pedagogical decisions.

In this didactic project, the following aspects will be evaluated. The *Padlet* created by each group will be assessed looking for the quality and organization of the written collected information, as well as the students' ability to collaborate and synthesize relevant content.

Individual work will be evaluated by observing active participation, responsibility for assigned tasks, and their ability to contribute to the group's objectives. Class participation will be observed by examining students' involvement in the proposed activities, their willingness to share ideas, and their attitude toward collaborative learning.

The writing of the cultural tour script will be assessed in terms of clarity, coherence, and the appropriateness of the language used, along with the ability to structure the information in an engaging and professional manner. Finally, the final oral presentation (or oral guided tour) will be evaluated according to the following criteria and categories:

Clarity and coherence:

- Excellent: the guide is clear, well-organized, and uses precise language.
- Good: the guide is mostly clear, with some minor linguistics error.
- Satisfactory: the guide is somewhat unclear or disorganized at times, the use of language and sentences is not bad.
- Needs improvement: the guide is difficult to follow and lacks accuracy in both language and vocabulary.

Pronunciation and fluency:

- Excellent: pronunciation is excellent; speech is clear and easy to understand with minimal pauses.
- Good: pronunciation is generally clear, with occasional mispronunciations or pauses.
- Satisfactory: pronunciation is understandable but frequent mispronunciations or pauses occur.
- Needs improvement: pronunciation is unclear, making it difficult to understand with frequent pauses.

Body language:

Excellent: uses engaging body language that enhances the presentation.

Good: body language is appropriate and helps with engagement.

Satisfactory: body language is somewhat stiff or limited but still effective.

Needs improvement: body language is limited or distracting to the presentation.

Motivation and communication:

Excellent: fully involves the audience with clear, compelling explanations.

Good: motivates the audience most of the time, with some minor lapses in interest.

Satisfactory: motivation is inconsistent, with parts of the presentation feeling flat.

Needs improvement: fails to engage the audience, and the presentation is dull.

Cultural accuracy:

- Excellent: demonstrates a deep understanding of cultural elements.
- Good: shows a good understanding of cultural elements, with minor gaps.
- Satisfactory: basic understanding of cultural elements but lacks depth.
- Needs improvement: shows little understanding of cultural elements being discussed.

The final evaluation distribution will be as follow, the 50% final oral presentation or guided tour, 20% class participation (including attendance and active class action), 30% *Padlet* demonstrable work and its content (organization, quality of information, and group collaboration). It is important to note that this task of creating the tourist guide will account for 30% of the total grade for the subject.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *Las Cruces de mayo* serves as a valuable didactic resource in ESP courses. The incorporation of authentic materials and

local cultural elements provides students with real-life examples that directly tie up to their professional contexts. This approach improves students' language skills while supporting their understanding of the mankind cultural heritage, essential for their future roles in tourism. Throughout this proposal, they interact with genuine resources, allowing them to explore linguistic structures and specialized vocabulary. The cooperative tasks, such as writing cultural routes scripts and presenting them, promote critical thinking, teamwork, and communication, which are vital in professional contexts. The use of tools like *Padlet* supports students in organizing and synthesizing information, fostering a productive learning experience assisted new technologies. So, this didactic proposal shows the importance of linking academic knowledge with real-world application. The tasks not only support language development but also prepare students to address challenges in their future careers, equipping them with the communication skills needed to attract with diverse cultural perspectives and communicate local traditions to international audiences.

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USING FLIKI-GENERATED VIDEOS TO FOSTER FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN EFL CONTEXT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language instruction extends beyond the mastery of grammar and vocabulary, emphasizing the development of learners' skills to participate in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts through language that is both contextually appropriate and communicatively effective (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). As Zhou et al. (2024) acknowledge, it is crucial to develop intercultural communicative competence in undergraduate (English as a Foreign Language) EFL programs because effective communicative ability involves linguistic skill, cultural awareness, and the strategic use of English in intercultural interactions; therefore, instructional designs should prepare students to meaningfully apply language in diverse cultural contexts, moving well beyond mere grammar and vocabulary acquisition. Samatova (2024) also emphasizes that effective foreign language education transcends grammar and vocabulary acquisition, highlighting the importance of successful communication, cultural immersion, and teacher adaptability in fostering contextually appropriate and communicatively effective language use for learners. Furthermore, Sarnovska (2020) asserts that fluency in a foreign language is achieved through cultural cognition, thus highlighting the necessity of understanding cultural contexts and using language as a means of intercultural communication, surpassing the conventional emphasis on linguistic form and word knowledge. Certainly, the process of becoming proficient in a foreign language encompasses various elements, each of which may present distinct challenges.

Among the diverse aspects of foreign language acquisition, figurative language poses significant challenges for teachers and students (Kövecses & Szabó, 1996) because the figurative idiomatic structure of one language will not coincide with that of another. According to Yahia (2020), the instruction of figurative language in EFL contexts is challenging because learners often lack enough lexical knowledge, limiting their capacity to comprehend symbolic meanings across diverse social and linguistic settings. Moreover, Chen (2019) highlights that EFL students frequently face difficulties with figurative language, largely due to insufficient lexical resources that limit their comprehension and use of metaphorical and metonymic structures, which might be more evident at beginner proficiency levels. In addition, Hajiyeva (2024) asserts that idiomatic expressions are difficult for language learners because of their non-literal meanings, cultural specificity, and interference from the learners' first language, underlining the importance of adopting innovative instructional approaches to improve learners' comprehension and application of idioms across varied contexts. In this respect, Palmer et al. (2007) discuss the difficulties that English-language learners encounter when interpreting figurative language, largely due to cultural disparities; also, they underline the need for direct instructional strategies to support the comprehension of students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Different innovative methods, strategies, and resources can be incorporated to teach figurative language to EFL students. Additionally, integrating technology into instruction can foster meaningful, context-based engagement with non-literal expressions. As noted by Cabrera et al. (2025), the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in EFL settings provides multiple opportunities to support personalized learning experiences. Certainly, AI applications facilitate individualized learning by adapting to different learning styles and encouraging active involvement in language acquisition; this integration strengthens specific feedback and supports immersive academic engagement (Alharbi, 2024). According to Almeida and Simoes (2019), AI technologies personalize learning tasks by adjusting them to students' skill levels, thereby maintaining both challenge and motivation. As highlighted by Ma and Chen (2024), AI tools such as ChatGPT, Duolingo, and POE can significantly foster language learning

and reduce procrastination among EFL students because they benefit from adapted content and real-time feedback, which promotes enthusiasm and sustained engagement. In addition, generative AI (GenAI) has been increasingly recognized as an effective tool for driving meaningful educational reform, as highlighted by Cooper (2023). GenAI refers to a field within AI focused on generating novel content in various forms, including written text, visuals, and videos (Cao et al., 2023).

In this context, incorporating GenAI resources offers new alternatives for teaching figurative language, thereby enhancing EFL learners' comprehension. Certainly, these tools can generate dynamic and multimodal input that supports learners' interpretation of abstract concepts such as idioms, metaphors, and symbolism. Thus, Li and Zhao (2025) emphasize the value of combining visual, textual, and auditory information in aiding understanding of abstract and figurative language; they also assert that multimodal content has been shown to enhance metaphorical concept mapping from concrete to abstract domains, reinforcing learners' interpretive processes. Furthermore, by presenting nonliteral expressions within authentic communicative scenarios, AI-generated content can foster contextualized learning and deeper understanding, which contributes to more meaningful and transferable EFL language acquisition outcomes. Among the AI applications available for EFL instruction, Fliki stands out for its capacity to produce instructional videos that educators can employ to facilitate content presentation (Ruiz-Rojas et al., 2023). However, despite the promising potential of AI tools, empirical research examining their impact on figurative language learning in South American EFL contexts remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by exploring the effectiveness of Fliki-generated videos in enhancing students' comprehension and use of figurative language in an online academic setting.

1.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Several recent studies have explored the role of technological tools and AI-generated content to enhance EFL or ESL language learning. Xu et al. (2024) conducted an experimental study to evaluate the effectiveness of AI-generated instructional videos (AIIV) compared to

traditional recorded videos (RV) in English language learning. The study involved 76 university students in Xi'an, China, who were randomly assigned to learn English vocabulary through either AIIV or RV. The AI-generated videos were developed using a pipeline that included GPT-based text generation, text-to-speech, and lip-synching technologies to simulate a human instructor. Learning outcomes were assessed through retention and transfer tests, along with subjective measures covering cognitive, emotional, motivational, and social dimensions. Results showed that both groups performed similarly in overall learning outcomes, but the AIIV group demonstrated higher retention. However, there was no significant difference in knowledge transfer between the two groups. Students who watched RVs reported a stronger sense of social presence, while perceptions of the AIIVs were slightly less favorable, particularly concerning authenticity. Despite this, AIIVs were still considered moderately to highly effective by learners. The study concludes that AI-generated videos can be a viable alternative to traditional video instruction, offering scalable, flexible, and accessible solutions for language education.

Alhusaiyan (2025) conducted a systematic review to explore emerging trends in artificial intelligence (AI) in foreign language learning, with a particular focus on the EFL context. The study aimed to analyze the effectiveness and pedagogical implications of AI-assisted learning systems by reviewing 15 empirical studies published between 2011 and 2022. The research adopted Activity Theory as a conceptual framework and followed the PRISMA method to ensure methodological rigor and transparency in the selection of articles. The reviewed studies highlighted the benefits of AI tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, automatic writing evaluation, and conversational agents to enhance learners' writing skills, engagement, and personalized learning. However, the findings also revealed ongoing challenges, particularly in fostering dialogic competence and collaborative communication. While AI showed strong potential in supporting individual learning and automating feedback, its full pedagogical value depended significantly on teacher configuration and contextual integration. The study concluded that although AI technologies can complement traditional instruction and restructure

teacher workload, further empirical research is needed to examine their effectiveness in real-world classroom environments and to develop best practices for integrating AI into hybrid language learning models.

Leiker et al. (2023) investigated the educational potential of generative AI by evaluating the impact of synthetic learning videos on content acquisition and learner experience in an online adult education context. The study employed a mixed-methods approach with 83 adult participants who were randomly assigned to either a control group, which viewed a traditionally produced instructor video, or an experimental group, which watched an AI-generated video featuring a realistic AI presenter. Both groups completed pre- and post-tests and responded to surveys regarding their learning experience. The results revealed that learners in both groups demonstrated significant improvement from pre- to post-learning ($p < .001$), with no statistically significant differences in knowledge gains ($p = .80$) or perceived learning experiences between the two formats. These findings indicate that AI-generated videos can match the effectiveness of traditional instructional videos in terms of content delivery and learner satisfaction. The authors conclude that AI-generated synthetic videos offer a promising, scalable solution for producing quality educational content, especially in online learning environments where accessibility and efficiency are crucial. This positions generative AI as a viable tool for broadening access to instructional resources.

Alkhammash (2022) examined how key factors influence figurative language comprehension among native English speakers and EFL learners, focusing on idioms and metaphors. The study included 123 participants, involving native English speakers and two groups of EFL learners (54 Arabic L1 students at a Saudi university and 43 others from various L1 backgrounds). Using 88 figurative expressions (English idioms, novel metaphors, and idioms translated from other languages), participants rated each phrase's familiarity and guessability, attempted to select its correct meaning, and then rated its transparency (clarity of the phrase–meaning connection). This design yielded measures of familiarity, transparency, figurative meaning comprehension, and decomposability. The results showed that familiarity was a strong predictor of perceived transparency. An interaction between familiarity and

transparency best explained whether participants could correctly infer an idiom's meaning, and correctly interpreting a phrase led to higher subsequent transparency and decomposability ratings. These findings underscore challenges EFL learners face with figurative language. Phrases low in familiarity and transparency proved most difficult for learners to understand. In contrast, idioms that overlapped with learners' L1 were perceived as more familiar and transparent, facilitating comprehension. The researcher concludes that highly familiar idioms may not require intensive instruction, whereas classroom time should prioritize figurative expressions that are unfamiliar or opaque. By focusing on these difficult idioms and using cognitive-linguistic approaches to highlight their underlying meanings, EFL instructors can better allocate teaching time and help learners grasp and use English figurative expressions more effectively.

Marabyan (2024) outlined a pedagogical reading strategy for literature courses aimed at helping university students (especially EFL learners) better comprehend and analyze literary symbolism and figurative language. The study details an instructional approach that integrates literary theory (e.g., semiotic and archetypal frameworks) with hands-on student engagement. Key components include guiding students to identify recurring motifs, examine symbols in cultural and historical context, and employ digital tools (e.g., text search) to facilitate symbolic analysis. According to the researcher, this multifaceted method is reported to strengthen learners' figurative language comprehension and reading strategies by connecting figurative devices to underlying symbolic meanings in texts, thereby improving overall reading comprehension and interpretive skills. The study concludes that embracing diverse interpretations and contextual inquiry, while blending traditional and modern analytical techniques, ultimately cultivates critical thinking and more insightful literary reading among university EFL students. Certainly, the strategy's emphasis on cultural context and multiple interpretations is especially beneficial for EFL learners who need to understand English literary symbols and metaphors.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To determine the impact of Fliki-generated videos on EFL learners' comprehension of figurative language.
- To explore EFL learners' perceptions of using Fliki-generated videos as a tool for learning figurative language.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study were 41 EFL students enrolled in the seventh semester of a TEFL program at a private university in Ecuador. Their English proficiency levels ranged from B1 to B2, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). All participants were registered in an online Semantics and Pragmatics course, which included both synchronous sessions and asynchronous activities hosted on the university's virtual learning platform. Students participated voluntarily and were informed of the academic purpose of the research, as well as the ethical considerations related to confidentiality and data use.

3.2. INSTRUMENTS

A diagnostic questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the course; this instrument aimed to collect background information on students' previous exposure to figurative language and the use of video-based materials in EFL learning. The results helped to plan the intervention and the design of the instructional resources.

A perception questionnaire was used to evaluate students' attitudes toward the use of Fliki-generated videos in learning figurative language. This instrument consisted of 10 Likert-scale items.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 8 participants. These interviews were useful to gather qualitative insights regarding learners' experiences with the AI-generated videos.

All instruments were subjected to expert validation and pilot testing before their official administration, ensuring their reliability and alignment with the study's research questions.

3.3. PROCEDURE

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore the impact of Fliki-generated videos on the comprehension and use of figurative language in EFL students. The intervention was implemented during 12 weeks in three stages. First, participants completed a diagnostic questionnaire to establish their prior knowledge and learning profiles. Based on these results, the instructional design incorporated videos created using the tool Fliki.AI, which is a platform that transforms written scripts into narrated, animated video content. These videos included contextual explanations and examples of idioms, metaphors, oxymorons, and symbolism in authentic communicative settings. During the instructional phase, students engaged with these videos as part of weekly activities. After viewing, they completed brief online quizzes and written tasks designed to reinforce comprehension and encourage the application of figurative expressions in written activities. These tasks were completed asynchronously, and students received feedback from the instructor to support language development. In the final stage, a perceptions questionnaire was administered to all participants to evaluate their overall experience and opinions of the video-based instruction. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subgroup of learners to explore their views associated with the use of Fliki-generated videos and follow-up tasks in their course.

4. RESULTS

The results of the diagnostic questionnaire revealed important aspects of students' prior experiences with figurative language and video-based learning tools. A significant percentage of participants (48.78%) reported having received limited formal instruction on figurative language, particularly on metaphors and idioms. Also, 95.12% of students indicated that they had previously been exposed to video materials, although not specifically designed to teach figurative language.

Remarkably, only 24.39% of students had some experience using AI-generated videos for language learning. Despite this, 92.68% expressed interest and openness toward integrating AI-based tools into their EFL instruction. Additionally, 95.12% confirmed they would like to engage with AI-generated resources within the online platform. These results provided valuable elements to design the intervention.

The table below displays the findings derived from the perception questionnaire, which assessed participants' viewpoints on the effectiveness of Fliki-generated videos as a pedagogical tool to foster figurative language learning.

TABLE 1: *Students' perceptions*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Fliki videos helped me better understand figurative language in English.	73.17%	21.95%	4.88%	0.00%	0.00%
2. Watching the explanations in the videos improved my ability to recognize idiomatic expressions.	70.73%	21.95%	7.32%	0.00%	0.00%
3. The examples presented in the videos clarified the meaning of metaphors and oxymorons.	80.48%	12.2%	7.32%	0.00%	0.00%
4. Completing short quizzes or tasks after watching the videos helped me understand figurative language more easily.	73.17%	24.39%	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%
5. I felt more confident using figurative language in my tasks after watching the videos and completing the activities assigned by my teacher.	82.92%	12.2%	4.88%	0.00%	0.00%
6. The video-based activities made learning figurative language more enjoyable and motivated me to participate with greater enthusiasm.	80.48%	12.2%	7.32%	0.00%	0.00%
7. I found the Fliki-generated videos and follow-up tasks effective for learning figurative language.	82.92%	12.2%	4.88%	0.00%	0.00%
8. The videos helped me understand symbolism in authentic communicative contexts and apply figurative language in my written tasks.	80.48%	14.64%	4.88%	0.00%	0.00%

9. The feedback from my teacher helped me use figurative language more accurately.	73.17%	24.39%	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%
10. I would recommend using Fliki-generated videos in other English language courses.	82.92%	14.64%	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration

Summary of Interviews

The interview data reinforced the findings obtained through the perceptions questionnaire, highlighting that participants viewed the integration of Fliki-generated videos as an effective approach to learning figurative language. Thus, they consistently emphasized that the flexibility of pausing, replaying, and reviewing video content enhanced their motivation and allowed them to engage with the material at their own pace. This autonomy enabled them to revisit complex expressions and symbolic meanings, promoting deeper comprehension. Learners also noted that watching the Fliki videos along with developing the follow-up activities contributed to a more personalized learning experience, facilitating both recognition and application of figurative language in authentic contexts. Furthermore, students mentioned that the combination of video-based input, complementary tasks, and teacher feedback played a central role in helping them use figurative expressions more confidently and accurately in their written assignments. Nevertheless, a few students expressed concerns regarding occasional difficulties they experienced in processing information, which they attributed to the fast pace of video narration or the density of abstract content presented in certain segments.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings from the diagnostic questionnaire offer key insights into participants' prior exposure to figurative language instruction and their familiarity with video-based resources in academic settings. Nearly half of the participants (48.78%) reported that they had received limited formal instruction in figurative language, particularly regarding metaphors and idioms. This suggests a noticeable need for explicit teaching of non-

literal language. In contrast, an overwhelming majority (95.12%) indicated previous exposure to video materials, although these had not been specifically designed to support figurative language learning. This highlights the growing presence of multimedia resources in EFL contexts and the opportunities for targeted pedagogical use of such tools. It is important to observe that a low percentage (24.39%) of students had experience using AI-generated videos for language learning purposes, highlighting the possibility for implementations with emerging educational technologies. Nevertheless, students expressed a high degree of openness to innovation, with 92.68% showing willingness to integrate AI-based tools into their learning process and an equal 95.12% stating their interest in engaging with AI-generated content through the virtual platform. This revealed students' enthusiasm to explore technology-enhanced strategies for developing their figurative language skills. In this respect, Kumar (2023) acknowledges that students find AI tools engaging and beneficial for improving their English language proficiency.

The data from the perceptions questionnaire reveal a strong agreement among students regarding the positive impact of Fliki videos on their understanding and use of figurative language. A significant 73.17% of participants strongly agreed, while an additional 21.95% agreed that Fliki videos helped them better understand figurative language in English. Only 4.88% expressed a neutral perspective, and no participants expressed disagreement. These results suggest that the AI-generated videos were perceived as beneficial to facilitate the comprehension of non-literal language, an area often regarded as particularly challenging for EFL learners. Interviews also corroborated that learners highlighted the flexibility of the resources used, which allowed them to revisit video content and promoted deeper comprehension. These findings align with those by Cabrera et al. (2025), which emphasize that Fliki AI videos can enhance comprehension of linguistic concepts and promote personalized learning.

Regarding the explanations in the AI-generated videos, a combined total of 92.68% of students either strongly agreed (70.73%) or agreed (21.95%) that the video-based explanations played a key role in facilitating the recognition of idiomatic expressions. The fact that no

participants disagreed and only 7.32% selected a neutral option reflects a high degree of consensus around the usefulness of audiovisual input for improving figurative language comprehension. Interview data further reinforced this finding, with several students noting that they were able to identify and understand idiomatic expressions more confidently after engaging with the video materials. This means that AI-enhanced instruction allows presenting content clearly and deepens learners' ability to interpret and apply complex language forms in meaningful ways. These results support existing research that highlights the pedagogical advantages of integrating AI in language education since it enables students' learning experiences, improving the transparency of content delivery and reinforcing their capacity to understand and use complex language structures effectively, while also encouraging engagement and sustained advancement in language development (Singha et al., 2024).

As for the examples presented in the videos, most students (80.48%) strongly agreed, and an additional 12.2% agreed that the examples included clarified the meaning of metaphors and oxymorons. Only 7.32% expressed a neutral position, while nobody disagreed. This reflects that perceptions were positive among participants regarding the benefits provided by the Fliki-generated content. This aligns with findings from the interviews, where participants reported that the videos presented figurative language within realistic communicative situations, which allowed them to internalize the meanings more effectively than through traditional explanations. These results are consistent with those reported by Islam et al. (2014), which support the effectiveness of video-based instruction in enhancing students' ability to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Also, students were asked about follow-up activities; in this respect, most of them indicated that those tasks were helpful to reinforce their understanding of figurative language, with 73.17% strongly agreeing and 24.39% agreeing. Only 2.44% remained neutral, and no one disagreed. These findings suggest that the combination of short quizzes and tasks with video content served as an effective reinforcement tool. Interview data confirmed this perception, as students highlighted that completing these activities after watching the videos enhanced

comprehension and supported personalized learning since they could immediately apply what they had learned. In this respect, Leiker et al. (2023) affirm that the combination of video content with follow-up tasks reinforces understanding and supports language learning experiences.

Furthermore, most students experienced increased confidence in using figurative language after engaging with the videos and completing related activities. Thus, 82.92% of participants strongly agreed, and 12.2% agreed, while 4.88% remained neutral. These responses suggest that the video input, followed by guided tasks, was positively perceived. Interview responses supported this finding, as students noted that the combination of visual input, interactive practice, and teacher feedback helped them apply expressions more accurately and with greater self-confidence in their written work. Concerning this aspect, Lin and Liu (2024) assert that AI-generated videos can enhance EFL learners' comprehension by providing flexibility to revisit video content at their own convenience.

The results also indicate that the video-based activities had a positive effect on students' motivation and enjoyment during the learning process. A strong majority (80.48%) strongly agreed and 12.2% agreed that the videos made learning figurative language more enjoyable and encouraged greater participation, while 7.32% selected a neutral response. These findings suggest that the integration of AI-generated videos supported comprehension and enhanced learners' emotional engagement. The interviews corroborated this view, with students describing the content as dynamic and flexible, allowing them to learn at their own pace while maintaining interest and enthusiasm throughout the course. This aligns with the findings by Kumar (2023), which highlight that AI tools have a positive impact on students' learning achievements, engagement, and motivation.

Moreover, the majority of participants expressed strong agreement (82.92%) and agreement (12.2%) concerning the effectiveness of the Fliki-generated videos and follow-up tasks for learning figurative language, while 4.88% remained neutral, and nobody disagreed. These results suggest that students viewed the implementation of video input and post-viewing tasks as a meaningful and well-structured approach to support both comprehension and application of figurative language.

Interview data reinforced this perception, as learners emphasized that the examples, explanations, and tasks provided clear guidance, reinforcing their understanding through active engagement. These findings are consistent with those reported by Pellas (2025), which demonstrated that AI-generated instructional videos effectively support self-efficacy, task performance, and knowledge retention.

Regarding the usefulness of the videos in helping students understand symbolism and apply figurative language in written tasks, 80.48% of participants strongly agreed, 14.64% agreed, 4.88% remained neutral, and none disagreed. These results suggest that the Fliki-generated videos successfully contextualized symbolic expressions, making abstract content more accessible. Interview findings confirmed this perspective, as students highlighted that the use of authentic communicative contexts within the videos enabled them to transfer figurative expressions more confidently into their assignments. As Cabrera et al. (2025) highlight, Fliki AI videos are valuable learning resources that provide clear explanations, examples, and visual representations of complex linguistic concepts.

In addition, participants' responses emphasized the importance of teacher feedback in supporting accurate use of figurative language. Most students (73.17% strongly agreed and 24.39% agreed) recognized feedback as a valuable element in their learning, while 2.44% remained neutral and none disagreed. These results confirm that instructional guidance complemented the video-based content effectively. Interview data further supported this perception, with students noting that receiving feedback helped them refine their use of figurative expressions in writing tasks. This highlights the importance of combining AI-generated materials with personalized teacher support to enhance precision and learner confidence in language production. In line with these results, Gonzalez-Torres et al. (2022) affirm that timely, well-informed teacher feedback, especially when complemented by technology-enhanced instruction, plays a fundamental role in supporting EFL learners.

Finally, 82.92% of students strongly agreed and 14.64% agreed that they would recommend using AI-generated videos in other English language courses, while only 2.44% responded neutrally and none disagreed. This reflects students' positive experiences with the integration of video content, particularly in terms of its flexibility, engagement, and

pedagogical relevance. The results of the interview support this view, with students emphasizing that the videos not only supported comprehension but also enhanced motivation and autonomy. In this regard, the research conducted by Xu et al. (2024) demonstrated that AI-generated content (AIGC) can be an effective tool for learning.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Fliki-generated videos significantly support EFL learners' comprehension of figurative language, facilitating their understanding of idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and oxymorons through multiple forms of presentation and contextualized examples.

The integration of quizzes and follow-up tasks after watching Fliki videos effectively reinforces EFL students' knowledge, providing adequate opportunities to process and apply figurative language expressions in a meaningful way.

AI video-based instruction combined with practice-oriented activities enhances not only recognition but also productive use of non-literal language. Thus, students can increase confidence in using figurative expressions in their written tasks.

The use of AI had a positive impact on learners' motivation by making the acquisition of figurative language more enjoyable and encouraging active participation in course tasks. As a result, students perceived Fliki videos as valuable instructional resources through which symbolism and other abstract concepts were effectively contextualized.

Teacher feedback, in combination with the video-enhanced learning experience, played a key role in guiding students toward more accurate and confident use of figurative language, indicating the importance of instructional support and interaction in AI-assisted language learning environments.

This study has several limitations. It was conducted at a single institution with 41 EFL learners, which may limit generalizability. In addition, the intervention period did not allow for long-term tracking of language retention. Also, it was not possible to have a control group, making it difficult to isolate the effect of the AI-generated videos.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, this research offers valuable pedagogical implications. Students' positive perceptions suggest that AI tools like Fliki can enhance participation, comprehension, and confidence in learning figurative language. The use of AI videos, interactive tasks, and feedback supports and enriches EFL instruction. Future studies might explore its impact across diverse contexts and long-term language development.

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EMPLEO DE LA IA EN REDACCIONES EN INGLÉS: SUGERENCIAS PARA UN APRENDIZAJE "POLÍTICAMENTE CORRECTO"

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

En la actualidad la revolución tecnológica provocada por la irrupción de la Inteligencia Artificial (IA) es de tal magnitud y su crecimiento tan vertiginoso, que en ocasiones resulta complicado mantenerse al corriente del lanzamiento de muchas aplicaciones útiles para la docencia. No obstante, de todos es bien sabido que *ChatGPT* comenzó su andadura en noviembre de 2022 y desde entonces, otras herramientas han continuado su estela, desde *Gemini*, *Copilot*, *Deepseek*, *Claude*, *GoogleNotebook LM*, *Perplexity* o *Notion*, entre otras. Todas ellas han permeado el ámbito de la enseñanza y aprendizaje de segundas lenguas, especialmente a la hora de resolver dudas lingüísticas, traducir textos, elaborar listas terminológicas e incluso practicar el idioma en directo gracias a *chatbots* apoyados por IA como *Elsa*, *Neo*, *Orai*, *Replika*, *Praktika*, *Talkpal* o *Mondly*.

Entre sus aspectos más positivos destaca el hecho de que imitan situaciones comunicativas en escenarios semireales a través de avatares con los que el aprendiz puede sentirse cómodo y seguro, planteando dudas sin el temor a ser juzgado y sin que sus errores sean férreamente penalizados. En última instancia, esto permite reducir el filtro afectivo del aprendiz hacia la lengua objeto de estudio (Fryer et al., 2017; Johnson, 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Smith, 2021; Ortiz, 2023), y acelerar su progreso cuando se combina con un cierto grado de regularidad. A largo plazo, esta constancia redunda en una mayor autonomía del aprendizaje, lo que promovería a su vez la competencia "aprender a aprender"

(Consejo de Europa, 2006; Keerthiwansha, 2018; Chen, 2018; Gawate, 2019; Yong, 2020; Liang et al., 2021; Davis, 2021). En esta misma línea, aplicaciones como *Duolingo*, *Busuu* o *Babbel* permiten a muchos usuarios aprender un idioma desde la base, incluso sin haber disfrutado de un contacto previo. Asimismo, la mayoría de ellas han ido perfeccionando sus interfaces a lo largo del tiempo, incorporando funciones de reconocimiento de voz y Procesamiento del lenguaje natural (NLP por sus siglas en inglés) que permiten desarrollar variables como la pronunciación o la fluidez, antaño inconcebibles, y que constituían algunas de sus principales flaquezas según los usuarios (Haristiani, 2019; Na, 2021; Rusmiyanto et al., 2023).

