

Bridging Cultures

Revista científica del Departamento de Lenguas
Universidad Católica Argentina

Número 5. Año 5
2020

Las opiniones contenidas en esta publicación son responsabilidad exclusiva de los autores y no representan, necesariamente, las opiniones de las autoridades de *Bridging Cultures* ni de sus Comités (Editorial y de Redacción). Los autores pueden escribir en español, o en inglés de EE. UU. o del Reino Unido, según su preferencia.

Editorial

Por quinto año consecutivo, hoy hacemos entrega de este nuevo número de *Bridging Cultures*. Una vez más, agradecemos inmensamente el trabajo y el esfuerzo incansables, generosos y desinteresados de cada uno de los eslabones del proceso editorial: desde los autores hasta los revisores, pasando por los expertos revisores, siempre en pos de garantizar la calidad de la publicación, respetando el proceso de referato y cada etapa del proceso editorial.

En este número, les ofrecemos siete artículos que tratan diferentes aspectos de la traducción, la lingüística y la enseñanza del inglés. Algunos de los trabajos incluidos son colaboraciones de investigadoras noveles; otros, de profesionales con amplia experiencia. Entre estas páginas, también encontrarán artículos breves que reflexionan sobre temas actuales que esperamos sean de interés para ustedes.

Este número es el producto del trabajo de este año tan particular para el mundo, azotado por la pandemia provocada por el COVID-19. Hemos de destacar que, a pesar de todas las adversidades y las situaciones particulares de varios colaboradores, ninguno dejó inconcluso su compromiso y aporte a este trabajo conjunto. Por eso, una vez más: nuestro más profundo agradecimiento. Juntos y comprometidos, salir adelante es más fácil.

La preparación de cada número es un proceso continuo e incesante, por lo que, con miras a nuestra próxima convocatoria, alentamos a nuestros lectores a que envíen sus artículos y a que consulten y disfruten de los números anteriores de este *journal* (<http://erevistas.uca.edu.ar/index.php/BRID>). En nuestro *Reglamento*, encontrarán los lineamientos y las pautas para sus colaboraciones. Estaremos más que gustosas de contestar las inquietudes que surjan, y de recibir aportes profesionales para someterlos al proceso editorial.

Esperamos que disfruten cada una de las páginas de este nuevo ejemplar. Hasta nuestro próximo encuentro.

Dra. Graciela del Pilar Isaía y Ruiz
Directora

Dra. María Celeste Irace
Secretaria de redacción

Contacto: bridging_cultures@uca.edu.ar

Equipo editorial

Directora

Dra. Graciela del Pilar Isaía y Ruiz, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina;
Universidad del Salvador; University of California in San Diego, Extension (Argentina)

Secretaria de redacción

Dra. María Celeste Irace, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina; Universidad del
Salvador (Argentina)

Comité editorial

Dra. Graciela del Pilar Isaía y Ruiz, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina;
Universidad del Salvador; University of California in San Diego, Extension (Argentina)

Dra. María Celeste Irace, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina; Universidad del
Salvador (Argentina)

Dr. Ricardo Chiesa, Universidad de Buenos Aires; Universidad de Belgrano (Argentina)

Mg. Andre Moskowitz, Berkeley, California, Estados Unidos; City University of New
York Graduate Center; University of Florida (Estados Unidos de América)

Mg. Gabriela Llull, Universidad Jaime I (España)

Dra. Bertha Gutiérrez Rodilla, Instituto de Lexicografía de la Real Academia Española.
Universidad de Salamanca. Académie de Médecine de Paris. Université de Paris (España)

Xosé Castro Roig, Universidad Alfonso X el Sabio; Universidad Autónoma de Madrid;
Universidad Complutense de Madrid; Universidad Pompeu Fabra (España)

Prof. Rita Tineo, Universidad de Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Dra. Paula Arturo, Universidad de Palermo, Universidad Austral (Argentina)

Comité de redacción

Dra. Graciela del Pilar Isaía y Ruiz, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina;
Universidad del Salvador; University of California in San Diego, Extension (Argentina)

Dra. María Celeste Irace, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina; Universidad del
Salvador (Argentina)

Dra. Ana María Marcovecchio, Universidad Católica Argentina; Universidad de
Buenos Aires. Instituto de la Lengua; Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y
Técnicas (Argentina)

Dra. Lucía Puppo, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina; Consejo Nacional de
Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (Argentina)

Dra. Inés Castelli, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina (Argentina)

Dr. Héctor Valencia, Universidad del Salvador (Argentina)

Prof. Marina Álvarez, Universidad del Salvador (Argentina)

Índice de contenidos

**A Crosslinguistic Analysis of English ‘Converbs’ in Contrast with Prepositional
Infinitives in Spanish to Contribute with the Art of Translation.....Page 7**

Marina Laura Álvarez

**Polysemy in Finite Verbs according to their Linguistic Structure and its Consequent
Impact on Spanish⇔English Translation.....Page 22**

Rocío Cantorna Blanco

**Is the American Dream Truly for Everyone? The Stereotypes Shaping Immigrants’
Reality.....Page 26**

Florencia Denise Ochoa

WhatsApp: experiencias de capacitación en inglés en empresas.....Page 50

Luz Callejo

Humanity Remembers: On Jung, Mythological Criticism and Archetypes....Page 59

Carolina Gimenez

La sistematización de la práctica de la traducción.....Page 72

Sandra Ramacciotti Giorgio

Demystifying Plain Language in Legal Translation.....Page 99

Paula Arturo

A Crosslinguistic Analysis of English ‘Converbs’ in Contrast with Prepositional Infinitives in Spanish to Contribute with the Art of Translation

*Marina Laura Álvarez*¹

Universidad del Salvador

✉ marinaalvarez76@hotmail.com

Recibido: 12/3/2020

Aprobado: 30/6/2020

Abstract

The notion of *converbs* has been studied cross-linguistically since the concept was first introduced by Haspelmath (1995) to refer to the use of a variety non-finite clauses with adverbial meaning. Despite the large number of correspondences that have been observed in different languages within the scope of adverbial non-finite phrases, the adverbial infinitive in Spanish does not fit into this categorial classification, probably due to its strong nominal reference. Likewise, in terms of a possible translation into English there seems to be a deep correlation of the adverbial infinitive in Spanish with the gerundial phrase in English, which is also interpreted as the most nominal of all English non-finites. Nevertheless, it is their shared nominal feature that allows them to appear as complements of a preposition which typically introduces them within an adverbial construction. Therefore, we believe it is worth asking: is it plausible to include English gerunds or Spanish infinitives within the category of *converbs*? This controversy has led to a discussion which aims at bringing light to the contrastive analysis of adverbial constructions known as *converbs* in these two languages. In turn, we expect that this comparison will contribute with the harsh task of translating non-finite phrases.

Key words: non-finite verbs, *converbs*, adverbial infinitive, English-Spanish translation

Resumen

La noción de *converbos* ha sido estudiada de manera translingüística desde que el concepto fuera introducido por Haspelmath (1995) para referirse al uso de una variedad de cláusulas no finitas con valor adverbial. A pesar del número de correspondencias que

¹ *Marina Laura Álvarez* is a Conference Interpreter (USAL). She also holds a BA in English Language and in Teaching English at Higher Education. She is a doctoral student in Letters at Universidad Católica Argentina. As a professor and a researcher, she has devoted herself to Contrastive Analysis and has been lecturing on the areas of Linguistic Structures and Contrastive Grammar at the School of Philosophy and Letters (UCA).

se observan entre las diferentes lenguas que alcanzan el empleo adverbial de frases verbales no finitas, el infinitivo adverbial del español parece no ingresar en dicha clasificación categorial, probablemente debido a su fuerte referencia nominal. Asimismo, en términos de su traducción al inglés, se observa un profundo vínculo entre el infinitivo adverbial del español con la frase gerundiva del inglés, que también se interpreta como una forma netamente nominal entre las formas no finitas del inglés. Sin embargo, es justamente su capacidad nominal la que posibilita que estas formas verbales aparezcan como complementos de una preposición nexos que los introduce en la función adverbial. Por consiguiente, creemos conveniente preguntarnos: ¿es posible incluir al infinitivo preposicional del español o al gerundio del inglés dentro de la categoría de converbos? Esta controversia puede conducirnos a una discusión que logre aclarar sobre el análisis contrastivo de las construcciones adverbiales conocidas como converbos en estas dos lenguas. Además, esperamos que esta comparación contribuya con la trabajosa tarea de la traducción de las formas verbales no finitas.

Palabras clave: formas verbales no finitas, converbos, infinitivo adverbial, traducción inglés-español

Introduction

The main goal of this paper is to address a challenging issue concerning the English-Spanish translation of *converbs*, and in this task, converbs will be contrasted with the adverbial infinitive in Spanish, taking into consideration that the Spanish construction is, in fact, a prepositional phrase in which the infinitive is intrinsically nominal and depends on its nexus to appear within an adverbial construction that resembles a converb.

A similar behavior is observed within the gerundial phrase in English, which is also interpreted as the most nominal of all English non-finites. With the aim of clarifying the English-Spanish translation process, we will approach the prepositional infinitive in Spanish and the alternating form in English, among which the gerund seems to be the English counterpart, because both are identified as half verbs-half nouns. Besides, we will observe whether an analysis of the notion of converbs, which are merely adverbial, will allow us to assess a plausible addition of these non-finite phrases to this categorial classification.

Av. Alicia Moreau de Justo 1300. Puerto Madero. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires. C1107AAZ.
Teléfono: (011) 4349-0200 c. e.: depto_lenguas@uca.edu.ar

It will be our main goal to analyze non-finite adverbial phrases based on the classification proposed by the typological study carried out by Haspelmath (1995) on the category of converbs which identifies crosslinguistic patterns in which it is possible to detect a language unit, i.e. the adverbial construction, which undergoes the evident diversity of structures among languages.

In general, converbs are expressed differently in various languages and the classification includes adverbial participles and adverbial gerunds. However, the infinitive is excluded from the classification of converbs in both languages, which leads to the introduction of the following questions: which syntactic elements divide the adverbial territory in the Spanish infinitive?, what sets the infinitive apart from converbs?, and, finally, can its high frequency of usage allow us to consider it as a converb? These are the type of interrogations that we will make in order to seek for a plausible expansion of the classification of converbs in order to contribute with the English-Spanish translation.

Following a cognitive functional approach, we will delve into the analysis of adverbial non-finite phrases, including the adverbial infinitive in Spanish with the hope to identify if it is possible to reach a congruency in meaning despite the difference in the structure with other converbs.

All in all, this analysis will allow us to draw the necessary linguistic comparisons through the analysis of patterns which will help us to describe the syntactic, semantic and morphological features of the non-finite adverbial phrases and will help us to consider an array of possible semantic interpretations of the Spanish infinitive within the adverbial clause which might be classified as converbs.

Objectives

In this paper, we have, firstly decided to inspect the traditional grammatical analysis of non-finite adverbial clauses to bring light to the category of converbs. In this task, we will identify some of the most relevant distinguishing features of converbs as regards the different possible translations from English into Spanish or vice versa.

Secondly, a contrastive analysis between English and Spanish will be developed in order to identify the possibility of introducing the Spanish infinitive within the classification of converbs based on the knowledge that there has been a diachronic expansion of usage, which is specially marked in romance languages, based on what Cristofaro (2003) and Schulte (2007) have already proven in previous studies.

More precisely, we will observe why it would be interesting to expand the category of converbs into the uses of adverbial infinitives in Spanish, and analyze the evident correlation with the gerund in English, in order to see if the analysis benefits a clearer Spanish-English translation of this type of adverbial non-finite phrases.

Methodology

In this paper, a crosslinguistic variationist analysis will be implemented in order to compare the adverbial Spanish and English infinitives as well as participles and gerunds as possible variants within the category of converbs. This research is based, on the one hand, on the belief presented in previous typological studies that affirm that languages vary and, on the other hand, on the fact that it is possible to establish linguistic universals which serve as a logical framework for the variationist research (Greenberg, 1963). Therefore, this crosslinguistic study intends to identify features that characterize the variants and to understand how they vary.

In agreement with Comrie's ideas (1989), the contrastive analysis arises from a classificatory principle, in this case, the category of converbs, which aims at observing languages in order to learn the structural properties that describe the languages which are compared. In this sense, our linguistic analysis uses typology as a linguistic method to make a morphological, semantic and syntactic comparison of the structures that are identified as converbs and that are expressed differently in varied languages, especially in English and in Spanish, since they show different grammatical descriptions. This universality principle, therefore, allows for comparisons to be made, even in languages such as English and Spanish, which, despite being Indo-European languages, belong to a different origin and deserve to be juxtaposed.

Analysis of the Category of Converbs in English and Spanish

Antecedents

The term ‘converb’ was coined by Ramstedt (1903), but it was first used by Nedjalkov (1987) in the same sense as it is used in the present in general typology, and it was recently taken by Haspelmath (1995) in the research paper that we will be discussing in this current study.

By definition, a converb is a grammatical category that classifies non-finite verbs with adverbial functions that include present and past participles, as well as gerunds in the languages in which the gerund shows an adverbial meaning. In line with this argument, it is worth mentioning that this classification does not include the adverbial infinitive as a converb, even though the infinitive shows a high frequency of usage with adverbial meaning both in English and in Spanish (Schulte, 2007).

The Morphology of Converbs

Converbs are dependent verbal forms which are marked by affixation, mainly by suffixes due to the fact that these constructions are more frequent among languages that prefer suffixation (Greenberg, 1978; Bybee-Pagliuca-Perkins, 1990), although there are languages in which converbs are marked by prefixes.

On the other hand, there are ‘periphrastic converbs’, as the mark for the French gerund ‘*en*’, for instance, ‘*en chantant*’ (singing), or the mark for the infinitive in English as in ‘*to- sing*’, which can be interpreted as the adverbial infinitive in Spanish, ‘*al cantar*’, ‘*para cantar*’, etc. depending on the context.

As regards the grammatical mark of the infinitive in English, there is an important consensus that the particle ‘to’ derives from the preposition ‘to’ which has been grammaticalized as an empty carrier or as the most expanded grammatical marker for the infinitive in all of its uses. It has been shown that the preposition ‘to’, which expresses the notion of a ‘forward movement’, may be associated (at a more abstract level) with the

notion of ‘purpose’ as a result of a process of grammaticalization (Haspelmath, 1989 - 2009).

As the adverbial uses of the infinitive moved apart from the idea of purpose and began to be used in a number of new constructions, the particle ‘to’ diachronically lost its original meaning and resulted in the most widely spread grammatical marker for the adverbial infinitive in English (Fischer, 2000).

Even in previous studies, Jespersen (1929) explains that due to the increasing usage of the {to-infinitive} over other non-finite forms in English, it derived into a weakening of the prepositional meaning until it was extinguished in most cases. This is how the {to-infinitive} has come to be the natural infinitive in English, even over the {bare infinitive} which is used in a limited number of cases.

This prepositional derivation of the grammatical marker ‘to’ leads to the question whether there is some similarity with the adverbial infinitive in Spanish. Despite having a high nominal value, the Spanish infinitive may be identified with an adverbial meaning when it is constituted as a prepositional phrase with a preposition functioning as its nexus (Hernanz, 1999).

If we take, for example:

(1) She worked hard to get through college successfully.

(1.a) Se esforzó mucho para terminar con éxito la universidad.

It is clear that, even though the empty carrier ‘to’ in the {to-infinitive} lacks meaning, it could be detected that some of its original meaning still remains, specially under adverbial uses which are related to the idea of purpose or posteriority, i.e. connected with the idea of forward movement, which resembles the construction made up by an adverbial infinitive in Spanish.

The Semantics of Converbs

As regards the possible interpretations of the adverbial infinitive in the English-Spanish translation, it would be convenient to clarify that this type of adverbial constructions belong to a phenomenon that allows the manifestation of a variety of contents that are connected with what is known as the ‘circumstances of the enunciation’ which is an area

of study that, in turn, gives way to different possible interpretations related to the subjectivity of the speaker (Marcovecchio, 2012).

In this sense, the different possible interpretations of the adverbial infinitive will mainly be transmitted by the nexus that introduces the adverbial infinitive in Spanish and may vary in English from the ‘temporal/ purposive’ reading to the ‘causative’ interpretation, depending on the context in which they appear, together with the semantic content of the verbs that make up the adverbial construction and the connection of the infinitive with the main clause.

It should be noticed that the verbal forms which are used in English when confronted with the array of adverbial interpretations deriving from the adverbial infinitive in Spanish may typically vary between the present participle and the infinitival phrase in English, especially when the phrase is not ‘purposive’ as in (1), (1.a) but ‘temporal’ showing ‘anteriority’ or ‘causal’ in meaning. If we take, for example:

(2) *Peeling the onions, she couldn't stop crying.* (=temporal ‘anteriority’/ causal)

(2.a) *Al pelar las cebollas, no podía dejar de llorar.*

(3) *Watching the movie, she remembered her grandma.*

(3.a) *Al mirar la película, recordó a su abuela.* (=temporal ‘anteriority’/ causal)

In contrast with:

(4) *To feel better, she decided to go for a walk.* (=temporal ‘posteriority’/ purposive)

(4.a) *Para sentirse mejor, decidió salir a caminar.*

It can be observed that the idea of ‘posteriority’ connects more naturally with the infinitive in English.

All in all, although the adverbial infinitive is the chosen form in Spanish, the meaning expressed by the adverbial infinitive affects the translation in English, and it is known that among the number of converbs that can be identified to cover the different adverbial interpretations, the present participle is preferred when an idea of ‘anteriority’ and the infinitive is preferred when the non-finite represents an idea of ‘posteriority’ in relation to the main clause.

The Category of Converbs as Embedded Reduced Clauses

Converbs are characterized as dependent verbal forms, i.e. which usually lack grammatical markers for the categories of person, number, tense, or mood and are said to depend, semantically and syntactically, on the main clause. However, according to Nedjalkov (1987), this classification of converbs made up by non-finite phrases is not appropriate for languages which use finite verbs within the category of converbs, which can be the case of subordinate adverbial clauses, also identified as dependent units.

Both English and Spanish make use of finite clauses to express adverbial meaning, as it could be the case of ‘conditional’, ‘concessive’, ‘purposive’ or ‘time’ clauses, just to mention a few. However, in this paper, we will focus on non-finite forms which adjust to the category of converbs described by Haspelmath (1995), i.e. non-finite phrases with adverbial meaning, since the traditional analysis already offers enough information about adverbial constructions with finite phrases.

As regards the dependent feature of converbs, they appear as embedded clauses and, as such, there seems to be agreement in the English-Spanish translation, although, as it has already been shown, the alternating forms may vary. There are a number of factors regarding: the type of subject of the non-finite phrase (whether it agrees or not with the subject of the main clause), the connection with the idea of ‘anteriority’ or ‘posteriority’ in relation to the finite in the main clause and also the possibility to appear within an adverbial phrase despite being intrinsically nominal, as the gerund in English and the infinitive in Spanish.

In this sense, converbs are some sort of *reduced clauses* in which the subordinating conjunction, in English, sometimes is kept, as in:

(5) *When leaving home, she met a very old friend.*

Here the converb which is made up by a present participle in English appears as a reduced adverbial clause, introduced by a subordinating conjunction, which helps clarify the ‘temporal’ adverbial notion of ‘simultaneity’.

Notice that this sort of reduced clause is not allowed to dangle in order to avoid misunderstanding. This means that it would be awkward to produce a statement such as:

(5*) **When leaving home, the shops were closed.*

Because, the subject of the main clause seems to be completely disconnected with that of the non-finite, therefore, the statement shows some sort of ambiguity derived from an undefined subject.

In its translation into Spanish, we resort to a ‘temporal’ adverbial infinitive:

(5.a) *Al salir de casa, se encontró con un viejo amigo.*

This, once again, shows the high frequency of usage of the adverbial infinitive despite being internally nominal, i.e. in its function as the complement of the preposition. Now, with the aim to identify a similar construction in English, which is also made up by a prepositional phrase with adverbial meaning, the gerund appears as the alternating form for the adverbial Spanish infinitive, as in:

(6) *By turning the lights off when you leave a room, you will surely save energy.*

(6.a) *Al apagar la luz cuando sales de una habitación, seguramente ahorrarás energía.*

Here the gerund is quite rarely allowed to dangle; however, we may hear examples such as:

(7) *Without knowing whether the food was enough for a quarantine, a new digital purchase was ordered.*

(7.a) *Al no saber si la comida era suficiente para una cuarentena, se encargó una nueva compra digital.*

Here, both the gerund in English and the infinitive in Spanish function as prepositional complements, which are said to have an implied subject, which does not agree with the subject of the main clause. According to Burton-Roberts (1989), Choice English avoids such dangling gerunds, however, the construction is not excluded entirely, especially when the subject of the gerund is clearly understood, or when it is impersonal or unimportant.

Therefore, the adverbial gerund may appear with a coreferential subject or it may be allowed to dangle, when it appears in initial position and as long as the gerundial phrase is identified as a complement of a preposition, i.e. depending on the preposition which functions as its nexus and which allows the gerund, which is merely nominal, to be assigned an adverbial interpretation.

As regards the infinitive in English and its ability to dangle, the infinitive shows a more flexible connection with the main clause and it is allowed to dangle more freely even under adverbial functions such as adverbial adjuncts.

(8) *To get to London from Buenos Aires, we had to fly for 12 hours. (coreferential subjects)*

(8.a) *Para llegar a Londres desde Buenos Aires, tuvimos que volar por 12 horas.*

(9) *To get to London from Buenos Aires, two stops were made. (dangling infinitive)*

(9.a) *Para llegar a Londres desde Buenos Aires, se hicieron dos escalas.*

It should also be clarified that in the cases in which the adverbial function is that of an external sentence modifier or disjunct, which typically refers to a comment made by the speaker, it is the function that justifies the speaker as the subject of the phrase, as in:

(10) *To be honest, the flight was tiring. (dangling disjunct)*

(10.a) *Para ser honesto, el vuelo fue cansador.*

Therefore, the adverbial infinitive functioning as disjunct is also allowed to dangle without offering much difficulty.

The Mark of Subject in Converbs

Since converbs lack morphological marks for the categories of person and number, there usually appears a coreferential subject which can be identified as a ‘covert’ type of subject because it agrees with that of the main clause or it is said to be ‘latent’ in the sense that it can be deduced from an argument of the verb within the main clause. In general, the subject is covertly expressed within the sentence, and agrees with that of the main clause, as in:

(11) *To get to the meeting in time, she took her car and drove straight to work.*

(11.a) *Para llegar a la reunión a tiempo, (ella) tomó/ agarró su auto y condujo/manejó directo al trabajo.*

But there are languages in which the subject can be overtly expressed, mainly when the subject is different from that in the main clause, as in:

(12) *For Eddie to get to the meeting in time, a taxi had to be reserved.*

Here, the overt subject of the adverbial infinitive in English is introduced by the complementizer ‘for’ which simply introduces the unrelated subject of the infinitival phrase and cannot be identified as a preposition. The overt subject in this type of phrases also shows that it can dangle, i.e. it shows no connection with the subject of the main clause. In Spanish, the suggested translation would resort to a converb with a finite verb, as in:

(12.a) *Para que Eddie llegue a la reunión a tiempo, se tuvo que reservar un taxi.*

Although a postponed overt subject is also allowed in the case of the adverbial infinitive in Spanish.