Desde un punto de vista meramente metodológico, plataformas como *EdTech* o *Socratic* facilitan la docencia mediante la planificación de las lecciones a partir de la introducción de *prompts* que especifican la temporalización, los contenidos o los objetivos de las actividades (Koraishi, 2023). Huelga decir, que la IA sirve además como un apoyo indiscutible en la corrección de trabajos y exámenes, así como en la provisión de retroalimentación automática (Runyon et al., 2022; Khan Academy, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; Flores-Vivar y García-Peñalvo, 2023). Este atajo permite ahorrar tiempo a los docentes, un tiempo que puede destinarse a mejorar los procesos de enseñanza y a proporcionar, por ende, un trato más personalizado a los discentes (Roig Vila et al, 2023).

No obstante, no cabe duda de que la IA ha planteado también una serie de retos y desafíos, entre ellos, el perjuicio que supone a la legitimidad de las producciones de índole intelectual (Sharples, 2022; Villarubia, 2023; Alejaldre, 2023) junto con la incursión en el plagio (Else, 2023; O'Connor y ChatGPT, 2023). En los últimos años, profesionales del ámbito académico han avistado cómo los discentes hacían un uso patente y desmesurado de la IA en sus redacciones en inglés como lengua extrajera (ILE), perceptible sobre todo en el uso de estructuras muy superiores al nivel real del estudiante. En efecto, estas acciones no solo atentaban contra la fiabilidad y la igualdad de condiciones entre compañeros, sino que impedía además conocer sus carencias lingüísticas reales, y por consiguiente, poder brindarles un seguimiento consecuente y coherente con sus necesidades. Es por este motivo por el que se

decidió integrar y permitir el empleo de la IA en las tareas de expresión escrita en inglés en el ámbito universitario, tratando de garantizar que su uso resultara fructuoso en lugar de resultar pernicioso para el aprendizaje mediante un procedimiento de corrección apoyado por IA.

1.1. LA IA COMO BAZA EN LA EXPRESIÓN ESCRITA

Pese a las vicisitudes planteadas, la IA es capaz de proveer de numerosas "bondades" en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras (Crompon y Burke, 2023; Muñoz-Basols y Fuertes Gutiérrez, 2024), no solo ya en la expresión escrita, sino también en otras destrezas lingüísticas, tales como en la comprensión auditiva (Annamalai et al., 2023); en el incremento del léxico (Zheng et al., 2015); el desarrollo de la expresión oral (Dizon y Tang, 2020); la mejora de la pronunciación (Shivakumar et al., 2019); la autorregulación del aprendizaje (Lee et al., 2023); la provisión de un aprendizaje adaptado (Hew et al., 2023), e incluso en el abordaje de la ansiedad al producir *output* de corte oral (Chen et al., 2022).

Es por esta razón por la que Yanhua (2020) y Sun et al. (2021) concluyen que recurrir a la IA en esta disciplina favorece un estilo de aprendizaje individualizado y cooperativo. Todo radica en el modo, el contexto y los fines para los que se utilice, por lo que es necesario "descubrir formas de usarla con sentido y conciencia" (Selwyn et al., 2022, p. 143). En el campo de la expresión escrita concretamente, la lista de aplicaciones es interminable, entre ellas: *Write & Improve, Grammarly, TypeAI, Quillbot, SudoWrite, ProWriting Aid, Textio, AI Writer, Textly AI, Essaybot*, *Paperpal*, *Writefull*, *Jenni*, *Writesonic*, *Scisopace*, *Textcortex*, *Outwrite,* etc. Este tipo de plataformas pueden ayudar al estudiante a generar ideas a modo de lluvia de ideas antes de comenzar a escribir un ensayo (Araujo, 2013); establecer un tono o registro más apropiados; adecuarlo a la tipología textual requerida o la función comunicativa deseada, reformular, parafrasear, etc., (Lee, 2023). Es más, los estudios de Chon et al. (2021) y Lo (2023) corroboraron los beneficios de *Google Translate* como proveedor de modelos de referencia para aprender a escribir correctamente en inglés, mientras que Koraishi (2023) alabó la capacidad de *ChatGPT* para generar fragmentos de texto y audio en concordancia con los descriptores del Marco Común

Europeo de Referencia con el que está familiarizado. Paralelamente, Chong (2021) ahondó en los beneficios derivados de implementar un modelo mixto (*blended*) de escritura en inglés apoyado por IA y constató que esta herramienta la había reforzado considerablemente.

Otro aspecto importante implícito a la IA es el factor motivación. Investigaciones recientes como las de Winkler y Söllner (2018) y Zhao y Cai (2021), verificaron que los estudiantes asumen las tareas con mayor diligencia y autoeficacia si disponen de esta tecnología. Igualmente, el trabajo de Roig-Vila et al. (2023) en torno al uso de *ChatGPT* para incentivar el trabajo colaborativo en la Universidad de Alicante, ratificó que un 92% de su estudiantado se sentía más aliviado e interesado si podían recurrir a este soporte.

En efecto, tal y como revela la encuesta elaborada por Edmett et al. (2024, p. 47) bajo el patrocinio del British Council con 1.348 profesores de 118 países, un 76% de los participantes entrevistados corroboró que la IA podía ayudar a mejorar la expresión escrita, si bien aconsejaban no depender de ella sobremanera. De hecho, un 70% matizaba que los estudiantes deberían ser capaces de escribir en inglés sin ayuda de la IA. En respuesta a este enunciado, uno de los participantes, Rodney Jones, puntualizaba que cuando los egresados ingresan en el mercado laboral deben redactar propuestas, informes y proyectos en equipos de trabajo. Sin embargo, en la universidad temen escribir colaborativamente porque no confían en el trabajo de uno de sus pares, a lo que se añade una interacción limitada con el docente. En contraposición, hallan amparo en *ChatGPT* con el que pueden interactuar las 24 horas del día y que les señala los errores en forma de borradores sobre los que el alumno puede tomar conciencia y refinar paulatinamente, de modo que se incide en el proceso constructivo de andamiaje sobre el producto final (Edmett, 2024, p. 47).

En líneas generales, podría afirmarse que incorporar la tecnología a los procesos de expresión escrita ha provisto de resultados positivos desde sus inicios según la literatura científica examinada (Dafton y Hannafin, 1987; Wolfe et al., 1996). De acuerdo con Martín-Marchante (2022, p. 20), los metaanálisis que han comparado la enseñanza de escritura, con y sin procesamiento de texto, exhiben que la calidad de los trabajos se

ve sustancialmente fortalecida, en especial, entre los estudiantes de menor rendimiento. Por ejemplo, ya en la década de los ochenta y noventa, los docentes percibieron los procesadores de texto como *Microsoft Word* como un instrumento prometedor, sobre todo, en lo que a la revisión se refería (McArthur, 2009). Y es que tal y como sostiene Pokrivcakova (2019), el poder de revisión de la IA es incalculable, ya que subraya errores de toda índole dentro del texto, sugiere recomendaciones de mejora, y en ocasiones redirige incluso a recursos externos para que el aprendiz continúe estudiando en modalidad autodidacta.

Wilson (2014) también se suma a esta afirmación cuando declara que el *feedback* automático ayuda a los docentes con ciertos problemas relativos al proceso de escritura y revisión, como el establecimiento de un diagnóstico precoz que permita amoldar el proceso de escritura a lo largo del curso. Wang (2020), por su parte, indagó en el modo en que la expresión escrita en inglés como LE se podía nutrir de la retroalimentación automática (AEE, *Automated Assessment and Evaluation*) dentro de su curso de lectura y escritura en una universidad china. Los resultados revelaron que los sistemas de corrección automática habían ayudado a mejorar la habilidad escrita de sus estudiantes desde primer hasta cuarto curso, cultivando el interés y la confianza en sus propias capacidades y optimizando constructos como el refinamiento gramatical; la ampliación de vocabulario; el uso apropiado de la lengua; la variedad sintáctica; la fluidez, así como la organización y estructura del texto.

González-Rodríguez y Álvarez Mosquera (2020) realzan asimismo el papel de la "información de retorno" o retroalimentación que proporcionan estos sistemas en la mejora de la competencia retórica, a lo que se suman los estudios de Dizon y Gayed (2021) y Nazari et al. (2021) al confirmar que la aplicación *Grammarly* contribuía a pulir la expresión escrita, ya que los estudiantes tendían a cometer menos errores tras su intervención. Similarmente, Chen y Warden (2019) atestiguaron que recurrir a plataformas como *SMOOC* (*Small Open Online Course*) y *QPR* (*Quick Research Papers technologies*) había ayudado a sus alumnos en la redacción de temas abstractos en los cursos de posgrado, pues les hacía más conscientes de los errores cometidos y las causas detrás de ellos. De igual modo, la profesora Hendrickson también alentó a sus

alumnos a usar *ChatGPT* en sus redacciones en la Universidad de Leeds con objeto de robustecer su escritura académica y fomentar la reflexión alrededor de las capacidades y limitaciones inherentes de la IA (Renbarger, 2023).

1.2. LA IA COMO LASTRE EN LA EXPRESIÓN ESCRITA

En palabras de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara et al. (2023), los sistemas de IA "suponen un importante desafío para la enseñanza de lenguas, y en concreto, para el trabajo de la expresión escrita y el desarrollo de la escritura creativa" (p. 2). Es más, el pensamiento creativo se ha incorporado recientemente como competencia evaluable en PISA (OCDE, 2019), lo que la convierte en una dimensión aun más relevante si cabe (*ibid*., 2023). No obstante, estos mismos autores dirigieron un minucioso estudio acerca de la capacidad creativa de la IA frente a la humana en producciones escritas a través de dos juegos en los que se solicitaba que hicieran "una lista sobre todas las cosas para las que podría servir un tubo de goma" (juego nº 2) y que imaginaran "qué pasaría si las personas nunca dejasen de crecer" (juego nº 3) (*ibid.*, 2023, p. 5). Para ello valoraron parámetros como la fluidez, la flexibilidad y la originalidad narrativa en las muestras de 193 estudiantes matriculados en tres universidades españolas con respecto a 20 sistemas de Modelo de Lenguaje Grande con tecnología OpenAI/GPT-3, entre ellas, *ChatGPT*.

Los resultados arrojaron que las puntuaciones de la IA en el juego nº 2 eran superiores a las provistas por los alumnos, entre otros motivos porque la IA posee una ingente cantidad de información y si ser creativo implica buscar soluciones prácticas a problemas, la IA se sitúa en una posición aventajada (Goleman et al., 2016). Sin embargo, la IA y las puntuaciones del alumnado fueron bastante similares en el juego nº3, lo que denotaba diferencias estadísticas mínimas entre la inteligencia humana y la artificial.

Si bien demostraron que las producciones escritas de los alumnos habían mejorado exponencialmente gracias al uso de *ChatGPT*, al final de su artículo de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara et al. (2023) reconocieron que la creatividad humana es irremplazable, en especial, cuando se trata de elaborar historias fantasiosas o narrativas que precisan de un mayor

grado de imaginación. Naturalmente, la IA carece de esta cualidad (Munari, 2018), pues entran en juego otras variables como el contexto sociocultural y las experiencias vitales en las que la flexibilidad es clave frente a la rigidez técnica de las máquinas. En este sentido, Holmes et al. (2019) insisten en que existen funciones específicas que solo los humanos pueden acometer para lo que precisan de una formación igual de específica. Fyfe (2022) también llevó a cabo un experimento similar, solicitando a su alumnado universitario que redactara un ensayo por medio de la IA y puso de manifiesto que el texto resultante se alejaba del tema propuesto al constituir el ensayo un género textual extenso. De hecho, todas las muestras requerían de un proceso de revisión posterior meticuloso, lo que iría en detrimento de la eficiencia.

Aplicando un enfoque similar, Carrasco (2023) examinó las respuestas aportadas por *ChatGPT* y *Google Bard* en su curso de Historia de América y llegó a la conclusión de que pese a parecer correctas, no podían competir con el grado de profundización que proveían los discentes. Esta dinámica también la emuló Suárez-Campos (2023) en la Universidad de Grenoble-Alpes en un intento de detectar el plagio fuera del aula. Para ello cotejó las respuestas generadas por *ChatGPT* con las de sus estudiantes y constató que las variables estilísticas y gramaticales diferían significativamente. A raíz de esta investigación, esta misma autora advirtió del efecto menguante o disuasorio de la IA en la disposición del estudiante por escribir, ya que si este siente que su versión siempre será de menor calidad, es comprensible que recurra a la IA para obtener una mayor calificación.

En la actualidad este escenario está afectando en cierta medida al campo de la traducción debido a la facilidad que brindan herramientas cada vez más sofisticadas como *DeepL*, *Google Translate*, *Linguee* o *Text to Speech*, aspecto que se extrapola a la enseñanza de lenguas. Frente a aquellas voces distópicas que auguran la desaparición del docente, un grueso de autores señala que los estudiantes, sobre todo, los de menor nivel aún requieren de la ayuda tácita del profesor (Lee, 2014; Chong, 2021; Zhou, 2019), de ahí que el docente deba asumir el papel de facilitador e instructor en el empleo de esta tecnología, advirtiendo de sus fortalezas, riegos y debilidades (Marta-Lazo y Gabelas, 2016;

Hrastinski et al., 2019; Méndez y Pano, 2019). En consonancia con el argumento de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara et al. (2023), "la prohibición de los sistemas de IA en el ámbito educativo (Peirón, 2023) sería una batalla perdida, por lo que, en lugar de fingir que la IA no existe, es el momento de capacitar al alumnado para que trabaje con ella" (p.9).

En línea con esta corriente, Bannister (2023) trató de prevenir el plagio en su asignatura de *English for Academic Purposes* y avistó cómo la mayor parte del profesorado es conocedor de los portales de elaboración de trabajos académicos que sus estudiantes contrataban. Pese a ello, se deduce que tanto alumnos como profesores sienten que poco pueden hacer al respecto, pues aun disponiendo de un mayor número de métodos de detección de la IA (*Classifier*, *GPTZero*, *Complilatio*, etc.), los índices de coincidencia difieren de una herramienta a otra, lo que disminuye su credibilidad.

La solución quizás residiría en evitar conductas ilícitas o poco éticas (Garcia, 2019; Huertas Abril y Palacios-Hidalgo, 2023), solicitando al alumnado que indicase las partes del trabajo que ha confeccionado con la IA (Jiménez et al., 2023) o integrándola de antemano y negociando los segmentos en l0s que puede utilizarse, tal y como se explicará en el siguiente apartado.

2. CONTEXTUALIZACIÓN Y JUSTIFICACIÓN DEL ESTUDIO

Entre 2023 y 2025 un grueso del profesorado de inglés comenzó a percibir que el estudiantado empleaba diferentes aplicaciones de IA para la realización de sus redacciones en inglés (*Writings*). No se trataba de solicitar a estas herramientas la mera generación de ideas o la adaptación de un texto original inédito, sino que más bien se tendía a la transferencia literal introduciendo las instrucciones de la tarea y devolviendo un texto inmaculado exento de errores. Esta situación provocó que muchos docentes se plantearan volver a la escritura a mano y en papel bajo su supervisión dentro del aula.

No obstante, regresar al papel en un contexto universitario en el que la ratio de estudiantes oscilaba entre los 45-65 alumnos por grupo, suponía obstaculizar el proceso de calificación, pues ya no era posible el

empleo de una rúbrica que facilitaba y agilizaba la corrección en la plataforma *Moodle* o Campus Virtual (MiULGPC). Es por este motivo por el que se decidió que, en lugar de prohibir el uso de la IA en su totalidad, lo ideal sería integrarla en la metodología del aula y convertirla en nuestra aliada a la hora de proporcionar retroalimentación complementaria a la de la docente.

Así pues, se decidió emprender el estudio con 33 alumnos que cursaban el primer año del Grado en Educación Infantil en la Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria. La mayoría se situaba en una edad comprendida entre los 18 y 20 años y poseía un nivel B1 según el MCER. Tomando en consideración la guía docente de la asignatura, *Comunicación oral y escrita en inglés B1, para un contexto educativo I*, se solicitó a los alumnos la elaboración de dos redacciones obligatorias: una con un formato de correo electrónico en la que se hacían pasar por un estudiante de intercambio (*Writing 1*) y una segunda redacción con formato de historia ficticia o anécdota personal que debían continuar a partir de una oración inicial dada (*Writing 2*). Ambas debían contener un rango de entre 150 y 180 palabras y acompañarse de una serie de pautas encaminadas a incorporar responsablemente la IA.

1. OBJETIVOS Y METODOLOGÍA

Partiendo de esta idea primigenia y como posible solución a la problemática avistada, se establecieron cuatro objetivos generales:

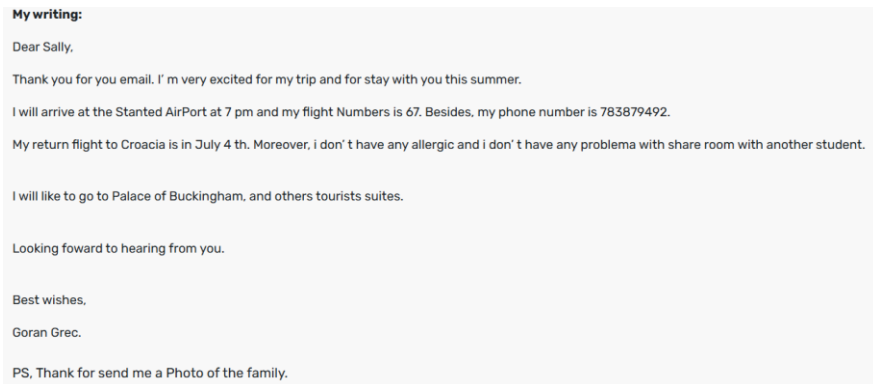
1. Concebir estrategias didácticas que permitieran integrar la IA en el proceso de redacción y usarla como aliada para incrementar la habilidad escrita de los estudiantes;
2. Comprobar si la retroalimentación de la IA contribuía a potenciar la reflexión metalingüística del alumnado, y por ende, su aprendizaje;
3. Implementar un proceso más exhaustivo de corrección con evaluación mixta (inteligencia artificial y humana);
4. Desalentar el uso inapropiado de la IA y minimizar el plagio en la medida de lo posible.

Una vez esbozados los objetivos, se decidió optar por una metodología de tipo Investigación-acción consistente en cuatro fases iterativas (Clark et al., 2020):

1. Identificar un problema;
2. Diseñar una intervención;
3. Observar el efecto por medio de la recolección de datos;
4. Reflexionar sobre los resultados obtenidos y reiniciar el proceso si fuera necesario.

En cuanto a los instrumentos utilizados, se emplearon las dos redacciones descritas anteriormente en conjunción con *ChatGPT* y una encuesta distribuida a final de curso. Para la primera redacción se solicitó al alumnado que primero escribiera su redacción sin la ayuda de *ChatGPT*. Una vez finalizada, sí que debía introducir un *prompt* en el que solicitaba a *ChatGPT* o cualquier otra IA que "le marcase los errores de su redacción de un modo claro y esquemático y a continuación le ofreciera una versión mejorada y corregida" (Figura 1):

FIGURA 1. *Ejemplo de Writing 1 (correo electrónico). Redacción original del alumno*


My writing:

Dear Sally,

Thank you for you email. I' m very excited for my trip and for stay with you this summer.

I will arrive at the Stanted AirPort at 7 pm and my flight Numbers is 67. Besides, my phone number is 783879492.

My return flight to Croacia is in July 4 th. Moreover, i don' t have any allergic and i don' t have any problema with share room with another student.

I will like to go to Palace of Buckingham, and others tourists suites.

Looking foward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

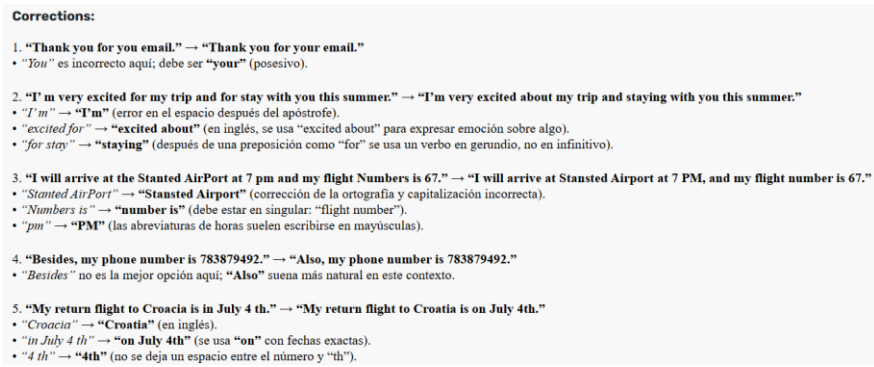
Goran Grec.

PS, Thank for send me a Photo of the family.

Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

Este primer procedimiento, sin embargo, resultó engorroso pues cada alumno recibía un formato de retroalimentación distinto (Figura 2):

FIGURA 2. *Ejemplo de Writing 1 (correo electrónico) con primer procedimiento marcando los errores de un modo claro y esquemático. Dos ejemplos con formato distinto*



Corrections:

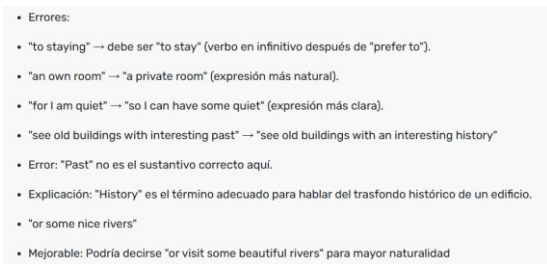
1. **"Thank you for you email." → "Thank you for your email."**
• *"You"* es incorrecto aquí; debe ser **"your"** (posesivo).

2. **"I' m very excited for my trip and for stay with you this summer." → "I'm very excited about my trip and staying with you this summer."**
• *"I'm"* → **"I'm"** (error en el espacio después del apóstrofe).
• *"excited for"* → **"excited about"** (en inglés, se usa "excited about" para expresar emoción sobre algo).
• *"for stay"* → **"staying"** (después de una preposición como "for" se usa un verbo en gerundio, no en infinitivo).

3. **"I will arrive at the Stanted AirPort at 7 pm and my flight Numbers is 67." → "I will arrive at Stansted Airport at 7 PM, and my flight number is 67."**
• *"Stanted AirPort"* → **"Stansted Airport"** (corrección de la ortografía y capitalización incorrecta).
• *"Numbers is"* → **"number is"** (debe estar en singular: "flight number").
• *"pm"* → **"PM"** (las abreviaturas de horas suelen escribirse en mayúsculas).

4. **"Besides, my phone number is 783879492." → "Also, my phone number is 783879492."**
• *"Besides"* no es la mejor opción aquí; **"Also"** suena más natural en este contexto.

5. **"My return flight to Croacia is in July 4 th." → "My return flight to Croatia is on July 4th."**
• *"Croacia"* → **"Croatia"** (en inglés).
• *"in July 4 th"* → **"on July 4th"** (se usa **"on"** con fechas exactas).
• *"4 th"* → **"4th"** (no se deja un espacio entre el número y "th").

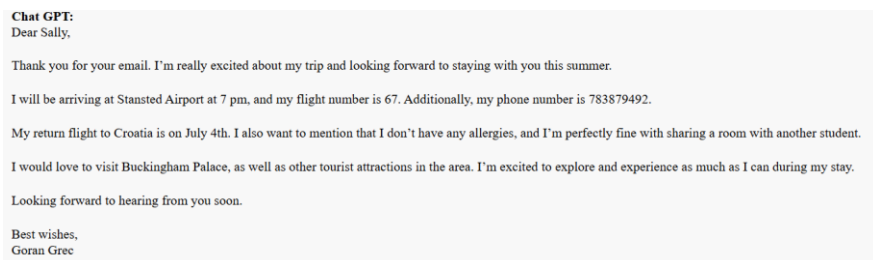


- Errores:
- "to staying" → debe ser "to stay" (verbo en infinitivo después de "prefer to").
- "an own room" → "a private room" (expresión más natural).
- "for I am quiet" → "so I can have some quiet" (expresión más clara).
- "see old buildings with interesting past" → "see old buildings with an interesting history"
- Error: "Past" no es el sustantivo correcto aquí.
- Explicación: "History" es el término adecuado para hablar del trasfondo histórico de un edificio.
- "or some nice rivers"
- Mejorable: Podría decirse "or visit some beautiful rivers" para mayor naturalidad

Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

Además, este primer procedimiento agregaba la versión corregida y mejorada, pero en ella no era posible advertir los errores de un modo sencillo desde un punto de vista visual (Figura 3):

FIGURA 3. *Ejemplo de Writing 1 (correo electrónico) con primer procedimiento mostrando la versión mejorada y corregida*



Chat GPT:
Dear Sally,

Thank you for your email. I'm really excited about my trip and looking forward to staying with you this summer.

I will be arriving at Stansted Airport at 7 pm, and my flight number is 67. Additionally, my phone number is 783879492.

My return flight to Croatia is on July 4th. I also want to mention that I don't have any allergies, and I'm perfectly fine with sharing a room with another student.

I would love to visit Buckingham Palace, as well as other tourist attractions in the area. I'm excited to explore and experience as much as I can during my stay.

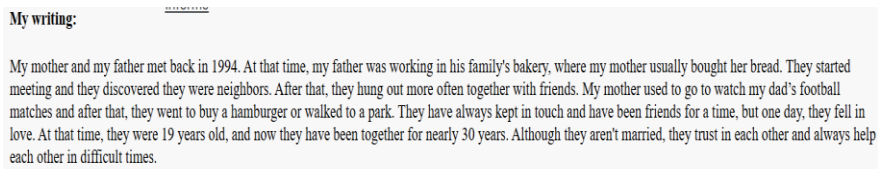
Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes,
Goran Grec

Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

Es por esta razón por la que se decidió refinar el *prompt*. Para el segundo procedimiento, los alumnos debían solicitar a la IA que le "marcase los errores de su redacción de un modo claro y esquemático y los clasificara según las siguientes categorías: (1) desarrollo y contenido de la tarea; (2) estructura, estilo y organización; (3) gramática; (4) vocabulario; (5) ortografía y puntuación", siguiendo así la rúbrica que empleaba la propia docente. Asimismo, se perfeccionó añadiendo que "a continuación le proporcionara la redacción corregida señalando los errores y su corrección en negrita", lo que difería significativamente del primer procedimiento en el que no se señalaban (Figuras 4, 5 y 6):

FIGURA 4. *Ejemplo de Writing 2 (historia ficticia o anécdota personal) con segundo procedimiento. Redacción original del alumno*



My writing:

My mother and my father met back in 1994. At that time, my father was working in his family's bakery, where my mother usually bought her bread. They started meeting and they discovered they were neighbors. After that, they hung out more often together with friends. My mother used to go to watch my dad's football matches and after that, they went to buy a hamburger or walked to a park. They have always kept in touch and have been friends for a time, but one day, they fell in love. At that time, they were 19 years old, and now they have been together for nearly 30 years. Although they aren't married, they trust in each other and always help each other in difficult times.

Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

FIGURA 5. *Ejemplo de Writing 2 (historia ficticia o anécdota personal) con segundo procedimiento clasificando los errores en categorías lingüísticas*



ChatGPT:

1. Desarrollo y contenido de la tarea

- **Error**: *"They started meeting and they discovered they were neighbors."*
  - **Corrección**: La frase "started meeting" no es lo suficientemente clara. Se puede ser más preciso.
  - **Corregido**: *"They started meeting"* → **"They started spending more time together"**(más claro).

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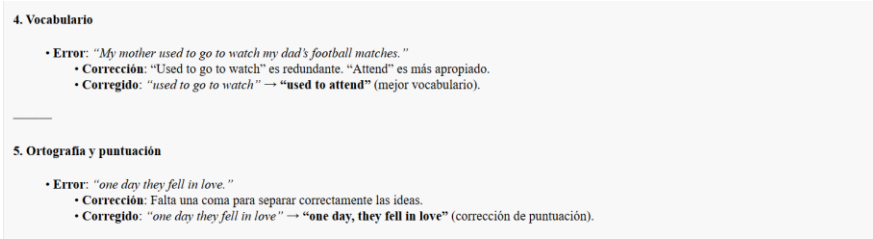
2. Estructura, estilo y organización

- **Error**: *"After that, they hung out more often together with friends."*
  - **Corrección**: La palabra "together" es innecesaria.
  - **Corregido**: *"together with friends"* → **"with friends"** (más natural).

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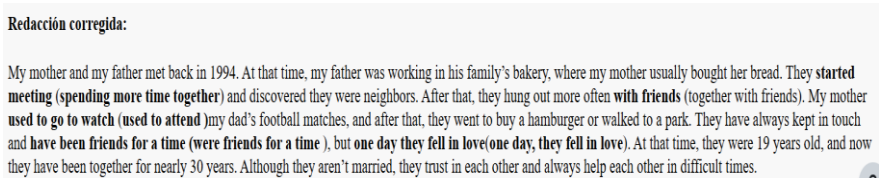
3. Gramática

- **Error**: *"They have always kept in touch and have been friends for a time."*
  - **Corrección**: Discordancia temporal. Se debe usar el tiempo pasado para la frase "were friends".
  - **Corregido**: *"have been friends for a time"* → **"were friends for a time"** (concordancia temporal).



Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

FIGURA 6. *Ejemplo de Writing 2 (historia ficticia o anécdota personal) con segundo procedimiento señalando los errores en negrita en la versión corregida dentro del texto*



Fuente: elaboración propia. Extraído de Campus Virtual (MiULPGC)

4. RESULTADOS Y DISCUSIÓN

En esencia este nuevo *prompt* mejorado resultaba más efectivo por las siguientes razones:

1. Hacía consciente al alumno de los parámetros que el docente evaluaría haciéndole partícipe en el proceso de corrección (autoevaluación inicial);
2. Potenciaba la reflexión metalingüística del aprendiz al clasificar los errores en categorías y mostrarlos de una manera más gráfica dentro del texto;
3. Facilitaba la corrección de la docente en el segundo estadio de corrección, pues errores que a veces pasaban inadvertidos, ahora se complementaban con los detectados por la IA durante el primer estadio de corrección.

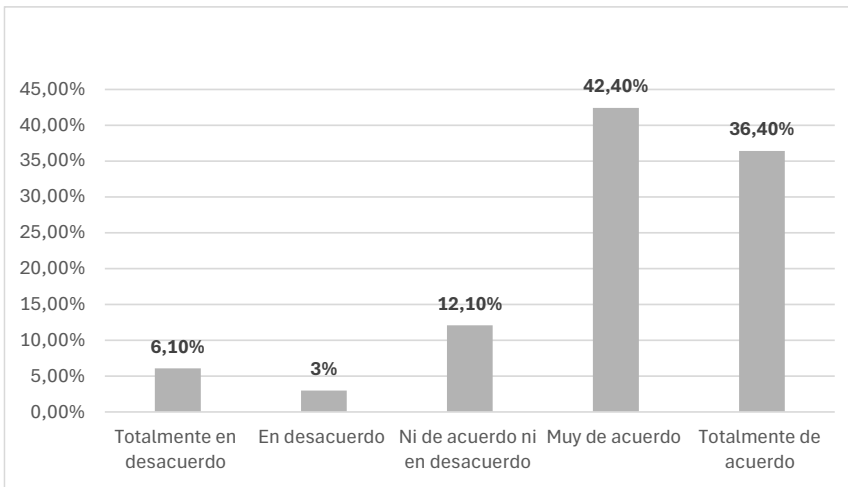
Por último, y en aras de comprobar la efectividad del segundo procedimiento y su impacto en el aprendizaje, se decidió indagar en las percepciones de los participantes por medio de una encuesta compuesta por preguntas cuantitativas cerradas con escala de Likert (1-totalmente en

desacuerdo y 5-totalmente de acuerdo), junto con preguntas cualitativas abiertas destinadas a recopilar opiniones y un *feedback* más específico respecto a los beneficios del primer y segundo procedimiento.

La primera pregunta leía así: 1. ¿Te ha ayudado la IA a entender mejor las causas detrás de los errores que cometías cuando te mostraba tus errores en la sección de correcciones junto con la versión corregida?

Un 42,40% del alumnado entrevistado respondió con un "muy de acuerdo", seguido de un 36,40% que manifestó sentirse "totalmente de acuerdo".

GRÁFICO 1. *¿Te ha ayudado la IA a entender tus errores?*

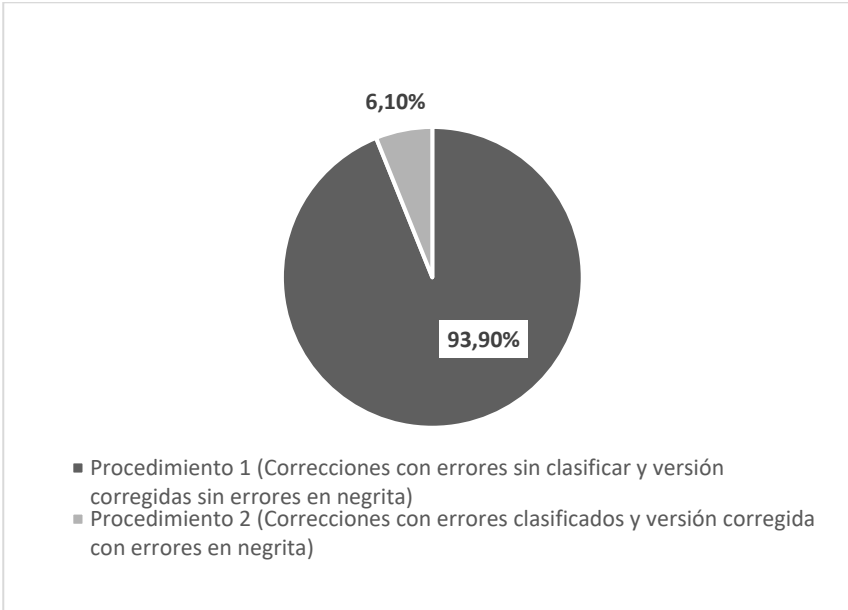


Fuente: elaboración propia

Por su parte, la pregunta 2 inquiría: 2. ¿Con qué procedimiento aprendiste mejor de tus errores?

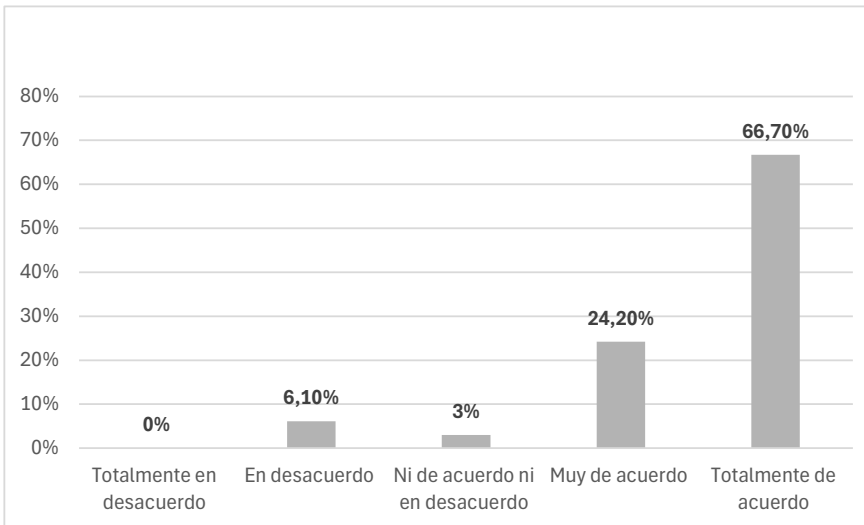
En este caso, un rotundo 93,90% indicó que aprendió mejor de sus errores con el segundo procedimiento. Francamente anticipamos en cierto modo este resultado al tratarse de un proceso doblemente mejorado (errores clasificados en categorías a la par que se señalaban en negrita), que resultaba más pedagógico y enriquecedor a ojos del alumno.

GRÁFICO 2. *¿Con qué procedimiento aprendiste mejor de tus errores?*



Fuente: elaboración propia

GRÁFICO 3. *¿Fomenta la IA la conciencia metalingüística?*



Fuente: elaboración propia

Finalmente, la tercera pregunta trataba de discernir si la retroalimentación de la IA resultaba realmente provechosa, por lo que se inquirió: 3. *Una vez la IA te hizo darte cuenta de esos errores, ¿trataste de cometerlos en menor medida en las siguientes redacciones?*

Un 66,70% de los estudiantes respondió con un "totalmente de acuerdo", lo que confirmaba los beneficios de la retroalimentación aportada por la IA en conjunción con la retroalimentación proporcionada por la docente. En esencia, este cambio metodológico fomentaba la reflexión metalingüística, y contribuía a reducir la repetición y fosilización de errores.

5. CONCLUSIONES

La irrupción de la inteligencia artificial ha demostrado que depende de los usuarios hacer un uso lícito y correcto de ella. En el contexto universitario resulta tentador emplearla para la elaboración de trabajos académicos de gran envergadura o de elevada complejidad. No obstante, frente a la aparente facilidad y perfección de la que hace gala la IA, múltiples estudios avalan aún el poder de la inteligencia humana sobre la "sintética" cuando se trata de aportar respuestas que exhiban cierto nivel de profundidad, reflexión y contextualización (Fyfe, 2022; Carrasco, 2023; Suárez-Campos, 2023; Bannister, 2023).

Tal y como evidencian de Vicente-Yagüe-Jara et al. (2023), la IA suele adolecer de creatividad genuina cuando se trata de tipologías textuales o tareas en las que se implica la imaginación, se alude al sentido del humor o se apela a experiencias vitales inequívocamente humanas como pueden ser recuerdos o vivencias personales, tal y como se solicitaba en el *Writing 2* consistente en una historia ficticia o anécdota.

Hoy en día sabemos que la IA es capaz de inventar información en lo que se conoce como "alucinaciones" cuando la desconoce o no es capaz de localizarla entre la vasta cantidad a la que tiene acceso. En consecuencia, recae sobre los docentes la labor de concienciar sobre sus ventajas y desventajas más inmediatas (Selwyn et al., 2022; Renbarger, 2023; Alejaldre, 2023).

Fue precisamente esta necesidad la que dio lugar al presente trabajo. En un intento por evitar que los alumnos de grado incurrieran en el plagio y otras conductas poco éticas (Garcia, 2019; Huertas Abril y Palacios-Hidalgo, 2023), se decidió integrar esta herramienta en la metodología del aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) tomando como referencia la literatura científica analizada en torno a los beneficios de la retroalimentación automática provista por la IA (Wilson, 2014; Pokrivcakova, 2019; Chen y Warden, 2019; Wang, 2020; González-Rodríguez y Álvarez Mosquera, 2020; Dizon y Gayed, 2021; Nazari et al., 2021; Martín-Marchante, 2022; Runyon et al., 2022; Khan Academy, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; Flores-Vivar y García-Peñalvo, 2023).

Del estudio dirigido con 33 alumnos del Grado de Educación Infantil en la Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria se extrajo que los estudiantes agradecían poder emplear la IA para señalar sus errores dentro del texto y les explicara las causas detrás de ellos emulando el modo en que lo haría la docente a partir de una rúbrica que esta misma les proveía. También manifestaron agradecer que la IA clasificara los errores en categorías, lo que incrementaba su conciencia metalingüística. Asimismo, declararon que les había servido como evaluación inicial orientativa antes de que la profesora evaluara el contenido en una segunda fase, lo que redundaba en una mayor autonomía de su aprendizaje. Paralelamente, se constató que el proceso de corrección resultaba ser más exhaustivo y fidedigno, pues se brindaba una evaluación mixta más integral resultante de la simbiosis entre inteligencia artificial y humana.

A modo de conclusión, las autoridades y el resto de agentes educativos deben aunar y dirigir sus esfuerzos a "abrazar" esta tecnología en lugar de sancionarla a través de políticas sensatas y planes de alfabetización adecuados (OCDE, 2021). Solo así se podrá garantizar un aprendizaje "políticamente correcto" que forme al alumnado y le ayude a maximizar las prestaciones que le ofrece la IA en un futuro eminentemente digitalizado.

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REDISEÑO Y CONTEXTUALIZACIÓN DEL CURRÍCULO DE INGLÉS PARA MEJORAR LA MOTIVACIÓN Y EL RENDIMIENTO DE ESTUDIANTES DE MAGISTERIO

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La globalización y el desarrollo internacional en el aprendizaje han llevado un cambio gradual del aprendizaje del inglés tradicional hacia el Inglés para Fines Específicos (ESP) (Dou et al., 2023). El ESP se conceptualiza como un enfoque de enseñanza que busca proporcionar a los estudiantes con aprendizajes específicos del idioma para su óptimo desempeño como profesionales en cada campo de especialidad (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Strevens, 1988). En lo que refiere a la formación inicial docente, esta orientación se hace relevante en tanto los futuros maestros necesitan desarrollar competencias lingüísticas específicas para su práctica profesional; especialmente en un contexto tan multicultural como son las escuelas en Canarias, lugar donde se está planteando este rediseño.

El presente artículo presenta la fase inicial de un proyecto de investigación y transferencia del conocimiento centrado en el rediseño contextualizado del currículo de la asignatura de Inglés II en la Facultad de Ciencias de Educación de la Universidad del Atlántico Medio para mejorar la motivación y el rendimiento académico del alumnado de los grados de Maestro en Educación Infantil y Maestro en Educación Primaria.

La necesidad de esta intervención surge de la detección de niveles bajos de motivación en el estudiantado, lo cual incide negativamente en su

rendimiento académico a pesar de la alta percepción de utilidad de la asignatura para la futura práctica docente del alumnado.

En tal sentido, tres elementos se erigen como claves para este rediseño: el filtro afectivo en el aprendizaje del inglés, la motivación por el aprendizaje de idiomas como el inglés, y la aplicación del Diseño Universal del Aprendizaje (DUA).

1.1. El filtro afectivo para el aprendizaje del inglés

Este concepto fue desarrollado por Krashen (1987), y establece que factores externos como el miedo, nerviosismo y falta de motivación influyen en la comprensión y retención de información en la adquisición de segundas lenguas. La investigación en neurociencia cognitiva establece que las emociones negativas pueden inhibir significativamente la capacidad de aprendizaje del cerebro (Dehaene, 2019), mientras que ambientes libres de estrés y amenaza facilitan la activación de mecanismos de plasticidad neuronal. Desde esta perspectiva, no es posible el avance real en el ámbito educativo si no se integran las dimensiones cognitiva y emocional del desarrollo cerebral, ambas consideradas esenciales para la neurociencia contemporánea.

Cuando una persona experimenta, por ejemplo, aburrimiento, estrés, ansiedad o falta de autoconfianza, el filtro afectivo se eleva y el aprendizaje de idiomas se ve obstaculizado (Krashen, 1987). Investigaciones recientes (Dewaele et al., 2019) confirman que las emociones predominantes de ansiedad, disfrute y aburrimiento afectan significativamente los resultados de aprendizaje de idiomas y el nivel de compromiso de los estudiantes.

Este enfoque destaca la importancia de crear ambientes de aprendizaje seguros, cooperativos y emocionalmente positivos, especialmente en contextos escolares y de formación docente (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). En estudiantes de Magisterio, el filtro afectivo puede verse activado no solo por sus propias inseguridades lingüísticas, sino también por la presión de convertirse en modelos lingüísticos para su futuro alumnado (Martínez Agudo, 2018). De ahí la necesidad de incorporar enfoques metodológicos que fomenten la autoeficacia, la interacción

auténtica y la validación emocional, como el aprendizaje basado en proyectos, el uso de tecnologías motivadoras o la integración de contenidos culturalmente relevantes (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004).

1.2. La motivación por el aprendizaje de idiomas

Este segundo factor clave se plantea como uno complejo que influye en el éxito del aprendizaje en situaciones de aprendizaje, dependiendo tanto de la motivación intrínseca como del rango de oportunidades para su uso fuera del aula (Gardner, 1985). En perfiles como el de estudiantes de magisterio, la motivación no solo responde a intereses personales o profesionales, sino también a una conciencia creciente sobre la necesidad de una educación plurilingüe e inclusiva en contextos escolares diversos (Lasagabaster & Doiz, 2021) como el de Canarias. Varios estudios (Bernaus, Wilson & Gardner, 2009; Martínez Agudo, 2020) señalan que los futuros docentes muestran una motivación predominantemente instrumental, relacionada con oportunidades laborales o requerimientos curriculares, por ejemplo.

Así, en contextos educativos diversos, motivar a los estudiantes en el entorno académico puede resultar particularmente desafiante (Hennebry-Leung & Lamb, 2024), especialmente cuando factores como exámenes y el estatus obligatorio del inglés pueden crear condiciones adversas. En tal sentido, remitirse a metodologías activas, enfoques comunicativos y el cultivo de la conciencia crítica sobre el lenguaje (Martínez Agudo, 2020) pueden contribuir a aumentar la motivación y el compromiso del alumnado de Magisterio con el aprendizaje del inglés, que es parte de lo que persigue esta propuesta.

1.3. El Diseño Universal para el Aprendizaje (DUA) y el inglés

Este acercamiento proporciona a los educadores estrategias prácticas y técnicas para asegurar igualdad de oportunidades de aprendizaje para todos los estudiantes, independientemente de sus necesidades y capacidades (CAST, 2024; Rose et al., 2006).

El enfoque se fundamenta en la premisa de que no existe un estudiante "típico" o "promedio", y que, en el aprendizaje, la variabilidad constituye

la regla, no la excepción (Rose et al., 2006). Si se pone el DUA en el contexto del aprendizaje de inglés, este facilita la adaptación de contenidos de la lengua meta (Fernández Portero, 2018) a través de distintos formatos sensoriales, como textos orales, escritos, visuales y audiovisuales (CAST, 2024), lo cual resulta especialmente útil para estudiantes poco motivados por el aprendizaje del inglés y que, además, tienen distintos estilos cognitivos, niveles lingüísticos o necesidades específicas de apoyo educativo (Navarro Asencio & Fuentes-Abeledo, 2021).

Asimismo, usar el DUA en la enseñanza del inglés permite que el alumnado demuestre sus competencias comunicativas de diversas maneras; por ejemplo, a través de herramientas digitales, actividades cooperativas, y opciones de evaluación formativa que valoren la producción oral, escrita o multimodal (Meyer, Rose & Gordon, 2014). En cuanto al principio de implicación, como se adelantaba líneas arriba, el DUA favorece la motivación y la autorregulación mediante propuestas contextualizadas, vinculadas a los intereses del estudiantado, y que son sensibles a la dimensión afectiva del aprendizaje de idiomas (Moreno-León et al., 2023).

2. OBJETIVOS

2.1. Objetivo general

Plantear una propuesta de rediseño curricular contextualizado de la asignatura de Inglés II para estudiantes de Magisterio. El objetivo perseguido por este rediseño es la mejora de la motivación y el rendimiento académico del alumnado mediante un enfoque ESP centrado en las necesidades específicas de la práctica docente.

2.2. Objetivos específicos

- Analizar la situación actual, necesidades, motivaciones y percepciones del alumnado de Magisterio respecto al aprendizaje del inglés.
- Identificar las competencias lingüísticas específicas requeridas para la práctica docente en educación infantil y primaria.

– Desarrollar una propuesta curricular basada en ESP que integre estrategias de reducción del filtro afectivo y principios del DUA.

3. METODOLOGÍA

Esta investigación se enmarca en el paradigma cualitativo con un diseño de investigación-acción, metodología orientada al cambio y la mejora continua de la práctica educativa mediante ciclos de planificación, acción, observación y reflexión (Colmenares y Piñero, 2008). El diseño metodológico integra elementos tanto cuantitativos como cualitativos para alcanzar una comprensión integral del fenómeno estudiado.

En cuanto al contexto y participantes, el estudio se desarrolla en la Universidad del Atlántico Medio con una muestra de estudiantes de los grados de Maestro en Educación Infantil y Maestro en Educación Primaria. La población objeto de estudio comprende aproximadamente 120 estudiantes distribuidos en diferentes niveles del grado.

A raíz de la poca motivación y bajo rendimiento detectados en las aulas de inglés en los grados de Magisterio de la Universidad del Atlántico Medio, el equipo docente de Inglés decidió hacer un diagnóstico para identificar la relación del alumnado con el idioma inglés a través de un cuestionario estructurado en el cual se les preguntó información sobre su recorrido en el aprendizaje del idioma (dónde lo aprendieron, cuánto tiempo llevan estudiándolo, etc.), la motivación que tienen por el aprendizaje de la lengua y los sentimientos que este aprendizaje les genera, así como las dinámicas y temáticas de clase que consideran más efectivas para lograr los objetivos académicos ligados a la asignatura, entre otros temas de relevancia.

Para completar el análisis de las necesidades, se realizaron entrevistas informales grupales para contextualizar y profundizar en cuestiones que el equipo docente consideraba clave en los resultados. Esto permitiría una contextualización más ajustada a los intereses y necesidades del alumnado, perspectiva que responde al enfoque centrado en el estudiante que tiene la universidad.

Luego de integrar los datos cuantitativos y cualitativos recabados, se pasó a la identificación de las necesidades del alumnado para establecer las líneas de intervención curricular en relación con los contenidos de la asignatura, las metodologías y enfoques de enseñanza actuales. Por último, se inició el diseño de una propuesta de investigación-acción que enmarque los aprendizajes de la lengua meta (inglés) en el ámbito educativo a fin de alcanzar los objetivos y competencias requeridas por la asignatura, de manera que resulte en una experiencia pedagógicamente significativa y motivadora para quienes se están formando como futuros docentes.

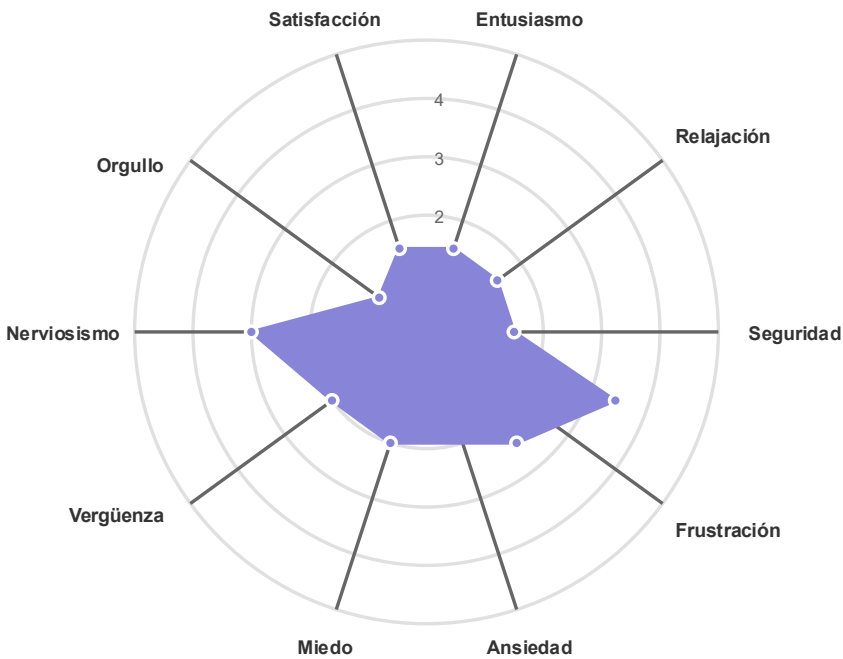
4. RESULTADOS

4.1. DIMENSIÓN EMOCIONAL

Los resultados del cuestionario suministrado al alumnado revelan un panorama preocupante en cuanto a las emociones asociadas al aprendizaje del inglés. Como se observa en el gráfico 1 a continuación, predominan emociones desagradables como nerviosismo, ansiedad y frustración, mientras que emociones agradables como relajación, satisfacción y seguridad resultan ser las menos experimentadas.

Este hallazgo es consistente con investigaciones recientes que identifican la ansiedad como una de las emociones críticas en el aprendizaje de idiomas (Dewaele et al., 20 19). La presencia elevada del ya nombrado filtro afectivo (Krashen, 1987) se evidencia además en múltiples indicadores observados frecuentemente en el aula como autopercepciones negativas sobre las habilidades lingüísticas, estrés al hablar, leer o escribir en clase, y escasa confianza en la capacidad de aprender. Estos resultados confirman así la necesidad de implementar estrategias explícitas para reducir el filtro afectivo y crear un ambiente de aprendizaje seguro y positivo.

GRÁFICO 1. *Frecuencia de las emociones asociadas al inglés*

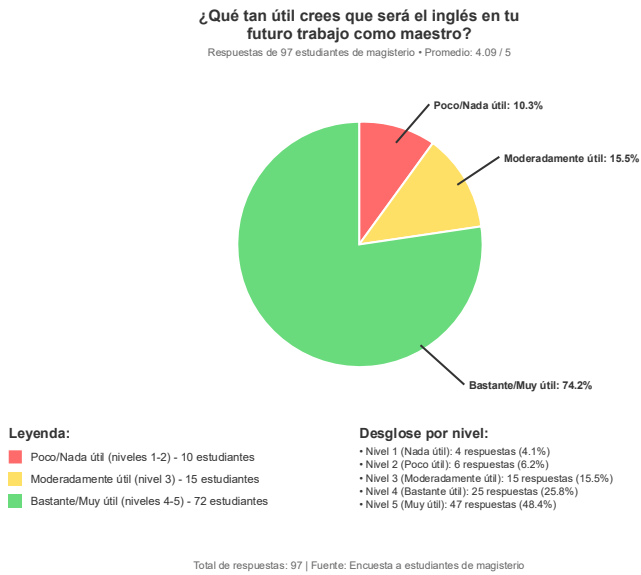


Fuente: elaboración propia

4.2. PERCEPCIÓN DE UTILIDAD PROFESIONAL

Contrariamente a los datos anteriores, la mayoría de los 98 estudiantes de Magisterios encuestados, o sea más del 75% (véase gráfico 2 abajo), consideran que el inglés será bastante o muy útil en su futuro laboral, asignando puntuaciones entre 4 y 5 en una escala Likert.

GRÁFICO 2. *Nivel de percepción de utilidad del inglés para la futura práctica docente*



Fuente: elaboración propia

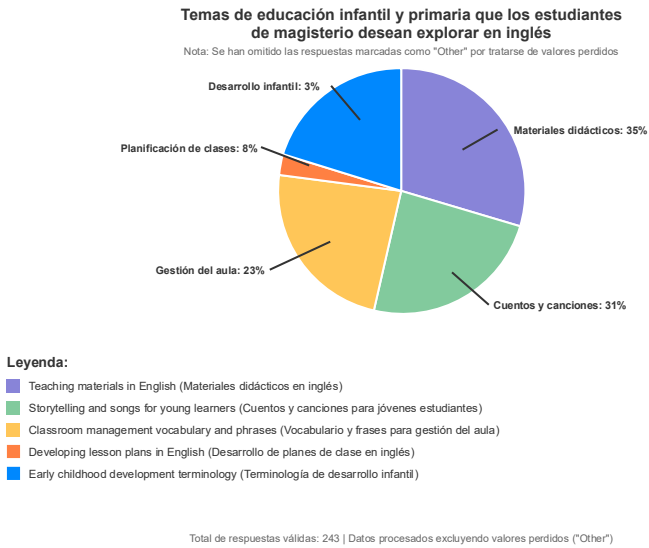
Esta alta percepción de utilidad contrasta significativamente con los bajos niveles de motivación detectados. De ahí surge el planteamiento de rediseño del currículo hacia uno que se acerque más al Inglés para Fines Específicos (ESP, por sus siglas en inglés); en este caso, Inglés para Profesionales de la Educación.

4.3. Preferencias temáticas y metodológicas

En cuanto a las temáticas relacionadas con la docencia propuestas para favorecer la motivación en la asignatura de Inglés II, los estudiantes, como se nota en el Gráfico 3, manifiestan interés sobre todo en aprender acerca de la elaboración y uso de materiales didácticos, cuentos y canciones infantiles, vocabulario y frases para la gestión del aula, planificación de las clases y terminología sobre desarrollo infantil.

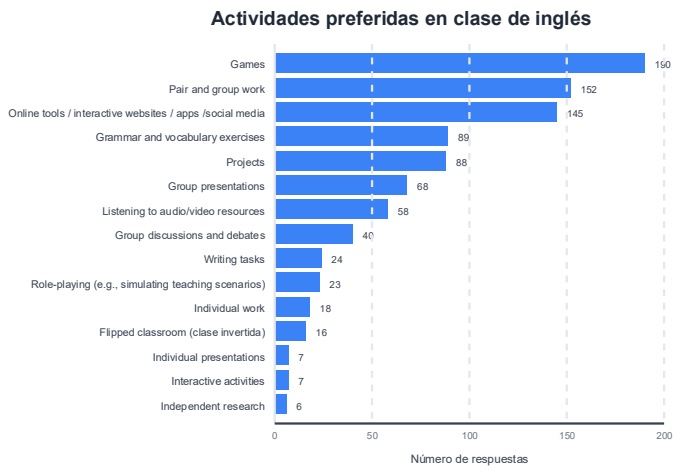
Se evidencia, así, una clara orientación del alumnado hacia contenidos prácticos y directamente vinculados con su futuro rol docente, lo cual se integrará en la propuesta de rediseño.

GRÁFICO 3. *Temas de educación infantil y primaria que los estudiantes de Magisterio desean abordar en inglés*



Fuente: elaboración propia

GRÁFICO 4. *Preferencias de actividades en la clase de inglés*



Fuente: elaboración propia

Por último, respecto a las actividades a llevar a cabo en el aula de inglés (ver Gráfico 4), los juegos (*Games*) destacan como la modalidad más popular, seguidos por el trabajo en parejas y grupos (*Pair and group work*) y las herramientas online/aplicaciones (*Online tools/apps*). Estas preferencias metodológicas son congruentes con enfoques pedagógicos que privilegian el aprendizaje activo y colaborativo.

5. PROPUESTA DE REDISEÑO

En base a todos los resultados recabados del diagnóstico inicial, se ha comenzado a estructurar una propuesta de rediseño del currículo de Inglés 2 en la facultad de Ciencias de la Educación articulada en cuatro líneas de acción principales, que se detallan a continuación.

5.1. Creación y uso de materiales didácticos en inglés

Esta primera línea se fundamenta en el principio de que los estudiantes deben convertirse no solo en consumidores sino también en creadores de materiales para su futura práctica profesional. Los estudiantes desarrollarían, entonces, materiales como pósteres, tarjetas, cuentos, rutinas visuales y recursos digitales, todos adaptados a los niveles de educación infantil y primaria.

Esta aproximación permitiría el desarrollo simultáneo de competencias comunicativas en inglés y conciencia pedagógica, de manera que se cree una experiencia de aprendizaje auténtica y significativa. Al diseñar sus propios recursos, los futuros maestros comprenden mejor los procesos de aprendizaje en la escuela, adaptan el contenido a diferentes niveles de desarrollo y empiezan a familiarizarse con la creación de herramientas útiles para su futura práctica docente, mejorando de esta manera la conexión entre el aprendizaje de la lengua y la percepción de utilidad de la misma.

5.2. Narración oral y recursos musicales

El cuento, la canción y la rima constituyen herramientas muy utilizadas en la enseñanza de lenguas desde la infancia. Por eso, y considerando los resultados del diagnóstico en lo que respecta a temáticas

relacionadas con la docencia propuestas para favorecer la motivación en la asignatura, se proponen talleres específicos donde el alumnado se entrenaría en técnicas de *storytelling* y exploraría recursos musicales y rítmicos. Esta línea responde directamente a las preferencias identificadas en el análisis de necesidades y aprovecha metodologías que podrían convertir el aula en un espacio lúdico y significativo para el aprendizaje de segundas lenguas.

Los futuros maestros que dominan estas técnicas pueden crear experiencias de aprendizaje memorables, que reducen el filtro afectivo en sí mismos y aumentan su motivación intrínseca, así como la de sus estudiantes. Además, al experimentar estas metodologías como aprendices, desarrollan una comprensión vivencial de su efectividad, lo que aumenta la probabilidad de que las implementen posteriormente en sus propias aulas.

5.3. Vocabulario específico para la gestión del aula

Esta línea abordaría un aspecto frecuentemente desatendido pero esencial: el dominio de expresiones funcionales específicas para rutinas, instrucciones y disciplina positiva. Se desarrollaría un módulo específico que incluiría expresiones como “Let's sit in a circle”, “Tidy up, please”, o “Use your quiet voice”, trabajadas tanto de forma oral como por escrito mediante simulaciones y prácticas contextualizadas.

El dominio de estas expresiones funcionales —algo que se identificó en el diagnóstico inicial reseñado en el apartado anterior— hace más efectiva la comunicación en el aula y aumenta la confianza para el futuro desempeño docente del alumnado. Al trabajar este vocabulario mediante simulaciones, experimentan su utilidad práctica, con lo cual se refuerza la motivación y la retención a largo plazo de lo aprendido.

5.4. Diseño y planificación de las clases

Como cuarta y última línea de acción, los estudiantes aprenderían a diseñar secuencias didácticas completas, considerando objetivos de aprendizaje, estrategias inclusivas basadas en el DUA, recursos, temporalización y evaluación.

La técnica del *microteaching* (microenseñanza) se propone como uno de los ejes metodológicos centrales, proporcionando al alumnado de Magisterio una oportunidad para perfeccionar sus habilidades docentes mediante la puesta en práctica de diversas tareas específicas, conocimientos teóricos y recursos (Remesh, 2013; Thangaraju & Medhi, 2023). Las sesiones de *microteaching* en aula simulada permitirían ensayar el uso del inglés en contextos reales, interactuar con el grupo de pares y ajustar la intervención docente según las necesidades del alumnado.

5.5. REDUCCIÓN DEL FILTRO AFECTIVO

Además de estos cuatro pilares, debido a la predominancia de emociones desagradables por parte del alumnado hacia el inglés, se considera necesario integrar estrategias explícitas para reducir el filtro afectivo, fomentar un ambiente de aprendizaje seguro y positivo, además de aumentan la sensación de autoeficacia y disfrute del aprendizaje.

Entre ellas, se propone:

- Realizar de forma sistemática juegos y dinámicas cooperativas que favorezcan la colaboración y reduzcan la ansiedad;
- Permitir el trabajo en parejas y grupos pequeños antes de participaciones en plenaria, para aumentar de forma progresiva la confianza;
- Ofrecer múltiples oportunidades en cada lección para que el alumnado participe en actividades donde pueda usar y reutilizar lenguaje que ya domina, acompañadas de feedback positivo constante, para construir así una base sólida de confianza y motivación por aprender más (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003);
- Incorporar técnicas de visualización, relajación, mindfuless y el humor para transformar la perspectiva emocional negativa del estudiantado frente al inglés;
- Establecer una cultura positiva acerca del error, en la que se concibe el fallo como parte natural y esperable en el proceso de aprendizaje.

La implementación de estas estrategias busca transformar la relación emocional del alumnado con el inglés, de manera que ellos y ellas experimenten el aula como un espacio seguro y se genere una mayor confianza, la cual, a su vez, alimenta la motivación y, en consecuencia, facilite el aprendizaje de la lengua meta.

5.6. El diseño universal para el aprendizaje (DUA)

Por último, el rediseño incorporaría el DUA (CAST, 2024; Rose et al., 2006), un marco teórico basado en la investigación neurocientífica cuyo objetivo es el empoderamiento o la agencia del aprendiz (Code, 2020), es decir, la capacidad de participar activamente en su aprendizaje, con determinación, espíritu crítico e iniciativa, de forma auténtica, estratégica y orientada a la acción (CAST, 2024).

Para alcanzar este propósito, el marco plantea la implementación en las aulas de estos tres principios fundamentales, los cuales suponen diseñar múltiples medios de compromiso, de representación y de acción y expresión. Con todo esto, el DUA permite que cada estudiante pueda acceder, participar y progresar en el aprendizaje del inglés desde sus fortalezas individuales, preparándolos simultáneamente para replicar estos principios inclusivos en sus futuras aulas como docentes.

6. DISCUSIÓN

6.1. La paradoja motivacional

El análisis de necesidades reveló una paradoja significativa que llama particularmente la atención: mientras que más del 75% de los estudiantes reconocen la utilidad del inglés para su futuro profesional, sus niveles de motivación hacia el aprendizaje permanecen bajos. Este hallazgo sugiere, en el contexto específico de la formación docente, una desconexión crítica entre la motivación instrumental —razones pragmáticas para aprender el idioma, centradas en objetivos definidos como obtener un tipo específico de trabajo o cumplir con requisitos académicos— y la motivación integrativa —que involucra razones personales para el aprendizaje del idioma— como las conceptualizan Gardner y Lambert (1972).

La mencionada paradoja puede explicarse también desde la teoría de la autodeterminación (Ryan & Deci, 2000), que distingue entre motivación extrínseca e intrínseca. Los estudiantes comprenden racionalmente la necesidad del inglés (motivación extrínseca por regulación identificada), pero no experimentan satisfacción o disfrute en el proceso de aprendizaje (ausencia de motivación intrínseca). La alta percepción de utilidad, combinada con la baja motivación, sugiere que los métodos tradicionales de enseñanza no logran conectar con las necesidades psicológicas de autonomía, competencia y relación social que propone esta teoría.

6.2. El filtro afectivo en contexto

Los hallazgos sobre el predominio de emociones desagradables (nerviosismo, ansiedad, frustración) frente a la ausencia de emociones agradables (relajación, satisfacción, seguridad) proporcionan evidencia empírica específica para la aplicación de la hipótesis del filtro afectivo de Krashen (1987) en contextos de formación inicial docente.

Sin embargo, estos resultados van más allá de la ansiedad lingüística general documentada en la literatura. La investigación en neurociencia cognitiva establece que las emociones negativas pueden inhibir significativamente la capacidad de aprendizaje del cerebro (Dehaene, 2019), mientras que ambientes libres de estrés y amenaza facilitan la activación de mecanismos de plasticidad neuronal (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). Este marco neurocientífico sugiere que el filtro afectivo elevado identificado no solo dificulta el aprendizaje del inglés, sino que compromete la capacidad general de procesamiento cognitivo necesaria para el desarrollo de competencias docentes complejas.

6.3. Las preferencias metodológicas para un mayor *engagement* del alumnado

La demanda específica de los estudiantes por juegos, trabajo colaborativo y herramientas digitales que se desprendió de la encuesta se alinea con las tendencias identificadas en la literatura sobre preferencias de aprendizaje. Estas apuntan a que los estudiantes actuales muestran predilección por modalidades colaborativas, con estudios indicando, por ejemplo, que un 80% de los estudiantes de la Generación Z prefieren

estudiar con compañeros (EIM Partnerships, 2024), puesto que consideran que esto hace la experiencia más agradable.

La preferencia por elementos lúdicos identificada en nuestro análisis encuentra respaldo en investigaciones sobre gamificación educativa (Zeng et al., 2024), las cuales plantean una tendencia de los estudiantes más jóvenes, quienes se benefician particularmente de mecánicas de juego simples, retroalimentación inmediata y recompensas frecuentes, lo que explicaría por qué los "juegos" emergieron como la actividad más popular en el diagnóstico hecho. Esta preferencia refleja una orientación hacia experiencias de aprendizaje que aumentan la participación y motivación (Ramírez-Ruiz et al., 2024).

Por otra parte, la reivindicación de las herramientas digitales como complemento de las clases de inglés se corresponde con metodologías como el microaprendizaje y la personalización, en las cuales los estudiantes se decantan por sesiones breves y focalizadas, que se adapten a sus rutinas diarias (Digital Learning Institute, 2024). Esta convergencia entre las preferencias identificadas en el contexto específico de los estudiantes de Magisterio de la Universidad del Atlántico Medio y las tendencias globales sugiere que sus necesidades no son idiosincráticas, sino que reflejan cambios más amplios en las expectativas educativas de las nuevas generaciones.

Finalmente, la predilección por contenidos didácticos específicos, cuentos, canciones y orientaciones de gestión del aula indica una orientación natural hacia el aprendizaje auténtico y contextualizado al ámbito de la Educación. Este hallazgo confirma los postulados del ESP sobre la importancia del análisis de necesidades específicas del campo profesional (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), pero también sugiere que los estudiantes de Magisterio poseen una conciencia intuitiva sobre las competencias que realmente necesitarán en su práctica profesional.

6.4. Implicaciones y expectativas del presente rediseño

Los hallazgos del presente diagnóstico son congruentes con investigaciones realizadas en contextos similares de formación docente. Ipek (2016) o Aydin & Ustuk (2020) identificaron patrones similares de

ansiedad lingüística entre futuros profesores de inglés, mientras que estudios en contextos asiáticos (Li & Peng, 2021) han documentado la efectividad de enfoques tecnológicos para reducir el filtro afectivo en estudiantes universitarios.

Sin embargo, la presente propuesta aporta especificidad al contexto de formación de maestros generalistas (no especialistas en inglés), un área menos explorada en la literatura ESP. La mayoría de literatura consultada se centra en profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera, no en maestros de educación infantil y primaria que utilizarán el inglés como herramienta pedagógica secundaria. Esta particularidad es el aporte más valioso del presente rediseño, que espera mejorar significativamente la motivación del alumnado, así como aumentar su percepción de utilidad de la asignatura y mejorar su competencia comunicativa en inglés. Asimismo, el estudio prevé un incremento en la participación activa y en la satisfacción general con la asignatura.

La propuesta de integración del DUA responde a hallazgos específicos sobre la diversidad de preferencias de aprendizaje identificadas en el análisis de necesidades. Sin embargo, va más allá de una simple adaptación metodológica: representa un cambio paradigmático que responde a evidencia empírica sobre la variabilidad en la selección metodológica (desde juegos hasta herramientas digitales) que confirma el principio fundamental del DUA: que la variabilidad es la norma, no la excepción (CAST, 2024).

El rediseño contextualizado de la asignatura de Inglés, orientado a las necesidades reales del alumnado de Magisterio, busca implementar una estrategia pedagógica eficaz para potenciar la motivación y mejorar el rendimiento académico. Este modelo de intervención puede extrapolarse a otras asignaturas de formación inicial docente, que fomente un enfoque más inclusivo, participativo y alineado con las exigencias de la práctica educativa contemporánea.

7. CONCLUSIONES

El análisis de necesidades realizado confirma la existencia de una desconexión significativa entre la percepción de utilidad del inglés para la práctica

profesional docente y los niveles de motivación hacia su aprendizaje entre estudiantes de Magisterio de la Universidad del Atlántico Medio, un hallazgo refrendado por otros estudios en diferentes grupos y contextos.

Esta paradoja sugiere la necesidad urgente de repensar los enfoques metodológicos y curriculares empleados en la formación inicial docente para que esta responda a la demanda real de conectar el aprendizaje del inglés con la futura práctica profesional del alumnado de Magisterio. En este sentido, el análisis de necesidades confirma la viabilidad y pertinencia de un enfoque ESP para futuros docentes generalistas de infantil y primaria.

Los resultados de la fase diagnóstica llevan a pensar que la motivación y el rendimiento del estudiantado pueden mejorar significativamente si perciben que los contenidos son relevantes, aplicables y accesibles para ellos/as y su futura práctica docente.

Por su parte, la documentación empírica apunta a altos niveles de ansiedad y emociones negativas asociadas al inglés y confirma la necesidad crítica de implementar estrategias específicas de reducción del filtro afectivo. Integrar propuestas para disminuir estas barreras emocionales se erige, de esta manera, como una cuestión fundamental que, mediante la mejora de las emociones vinculadas al aprendizaje del inglés, podría facilitar la adquisición de la lengua meta.

De otro lado, el planteamiento de integración de principios del Diseño Universal del Aprendizaje ofrece un marco inclusivo para abordar las diferentes necesidades y estilos de aprendizaje del alumnado y asume que esta diversidad es una oportunidad y no un obstáculo. Asimismo, la incorporación de microenseñanza como metodología central ofrece un puente efectivo entre la teoría y la práctica profesional, puesto que lo que los futuros docentes pueden experimentar situaciones auténticas de uso del inglés en contextos educativos.

La propuesta desarrollada postula que un enfoque centrado en la creación de materiales, técnicas narrativas, gestión del aula en inglés y planificación didáctica puede resultar más eficaz que enfoques centrados en aspectos lingüísticos y gramáticos abstractos. Este modelo de intervención constituye un cambio paradigmático hacia la formación

integral de docentes competentes en contextos multilingües. Busca concebir el aula como un espacio seguro donde el error se normaliza y las emociones se reconocen como parte fundamental del proceso de aprendizaje. La expectativa es mejorar el rendimiento académico y la motivación del alumnado, y que una propuesta como esta pueda extrapolarse a otras asignaturas de formación inicial docente, con un enfoque más inclusivo, participativo y alineado con las exigencias de la práctica educativa contemporánea.

En el contexto actual, donde el inglés funciona como *lingua franca* global, el idioma constituye una herramienta profesional clave para los docentes del siglo XXI. Más allá de ser una materia curricular, el inglés se convierte en un vehículo de acceso a recursos, formación internacional y colaboración profesional entre docentes de todo el mundo. Esta proyección internacional pasa necesariamente por formar maestros capaces de usar el inglés de manera funcional y pedagógica, lo cual se constituye como una ventaja competitiva para los sistemas educativos nacionales, que permite la colaboración educativa internacional.

Lo que se persigue con este rediseño es integrar de manera eficaz la teoría y la práctica, sin perder de vista las emociones, y contextualizando el aprendizaje en propósitos profesionales específicos del ámbito educativo. De esta manera, se espera mejorar tanto la motivación como el rendimiento en la asignatura de inglés de forma tangible y medible.

Finalmente, este rediseño contextualizado es una innovación curricular que trata de brindar una respuesta integral a las necesidades detectadas en el alumnado, la cual podría transformar la experiencia de aprendizaje del inglés en la formación inicial docente. La propuesta sienta las bases para un modelo replicable que reconoce la especificidad de las necesidades profesionales de los futuros maestros, la importancia de los factores emocionales en el aprendizaje, y la necesidad de metodologías inclusivas que respondan a la diversidad del alumnado contemporáneo. En última instancia, se trata de formar docentes competentes en el uso de la lengua meta, y que sean capaces de utilizar el inglés como herramienta pedagógica útil en sus futuras aulas.

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ENHANCING EFL LEARNING BY USING AI TO DEVELOP INTERACTIVE EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been considered a transformative tool in education, redefining the way knowledge is accessed, processed, and applied. In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, AI technologies offer unique opportunities to support and enhance language learning processes because they can be used to systematize routine tasks, generate adjusted content, and enable immediate feedback (Rajak et al., 2024). Certainly, the integration of AI in EFL teaching enhances students' academic experiences by supporting their cognitive, emotional, and social involvement in learning (Guo & Wang, 2024). In addition, AI resources have the potential to bridge instructional gaps and make learning experiences more adaptive and responsive to students' needs (Anderson et al., 2025). Moreover, AI technologies play a crucial role in EFL learning by fostering greater proficiency, promoting learners' motivation, reducing foreign language anxiety, and supporting more effective language acquisition (Tajik, 2024). Moreover, Labadze et al. (2023) acknowledge that students mostly gain from AI-powered chatbots in the areas of homework and study assistance, personalized learning experiences, and the development of various skills. As AI technologies develop, their role shifts from being merely supportive to becoming integral components to facilitate deeper learning. For EFL students, whose challenges are often compounded by

cultural, linguistic, and cognitive differences, AI presents valuable solutions to address language proficiency gaps and to scaffold the acquisition of complex academic and professional discourse. Cognitively, AI facilitates content personalization through data-informed recommendations, which allow learners to access content at their own pace and deepen their understanding of abstract or unfamiliar concepts (Oye & Dillian, 2025). Emotionally, AI applications foster learner autonomy and motivation by providing timely feedback, promoting curiosity, and stimulating engagement with novel content forms, such as interactive videos or conversational agents (Portuguez-Castro, 2025).

In this context, AI-driven collaborative tools can support peer interaction and co-construction of knowledge, especially when integrated into multimedia design tasks that encourage teamwork and shared decision-making. In teacher training programs, AI tools can be used to design videos about specific topics. As Purwanti et al. (2022) emphasize, the use of interactive videos in EFL education enhances learning by providing interactive content that facilitates the understanding of speech functions. Additionally, as noted by Setyorini (2015), such videos deliver authentic audiovisual input that promotes language acquisition, encourages learner autonomy, and strengthens self-efficacy, thereby enabling students to engage more actively in their learning process. These advantages become particularly critical, as pre-service educators must not only master disciplinary content but also develop pedagogical strategies that respond to diverse learners' needs. AI-enhanced assignments, such as the design of videos, encourage students to synthesize theory and practice, which strengthens their conceptual understanding and professional identity. Therefore, when strategically integrated, AI can enhance instruction and improve the learning experience into one that is more participatory, equitable, and cognitively enriched. It is necessary to acknowledge that despite the global proliferation of digital technologies, many teacher education programs continue to underutilize AI, particularly in ways that help learners to become content creators and reflective practitioners. Considering the aforementioned aspects, this study explores how AI can be meaningfully incorporated into EFL teacher training. Furthermore, empirical evidence remains limited in

Latin American contexts where English language teaching is evolving alongside digital innovation. By investigating the pedagogical affordances of AI-assisted video design in a university-based TEFL program, this research intends to contribute to the literature on technology-enhanced language education and provide actionable insights into how AI can support personalized, learner-centered practices. Hence, this study aims to examine the impact of AI-assisted video design on pre-service EFL teachers' learning and to explore their perceptions regarding how the use of AI-generated interactive videos influences their language learning process.

1.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Portuguez-Castro (2025) conducted a study to examine how the use of generative AI avatars transforms business education by enhancing student engagement, collaboration, and the development of social entrepreneurship competencies. The research took place at a private university and involved 35 undergraduate students enrolled in a business education course. The study employed a qualitative case study design, using observation logs, interviews, and student artifacts to collect data. The participants interacted with AI-generated avatars integrated into the course content, which served as mediators for discussing real-world scenarios and ethical challenges. The findings revealed that students perceived the AI avatars as highly engaging and cognitively stimulating. Participants reported that these tools helped them better understand complex concepts through storytelling, promoted deeper reflection, and encouraged collaborative knowledge construction. Additionally, the use of avatars fostered empathy and ethical reasoning, which are crucial elements in education. The researcher concluded that generative AI can be a powerful pedagogical resource in higher education when applied thoughtfully to facilitate learner-centered, reflective, and socially meaningful learning experiences. These AI resources can be considered a promising alternative to foster motivation and deeper conceptual understanding in digitally enhanced educational environments.

Roumpas and Xenos (2025) proposed the design of an AI-assisted platform to support educators in developing gamified educational content

using Minecraft Education (ME). Conducted at the University of Patras, this design-based study addressed the increasing demand for accessible EdTech tools among educators with limited technical backgrounds. The platform integrates AI, large language models (LLMs), and drag-and-drop features to assist teachers when creating immersive learning environments. It includes modules to build dialogue-based scenarios, infrastructure, coding challenges via MakeCode, and interactive educational content. The researchers reviewed relevant case studies, existing gamified tools, and user interface preferences to inform platform design. The study emphasized the value of AI to reduce the cognitive and technical load on teachers by suggesting pedagogically sound structures, offering real-time content recommendations, and enabling course customization. The tool also supports feedback, accessibility, and integration with existing ME resources. The authors concluded that such platforms can help educators to design learner-centered, engaging, and personalized experiences. They advocate for further usability testing and teacher feedback to optimize functionality, which highlights the role of AI as a supportive resource in instructional design.

Oye and Dillian (2025) examined the dual impact of generative AI in educational settings, addressing its promise and associated risks. The study aimed to explore the ethical, pedagogical, and epistemological implications of AI integration in classrooms. Utilizing a conceptual analytical approach, the researchers synthesized findings from existing literature, case studies, and policy reports to construct a multidimensional framework. No empirical participants were involved, as the study employed a theoretical design rather than experimental or observational methods. The results highlighted AI's capacity to personalize learning, automate assessment, and simulate authentic learning environments. However, the authors also reported critical concerns, such as algorithmic bias, academic integrity issues, diminished critical thinking, and unequal access. They emphasized that teachers play a pivotal role to mediate the use of technology and must be adequately trained to manage its ethical and instructional dimensions. The study concluded that while AI holds transformative potential in education, its successful deployment requires deliberate pedagogical planning, institutional

guidelines, and teacher empowerment. The researchers suggested balanced implementation strategies that ensure technology enhances rather than disrupts educational equity, student agency, and meaningful knowledge construction.

Anderson et al. (2025) explored how the integration of AI can personalize learning within the established Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework in digital higher education environments. The study aimed to examine the extent to which AI tools such as large language models could enhance teaching, social, and cognitive presence by adapting content delivery and interaction to individual learner needs. Conducted in a North American university, the study involved 48 undergraduate students enrolled in online teacher education courses. A mixed-methods design was employed, incorporating usage analytics, surveys, and focus group interviews to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The findings revealed that AI prompts facilitated real-time personalization of content and questioning strategies, which leads to increased learner engagement, self-regulation, and metacognitive awareness. Participants reported that the AI's responsiveness helped them feel more supported and intellectually challenged. Moreover, instructors noted reduced cognitive workload in managing diverse learner trajectories. The study concludes that integrating AI into online learning environments can significantly amplify the efficacy of the CoI model. The authors emphasize that when properly embedded, AI systems enhance learner autonomy, support reflective thinking, and foster more meaningful educational experiences without undermining the instructor's role.

Cabrera-Solano et al. (2025) explored the impact of AI-generated videos on EFL teaching and learning outcomes in higher education. The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of Fliki AI videos to enhance student engagement, comprehension, and professional development in the EFL context. A total of 84 pre-service EFL teachers from a private university in Ecuador participated in this mixed-methods study. Data was collected through diagnostic and perception questionnaires, as well as interviews. The findings revealed that the use of AI videos significantly improved students' engagement, particularly when dealing with

abstract content. Participants reported a deeper understanding of linguistic and pedagogical concepts, facilitated by the videos' clear explanations and visual representations. Furthermore, students appreciated the adaptability and personalization enabled by AI-driven video design, which supported their individual learning processes. The study concludes that AI-based tools, particularly Fliki videos, can play a significant role in EFL instruction by reinforcing learning outcomes and offering accessible, customizable learning experiences. The authors recommend further research into optimal design features and strategies to maximize the pedagogical potential of AI in language education.

In addition, Azamatova et al. (2023) conducted a pre-test–post-test experimental study to examine the impact of digital tools and AI applications on university students' achievement, motivation, and retention in a foreign language course with a project-based learning (PBL) approach. The study involved 64 second-year students from universities in Almaty, Kazakhstan, divided into experimental and control groups (n = 32 each). Over eight weeks, the experimental group engaged in learning tasks supported by AI and digital technologies within a PBL framework, while the control group received traditional instruction without these tools. Data was collected using a Foreign Language Achievement Test and a Motivation Scale. The results indicated that the integration of AI and digital tools within PBL enhanced students' achievement and motivation. Also, these technologies contributed to better retention of the course content. The researchers concluded that combining AI with student-centered methodologies improves cognitive and affective outcomes and supports deeper learning.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of AI-assisted video design on EFL students' language learning.
- To analyze EFL learners' perceptions of AI-assisted interactive video design on their learning process.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

This study was conducted at a private university in Ecuador within the Inclusive and Sustainable Education course, which forms part of the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program. The participants were 53 pre-service EFL teachers aged between 21 and 45, with English proficiency aligned to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). All students were enrolled in the final semester of their academic program and had previous exposure to digital tools. Instruction was delivered through an online format that combines weekly synchronous sessions with asynchronous online activities hosted on the university's virtual learning platform.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research employed a mixed-methods design integrating both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) to have a comprehensive understanding of the impact and perceptions related to AI-assisted interactive video design in EFL learning. The mixed-methods approach enabled the triangulation of data and provided in-depth insights into learners' outcomes and experiences.

3.3 INSTRUMENTS

Three data collection instruments were used. A diagnostic questionnaire was administered to determine students' prior knowledge regarding their familiarity with AI tools and the design of videos. It consisted of 8 multiple-choice and short-response items. A perception questionnaire was used to measure the participants' perspectives of AI-assisted video design and its impact on their learning experience. This instrument included 8 Likert-scale statements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). Finally, students submitted written reflections in which they reported their experience using AI to design interactive videos. These reflective reports were analyzed to complement the quantitative findings and provide a better understanding of learners' perceptions. All instruments underwent pilot testing with a separate group of TEFL

students to ensure clarity and reliability. Ethical procedures were followed, including voluntary participation and confidentiality.

3.4 PROCEDURE

The study was conducted over twelve weeks and was organized into three main stages. During the pre-intervention phase, students completed the diagnostic questionnaire and received a brief tutorial to introduce AI tools through demonstration and guided practice. In the intervention phase, learners were organized into small collaborative groups and were assigned the task of creating brief educational videos focused on key concepts related to inclusive education. They were encouraged to incorporate AI tools in various aspects of the production process, including scriptwriting, content organization, information simplification, and audiovisual enhancement. The videos were shared, and feedback was offered during synchronous sessions in Zoom. In addition to the group task, each student was required to design a video as part of an assignment that was submitted through the institutional virtual platform; in this case, participants received personalized written feedback from the instructor. After the intervention, learners completed the perception questionnaire and submitted their individual written reflections. These data sources were analyzed to explore the impact of the implementation.

4. RESULTS

The results of the diagnostic questionnaire provided insights into students' prior knowledge and experience with AI and video-based learning tools. While 35.85% of participants reported a general awareness of AI applications in education, 18.87% had previously used these tools to support learning or content creation. Moreover, only 16.98% indicated that they had previous experience designing educational videos, whereas the majority had not engaged in structured video production as part of their academic training. When asked about the pedagogical use of AI, 86.79% expressed interest in incorporating AI tools into their future teaching practice, and 92.45% stated that they would be willing to explore AI-generated resources in their course activities. These results were used to shape the intervention phase, ensuring that students

receive the teacher's support in the technical and pedagogical aspects of AI-enhanced video production.

Table 1 presents the students' perceptions of using AI-assisted tools to design interactive educational videos for EFL learning.