(12.b) *Para llegar Eddie a la reunión a tiempo, se tuvo que reservar un taxi.*

There are cases in which the subject of the converb, mainly in participial phrases, is identified as ‘absolute’, which means that it is overtly expressed within the non-finite phrase, but shows no connection with the subject of the main clause and cannot find a dependence with the arguments of the finite in the matrix. This can be observed in:

(13) *Summer being over, we got back to work.*

(13.a) *Al terminar el verano, volvimos a trabajar.*

In this sense, converbs may be found within what is known as *nominative absolute constructions*, which are converbs whose subjects do not depend on the main clause because the subject is explicitly or overtly expressed or because the subject can be assigned an arbitrary interpretation. In other words, the nominative absolute construction is an adverbial phrase, or converb which is constituted by a nominal phrase which has been inserted within the non-finite phrase as the subject of the converb.

In turn, these types of constructions show a double function since they appear as embedded clauses, which contribute to the main clause and simultaneously seem to appear in coordination with the matrix, meaning:

(13.c) *Summer was over, and we got back to work.*

(13.d) *Terminó el verano y volvimos a trabajar.*

The structure of coordination which can be identified as a feature of these absolute constructions, allows for the inclusion of a new type of subject, which is different from that in the main clause. In Haspelmath (1995:27) ‘absolute constructions’ are also

exemplified both with the gerund in Spanish and the participle in English. These constructions show that both can accept an overt subject within the non-finite phrase, as in:

(14) *God permitting, we will leave this quarantine.*

(14.a) *Permitiéndolo Dios, saldremos de esta cuarentena.*

The Spanish version containing a gerundial phrase with a postponed subject and the English version made up by a participle with its own subject in initial position, both fulfilling the adverbial subordination offered by converbs, and admitting an overtly expressed subject.

The identification of the type of subject, also proposed by Haspelmath (1995) becomes fundamental to determine if it is possible to include the infinitive within the description of converbs. It has been observed that the adverbial infinitive in Spanish with an idea of ‘purpose’ typically contains a subject which is coreferential with the subject of the matrix, and that will, therefore, be the most frequently found form. In this sense, Schulte (2007) proposes that the extension of adverbial infinitives in romance languages originates from the use of infinitives which contain coreferential subjects.

Is it Possible to Extend the Category of Converbs to the Adverbial Infinitives?

As it has been observed, in order to facilitate the task of translation, the Spanish adverbial infinitive has been of use to paraphrase other converbs. However, as we have already anticipated, the infinitive does not fit into the classification of converbs provided by Haspelmath (1995). This is probably because the infinitive, which is considered a verb-noun, especially in European languages such as Spanish, requires a preposition to fulfill an adverbial function.

A close parallelism can be established with the gerundial phrase in English, which is basically nominal. Therefore, the gerund will only be used with an adverbial meaning if it becomes the complement of a preposition within a prepositional phrase which is used to express an adverbial notion. This means that the gerundial phrase in English is not the best example of an English converb or, at least, not the most frequent one.

Besides, it has been shown that when dealing with English-Spanish translation difficulties concerning converbs, the translation of English converbs has frequently been solved by means of an adverbial infinitive in Spanish. In line with this paper, Cristofaro (2003), in a recent typological study, examines the presence of ‘*deranked clauses*’ when classifying adverbial phrases in different languages, among which the adverbial infinitive plays an important role.

Later, in a crosslinguistic study carried out by Schulte (2007) in which a diachronic tracking of the adverbial infinitive was made in romance languages, it could be proved that there has been an expansion in the variety of prepositions that began to be implemented to express different adverbial notions until reaching a high frequency of usage.

Likewise, it is believed that the English adverbial infinitive, which originated as a prepositional phrase with ‘to’, went through a process of grammaticalization and began to expand its range of usage over new adverbial notions, thus losing its prepositional function so as to become a grammatical marker, as we explained above.

For all these reasons, although we are comparing languages that deserve a different grammatical description, we believe that the adverbial infinitive should be included within the classification of converbs with the aim to clarify the different possible translations.

Final Thoughts

A crosslinguistic analysis of the categories of converbs has shown that the development of the adverbial infinitive in romance languages and in English adjusts to a common pattern, which is present in these languages, allowing for certain types of reduced adverbial clauses to be construed by means of non-finite phrases, among which, we believe the infinitive should be included.

The similarity among the languages that use the adverbial infinitive is so important that it is quite unlikely for it to be the result of a mere coincidence. The possibility of combining different prepositions with the non- finite phrase in order to express an

adverbial notion allows us to conclude that new structural conditions have been established to give birth to the adverbial infinitive in Spanish.

According to Schulte (2007), there has been a parallel development of the adverbial infinitive based on several universal principles, which have been described above. It has also been observed that as regards the translation of converbs, something very similar is happening with the adverbial gerund in English, which despite being primarily nominal, it can be found as complement of a preposition with adverbial meaning.

Hence, it can be stated that the classification of converbs has been useful to determine that non-finite phrases which are typically nominal can also be included within this classification when they are combined with a variety of prepositions that allow the non-finite to express adverbial meaning.

Undoubtedly, the identification of the subject within the adverbial phrase also remains as a prevailing pattern of usage of the adverbial infinitive among other converbs. Therefore, it can be stated that the possibility of predicting the type of subject in this kind of constructions has triggered a wider use of adverbial infinitives cross linguistically.

To summarize, although the adverbial function is not among the primary uses of the infinitive, as Haspelmath (1995) explains, we are in the presence of a grammaticalization process, mainly marked by the notions of ‘purpose’ and ‘posteriority’. Consequently, we believe that including the infinitive within the classification of converbs opens the array of possibilities for the translator to identify the most suitable English-Spanish translation of these non-finite phrases.

References

- Burton-Roberts, N. (1989). *Analysing Sentences – An Introduction to English Syntax*. Longman.
- Bybee, J.; Pagliuca, W.; Perkins, R. (1990). “On the asymmetries in the affixation of grammatical material”. In W. Croft, K. Denning, S. Kemmer (Eds.). *Studies in typology and diachrony*. (Typological Studies in Language 20). Benjamins.
- Comrie, B. (1989). *Tipología de lenguas. Universales del lenguaje y tipología lingüística*. Gredos.
- Cristofaro, S. (2003). *Subordination*. Oxford University Press.

- Schmidtke-Bode, K. (2009). *A Typology of Purpose Clauses*, Amsterdam. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Fischer, O. C. M. (2000). *Grammaticalization: unidirectional, non-reversible? The case of 'to' before the infinitive in English*. In A. Rosenbach, O. Fischer, & D. Stein (Eds.). *Pathways of Change. Grammaticalization in English*. (149-169). Benjamins.
- Greenberg, J. (1963). *Some Universals of Grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements*. In J. Greenberg (Ed.). *Universals of Grammar*. The MIT Press.
- Greenberg, J, Ferguson, C and Moravcik, E. (1978). *Diachrony, synchrony and language universals*. In: *Universals of Human Language*, vol. 1. (61-92). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Haspelmath, M. (1989). *From purposive to infinitive – a universal path of grammaticalization*. *Folia Linguística Histórica*.
- Haspelmath, M, König, E. (1995). *Converbs in Cross-Linguistic Perspective- Structure and Meaning of Adverbial Verb Forms- Adverbial Participles and Gerund..* Mouton de Gruyter.
- Haspelmath, M. (2009). *From purposive to infinitive- a universal path of grammaticalization*". Published online: <https://www.degruyter.com/view/journals/flin/23/Historica-vol-10-1-2/article-p287.xml>
- Haspelmath, M. (2008). *A Frequentist Explanation of Some Universals of Reflexive Marking*. Published online by: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/40853572_A_Frequentist_Explanation_of_Some_Universals_of_Reflexive_Marking (Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig.)
- Hernanz Carbó, M. (1999). *El infinitivo*. Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española, dirigida por Ignacio Bosque y Violeta Demonte, tomo 2, 2.197-2.356. Espasa Calpe.
- Jespersen, O. (1909-1949). *A modern English grammar on historical principles*. Vol. 1-7. Allen and Unwin.
- Marcovecchio, A. (2012): *De las circunstancias de los eventos a las de la emisión: gramaticalización y evidencialidad*. In Vucheva, E. (Coord.). *El español: territorio de encuentros*. (pp. 65-75). Editorial de la Universidad "San Clemente de Ojrid".
- Nedjalkov, V. (1987). *On the typological characteristics of converbs*. In T. Help (Ed.). *Symposium on Language Universals* (75-79). Tallinn.
- Ramstedt, G. (1903). *Über die Konjugation des Khalkha-Mongolischen*. (Memoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne 19). Société Finno-Ougrienne.
- Schulte, K. (2007). *What Causes adverbial infinitives to spread? Evidence from Romance*. *Language Sciences* 29: (512-37).

Polysemy in Finite Verbs according to their Linguistic Structure and its Consequent Impact on Spanish<>English Translation

*Rocío Cantorna Blanco*²

Universidad Católica Argentina

✉ rociocantornablanca@gmail.com

Recibido: 18/5/2020

Aprobado: 20/7/2020

Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship between the syntactic structure of finite verbs and their meaning. In order to do so, it provides an overview of the notion of polysemy, the linguistic categories of finites and non-finites, verbs of complete and incomplete predication, transitive and intransitive verbs, as well as the concepts of quasi-passive and empty carriers. What is more, it explores the way in which these categories affect the translation of finite verbs into Spanish and highlights the importance of recognizing syntactic structures when translating.

Key words: polysemy, finite verbs, categories of the verb, Spanish<>English translation, semantic and syntactic approaches, linguistic structures.

Resumen

El presente trabajo analiza la relación entre la estructura sintáctica de los verbos finitos y su significado. Para ello, refiere brevemente a la noción de polisemia, los verbos finitos y no finitos, los verbos de predicación completa e incompleta, los verbos transitivos e intransitivos, la cuasi pasiva y los *empty carriers*. A su vez, examina la forma en que dichas categorías afectan la traducción de los verbos finitos al español y resalta la importancia de reconocer las estructuras sintácticas al traducir.

Palabras clave: polisemia, verbos finitos, categorías de los verbos, traducción Español<>Inglés, enfoques semánticos y sintácticos, estructuras lingüísticas.

² *Rocío Cantorna Blanco* is a Sworn Translator graduated from Universidad Católica Argentina and a student of International Spanish Copy Editing and Proofreading at Fundación LITTERAE. She currently works as a translator and English teacher and is specializing in Linguistics as a teaching assistant (*adscripta*) in the subject Linguistic Structures at Universidad Católica Argentina.

Introduction

Polysemy is an inherent feature of the language, which evidences the extreme complexity, creativity, flexibility and intricacy thereof. For the purposes of this research work, the term “polysemy” shall refer to “the coexistence of many possible meanings for a word or phrase” (Oxford University Press, 2020). It is worth noting that some authors question the notion of “meaning of an expression,” suggesting that, in fact, words do not have concrete meanings but rather “meaning potentials,” which may be defined as the “essentially unlimited number of ways in which an expression can prompt dynamic cognitive processes, which include conceptual connections, mappings, blends and simulations” (Fauconnier, & Turner, 2003, p. 79). Therefore, such meaning potentials will be realized in concrete contexts.

It is the job of translators to identify out of the multiplicity of potential meanings of a word or phrase, the meaning that such expression bears in the particular context of the source text in order to be able to produce an equivalent meaning, to the extent possible, in the target language. Consequently, polysemy is in the very essence of the profession of translators and, in the absence of the former, the latter would become replaceable by machines.

Objectives

The aim of this research work is to analyse some of the ways in which the structure of finites can be helpful to recognize their meaning in order to translate them. To such end, it will briefly refer to the notions of finites and non-finites, verbs of complete and incomplete predication, transitive and intransitive verbs, quasi-passive constructions and empty carriers, and it will provide some examples to illustrate such potential meanings and the relationship between meaning and the linguistic structure, together with its corresponding Spanish structure. Such examples are merely of an illustrative nature and they do not cover all the potential meanings of the corresponding finites.

The Impact of Linguistic Structures on the Meaning of Finites

Throughout the history of linguistics, great efforts have been devoted to analysing and categorizing verbs. One of the main classifications of verbs is that which divides them into finites and non-finites. Finites are conjugated verbs, i.e., the form of the verb shows the categories of person, number, tense, mood, aspect and voice, whereas non-finites are non-conjugated verbs that only show the categories of aspect and voice, and encompass infinitives, past participles, gerunds and present participles. Within the broader category of finites are the subcategories of verbs of complete and incomplete predication, also referred to as predicating and linking verbs respectively. Verbs of complete predication are those that express a complete meaning, or, in other words, that wholly or chiefly accomplish the predication (Paul Roberts, 1954), whereas verbs of incomplete predication do not. As pointed by Paul Roberts, many verbs of incomplete predication were originally verbs of complete predication and the change from one category to the other took place in historic times.

This ancient shift in structure can be observed, for example, in the verb “become”. In Old English, this verb meant “happen”. For instance, “Him ðæs grim leán becom: this grim retribution *happened* to them, Cd. 2; Th. 3, 36” (Bosworth, J., 1898, emphasis added). This meaning is preserved, for example, in the expression “what has become of it?” (Harper, n.d.). This verb was also used in Old English to mean “come” or “arrive”. For example, “Hannibal to ðam lande becom: Hannibal *came* to that land, Ors. 4, 8; Bos. 90, 14” (Bosworth, J., 1898, emphasis added). The most frequent use of the verb “become” nowadays - as a verb of incomplete predication meaning “to turn, develop into, start to be, grow to be”: *volverse*, *tornarse*, *convertirse* - may derive from this later sense, since it conveys the idea of *coming* to a certain condition or state (Quirk, 2014). In Middle English, the verb was used in the sense of “befit”, “be suitable”: *quedar bien*, *sentar bien*, *verse bien*, as a verb of complete predication. This is seen, for example, in the following sentence “They should doe such things as becommed their shape” from a Treatise of Moral Philosophy from 1563 (Oxford University Press, 1971). This sense is still used nowadays in phrases such as “This suit becomes him”.

Likewise, among inchoative verbs, the verb “grow” is another clear example of how the meaning of the verb may change depending on whether it has complete or incomplete predication:

Grow (complete predication)	E. g. He grew a lot.	Crecer
Grow (incomplete predication)	Grow old	Envejecer
	Grow pale	Palidecer
	Grow bored	Aburrirse
	Grow suspicious	Comenzar a sospechar/sospechar
	Grow tired	Cansarse

It should be noted that, whereas in some cases ‘grow’ may be translated into Spanish either as a verb of complete predication or as a verb of incomplete predication (for example, grow pale: *palidecer/ponerse pálido*), in other cases, a verb of incomplete predication would not constitute an appropriate translation. For example, grow bored cannot be translated as “*volverse aburrido*” (turn boring).

Apart from this difference in meaning between complete and incomplete predication, a further difference appears depending on whether the verb is transitive (VT), i.e. it takes a direct object, or intransitive (VI), i.e. it does not take a direct object. For example:

- a. (i) The herbs in my uncle’s garden grow very fast. (VI) [*Las hiervas del jardín de mi tío crecen muy rápido.*]
(ii) My uncle grows herbs in his garden. (VT) [*Mi tío cultiva hiervas en su jardín.*]
- b. (i) Her hair grew a lot. (VI) [*Le creció mucho el pelo.*]
(ii) She grew her hair long. (VT) [*Se dejó crecer el pelo.*]
- c. (i) The bacteria grew in the Petri dish. (VI) [*Las bacterias proliferaron/se multiplicaron en la placa de Petri.*]
(ii) We grew bacteria in the Petri dish. (VT) [*Cultivamos bacterias en la placa de Petri.*]

Other examples include:

- a. (i) The cake tasted delicious. (VI) [*La torta estaba/sabía deliciosa.*]
(ii) He tasted the delicious cake. (VT) [*Probó la deliciosa torta.*]
- b. (i) I felt tired. (VI) [*Me sentía cansado.*]

(ii) I realized he had fever when I felt his forehead. (VT) [*Me di cuenta de que tenía fiebre cuando le toqué la frente.*]

c. (i) He ran last week. (VI) [*Corrió la semana pasada.*]

(ii) He ran a fundraising campaign last week. (VT) [*Organizó una campaña de recaudación de fondos la semana pasada.*]

d. (i) The butler walked to the door. (VI) [*El mayordomo se dirigió a/caminó hacia la puerta.*]

(ii) The butler walked her to the door. (VT) [*El mayordomo la acompañó a la puerta.*]

e. (i) Tom left after Mary. (VI) [*Tom se fue/se marchó después que Mary*]

(ii) Tom left Mary. (VT) [*Tom dejó a Mary.*]

In some cases, however, the potential transitive or intransitive nature of the verb, as well as its potential complete or incomplete predication, creates ambiguity. Oaks (2010) mentions, among others, the following examples:

- “Did you hear about the writer who *dropped eleven stories* into a waste-basket and lived?” (Rosenbloom, 1978: 110, emphasis added). Here, “dropped” can be intransitive (*se cayó once pisos*) or transitive (*tiró once historias*).

- “When is a hat not a hat? – When it *becomes a woman*.” (Withers & Benet, 1954: 68, emphasis added). In this case, “become” may be a transitive verb of complete predication (*le queda bien a una mujer*) or an intransitive verb of incomplete predication (*se convierte en una mujer*).

- *Get Rich Quick* (Advertisement for HERBA RICH, a haircare product) (Revlon Consumer Products, 1955, emphasis added). Here the verb “get” can be intransitive of incomplete predication (*vuélvase rico*) or transitive of complete predication (*compre/consiga Rich*).

In such cases, it is essential that the translator be aware of the different structures that the verb may adopt in order to be able to convey the meaning of the source text in the target language and, depending on the intention of the writer or speaker, to maintain the ambiguity of the source text, if possible.

As previously mentioned, an intransitive verb differs from a transitive verb in that the former does not take a direct object. Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that, in some

cases, a finite may be analysed as an intransitive verb since no direct object is present and the structure is active in form, but the meaning of the structure may be consistent with that of a passive structure and, therefore, the verb would convey an idea of transitivity. This is the case of quasi-passive structures, also known as notional passives. For example, in the sentence “This book reads easily”, the structure is in the active voice, but the meaning of the sentence is passive (the book is read by someone). Therefore, the grammatical subject “This book”, which is an inanimate object, is not the performer of the action and it, thus, differs from the logical subject “*someone* reads the book”. This is shown in Spanish by means of the passive voice with “se”, which is more frequent than the passive formed by *ser* + past participle: “*Este libro se lee con facilidad*”. Other examples include:

a) (i) The tickets to the show sold very quickly. [*Las entradas para el espectáculo se vendieron muy rápido.*]

(ii) They sold the tickets to the show very quickly. [*Vendieron las entradas para el espectáculo muy rápido.*]

b) (i) As the chicken cooks, prepare the potatoes. [*Mientras se cocina el pollo, prepare las papas.*]

(ii) Her husband cooks chicken very well. [*Su marido cocina pollo muy bien.*]

c) (i) The new edition of his book on criminal law will publish next year. [*La nueva edición de su libro sobre derecho penal se publicará el año que viene.*]

(ii) He will publish a new edition of his book on criminal law next year. [*Publicará una nueva edición de su libro sobre derecho penal el año que viene.*]

Once again, knowing these structures can be very helpful to properly understand the meaning of apparently similar phrases or sentences. For example:

(a) This contract is binding. [*Este contrato es vinculante.*]

(b) This book on contract law is binding. [*Este libro sobre derecho contractual se está encuadernando.*]

Whereas in sentence (a), the finite “is” functions as an intransitive verb of incomplete predication and “binding” is an adjective that means “obligatory”, sentence (b) shows a quasi-passive structure in which the finite is “is binding”. In the example (b), the sentence

is active in form (neither an auxiliary for the passive nor a past participle is used), but the meaning is passive (the book is bound by somebody), since the book is an inanimate object that cannot perform the action of “binding”.

Another example is provided below:

- (a) His biography is moving. It even made me cry! [*Su biografía es conmovedora. ¡Hasta me hizo llorar!*]
- (b) Although it is quite expensive, his biography is moving and it will soon sell out. [*A pesar de ser bastante cara, su biografía se está vendiendo y se agotará pronto*]
- (c) Although the biography is quite expensive, the publisher is moving it and it will be soon sold out. [*A pesar de que la biografía es bastante cara, el editor la está vendiendo y se agotará pronto.*]

In the first sentence in (a), the finite is “is”, which is an intransitive verb of incomplete predication, and “moving” is an adjective functioning as a subjective complement. However, in (b), the finites of the main clause are “is moving”, which is used in the sense of selling goods or merchandise (Oxford University Press, 2020), and “will sell out”. Here, the quasi-passive is applied using, first, the progressive tense, and then, the simple future. The same meaning is expressed in (c), but an active construction (the publisher is moving it: subject + VTCP + DO) and a passive construction (it will be sold out: subject + modal + auxiliary for the passive + past participle) are used instead of the quasi-passive. In addition to this, the structure of a finite may not only lead to different potential meanings, but may also result in the verb being sometimes devoid of lexical meaning. The verb “do” constitutes a clear example of this. To begin with, “do” may function as an empty carrier or as a main verb. When “do” functions as a main verb, it can be transitive or intransitive. As an intransitive verb, it can convey different meanings. For example:

- a) Do as I say, not as I do. [*Haz lo que yo digo, pero no lo que yo hago.*]
- b) That will do. [*Con eso bastará.*]
- c) How are you doing? [*¿Cómo estás?*]

Moreover, as mentioned before, the verb “do” can be transitive. As such, it is considered to be delexical. A delexical verb, also known as a light verb, thin verb or semantically

weak verb, can be defined as that which “has very little meaning in itself and is used with an object that carries the main meaning of the structure” (*Cobuild English Grammar*, 2017, p. xix). For instance, the phrase “do the ironing” can be replaced by “iron”, and, therefore, in the sentence “She is doing the ironing”, the direct object “the ironing” would bear the main meaning of the predicate and the sentence could be translated as “*Ella está planchando*”. Other examples include:

Do the washing up	Lavar los platos.
Do the cooking	Cocinar
Do drugs	Drogarse
Do research	Investigar
Do an operation	Operar

As noted by Live (1973), throughout the history of English, there has been a tendency to split the verb into two parts. The first part would carry the grammatical information and the second part would bear the lexical meaning. This tendency is also observed in the use of auxiliary verbs and empty carriers. In this respect, Live argues that said tendency “has, since the sixteenth century, crystalized in the use of periphrastic verb forms for interrogative and negative expressions and in the establishment of the progressive tenses, with do in the former cases, and in the latter case, be (...) (p. 31)”.