TABLE 1: *Students' perceptions*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Preparing the information for the videos increased my awareness of key concepts related to inclusive education.	75.47%	20.75%	3.78%	0.00%	0.00%
AI provided information and examples that facilitated understanding of the cognitive processes of learning.	73.58%	18.87%	5.66%	1.89%	0.00%
AI helped me to prioritize and organize the information for the videos more efficiently.	81.13%	9.43%	7.55%	1.89%	0.00%
AI helped me link theoretical concepts to real situations.	75.47%	16.98%	5.66%	1.89%	0.00%
Engaging in the design of videos facilitated my understanding of cognitive neuroscience and educational taxonomies.	69.81%	20.75%	5.66%	3.78%	0.00%
AI-assisted video design increased my engagement and motivation to learn about the elements of the responsive teaching framework.	81.13%	9.43%	7.55%	1.89%	0.00%
The feedback I received was useful and helped me reflect on my learning progress.	83.02%	9.43%	7.55%	0.00%	0.00%
I will continue using AI to learn and design educational resources, as it supports my professional development by making complex information more accessible and personalized.	83.02%	13.20%	3.78%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration
Students' written reflections

The following summary presents key opinions drawn from students' written reflections on their experience using AI tools to design interactive educational videos. The analysis of the participants' written reflections revealed positive views regarding the integration of AI to create videos. Most participants expressed that the process improved their

understanding of inclusive education and increased their engagement with abstract theoretical content. By using AI to support the design and development of video resources, students reported greater clarity on concepts such as cognitive processes of learning, educational taxonomies, and responsive teaching frameworks. A common aspect that was emphasized in the reflections was the organizational support that AI tools offered. Students noted that AI-assisted planning enabled them to prioritize content, structure information more clearly, and manage their ideas with greater efficiency. Thus, learners found it easier to organize their ideas and connect course concepts in a logical and meaningful way. Also, several participants highlighted that this structured approach helped them enhance their academic decision-making and content development skills. Moreover, students valued the use of AI to link theoretical knowledge with practical, real-world applications. Many learners found that AI-generated explanations helped them contextualize inclusive education principles in ways that felt relevant and applicable to their future classrooms. This perceived connection between theory and practice fostered meaningful learning. Finally, a strong motivational component was present throughout the reflections. Students described feeling more engaged, autonomous, and creatively stimulated when working with AI-supported platforms. They appreciated the opportunity to explore new digital tools and reported increased enthusiasm to produce educational content. This engagement was especially outstanding when students encountered challenging topics, as they found that AI made such content more accessible and manageable.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings from the diagnostic questionnaire offer relevant information about students' prior knowledge of AI and their familiarity with video-based educational tools. Although 35.85% of the participants reported general awareness of AI applications in education, only 18.87% had previously used AI tools to support learning or content creation. This reflects a notable gap between exposure and practical engagement, suggesting that AI remains an underutilized resource in teacher preparation contexts. Likewise, only 16.98% had experience designing

educational videos, which reveals limited opportunities for students to apply digital tools in pedagogically meaningful ways. Despite these limitations, the results highlight a strong openness to innovation, as 86.79% of participants expressed interest in integrating AI into their future teaching practices. Furthermore, a higher percentage (92.45%) indicated a willingness to engage with AI-generated resources through the institutional platform. These findings emphasize the potential of AI in language teacher education. In this respect, Sabaruddin et al. (2024) acknowledge that the application of AI in language teaching can significantly enhance learning outcomes by providing personalized, adaptive, and engaging experiences for English learners.

The results from the perceptions questionnaire reveal agreement among the participants regarding some benefits of AI-assisted video design on their language learning. A considerable 75.47% of students strongly agreed and 20.75% agreed that preparing the information for the videos increased their awareness of key concepts related to inclusive education. Only 3.78% of the participants expressed a neutral opinion, and no one reported disagreement. These findings suggest that the process of preparing educational content fostered engagement and deepened students' awareness of key pedagogical principles related to inclusive practices. This reinforces the idea that integrating content creation tasks into teacher education can serve as a meaningful learning strategy, especially when addressing abstract or complex topics such as equity, diversity, and inclusive methodologies. Written reflections further supported these results by highlighting the positive impact of AI on students' conceptual understanding. Many participants reported that AI-generated explanations made abstract concepts easier to apply to real-world teaching scenarios, enriching their preparedness as future EFL educators. Regarding this aspect, Roumpas and Xenos (2024) emphasize that enhanced learner engagement and language acquisition can be achieved through dynamic video interactions. These researchers affirm that the intuitive AI interface simplifies multimedia content creation and fosters language retention through gamified interaction.

The perception data also evidenced strong support for the role of AI to facilitate students' understanding of cognitive processes involved in

learning. A total of 92.45% of participants either strongly agreed (73.58%) or agreed (18.87%) that AI provided relevant information and examples that contributed to their conceptual comprehension of topics such as how learning occurs, how knowledge is processed, and how content can be meaningfully structured. Only one student expressed disagreement, while a small minority (5.66%) maintained a neutral attitude. This high level of agreement reinforces the idea that AI-generated explanations can enhance students' metacognitive awareness by making abstract concepts more accessible and easier to internalize. Also, written reflections supported these perceptions, with students frequently emphasizing the clarity, structure, and relevance of the explanations and examples provided by AI tools. Many participants indicated that AI contributed to increase their knowledge and their ability to design innovative educational materials. As Portuguez-Castro (2025) acknowledges, the use of AI tools significantly enhances understanding of complex concepts, particularly when organized in collaborative learning environments; thus, the use of AI aligns well with multimodal learning theory. In addition, research by Oye and Dillian (2025) shows that AI tools substantially enhance students' cognitive engagement and comprehension, mostly in ESL and humanities contexts.

Another significant finding emerged from students' responses regarding the organizational benefits of AI during the video design process. A significant 90.56% of participants either strongly agreed (81.13%) or agreed (9.43%) that AI tools helped them prioritize and organize the information for their videos more efficiently. Only 7.55% expressed a neutral stance, while just one student disagreed. These results highlight the perceived benefits of AI to support cognitive processes such as content structuring, planning, and sequencing, which are essential for instructional material development. Learners' written reflections reinforced this perception, as many of them emphasized how AI suggestions allowed them to organize the flow of information logically and coherently so that they could focus on what was most relevant for their learning objectives. These findings are consistent with existing literature that underlines the role of AI tools to enhance video production by automating tasks, enabling contextual search, and providing

recommendation engines, which allow creators to prioritize and organize information more efficiently, focusing on higher-order creative tasks while benefiting from AI-driven assistance in video editing (Gonsalves et al., 2023).

The perception data also emphasized the role of AI to help students bridge the gap between theory and practice. A notable 92.45% of participants either strongly agreed (75.47%) or agreed (16.98%) that AI-assisted tasks helped them link theoretical concepts to real-life situations. Only 1.89% expressed disagreement, while 5.66% remained neutral. These results suggest that AI tools served as sources of information and as facilitators of applied learning. Students' written reflections provided further evidence that supports this view. Many participants described how AI-generated prompts, scenarios, and simplified examples enabled them to contextualize aspects related to inclusive teaching practices, cognitive processes, or taxonomic classifications within authentic classroom settings, which made the learning experience more meaningful and relevant. These perceptions align with research by Alkhresheh (2024), which demonstrates that the potential of AI to simulate real-life situations makes it an effective tool to improve language fluency and comprehension.

Furthermore, the perception data demonstrated the value of active engagement in video design to deepen students' understanding of relevant content. A combined 90.56% of participants either strongly agreed (69.81%) or agreed (20.75%) that working on the design of AI-assisted videos facilitated their grasp of cognitive neuroscience and educational taxonomies. Only 3.78% of students disagreed, and a small portion (5.66%) remained neutral, which suggests an overall positive perception of the implementation. Reflections revealed that students valued the opportunity to break down, simplify, and represent ideas related to brain-based learning and classification systems or taxonomies through concrete instructional media. The process of designing videos, supported by AI-generated guidance, prompted learners to review, synthesize, and apply knowledge in ways that made abstract frameworks more understandable and practical. Several participants emphasized that AI supported them to generate content and helped them reflect on how

these concepts could affect teaching decisions. This is consistent with innovative views of learning, which suggest that knowledge construction is enhanced when learners engage in meaningful tasks and experiences that involve cognitive, emotional, and sensory aspects of learning (Macas Castillo et al., 2023).

The findings also reveal that AI-assisted video design had a notable impact on students' participation and motivation, particularly concerning the responsive teaching framework. A large majority of participants (90.56%) either strongly agreed (81.13%) or agreed (9.43%) that the process increased their motivation and interest in learning about the components of responsive teaching. A small percentage (7.55%) remained neutral, and only 1.89% disagreed. These results suggest that AI integration reinforced learners' willingness to engage with pedagogical content that might otherwise be perceived as dense or abstract. Students' reflections further substantiated these perceptions, with many describing the activity as motivating. Certainly, the interactive nature of video design helped students to explore inclusive teaching concepts with increased curiosity and confidence. Moreover, these findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing the motivational potential of technology-enhanced learning environments; in this respect, Alkhresheh (2024) conducted research that demonstrated that ChatGPT can significantly improve language teaching by providing personalized feedback, fostering learner autonomy, enhancing student motivation and engagement, thus facilitating specific language skills improvement.

Regarding feedback, 92.45% of students either strongly agreed (83.02%) or agreed (9.43%) that the feedback they received during the AI-assisted video design process was helpful to foster reflection on their learning progress. Only a small proportion (7.55%) selected a neutral response, and nobody expressed disagreement. These findings indicate that feedback, whether from peers or the instructor, served as an essential component of the intervention, which enhances students' ability to evaluate their own growth and identify areas for improvement. Reflections revealed that personalized feedback, particularly written comments, was perceived as constructive and actionable. Students also emphasized that feedback encouraged them to think more critically about the pedagogical

implications of their work. This aligns with previous research that remarks on the role of formative feedback to promote metacognitive development and self-regulated learning in teacher education contexts (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In addition, Barrios-Beltran (2024) asserts that AI tools can provide immediate feedback, which allows educators to adjust their teaching strategies to individual student needs.

The final statement in the perception questionnaire addresses students' long-term intentions regarding the use of AI in their professional development. A significant 96.22% of participants either strongly agreed (83.02%) or agreed (13.20%) that they would continue using AI to learn and design educational resources because it makes complex content more accessible and personalized. Only 3.78% remained neutral, and no respondents expressed disagreement. These findings are particularly relevant in the context of EFL teacher education, as they reflect a sustained interest to utilize emerging technologies. Written reflections also confirmed this perspective, with many students describing how AI tools helped them gain confidence to create instructional materials that are relevant and responsive to learners' needs. Several participants affirmed that AI technologies contributed to their understanding and motivated them to explore such tools for future classroom use. This aligns with educational research that explores how generative AI enhances personalized learning in digital teacher training environments. As Anderson et al. (2025) acknowledge, by embedding AI into the CoI framework, teacher trainees adapt their learning trajectories and reflect more deeply on their practice; therefore, the integration of AI supports learner-centered pedagogy by offering autonomy and adaptive scaffolding in real time.

6. CONCLUSIONS

AI-assisted video design enhances conceptual understanding since students acknowledged that preparing video content with AI support increased their awareness of key inclusive education concepts. This facilitates learners' deeper engagement with abstract topics.

Using AI tools to support the organization of content is beneficial. Certainly, students perceived that AI helped them efficiently prioritize and

systematize information for the videos, highlighting its value to enhance cognitive processes such as content planning, information management, and decision-making.

The support provided by AI technology is useful because it helps learners integrate theory and real-life situations. Thus, theoretical knowledge might effectively be connected to reality and facilitate the application of concepts, which indicates its potential to promote meaningful learning experiences in EFL education.

Incorporating AI in specific assignments fosters EFL learners' motivation and engagement, especially when addressing complex topics. Students reported feeling more involved and interested while interacting with AI-generated content. This highlights the motivational benefit of AI in language education and professional development.

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REIMAGINING LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH STORYTELLING: A DIGITAL, INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE ELT

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1. INTRODUCTION

As classrooms become more linguistically and culturally diverse, the development of educational tools that foster both language acquisition and intercultural understanding has become imperative for language teachers. In response, this chapter presents EmpKIDL (https://empkidl.eu), a digital library that integrates English language learning with intercultural education through multilingual storytelling, offering a pedagogically grounded approach to inclusive early language instruction. Developed using the iSpring application—an integrated Microsoft PowerPoint add-in that enables the creation of interactive slide-based lessons—the platform provides ready-to-use resources that support both classroom and online learning environments.

In response to the evolving demands of education, teachers are increasingly expected to engage in lifelong learning and adapt their practices to diverse learner needs (Huang, 2023). This initiative supports that shift by offering high-quality, customizable materials that allow educators to rethink teaching as a process of creative and flexible content delivery.

As part of an Erasmus+ Educational Project focused on empowering young learners through inclusive and intercultural pedagogy, our team—representing five partner countries (*Spain, Uzbekistan, North Macedonia, Romania,* and *Greece*)—has developed a carefully selected collection of 100 interactive learning resources available in six languages. Each lesson includes pre-reading, while-reading, and post-

reading questions, along with a variety of engaging quizzes, all integrated into cohesive, user-friendly slides created with the iSpring application. Freely accessible online, the digital library offers a rich and adaptable toolkit for educators seeking to support language development and cultural awareness in diverse classrooms.

Designed to reinforce reading comprehension, promote critical thinking, and nurture creativity, the resource serves as a practical and innovative solution for multilingual, story-based English language instruction. It highlights the value of culturally relevant content in language acquisition, as well as the importance of empathy, identity affirmation, and intercultural dialogue in early education.



Fuente: https://empkidl.eu/

This chapter outlines the conceptual foundations, development process, and educational goals of the project, situating it within current debates on multilingual education, digital literacy, and the cultivation of intercultural competence in young learners

The pedagogical rationale behind the project is grounded in research demonstrating that culturally rich narratives support not only the development of English language proficiency, but also children's ability to explore cultural values, traditions, and diverse worldviews Soler-Pardo,

2014; Zhussupova, 2017; Kahanurak et al. 2023). Such narratives provide meaningful contexts for language learning while also serving as entry points to intercultural dialogue. By combining bilingual presentation with culturally grounded content, the platform fosters cultural awareness and empathy—core components of global citizenship and essential competencies in contemporary multilingual education (Hanley, 2021; Brown, 2023; Ferguson, 2024).

In addition, digital storytelling—through the integration of media such as images, audio, and video—enables learners to express ideas in creative and reflective ways, thereby promoting student engagement, creativity, and deeper learning (Robin, 2016). This approach also enhances personal expression, social inclusion, and the development of digital competences, allowing learners to engage multiple senses and process information visually, which aids memory and reduces confusion (Lucena Rodríguez et al., 2021). Furthermore, it invites learners to become creators of their own narratives, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity—skills that are vital for both education and everyday life (Masters, 2020)

Building on these benefits, digital storytelling can also be regarded as a powerful tool for inclusive education, as it promotes student voice, cultural expression, and differentiated learning opportunities. As Robin (2016) notes, the integration of multimedia elements—such as audio, visuals, and video—enables learners to articulate their ideas in creative and reflective ways, which is especially valuable for students who may struggle with conventional literacy tasks. This multimodal nature is consistent with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), offering multiple means of engagement and expression that support diverse learners, including those with special educational needs (CAST, 2018).

Furthermore, digital storytelling provides a platform for culturally and linguistically diverse students to share their lived experiences and cultural narratives, thereby validating their identities and enhancing classroom inclusivity (Lucena Rodríguez et al., 2021). Masters (2020) also underscores the technique's role in fostering critical thinking and self-directed learning, which contribute to learner autonomy across varied ability levels. Beyond individual benefits, digital storytelling

encourages peer collaboration and empathy, cultivating a classroom environment where diverse perspectives are respected and valued (Kajder, 2006; Sadik, 2008). By facilitating meaningful participation and reducing structural barriers to learning, digital storytelling not only enriches the educational experience but also advances the goals of equity and inclusion in multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

Grounded in these principles and research findings, the subsequent section details the primary objectives of the *EmpKIDL* project.

2. OBJECTIVES

Building on the core aim of integrating language acquisition with intercultural dialogue, *EmpKIDL* is guided by a set of specific objectives designed to address the diverse needs of learners, educators, and communities. These objectives include:

- **Providing equitable access to multilingual digital storytelling resources:** To offer a freely accessible collection of culturally rich, bilingual stories aimed at supporting children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, thereby reducing educational inequalities and fostering inclusivity.
- **Fostering intercultural competence and global citizenship:** To encourage learners to explore and appreciate diverse cultural values, traditions, and perspectives through engagement with authentic narratives from multiple countries, promoting empathy and cross-cultural understanding.
- **Supporting English language acquisition in multilingual contexts:** To facilitate English language learning by presenting stories bilingually, allowing learners to improve their native languages as scaffolding tools while acquiring new linguistic skills.
- **Empowering educators through ready-to-use digital teaching materials:** To provide teachers with accessible, pedagogically sound resources that can be easily integrated into

curricula, reducing preparation time and enhancing instructional effectiveness.

– **Promoting digital literacy and inclusive use of technology in education:** To harness digital technology in a way that is user-friendly and adaptable, encouraging both learners and educators to engage confidently with digital tools for language and intercultural education.

Through these interconnected objectives, our project aims to contribute meaningfully to the fields of multilingual education, intercultural dialogue, and educational equity.

3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

As noted earlier, the development of EmpKIDL followed a design-based research (DBR) approach, which emphasizes the iterative creation and refinement of educational tools within authentic learning environments. DBR is particularly suited to initiatives that integrate pedagogy, technology, and cultural content, as it allows for continuous feedback, adaptation, and responsiveness throughout both the design and implementation phases (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003; Wang & Hannafin, 2005)

Carried out within the framework of a European Erasmus+ collaboration, the project drew on the cultural and linguistic diversity of its international partnership. These varied educational contexts informed all stages of development, ensuring that the resulting platform is both pedagogically sound and culturally responsive.

3.1. Needs Analysis and Collaborative Design

The initial phase involved a comprehensive needs analysis focusing on the linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic profiles of the potential target learner populations. Through a collaborative process, the partners selected themes and culturally relevant materials intended to engage young learners within their national contexts and beyond, given the

platform's open access to educators and students worldwide. Cultural consultants and educators worked together to select and adapt traditional stories and folktales in ways that maintained cultural authenticity while ensuring accessibility for students learning English as an additional language.

This approach was strongly informed by literature emphasizing the value of culturally rich narratives in developing both language skills and intercultural awareness. Research has shown that exposure to diverse cultural perspectives through storytelling enhances learners' ability to engage with values, traditions, and worldviews different from their own, thus fostering both language proficiency and empathy (Eristi, 2014; Zhussupova, 2017; Dibyamandala, 2023).

3.2. Integration of Multimedia and Digital Storytelling

To enhance learner engagement and language acquisition, the platform incorporates a range of multimedia elements, including audio narration, visual illustrations, and interactive activities. These design choices are grounded in research demonstrating that multimodal digital tools significantly increase motivation and active participation, both of which are key to improving language learning outcomes (Robin, 2014; Zou, Huang, & Xie, 2021). Digital storytelling, in particular, has been recognized for its capacity to personalize learning, improve learners' confidence, and foster social-emotional skills (Niemi & Niu, 2021; Robin, 2014).

By blending these interactive features with bilingual story presentation, the EmpKIDL platform fosters active participation and sustained motivation—two critical components in the process of second language acquisition. The bilingual format also enables learners to engage with content in both their native language and English, reinforcing comprehension and supporting translanguaging practices that are increasingly recognized as beneficial in multilingual classrooms (Kahanurak et al., 2023)

These theoretical considerations guided the practical design of the EmpKIDL digital stories, which were developed using a structured template and a combination of PowerPoint and iSpring tools to support interactivity, personalization, and accessibility.

Each digital story in our project library features a short traditional narrative accompanied by a set of pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. The post-reading tasks are particularly varied and designed to assess multiple student competencies, including reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and written expression.

All stories follow a standardized six-slide structure:

- An introductory dialogue presenting the title of the story.
- Pre-reading questions.
- The main story text, with while-reading questions displayed alongside.
- Post-reading tasks, including:

a. Comprehension: multiple-choice questions
b. Comprehension: true/false questions
c. Vocabulary: fill-in-the-blank exercises
d. Vocabulary: word-meaning matching
e. Writing: a short essay based on one of three provided prompts

A reflective dialogue slide prompting curiosity about other stories.

A concluding dialogue slide to wrap up the story and link to additional content.

This structure was designed to be both user-friendly and communicative, tailored to the needs of primary and lower secondary learners. Dialogue slides (1, 5, and 6) were developed using iSpring's Dialogue Simulation tool, which allows for the selection of animated characters with a variety of facial expressions. These can be linked to dialogue text boxes to simulate conversation, adding a layer of emotional nuance and interactivity that enhances learner engagement.

Slides 2 and 3, which include the pre-reading questions and the story itself, were created using standard PowerPoint features, as they require no interactive input from learners. The post-reading activities on slide 4 were built using iSpring's Quiz tool, which offers a wide range of question types such as drag-and-drop, Likert scales, sequencing, and

short answers. For the EmpKIDL project, five were selected based on pedagogical alignment with our learning objectives: multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, word matching, and essay writing.

The quizzes are automatically graded based on predefined settings, with the exception of essay responses, which are not automatically scored but provide learners with a space for reflective writing. After completing the quiz, students receive an overall score and have the opportunity to review their answers. iSpring also allows for personalized feedback messages after each question, which were customized in EmpKIDL to provide encouragement and support ongoing motivation.

Further technical adjustments were made to enhance accessibility and ease of navigation. Presentations were designed to allow only forward movement, avoiding the use of multiple navigational buttons that might overwhelm younger users. The visual interface—including background layout, navigation controls, text labels, and colour scheme—was also customized to ensure consistency and visual clarity.

Lastly, each digital story was enriched with traditional or thematically appropriate music sourced from the contributing country. This background audio was carefully selected and embedded in the story to strengthen cultural immersion and reinforce the project's intercultural learning objectives.

3.3. INCLUSIVE AND FLEXIBLE DESIGN

A core methodological priority of the project was to ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all learners. The platform was intentionally developed to accommodate students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as those with diverse cognitive, linguistic, and learning profiles. This commitment to flexibility in content delivery was essential to address developmental differences across a broad age range, ensuring the materials remain relevant and engaging from early to late primary and secondary levels.

Such an inclusive approach is supported by extensive international research and policy frameworks, which underscore the critical role of equitable access in educational success. UNESCO (2020) highlights that

inclusive education not only improves academic achievement but also fosters social inclusion and reduces disparities. Similarly, the OECD (2022) emphasizes that flexible learning environments promote equity by addressing diverse learner needs and empowering educators to personalize instruction. These perspectives are fully consistent with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which advocate for multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to support learner variability (CAST, 2018; Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

To operationalize these principles, EmpKIDL stories are carefully scaffolded with multimodal supports, including audio narration, visual aids, and interactive elements, which collectively enhance comprehension and engagement. The user interface was designed with simplicity and intuitiveness in mind, following established usability guidelines to ensure accessibility for both educators and young learners (Nielsen, 2012; Lazar, Feng, & Hochheiser, 2017).

Furthermore, the materials were crafted with classroom integration as a guiding principle, enabling teachers to smoothly incorporate the stories into their existing curricula and pedagogical routines. This flexibility supports differentiated instruction and allows educators to adapt content to varying classroom contexts and learner abilities, promoting inclusive practices and maximizing educational impact (Tomlinson, 2014; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

3.4. PARTICIPATORY DESIGN AND ITERATIVE IMPROVEMENT

The development of the platform was guided by a participatory approach in which ongoing feedback from key stakeholders—including language educators, cultural practitioners, and parents—played a central role. Input was collected at multiple stages, enabling iterative refinement of both the content and functionality of the digital library. This ongoing process of reflection and adaptation is consistent with design-based research (DBR), which emphasizes the importance of real-world feedback loops and context-sensitive revisions to improve educational tools (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Amiel & Reeves, 2008).

Although formal evaluation studies are currently underway, preliminary responses from educators suggest that the platform promotes learner engagement, provides high-quality instructional content, and offers a meaningful entry point for intercultural dialogue in early language education.

Beyond its practical classroom utility, digital storytelling itself has been widely recognized as a powerful pedagogical strategy. Research indicates that it can stimulate inclusive classroom conversations around identity and diversity, encourage critical reflection, and foster a stronger sense of belonging among multilingual learners (Robin, 2016; Niemi & Multisilta, 2016; Kamranian, 2023; Kahanurak et al., 2023). These reported benefits align closely with the broader aims of the project, which include fostering empathy, intercultural awareness, and linguistic development in young learners.

Taken together, these development strategies underscore the project's commitment to creating an inclusive, culturally grounded, and pedagogically robust educational platform. Rather than focusing on empirical learning outcomes, this chapter aims to share the theoretical foundations, design processes, and methodological lessons that emerged during the creation of the digital library—contributing to current conversations on inclusive digital innovation in multilingual education.

The next section considers how the platform aligns with established pedagogical frameworks and contemporary best practices in intercultural and multilingual learning environments.

4. ANTICIPATED EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

Although EmpKIDL is currently in its dissemination phase and has yet to undergo formal empirical evaluation, its pedagogical design is deeply informed by both educational research and practitioner experience. This foundation allows for the anticipation of several areas where the resource is expected to positively influence learners' development.

One key anticipated impact lies in the area of language proficiency. Repeated exposure to bilingual narratives—enhanced with audio, visual,

and interactive elements—is likely to support vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, and comprehension. Research on digital storytelling environments suggests that multimodal inputs improve decoding, memory retention, and learner engagement with language (Robin, 2014; Zou, Huang, & Xie, 2021). The combination of textual, auditory, and visual modalities offers multiple entry points into meaning-making, supporting a range of learning styles and linguistic backgrounds.

Equally important is the potential to foster intercultural understanding and empathy. By engaging with narratives rooted in diverse national and cultural traditions, learners are exposed to multiple worldviews, values, and social norms. This exposure cultivates not only curiosity but also the development of intercultural sensitivity. Studies in this field emphasize the role of culturally embedded storytelling in challenging stereotypes, encouraging critical reflection, and promoting respect for difference (Zhussupova, 2017; Kahanurak et al., 2023; Kamranian, 2023).

A third area of expected benefit concerns learner motivation and engagement—factors strongly associated with sustained progress in language learning. The integration of interactive elements, vibrant illustrations, and story-based tasks fosters a playful, low-anxiety environment conducive to curiosity and persistence. Research confirms that multimodal and gamified contexts can enhance emotional connection to learning, increase attention, and support long-term motivation (Niemi & Niu, 2021).

Together, these anticipated outcomes—linguistic development, intercultural competence, and increased motivation—reflect the project's commitment to inclusive, holistic, and meaningful early language education. While future research will be necessary to empirically evaluate its effectiveness, our project represents a theoretically grounded and contextually responsive contribution to contemporary multilingual pedagogy.

5. DISCUSSION

The development of EmpKIDL highlights both the promise and the complexity of integrating language learning with intercultural education within digital environments. As Bailey and Gruber (2020) demonstrate in their study of a virtual exchange between students in Germany

and Colombia, such initiatives offer valuable opportunities for global engagement while also presenting intricate challenges in pedagogical design and cultural understanding. Similarly, Muszyńska and Giesler (2022) emphasize the importance of fostering Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in online learning environments, noting that these efforts require careful planning, reflection, and student-centered adaptation. Madkur (2024) further argues that leveraging technology to enhance intercultural learning in English education demands a nuanced approach—one that addresses issues of equitable access, digital literacy, and the socio-cultural contexts of learners.

At the same time, platforms like EmpKIDL respond to an urgent need for inclusive, engaging tools capable of serving increasingly multilingual and multicultural classrooms. Fitas (2025) underscores the role of AI in supporting inclusive education by addressing language barriers and individual learning needs. Smith et al. (2021), through their work with migrant and refugee students, highlight the importance of digital resources that not only facilitate language learning but also foster meaningful participation and a sense of belonging in educational settings.

EmpKIDL is not merely a digital platform designed to extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom. It represents a broader educational vision—one in which English is not only a communicative tool but also a bridge between cultures. Through openly accessible bilingual stories grounded in diverse cultural traditions, the platform encourages children to explore different worldviews and values, fostering empathy, curiosity, and inclusive global citizenship.

A particularly demanding aspect of the project involved adapting traditional stories for a young, culturally diverse, and largely unknown global audience. As an open educational resource, EmpKIDL is intended to serve learners of different ages, linguistic backgrounds, educational needs, and cultural contexts. This challenge is echoed in the African Storybook Project, where Welch et al. (2014) highlight the complexities of creating culturally relevant and pedagogically sound stories for multilingual settings. Ensuring linguistic clarity, age appropriateness, and pedagogical value required ongoing collaboration between educators, translators, and cultural consultants. Buckler and

Keraro (2012) document similar experiences in the TESSA initiative, where OER materials had to be locally adapted to be relevant and meaningful across various African contexts. Likewise, Omidire (2013) argues that teachers must be equipped to deliver multilingual instruction that reflects the cultural and linguistic realities of their learners.

Maintaining the authenticity of traditional stories while making them accessible involved not only pedagogical and ethical considerations but also iterative design processes. This aligns with the work of Mills et al. (2023), who advocate for inclusive educational design through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) frameworks supported by AI and open access tools. Moreover, the application of translanguaging principles throughout the platform design (Li, 2022; Li Wei, 2018; García & Wei, 2014) ensured that learners could engage in meaning-making through all their linguistic resources, thus supporting identity development and deeper cultural understanding.

EmpKIDL's success also depended on inclusive, cross-disciplinary collaboration and iterative refinement informed by real-world feedback. Regular consultation with language teachers, cultural educators, and parents throughout development helped ensure that the platform remained relevant, adaptable, and pedagogically sound. These practices align with core principles of design-based research and participatory educational design, which emphasize the importance of ongoing revision in authentic learning contexts (Amiel & Reeves, 2008; McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

Despite its accessible design, the platform's successful implementation in under-resourced environments poses ongoing challenges. Digital equity, variations in infrastructure, and limited institutional support remain significant barriers to effective use at scale. Addressing these issues will require not only technical improvements but also policy engagement and professional development for educators.

From a pedagogical perspective, EmpKIDL reflects a growing shift toward multimodal, story-based instruction that affirms learners' cultural and linguistic identities. Its ready-to-use materials reduce teacher preparation time while promoting inclusive, intercultural learning

experiences. However, the long-term success of such platforms also depends on teacher support and systemic integration. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) suggest, even the most innovative digital tools must be accompanied by adequate training and institutional alignment to achieve meaningful impact.

Finally, the theoretical underpinnings of EmpKIDL resonate strongly with current debates in multilingual education. The project embraces translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy (Li Wei, 2018; García & Wei, 2014) and aligns with culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2017), presenting a practical example of how language learning can be embedded in cultural and identity work. While the platform's dissemination is ongoing and empirical impact data is forthcoming, its conceptual foundations and development process already contribute meaningfully to global conversations on how early education can foster empathy, equity, and cultural awareness in increasingly diverse learning environments.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This project was developed in response to the growing need for inclusive, pedagogically sound tools that support language and intercultural learning in increasingly diverse classrooms. Today's educators are expected to address a wide range of learner needs—often with limited resources and little institutional support. The digital platform described in this chapter offers a practical, research-informed solution: a freely accessible library of multilingual stories that combine technology, cultural content, and pedagogical flexibility.

By centring culturally rooted narratives and presenting them through bilingual, multimedia formats, the resource supports language development while affirming learners' identities. It offers opportunities not only for vocabulary building and comprehension but also for empathy, engagement, and curiosity about other cultures. Its design reflects the everyday realities of primary and secondary classrooms—where students bring varied linguistic repertoires, educational experiences, and worldviews.

For educators, this collection provides adaptable, ready-to-use materials that reduce preparation time while aligning with inclusive teaching

principles. Its structure encourages reflection, creativity, and learner autonomy, making it suitable for a wide range of classroom contexts.

At a broader level, the platform reflects an important shift in language education—one that values cultural responsiveness, student-centred design, and global perspectives over rigid, standardised models. However, to unlock its full potential, further support is needed. Teacher training, investment in digital infrastructure, and institutional endorsement are all crucial to ensuring meaningful uptake and sustainable integration, particularly in under-resourced settings.

Future research should focus on how such tools function in varied educational environments, and on their long-term impact on learners' language skills, intercultural competence, and classroom engagement. While empirical studies are still forthcoming, early feedback suggests strong potential for fostering inclusive, motivating learning experiences.

Ultimately, this initiative offers more than a digital collection of stories—it presents a vision for what inclusive, technology-enhanced language education can become. In a world where linguistic and cultural diversity is the norm rather than the exception, such approaches are not only timely but essential.

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ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE LEARNING THROUGH PADLET-BASED ACTIVITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Collaborative learning, characterized by a shift from traditional teacher-centered instruction to a student-centered approach, fosters an environment where learners actively construct meaning through interaction and teamwork, leading to higher academic achievement (Salma, 2020). For this reason, collaborative learning plays a fundamental role in higher education (Matongo & Goronga, 2024). In this context, Bravo et al. (2018) state that collaborative learning, rooted in connectivism theory, is a well-established pedagogical approach that offers learners several benefits, including the acquisition of new knowledge. Collaboration can also foster an effective learning environment by creating meaningful relationships among students, which improve their educational experience (Cotterill, 2015). Thus, promoting collaboration among learners enhances motivation, engagement, and overall learning outcomes.

In contemporary higher education, the use of technology offers diverse alternatives to enhance collaborative learning. Digital tools facilitate active engagement among students, enabling them to work together more effectively and develop essential skills. As Beltrán-Martín (2019) acknowledges, the importance of technology-based collaborative learning is increasingly recognized within higher education. Thus, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, teachers can promote interaction and knowledge construction as essential components of language

development by creating significant learning experiences using technology. For instance, digital platforms such as Padlet, Google Docs, or breakout rooms can facilitate real-time collaboration, allowing students to co-construct texts, share diverse perspectives, and provide peer feedback, which makes learning more dynamic and participatory (Naamati-Schneider & Alt, 2023).

Concerning Padlet, it is a free digital wall that can increase students' participation and allow real-time interaction (Cahyono et al., 2024). Naamati-Schneider and Alt (2023) state that Padlet enables educators and students to create collaborative boards, share multimedia content, and engage in structured dialogue. The author emphasizes Padlet's value in facilitating online and hybrid learning, supporting reflective practices, promoting creativity, and enabling both synchronous and asynchronous interaction. As Mehta et al. (2021) assert, Padlet (padlet.com) is a versatile web-based platform that can be used to facilitate collaborative learning because it provides a virtual space where users can post and share various forms of multimedia content. This interactive tool allows for the inclusion of documents, questions, comments, images, videos, and audio clips, all accessible to students at any time, thereby enhancing engagement and interaction in educational settings. Additionally, Padlet's multimedia features enable educators to adapt content and activities to meet the diverse needs of learners, thereby encouraging student autonomy and the development of digital literacy competencies essential for 21st-century learning (Schechter & Granera, 2025).

As mentioned above, Padlet platform is an effective digital tool for promoting collaborative learning in EFL contexts across various educational settings. Prior research has demonstrated that Padlet significantly develops essential soft skills, including communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, especially when compared to traditional methods. Additionally, students expressed positive perceptions of this tool, noting its interactive features that enhance engagement, peer feedback, and linguistic accuracy, thereby creating an enjoyable classroom atmosphere. Thus, considering the advantages of the use of Padlet, the present study aimed to analyze its impact on collaborative learning among EFL students in higher education. The investigation

seeks to understand how this digital tool supports interaction, knowledge sharing, and collective task completion within academic language learning environments.

1.1. Previous Studies

Several studies have been carried out regarding the use of Padlet to enhance EFL students' collaborative learning. Kaldarova et al. (2024) evaluated the effectiveness of the Padlet application to enhance soft skills among EFL students at the International Information Technology University. The study focuses on essential soft skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, which are vital for students in a globalized workforce. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: an experimental group that engaged with Padlet activities and a control group that received traditional instruction. A quantitative research approach that utilized pre- and post-observation design to assess the impact of Padlet on soft skills development was employed. The main findings revealed significant improvements in various soft skills among the experimental group, specifically in communication clarity, increased collaboration during group tasks, improved critical thinking through information synthesis, and greater creativity in idea generation.

Vu et al. (2024) explored students' perceptions regarding the use of Padlet as a discussion board in their learning process. The researchers sought to understand how this digital platform impacts student engagement, collaboration, and overall learning experience in language classes. The participants were students from Saigon University. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data. This included questionnaires to gather structured responses from students regarding their experiences with Padlet, and reflections that were used to capture qualitative insights and personal experiences of students using the platform. The study revealed that Padlet enhanced learners' experience by allowing them to create responses in various formats, which made the learning environment more engaging and interactive. Students appreciated features that helped them identify spelling and grammatical errors and facilitated peer assessments. Additionally, most students felt that Padlet

fostered an enjoyable collaborative atmosphere, encouraging active participation in language learning classes.

Another study conducted by Ali et al. (2024) explored how Padlet influences the speaking competence of Saudi EFL learners. The research focused on key aspects of speaking skills, including accuracy, vocabulary, and fluency. A total of fifty high school graduates were divided into two groups: an experimental group that utilized Padlet for their speaking practice, and a control group that continued with conventional teaching methods for 12 weeks. The assessment of speaking skills was conducted using the IELTS speaking criteria, which provided a standardized measure for evaluating the participants' performance. The results indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in terms of speaking competence. This suggests that Padlet not only enhances engagement among learners but also serves as a transformative tool to improve speaking proficiency in EFL contexts.

Karki (2024) explored the perceptions and practices of using the Padlet application in secondary English language classrooms. It sought to understand how this digital tool impacts learners' experiences and skills in the classroom setting. The study involved ten secondary-level learners from Nepal. The participants included an equal number of boys and girls, with five of each gender. The research employed a qualitative approach using narrative inquiry as its method. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to share their experiences and perceptions regarding the use of Padlet. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select participants who were already familiar with the application, ensuring relevant insights were gathered. The findings indicated several positive aspects of using Padlet in the classroom, including enhanced writing skills. Moreover, the platform fostered collaboration and teamwork among students, leading to collective learning experiences. Participants also demonstrated increased interest and motivation in their studies when using Padlet, which contributed to a more engaging environment.

Kanchana and Cherukuri (2024) carried out a study to explore how tools like discussion forums and Padlet can enhance the teaching-learning process in higher education. It emphasizes the need for engaging,

motivating, and effective educational experiences that foster student accountability and collaboration in learning environments. The participants were college and university students. The methodology involved analyzing the impact of forums and Padlet tools on student engagement, retention, and participation in both synchronous and asynchronous learning environments. The results suggest that the use of discussion forums and Padlet significantly enhances student engagement by fostering interactive and collaborative learning environments, which are essential for effective learning. This collaborative approach also aids in developing higher-order thinking skills, promoting students' confidence and self-esteem.

The study by Sha'ar et al. (2025) aimed to explore students' experiences with technology-supported feedback, specifically using Padlet as a collaborative learning tool in higher education EFL contexts. The research was conducted at a Thai university, and it involved undergraduate EFL students enrolled in English communication and writing courses. The research employed a qualitative approach, gathering data through semi-structured interviews aimed to capture students' perceptions of different activities using the Padlet tool. This resource was used throughout the semester to facilitate peer feedback, group discussions, and reflective learning tasks. The findings revealed that students perceived Padlet as highly effective to enhance communication, encourage participation, and improve group dynamics. Also, the participants valued the ability to view and build on others' ideas, which fostered a sense of community and co-constructed knowledge. Certainly, the asynchronous nature of the platform supported reflective learning and improvement through peer comments and feedback.

Action research conducted by Albán et al. (2020) aimed to enhance descriptive writing skills among EFL learners through collaborative activities using the digital tool Padlet. Conducted at a public technological institute in Ecuador, the study involved 18 first-semester students from a graphic design program, all at an A1 proficiency level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The intervention spanned 24 hours of instruction and followed a constructivist approach, emphasizing peer collaboration, feedback

exchange, and knowledge construction. The researchers employed a quantitative methodology using pre- and post-tests alongside a perception survey to measure writing improvements and student attitudes. The results demonstrated significant progress in students' writing performance, with an average of 11 points and a large effect size (Cohen's d = 1.22). The most notable results were in grammar accuracy and vocabulary. Survey responses reflected students' positive perceptions of the collaborative writing process and the use of Padlet, highlighting increased participation, awareness of mistakes, and improved organization.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To determine the impact of using Padlet on collaborative learning among EFL students.
- To identify students' perceptions of the use of Padlet-based collaborative activities in EFL instruction.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Setting and participants

This study was carried out at a private university in Southern Ecuador and included 22 pre-service teachers in their final year of a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program. All participants were actively involved in their academic studies and preparing for their future roles as English language educators. Their English proficiency levels ranged from B1 to B2, as defined by the CEFR, reflecting intermediate to upper-intermediate communicative competence. This level of proficiency enabled them to effectively engage with the Padlet tool and complete the assigned tasks with sufficient linguistic autonomy.

3.2. Instruments

- A pre-intervention questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the study to assess students' experiences with the

use of Padlet in collaborative learning contexts in previous courses of their TEFL program.

- A post-intervention perception questionnaire was systematically administered to identify students' perspectives on the effectiveness of Padlet to promote collaborative learning.
- To gain deeper insight into learners' perceptions of using Padlet, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

These instruments were subjected to a pilot testing phase with a different group of students, which helped to establish the validity and reliability of the questionnaires employed.

3.3. Procedure

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Initially, the pre-intervention questionnaire was administered to assess students' prior experiences with Padlet. Following the initial assessment, a pedagogic intervention was implemented, during which Padlet was integrated into the curriculum to facilitate peer interaction and knowledge sharing. Students engaged in collaborative activities, including brainstorming sessions, group project presentations, providing feedback to peers, and sharing co-constructed reflections at the end of specific lessons. To gain deeper insights into learners' perceptions of using Padlet, semi-structured interviews were conducted for a more complete exploration of their views. After the intervention, the perception questionnaire was administered to evaluate students' perspectives on the effectiveness of Padlet in promoting collaborative learning. The analysis of results combined quantitative data from the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires with qualitative insights from the semi-structured interviews, which provided a holistic understanding of the impact of Padlet on collaborative learning.

4. RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 present the findings from the diagnostic and perception surveys.

TABLE 1. *Diagnostic survey*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable working collaboratively with my classmates on academic tasks.	63.64%	22.73%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%
Collaborative learning helps me understand English language content better than working alone.	59.09%	27.27%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%
Sharing ideas in group activities improves the quality of my learning.	68.18%	18.18%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%
I actively participate when I work in teams or small groups during class.	63.64%	27.27%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
I believe that technology can improve communication and interaction among peers during group work.	81.82%	9.09%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
I have used digital tools (e.g., workspaces, forums, shared documents, educational platforms) to work with classmates on academic tasks.	63.64%	22.73%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%
I find it easier to share my ideas using digital platforms than in face-to-face discussions.	59.09%	22.73%	13.64%	4.55%	0.00%
I am familiar with Padlet or similar tools that allow posting and sharing multimedia content in real time.	50.00%	18.18%	22.73%	9.09%	0.00%
I believe that using a digital collaborative tool can help me contribute more actively in group projects.	86.36%	4.55%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
I think collaborative tools can create a more supportive and interactive learning environment.	81.82%	9.09%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration

TABLE 2. *Post-intervention questionnaire*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Using Padlet helped me interact more effectively with my classmates during collaborative activities.	77.27%	18.18%	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%
Padlet made it easier to share ideas and co-construct knowledge in group tasks.	72.73%	18.18%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
I felt more confident expressing my opinions through Padlet than in traditional class discussions.	77.27%	13.64%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
The use of Padlet increased my motivation to engage with the course content.	81.82%	9.09%	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%
Padlet allowed me to contribute more actively and consistently to group projects.	68.18%	22.73%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
Reading my classmates' contributions on Padlet helped me reflect on and improve my work.	77.27%	18.18%	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%
Padlet supported the development of a more inclusive and respectful learning environment.	86.36%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%
Using Padlet enhanced the quality of my group's collaborative work.	72.73%	13.64%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%
Padlet contributed positively to my learning experience in this course.	90.91%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%
I would recommend using Padlet in other EFL courses to promote interaction and teamwork.	86.36%	9.09%	4.55%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration

TABLE 3. Interview results

Category	Participant's Opinion
Argument Construction	"I feel quite confident when I have to construct arguments in English. Once I know my point of view, it's easy for me to organize my ideas and make them coherent"
Supporting Ideas	"Sometimes I find it hard to support my ideas with clear examples or evidence. I know what I want to say, but I'm not sure how to back it up properly".
Vocabulary Use	"I try to choose the right words when I write, but I'm not always sure if they are appropriate for the context. That makes me doubt myself sometimes".
Importance of Connectors	"I know that using connectors helps my writing flow better, but I often forget to include them or repeat the same ones too much".

Source: Own elaboration

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the diagnostic questionnaire revealed that a significant portion of students (68.18%) strongly believe that sharing ideas during group activities improves learning quality, while 63.64% feel comfortable working collaboratively, and the same percentage had previously used digital tools for academic group tasks. Regarding participation, 63.64% strongly agreed that they were actively engaged in group work, indicating that collaborative structures were well-received and familiar to learners. The item with the highest level of agreement (86.36% strongly agree) highlights students' belief that digital collaborative tools enhance their contributions to group projects, indicating a readiness to integrate such tools into their learning routines.

Similarly, 81.82% strongly agreed that technology can improve communication and interaction, and the same percentage believes collaborative tools foster supportive and interactive environments. However, a notable aspect is that only 50% strongly agreed that they are familiar with Padlet or similar tools, and 22.73% responded neutrally, which suggests a knowledge or experience gap regarding this specific platform. This justifies the need for targeted training during the intervention phase. Additionally, while most students favor digital platforms to share ideas, 13.64% remained neutral, showing a potential variability in digital communication preferences.

As for the post-intervention perception questionnaire, the results revealed that 77.27% of students strongly agreed that using Padlet helped them interact more effectively with their classmates in EFL collaborative settings. Besides, 18.18% agreed and 4.55% had a neutral opinion regarding this aspect. These results are in line with the ones obtained by Sha'ar et al. (2025), who also found that Padlet facilitates meaningful interaction in collaborative EFL contexts. These authors report that Padlet helps students to share responses, engage in peer feedback, and participate in asynchronous discussions, which improves students' engagement and collaborative learning outcomes. As highlighted by Rath (2025), collaborative learning through digital platforms such as Padlet fosters interactional competence, especially when learners are provided

with low-stress environments for communication. Similarly, Yap (2018) asserts that Padlet enhances learners' interaction and communication, fostering a supportive environment for knowledge construction. This interaction promotes a sense of community and co-responsibility in the learning process, which is particularly important in EFL settings.

With respect to students' opinions about Padlet as a tool that allows them to share ideas and co-construct knowledge, 72.73% strongly agreed, 18.18% agreed, and 4.55% had a neutral view. These results suggest that Padlet effectively fosters collaborative learning environments, where students feel empowered to contribute ideas and build knowledge with their peers. This aligns with a study conducted by Wahidin et al. (2024) who found that Padlet enhances learners' contributions in a supportive environment and reduces the fear of being judged when sharing ideas. Similarly, in a study by England (2017) it was found that Padlet promotes collaboration, creativity, and increased learner motivation through a stimulating and inclusive digital space. It is necessary to remark that, in another research conducted by Alharthi et al. (2021), learners were satisfied with Padlet's features since they allowed them to share ideas, contribute asynchronously, and build upon peer insights. The authors reported that Padlet's structure supports visibility of contributions, encourages engagement, and empowers students to take ownership of their learning.

Furthermore, the results reveal that a significant majority of students (77.27%) strongly agreed and 13.64% agreed that they felt more confident expressing their opinions through Padlet than in traditional class discussions. This suggests that Padlet constituted an environment where learners could participate without the pressure typically associated with real-time verbal exchanges. Certainly, the user-friendly interface of Padlet likely reduced affective factors such as anxiety, fear of making linguistic errors, or peer judgment. These findings are consistent with the work of Zainuddin et al. (202o), who found that Padlet reduces anxiety and offers a more reflective space where students can formulate their ideas before sharing them, which supports deeper cognitive engagement and collaborative work. Similarly, Ardiningtyas et al. (2025) also found that Padlet provides a safe, low-pressure

environment where students feel less anxious and more willing to express their ideas. Many participants reported that Padlet's asynchronous format gave them time to reflect, organize thoughts, and revise posts before sharing, which aligns with the results found in the present research.

The results also indicate that most students (81.82%) strongly agreed and 9.09% agreed that the use of Padlet increased their motivation to engage with the course content. Only a small portion (9.09%) remained neutral, and no students disagreed. These findings suggest that Padlet played a significant role in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation and interest in the course content. The interactive nature of Padlet may have contributed to this outcome since it promotes autonomy and active participation, which encourages learners to take ownership of their progress. These findings align with those of Megat et al. (2020) who observed that Padlet fosters learner engagement by offering an accessible and collaborative digital space that supports sustained attention, creativity, and motivation through multimodal interactions. Similarly, Al-Jarf (2024) found that Padlet promotes motivation and deeper engagement among EFL learners. Certainly, when Padlet was integrated into writing and reflective activities, students demonstrated increased interest and intrinsic motivation. They were more likely to explore course content voluntarily, express their ideas creatively, and participate actively in peer discussions.

Moreover, the findings show that 68.18% of students strongly agreed and 22.73% agreed that Padlet allowed them to contribute more actively and consistently to group projects. Only a small fraction remained neutral (4.55%) or disagreed (4.55%), with no participants strongly disagreeing. These results suggest that Padlet facilitated a more inclusive form of participation in collaborative tasks. Its asynchronous and flexible features enabled learners to contribute at their own pace, thus ensuring more thoughtful and equitable engagement among group members. In this regard, Zainuddin et al. (2020) emphasize that Padlet supports collaborative knowledge construction by encouraging learners to engage reflectively in group interactions. Similarly, Naamati-Schneider and Alt (2023) also found that the use of Padlet significantly encouraged collaborative interaction, refined group knowledge construction, and fostered self-reflection among students. The asynchronous space allowed

learners to express ideas freely, interact with peers, and develop a shared understanding through iterative and reflective contributions.

The findings also demonstrate that 77.27% of students strongly agreed and 18.18% agreed that reading their classmates' contributions on Padlet helped them reflect on and improve their work. A minimum of 4.55% remained neutral, and no participants expressed disagreement. These findings suggest that exposure to diverse perspectives and approaches encourages students to reconsider their ideas, refine their arguments, and enhance the quality of their contributions (Kanchana & Cherukuri, 2024). This implies that Padlet fosters critical thinking skills and promotes a more personalized learning experience (Giler-Loor et al., 2020).

Additionally, most students (86.36%) strongly agreed and 9.09% agreed that Padlet supported the development of a more inclusive and respectful learning environment. Only 4.55% responded neutrally, and none expressed disagreement. These findings reveal that Padlet was perceived as a digital space where students' opinions could be acknowledged and respected, which fostered a sense of belonging among them. Certainly, Karki (2024) emphasizes that Padlet promotes inclusion since it minimizes social pressure and supports respectful peer interaction, which is particularly valuable for students who are shy, less confident in their language abilities, or come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The data indicate that 72.73% of students strongly agreed and 13.64% agreed that using Padlet enhanced the quality of their group's collaborative work. A small portion responded neutrally (9.09%) or disagreed (4.55%), while none strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that Padlet played a key role in improving the way students coordinated, contributed, and interacted within their groups. The platform's advantages to centralize ideas, track contributions, and visually organize group input likely fostered clearer communication and more effective collaboration. In this respect, Zhi and Su (2015) assert that Padlet improves group dynamics by supporting transparency and equitable participation, which are essential factors for meaningful collaborative learning. Similarly, Naamati-Schneider and Alt (2023) found that Padlet fosters visibility of contributions, democratic participation, and

group cohesion. Certainly, the non-hierarchical structure of Padlet encouraged quieter or less confident students to contribute meaningfully, helping balance participation across the group. These factors led to healthier group dynamics, increased accountability, and enhanced collaborative outcomes.

In addition, it was found that 72.73% of students strongly agreed and 13.64% agreed that using Padlet enhanced the quality of their group's collaborative work. A smaller portion responded neutrally (9.09%), and only 4.55% disagreed, with no students strongly disagreeing. This positive perception suggests that Padlet contributed to the effectiveness of group collaboration. Certainly, its interactive interface allowed students to share resources, ideas, and feedback more efficiently, which fosters greater coordination and coherence in group tasks. These findings are in line with research by Nguyen (2023) who emphasized that Padlet enhances group performance by facilitating communication and enabling iterative improvement through peer feedback. In a similar vein, Sha'ar et al. (2025) found that Padlet enabled structured and transparent peer feedback, allowing students to revise and improve their work iteratively.

The results also revealed that most students (90.91%) strongly agreed and 4.55% agreed that Padlet contributed positively to their learning experience on the course, with 4.55% expressing a neutral opinion and no disagreement reported. Certainly, the platform's ability to foster both individual expression and group collaboration may have contributed to an interactive learning environment. These results show that Padlet enhanced the learning process through its multimodal space where students could visually organize ideas, collaborate asynchronously, and reflect on peer contributions (Kanchana & Cherukuri, 2024).

It is important to mention that most students (86.36%) strongly agreed and 9.09% agreed that they would recommend using Padlet in other EFL courses to promote interaction and teamwork, while only 4.55% remained neutral, and no disagreement was reported. These findings suggest that students perceived Padlet not merely as a supportive tool for their learning but as a broadly effective platform with potential benefits for wider educational contexts. The high levels of agreement reflect students' recognition of Padlet's capacity to foster collaboration,

facilitate real-time or asynchronous communication, and support equitable participation, which are essential elements in language learning environments that emphasize communicative competence.

Regarding the students' responses in the interview, it was evident that they had a positive perception of Padlet as a collaborative and inclusive learning tool in the EFL classroom. Several students reported feeling more confident sharing their ideas in writing, noting that the asynchronous format reduced the pressure of speaking publicly and encouraged greater participation. This highlights the platform's role in fostering a psychologically safe environment for expression. Others emphasized the benefits of being able to view and interact with their classmates' contributions, which facilitated the co-construction of knowledge and deeper topic understanding through reflection. Increased familiarity with Padlet over the course contributed to students' appreciation of its practical features, such as organizing tasks and ensuring group alignment. Moreover, students valued the equal opportunity Padlet provided for participation, suggesting that the tool supports more inclusive group dynamics. Finally, the public and interactive nature of the platform enhanced students' motivation and accountability, as knowing that peers would read and respond to their posts encouraged more thoughtful engagement. These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Sha'ar (2024) who found that Padlet significantly improved students' learning experience, describing it as interactive, engaging, and helpful in visualizing peer contributions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Padlet enhanced student collaboration, fostered effective peer interaction, and promoted inclusive group dynamics. This was evident in both the quantitative data, which showed high levels of agreement with statements related to collaborative effectiveness, and in student interviews, where learners expressed that this tool enabled equal participation and active engagement in group tasks.

The use of Padlet had a strong motivational impact on EFL students, as reflected in the post-intervention responses. Certainly, most participants

believed that this collaborative tool increased their motivation to engage with the course content. Additionally, learners valued the visibility and interactivity of the platform, which encouraged them to contribute more actively.

Padlet served as a fundamental medium to promote reflective learning and co-construction of knowledge. Students reported that reading their peers' posts helped them develop a deeper understanding of the content, indicating that the platform facilitated metacognitive engagement and peer scaffolding, which are critical components of effective collaborative learning in EFL contexts.

The integration of Padlet in EFL instruction contributed to the development of a more supportive and respectful learning environment. Students perceived that the platform fostered equitable participation, where their opinions could be acknowledged, thus promoting a sense of belonging and mutual respect within collaborative groups.

The findings highlight the pedagogical benefits of Padlet to facilitate student autonomy and active learning. By offering a space for learners to express ideas, respond to peers, and reflect on collective input, Padlet supported the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction, which aligns with current educational paradigms that value interaction, reflection, and knowledge construction.

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INCREASING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE EFL AND ESP CLASSROOM THROUGH GAMIFIED GROUP DYNAMICS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Student motivation in the university context is a well-stablished subject of scholarly research. As explained by Dja'far et al., (2016), numerous studies have demonstrated that motivation plays a crucial role in achieving proficiency in a second or foreign language (e.g., Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Schmidt et al., 1996).

Nonetheless, despite its relevance in the learning process, researchers and educators have found that students' levels of motivation differ greatly depending on the setting, program they are undertaking, and personal differences. The elevated number of variables involved hinders the possibility of making general claims about student motivation in a university setting. Thus, it was decided not to incur in generalizations and report that while some researchers have found high levels of student motivation in their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) classrooms (see Dja'far et al., 2016), others have found low (Nilubol, 2023) or varying levels of motivation (see Abdalla, 2023; Bellés-Fortuño & Ollero Ramírez, 2015; González Ardeo, 2016).

It has been found that some of the most recurrent factors that the students tend to find demotivating in this setting include finding the

subject matter uninteresting, the usage of uninspiring traditional teaching methodologies such as lecture-based classes, or the use of textbooks that did not stimulate student engagement and, in the case of ESP, did not align with the professional applications of the language (Punthumasen, 2007). Further, the compulsory nature of most EFL/ ESP subjects was yet another element to take into consideration as many students, specially those in private institutions, considered that they did not need to take EFL or ESP subjects due to their self-perceived proficiency in EGP (English for General Purposes).

This considered, motivating university students in language learning contexts, particularly in ESP, remains a persistent challenge (Martín-González & Chaves-Yuste, 2024), especially when students perceive the subject as either disconnected from their academic goals or redundant due to their existing proficiency. Scholars and educators have resorted to different means in an attempt to foster student motivation in these contexts such as task-based learning (Fujita & Shintani, 2025, Sarani & Farzaneh Sahebi, 2012; Tsai, 2022; Zahra El Abaoui, 2023), the use of technology and AI in the classroom (Ebadi & Amini, 2024; Rachmawati & Irawan, 2024), and gamification (Hardianti, 2024; Huseinović, 2023; Jiménez-Sánchez & Gargallo-Camarillas, 2020). The results from most of these studies has been satisfactory, reporting higher levels of students' motivation and engagement after the implementation of the innovative teaching methodology or strategy. Thus, it was decided to follow the footsteps of these (and other) scholars and implement and explore the effectiveness or lack thereof of a blended gamification and task-based strategy in the ESP and EFL classrooms.

Since our observations showed that most previous research was focused on a single university (even in those cases in which students from various courses of faculties were considered), it was decided to further contribute to the field by researching the student body and their perception of the implementation of the gamification strategy in two different universities in Madrid: the Public Complutense University of Madrid and the Private University of Design, Innovation and Technology. Naturally, this generated and additional variable.

1.1. Student Motivation

The concept of motivation will be employed in this book chapter as the connection between effort, desire, and affect/satisfaction, resulting from a blending of internal and external influences (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2009). These are all elements involved in the process of learning a foreign language, a process which is characterized according to Gardner (1985) by four main features: socio-cultural environment, learner's individual differences, the overall context of learning, and linguistic outcomes.

As deeply covered by the literature (Abdalla, 2023; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), motivation can be divided into integrative and instrumental. González Ardeo (2016) describes integrative motivation in the specific context of language learning as the students' interest to be open and accepting of the new cultural group, to have a strong emotional interest in the speakers of that language, and to have a positive evaluation of the learning process. Likewise, he presents instrumental language learning motivation as that which is connected to pragmatic or potential utilitarian gains of L2 proficiency that would lead the learner to achieve practical goals such as reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher social status (Norris-Holt, 2001). This considered, it is to be expected that, while integrative motivation may vary depending on the students' personal preferences, instrumental motivation can be more easily controlled (and expected), especially in ESP contexts.