According to the Oxford Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 1971), the use of “do” as an empty carrier dates back to Old English, though it became more frequently used in Middle English and especially after the 16th Century. At that time, it was used not only in the negative form - the periphrastic form in negative sentences such as “They did not know” replaced the negative particles used in Old English “Hie ne wendon” (Harper, n.d.) - but also in the affirmative form - for example, “He dū zim”, instead of “He seems”. Later on, this use of “do” in affirmative sentences was dropped, but it was preserved in interrogative and negative sentences. For example:

- a) Did they know how to get there? – No, they didn’t (know how to get there).
[¿Sabían cómo llegar? –No, no sabían (cómo llegar)].
- b) Does he do his homework alone? [¿Hace la tarea solo?].
- c) Does she do drugs? [¿Se droga?]

As previously mentioned, the empty carrier would only contribute grammatical meaning to the sentence and would, thus, impact the inflection used in Spanish (*sabían* instead of *saben*, *sabrán*, etc.). Moreover, nowadays, “do” is also used in affirmative sentences to show emphasis and contrast, and for the purpose of inversion:

- a) They thought he didn’t know anything about the party, but he did know. [*Pensaron que no sabía nada sobre la fiesta, pero sí sabía.*]
- b) I don’t recall if he was with Susan, but I do remember he came to the party. [*No recuerdo si estaba con Susan, pero sí recuerdo que vino a la fiesta.*]
- c) That dress does look beautiful on you! [*¡Qué bien que te queda ese vestido!*]
- d) Not even once did he tell me the truth! [*¡Ni siquiera una vez me dijo la verdad!*]
- e) Only then did I understand what was going on. [*No fue sino hasta ese momento que entendí lo que sucedía.*]

As illustrated in the examples above, “do” has multiple possible translations depending on its structure and the particular context in which it appears.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research work has referred to the interplay between linguistic structures and meaning, in particular with respect to finite verbs, showing how semantics and syntax are inextricably intertwined, and exploring their impact on translation. To such end, this work has briefly pointed out the differences between finites and non-finites, verbs of complete and incomplete predication, and transitive and intransitive verbs. What is more, examples of such verbs as well as their respective translations into Spanish have been provided in order to illustrate such differences in meaning. In addition to this, the notion of the quasi-passive has been briefly explained and examples of said structure with their corresponding translation have been included. Last but not least, this research has alluded to the concept of empty carriers and compared the use of “do” as a main verb and as an empty carrier.

Overall, this work has illustrated some of the ways in which different structures can contribute to polysemy, which in turn contributes to the richness of the language. It is of

crucial importance that the translator be able to recognize the different linguistic structures that make up the language since the lack of knowledge of such structures could lead to a misrepresentation of the intended meaning in the source text. Further research should be conducted to explore other ways in which linguistic structures impact the meaning of finites as well as non-finites and the difficulties that this may entail for translators.

References

- Bosworth, J. (1898). be-cuman. In T. Northcote Toller (Ed.). *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Retrieved June 28, 2020, from: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/lrc/resources/books/asd/dict-B.php>
- Bosworth, J. (1898). DÓN. In T. Northcote Toller (Ed.). *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Retrieved June 28, 2020, from: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/lrc/resources/books/asd/dict-B.php>
- Collins Cobuild English grammar* (4th ed.). (2017). HarperCollins.
- Fauconnier, G. & Turner M. (2003). Polysemy and conceptual blending. In B. Nerlich, V. Herman, Z. Todd & D. Clarke (Eds.). *Polysemy: Flexible Patterns of Meaning in Mind and Language* (pp. 79-94). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Harper, D. (n.d.). Become. In *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved June 28, 2020, from: <https://www.etymonline.com/word/become>
- Harper, D. (n.d.). Do. In *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved June 28, 2020, from: <https://www.etymonline.com/word/become>
- Live, A. H. (1973). The take-have phrasal in English. *Linguistics*. (95, pp. 31-50).
- Oxford University Press. (1971). Become. In *The compact edition of the Oxford English dictionary: Complete text reproduced micrographically*. (Vol. 1).
- Oxford University Press. (1971). Do. In *The compact edition of the Oxford English dictionary: Complete text reproduced micrographically*. (Vol. 1).
- Oxford University Press. (2020). Move. In Lexico.com dictionary. Retrieved July 4, 2020, from: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/move>
- Oxford University Press. (2020). Polysemy. In Lexico.com dictionary. Retrieved July 5, 2020, from: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/polysemy>
- Oaks, D. D. (2010). *Structural Ambiguity in English: An Applied Grammatical Inventory*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Quirk, R. (2014). *Grammatical and Lexical Variance in English*. Routledge.
- Revlon Consumer Products. (1955, August). Get Rich Quick. [Advertisement]. *Ebony*, 25.
- Roberts, P. (1954). *Understanding Grammar*. Harper&Brothers.
- Rosenbloom, J. (1978). *The Gigantic Joke Book*. Sterling Publishing Company.
- Withers, C. & Benet S. (1954). *The American Riddle Book*. Abelard-Schuman.

Is the American Dream Truly for Everyone? The Stereotypes Shaping Immigrants' Reality

*Florencia Denise Ochoa*³

Novel researcher

✉ denise.ochoa07@gmail.com

Recibido: 25/5/2020

Aprobado: 30/7/2020

Abstract

Throughout history, we can infer that media is the Fourth Estate due to its influence within politics. Such statement has become even clearer during the last years, especially in the United States due to the stereotypes framing immigrants depending on the current agenda. The aim of this paper is to observe the discourse (racism, American dream) of articles against the DREAM Act through the theoretical framework provided by Van Dijk and López to determine the influence within politics of a stereotypical portrayal of immigrants.

Key words: American Dream, immigrants, media, DREAM Act, discourse, press, racism, stereotypes.

Resumen

A lo largo de historia podemos ver como los medios forman El Cuarto Poder debido a su influencia en la política. Esta frase se volvió aún más clara durante los últimos años especialmente en los Estados Unidos debido a los estereotipos que encuadran a los inmigrantes conforme a los fines actuales. El objetivo del presente ensayo es observar el discurso (racismo, sueño americano) de los artículos contra la Ley DREAM mediante el marco teórico de Van Dijk y López para determinar la influencia en la política de una representación estereotípica de los inmigrantes.

Palabras clave: sueño americano, inmigrantes, medios, Ley DREAM, discurso, prensa, racismo, estereotipos.

³ **Florencia Denise Ochoa** is a student in translation at UCA who delivered seminars about translation and interpretation in events such as: Interuniversity Seminar of Translation and Interpretation Students, Seminar of Feminist Translators and Interpreters. In 2018, she was part of the internship program by the Swedish-Argentine Chamber of Commerce where she rendered her translation services. She also worked as an interpreter for John Foos S.A., UCA and the Youth Olympic Games.

Introduction

The American Dream is allegedly a universal dream. However, there is a debate on whether such dream should be available for everyone or only for those who meet certain requirements. Even American citizens struggle to achieve it due to socio-economic factors. Yet, the debate on whomever should access them is focused on one group: undocumented immigrants.

Such debate is framed by the media due to its influence within socio-political affairs. It can be the trump card that establishes the final result. In the case of immigration, stereotypes act as an argument against immigration. Thus, such racist discourse encourages further racism since readers believe that immigrants act the way stereotypes portray them. This can be inferred from the debate on the DREAM Act.

The aim of the following paper is to provide an observation on how the ones opposing the DREAM Act use discourse in the media to shape public opinion in their favour and the consequences of such use by following the theory provided by Teun Van Dijk on discourse, racism and press.

Section 1: Can Immigrants DREAM on? An Overview on Federal, State and New York's Legislation on Undocumented Immigrants' Education.

This section will commence by establishing the difference between naturalized citizens, permanent residents, refugees or asylees, and unauthorized immigrants. After highlighting the difference between federal and state legislation, a special focus on New York legislation will be developed to reflect the difficulties undocumented students have to face, particularly, because in order to be eligible for the (State) assistance program they need to fulfil certain requirements. Sources such as The New York Senate, National Conference of States Legislatures, New York Assembly Speaker, among others will be considered to examine the information needed to accomplish the aim of this section.

According to Bolter (2019), *Explainer: Who Is An Immigrant?*, issued by Immigration Policy Institute, a naturalized citizen is a person who after a certain period as a permanent resident can apply to naturalize and acquire benefits and responsibilities as a legal citizen.

Whereas a permanent resident acquires the status of legal resident through employment, family relationships despite not being a legal citizen. Moreover, refugee or asylee is the term used to describe people that had to flee their homes due to economic, political, ethnic, race, or religious reasons among other push factors, but not every migrant is considered to be a refugee or an asylee. Finally, unauthorized also called illegal or undocumented immigrants are those that are present in a country illegally regardless of whether they have entered unlawfully or by extending their visa. Furthermore, sometimes undocumented immigrants can settle in a country for a short period or permanently. After this brief comparison, as defined in the U.S Immigration Glossary (2019), an immigrant is a person who has to leave their country to relocate in a different one for the reasons stated above.

The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was introduced in 2001 (American Immigration Council, 2019). Throughout eighteen years, approximately, ten versions of the DREAM Act have been introduced in Congress (American Immigration Council, 2019). According to the American Immigration Council, prior versions of the act dealt with the treatment of potential beneficiaries and the duration of the "Dreamer" status. Nevertheless, the goal remains unchanged which is to "provide a pathway to legal status for undocumented youth who came to this country as children" (American Immigration Council, 2019, p. 1). Despite the support they received, none of these bills became law.

Its most recent version (American Immigration Council, 2019) would provide to undocumented high-school graduates and GED recipients a pathway to U.S. citizenship through college, work, or armed services.

Likewise, the potential "Dreamer" would have to meet requirements such as entering the U.S. while underage and with no criminal record. Then, the "Dreamer" or anyone who has Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) would be granted a Conditional Permanent Resident (CPR) status for 10 years authorizing them to work.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), announced by President Obama in 2012, provides temporary comfort from deportation and work authorization for certain undocumented children and adult immigrants in the United States; this immigration

policy helps to provide opportunities for those that have been in the country until 2017 when the Secretary of Homeland Security, Elaine Duke rescinded it. However, it does not provide a legal permanent status, or a U.S. citizenship and it must be renewed every two years (American Immigration Council, 2019).

Afterwards, those who obtained the CPR status would be able to obtain the Lawful Permanent Residence (LPR or a "green card") through higher education, military service or work. If they cannot meet such requirements, they may be eligible for a "hardship waiver" due to disabilities, working as a caregiver for a minor or possible hardship to a lawful permanent resident of the U.S (World Relief, 2017). After maintaining such status for 5 years, the "Dreamer" or whoever has the DACA may apply to become a U.S. citizen through the normal process (Jefferson County Public Schools, n.d.).

Besides, in the United States the educational system is not controlled by federal laws; each state controls their own institutions. These institutions are funded by the state, and this funding comes from the taxes of the residents of that individual state. Thus, residents of a specific state can attend these institutions by paying a lower price than people that live in another state. This system is known as In-state tuition and out-of-state tuition (George Washington University, 2017).

The out-of-state and in-state tuition vary depending on each state; each one has specific requirements to qualify for it. Regarding undocumented students, state and federal governments have two options: "(1) Increasing access to higher education for these students by charging them in-state tuition, which is substantially lower than out-of-state tuition in most states (...) or (2) Making state financial aid programs accessible to undocumented students" (Radha Roy Biswas, 2015, p. 2). Even though federal laws do not govern the educational system, they do prohibit undocumented students from applying for federal financial assistance. Federal law also limits states regarding tuition and financial support for undocumented students. According to the article *Access to Community College for Undocumented Immigrants: A Guide for State Policymakers*, many are against the availability of in-state tuition and financial aid for undocumented students, arguing that it is unfair to taxpayers and that this will lower the opportunities for U.S "legal" citizens.

As stated by the National Conference of the State Legislature on September 19, 2019, currently, at least nineteen states allow in-state tuition for undocumented students, at least seven states allow undocumented students to receive state financial aid, at least three states prohibit in-state tuition rates for undocumented students and two states prohibit undocumented students from enrolling at any postsecondary tuition.

New York is one of the states that allows in-state tuition to undocumented students, but in addition to that, it was the only state that passed the José Peralta New York State DREAM Act in 2019. According to the New York State Senate, this act allows undocumented children, who are already students in that state, to qualify for state aid, and it will also create a DREAM fund for college scholarship opportunities (Sepúlveda, 2019). The aim of the New York Dream Act is to provide educational opportunities to children of immigrants by providing scholarships to college-bound students, to eliminate financial obstacles, to obtaining financial aids and to extending the opportunities for those undocumented students to attend higher education. (Sepúlveda, 2019) Undocumented students would be eligible for general awards, performance-based awards, or New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) funds if they fulfil the requirements.

In conclusion, through this section, it may be inferred that the funding of education comes from residents' taxes allowing them to access a lower tuition whereas non-residents must pay a higher amount. In the case of undocumented students, state and federal governments can either increase access to higher education by charging them in-state tuition, or by creating state financial aid programs aimed at them. Furthermore, federal legislation prohibits the application of undocumented students to federal financial assistance, limits tuition, and financial support for them.

Tuition is part of the struggles that must be faced to achieve the American Dream. That struggle reaches all nationalities, social classes, colours, and age. It has been discussed for years and the discussion still goes on. Yet, that struggle is even greater for undocumented students. Nevertheless, José Peralta's DREAM Act in 2019 will pave the path to tuition aid for undocumented students. Therefore, there is a chance that the other states will follow New York's example.

Section 2: Equality or Protection of the Status Quo? A Review of the Claims of Anti-Immigration Sources

The “American Dream” is shared among citizens regardless of social condition, ethnicity, nationality, or any other factor. Thus, the idea of achieving their long-term goals through hard work is universally known. The goal is universal; however, the path to achieving it is subject to socioeconomic factors such as ethnicity, nationality, and others. In other words, several authors resort to racist arguments against immigrants who want to access higher education in the United States despite being aware of the extra hardships immigrants go through. Such claims shall be examined throughout the section to establish whether they are valid or not.

One of the most used arguments against educational aid for undocumented immigrants is that it will encourage further illegal immigration. Regarding the topics of the previous section “Can Immigrants DREAM on?”, the DACA and the DREAM Act, Eschbach (2015, p.4) states that the undocumented population would increase expecting to qualify for these programs. According to Rep. Lamar Smith, “history would repeat itself” since the “1986 amnesty legislation encouraged illegal immigration” (2016, p.5). As it can be inferred from the previous part, the DACA and the DREAM Act are linked to tuition aid because if they were effective, undocumented immigrants would access in-state tuition. Furthermore, these aids, on a state level, are funded by the taxes residents pay (George Washington University, 2017) raising the “concern” of paying taxes for someone else’s education.

The abovementioned concern is related to the claim that the DACA and DREAM Act “would give amnesty to law-breakers” (Benkof, 2019). Organizations such as The Center for Immigration Studies (Procon, 2020) associate the DREAM Act with vandalism through selected numbers that favour their anti-immigration views. That organization resorts to repetition highlighting their view on Dreamers "Dreamer gang-bangers, Dreamer identity thieves, Dreamer sexual predators, Dreamers who have not paid income taxes, and Dreamers committing a wide range of other crimes all qualify for DACA status as long as they haven't been convicted of their crimes" (Procon, 2020). Consequently,

undocumented immigrants would be unemployable. Furthermore, it is stated that they would be unemployable if they remain undocumented even if they had not committed crimes.

Opponents also claim that aiding undocumented immigrants would put U.S. citizens and legal immigrants at a disadvantage whereas undocumented immigrants would be rewarded “for breaking the law” (National Conference of the State Legislature, 2019). These arguments shall be observed through the lens provided by Van Dijk (1991) to reflect on their racism.

Although the main topic of these arguments is a pathway to achieve the American Dream, postsecondary education, those who oppose tuition aid for undocumented immigrants aim to assert their dominance through their “complex societal system” to protect their economic, social, cultural and even political hegemony (Van Dijk, 1991, p.25).

History is bound to repeat itself, the dominant social group resorts to highlight a characteristic of a minority to assert their alleged superiority (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 25-26). The main characteristic of the allegedly superior group is their legal citizenship which is the core of the aforementioned arguments. It derives into further negative labels such as “criminals” causing a link between undocumented immigrants and vandalism to use their alleged moral superiority as a shield. Thus, these arguments are used to promote the exclusion (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 25-26) of undocumented immigrants from postsecondary education, since opposition fights against the implementation of the principle of equal rights (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 29) disregarding that opposition favours the exclusion of immigrants from public benefits (National Conference of the State Legislature, 2019). In other words, the racism seen in said arguments is not the discrimination usually tied to it (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 25), but a protection of the status quo “to maintain equality” (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 29).

After examining the racism of the arguments, their validity shall be observed. While there is a possibility of an increase in illegal immigration. It is vital to consider that the argument is merely a possibility. Furthermore, opponents merely resort to a historical example that fits within their narrative. That narrative arises from their own experience,

but not from the experience of these immigrants as in the famous quote: “History is always written by the winners”.

Tax concerns are a staple to American politics. Yet, opponents rather than focusing on the actual cost of taxes emphasize that undocumented immigrants should not be entitled to public benefits (National Conference of the State Legislature, 2019). Besides, allowing undocumented immigrants to access postsecondary education would improve the economy of the country, since they would have an incentive to participate in the economy (National Conference of the State Legislature, 2019). On the other hand, drop-out and juvenile delinquency rates would decrease due to such incentives (National Conference of the State Legislature, 2019).

As it can be seen from previous paragraphs many of these arguments are merely possibilities, historical examples selected to fit within the anti-immigration narrative or use of stereotypes.

In conclusion, although it is vital to consider all perspectives in matters such as education. The validity of such arguments should also be considered as well. In this case, anti-immigration sources not only were racist to maintain the status quo disguised as equality but also resort to hypothetical scenarios while disregarding the perspective of undocumented immigrants. Thus, these arguments turn into widely known racial stereotypes.

Section 3: The One-sided Fight “Us vs Them” Perpetuated by the Press

To understand the role of the press in the perpetuation of racism, it is vital to understand the relation between discourse and racism. As it has been examined throughout the previous section, Van Dijk (2012) defines racism as a "systematic power abuse of a dominant group against ethnic minorities, immigrants, and refugees" that causes social inequality. Thus, two dimensions manifest: social and cognitive (Van Dijk, 2012). The social dimension comprises common discriminatory practices such as "exclusion or unequal distribution of social resources or human rights" (Van Dijk, 2012). Whereas, the cognitive dimension involves "ethnic beliefs, stereotypes, prejudices and ideologies" as grounds for such discriminatory acts (Van Dijk, 2012).

Discourse is one of the main factors within racism since both racist dimensions interact with each other. In other words, discourse may function as a discriminatory social practice, or it may spread negative social representations (Van Dijk, 2012). Furthermore, it is key to establish the concept of “us vs them” that prevents minorities from (Van Dijk, 2012). Van Dijk (2012) explains the “semantic macrostructures” of discourse that “organize the local meaning of words and sentences at higher levels of paragraphs and whole discourse”. Such information is highlighted and shapes the representation of ethnic events. It also demonstrates the newspaper or news program view on the topic. Besides, the topics involving minorities are usually problematic news to strengthen stereotypes. For instance, the prejudices against immigrants in the U.S. observed throughout the previous section. Not only they create problems labelled exclusively to minorities, but also establish possibilities as facts for their audience. Due to the lack of representation in media, ethnic news is seen as a general problem instead of an everyday situation. Thus, positive news related to minorities are seldom seen in the press (Van Dijk, 2012).

Van Dijk (2012) states that racist discourse uses devices for “positive self-presentation” and “negative other-presentation” to highlight the “us vs them” main idea of racist discourse. Among these devices, there is the use of the alleged previous knowledge of the readers and audience to reinforce prejudices through implication. Such prejudices may also be strengthened through emphasis of the negative characteristics of the “others”, whereas the description of the dominant group tends to be vague to favour “positive self-presentation”. Van Dijk details that if people lack concrete knowledge about minorities, such biased news production shall develop prejudices even further.

The main influential discourse, public discourse, is controlled by symbolic elites who spread dominant knowledge and ideologies in society (Van Dijk, 2012). The abovementioned negative preconceptions are socially acquired (Van Dijk, 2012). Although popular racism arises from personal experiences and interpersonal conversations (Van Dijk, 2012), the concepts within racism stem from public discourses. Therefore, the media elites determine the dominant ideology and knowledge, since they determine which symbolic elites shall bear more influence (Van Dijk, 2012). The press

can be segmented according to “education, social position, status, and ethnic beliefs” of “editors, owners, and reporters” and their audience (Van Dijk, 2012).

The press relies on outside sources bound to public discourse from public elites. Such discourse is produced and organized by journalists unless owners control journalists and are liable for such discourse (Van Dijk, 2012). Despite the intervention of press owners in media, the sources are sought for, reviewed, and researched by journalists (Van Dijk, 2012). The origin of such sources can be non-elite organizations such as non-governmental organizations, agencies, and others. So, journalists, in order to produce articles and reports resort to a process of selection and reduction according to the influence of such knowledge and ideologies (Van Dijk, 2012). Van Dijk mentions that ethnic sources are deemed as “biased”, whereas sources without ethnic perspective are labelled as “reliable”. In other words, news-production becomes an “in-group” production, since sources without ethnic perspective are preferred instead of ethnic sources.

Thus, Van Dijk (2012) explains that minority journalists seldom become part of the news-production process due to such criteria to fit in the hivemind within news production. Besides, their views may hinder their possibilities to work on news production due to the predominant ideology. Due to social structure, news production is subject to the dominant discourse thus reproducing further racist ideologies. Such social structure is subject to prejudices towards minorities since the disregard towards ethnic journalists comes from racist “knowledge” as well.

López (2020) in her paper “Discursive De/Humanizing: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Television News Representations of Undocumented Youth” examines the consequences of the news-production process about undocumented students that have been the main topic on previous sections. López (2020) demonstrates that undocumented students were often modified by dehumanizing terms such as “alien”, or the emphasis on negative adjectives as “illegal”. Therefore, López mentions several cases where television outlets such as CNN focuses on the fact that these immigrants are undocumented instead of the DACA and DREAM Act debate. López (2020) also highlights that the use of abstract discourse reinforces the abovementioned notion of “us vs them” because it

encourages the lack of concrete knowledge about immigrants while asserting prejudices towards them.

In conclusion, it can be seen throughout the previous sections regarding the DACA and DREAM Act the press resorts to a racist discourse not only formed by negative labels towards undocumented students, but also by ambiguity to encourage positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation among other resources to encourage prejudice (Van Dijk, 2012). Such racial prejudices are present within news-production from its selection of journalists to its reduction of sources to produce news that fit the bias of the press. In other words, racist discourse from public elites acts as an umbrella for news-production, cognitive and social dimensions of racism (Van Dijk, 2012).

Section 4: Analysis of a Newspaper Article: Rep. Smith Decides which Immigrants can DREAM on

Throughout the sections, the American Dream has been observed from a different angle. An angle showing the sources and growth of racism within such ideal considered “as American as apple pie” (Smith, 2016). Yet, the abovementioned sections examined matters such as legislation (Section 1), racist arguments, their sources and validity (Section 2), and the cycle linking racism and the press (Section 3). Therefore, this section shall examine the application of the aforementioned elements in the discourse used by Representative Lamar Smith for The Hill.

Apart from intertwining the statements made throughout previous sections, this section shall examine the statements by Smith through the lens provided by Van Dijk. Thus, this section shall demonstrate the racism behind such allegedly objective statements. The article itself titled “DREAM Act rewards illegal immigrants for law-breaking” (see Appendix) was published on May 20th, 2011 by the print newspaper “The Hill” founded in 1994 that claims being “non-partisan” (Perks, 2020). Furthermore, this article was written by the Republican representative, Lamar Smith from Texas 21st congressional district (Govtrack, 2018) representing the interests of the wealthy-class of San Antonio and Austin, and infamous for denying climate change during his term (Timmer, 2017).

Previously, part of the article has been reviewed in Section 2 to examine the validity of one of the arguments made against the DREAM Act (as seen in Section 1), which states that its approval would encourage further illegal migration. Thus, the article attempts to dehumanize undocumented students while emphasizing positivity towards Republicans even though the newspaper claims to be nonpartisan (Perks, 2020).

Firstly, Van Dijk (2012) states that headlines are the first thing readers remember from newspaper articles and provides an overview of the newspaper's opinion on a certain topic. This headline is not the exception due to its choice of words. For starters, Smith (2011) uses the verb "reward", the racist term "illegal immigrant" and the negative term "law-breaking" to highlight the allegedly negative qualities of undocumented immigrants (Van Dijk, 2012) while dehumanizing them through the association with the term "illegal" (López, 2020) and encouraging a positive self-image through the verb "reward" (Van Dijk, 2012).

Furthermore, The Hill resorts to disclaimers (Van Dijk, 2012, p. 25-26) to "avoid negative reception from readers" and achieving a positive presentation since The Hill relies on its image based on "objectivity" (Perks, 2020). That disclaimer is achieved by denying that the newspaper shares the views presented by Smith (2011). Nevertheless, Section 3 demonstrated that the selection of sources, journalists, contributors, and other factors are a reflection of the newspaper's predominant ideologies and knowledge. Such ideologies and knowledge shall be examined in the following paragraphs.

The article starts with a reference to the values that encompass the American dream mentioned in Section 1. However, the enumeration by Smith contains negative implications towards immigrants through the emphasis on common good despite affirming that "America is a nation that values and promotes freedom and the inherent rights of all people" (Smith, 2011). By emphasizing the common good, and the importance of laws and regulations Smith portrays undocumented immigrants as delinquents that harm society (Van Dijk, 2012, p. 25), and dehumanizes them further through such portrayal by personalizing America (López, 2020).

As mentioned throughout the previous sections, racist arguments rely on a notion of "us vs them". Smith encourages said idea through implication. The overlapping implication

throughout this article is “The good vs the bad” by reducing undocumented immigrants to “those” that disobey the law. Notice that Smith uses the relative pronoun “who” for the persons who supposedly respect the law, whereas undocumented immigrants are merely labelled as “lawbreakers” (Smith, 2011). Smith resorts to a positive portrayal of Republicans by stating that the American Dream should be accessed “legally”. This positive portrayal of Republicans is vital towards the interests of Smith and the Republican Party since Barack Obama of the Democratic Party was President of the United States at that time. Furthermore, the White House presented a project to modify the immigration system highlighting that immigrants are pivotal to the economy of the United States (Barnes, 2011).

Once again, Smith resorts to disclaimers by stating that he is “sympathetic towards the children of illegal immigrants” (Smith, 2011) to avoid negative responses from undocumented students (Van Dijk, 2012). Yet, he implicitly puts them on the bad side by stating that these undocumented immigrants would be part of a “massive fraud” (Smith, 2011).

Smith claims that if Congress passes the DREAM Act, undocumented immigrants will claim that they came to the country during their childhood (Smith, 2011). Although right-wing media tends to claim to be “non-partisan” or based on “facts, not opinion”, Smith states a mere possibility that can be discarded due to the requirements to apply to DREAM seen in Section 1.

Furthermore, Smith merely resorts to a historical example that fits within his narrative. That narrative arises from his own experience, but not from the experience of these immigrants as in the famous quote: “History is always written by the winners.”

Despite his negative statements towards undocumented immigrants, Smith has a favourite group: Republican immigrants. It can be inferred by the terms used to describe them since they are labelled as “Hispanic immigrants” instead of “illegal immigrants”. However, his aim to favour the number of votes for the Republican party can be inferred by his focus on the Hispanic vote and the Members of Congress (Smith, 2011). Also, Smith omitted the fact that in the 2008 Presidential Elections, Hispanic voters were vital for Obama’s victory since approximately 11 million Latinos voted for Barack Obama back in 2008

(Lulac, 2010). This voting tendency repeated itself afterwards in 2012 Presidential Elections (St. George et Dennis, 2012) with 72% of the Latino vote.

Finally, there are two types of immigrants according to Smith: undocumented immigrants or as he calls them: illegal immigrants and Hispanic Republicans who earn his favouritism for sharing his ideas. Thus, as Van Dijk (1991, p. 39) stated that racism is no longer explicit, but implicit. Such racism was seen through Smith's choice of words, sources, and his use of grammar since his dehumanization of immigrants could even be inferred from his use of the relative pronoun "who". In other words, this analysis demonstrates that racism is subject to the interests of the dominant group and that it can be seen through vocabulary and use of grammar.

Conclusion

Considering the aforementioned information, the American Dream certainly goes beyond just living in the country. Furthermore, it can be manipulated since it is merely an ideal. Thus, it becomes part of discourse either against or in favour of immigrants aiming towards a better future. Nevertheless, the issue of immigration in the United States is more complex than it seems.

The ideal of the American Dream has not only been used as an argument against tuition aid for undocumented immigrants, but also for political interests as it can be seen throughout the above sections since it outlines the ideal immigrant according to the public elites.

This paper managed to reveal not only the role of media as the Fourth Estate, but also the importance of the selection of information due to its capacity to modify a narrative through resources such as newspaper articles, academic articles and the theory provided by Van Dijk. In this case, the racist narrative of "us vs them" is still present in the world. Thus, the application of Van Dijk's theory demonstrates how media shapes reality.

References

- A., V. D. (2017). *Racism and the press*. London and New York: ROUTLEDGE.
- Are DACA and the DREAM Act Good for America? (2020, March). Retrieved from <https://www.procon.org/headline.php?headlineID=005384>
- Barnes, M. (2011, May). The President's Blueprint for Building a 21st Century Immigration System. Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2011/05/10/president-s-blueprint-building-21st-century-immigration-system>
- Benkof, D. (2019, March 1). Let Dreamers Stay – If Their Parents Go. Retrieved from <https://dailycaller.com/2017/09/04/let-dreamers-stay-if-their-parents-go-what-kind-of-person-would-bring-kids-to-a-country-that-might-deport-them/>
- Biswas, R. R. (2015, May). Access to Higher Public Education and Location Choices of Undocumented Migrants: An Exploratory Analysis. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276138441_Access_to_Higher_Public_Education_and_Location_Choices_of_Undocumented_Migrants_An_Exploratory_Analysis
- Bolter, J. (2019, June 10). Explainer: Who Is An Immigrant? Retrieved from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/content/explainer-who-immigrant>
- Duke, E. C. (2019, September 23). Memorandum on Rescission Of DACA. Retrieved from <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2017/09/05/memorandum-rescission-daca>
- Exhibit 14 - Declaration of Karl Eschbach, Ph.D. (2015, January). Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/document/252040629/Exhibit-14-Declaration-of-Karl-Eschbach-Ph-D>
- George Washington University. In-State vs. Out-of-State Tuition. (2017, September 7). Retrieved from <https://www.heath.gwu.edu/state-vs-out-state-tuition>
- George, D. S., & Dennis, B. (2012, November 7). Growing share of Hispanic voters helped push Obama to victory. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/decision2012/growing-share-of-hispanic-voters-helped-push-obama-to-victory/2012/11/07/b4087d0a-28ff-11e2-b4e0-346287b7e56c_story.html
- Heastie, C. E. (2019, March 31). Retrieved from <https://nyassembly.gov/Press/files/20190331a.php>
- Historic Latino Voter Turnout Helps Elect Barack Obama. (2010). Retrieved from https://lulac.org/news/pr/historic_turnout/
- Immigration Reform FAQ / Frequently Asked Questions. (2019, October). Retrieved from <https://americasvoice.org/why-dont-immigrants-come-here-legally-and-other-frequent-questions-about-immigration-reform/>
- Jefferson County Public Schools. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.jefferson.kyschools.us/department/diversity-equity-poverty-division/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-resources>
- Liu, M., & Hultin, S. (2019, September 19). National Conference of the State Legislature. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/undocumentedstudent-tuition-overview.aspx>

- López, R. M. (2020). Discursive De/Humanizing: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Television News Representations of Undocumented Youth (Vol. 28). Arizona State University. Retrieved from: <https://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/4972>
- Perks, A. (2020, April 9). Who we are. Retrieved from <https://thehill.com/contact/about-us>
- Rep. Lamar Smith. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/lamar_smith/400381
- Sepúlveda, L. R., The New York State Senate, “Senate Passes The José Peralta New York State DREAM Act. (2019, May 3). Retrieved from <https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/senate-passes-jose-peralta-new-york-state-dream-act>
- Smith, L. (2016, February 3). DREAM Act rewards illegal immigrants for law-breaking. Retrieved from <https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/162393-dream-act-rewards-illegal-immigrants-for-law-breaking>
- The Dream Act, DACA, and Other Policies Designed to Protect Dreamers. (2019, August). Retrieved from https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/the_dream_act_daca_and_other_policies_designed_to_protect_dreamers.pdf
- Timmer, J. (2017, March 29). Lamar Smith claims climate scientists not following scientific method. Retrieved from <https://arstechnica.com/science/2017/03/lamar-smith-claims-climate-scientists-not-following-scientific-method/>
- US Legal, Inc. (n.d.). Undocumented Immigrant Law and Legal Definition. Retrieved from <https://definitions.uslegal.com/u/undocumented-immigrant/>
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1995). “The role of the Press in the reproduction of racism”, *Elites, racism and the press*, *Z Literaturwiss Linguistik* 25. (86-115) Barcelona. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-7091-0950-2_2.
- World Relief. (2017, September 7). DACA and DREAM Act 101. Retrieved from <https://worldrelief.org/daca-and-dream-act-101/>

Appendix

DREAM Act Rewards Illegal Immigrants for Law-breaking

BY REP. LAMAR SMITH (R-TEXAS) — 05/20/11 03:26 PM EDT 203
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

America is a nation that values and promotes freedom and the inherent rights of all people. However, America also is a nation that has established laws and rules to promote the common good of our society.

In other words, we are a nation that distinguishes right from wrong. Part of the role of government is to promote policies that reward those who follow the law, rather than reward lawbreakers.

Republicans believe that immigrants who want to come to the United States and pursue the American dream should do so legally. That's why America admits more than one million legal immigrants each year, far more than any other country in the world. But there is a right way and a wrong way to come into the country.

I am sympathetic to the young illegal immigrant children who were brought to the United States by their parents. Because their parents chose to disregard our immigration laws, they are in a difficult position. But the DREAM Act rewards the very illegal immigrant parents who knowingly violated our laws and opens the door to massive fraud.

Under past and present DREAM Act proposals, illegal immigrants under the age of 30 are able to receive amnesty. Many illegal immigrants will fraudulently claim they came here as children or are under 30. And the federal government has no way to check whether their claims are true or not.

The DREAM Act will only encourage more illegal immigration. One only needs to look at history to see how amnesty has played out in the past. The 1986 amnesty legislation legalized about three million illegal immigrants. But rather than put an end to illegal immigration, the amnesty only encouraged more. There are at least 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S.

Mr. Sosa claims that opposing amnesty will alienate Hispanic voters. But the facts tell a different story.

During the November 2010 midterm elections, the Republican Party had historic levels of Hispanic support. In fact, exit polls showed that 38% of Hispanic voters cast ballots for House Republican candidates. This is more than in 2008 or 2006.

Many Hispanic voters support efforts to enforce our immigration laws. Republican Latino candidates in Florida, New Mexico and Nevada – all of which have large Hispanic populations – won statewide races while calling for enhanced border security and enforcement of immigration laws. And all five newly elected Hispanic Members of Congress are Republicans. This is a good trend for the GOP.

The pro-enforcement movement is not Republican, it is American. And it is not anti-Hispanic, it is pro-rule-of-law.

To attract more Hispanic voters in the future, Republicans should continue to emphasize our shared desire for economic growth, better schools, and strong national security.

Mr. Sosa, you are entitled to your own views. But the rule of law is as American as apple pie – not amnesty.

Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas) is Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

WhatsApp: experiencias de capacitación en inglés en empresas

*Luz Callejo*⁴

Universidad de Belgrano. Universidad del Salvador. Universidad Católica Argentina.

✉ callejomarialuz@gmail.com

Recibido: 15/5/2020

Aprobado: 20/6/2020

Resumen

En este artículo nos proponemos, primero, presentar el contexto actual de la capacitación en inglés como Lengua Franca para negocios en Buenos Aires, Argentina. Después, vamos a describir brevemente nuestro marco teórico de Andragogía y de Instrucción Basada en la Tarea. Por último, vamos a compartir experiencias de capacitación con *WhatsApp* como recurso de las Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación.

Palabras clave: Capacitación, inglés como Lengua Franca, Instrucción Basada en la Tarea, *WhatsApp* TIC.

Abstract

In this article, we aim at, to begin with, describing the current English as a Lingua Franca in-company training context in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Then, we will briefly describe our theoretical framework: Andragogy and Task-Based Learning. Last but not least, we will share training experiences using WhatsApp as an Information and Communication Technology.

Key words: training, English as a Lingua Franca, Task-Based Learning, ICT WhatsApp.

Introducción

En este artículo nos proponemos compartir algunas actividades con el uso de WhatsApp como recurso andragógico en la capacitación en inglés como Lengua Franca (LF) en empresas. Para ello, vamos a describir primero nuestro contexto y luego a definir

⁴ **Maria Luz Callejo** se desempeña en el área de inglés como lengua franca desde hace más de 28 años capacitando a ejecutivos de destacadas empresas nacionales e internacionales. Su perfil profesional se complementa con la actividad académica en UCA, USAL y UB en Metodología, Lingüística General, Análisis del Discurso, Adquisición de Segundas Lenguas y Materiales en carreras de grado y posgrado.

brevemente los conceptos de andragogía y de tarea pedagógica que nos brindarán el marco teórico de nuestra práctica. Por último, presentaremos experiencias concretas de capacitación en inglés como LF con el uso de WhatsApp.

Nuestro hoy

Internet, conforme expresa Manuel Castells (2001), “constituye un nuevo y complejo espacio global de integración social, cuyo despliegue modifica drásticamente las condiciones en que se produce la conformación mutua entre los individuos y las culturas”. Este contexto ha modificado las formas en las que se produce cultura, se enseña y se aprende, se trabaja y se capacita. En los últimos años, se han modificado algunos diseños curriculares en los institutos y universidades de formación docente según los cambios impuestos por la irrupción de las Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación (TIC). Pero, es importante destacar que hay un número considerable de maestros, profesores y capacitadores que aprendimos y fuimos formados en otros contextos. Para este conjunto de profesionales, incorporar las TIC y pensar en un modelo en el que se articulen las competencias metodológicas/pedagógicas, las didácticas, las disciplinares y las tecnológicas (cfr. Modelo TPACK, Judi Harris, 2005) resulta un desafío. Por eso, es importante no solo aprehender estas herramientas, sino también incorporarlas a la tarea cotidiana sin perder el norte pedagógico y andragógico (como veremos más adelante) y mantenerlas en nuestro repertorio de manera continua; es decir, sin interrupciones y con un uso frecuente; continuada: esto es, de manera sucesiva y correlativa; y, último pero no menos importante, de manera sostenida en el tiempo.

¿Con quiénes y cómo trabajamos?

Hablamos del inglés como LF, porque, hoy en día, el participante adulto en empresas usa el inglés como medio para interactuar y trabajar con otras personas cuya lengua madre no suele ser el inglés. De hecho, el ratio es de un hablante nativo (HN) cada tres hablantes no nativos (HNN) (Crystal, 2003). Así, el término “inglés como lengua franca” está fuertemente establecido en la literatura (Knapp and Meierkord, 2002; Mair, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2004; Ammon, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Bargiela-Chiappini et al., 2007).

Es importante recordar que nuestros participantes son adultos, en su mayoría profesionales, con un alto grado de eficacia y eficiencia en el manejo de sus tareas cotidianas y una gran responsabilidad orientada a la acción y a los resultados. Así, su capacitación en inglés como LF debe diferenciarse de la enseñanza de inglés y para nosotros está regida por los 4 principios básicos de la Andragogía propuestos por Knowles (2001), docente estadounidense considerado hoy el padre de la Andragogía. Estos principios son: involucramiento, experiencia propia, relevancia e impacto y aplicabilidad. Dentro del marco de la Andragogía, podemos observar con mayor claridad y sustento teórico como los participantes son responsables de su propio proceso de aprendizaje, suelen utilizar sus experiencias previas y sus errores para construir sus propios procesos, y se interesan por aprender aquello que les es relevante y que tiene impacto directo en la modificación de sus actividades cotidianas, ya sea para facilitarlas o para agilizarlas.

Es necesario detenernos en este momento en el concepto de “tarea” ya que más arriba dijimos que el adulto aprende haciendo, aprende en acción. Por eso, los participantes aprenden cuando logran pasar del saber al hacer: cuando logran realizar una actividad en inglés. Siguiendo a Ellis (1996, p. 595), “una tarea parecería referirse a la idea de algún tipo de actividad diseñada para involucrar al estudiante en el uso comunicativo de la lengua o para alcanzar un resultado más allá de aprender una característica específica de la lengua meta.” Skehan (2003) caracteriza estas actividades o tareas de manera muy simple:

- ✓ El significado prima sobre la forma.
- ✓ La finalización de la tarea es crucial.
- ✓ El éxito se basa en el resultado de la tarea.
- ✓ La tarea pedagógica es parecida a las tareas que se realizan fuera de la sala de capacitación.

Así entendidas las tareas, podemos pensar en la tecnología digital y en las comunicaciones multimodales como instrumentos para que los docentes y capacitadores en lenguas extranjeras podamos optimizar el método de instrucción basada en tareas (IBT) a través de un recurso auténtico en donde el uso genuino de la lengua meta queda de manifiesto.

Por ejemplo, esto se evidencia al realizar tareas como: completar un formulario, hacer un reclamo, seguir instrucciones para instalar un nuevo software (Leaver y Willis, 2005). Es claro que para poder completar las tareas mencionadas antes, nuestros participantes tienen que valerse de los recursos lingüísticos que tienen a su alcance para poder compartir e intercambiar información, negociar significado y producir un lenguaje de manera genuina.

En el marco de la IBT, las TIC o las TAC (Tecnologías del Aprendizaje y Conocimiento) como se las conoce ahora con la fortísima irrupción de las mismas en todos los ámbitos educativos parecerían ser recursos o herramientas que nos permiten planificar la capacitación desde la coyuntura valiéndonos de ellas en función de las necesidades concretas de los participantes y de los objetivos previamente acordados. Sin embargo, se nos presenta aquí un enorme desafío, sobre todo para quienes no aprendimos, ni fuimos formados ni capacitados con TIC: mantener siempre el foco andragógico involucrando al otro, trabajando sobre su experiencia y apuntando a la relevancia, al impacto y a la aplicabilidad inmediata de nuestras capacitaciones.

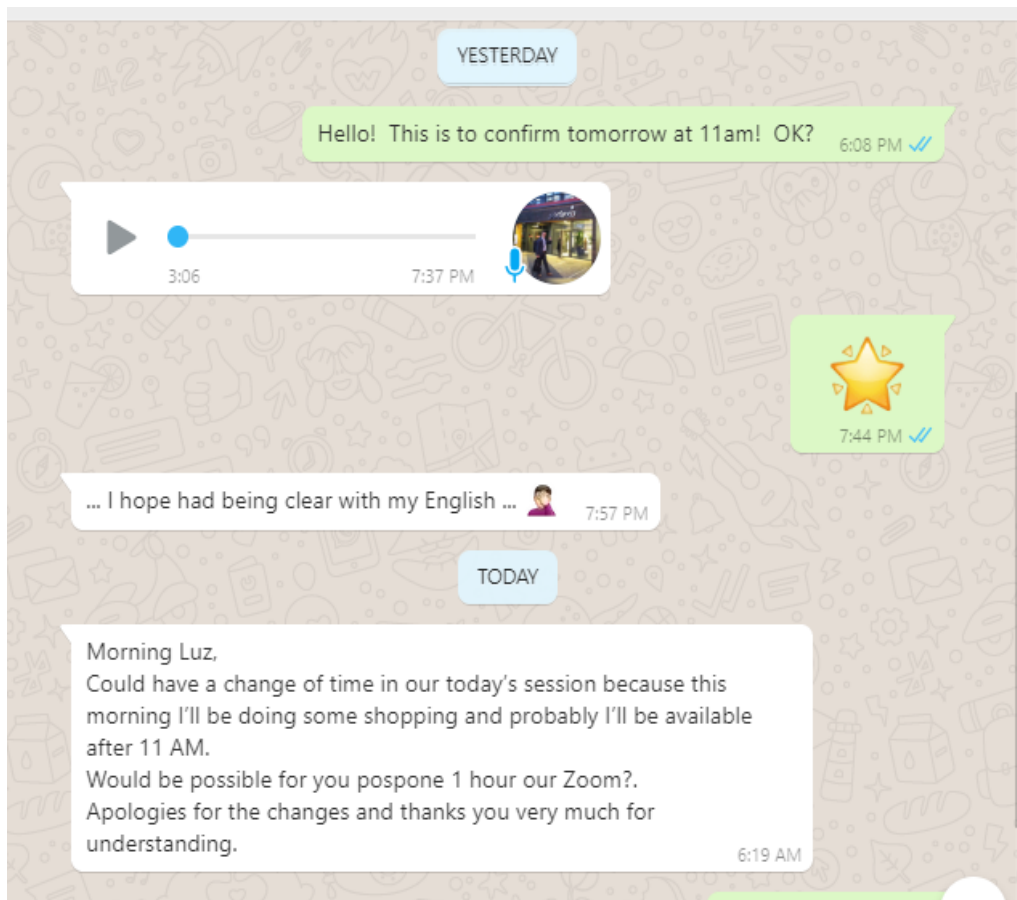
Por lo tanto, podemos concluir que la IBT a través de la tecnología parecería favorecer la adquisición del inglés como LF ya que permite que los participantes presten atención al significado y a la forma, que sean conscientes del uso que están haciendo de la lengua meta y que desarrollen y estiren su interlengua de manera tanto sincrónica como asincrónica (Lee, 2008). Como expresa Swain (2000), entendemos “estirar la interlengua” como el proceso atencional de los participantes sobre una forma particular de la lengua meta en un punto en el tiempo específico que se volverá a atender en otro momento o tiempo específico X con el objetivo de que los participantes reestructuren su interlengua a través de la intervención andragógica del docente para así “estirar” su IL acercándose a la lengua meta de manera cada vez más precisa, correcta y fluida.