Additionally, it must be mentioned that there is an additional distinction in terms of types of motivation which is that of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). This distinction is not so straightforward and has, in fact, been a controversial subject in the literature, but for the sake of practicality, they will be referred to in this book chapter following Brown (2000) and González Ardeo's (2016) definitions. Thus, extrinsic motivation will be used as an umbrella term under which can be found both instrumental and integrative motivation, as they are both related to goals and outcomes. Meanwhile, intrinsic motivation will solely refer to those instances in which the motivation to learn comes from within, that is, just for the sake of learning and acquiring knowledge.

This considered, it must be noted that the motivations of the studentship in EFL classrooms and ESP classrooms may differ. EFL students may have a mix between integrative and instrumental motivation to learn the language while ESP students' motivation is strongly instrumental (Dos Santos, 2020; Peñarroja, 2022). This is partly due to the fact that the goal in EFL is often broader and more general while that of ESP classes is generally more field and task specific. This may lead to students perceiving ESP courses more relevant than EFL ones (Martín-González & Chaves-Yuste, 2024). Nevertheless, ESP teaching is not without its challenges (Jande & Ibrahim, 2021), such as teaching methodology selection, teacher training and collaboration with content experts, sometimes unrealistic or misguided student expectations, or reduced number of available materials.

The gap in the research regarding ESP and EFL students' motivation in the Spanish context seems to be even larger, although it has recently began to be filled (González Ardeo, 2016; Martín-González & Chaves-Yuste, 2024). Their results seem to align with earlier research reporting higher instrumental motivation rates among ESP students than among EFL students, with limited differences in terms of integrative motivation.

To sum up, different scholars define motivation in various ways but most of the research community agrees that motivation is generally a significant factor in learning achievement and learning achievement, which is considered one of the most vital indicators of learning success in many educational systems.

1.2. Gamification in EFL/ESL Contexts

The term "gamification," coined by Nick Pelling in 2002, refers to a methodological approach that incorporates game-like elements (i.e., points, rewards, challenges, or badges) into non-game contexts, such as education, with the aim of enhancing students' motivation and engagement (Sailer & Homner, 2020). Gamification, thus, differs from "game-based learning," which refers to the use of games as a medium for instruction (e.g., chess). One of the earliest applications of gamification, preceding the coining of the term, dates back to the early 20th century, when the Boy Scouts introduced badges as a form of achievement recognition. Since then, various game (or video game) elements, such as experience points

(XP), turns, or leaderboards, have been integrated into educational settings (e.g., examinations, project-based learning, etc.), leading to notable increases in student motivation (Li, 2024; Sappaile, 2024).

This is extensive to the EFL/ESL classrooms. For instance, studies by Kıyançiçek & Uzun (2022) show that integration of gamified platforms like Kahoot significantly increased learners' interest, enjoyment, and participation compared to non-gamified environments. Furthermore, several controlled studies suggest that gamified instruction yields modest gains in vocabulary, reading, and grammar when compared to traditional methods (Cheng et al., 2025; Sadeghi et al., 2022).

However, the positive impact is not always uniform. Zhang & Hasim, (2023) are able to conclude, in their systematic review that while many studies report motivational gains and improved attitudes; specially in those cases in which methods such as quests, narratives, awards, point systems, and storytelling along with more immersive gaming experiences are employed, others, such as excessive competition seem to sometimes increase anxiety (Edwards, 2022). Encouragingly, cooperative and competitive gamified formats have been shown to achieve comparable results in terms of effort and learning outcomes. Yet, collaborative formats tend to promote a stronger sense of social connection, mitigate stress and enhance interpersonal skills (Zhang & Hasim, 2023). It must then be considered that even though competition-based learning has been found to support teamwork, project-based engagement, and metacognitive reflection, it must be carefully implemented to avoid undermining learner confidence.

When taking into consideration the success rate of different gamification strategies, it must also be considered that it is possible that the effectivity of these strategies may be related to the novelty effect. This is described by Elston (2021:565) as

a positive effect that relates to the newness of an innovation rather than the innovation itself. Over time, the novelty effect wears off and subsequent data may show that the intervention by itself is only modestly effective or completely ineffective.

While this is possible, gamification can take many shapes and small changes to the specific strategies implemented may suffice to maintain their attention-grabbing and engagement-fostering capabilities. Longitudinal studies would be necessary to ascertain the success rate of different gamification strategies, and the extent of their application to this context.

As previously explained, while gamification in the EFL classroom has been widely implemented and explored in the literature, the use of gamification in the ESP classroom has not received that much scholarly attention (but see Sevilla-Pavón & Haba-Osca, 2017; among some others others). It was thus established that it could be insightful to explore the implementation of the same gamification strategy in both EFL and ESP classrooms and compare the results in both settings.

1.3. The House Cup Competition: A Gamification Strategy

The strategy implemented in this case study and described in this book chapter consists of a point system and leaderboard inspired by the Harry Potter franchise that measures student participation in real time, whilst fostering students' peer collaboration and enhancing both intrapersonal and interpersonal engagement.

The use of a house point system has a long-standing tradition in British culture and is used by many educational institutions in tertiary education such as Cambridge UNiversity and Oxford University. This system divides students into different houses or colleges, which originally corresponded to the physical residence where boarding students lived. Nowadays, all students are assigned to a house upon enrolment. Students compete throughout the academic year to earn points through academic and sports achievements. Beyond competitiveness, this method aims to foster key values such as collaboration, responsibility, and resilience.

This considered, it was decided to extend this practice to the specific context of the EFL and the ESP classrooms. The application of this method in the classroom is very simple and does not require significant effort from the teacher. The first step is to determine the number of houses and their names. This can be done by the teacher alone or jointly with the students as a first-day activity, serving as an icebreaker. It is

advisable for the houses to be easily identifiable, so linking each house to a colour (e.g., red, blue, etc.) or shape (e.g., circle, square, etc.) can be helpful. In this specific case, it was decided to use this opportunity to increase students' cultural awareness, by deciding that each house would be named after well-known festivities in the Anglo-Saxon culture—namely, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, St. Valentine's Day, and Easter. Students were randomly assigned to their houses using "Picker Wheel", an online free tool that randomly places people into groups.

Students were informed on the first day that their class participation grade (10%) would be measured through the point system. They were made aware that those students who participated most would be awarded the maximum grade and subsequent grades would be assigned proportionally. The winning house and the top scorers in each house would also receive an additional gift at the end of the course. In order to earn house points, students were asked to participate in class both verbally (by raising their hand to answer questions by the teacher, volunteering to correct exercises or participate in debates or other activities) and also in a written format through their contributions to class brainstorming and opinion sharing on Wooclap, Padlet or other similar software tools used. House points were also occasionally awarded for fast or accurate classwork completion, as a prize for the winning team after a Kahoot quiz or as a reward when one of their projects was voted by their classmates as their favourite. Each time a student earned points, they earned them for themselves, but also for their house, so as to value both personal and group efforts. To allow the students to follow their progress in real time, a digital scoreboard was created using the free online tool "Keep the Score". Visual identifiers in the form of color-coded lanyards were given to the students to wear in class to sustain visibility and accountability.

Finally, in addition to tracking daily participation and engagement in classroom tasks and homework, students had to partake in a themed task around the time in the year in which their festivity was celebrated. On a given date, following the inverted classroom and task-based methodology they were asked to prepare an activity with their peers that

would last for 30 minutes. The theme of this activity was that they needed to make it about their festivity, it had to be related to the English language in some way and, in the case of ESP students, also to their degree. During the time in which they were implementing the activity, they had complete freedom over the point system, which allowed them to praise their classmates efforts while also developing strategic thinking so as not to harm their own standing in the leaderboard.

1.5. Implications for the House Cup Competition Dynnamic

The House Cup Competition blends competitive mechanics (houses, points, leaderboards) with collaborative structures, as points contribute both to individual and group success. This aligns well with best practices identified in the literature as it balances competition with community, and using visible progress-tracking tools. It also caters for student diversity by allowing students to participate in different ways (oral and written formats, homework and classwork, speed in completing the activities and linguistic accuracy, etc.). Furthermore, by aligning thematic content (cultural festivities) with student agency, the approach aims to overcome boredom, increase intrinsic motivation, and foster peer connection while minimizing the anxiety and novelty fade common in simpler gamified systems.

To sum up, existing research affirms that well-designed gamification can motivate and increase engagement in EFL/ESP settings, but only when it supports meaningful interaction. The House Cup Competition has been deliberately structured to embody these principles, offering both empirical and pedagogical alignment with the broader literature.

2. OBJETIVES

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the House Cup Competition gamification dynamic in promoting student motivation, participation, and engagement in both English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms in two universities in Spain (one public and one private)

– To determine if there are any differences considering the variables at hand: EFL vs. ESP, private university setting vs. public university setting.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods, classroom-based action research design. The design combined quantitative data collection (student self-assessment surveys and point tracking) with qualitative data (open-ended student reflections, classroom observations, and post-activity feedback), allowing for the triangulation of the data which permitted a richer understanding of the students' responses to the dynamic.

3.2. Participants

The dynamic was put into practice by a single instructor across two higher education institutions in Spain. Table 1 below summarizes the groups in which it was implemented.

TABLE 1. *Data collection instruments, descriptions and sample questions.*

	University of Design, Innovation and Technology (Private University)	N of students	Complutense University of Madrid (Public University)	N of students
EFL	English I (B)	34	English B2.1	58
	English I (J)	33		
ESP	English for Graphic Design	26	English for Tourism	68
	English for Interior Design	31		

As can be observed in Table 1, the strategy was implemented in a total of 6 courses, four of them taught at UDIT, a private university in Madrid specialised in Design degrees and two of them at UCM, a public university in Madrid. The total number of students with whom the strategy was tested amounts to 250, out of which 126 attended UCM and 124 attended UDIT. In terms of course type, the sample was evenly distributed among EFL and ESP classes (125 students of each). This

distribution was highly balanced which allows for intergroup comparison with no need of sampling adjustment. It must be noted that although information about students' socioeconomic status was not collected, university fees in UDIT ranged from 11.600€ to 14.100€[65] while the university fees of humanities courses in UCM was of 846.93€[66]. This cannot be perceived as an indicator of students' socioeconomic means but it does provide additional information about the cost of their university studies which may play a role in extrinsic motivation.

3.3. The Gamified Intervention: The House Cup Competition

As previously explained, the House Cup Competition dynamic divided students into mixed ability "houses" (teams), each competing across the term in various academic and participatory tasks. Students were made aware that this would be the way in which their participation grade (10%) would be measured throughout the term. This dynamic stablished that students would earn house points that would benefit themselves and their houses for both classroom participation (e.g., asking questions, completing challenges, correcting exercises) and academic tasks (quizzes, homework completion). Students' points were shown in real time using a virtual board so students could monitor progress and strategize collectively. During project presentations, students were allowed to allocate points to competing houses, fostering peer evaluation and reflective judgment. Finally, the usage of culturally bound festivities as house names fostered cultural awareness and immersion; and the usage of "The House Cup System" from the Harry Potter franchise increased students' motivation. The intervention lasted for the totality of the course which consisted of 60 teaching hours.

[65]Information retrieved on June 20th, 2025 from: https://udit.es/admisiones/precios-becas-y-financiacion/#tasas-grado-universitario

[66] Information retrieved on June 20th, 2025 from: https://www.ucm.es/informacion/precios-de-grado

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

Table 2 summarizes the data collection instruments; description and sample questions used to compile the data that was then analysed in this book chapter.

TABLE 2. *Data collection instruments, descriptions and sample questions.*

Instrument	Description	Sample questions
Pre- and post-intervention surveys	Students completed a Google Forms survey with Likert-scale questions measuring motivation, engagement, and attitudes toward English learning and classroom dynamics	Rate the statements on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot): 1) I feel motivated to participate in English class 2) I feel the House Cup Competition makes me participate more
Qualitative reflections	Students were asked to reflect on their experience in open-ended prompts	1) What did you enjoy most about the House Cup? 2) How did the point system influence your participation?
Classroom observations	The instructor maintained a journal documenting student behaviour, interactions, and overall classroom atmosphere throughout the implementation	
Performance tracking	Weekly point accumulation was recorded and used to analyse trends in participation and task completion	

3.5. Data Analysis

Data was analysed using a mixed methods approached that combined quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Quantitative data from the surveys were analysed using descriptive statistics to compare pre- and post-intervention attitudes. Given the small sample size and absence of a control group, inferential statistics were not applied and just the mean and standard deviation were reported. Qualitative data were studied using a inductive approach in the form of thematic analysis. Responses were coded for recurring themes such as motivation, engagement, perceived fairness, enjoyment, stress, and peer collaboration. Observational notes served to triangulate student-reported data and provide context for interpretation.

3.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All participants were informed of the pedagogical purpose of the activity and gave informed consent for anonymous data to be used in research dissemination. No grades were affected by refusal of participation in the evaluation of the initiative. Students could opt out of individual data sharing while still participating in the classroom dynamic at any time.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results in this section will take into consideration the variables of course type (EFL/ ESP) and institution (UCM/UDIT).

4.1. QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Table 3 below summarizes the results obtained in the pre-test and post-test regarding students' self-reported motivation scores before and after taking part in the dynamic.

TABLE 3. *Pre-test and post-test scores*

	UDIT	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Change	UCM	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Change
EFL	English I (B)	3.0 (0.6)	4.3 (0.5)	+1.3	English B2.1	3.1 (0.5)	4.6 (0.3)	+1.5
	English I (J)	3.3 (0.5)	4.5 (0.4)	+1.2				
ESP	Graphic Design	2.2 (0.9)	3.8 (0.6)	+1.6	Tourism	3.4 (0.6)	4.5 (0.2)	+1.1
	Interior Design	2.1(1.2)	4.1 (0.3)	+2.0				

As can be observed, there were some differences between the motivation baseline across institutions and when comparing EFL and ESP courses, although the differences do not seem statistically significant. Students at UDIT had lower motivation rates at the pre-test phase than students at UCM, with this difference being particularly noticeable in the case of ESP students. This may be due to the fact that students at UDIT also felt like their English proficiency level was above average,

as self-reported by 82.34% of ESP students at UDIT in contrast with 30.88% of ESP students at UCM.

However, all student groups showed increased motivation following the implementation of the classroom dynamic across all courses and in both university settings. This suggests the intervention was effective in promoting student engagement, in line with previous research in the usage of gamification in the EFL and ESP classroom (Edwards, 2022; Jiménez-Sánchez & Gargallo-Camarillas, 2020; Kıyançiçek & Uzun, 2022; Sevilla-Pavón & Haba-Osca, 2017).

After analysing the results in greater depth, some more detailed results were obtained. First, in terms of the institution, it was observed that UDIT students, particularly those in ESP courses, had lower baseline motivation scores but experienced the largest gains, suggesting that the dynamic had a particularly strong impact on students who were initially less engaged. Parallelly, UCM students had higher starting motivation, especially in ESP, but showed slightly smaller improvements, indicating a possible ceiling effect or that the new dynamic was most impactful when initial motivation was lower. It must also be considered that other elements may also have been at play, such as the realization of the difference between EFL and ESP which may have increased ESP students' instrumental motivation.

In terms of course type, it was noticed that EFL courses showed moderate to strong gains (average of +1.33). Students likely responded well to the competitive structure, perhaps because it aligned with communicative tasks typical in language learning. Similarly, ESP courses, especially at UDIT, showed the largest gains, with Interior Design students improving by +2.0 points. Results from the qualitative analysis may be needed to further understand students' change of heart.

Results from other questions in the survey seem to indicate that students reported a higher degree of engagement in class activities, with 81% indicating that the House Cup Compeition made them more likely to participate actively, compared to only 45% prior to the intervention.

Finally, 76% of students seemed to agree that having a real-time leaderboard gave them a clearer understanding of their progress than

traditional grading and encouraged them to participate more to catch on with their peers. They also seemed to appreciate having a numeric justification of this grade as they often found the teacher's process for participation grading arbitrary.

Although the lack of a control group limits causal claims, these preliminary results seem optimistic regarding the success rate of the implementation of the dynamic. Nonetheless, it is expected that the analysis from the qualitative data will help further understand these tendencies.

4.2. Qualitative Findings

A thematic analysis of open-ended survey responses was carried out so as to establish the main themes mentioned and to complement the results from the Likert scale questions in the survey. In this manner, some highly salient themes were stablished. These have been summarized in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. *Results from the thematic analysis and examples*

Theme	Example
Increased motivation through team accountability	"Había días que estaba a otra cosa, pero era mirar a la pantalla y ver que íbamos segundos que les decía a mis colegas que se pusieran a levantar la mano y hasta que no superábamos a Thanksgiving no parábamos" [There were days in which I wasn't paying that much attention but then I would see on the screen that we were in second place and I would tell my fellow team members to start raising their hand to participate and we wouldn't stop until we had beat Thanksgiving] EFL student, UDIT
Peer evaluation encouraged critical thinking	"We debated a lot before giving points. Was their design proposal better than the other team's? Was their vocabulary advanced? How much of an advantage will it be in the leaderboard? I know we weren't supposed to think that, but we were also not gonna just let someone else win" ESP student, UDIT
Original methodology	"Sinceramente, a veces parecía algo infantil, pero no es como que no lo disfrutáramos y la verdad es que conseguía motivarnos a hacer las tareas y a participar en clase" [Honestly, it felt a bit childish sometimes, but it's not like we didn't enjoy it. In fairness, it did motivate us to work in class and participate] EFL student, UCM

Motivation for reserved students	"Normalmente no suelo hablar mucho en clase pero soy trabajadora y me gustaba que la teacher me diera puntos por terminar rápido y tener bien todas las respuestas, además eso me animaba a levantar luego la mano para corregir porque ya sabía que las tenía bien" [I don't usually talk much in class, but I'm hardworking and I liked it when the teacher gave me points for finishing quickly and having all the answers right. That also encouraged me to raise my hand to correct the exercises with the whole class because I already knew they were right] ESP student, UCM

The first recurrent theme was "Increased motivation through team accountability". Within this theme were found those instances in which students mentioned the team-based structure as a major motivator. As can be seen in the example in Table 4, many students reported that they felt a responsibility to contribute not only for their own learning, but also for the success of their house, often encouraging fellow house members to contribute. This sense of shared responsibility aligns with research by Dörnyei & Murphey (2003), who emphasize the motivational power of learner groups in language classrooms.

Another recurrent topic was how "peer evaluation encouraged critical thinking". Students seemed to widely enjoy assigning points to other houses during projects and many did so strategically so as to try to be fair while not being too generous in a manner that may penalize their house. Students described discussing performance critically and collaboratively before awarding points, leading to deeper engagement with evaluation criteria. This also raised some concerns about bias or manipulation, but most students took the process seriously, and the rotative nature of the point awarding house prevented students from thinking of it as unfair.

In addition, several students described the House Cup Competition as a refreshing alternative to conventional classroom routines that are mostly text-book based. They enjoyed wearing the lanyards and developed a sense of house identity and belonging. This supports findings from authors such as Kapp (2012) and Werbach & Hunter (2015), who argue that gamification can revitalize learner interest when designed with pedagogical alignment.

In a similar line, many self-identified shy students claimed to feel empowered by the points system, as it gave them non-verbal pathways to contribute, such as through written tasks, teamwork, and digital participation. They specially seemed to value those instances in which the instructor asked them to work on a task and rise their hand when they were finished so the instructor could correct the exercise privately before asking all students to share and check their answers. Counting with the teacher's approval before sharing their answers with the class seemed to grant these students with enough confidence so as to later volunteer to correct the exercises. This was perceived as a huge success result of the dynamic as this finding underscores the value of multimodal participation channels in inclusive classroom design (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The second part of the qualitative analysis involved exploring the classroom observation notes taken by the instructor during each lesson. Some of the most recurrent comments made about the class's performance were the following:

On the one hand, the implementation of the House Cup Competition dynamic seemed to increase interaction and collaboration among fellow house-members as it seemed to boost feelings of connectivity and belonging. Students often sat with their fellow house-members and performed tasks together helping one another. One specific case of notable importance was the case of a student with Autism in one of the EFL classes in UDIT, as the House Cup Competition dynamic provided him with an opportunity to interact with his peers in a smaller group. Other noteworthy signs of collaboration included those cases in which there were individuals with different ability levels in the same house, as they always tried to help one another.

On the other hand, the implementation of the House Cup Competition dynamic seemed especially useful for students who showed clear signs of demotivation (i.e., sitting on the back rows, forgetting or refusing to bring writing materials to class, working on other subjects during class, using their phones, etc.). This is perceived as a very relevant result as it proved a useful way to increase engagement among this challenging group. They seemed to be particularly fuelled by the competitiveness

of the dynamic, the possibility to be awarded points in real time for everyone to see, and the final prize in the end.

Although the general perception of the instructor during classroom observation was positive, the House Cup Competition dynamic was not without its drawbacks. There were three main setbacks that were identified.

First, some students exhibited over-competitiveness, shown as meaningless interventions in class and the request to be awarded points for them. This occasionally led to tension within the group and between the students and the language instructor. However, the issue was easily resolved through open communication between the students and the instructor.

Then, in one of the EFL courses at UDIT, one of the houses had some communication issues among themselves and they did not end up preparing an activity for the whole class as a whole team but rather in pairs or individually. In this case, individual grades were awarded as some students in the house had stopped attending lessons regularly. This was a possibility considering that houses were made at random on the first day of class. However, in those cases in which houses ended up losing some of their members throughout the term (e.g., international students, dropouts, truancy, etc.), the remaining members were simply relocated to other houses, as it was the case in the English for Graphic Design course at UDIT, after two international students returned to their home university half-way through the course.

Finally, it must be mentioned that a few students struggled to understand how points were awarded, requiring additional clarification and transparency, specially reaching the end of the year, as they were worried about their participation grade.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The House Cup Competition dynamic proved an effective class gamification strategy that promotes student motivation in both EFL and ESP courses. Students' initial motivation scores on the pre-test were low, reflecting a general lack of interest in EFL classes. Many expected to find the lessons boring or unengaging. On the other hand, ESP students

seemed to feel that these classes were unnecessary due to their high self-assessed English proficiency.

Nonetheless, the application of the House Cup Competition dynamic in the classroom seemed to motivate students as it encouraged individual participation, inasmuch as team accountability. It also gave students some control over the points that were awarded, while always showing them in-time proof of their achievements. Finally, it offered an opportunity for students to participate in different manners (e.g., oral and written contributions), thus catering for diversity, which was highly valued.

The increase in motivation seemed particularly prevalent among the most initially disengaged learners, including students who typically preferred working alone or those who expressed disinterest in English language courses for finding them uninteresting or unnecessary. The integration of competitive, collaborative mechanics, along with cultural content and autonomy in decision-making, fostered intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among a diverse range of students. Thus, this chapter has been able to stablish how such an approach transformed class dynamics, boosted self-efficacy, and contributed to a more participatory and enjoyable learning environment. Despite our initial hypotheses that there may be some major differences in terms of university type (private vs. public) or course (EFL vs. ESP), only anecdotal differences were spotted.

While limitations such as sample size disparity and the absence of a formal control group may temper the generalizability of results, the evidence suggests that gamified structures, when aligned with meaningful content and learner agency, can significantly enhance motivation in EFL and ESP courses in both private and public universities in Spain. This chapter contributes to ongoing discussions on active learning, gamification, and inclusive motivational strategies in higher education language instruction, although further studies must be conducted so as to determine the extent of this chapter's findings. Future research should also include comparative studies with control groups, extend the model to content-based instruction, and examine long-term retention effects. This considered, gamified dynamics like the House Cup Competition could serve as powerful tools in multiple educational contexts.

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CHATGPT'S EFFECTIVENESS IN SUPPORTING EFL LEARNERS AND ANSWERING GRAMMAR OR VOCABULARY QUESTIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) emerged as a field marked both by uncertainty and visionary ambition. It was as a bold attempt to replicate human intelligence using machines, something that had never been done before (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2019). This was mainly due to the technological limitations of the time: between the 1940s through the early 1970s, computers had very limited processing power, memory and storage. After decades of progress in this area and thanks to the rapid advancement of (AI) and natural language processing (NLP), new paid but also free tools have been developed and made available to ordinary consumers, offering a wide range of potential uses.

The development of large language models (LLMs) has significantly expanded the capabilities of artificial intelligence, enabling machines to generate coherent, human-like responses and interact with users in increasingly natural ways. Among these, ChatGPT—a chatbot developed by OpenAI—has rapidly emerged as one of the most accessible and widely used applications of LLMs (Brown et al., 2020; Prasad, et al. 2023). ChatGPT is powered by models like GPT-4, which stands for Generative Pre-trained Transformer 4. "Generative" means that it generates text, that is, it can create human-like responses, complete the user's sentences, write essays, code, etc. based on the input it receives. The fact that it is "pre-trained" means that the model used has already

been trained before any interaction with the user. Typically, it is trained on a massive amount of text data, taken from books, websites, forums, among others, from which it leans general patterns in language, facts about the world, reasoning skills and writing styles. “Transformer” refers to the type of neural network architecture it uses, introduced by Vaswani et al. (2017). The most important feature of transformers is that they are very good at understanding context, instead of having a word-by-word approach. The number at the end, in this case “4”, refers to the version. Versions improve at tasks involving logic, accuracy, and complex instructions. The latest versions include GPT-4.1, which focuses on producing more detailed, text-only responses, albeit with slower output, and GPT-4o, which is optimized for faster interaction and supports input and output across text, image and audio modalities. The fact that ChatGPT can process and produce text in a conversational format has led to its integration into a range of contexts, from customer service to content generation and educational support (Singh, 2023).

The integration of ChatGPT into language education, specifically, has gained increasing attention due to its ability to support teaching and learning processes. As a generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool, ChatGPT offers numerous pedagogical opportunities, particularly in language learning contexts where dialogue, feedback, and personalization are essential (Kohnke, Moorhouse, & Zou, 2023; Kartal, 2023). Its capacity to simulate human-like interaction makes it a valuable resource for learners seeking immediate, contextual language practice, as well as for educators aiming to scaffold instruction through AI-enhanced dialogue.

Recent studies highlight ChatGPT’s role in promoting learner autonomy and engagement. Xiao and Zhi (2023) found that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners appreciated ChatGPT’s capacity to provide instant responses, error correction, and vocabulary suggestions, which in turn boosted their confidence in practicing language skills. Similarly, Yıldız (2023) reported that ChatGPT positively influenced learners’ motivation by creating a low-stress, interactive environment where students could engage with language learning tasks without the fear of judgment. These findings align with broader discussions on AI

as a tool for fostering learner-centered environments and personalized learning experiences (Hong, 2023).

From a pedagogical perspective, researchers have explored how ChatGPT can be integrated into instructional design. Alm and Watanabe (2023), using a Freirean lens, argued that AI tools like ChatGPT can support critical pedagogy by enabling dialogic learning and co-construction of meaning, particularly when learners are encouraged to critique and reflect on AI-generated content. Additionally, Kohnke, Moorhouse, and Zou (2023) emphasized ChatGPT's value in enhancing formative assessment and feedback practices, allowing educators to personalize feedback loops and encourage active learner participation.

Higher education contexts have also witnessed an increase in experimental and research-driven use of ChatGPT for academic English development. Baskara (2023) investigated the implications of ChatGPT in university settings and observed improvements in learners' writing fluency and syntactic complexity. However, the study also noted concerns around overreliance and the need for critical digital literacy. Similarly, Cai, Lin, and Yu (2024) identified several factors affecting learners' attitudes toward ChatGPT-assisted language learning, including perceived usefulness, prior AI exposure, and trust in AI-generated output.

Another approach to research on ChatGPT in language education has been the systematic evaluation of its effectiveness. Li et al. (2024), in a review of the first year of ChatGPT-related research, found that most studies emphasize its potential for writing support, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar enhancement. However, they also identified gaps in understanding its long-term impact on communicative competence and intercultural awareness. Therefore, it seems that while ChatGPT can be a powerful tool in supporting discrete language skills, further research is needed to evaluate its efficacy in fostering holistic language development.

It can be said that despite the previous studies and reflections considering ChatGPT's potential in education broadly (e.g., Bozkurt et al., 2023; Adeshola & Adepoju, 2024), there are few empirical

investigations focusing on how it performs in relation to specific learner needs in second language acquisition (Kim et al., 2023). As shown above, most existing discussions emphasize general benefits and limitations, rather than evaluating how ChatGPT adjusts its output according to factors such as language proficiency level or age. As Deng and Lin (2022) note, although ChatGPT provides immediate responses to grammar and vocabulary queries, there remains limited evidence on whether those responses are pedagogically appropriate, especially for EFL learners operating at beginner or intermediate levels.

To address this gap, the present study investigates ChatGPT's effectiveness in responding to real-life EFL questions posed by students or their parents outside of school hours. It evaluates whether the chatbot's responses are sufficiently clear, relevant, and adapted to the users' linguistic and cognitive needs. Therefore, this research aims to identify both the advantages and limitations of using ChatGPT as a language learning support tool, particularly in informal educational settings where learners may lack teacher guidance or structured feedback.

2. OBJECTIVES

This study aims to evaluate ChatGPT's responses to EFL questions posed by students or parents of varying proficiency levels outside of school hours. To achieve this aim, the following specific objectives were also established: first, to determine whether ChatGPT's responses to EFL questions posed by students of parents outside of school hours are efficient, clear and adapted to the learner's potential level; and secondly, to identify the most effective way for students or parents to ask ChatGPT EFL questions outside of school hours.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory research design to investigate how ChatGPT (GPT-4 version) responds to language-related questions posed at different proficiency levels. The analysis centers on the content and pedagogical quality of ChatGPT's outputs, particularly in grammar and vocabulary support for language learners. The choice of

qualitative analysis allows for a nuanced examination of non-numerical data, enabling the identification of patterns, strengths, and limitations in the chatbot's responses.