Experiencias

A continuación, compartiremos algunas experiencias con el uso de *WhatsApp* como recurso andragógico en la capacitación en inglés como LF en empresas.

1. Canal de comunicación abierto y genuino

Como se aprecia en la foto debajo, el capacitador contacta al participante para confirmar día y hora de la sesión presencial lo que dispara una cadena de mensajes transaccionales, genuinos y sumamente necesarios en donde prima la necesidad de comunicación inteligible sobre la forma. Vale aclarar que “la forma” no se desplaza ni mucho menos se olvida sino que se trabaja in situ en cada capacitación cuando el foco pasa a ser la estructura de la lengua por sobre la comunicación del mensaje.



1-Canal de comunicación

2. Medio para compartir tareas y recibir una devolución de manera inmediata

Como se observa en la foto 2 debajo, los participantes utilizan este medio para compartir sus tareas de manera sincrónica y asincrónica. Así, ellos reciben una devolución de manera inmediata y esto favorece que cada devolución sea mucho más útil y beneficiosa debido a que está orientada a resolver un problema puntual e inmediato para ellos como puede ser el hacer preguntas sobre un determinado producto para conocer sus características y eventualmente analizar su importación al país.

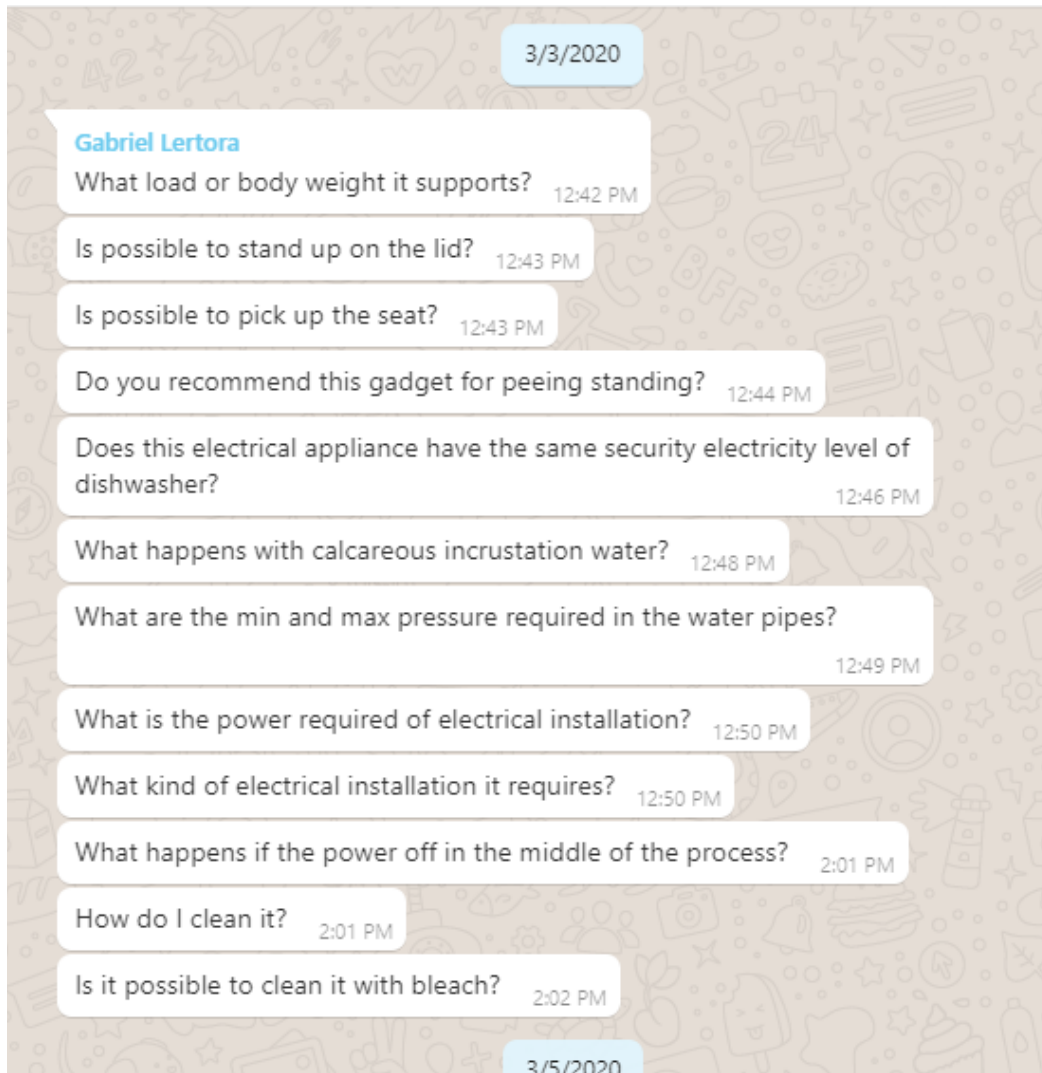


Foto 2- Medio para compartir tareas y dar una devolución

3. Medio para compartir material de trabajo

Como se ve en la foto 3, el capacitador comparte material de trabajo y, a su vez, los participantes comparten material de su interés o afín a sus necesidades cotidianas.

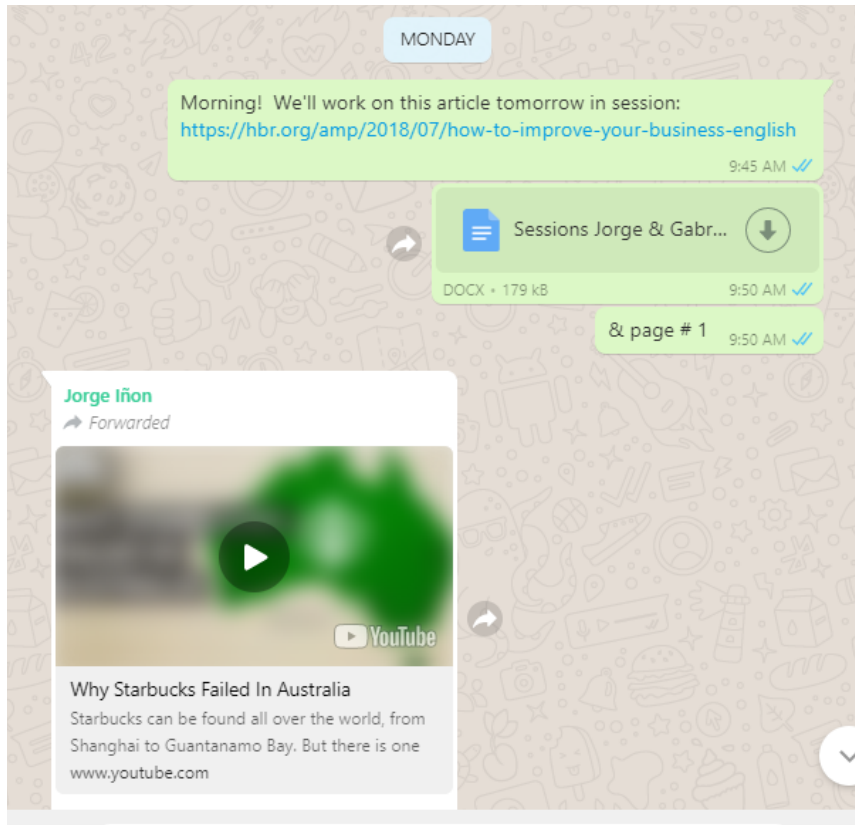


Foto 3-Medio para compartir material de trabajo

4. Medio para compartir producciones de manera asincrónica

En muchas ocasiones, cuando los participantes están, en efecto, realizando una tarea laboral en inglés, optan por compartirla con sus capacitadores porque saben que recibirán una devolución valiosísima sobre su propia y genuina tarea y que está devolución los ayudará a resolver de manera más ágil y eficiente la próxima tarea similar que tengan que realizar. A veces es una captura de pantalla de un correo enviado o un mensaje de voz enviado a un colega.

Ideas finales

Para concluir, podemos decir que las teorías sobre el aprendizaje en edad adulta se basan en el uso, no en el conocimiento, de la L2. Siguiendo la definición Chomskiana (1965), el aprendizaje en edad adulta necesita fomentar la performance lingüística sobre la competencia.

De esta manera, WhatsApp es para nosotros una herramienta versátil que le brinda a nuestros participantes la genuina oportunidad de usar la lengua como instrumento para alcanzar un objetivo que va más allá del mero uso y manipulación lingüística de la lengua meta, en nuestro caso el inglés como LF.

Además, WhatsApp está literalmente al alcance de nuestras manos y simula, sin lugar a dudas, el mundo real de las tareas cotidianas de los adultos en empresas.

Por todo esto, WhatsApp es para nosotros, y ¿por qué no para vos también?, una herramienta súper útil y muy valorada en nuestras capacitaciones.

Referencias

- Ammon, U. (2006) *Language conflicts in the European union: On finding a politically acceptable and practicable solution for EU institutions that satisfied diverging interests*. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16, 319–38.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F., C. Nickerson y B. Planken (2007) (Eds). *Business Discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Castells, M. (2001). Entrevista: *Internet es la base del desarrollo futuro*. <http://www.educ.ar/sitios/educar/recursos/ver?id=90309>
- Chomsky, N (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. MIT Press.
- Crystal, D (2001). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1996). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: OUP
- Harris, J. (2005). *Our agenda for technology integration: It's time to choose*. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education* [Publicación on line], 5 (2). <http://www.citejournal.org/vol5/iss2/editorial/article1.cfm>
- Jenkins, J. (2006) *Points of view and blind spots: ELF and SLA*. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16(2), 138–62.
- Knapp, K. y C. Meierkord (2002) (Eds). *Lingua Franca Communication*. Peter Lang
- Knowles, M. (2001) *Andragogía. El Aprendizaje de los Adultos*. AlfaOmega, Oxford.
- Leaver, B. L., & Willis, J. (2005). *Task-based instruction in foreign language education. Practices and programmes*. Georgetown University Press.

- Mair, C. (2003) (Ed.) *The Politics of English as a World Language*. Rodopi.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2004) *Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca*. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, (24: 209–39).
- Skehan, P. (2003) *Task-Based instruction*. In Language Teaching. January 2003
DOI:10.1017/S026144480200188X. uploaded on 24 April 2015.
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231787670>
- Swain, M. (2000) *The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue*. In J. Lantolf (Ed.) *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (97-114). OUP.

Humanity Remembers: On Jung, Mythological Criticism and Archetypes

Carolina Gimenez⁵

Novel researcher

✉ macaro1999@hotmail.com

Recibido: 20/5/2020

Aprobado: 5/9/2020

Abstract: The influence of mythological criticism can still be felt in such popular contemporary works such as the *Star Wars* saga, but the scope of its influence is not limited only to science-fiction movies. As a result of a strong connection between mythological criticism, anthropology and psychology, certain authors from all of these fields have introduced key concepts relevant to the analysis of a variety of literary genres. In this article, some of these concepts will be explored, including Jung's "collective unconscious", "archetypes" and "individuation", Frye's "archetypes", "mythoi" and "monomyth", and Campbell's "Hero's Journey". Thanks to the analysis of these notions, it is clear that, although not necessarily present in every work of fiction created, mythological criticism constitutes a valuable field that may serve as a theoretical framework for literary and media analysis.

Key words: myth, collective unconscious, archetype, Hero's Journey, psychology, Jung, Frye, anthropology.

Resumen: Todavía se puede apreciar la influencia de la crítica mitológica en obras contemporáneas y populares tales como la saga de películas de *Star Wars*. Sin embargo, su campo de influencia no se limita a películas de ciencia ficción. Como consecuencia de una fuerte conexión entre crítica mitológica, antropología y psicología, ciertos autores de estas disciplinas han introducido conceptos clave que son relevantes para el análisis de una amplia gama de géneros literarios. En este artículo, algunos de estos conceptos van a ser explorados, incluyendo el "inconsciente colectivo", la "individuación" y los "arquetipos" de Jung, los "arquetipos", el "mythoi" y el "monomito" de Frye, y el "Viaje del Héroe" de Campbell. Gracias al análisis de estas nociones, se evidencia que, aunque no necesariamente esté presente en todas las obras ficticias, la crítica mitológica constituye una disciplina valorable que puede funcionar como marco teórico para el análisis de literatura y medios audiovisuales.

Palabras clave: mito, inconsciente colectivo, arquetipo, Viaje del Héroe, psicología, Jung, Frye, antropología.

⁵ **Carolina Gimenez** is a last-year student of the BA in English (*Licenciatura en Inglés*) at Universidad Católica Argentina. She has taken courses at the Department for Continuing Education of Oxford University, including: Writing Fiction for Young Adults (2018); Advanced Creative Writing (2019); Greek Mythology (2020).

Introduction

Myths have always been a part of our lives: they are present sometimes in movies, in television shows, in the books we read. They are introduced to us during our schooling, generally when we study the Classical cultures of Greece and Rome. If one happens to study psychology even in its most basic form, *Oedipus Rex* will likely be mentioned. One need not look further than the *Star Wars* saga to find examples of how mythical structure has influenced our society.

However, it is not common for those who consume these products to understand where they come from, much less to comprehend that there is a wealth of critical analyses of literature that, conjoined with other disciplines like anthropology and psychology, sets out to acquire a deep understanding of why and how mythological stories are such an enormous part of our culture.

This article will narrate briefly the journey that mythological or archetypal criticism has embarked on, focusing particularly on two of its pioneering authors: Carl Jung and Northrop Frye. Although they belong to different branches of the humanities, both have provided important accounts of this type of criticism, aided by their specific brand of knowledge; Jung, for instance, was deeply influenced by his experience as a psychiatrist and as a pupil of Freud (Dobie, 2012).

In the first place, what myth criticism actually is will be established, so as to give a theoretical framework to this article, followed by a description of the main elements that comprise the theory of Jung and Frye. In the case of the former, special attention will be given to his concepts of ‘collective unconscious,’ archetypes, individuation and to the tripartite idea of ‘shadow, anima, and persona.’ On the other hand, Frye will serve as an introduction not only to another way of conceiving archetypes, but also to the mythoi that will give rise to the idea of a monomyth.

The aim is to give the reader a sense of how this type of analysis works, and why it exists. Furthermore, this analysis attempts to explain succinctly how fundamental it is to understand the incidence of myth in literature, for without that knowledge we may never

be able to fully grasp the message or the main thematic concerns that are part of so many of our most iconic stories.

Myth Theory and Criticism: What is it?

As Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) state, myth (from Greek *mythos*, which means ‘tale,’ ‘story’) criticism encompasses several forms of inquiry about the relationship between myth and literature, and as these inquiries are oftentimes quite varied it may be easier to think of myth criticism in terms of a series of possible questions we can ask ourselves: “Is all literature susceptible of myth criticism? (...) Does a single governing myth, a ‘monomyth,’ organise disparate mythic narratives and dominate literary form? (...) [W]hat does ‘myth’ mean in the context of literary criticism?” (Groden and Kreiswirth, 1997, p. 1). The answers to these questions are the main criteria for understanding what type of mythological criticism we are dealing with.

For example, Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) explain that a Romantic and post-Romantic tendency is to deny euhemerism, which is the theory that myths can be explained through history or by “identifying their special objects or motives” (Groden and Kreiswirth, 1997, p. 2). In response to this reductionist claim, philosopher Ernst Cassirer proposed that “myth is a form of thought” (Groden and Kreiswirth, 1997, p. 2). What Cassirer means, according to the aforementioned authors, is that myth is a “symbolic form” very similar to language as a means of responding and, in a manner, creating our world. However, unlike language, myth is generally imagistic and non-discursive, since it is the honest, unmediated language of experience.

There are two other non-reductionist theories that come from the fields of anthropology and psychology which are introduced by Groden and Kreiswirth (1997). The former belongs to Claude Lévi-Strauss, for whom “the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction” (Groden and Kreiswirth, 1997, p. 4), a claim that leads Lévi-Strauss to the notion that the structure of myths is akin to that of the human mind. Consequently, Groden and Kreiswirth claim (1997), the mythopoeic (mythmaking) imagination finds its mirror image in the structure of actual myths.

Unfortunately, the very nature of his argument has made it difficult for literary critics to use his concepts sustainably.

The other theorist, this time from the field of psychology, that was mentioned above is Carl Jung. His most influential idea for this type of criticism is that of the ‘collective unconscious’ (which will be further developed later on), a racial memory that consists of archetypes. In it, we can find several expressions of the idea of archetype: the wise old man, the divine child, the sacrificial death, the cross, the number four. All of these elements have, according to research carried out by Jung and others and analysed by Groden and Kreiswirth (1997), become a primordial part in the mythical constructions of different cultures.

According to Groden and Kreiswirth (1997), another relevant figure is Northrop Frye, a myth critic and literary critic who suggests a way to draw individual and seemingly unrelated archetypes into a hierarchical and coherent framework of what he calls *mythoi*, organising the entire system that is literature. Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) quote Frye so as to showcase that he attributes certain characteristics to the mythic mode such as being abstract and conventionalised. As Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) explain, Western literature has been founded on biblical and classical myths, and as a result of this, it can be thought of as preserving coherent structural principles. If one takes all this into account, the concept of a central myth, a ‘monomyth’ as Frye calls it, according to Groden and Kreiswirth (1997), is a logical conclusion, however disputed this idea may be. For this particular literary critic the central myth of literature is the ‘quest-myth,’ as Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) claim.

Finally, other authors have also put forward their own ideas. One such academic is C. L. Barber, who has “explored the ways Shakespearean comedy achieves a characteristic ‘release’ leading to social clarification; this release is related in turn to a (...) mythic conception of human life (...)” (Groden and Kreiswirth, 1997, p. 10). In recent times, meanwhile, René Girard is introduced by Groden and Kreiswirth (1997) as somebody who has started to investigate the meaningful cultural role of ritual sacrifice in relation to myths, especially those from Greek tragedy.

Although myth theory and criticism does not enjoy the same level of notoriety as it used to, its legacy is undeniable. And as long as its theorists can answer the questions posed at the beginning of this section and can form connections between this discipline and others, then myth criticism, much like myths themselves, cannot die. Currently, perhaps where it is seen most often is in discussions about certain fantastical works framed within the concept of ‘The Hero’s Journey,’ a concept that will be explained at the end of this article for it is the most widespread legacy that myth criticism has.

Carl Jung: Collective Unconscious and Individuation

Carl Jung (1875-1961) began his career as a student of Freud, a revolutionary when it came to psychological and, eventually, psychoanalytical matters. In spite of this early apprenticeship, Jung went on to forge a separate path from his mentor and to build on the latter’s teachings in ways that made him as significant as Freud was.

Like Freud, Jung believed that our unconscious mind dictates much of our behaviour, but unlike Freud, he also asserted that a part of our unconscious is shared with other members of the human species. Thus, he described the human mind as composed of three parts: a personal conscious, “a state of awareness of the present moment that, once it is past, becomes part of the individual’s unique **personal unconscious**” (Dobie, 2012, p.62). Beneath them is the collective unconscious, one of the key concepts in Jungian theory. Dobie (2012) described the collective unconscious as a store of images, knowledge and experience belonging to the whole of the human race, which is often expressed through rituals and myths.

Another key idea that we have inherited from Jung (although he is not the only author to define this term) is that of the archetype, which Jung defines as “universal images that have existed since remotest times,” and as “a figure (...) that repeats itself in the course of history wherever creative fantasy is fully manifested” (Dobie, 2012, p.62). These archetypes, Dobie (2012) clarifies, are not culturally acquired, but are an instinctual part of ourselves, which remains hidden in our biological, social and psychological natures. Myths, as defined by Jung are “the natural and indispensable intermediate stage between unconscious and conscious cognition” (Dobie, 2012, p.63). Dobie (2012) continues the

interpretation of this quotation to present the idea that when we mediate these two parts of our mind, we become complete; archetypes and myths enable us to do so, to transform what is unconscious into conscious. What is more, in order to live in true harmony, Jung believes we must face three powerful archetypes which form the self: the *shadow*, the *anima* and the *persona* (Dobie). The first is our dark side, those parts of our being that we try to hide and avoid because they are the sides of our self that we dislike. In literature, it is expressed through the figure of the villain. The *anima*, meanwhile, is the “soul-image, the life force that causes one to act” (Dobie, 2012, p.63). Lastly, the *persona* is the image that we present to the rest of the world, the mask we wear in front of others.

To become psychologically healthy people, Dobie (2012) explains while discussing Jungian theory, we ought to come to terms with all the parts of ourselves, even those we do not like so much. Only in this way can individuation occur. According to Jones and Kalsched (1986), this last term is one that Jung utilises to refer to stages of the life drama that are usually present in the Hero myth. The archetypal images that appear here go from “an initial state of unconsciousness before the ego has awakened, through various stages of heroic struggle, to a final state of ‘wholeness’ (...) when (...) a relationship between the human and divine has been reestablished” (Jones and Kalsched, 1986, p. 4). Basically, through the process of individuation, we become who we really are, who we are meant to be. As Jones and Kalsched state, this represents the archetype of order that Jung calls the Self. There are several symbols in literature that stand for this unity between the human and the divine, between life and death, light and darkness, as enumerated by Jones and Kalsched (1986): the promise, the Ring, the Flaming Rainbow Bridge, a marriage, the elixir of immortality, and the divine child. In addition to this, and according to these two authors who study Jung’s theory, the Hero is also a dual entity: he is human, but at the same time he is an outsider; sometimes the hero has two fathers –one normal, and another ‘higher’ or their conception was of divine origin. He also usually possesses special powers.

Finally, here is a brief list of the main archetypes and symbolic images that Jung identified in literature, as classified in Dobie (2012), subdivided according to category. These evoke similar psychological responses across a range of widely diverse cultures:

- Characters
 - The Hero: He is usually set apart by a birth filled with strange circumstances, an early escape from murder attempts, “(...) or a return to his homeland where, after a victory over some antagonist, he marries a princess, assumes the throne, and only later falls victim to a fate” (Dobie, 2012, p. 64) that may include banishment, a mysterious death and an ambiguous burial. The Hero’s story may also involve a quest in search of a powerful artefact, or the goal of solving a complex riddle.
 - The Outcast: “a character who is thrown out of the community as punishment for a crime against it” (Dobie, 2012, p.64). His fate is “(...) to wander throughout eternity” (Dobie, 2012, p.64).
 - The Devil: Personifies the evil that encroaches on a character’s life so as to tempt him and cause his destruction, often by promising wealth, knowledge or fame in exchange for his soul.
 - The Trickster: A mischievous, amoral figure frequent in American Indian and African American narratives. “He disrupts the rigidity of rule-bound cultures” (Dobie, 2012, p.65), reminding them of their less strict origins.
 - Female Figures: One can include here several different archetypes, such as the good mother, associated with fertility and nurturance; the temptress that destroys men who are sexually attracted to her; the unfaithful wife; the female who inspires and guides her male counterpart in a spiritual ideal.

- Images
 - Colours: They are usually associated with diverse things. Red, for instance, tends to suggest passion, violence or sacrifice. Green, in contrast, elicits images of hope and life.
 - Numbers: The number three indicates spiritual things, starting with the Holy Trinity; four is associated with the four elements and the four seasons; thus, with the cycle of life. When they are combined and form seven the union creates something that is whole and perfect.

- Water: Often used to symbolise creation, birth or rebirth. “Flowing water can refer to the passage of time” (Dobie, 2012, p.65), whereas the lack of water is associated with a state of spiritual absence.
- Gardens: They often point to a state of innocence or to paradise, something evident as regards the Garden of Eden.
- Circles: As they have neither beginning nor end, circles suggest a state of union and completeness.
- Situations
 - The Quest: As mentioned above, it is a complicated search for a holy or magical item pursued by the hero, so as to return fertility to a desolate state. Another possible pattern is having to “perform a nearly impossible task so that all will be well” (Dobie, 2012, p.66). Often found alongside these situations is the physical journey, suggesting a psychological one as well. The journey “may involve a descent into hell” (Dobie, 2012, p.66).
 - Death and Rebirth: These are the most common archetypes in literature. “Rebirth may take the form of natural regeneration, (...), or of escape from this troubled life to an endless paradise (...)” (Dobie, 2012, p.66).
 - Initiation: These types of stories “(...) deal with the progression from one stage of life to another, usually that of an adolescent moving from childhood to maturity, from innocence to understanding” (Dobie, 2012, p.66). The transformation is usually plagued by problems, although it may be comical. In its classic form, the protagonist goes through this process alone, overcoming trials and tribulations that change him so that his return to the group from which he originated is as an adult.

Northrop Frye: Archetypes and Monomyth

Northrop Frye (1912-1991) was a literary critic best known for enlarging the study of archetypes. In 1957, he published *Anatomy of Criticism*, where he presented, as Dobie (2012) explains, a model of how myths are at the basis of all texts. According to Dobie (2012), he did not accept Jungian theory in its entirety, but he did use quite a lot of it in

order to understand the functions of archetypes in literature. As stated in the paper *The Archetypes of Literature*, “he relates narrative to the creation of rituals, imagery to moments of instantaneous insights, rhythm to natural cycle, and so forth” (Frye, 1951, pp.500-501). As Frye (1951) claims, his approach was criticised because the archetypal approach tends to erase the specifics of individual works for the universals of the larger patterns.

In this paper, a very interesting concept is introduced: that of recurrence, “which is called rhythm when it is temporal, and pattern when it is spatial” (Frye, 1951, p.508). If all arts can be understood in temporal and spatial terms, then all of them contain a rhythm and a pattern. For instance, in the case of literature, Frye (1951) describes how the words form a certain musicality, a rhythm; but the words also form patterns close to the pictorial image. Moreover, one can call the rhythm of literature narrative, and its pattern, meaning; “an author’s narrative is his linear movement; his meaning is the integrity of his completed form” (Frye, 1951, p.508). If we wanted to relate this two terms, narrative and meaning, to music, Frye (1951) asserts that we could call them the melodic and harmonic sides of imagery, respectively.

The origin of narrative may be found in ritual, “a temporal sequence of acts in which the conscious meaning or significance is latent” (Frye, 1951, p.509). On the other hand, Frye (1951) affirms that significance is ocular in origin, and derives from a moment of epiphany, of sudden comprehension with no specific reference to time.

According to Frye (1951), myth is the “central informing power that gives archetypal significance to the ritual and archetypal narrative to the oracle. Hence, the myth *is* the archetype” (Frye, 1951, p.509).

Although all of these concepts are undeniably significant if one wishes to grasp the main theory proposed by Frye (1951), his main contribution to mythological criticism was his theory of genres, according to which all texts are part of a “central unifying myth,” as Dobie (2012) expresses, and these are exemplified in four types of literature, or as he calls them, four *mythoi*, that correspond to the seasons. Together, Dobie (2012) enunciates, they represent the whole of literature, or what he calls the *monomyth*.

The four mythoi are, as presented in Frye (1951):

- Spring, the dawn and birth phase: Included here are the myths of the birth of the hero, of resurrection and revival, of creation and of the defeat of darkness, death and winter. This phase corresponds to the archetype of romance, and the subordinate characters most relevant in this type of mythoi are the father and the mother.
- Summer, the zenith and marriage and triumph phase: Included here are myths of apotheosis (divinisation of a subject), of entrance to Paradise and the sacred marriage. It corresponds to the archetype of comedy and pastoral. Its subordinate characters are mainly the companion and the bride.
- Autumn, the sunset and death phase: Included here are the myths of the dying god, the isolation and sacrifice of the hero, and the violent death. It corresponds to the archetype of tragedy, and its principal subordinate characters are the traitor and the siren.
- Winter, the darkness and dissolution phase: Included here are “myths of the triumph of these powers; myths of floods and the return of chaos, of the defeat of the hero” (Frye, 1951, p.510). It corresponds to the archetype of satire, and its subordinate characters are the ogre and the witch.

There is another possible division that is found in Ann B. Dobie’s *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism* (2012). In her description of Frye’s theory, the archetype of romance corresponds to the summer mythoi; the archetype of comedy, to the mythoi of spring; the defeat of the hero is part of the autumn mythoi, not the winter one. This may reflect an evolution in Frye’s theory.

Finally, another classification that Frye (1951) provides is one that sets forth the pattern of the tragic and comic visions:

1. “In the comic vision the human world is a community, or a hero who represents the wish-fulfilment of the reader” (Frye, 1951, p.513). The archetype of images of communion, love, order and friendship belong here. In the tragic vision the human world is an anarchy or tyranny, an isolated man, the betrayed or abandoned hero. “Marriage (...) belongs to the comic vision; the harlot, witch and other varieties of Jung’s “terrible mother” belong to the tragic one” (Frye, 1951, p.513).

2. “In the comic vision the animal world is a community of domesticated animals, usually a flock of sheep, or a lamb, or one of the gentler birds. In the tragic vision the animal world is seen in terms of beasts and birds of prey, wolves, vultures, serpents, dragons and the like” (Frye, 1951, p.513).
3. In the comic vision the vegetable world is a tree of life, a park, a rose or a garden. In the tragic vision, it is a sinister forest, a tree of death, or a heath.
4. “In the comic vision the mineral world is a city, or one building or temple, or one stone, normally a (...) precious stone. The archetype of geometrical images: the “starlit dome” belongs here. In the tragic vision the mineral world is seen in terms of deserts, rocks and ruins (...)” (Frye, 1951, p.513).
5. In the comic vision the unformed world is a river, whereas in the tragic vision it generally becomes the sea, “as the narrative myth of dissolution is so often a flood myth” (Frye, 1951, p.513). From the combination of images of beasts and the sea, typical water-monsters such as the leviathan are created.

The Hero’s Journey

Nowadays, the prevalent precept from mythological analysis is that of ‘The Hero’s Journey’ which was mentioned in the introduction. It is a concept first presented by Joseph Campbell in his famous book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* published in 1949. In this book, Campbell establishes the idea that many stories follow the hero on a journey that has several set stages. Of course, as can be seen from this article, Campbell was not the first to recognise these patterns and archetypes across literature, but he was the first to organise them and name them in an orderly fashion that has been repeated over and over again since then.

The stages that Campbell identified are the following, as they appear in Vogler (1998):

1. World of Common Day
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Supernatural Aid
5. Crossing the First Threshold

6. Belly of the Whale
7. Road of Trials
8. Meeting with the Goddess
9. Woman as Temptress
10. Atonement with the Father
11. Apotheosis
12. The Ultimate Boon
13. Refusal of the Return
14. The Magic Flight
15. Rescue from Within
16. Crossing the Threshold
17. Return
18. Master of the Two Worlds
19. Freedom to Live

It goes without saying that not every writer follows these steps religiously, but rather may take inspiration from them and adapt them to the needs of his/her story. What one can take from this evolution of the Hero is that there is an underlying pattern to most of the tales we are told that most likely adheres at least partially to this model, and that occurs mostly because of one of the first concepts explained: the collective unconscious.

Conclusion

Myths are a much larger part of our lives than we may realise. The mythological analysis of stories is one that has been overlooked for being too complex to comprehend, despite the fact that, as can be seen in the explanations given above, it is one of the most structured ways we have of analysing literature.

The stages of The Hero's Journey are not set in stone, of course, but they are strongly established nonetheless. There can be and there have been deviations from the norm, but in most cases one can trace the steps back to the beginning and see the evolution of this monomyth even in the most unlikely of tales. Admittedly, mythological criticism may not

be applicable to every single novel, novella or short story that has ever been created, but few literary theories can fulfil this task. However, this article does provide support for the belief that archetypal or mythological criticism can be useful in many circumstances, even if one cannot apply all the theoretical elements to the same story.

Regardless, the influence of myths themselves is undeniable. As explained above, archetypes and mythoi exist, and the rhythm of the stories sometimes repeats itself. Certain patterns, certain characters, quests, situations and symbols show up regularly throughout literature, in spite of cultural differences and the passage of time. The reasons might remain mysterious, but the overlapping of mythical elements is still evident.

If we have to find a reason, we may conclude that Jung was partly right, and that it is just a matter of humanity remembering, even unconsciously, what came before.

References

- Dobie, A. (2012). *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism* (E-Reader version). Retrieved from http://elibrary.bsu.az/books_400/N_152.pdf on April 16, 2019.
- Frye, N. (1951). *The Archetypes of Literature*. Retrieved on April 16, 2019 from <http://www.eacfaculty.org/pchidester/eng%20102f/archetypal%20criticism.pdf>
- Groden, M. and Kreiswirth, M. (1997). *Myth Theory and Criticism*. Retrieved on April 16, 2019 from <https://www.ndsu.edu/pubweb/~cinichol/271/Myth%20Theory%20and%20Criticism.html>
- Jones, A. and Kalsched, D. (1986, November 15-December 19). *Myth and Psyche: The Evolution of Consciousness*. Companion to a photographic exhibition at The Hofstra Museum. Retrieved on April 16, 2019 from http://www.cgjungny.org/d/d_mythpsyche.html
- Vogler, C. (1998). *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* (3rd ed.). Michael Wiese Productions.

La sistematización de la práctica de la traducción

*Sandra Ramacciotti Giorgio*⁶

Universidad de Buenos Aires. Universidad del Museo Social Argentino.

✉ ramacciottisandra@gmail.com

Recibido: 15/5/2020

Aprobado: 10/7/2020

Resumen

El siguiente trabajo tiene como objetivo presentar una propuesta metodológica para las clases de traducción a nivel inicial en el ámbito universitario. Es en este contexto donde surge la noción de la sistematización de la práctica como una estrategia de enseñanza tendiente a que los alumnos puedan, a partir de ciertas estrategias relativamente sencillas, realizar algunas generalizaciones y abstracciones que les permiten abordar futuros desafíos de traducción o redacción en circunstancias similares.

Creemos que la adquisición de la competencia traductora se logra a través de un permanente proceso de abstracción, conceptualización y sistematización que permite entender de qué modo esa experiencia se recupera para ponerla en práctica a la hora de emprender un trabajo de traducción futuro. Con esta propuesta, intentamos acortar la distancia que a veces existe entre las aproximaciones teóricas y empíricas sobre la práctica de la traducción.

Palabras clave: didáctica de la traducción, sistematización de la práctica, puentes cognitivos, planos textuales.

Abstract

This paper introduces a methodological approach for undergraduate students specializing in Translation Studies. Systematizing practice in translation classes becomes a teaching strategy so that students can make generalizations and abstractions which will enable them to address similar translation or writing challenges in the future.

We believe the acquisition of the translation competence can be better achieved through an ongoing process of abstraction, conceptualization and systematization that will enable

⁶ *Sandra Ramacciotti Giorgio* es Traductora Pública (UBA) y Profesora Universitaria (UMSA). Es profesora de grado en la Universidad del Museo Social Argentino (donde también es Investigadora), en la Universidad Argentina de la Empresa y en la Universidad de Buenos Aires. Es profesora de posgrado en la Universidad Católica Argentina. Autora de diversos artículos y disertante en congresos nacionales e internacionales. Es autora de *Glosario económico-financiero – Uso metafórico de voces*.

students to retrieve information when they translate a text. We seek to narrow the gap between theory and practice in Translation Studies.

Key words: Translation Studies, systematizing practice, cognitive bridges, text levels.

Introducción

El propósito de este trabajo es ofrecer un testimonio de experiencia pedagógica limitado al ambiente universitario que consiste en la sistematización de la práctica. Creemos que puede servir de punto de apoyo para quienes desean incursionar en la docencia y de materia de reflexión para quienes ya la ejercen.

Las consideraciones que expondremos se aplican específicamente a la didáctica de la traducción general directa en el nivel de iniciación, donde, por lo general, abundan los ejercicios supervisados de traducción de textos pragmáticos (no literarios). Creemos que podrán resultar útiles para aquellas asignaturas que suelen dictarse en el primer o segundo año de la carrera, tal como están concebidos los planes de estudios de gran parte de las instituciones de educación superior.

Es en el contexto de la docencia de la traducción donde nos referiremos a la traducción instrumental o utilitaria (Hurtado Albir, 2013). A diferencia de la traducción profesional, que tiene diferentes funciones y se realiza por un encargo específico, la traducción instrumental tiene como objetivo analizar el proceso de la traducción y aprender a llevarlo a cabo.

Cuando comenzamos un curso de traducción general, nos encontramos, usualmente, con alumnos sin experiencia. El alumno produce traducciones que no siempre son apropiadas cultural o estilísticamente, traduce por microunidades sin considerar los elementos de coherencia y cohesión, en general, no tiene en cuenta la finalidad de la traducción, se concentra en el léxico en detrimento de otros elementos, tiende a calcar y, en la mayoría de los casos, cae en la literalidad o en el literalismo. El estudiante cree que la tarea de traducir implica solo el trasvase de una lengua a otra, trasponer palabra por palabra, y esta es una de muchas otras falsas concepciones que trae el alumno a clase.

Cuando hablamos de alumnos sin experiencia, nos referimos también a aquellas personas que traducen sin ningún tipo de formación académica. Si bien las personas bilingües traducen por naturaleza de un modo intuitivo, la abundancia de traducciones poco satisfactorias pone de manifiesto que esta habilidad de traducción natural no es suficiente para ser un traductor profesional.

Todos los profesores a cargo de estos cursos o talleres sabemos que, al comenzar el curso, el estudiante calca las estructuras de la lengua de partida, le da prioridad a la lógica textual del texto de partida o al sentido de las palabras y las expresiones aisladas. El futuro traductor que se inicia se siente limitado al momento de reexpresar una idea que, sin embargo, entiende perfectamente. Se ve restringido por las formas extranjeras del texto original, le resulta difícil encontrar las palabras, los giros o las estructuras equivalentes en la lengua de llegada. Delisle (2006, p. 20), en este sentido, explica: “Es un hecho que, al tener otro idioma ante los ojos, la formulación de un sentido captado no es espontánea ni mucho menos automática. (...) Este tanteo mental genera frustración”.

Enseñar a traducir es una tarea compleja, porque son muchos los contenidos conceptuales, procedimentales y actitudinales que debemos desarrollar en clase. Además, adquirir la competencia traductora lleva mucho tiempo y paciencia.

Consideraciones preliminares – El enfoque didáctico y la competencia traductora

A la hora de diseñar y emprender la tarea de dictar un curso de iniciación a la traducción, una experiencia pedagógica limitada al ámbito universitario, ya sea para los programas de formación, o para cursos o seminarios prácticos dedicados al aprendizaje propiamente dicho de la traducción, los profesores debemos contemplar todos los aspectos que nos permitan presentar la traducción como un proceso de comprensión y de producción de textos para que el alumno pueda adquirir los principios fundamentales que rigen la traducción de un modo progresivo y controlado; no deseamos que las actividades del curso solo consistan en ejercicios repetidos de traducción donde solo se pone el énfasis en la equivalencia lingüística. Buscamos evitar, en la medida de lo posible, que el curso de traducción implique traducir textos a partir del trabajo intuitivo de nuestros alumnos.

En general, pensamos en cuáles serán los contenidos mínimos, nuestros objetivos metodológicos y las estrategias didácticas que emplearemos, el criterio que adoptaremos para la selección de textos, las habilidades que deseamos desarrollar en nuestros estudiantes, y el método de evaluación de los conocimientos adquiridos, entre otros, ya que todo esto nos permitirá reflexionar sobre el marco teórico general del curso.

Estas consideraciones nos permiten diseñar el *syllabus* y, cuando comenzamos a trabajar en la clase, es allí donde tenemos la posibilidad de constatar si es factible cumplir los objetivos que nos hemos planteado o si es necesario realizar algún ajuste en función de los grupos de estudiantes que vamos teniendo y las realidades que se presentan en el aula. Sabemos que toda propuesta debe encontrar el punto de equilibrio entre los contenidos que deben enseñarse, los textos que debemos seleccionar y las características del grupo. Antes de comenzar, debemos distinguir entre el enfoque didáctico y las estrategias para abordar los desafíos de la traducción en sí, es decir, el método y el proceso traductor que apuntan a la competencia traductora. El desarrollo de los primeros determinará el resultado de los segundos. Si bien ambos están íntimamente relacionados, tal vez, en las publicaciones del ámbito de la didáctica de la traducción, esta distinción no siempre se ve reflejada claramente.

El enfoque didáctico elegido es el que determina las decisiones del profesor en el aula en cuanto a la organización de la clase, la selección, secuenciación y presentación de los contenidos, y la elaboración de tareas y actividades dentro y fuera del aula, entre otras. Está determinado por la forma de enseñar a traducir, y no por la forma de traducir en sí. Son estas estrategias las que mejorarán el proceso traductor, las que le permitirán al estudiante ir adquiriendo las habilidades propias del traductor profesional. Las estrategias didácticas implican poder explorar distintas actividades en el aula y fuera de ella, tendientes a la concreción de nuestros objetivos metodológicos. Por ejemplo, desarrollar la habilidad de asimilación y retención, poder relacionar la nueva información con la previa, lograr que el alumno tenga una buena disposición para que se logre el aprendizaje, desarrollar la memoria a largo plazo, entre otras. Pueden ir desde la clase expositiva y teórica hasta la realización de todo tipo de ejercitación que vamos proponiendo en un contexto controlado.

Durante el curso de iniciación desarrollamos aquellas estrategias que permiten mejorar la comprensión del texto original y la identificación de su estructura, la progresión y el encadenamiento de la información; diferenciar las ideas principales y secundarias; establecer las relaciones conceptuales que se presentan; aplicar el razonamiento lógico; extrapolar ideas; visualizar los hechos que expone el texto (ponerse en situación); y guiar a los estudiantes en la metodología de búsquedas de información futuras para que pueda cubrirse la carencia de conocimientos enciclopédicos que tengan, entre muchos otros.

Por otra parte, la competencia o habilidad traductora (Hurtado Albir, 1996, 2013) comprende una variedad de aspectos: la destreza que implica la comprensión lectora de la lengua de partida y la correcta producción en la lengua de llegada; la habilidad para comprender los factores que van más allá del texto, es decir, conocer el tema y la cultura en el que se inscribe el texto, poder detectar las alusiones culturales y los ecos intertextuales; la habilidad traslatoria para poder realizar el cambio de una lengua a otra sin interferencias; la habilidad para redactar y producir textos en la lengua de llegada; la precisión léxica y la riqueza expresiva; la habilidad profesional o de estilo de trabajo, que consiste en saber documentarse, saber utilizar las nuevas tecnologías, conocer el mercado laboral, etc.

Los resultados de las evaluaciones – Punto de partida para elaborar el enfoque didáctico

La evaluación de exámenes o trabajos prácticos es una instancia fundamental en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje que permite realizar un balance de nuestra actividad y de nuestra propuesta metodológica. Así como el diseño curricular es una herramienta importante para armar nuestro proyecto, la evaluación permite medir los resultados obtenidos y confrontarlos con el diagnóstico inicial y los objetivos que nos habíamos propuesto. La información que obtenemos a través de la evaluación nos ofrece pautas valiosas para la elaboración de las unidades didácticas y para la modificación de objetivos.

El profesor debe, de modo sostenido, practicar los ajustes que la experiencia y el sentido común le sugieran, en este sentido Hurtado Albir (2013) señala:

Av. Alicia Moreau de Justo 1300. Puerto Madero. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires. C1107AAZ.
Teléfono: (011) 4349-0200 c. e.: depto_lenguas@uca.edu.ar

Para que la elaboración de propuestas didácticas adquiriera un carácter cada vez más sistemático y riguroso, es conveniente instaurar en nuestra didáctica prácticas de experimentación para poder validar su alcance: probar, confrontar y medir resultados a los que se llega con determinadas propuestas de objetivos y de metodología; experimentar criterios y pruebas de evaluación; efectuar análisis de errores para buscar irregularidades y llegar a una definición, clasificación y nivelación; contrastar baremos de corrección, etc. (p. 169)

Al analizar o evaluar los trabajos prácticos o las evaluaciones de los alumnos de distintos cursos en diferentes períodos lectivos, algunas veces notamos que estos no logran poner en práctica los aspectos relativos a la traducción, a la producción o a la redacción de textos que se han discutido en clase tantas veces, a pesar de haber planificado el curso con cuidado y de haber seleccionado los textos propicios que nos ayudan a cumplir nuestros objetivos.

Entonces surgen interrogantes, no sin un dejo de frustración: si los alumnos habitualmente anotan las sugerencias que vamos realizando cuando leen su traducción, si discutimos diversas versiones y opciones posibles, y analizamos cuáles son las técnicas y estrategias de traducción válidas para el caso en cuestión, ¿qué es lo que sucede?, ¿por qué nos encontramos corrigiendo siempre los mismos errores?, ¿por qué no pueden recuperar las reglas gramaticales u ortográficas que vimos en clase?, ¿cómo es posible que no comprendan la diferencia entre tal o cual tema si lo hemos trabajado en profundidad en clase?

Estas son algunas de las preguntas que nos hacemos al momento de revisar la metodología que estamos utilizando en la clase. Aun cuando el grado de motivación de los alumnos es alto, cuando el grupo parece disfrutar de las clases, cuando surgen preguntas y debates interesantes, las evaluaciones no siempre reflejan el trabajo realizado en la clase. Creemos entonces que surgen otros interrogantes que merecen nuestra atención: ¿qué es lo que estudian? ¿Cómo se preparan para las evaluaciones o para los trabajos prácticos? Como destaca Delisle (2006), ¿cuántos de esos errores se producen por la falta de método?

En general, si les hacemos estas preguntas, los alumnos van a contestar, en términos generales, lo mismo: “*Releemos las traducciones que hacemos durante el curso*”, “*traducimos aquellos párrafos que han quedado sin hacer*”.

Si los alumnos dicen que vuelven a leer las traducciones que hacemos durante el curso, debemos preguntarnos: ¿de qué manera dejan registro de las sugerencias o correcciones que se realizan en clase? En virtud de ello, comenzamos a leer sus traducciones y a prestar atención al modo en que registraban esas anotaciones y de qué manera consignaban las observaciones que hacíamos en relación con un tema determinado.