3.1. Data collection

The data were generated through a series of interactions with ChatGPT GPT-4, chosen for its capacity to deliver fast, coherent, and interactive responses. Each question was submitted in a separate chat, and ChatGPT's memory feature was disabled between sessions. This ensured that each response was independent and unaffected by previous interactions—crucial for maintaining consistency and preventing bias from cumulative memory.

The prompts used were designed to simulate real-life questions students or parents might pose when working on tasks such as homework, presentations, or essays. A total of six prompts were selected and categorized by language proficiency levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): A1, B1, and C1. Within each level, one question focused on grammar and another on vocabulary. Table 1 presents the questions and their corresponding levels and focus areas.

TABLE 1. *CEFR-level questions by topic*

CEFR level	Topic	Question
A1	Grammar	Why do I need 'do' in questions?
	Vocabulary	What is the difference between 'do' and 'make'?
B1	Grammar	What is the difference between the past simple, present perfect and past perfect?
	Vocabulary	What are the meanings of 'get'?
C1	Grammar	What is the difference between 'used to' and 'would' in the past?
	Vocabulary	Which is the correct preposition for 'tired': 'tired of' or 'tired from'?

3.2. CASE STUDY DESIGN AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

For this investigation, three case studies were designed. Case study #1 aimed to evaluate ChatGPT's responses using an assessment chart presented in Table 2, which includes four evaluation criteria: relevance, clarity, pacing and support of ideas. Each criterion was rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated the lowest performance and 5 the highest. Each response was individually scored according to how well it performed in each category, which enabled the identification of weaknesses in ChatGPT's responses.

TABLE 2. *Assessment chart for Case study #1 with four evaluation criteria and a rating scale from 1 to 5*

Evaluation criteria	Description	Rating scale (1-5)
Relevance	The response addresses the language-learning prompt; it stays on-topic	1=completely off-topic; 2=barely on-topic; 3=somewhat on-topic; 4=mostly on-topic; 5=completely on-topic
Clarity	The response is easy to understand and follow	1=not easy; 2=barely easy; 3=somewhat easy; 4=mostly easy; 5=very easy
Pacing	The response matches the student's potential learning level	1=too complex; 2=very complex; 3=somewhat complex; 4=well-paced; 5=perfectly paced
Support of ideas	The response provides useful examples for better understanding	1=not useful; 2=barely useful; 3=somewhat useful; 4=mostly useful; 5=very useful

Based on the limitations identified in this initial analysis, Case study #2 was developed to explore whether these issues could be addressed by adding contextual information, namely the learner's proficiency level. Using the results from the second case study, Case study #3 tested whether adding not only the English proficiency level but also the learner's age, would lead to more effective and learner-appropriate responses. Therefore, the case studies show how different types of prompt information influence ChatGPT's responses to EFL questions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Due to the limitations of this paper, the analysis of the three case studies below is illustrated with the grammar question "Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (A1). However, the conclusions drawn are based on the analysis of the complete set of questions presented in Table 1 and the corresponding ChatGPT's answers.

4.1. CASE STUDY #1

This case study examined and compared two types of responses generated by ChatGPT. The first set of responses was based on prompts posed without any additional contextual information. For instance, "Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt "Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Answer #1)*

Great question! The word **"do"** in questions is what we call an **auxiliary verb**, or a **helping verb**. It's used to help form **questions**, **negatives**, and **emphasis** in English. Here's why you need it:

1. Making questions in the present simple and past simple

In English, when you form a question and there's **no other helping verb** (like "is", "can", "have", etc.), you need **"do"** to help you.

Examples:

- **You like pizza.** → **Do you like pizza?**
- **He went to school.** → **Did he go to school?**

Without "do," you'd end up with something like "You like pizza?" — which is okay in casual speech, but not standard grammar.

2. To show tense (especially in past questions)

The verb "do" carries the tense, so you don't change the main verb:

- **Did she go** to the store? (instead of ❌ "Did she went...")
- **Does he play** guitar? (instead of ❌ "Does he plays...")

3. For emphasis

You also use "do" to emphasize something, even in statements:

- **I do like chocolate!**
- **She did finish her homework.**

Quick tip:

You don't need "do" when the main verb is **to be** or a **modal verb** (can, will, should, etc.)

- ❌ Do you are happy? → ✅ Are you happy?
- ❌ Do she can swim? → ✅ Can she swim?

Want to dive into examples or try making some of your own?

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

The second set consisted of responses made entirely of full sentences, excluding the use of bullet points or emojis. To generate these, prompts

were used that explicitly requested sentence-only answers, such as: "Can you answer this questions using only sentences: Why do I need 'do' in questions?" Since the initial answers were too short for meaningful analysis, they were further refined with prompts like: "Can you give a longer version of this explanation using only sentences?" (Figure 2). Therefore, in total, twelve responses were analyzed: six without contextual information and six in full-sentence format.

FIGURE 2. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt "Can you answer this question writing only sentences: Why do I need 'do' in questions?", afterwards modified with the prompt: "Can you give a longer version of this explanation using only sentences?" (Answer #2)*

Absolutely! Here's a longer version using only sentences:

In English, the word "do" is often used in questions to help form the correct grammatical structure. It serves as an auxiliary verb, which means it supports the main verb in the sentence. This is especially common in the present simple and past simple tenses when there isn't already another helping verb. When forming a question, English usually requires the subject and verb to switch places, and "do" helps make that possible. For example, the sentence "You speak English" becomes "Do you speak English?" The word "do" appears at the beginning to indicate that it's a question, and the main verb "speak" stays in its base form. Without "do," the question would not follow standard English grammar rules. This use of "do" applies to many regular questions, especially when the verb doesn't already include a form of "to be," a modal verb, or an auxiliary like "have." So, "do" is not always needed, but when it is, it plays an important role in creating a clear and grammatically correct question.

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

The answers to every question were obtained following this procedure. Then, each answer was assessed using the rubric presented in Table 2. For illustration and discussion purposes, the scores of Answers #1 (Figure 1) and #2 (Figure 2) are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3. *Assessment of responses to A1 grammar question (Answers #1 and #2)*

Evaluation criteria	Answer #1	Answer #2
Relevance	4	5
Clarity	4	3
Pacing	2	1
Support of ideas	5	3
Total	15	12

In terms of relevance, Answer #2 stays fully on topic, since it focuses on the use of 'do' as an auxiliary verb in questions as the prompt indicates. Answer #1, however, only partially stays on topic. The first point in its explanation, "making questions in the present simple and past simple", is relevant, as it directly relates to the role of 'do' in forming questions in those tenses. The second point, "to show tense", is also on-topic, especially in reference to the use of 'did', although the phrasing may cause some confusion. In contrast, the third point, "for emphasis", is off-topic, as it is not directly relevant to the question posed, but rather belongs to declarative sentences that vary in tone. Including it shifts the focus away from the original question and introduces an unrelated concept that may confuse learners.

In terms of clarity and format, both answers are generally easy to follow. Answer #1 is clearly segmented using bullet points, with each point addressing different aspects of the explanation. This structure helps break the information into manageable parts, making it easier for the reader to process. The use of short, labeled sections such as "1. making questions", and line breaks, provide visual clarity. However, this segmented structure can make it more difficult to see the overall logic of the explanation or understand how the individual points connect. In contrast, Answer #2 is presented in continuous prose, which allows for smoother transitions and a more cohesive development of ideas. While this format supports a more fluid explanation, it is also denser and harder to scan quickly, which may hinder accessibility for readers looking to extract key points.

With respect to pacing in Answer #1, although it uses simple sentence structures like "You like pizza→Do you like pizza?", the overall language is too complex for an A1-level learner. It introduces grammar terms like "past simple", "present simple", "main verb", "tense" or "modal verbs" without offering definitions or explanations. For instance, the sentence "In English, when you form a question and there's no other helping verb (like "is", "can", have", etc.), you need "do" to help you" makes several assumptions about the learner's prior knowledge: it assumes that the student knows what a "helping verb" is, can identify other auxiliary verbs and distinguish between helping and

main verbs. This sentence can lead to confusion, especially with examples like ‘Do you know what time it is?’, a learner might wrongly conclude that ‘do’ is unnecessary because ‘is’ is already present. Similarly, the phrase “there’s no other helping verb” could mislead the learner in cases like transforming ‘I do my homework’ into a question. The student might assume that another ‘do’ is not needed, although the correct question form is “Do I do my homework?” Furthermore, the third point in the explanation, “for emphasis”, introduces the concept of tone, a linguistic feature too advanced for learners at these levels.

Answer #2 is overall too complex. The sentences structures are lengthy and dense, and the use of relative clauses, such as “It serves as an auxiliary verb, which means it supports the main verb in the sentence”, introduces syntactic complexity, beyond what is appropriate for A1- or B1-level learners. Additionally, advanced vocabulary like “grammatical structure”, “auxiliary”, “indicate”, “standard grammar rules”, are likely unfamiliar and difficult for beginners. The explanation is abstract, making it hard for learners to follow. Furthermore, the sentence “especially when the verb doesn’t already include a form of “to be”, a modal verb, or an auxiliary like ‘have’” assumes again wrongful knowledge. It assumes that the learner knows all forms of the verb ‘to be’, understands what modal verbs are (including which verbs fall into that category and their meanings) and can distinguish between main and auxiliary verbs, particularly in the case of ‘have’, which can serve both functions. These assumptions make the explanation unsuitable for A1-level learners, who require clearer guidance.

Regarding ideas support, Answer #1 includes useful examples like “You like pizza→Do you like pizza?” and “He went to school→Did he go to school?”, which effectively illustrate how ‘do’ functions in questions. These examples are concrete and accessible for the learners. In contrast, Answer #2 provides only a single example, “You speak English→Do you speak English?”, which, while accurate, is insufficient to illustrate the broader range of contexts discussed in the explanation. Given that the responses include multiple tenses and variations, such as negative questions, including more examples would be necessary to clarify and reinforce understanding, especially for beginner learners.

4.2. Case study #2

This case study focused on comparing the original responses from Case study #1, those generated without contextual information, with new responses that included explicit information about the learner's proficiency level (Figure 3). For example, the prompt for A1-level students on the grammar question "Why do I need 'do' in questions" was: "I am an A1 level student, and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?". This approach aimed to evaluate whether providing learner-level information would affect the clarity, depth or appropriateness of ChatGPT's responses. As in Case study #1, twelve responses were analyzed in total: six without context (from Case study #1) and six with level-specific instructions (specific to Case Study #2).

FIGURE 3. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt: "I am an A1-level student, and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Answer #3)*

Great question! You're doing a great job asking about grammar. Let's look at **why we use "do" in questions** in English, especially at the A1 level.

In English, we often use "do" to help us make questions.

Let's see some examples:

Without "do":

- ❌ *You like pizza?* (Not correct in standard English)

With "do":

- ✅ *Do you like pizza?*

The word **"do"** is a **helping verb**. It helps to form a question when there is **no other helping verb** (like *is*, *are*, *can*, *will*, etc.).

Use "do" when:

- The verb is in the **present simple**.
- The subject is **I, you, we, they**.

Statement	Question
You like pizza.	Do you like pizza?
They play soccer.	Do they play soccer?

Use "does" when:

- The subject is **he, she, it**.

Statement	Question
She likes pizza.	Does she like pizza?
He plays soccer.	Does he play soccer?

📝 Remember: When you use "does," the main verb (like *like*, *play*) stays in the base form.

Why is "do" needed?

Because English needs a **helping word** to make a question in the present simple when there's no other helper verb.
Other languages (like Spanish or Chinese) don't need this — so this is something special in English.

Would you like to practice making some questions with "do"? 😊

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

Answer #1 is intended for a general audience or learners with a somewhat more advanced understanding of English grammar. It introduces terms such as “auxiliary verb” and explains that ‘do’ is “used to help form questions, negatives and emphasis”, which assumes prior grammatical knowledge. Moreover, it covers multiple uses of ‘do’, extending beyond its role in questions, which may suggest an implicit expectation that the learner already understands concepts like inversion and auxiliary usage. In contrast, Answer #3 is more A1 level oriented. It simplifies the explanation in plain terms, such as “The word ‘do’ is a helping verb. It helps to form a question…”, which aligns more closely with cognitive and linguistic needs of early-stage learners.

The vocabulary used in Answer #1 is complex, including terms or phrases such as “auxiliary verb”, “carry the tense”, “modal verb” or “standard grammar”. These are not defined within the response, suggesting that the reader is already somewhat familiar with them. Even the note, “without ‘do’ you’d end up with something like ‘You like pizza?’ – which is okay in casual speech, but not standard grammar” assumes that the learner can distinguish between casual and formal register. In contrast, Answer #3 sticks with vocabulary that is more accessible and is either defined directly or supported by concrete examples. Terms or phrases such as, “helping verb”, “question” or “main verb stays in the base form” are introduced in a way that aligns with the linguistic competence of early-stage learners.

Answer #1 covers a broader range of grammatical concepts, including the present simple (“Do you like pizza?”), the past simple (“He went to school→Did he go to school?”), emphatic use (“I do like chocolate!”), and exceptions involving modal or helping verbs (“You don’t need ‘do’ when the main verb is to be or a modal verb…”). In contrast, Answer #3 focuses solely on the present simple (“use ‘do’ when…” or “use ‘does’ when…”) and subject-verb agreement with ‘does’ (“Use ‘does’ when the subject is he, she, it”). It avoids discussing more advanced concepts such as past tenses and emphatic constructions, making it more suitable for the learners.

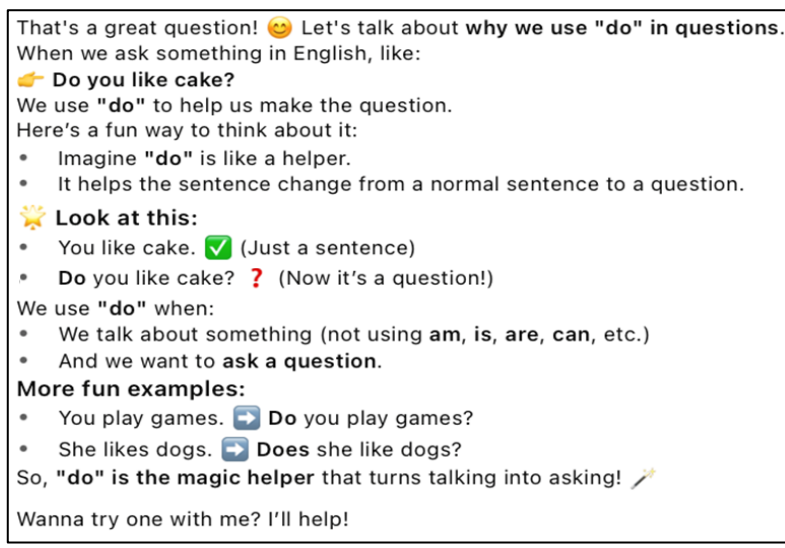
Answer #1 lacks a personalized or empathetic tone. The closing suggestion, “Want to dive into examples or try making some of your

own?", is directive but neutral, and does not acknowledge the learner's effort or emotional engagement. Conversely, Answer #3 adopts a more supportive and encouraging tone. It begins with positive reinforcement ("You're doing a great job asking about grammar") and concludes with a friendly, learner-centered invitation ("Would you like to practice making some questions with 'do'?").

4.3. Case study #3

This last case study compared three types of responses generated by ChatGPT that were adjusted not only to language proficiency levels but also to specific age groups. Within each proficiency level, three different age groups were selected: six (Figure 4), twelve (Figure 5) and eighteen years old (Figure 6). These age points represent broader ranges, approximately two years above and two years below each selected age. An example prompt used was: "I am six years old with an A1 level and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?". In total, eighteen answers were analyzed: six for each age group.

FIGURE 4. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt: "I am six years old with an A1 level, and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Answer #4).*


That's a great question! 😊 Let's talk about **why we use "do" in questions**.
When we ask something in English, like:
👉 **Do you like cake?**
We use **"do"** to help us make the question.
Here's a fun way to think about it:
- Imagine **"do"** is like a helper.
- It helps the sentence change from a normal sentence to a question.

🌟 **Look at this:**
- You like cake. ✅ (Just a sentence)
- **Do** you like cake? ❓ (Now it's a question!)

We use **"do"** when:
- We talk about something (not using **am**, **is**, **are**, **can**, etc.)
- And we want to **ask a question**.

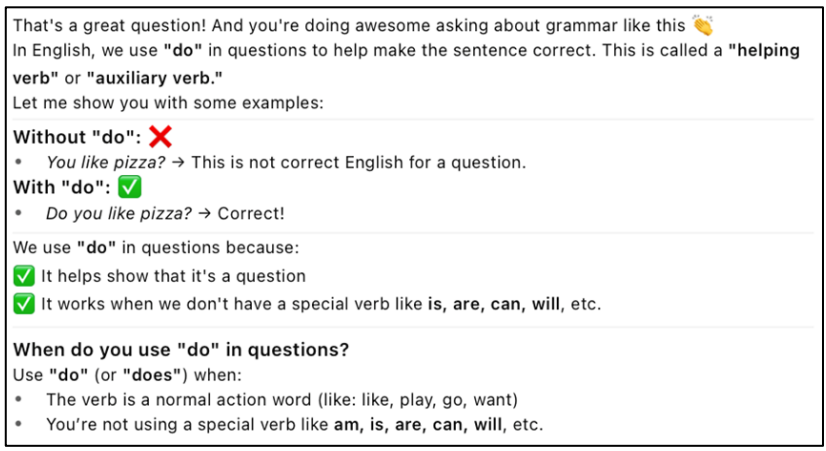
More fun examples:
- You play games. ➡️ **Do** you play games?
- She likes dogs. ➡️ **Does** she like dogs?

So, **"do" is the magic helper** that turns talking into asking! 🪄

Wanna try one with me? I'll help!

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

FIGURE 5. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt: "I am twelve years old with an A1 level, and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Answer #5).*



That's a great question! And you're doing awesome asking about grammar like this 👏
In English, we use **"do"** in questions to help make the sentence correct. This is called a **"helping verb"** or **"auxiliary verb."**
Let me show you with some examples:

Without "do": ❌
- *You like pizza?* → This is not correct English for a question.

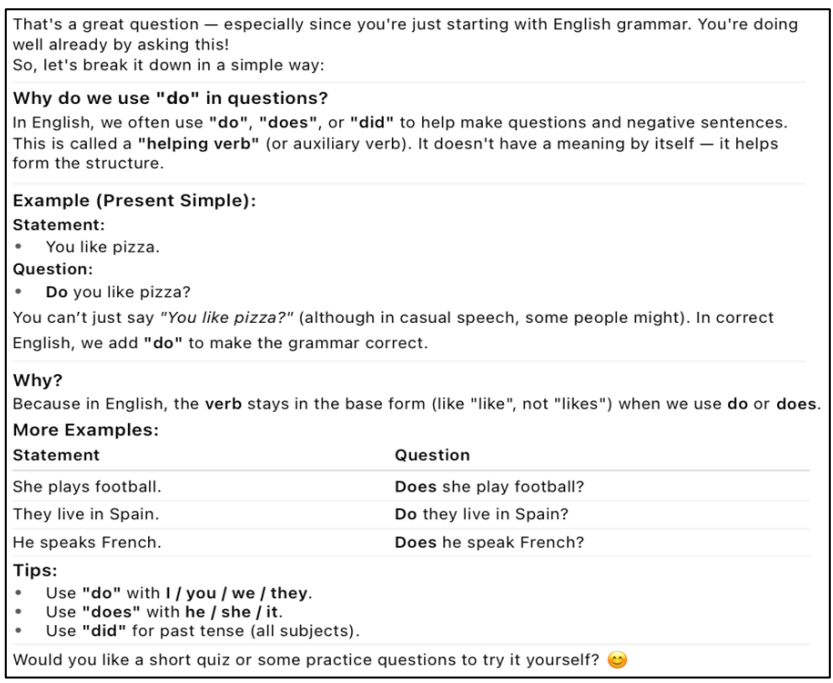
With "do": ✅
- *Do you like pizza?* → Correct!

We use **"do"** in questions because:
✅ It helps show that it's a question
✅ It works when we don't have a special verb like **is, are, can, will**, etc.

When do you use "do" in questions?
Use **"do"** (or **"does"**) when:
- The verb is a normal action word (like: like, play, go, want)
- You're not using a special verb like **am, is, are, can, will**, etc.

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

FIGURE 6. *ChatGPT's response to the prompt: "I am eighteen years old with an A1 level, and my question is: Why do I need 'do' in questions?" (Answer #6).*



That's a great question — especially since you're just starting with English grammar. You're doing well already by asking this!
So, let's break it down in a simple way:

Why do we use "do" in questions?
In English, we often use **"do"**, **"does"**, or **"did"** to help make questions and negative sentences. This is called a **"helping verb"** (or auxiliary verb). It doesn't have a meaning by itself — it helps form the structure.

Example (Present Simple):
Statement:
- You like pizza.

Question:
- **Do** you like pizza?

You can't just say *"You like pizza?"* (although in casual speech, some people might). In correct English, we add **"do"** to make the grammar correct.

Why?
Because in English, the **verb** stays in the base form (like "like", not "likes") when we use **do** or **does**.

More Examples:

Statement	Question
She plays football.	**Does** she play football?
They live in Spain.	**Do** they live in Spain?
He speaks French.	**Does** he speak French?

Tips:
- Use **"do"** with **I / you / we / they**.
- Use **"does"** with **he / she / it**.
- Use **"did"** for past tense (all subjects).

Would you like a short quiz or some practice questions to try it yourself? 😊

Source: ChatGPT (2025)

All three answers (4-6) are written in a tone that is appropriate for beginner English learners, offering clear explanations and encouraging engagement. Each concludes with an invitation to practice, promoting interaction and learner involvement. While the phrasing varies slightly across the answers, all state that 'do' is used as a helping verb to form questions. They consistently highlight its use in the present simple tense and emphasize the importance of subject-verb agreement, particularly the distinction between "do" and "does".

The explanation in Answer #4 lacks explicit detail. It focuses mainly on the verb "do" and its role in forming questions, with a subtle reference to "does" toward the end of the explanation in an example such as "Does she like dogs?". Young learners reading the response will unconsciously read the example and know that there are further versions of 'do'. In contrast, Answer #5 explicitly distinguishes between "do" and "does", offering clear guidance on when each form should be used. Answer #6 provides the most detailed explanation, introducing terminology related to the '-s' in the present simple and including the past form "did". This presumes that older learners can handle more advanced grammatical information.

Answer #4 uses a storytelling-like style by using child-friendly language such as "helper", "imagine" or "magic helper", along with playful metaphors like "imagine 'do' is like a helper" or "'do' is the magic helper". This approach is well-suited to young learners around six years old. In contrast, Answers #5 and #6 use a more technical tone. While both refer to "helping verb", only Answer #6 introduces the term "auxiliary verb". This selected terminology reflects how the age difference across learners influences the complexity and explicitness of the explanation, with the older learner receiving more technical and detailed responses.

Answer #4 provides a very surface-level explanation, focusing primarily on how to form the correct questions structures. In contrast, Answers #5 and #6 include contrastive examples that illustrate both incorrect forms (e.g., "You like pizza?") and correct forms (e.g., "Do you like pizza?"). This comparison is effective for learners with more developed cognitive skills, who can understand that the presence of a sentence on the screen does not automatically mean that the sentence is correct.

Such learners can see these examples as means of highlighting the distinction between right and wrong forms. Younger children, however, may misinterpret any written sentence as correct simply because it is presented in the explanation.

Answer #4 makes frequent use of emojis such as 🌟, 👉, or 😊, creating a playful and visually engaging tone suitable for very young learners. In contrast, Answer #5 uses fewer emojis and instead organizes its content through more structured formats like lists, tables and bullet points. Answer #6 omits emojis entirely, opting for a more formal tone by structuring the explanation with an introduction, definition, examples and concluding tips. When summarizing key points, Answer #4 relies on visual information like emojis and arrows to guide the reader, whereas Answers #5 and #6 use comparison charts to differentiate between correct and incorrect forms, supporting clearer understanding through visual contrast.

The endings of Answers #4 and #5 adopt a more encouraging and less demanding tone, using phrases such as “Wanna try one with me? I’ll help!” and “Would you like to practice making some questions with "do"?”. These are designed to prompt interaction, which is developmentally appropriate for young learners. In contrast, Answer #6 concludes with a more structured and academically oriented prompt: “Would you like a short quiz or some practice questions to try it yourself?”, which aligns with the expectations and learning habits of older students around eighteen years old, who are more likely used to formal exercises and independent practice.

4.4. Summary of results

The results indicate that the level of specificity of the prompt influences the quality and accuracy of ChatGPT’s responses. When the input is too general, the resulting answer tends to be general as well and may fail to fully address the user’s needs. In contrast, prompts that specify the users’ needs and provide relevant context, such as proficiency level or age, are more likely to generate responses that are both appropriate and helpful. Therefore, ChatGPT seems to adapt its output according to the

information it receives, and well-defined prompts consistently lead to more effective and targeted responses.

The comparison conducted in Case study #1 between responses generated without contextual information and those composed using only full sentences reveals that ChatGPT's default responses are meant for learners aged approximately fifteen or older, with language proficiency levels around B2 to C1. This conclusion is supported by the fact that both types of responses were too complex for learners at A1 or B1 levels to understand or follow, not only due to the advanced language used, but also because of the content included in the explanations. The responses often introduced off-topic or overly abstract concepts, which may confuse early-stage learners and ultimately fail to address their questions effectively.

The comparison between the responses without contextual information and those that included details about the learner's proficiency level (Case study #2) revealed noticeable differences. When the learner's level is specified, ChatGPT tends to adjust its language accordingly, reducing complexity and simplifying the content. These responses remain accessible and do not introduce advanced concepts that require a strong foundation of prior knowledge. These findings indicate that the chatbot adjusts its responses to match the expected linguistic ability of the learner when prompted with level-specific information.

Nevertheless, although the responses are generally level-appropriate for learners, further adjustment is needed depending on the age of the learner. The findings of Case study #2 revealed that ChatGPT tends to associate lower proficiency levels with younger learners and higher levels with older learners. As a result, responses to low-level prompts may be over-simplified for older students, while high-level responses can become too technical or cognitively demanding for younger students. This highlights the importance of specifying in some cases both age and proficiency level to ensure that responses are developmentally and linguistically appropriate.

For example, a six-year-old learner does not benefit from lengthy, technical explanations. Rather, they require basic and clear answers that avoid overwhelming detail. In contrast, an eighteen-year-old is more cognitively

developed and capable of processing complex information. Their exam questions tend to be more demanding and specific, requiring a deeper understanding of the underlying rules and accurate application. Therefore, an effective explanation must take both the learner's language level and cognitive maturity into account, to meet their needs appropriately.

Case study #3 suggests that ChatGPT can adjust its responses to match the cognitive development and comprehension capacity of different age groups, since the responses were generally well-aligned with the learner's capacities.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to evaluate the quality of ChatGPT's responses when used by students or parents outside of school hours. To do so, this study examined how ChatGPT responded to six grammar and vocabulary questions across three CEFR levels (A1, B1, and C1), using a qualitative case study approach to analyze the clarity, relevance, pacing, and support of its answers under different prompt conditions, and to compare the adequacy of the answers based on how much contextual information was given.

The findings revealed a significant gap between the expected and actual performance of the chatbot. Contrary to initial assumptions, ChatGPT did not automatically adjust its responses to align with the learner's presumed proficiency level, even when the complexity of the question suggested a lower level of language competence. As a result, many of the responses lacked clarity and were insufficiently adapted to the learner's needs, indicating a mismatch between the information ChatGPT assumed the learner had and the actual knowledge expected of the learner.

For more effective responses, students around six years old at any proficiency level (A1, B1, or C1), those around eighteen years old at A1 or B1 levels, and twelve-year-olds at C1 level should provide prompts that are both age- and level-specific. Twelve-year-old students at A1 or B1 levels benefit from level-specific prompts to receive clear and appropriate answers. In contrast, eighteen-year-old students at the C1 level generally do not need to include additional instructions, as ChatGPT's

default responses are already adapted to older learners with advanced language proficiency.

Despite these results, some limitations must be acknowledged. First, the analysis was limited to a small set of six prompts, which, while representative, may not capture the full range of question types or learner needs in real-world contexts and were created for research purposes instead of by real users. Second, the study focused exclusively on responses generated by ChatGPT using GPT-4, without comparing performance across different versions or alternative AI tools. Finally, although the study included prompts representing three CEFR levels and multiple age groups, the scope of linguistic features examined—primarily grammar and vocabulary—was narrow and did not extend to skills such as speaking, listening, or discourse-level writing. Consequently, future research can explore how other AI models would respond to the same prompts and see whether these also have the same difficulties. This would allow for a broader understanding of how different AI systems manage user input and adjust their responses to learner profiles. Additionally, future research may also explore how the answers may vary when given other prompt-framing variables, for example, specifying that a response is intended for multiple learners in a group setting rather than a single user. This could reveal how AI-generated content changes when prompted to accommodate diverse learner needs within collaborative or classroom-based contexts.

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