Notamos, entonces, que el estudiante tachaba (muchas veces sin siquiera preguntar) lo que había escrito; en algunas ocasiones descartaba sus versiones, muchas veces correctas, y las reemplazaba por la frase u oración que surgía de la puesta en común en clase como la única posibilidad “correcta” o “aceptable” en esa situación, sin ningún tipo de nota, aclaración o justificación, y así eliminaba y reemplazaba su propia versión sin más.

Naturalmente, si el alumno, cuando se prepara para alguna instancia de evaluación de su traducción, “relee las traducciones y las correcciones que se realizan en clase” y se encuentra con una oración corregida sin ningún tipo de aclaración, no está llevando a cabo un proceso de abstracción o una elaboración de modelos acerca de su trabajo; tampoco está relacionando información ni desarrollando la memoria a largo plazo. Es decir, no está poniendo en juego ninguna de las habilidades que constituyen las estrategias didácticas. Por lo tanto, es lógico que no pueda poner en práctica, recuperar, en futuras traducciones, los aspectos sintácticos, normativos, léxicos, para nombrar solo algunos, que discutimos, analizamos o corregimos en clase y que han de surgir en futuros trabajos prácticos de traducción.

Así, las explicaciones y las correcciones realizadas en clase pierden sentido, ya que no están correctamente anotadas o apuntadas; muchas veces, en esas correcciones no surge el origen del error, y el alumno desconoce cuál es el modo de proceder ante una situación similar en el futuro, simplemente porque no puede reconocerla o desconoce cuál es el método para no volver a cometer un error. A pesar de que les damos bibliografía con los contenidos teóricos, pareciera que el alumno no pudiera vincularlos con la práctica de la

traducción, que no pudiera relacionarlos con los conocimientos que ya posee a través de la significación.

Es en este contexto donde surge la noción de la **sistematización de la práctica**, como una estrategia de enseñanza tendiente a la adquisición y profundización del conocimiento; a través de ella, procuramos recuperar el conocimiento, a partir de ciertas estrategias relativamente sencillas, para realizar algunas generalizaciones que permiten abordar futuros desafíos de traducción o redacción en circunstancias similares.

Breves consideraciones acerca de la sistematización de la práctica

Como ya mencionamos, si el alumno, al comenzar, traduce intuitivamente, somos nosotros, los profesores, quienes deberemos ayudarlo, a través de los contenidos y textos seleccionados, y las estrategias de enseñanza, entre otros aspectos, a elaborar un procedimiento de toma de decisiones de manera jerárquica, para que comience a utilizar ciertas reglas y los conocimientos aportados en clase de manera consciente, para que sea capaz de procesar la información y comenzar a elaborar sus propias traducciones, no ya a partir de la intuición, sino sobre la base de reflexiones críticas.

Ayudar a nuestros alumnos a objetivar aquello del orden de lo abstracto, es decir, aquellas nociones teóricas que leen en la bibliografía específica; a **sistematizar la práctica** para crear abstracciones, a partir de una traducción específica y sobre la base del trabajo realizado en clase, permite que puedan dar cuenta de la información o los datos que aporta la actividad, del fenómeno objeto de estudio, y evita que caigan en automatismos. Deberíamos ser capaces de ubicar a los alumnos siempre en el terreno explicativo para que puedan confrontar el quehacer práctico con los supuestos teóricos que lo inspiran.

Esto nos plantea un desafío importante, sabemos que no hay reglas establecidas ni soluciones invariables, por lo tanto, deberemos procurar que los alumnos puedan crear abstracciones que les permitan poder resolver futuros problemas similares con autonomía. Realizar una **sistematización de la práctica** de la traducción instrumental o utilitaria, a través de una estrategia didáctica, le permitirá al alumno ser mucho más consciente de los pasos que ha de seguir para llevar a cabo un desarrollo correcto del proceso traductor.

Esta propuesta no se centra tanto en la traducción realizada, sino en la comprensión de qué es lo que ocurre cuando elaboramos un texto a partir de la traducción.

El desafío, entonces, es encontrar diversidad de estrategias y un modelo/metodología de corrección de traducción en clase para que el alumno desarrolle un mecanismo y realice inferencias, para que pueda estudiar de sus notas y traducciones corregidas, como lo hace habitualmente, pero que esta vez sus apuntes le permitan aprehender los conceptos, las reglas, las sugerencias estilísticas, entre otros aspectos, más allá de una traducción en particular, para que logre realizar una abstracción metodológica y hacer deducciones más acertadas sobre la práctica traductora que puedan aplicarse en situaciones comparables y que vayan más allá de la traducción que trabajamos o corregimos en clase. Como ya se mencionó, creemos que ese conocimiento o esa experiencia es lo que le servirá para resolver problemas de traducción similares en el futuro.

Esta sistematización de la práctica, este proceso de objetivación, tanto de los desafíos que plantea la traducción como de los criterios de resolución de problemas, es un proceso crítico y reflexivo que le permite al alumno aprender sobre la base de la construcción del propio hacer, es un enfoque que favorece la reflexión sobre su acción, sobre su práctica. La sistematización de la práctica se caracteriza esencialmente por ser un conocimiento que permite ir más allá de lo inmediato, a través de la guía de determinados principios teóricos que brindan racionalidad a aquello que estamos haciendo. Es un modo de objetivar el conocimiento sobre la base de los datos que aporta el fenómeno observado. Concebida de este modo, la sistematización se sitúa en un camino intermedio entre el estudio de los distintos aspectos teóricos (la normativa, los procedimientos de traducción, los aspectos estilísticos, entre otros) y la traducción que se realiza en el contexto de una clase.

La sistematización permite tender un “puente cognitivo”, tomando la metáfora de Ausubel (Méndez, 2005, p. 97), implica tomar la práctica como fuente de teoría para confrontarla en la próxima traducción que realizaremos. Es un continuo en el cual la práctica comienza a estar al servicio de la teoría, y es esa teoría la que podremos utilizar y constatar en futuras prácticas. Creemos que esto le permitirá al futuro traductor desarrollar su pensamiento crítico y crear una estructura analítica que lo capacite/entrene

para la evaluación de su propia traducción y, de este modo, evitar “el tanteo mental”. Buscamos sistematizar las operaciones más abstractas que han de integrarse a la práctica de la traducción para evitar caer en la tentación de recurrir a la anécdota o proporcionar soluciones *ad hoc*.

Proponemos un modelo de análisis de traducciones que corregimos en clase que nos permita mostrarles a los alumnos lo que operativa y naturalmente, y casi automáticamente, realizamos los traductores diplomados y con experiencia cuando emprendemos un trabajo de traducción. Los alumnos podrán, a partir de la experiencia propuesta, vincular y comprobar las nuevas situaciones con aquello que ya saben.

La propuesta metodológica que aquí se presenta intenta recoger algunas nociones del concepto de **aprendizaje significativo** con la que trabajó Ausubel (Méndez, 2005, p. 91). Según este autor, el conocimiento verdadero solo puede nacer cuando los nuevos contenidos tienen un significado a la luz de los conocimientos que ya se tienen.

Esta propuesta nos ayudará a lograr que el alumno aprenda de lo hecho y que comprenda cabalmente aquello que ha realizado con aciertos y errores, para luego generar un proceso de transferencia, es decir, lograr la construcción de ciertos saberes partiendo de los aprendizajes encontrados.

Pasaremos a desarrollar las ideas propuestas para una clase práctica de traducción, que se asemeja a la dinámica de un taller de traducción. En este contexto, concebimos la tarea de traducción como una unidad de trabajo en el aula que sea representativa de la práctica traductora, cuya intencionalidad es el aprendizaje del proceso de la traducción. El traductor diplomado no traduce palabras ni oraciones aisladas, sino textos reales dirigidos a un público determinado. Si bien la traducción oracional puede resultar de utilidad para ciertos objetivos de enseñanza, deseamos poder resolver problemas frecuentes de reexpresión. Siempre que sea posible, procuraremos trabajar con una traducción que esté claramente contextualizada.

Así, haremos el intento de ponernos en la piel del autor del original, pensar en el destinatario, buscar espontaneidad en la lengua de llegada, realizar paráfrasis, redactar, desconfiar ante las palabras y estructuras, evitar palabras cercanas a las del original y evitar el mismo orden de palabras que plantea el texto de origen, seguir la lógica del texto,

evitar mantener todo el tiempo las correspondencias preexistentes, etc. (Delisle, 2006). Estos aspectos deben ser explicitados en cada instancia de debate y corrección de los trabajos prácticos asignados. Hemos constatado que nunca es suficiente con una sola explicación. Debemos saber que, como profesores, tendremos que explicar los temas una y otra vez, siempre de manera distinta.

Con estos objetivos en mente, les proponemos a los alumnos que realicen sus traducciones en *Word*, que dejen, como es habitual, un interlineado lo suficientemente amplio y, además, les sugerimos que dejen márgenes amplios a la izquierda del texto traducido.

Cada vez que emprendemos la tarea de la corrección de una traducción, les explicamos que, en esos márgenes, deberán realizar las anotaciones sobre su traducción (al principio, guiadas por el profesor) y que deberán consignar la razón, el principio, la regla por la cual han realizado algún tipo de cambio en su traducción.

Como es habitual, durante el proceso de corrección de un trabajo de traducción, cada participante aporta sus propias versiones o ideas y plantea dudas, mientras el docente actúa como guía del grupo y del debate, incentivando a los alumnos a que, por sí mismos, lleguen a una solución aceptable mediante el debate. Asimismo, el profesor va explicando/argumentando las razones por las cuales una traducción es más exacta o precisa que otra. Nosotros debemos explicar y pedir que anoten la razón por la cual se ha corregido o modificado la versión original.

Debe quedar muy en claro que no alcanza con que el alumno corrija y tache sobre lo que escribió para transcribir una versión dictada por otro alumno o elaborada en conjunto en la clase porque, en ese caso, los estaríamos motivando a continuar con una práctica intuitiva. Buscamos ahora no solo que detecte y corrija los errores, sino que identifique, reconozca y pueda ponerle nombre a todas las anotaciones que consigne sobre el margen izquierdo de su traducción. Esto permite que el alumno reflexione y capte el proceso de la traducción y el funcionamiento de su propia lengua, a la vez que aprende a justificar los errores y fundamentar las soluciones elegidas. A partir de esta práctica, podrá objetivar aquello que es del orden de lo abstracto.

Poder realizar estas anotaciones en cada traducción contribuye a desarrollar un mayor grado de abstracción y formalización. Al hacerlo, también ampliará su poder explicativo.

Es importante que el futuro traductor adopte una actitud reflexiva frente al texto, que pueda realizar inferencias y desarrollar un “espíritu crítico” que le permita fundamentar los aciertos y los errores planteados en cada una de las traducciones realizadas, y así lograr mayor independencia y autonomía.

Esto le dará la posibilidad de ordenar y clasificar los fenómenos estudiados en categorías más abstractas, más rigurosas y más refinadas. Queremos que elabore una teoría sobre cada error o versión pasible de mejora, que pueda construir una reproducción conceptual de ese error que le permita explicar cabalmente el fundamento de la sugerencia o anotación al margen. Esto lo obliga a poner en juego todo lo que ha aprendido hasta el momento, tanto sobre la teoría de la traducción como sobre el proceso mismo de la traducción.

Así, el alumno siempre debería ser capaz de poder explicar o justificar sus decisiones a la hora de resolver un problema de traducción o plantear posibles soluciones, esto lo alejará de las decisiones tomadas intuitivamente. A medida que el conocimiento experto avanza, aumenta la habilidad para reconocer rasgos discursivos y elegir la estrategia apropiada que, cada vez, estará más internalizada y será más fácil de recuperar, y dejará de traducir desde la intuición que, como ya mencionamos, es lo que queremos evitar.

En este proceso se va desarrollando una estructuración de conocimientos declarativos y operativos que le permite al alumno mayor flexibilidad y adaptabilidad para ajustarse a situaciones cambiantes que exigen habilidades diferentes. Asimismo, al realizar una abstracción sobre su trabajo, podrá hacer inferencias y aplicarlas en situaciones comparables, es decir, podrá resolver problemas de traducción similares en el futuro.

Ahora bien, es sabido que, para poder reflexionar, realizar anotaciones, fundamentar aciertos o desaciertos, debemos poder “nombrar”; poner nombres a cuestiones abstractas con la mayor exactitud posible es un modo para que lo que es nuevo o confuso para el alumno cobre sentido. Es lo que permite crear una vía de acceso hacia aquello que es del orden de lo desconocido o nuevo.

En ocasiones, los profesores de traducción sentimos que, en esta primera etapa, incursionar en aspectos muy teóricos va a desmotivar a los alumnos. Consideramos, sin embargo, que es importante que, desde el primer momento, vayan tomando conciencia de

que traducir no es una tarea mecánica de traslación, sino que es un saber que requiere el manejo de nociones teóricas que hay que conocer y aprehender para mejorar la habilidad traductora.

Asimismo, poder presentar la teoría de la traducción a través de la práctica cotidiana desde la primera clase les permite a los alumnos visualizar las operaciones mentales que realizamos los traductores con experiencia; y esto, sin duda, es un elemento muy motivador para ellos.

Aunque nos parezca una obviedad, no lo es. Los conocimientos procedimentales son muy difíciles de verbalizar y se adquieren a través de la práctica y de la ejercitación (Pozo y Postigo, en Hurtado Albir, 2013, p. 380). Para el alumno de cursos de iniciación a la traducción hay un gran número de conceptos, términos y definiciones que desconoce. Y verdaderamente le resulta muy difícil incorporarlos a su repertorio. Poder encontrar el nombre para argumentar una posible modificación, en virtud de reglas gramaticales, de elecciones lexicales, etc., le permite ubicarlo en el espacio y en el tiempo; y esto es, creemos, clave para iniciar el verdadero proceso de aprendizaje y adquisición, en este caso, del proceso de traducción.

Vamos a notar que en las primeras clases los alumnos se presentan reacios a realizar las anotaciones. Creemos que esto sucede porque están confundidos por la terminología o simplemente porque no están acostumbrados o no entienden, en un principio, cómo realizarlo. Debemos tener en cuenta que muchos estudiantes tardan en entender la importancia de la corrección.

Por lo tanto, como en una primera etapa esto les resultará muy dificultoso, es imperioso que les expliquemos claramente qué tipo de notas deben realizar en esos márgenes. Es conveniente que, en las primeras clases, escribamos sobre la pizarra nosotros mismos las observaciones o anotaciones que deberían ellos realizar para que estas sirvan de modelo. Al mismo tiempo, podemos pedir algún trabajo de los alumnos, corregirlo, realizar nosotros las observaciones o anotaciones y las reglas que debió haber puesto en práctica y entregarla a todo el curso para que sirva de modelo.

Este trabajo lo comenzaremos a realizar en la segunda o tercera clase cuando ya les hayamos explicado algunas nociones básicas que deben comprender antes de comenzar a traducir.

Anotaciones

A continuación, veremos algunos de los aspectos que les presentamos a los alumnos para comenzar a sistematizar la práctica. Aislamos estos contenidos con fines pedagógicos y los presentamos paulatinamente en clase y a través de la bibliografía específica. No son los únicos, podemos recurrir a todos los elementos teóricos a nuestro alcance para poder arrojar luz sobre lo que hacemos los traductores cuando traducimos. Estamos convencidos de que esto les permitirá adquirir la habilidad explicativa y desarrollar la autonomía que deseamos. Esto resulta ser muy motivador a partir de la cuarta o quinta clase, porque hemos notado que los estudiantes comienzan a encontrar su propia satisfacción al poder comprender qué es lo que sucede cuando están traduciendo.

Planos textuales

Las primeras nociones que les explicaremos a los alumnos tienen que ver con los distintos planos que entran en juego en la lectura y posterior traducción. Es importante que sepan que todos ellos se entretajan e interactúan permanentemente. Los planos básicos que les presentamos son los siguientes:

1. la ortografía;
2. la puntuación;
3. el plano sintáctico (el texto debe tener una sintaxis rigurosa, obedecer a las reglas de la gramática);
4. el plano léxico (precisión léxica, falta de riqueza expresiva, congruencia semántica, pleonasmos, polisemias de base latina);
5. el plano morfológico;
6. el plano estilístico (estilo pesado, poco claro, la naturalidad, cambios de estilos injustificados);

7. la coherencia y la cohesión (errores textuales y lingüísticos, texto incoherente, no lógico, mal uso de los elementos referenciales o deícticos, cohesión temporal confusa, mala construcción de las frases);
8. aspectos pragmáticos (el emisor, la intención, el receptor, el lugar, el tiempo, el motivo, el medio, la función textual, la interpretación del encargo, no adaptación del texto traducido a la función o a la situación de comunicación, no respeto a las normas y convenciones del género, estilo, registro);
9. intertextualidad (todos los textos están de una u otra forma relacionados con otros textos). Como hemos señalado, en las primeras clases, debemos dejar bien en claro qué significa cada plano, realizar un recorte a los efectos didácticos y asegurarnos de que reconozcan las diferencias entre ellos a través de ejercitación diseñada a tales efectos. Es importante que luego comprendan que no son compartimentos estancos, ya que estos planos se relacionan entre sí de un modo dinámico, y que la comisión de un error en uno de estos niveles puede tener consecuencias sobre los otros.

A partir del análisis de estos planos, esperamos que los alumnos adquieran una competencia que les permita tener un cimiento sólido para elaborar un texto a partir de otro; deberíamos siempre poder especificar de qué tipo de plano estamos hablando cuando se presenta una sugerencia en clase o una modificación a un texto.

A continuación, veremos un modelo de lo que proponemos. Estas son las anotaciones que realizan los alumnos. Como se mencionó, en una primera instancia, nosotros deberemos guiarlos.

En mi artículo, <u>*argumenté</u> que los profesores universitarios no deberían sentirse responsables de curar los males del mundo, pero sí de ** hacer el trabajo para el que ***fueron entrenados y para que se les paga –hacer el trabajo de <u>introducir</u> a los alumnos a las áreas de	*Plano léxico: no es necesario calcar el verbo. *Error de traducción: interferencia léxica. Convenciones del género: exponer, sostener, presentar el argumento, entre otros.
--	---

<p>conocimiento que no conocían, y segundo ***equipar esos mismos estudiantes con las habilidades analíticas que les permitirán analizar y evaluar los materiales que se les piden que lean.</p> <p>****Además señalé que en el momento en que un instructor trata de explicar por demás, él o ella ha sobrepasado una línea y se ha aventurado en un territorio que pertenece a otra iniciativa.</p>	<p>*Plano gramatical: Simple Past (EN) – (SP) dos opciones: expuse o exponía. Elección determinada por el contexto. Prestar atención en el futuro.</p> <p>**Plano léxico: precisión. Evitar verbos comodín, por ejemplo, llevar a cabo.</p> <p>***Plano gramatical: voz pasiva, evitar.</p> <p>***Plano léxico: entrenar (calco) capacitar. Evitar los calcos, buscar sinónimos. Prestar atención al plano pragmático.</p> <p>****Uso de la coma (puntuación): coma después de “además”. Repasar bibliografía. Revisar en DRAE.</p>
--	--

Texto fuente:

In my article, I argued that university teachers should not take it upon themselves to cure the ills of the world, but should instead do the job they are trained and paid to do — the job, first, of introducing students to areas of knowledge they were not acquainted with before, and second, of equipping those same students with the analytic skills that will enable them to assess and evaluate the materials they are asked to read. I made the further point that the moment an instructor tries to do something more, he or she has crossed a line and ventured into territory that belongs to some other enterprise.

The Economist

Si analizamos el ejemplo, vemos que la traducción tiene varias observaciones relativas al plano léxico. Esto también nos permite realizar un diagnóstico de las dificultades del alumno.

Errores de lengua y errores de traducción

Otro de los aspectos en los que trabajaremos es en presentar los distintos tipos de errores que cometemos cuando traducimos. Es importante que los estudiantes conozcan los

nombres técnicos, como dijimos anteriormente, esto les ayudará a reconocerlos con mayor facilidad. Adoptaremos la definición de Hurtado Albir (2013, p. 290) cuando señala: “Podemos definir el error de traducción como una equivalencia inadecuada para la tarea traductora encomendada”. Los errores de traducción, agrega, se determinan por criterios textuales, contextuales y funcionales.

Existen muchas clasificaciones del error de traducción, el profesional puede adoptar la que mejor resulte para cada situación, en este trabajo tomaremos las categorías establecidas por Delisle (1993).

- **Errores de lengua:** es un error en la traducción relacionado con el desconocimiento de la lengua de llegada. Estos son el solecismo (error de lengua, error sintáctico – construir o emplear una frase sintáctica incorrecta); el barbarismo (error morfológico, uso impropio, error semántico); la ambigüedad (formulación incomprensible); el pleonasma; el zeugma; el error deliberado; el error no deliberado [equivoco].
- **Errores de la traducción:** es un error que figura en el texto de llegada que se produce porque ha habido una interpretación errónea de un párrafo del texto de partida y que produce un falso sentido, un contrasentido o un sinsentido en la traducción. Ellos son la adición; el anglicismo; el falso amigo; el falso sentido, el contrasentido o sinsentido; la hipertraducción; la sobretraducción; la subtraducción; la interferencia de naturaleza morfológica, léxica, sintáctica, estilística o tipográfica; la adición; la omisión; la paráfrasis (puede consistir en adiciones o en el empleo abusivo de circunloquios y perífrasis que entorpecen la redacción del texto de llegada); la pérdida.

Así como sucede con los planos textuales, es importante tener en cuenta que muchas veces las fronteras entre estas categorías no son muy claras para los alumnos. Por lo tanto, es aconsejable que tomemos los más representativos para que sirvan de punto de referencia para dar cuenta de los errores cometidos en el proceso traductor.

Como ha quedado dicho, es importante que podamos ponerles nombre a todos los errores para comprender su naturaleza, para saber de dónde proceden y así establecer una estrategia para no volver a cometerlos. Creemos que esto les permitirá a los estudiantes realizar una autoevaluación y emprender el proceso de sistematización de la práctica.

En clase, al principio, podremos diseñar actividades de traducción que nos permitan concentrarnos en solo un tipo de error. Hurtado Albir (2013, p. 297) sugiere: “En un contexto didáctico, la importancia de los errores dependerá siempre de la finalidad de la traducción”. Nuestro objetivo sería que el alumno pueda contar con todas las explicaciones que tenga al alcance para juzgar su traducción, argumentar las decisiones que ha realizado y “defenderla” frente al curso.

Procedimientos de traducción

Creemos que el análisis de los procedimientos de traducción, concebidos como mecanismos que ayudan a resolver deficiencias o problemas específicos, puede ser de utilidad para sistematizar y explicar algunas de las decisiones que tomamos. En este sentido coincidimos con García Yebra (1986) cuando destaca la importancia de la teoría en nuestra profesión:

El dominio de la teoría nos permite conocer la causa de lo que se está haciendo, sin ella, hacemos sin saber bien el porqué, tal vez por impulso natural, por costumbre. Los conocedores de la teoría son más sabios por su dominio de la teoría y su conocimiento de las causas. (p.18)

En este trabajo adoptaremos los procedimientos de traducción enumerados por Vinay y Darbelnet (1977), con el fin de observar y sistematizar muchas de las decisiones que es necesario tomar a la hora de realizar una traducción para dotarla de coherencia, cohesión y naturalidad. Otros autores han agregado o desglosado procedimientos. El profesor puede adoptar la clasificación que mejor se preste para cumplir sus objetivos. Creemos que el análisis de estos procedimientos es pertinente ya que son de gran utilidad para explicar aquello que hemos realizado cuando se aplican a oraciones y unidades lingüísticas más pequeñas (Newmark, 1995, p.117). El análisis de los procedimientos de traducción permite someter cada elemento del texto original a un examen contrastivo y decidir si es conveniente o no realizar una traducción literal, aplicar las técnicas de transposición o modulación, o realizar las adaptaciones necesarias para resolver los problemas que se van presentando y poder reproducir la integridad del original, añadiendo

información adicional, pero sin sustraer nada que constituya la esencia del texto. Los procedimientos permiten realizar una comparación en un plano más abstracto, y esto es un paso importante para poner de manifiesto los rasgos que separan los distintos sistemas lingüísticos (López Guix, 2003, p. 236).

1. préstamo;
2. calco;
3. traducción literal;
4. transposición;
5. modulación;
6. equivalencia;
7. adaptación;
8. expansión;
9. reducción;
10. compensación.

La coherencia

La coherencia puede entenderse como el entramado de un texto donde se establecen relaciones de significado que lo organizan portando así un continuo de sentido, esto garantiza la “conectividad conceptual” (Hatim y Mason, 1995, p. 247).

Para que un texto sea coherente es necesario que intervenga la habilidad del lector para poder detectar esas relaciones semánticas que le dan continuidad de sentido. Es, de algún modo, la interacción entre el contenido de un texto y el propio conocimiento del receptor y su propia experiencia del mundo con su bagaje cultural e intelectual. De este modo, la coherencia tiene mucho que ver con la expectativa del lector, así como con sus conocimientos y experiencia.

Nuestros alumnos deben saber esto desde el principio, con nombre y apellido, deben ser conscientes de que los lectores van a contar con un conocimiento determinado y van a tener ciertas expectativas en relación con el texto que van a leer; estas expectativas tendrán que ver con el contenido, con la organización del mundo, con la organización de

la lengua, con las convenciones del género. Deberán, invariablemente, aportarle coherencia a un texto e impedir la aparición de “implicaturas” no deseadas.

Para esto, es importante transmitirles la noción de la “intervención” y el grado de variación que deberán manejar. Sabemos que depende de la habilidad del traductor para evaluar el conocimiento y las expectativas del receptor. Es muy estimulante para los alumnos comprender esto desde el primer momento.

Cuanto mayor sea el conocimiento del destinatario, menor será la intervención del traductor. El traductor deberá ser cauteloso para no explicar demasiado. El desafío principal está relacionado con la habilidad para evaluar el alcance del conocimiento y las suposiciones sobre diversos aspectos del mundo de los lectores de llegada, así como para lograr un equilibrio razonable entre responder a sus expectativas y mantener su interés en la comunicación, ofreciéndoles percepciones nuevas y alternativas.

La cohesión

Para que exista coherencia, los elementos del texto deben estar relacionados entre sí y conformar entre ellos una idea única y unitaria. Desde el punto de vista formal, la coherencia se basa en el funcionamiento de una serie de recursos para constituir relaciones entre los elementos de un texto. Estos recursos son los elementos de cohesión.

La cohesión es una propiedad textual mediante la cual los enunciados de un texto se relacionan correctamente desde el punto de vista léxico y gramatical. Por lo tanto, diremos que existe cohesión en un texto cuando los enunciados sucesivos aparecen debidamente trabados por conectores morfosintácticos y léxico-semánticos, e incluso fónicos.

Un buen traductor se asegurará de que el texto de llegada muestre un nivel suficiente de cohesión por sí mismo. Esto le llevará a introducir cambios sutiles en el texto y, a veces, cambios considerables, evitando siempre el caso extremo de producir una serie inconexa de unidades que no serían cadenas léxicas reconocibles y con sentido para el receptor.

Los recursos de cohesión son: referencia; sustitución; elipsis; los conectores; repetición por recurrencia; signos de puntuación. El tema es muy amplio y vasto, excede el alcance de este trabajo. Sin embargo, diremos que es importante que los estudiantes conozcan muy bien todos estos recursos y que sepan que pueden alterar las referencias, por ejemplo,

para optimizar la efectividad en la transmisión de la comunicación; que es posible activar el mismo significado usando una expresión distinta (en el caso de la sinonimia, por ejemplo); que las redes léxicas son un estupendo mecanismo cohesionador de un texto y que importa un alto nivel de creatividad por parte del traductor.

Debemos enseñarles a rastrear la red de relaciones del texto, ya que casi nunca es posible reproducir las mismas redes de cohesión léxica en la lengua de llegada para que sean idénticas a las del texto original.

Cuando el texto juega con una expresión idiomática para crear una metáfora extendida, por ejemplo, o cuando no existen equivalentes directos para todos los términos, cuando las estructuras gramaticales son muy diferentes entre las dos lenguas, el traductor utilizará hiperónimos, paráfrasis, préstamos, añadirá o borrará información, etc.

Buscamos con esto acostumbrar al alumno a leer con ojos de traductor desde el primer momento, a desarrollar determinadas habilidades como la comprensión lectora o sensibilizarlo frente a ciertas cuestiones para que pueda llevar a cabo la actividad profesional con una mayor preparación. Además de los planos, de los tipos de errores y de los procedimientos de traducción hay muchos otros temas que podemos abordar.

Como hemos mencionado, el aprendizaje significativo entrena que los nuevos aprendizajes se conecten con los anteriores; no porque sean lo mismo, sino porque tienen que ver con estos de un modo que se crea un nuevo significado. Y esto hace que los conocimientos sean más estables y completos.

A medida que vamos avanzando, las correcciones y anotaciones se van ampliando y se van haciendo más complejas.

<p><u>*Con 50 millones de niños que deben regresar a clase,</u> los distritos de todo el país siguen realizando un gran esfuerzo para cubrir las vacantes de los cargos de <u>profesores y les</u> está resultando difícil encontrar **solicitantes calificados para</p>	<p>*Error de traducción: interferencia de naturaleza sintáctica. No comenzar las oraciones con “CON”. Estructura frecuente en inglés. Análisis contrastivo.</p>
---	--

<p>cubrir los cargos de ***<u>áreas</u> vitales como Matemáticas y Ciencia. Esta escasez <u>persistirá y****</u> la reforma educativa seguirá retrasada hasta que los estados y el gobierno federal comiencen a prestar más atención a *****<u>cómo</u> los maestros *****<u>son capacitados, contratados y asignados.</u></p>	<p>*Cohesión: uso de conectores para evitar oración extensa. Asimismo, /además. Usar coma después de estos conectores.</p> <p>**Plano léxico. Interferencia léxica (error de traducción). “Aspirante”, por ejemplo. Prestar atención al plano pragmático.</p> <p>***Cohesión: asignaturas. Usar hiperónimo que sea más preciso en español. Procedimiento de traducción: no usar calcos. Analizar el entramado del texto.</p> <p>****Uso de la coma. Plano de la puntuación. Recordar: una coma antes de “y” cuando cambia sujeto.</p> <p>*****Sugerencia estilística: cómo: al modo en que, (sugerencia de traducción). Prestar atención cuando aparezcan <i>-WH words</i> en el texto.</p> <p>*****Procedimiento de traducción. Modulación: voz pasiva y/o transposición: cambio de categoría gramatical (capacitación, contratación, etc.). Error de traducción: interferencia sintáctica/gramatical.</p>
--	---

Texto fuente:

With 50 million children set to return to school, districts all over the country are still scrambling to fill teaching positions and are having an especially difficult time finding qualified applicants to fill shortages in vital areas like math and science. These shortages will persist and the education reform effort will continue to lag until states and the federal government start paying much more attention to how teachers are trained, hired and assigned.

The Economist

Los textos, nuestros aliados - Criterio de selección

Cuando dictamos un curso de traducción general, deseamos evitar que el alumno se vea expuesto a una variedad de textos desordenados y aislados. Sabemos que debe haber una sucesión razonable en cuanto al nivel de complejidad, es decir, con cierta progresión didáctica en términos del grado de dificultad.

Los textos que utilizamos en las primeras clases son textos de carácter informativo-divulgativo que, por lo general, no están marcados por los lenguajes de especialidad. Este tipo de textos tiene la ventaja de limitar los problemas de traducción a los que exponemos a nuestros alumnos (Hurtado Albir, 1996, p. 31). Son, en cierto modo, textos que nos permiten mostrar estabilidad al principio. Luego de algunas clases, además de seguir trabajando con textos generales, trabajaremos con textos pragmáticos de mayor dificultad (Delisle, 1984). Esta clasificación comprende textos más especializados, científicos, técnicos, textos en lengua de especialidad, entre otros. Son, por lo general, textos cuyo objetivo central es transmitir información y donde no prevalece el aspecto estético (Delisle, 1984, p. 22).

La designación “textos pragmáticos”, acuñada por Delisle, nos permite adoptar un criterio amplio, simple y práctico para referirnos a los textos cuyo objetivo esencial es transmitir información sin que exista una búsqueda estética dominante por parte de los autores. Es importante señalar que, si bien este tipo de textos es más especializado, el énfasis no estará puesto en la terminología, por ejemplo, sino en la resolución de problemas de traducción más generales (Hurtado Albir, 1996, p. 31).

Podemos ver la selección de textos como un recorrido que nos permita encontrar desafíos de traducción; así, la utilización de un texto “especializado” es una excusa para plantear un problema de traducción de índole general y enseñar a resolverlo; las cuestiones propias de la traducción especializada se verán después en las asignaturas específicas creadas a tal efecto.

Vale la pena destacar que los textos que no corresponden al género de la literatura también despliegan recursos creativos y retóricos muy propios de los textos literarios, en todos subsiste una mayor o menor carga estilística. En este sentido, coincidimos con Hatim y Mason (1990):

If creative use of language is taken to be one of the criteria for recognition of the former [literature], it can be shown that many non-literary texts display the same creative devices, used to the same ends, as in what is recognised as belonging to the category ‘literature’ (p.2)

Por lo tanto, deberemos estar alertas a la aparición de los recursos retóricos como la metáfora, el símil, la imagen, el oxímoron, el paralelismo, la interrogación retórica, entre otros, para poder introducir algunos primeros aspectos sobre la equivalencia de sentido, por ejemplo.

No es lo mismo, naturalmente, traducir un texto técnico que uno literario; no es lo mismo un informe ambiental que un texto jurídico; la lista es infinita. Por lo tanto, es importante comenzar a trabajar con estos matices desde el primer curso de traducción para que el estudiante comience a diferenciar las distintas tipologías textuales con sus correspondientes estructuras, fórmulas y convenciones, y progresión temática, entre otros aspectos.

Trabajar una importante variedad de tipos textuales (artículos periodísticos, correspondencia general, folletos informativos, documentación turística, informes y documentos oficiales sobre contaminación, salud, migración, entre otros) nos permite generar un contexto amplio donde el alumno puede aplicar los principios que rigen la traducción que vamos exponiendo en clase y el método de trabajo que proponemos aquí.

Como ya expresamos, es importante que la ejercitación, los materiales y los textos que elegimos para traducir mantengan una secuencia lógica en términos del grado de dificultad y la gradación de su especialización, de los temas tratados en clase, de los aspectos normativos que se han visto, del género textual, para citar algunos, y que les expliquemos a los alumnos cuál ha sido la lógica de la selección. Es de suma importancia que el alumno comprenda y constate esa lógica en relación con la elección del material y los temas tratados. Debemos evitar presentar textos desconectados, elegidos aleatoriamente porque esto, lejos de ayudar, le hace pensar al alumno que traducir es una operación “movida por los hilos del azar” (García López, 2004, p.11).

Conclusiones

Creemos que la adquisición de la competencia traductora se logra a través de un permanente proceso de abstracción, conceptualización y sistematización de la tarea que permite entender la naturaleza del trabajo que se está realizando o el porqué de las correcciones u observaciones que se hacen mediante una operación mental determinada para optimizar el proceso de toma de decisiones y, por sobre todo, entender de qué modo esa experiencia se recupera para ponerla en práctica en un trabajo práctico o ejercicio a futuro.

No queremos que la clase de traducción quede anclada en la metodología propia de la traducción pedagógica con los métodos tradicionales donde el alumno va ensayando versiones casi a ciegas. Como ya se ha mencionado, la metodología no debería consistir solamente en corregir traducciones basadas solo en la equivalencia lingüística. Buscamos establecer, de manera sostenida, relaciones entre el producto de la traducción y el proceso cognitivo que conduce a ese resultado. Con esta propuesta intentamos acortar la distancia que a veces existe entre las aproximaciones teóricas y empíricas sobre la práctica de la traducción.

Como todo proceso de aprendizaje, el de aprender a traducir es dinámico y cíclico. El futuro traductor va asimilando el *feedback* recibido y, por consiguiente, modifica su competencia traductora básica. Por lo tanto, es importante elaborar ejercitación que le permita al alumno estar permanentemente aprendiendo, almacenando, recuperando y

reformulando sus supuestos y aplicando el análisis correspondiente en una nueva traducción. Aprender a traducir implica poder activar todo el conjunto de conocimientos y habilidades que poseemos durante todo el proceso traductor y lograr mejorar la competencia traductora.

Coincidimos con Delisle (2006, p.15) cuando sostiene que “(...) un empirismo excesivo arruina cualquier pedagogía”. La idea que proponemos es que el alumno “aprenda a aprender a traducir”, es decir, que adquiera la autonomía necesaria para poder emprender tareas de traducción y que sea consciente de las decisiones que tome. Para ello, debemos poner a disposición de los estudiantes todos los instrumentos a nuestro alcance. Si esto lo hacemos desde las primeras clases, mucho mejor.

Este es un humilde aporte: es necesario que, cada vez más, contemos con más investigaciones que nos ayuden a mejorar las propuestas didácticas en el aula de traducción, adoptando, tal vez, un enfoque más interdisciplinario, e incorporando las contribuciones del ámbito de la didáctica general.

Referencias

- Delisle, J. y Bastin, G. (2006). *Iniciación a la traducción. Enfoque interpretativo. Traducción y práctica*. Universidad Central de Venezuela.
- García López, R. (2004). *Guía didáctica de la traducción de textos*. Netbiblo.
- García Yebra, V. (1982). *Teoría y práctica de la traducción*. Gredos.
- García Yebra, V. (1986). *Cuadernos de traducción e interpretación*. Gredos.
- Hatim, B. y Mason, I. (1990). *Discourse and the Translator*. Longman.
- Hatim B. y Mason, I. (1997). *The Translator as Communicator*. Routledge.
- Hurtado Albir, A. (2013). *Traducción y traductología. Introducción a la Traductología*. Cátedra Lingüística.
- Hurtado Albir, A. (1996). La enseñanza de la traducción directa general. Objetivos de aprendizaje y metodología. En Hurtado Albir, A. (coord.) *La enseñanza de la traducción* (pp. 31-56). Publicaciones de la Universitat Jaume I.
- López Guix, J. y Wilkinson, J. (2003). *Manual de traducción*. Editorial Gedisa.
- Méndez, Z. (2005). *Aprendizaje y cognición*. Universidad Estatal a Distancia.

Newmark, P. (1995). *Manual de traducción*. Ediciones Cátedra.

Nord, C. (1996). El error en la traducción: categorías y evaluación. En Hurtado Albir, A. (coord.) *La enseñanza de la traducción* (pp. 91-108). Publicaciones de la Universitat Jaume I.

Tolosa, M. (2013). *Don de errar: tras los pasos del traductor errante*. Publicaciones de la Universitat Jaume I.

Demystifying Plain Language in Legal Translation

Paula Arturo ⁷

Universidad de Palermo. Universidad Austral

✉ paula.arturo@gmail.com

Recibido: 20/5/2020

Aprobado: 5/10/2020

Abstract

The purpose of this brief communication is to challenge the existing notion that plain language and legal translation are incompatible, while also inviting further research. Tackling some common objections to plain language and relying on three brief examples, I posit that if we define plain language as nothing more (and nothing less) than just seeking clarity, then plain language is perfectly compatible with legal translation.

Key words: plain language, clarity, legal translation, fidelity to source, literality.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo breve es cuestionar la idea de que el lenguaje claro y la traducción jurídica son incompatibles, al mismo tiempo que intenta alentar más investigación en la materia. Mediante el análisis de algunas objeciones comunes al lenguaje claro y analizando tres ejemplos simples, postulo que si definimos al lenguaje claro como nada más (y nada menos) que claridad, entonces este es perfectamente compatible con la traducción jurídica.

Palabras clave: lenguaje claro, claridad, traducción jurídica, fidelidad al texto Fuente, literalidad.

I. The Case for Plain Language

In April 2017, Neil Gorsuch, then-newest judge in the United States Supreme Court, made national headlines for consistently “sticking to plain language” in his decisions (Wolf 2017). Not too long after that, the Supreme Court of Canada began to publish plain language Cases in Brief claiming: “We’re doing this because we want to be more transparent and accessible to Canadians—but we’re also doing it because we must. The

⁷ *Paula Arturo* is a lawyer-linguist, law lecturer at Universidad Austral and linguistic consultant at Marval O’Farrell Mairal. She is the Head of Legal Affairs at the International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters and is currently serving a two-year term as administrator of the American Translators Association’s Law Division.

reality is that there are fewer journalists covering the Court than ever, and those who remain are pulled in many different directions. This is an attempt to fill the gap” (Sheppard 2018).

One would think plain language in courts is a new thing; but one would be wrong. Already in 1990, the U.S. Supreme Court had held in *Moskal v. United States* that: “In determining the scope of a statute, we look first to its language, giving the words used their ordinary meaning” (*Moskal v. United States*, 498 U.S. 103, 108 (1990)). And SCOTUS has consistently upheld this position ever since (see, for example, *Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc. v. Director, Office of Workers Compensation Programs, Dep’t of Labor*, 117 S. Ct. 796, 801 (1997)). In fact, both the Rehnquist and the Roberts Courts have consistently argued in favor of a plain language interpretation of a statute with very little dissent since the 1990s (Strauss 2016).

But Courts are not the only ones hopping aboard the plain language train. Many jurisdictions have plain language statutes in effect, including the U.S. and the U.K. Many law firms invest time and financial resources to ensure that all client and court-facing documents are written in plain language, yet legal translators are often reluctant to embrace plain language in legal translation.

“As secondary drafters,” they say, “the decision is not up to us.” To them, I say it depends on how you understand what plain language is. If plain language is about clarity, then the case for plain language in legal translation practically writes itself.

II. Some Middle Ground

Plain language is everywhere in the legal world: from how we draft laymen-facing documents like consumer contracts to how we address the courts. It raises questions; many of which have no straight-forward answer. And, while some plain language advocates argue that plain language is appropriate in every legal setting, not everyone agrees, counterarguing instead that plain language impoverishes or “dumbs down” legal language.

Regardless of whether you’re a plain language advocate or not, the most rational take on the matter of plain language lies somewhere in the middle. While there is merit to the

argument that not everything needs to be spelled out in laymen's terms (terms of art for example are sometimes the clearest and most precise way to get the message across), there is equal merit to the argument that at least laymen-facing documents need to be drafted in terms the average person can understand.

The same can be said about legal translation. While it is true that fidelity to source means nothing can be added or subtracted from the text we're translating and translators are bound to the tone, style and register of the source text, it is equally true that if plain language is about clarity, then plain language can easily be applied to legal translation without being unfaithful to source.

III. Main Misconceptions and Objections

Whenever one uses the terms *plain language* and *legal translation* in the same sentence, certain objections are sure to come up.

a. Dumbing it down

A common misconception about plain language is that it dumbs down the message, as if complex ideas necessarily require cryptic phrasing. The more complex the idea, apparently, the more impossibly convoluted we have to make it sound. But dumbing down a message and conveying it clearly are obviously not the same thing; and plain language is about the latter.

b. "Uglying" it up

Another common objection is that some languages are simply too musical and beautiful and too much of that music would be lost in plain language. But again, that objection parts from a misconception about what plain language is, which becomes very evident when we look at some of the guiding principles of legal drafting in plain language, such as:

- Avoid using multiple conditionals in a single sentence (which is another way of saying: one sentence, one condition)
- Avoid using the same word for multiple meanings (principle of consistent usage)

- Avoid double negatives or exceptions to exceptions (also known as common sense)

While all of these principles go a long way to clearly conveying the message, none of them involve sacrificing naturalness, flow or whatever people mean when they speak of the “music” or “beauty” of a language —unless by “beauty” what they mean is lack of structure, order or common sense.

c. Unpopular Means Bad

A common argument is that because plain language is not *wildly* popular, then it must be a bad idea. By that rationale, what makes an idea *good* is solely its popularity too. But just because something is wildly popular doesn't mean it's a good idea. There was a time when slavery was wildly popular and no person in their right mind today would argue that slavery is anything less than one of the most shameful collective mistakes of human history. Conversely, there was a time when people thought the telephone had too many shortcomings and look at how that turned out. We need a little more than popularity to decide against or in favor of plain language.

d. Confusing primary and secondary drafting

A common objection (and one that actually holds some merit) is that translators are not primary drafters. We are secondary drafters; and, as such, it's not up to us to decide whether plain language is to be used in the target text.

Granted. Secondary drafters are bound by fidelity to source.

But plain language is not about not using terms of art, it's about how we structure the language around those terms. And as secondary drafters, translators *can* restructure sentences for clarity in the target language, within reason.

Let's look at the following example:

Source	Standard Translation (Formal Equivalence)	Plain Language Translation
Se sostuvo que los apelantes, que eran empleados del Estado Nacional al momento de sufrir la lesión, debieron haber reclamado la indemnización en ese entonces.	It was sustained that, because the applicants were Federal employees at the time the injury occurred, they should have filed a compensation request at that time.	It was held that, because the applicants were Federal employees at the time of the injury, they should have filed a compensation request then.
Con el propósito de identificar el pago omitido, es posible que nos veamos en la necesidad de auditar las cuentas del Prestador a fin de lograr una mejor comprensión de las razones por las que se generó el error.	For the purpose of identifying the missing payment, we may need to audit the Vendor's accounts so we can gain a better understanding of the reasons why the error occurred.	To trace the missing payment, we may need to audit the Vendor's accounts to better understand the reasons why the error occurred.
Las presentes secciones describen los diferentes tipos de información que podrían satisfacer los requisitos de postulación de conformidad con la Circular 2.B en lo que respecta al programa.	The present sections describe the different types of information that could satisfy the application requirements in accordance with Circular 2.B as it would apply to this program.	These sections describe what different types of information meet the application requirements of Circular 2.B for this program.

Notice that nothing is added or taken away. The message remains exactly the same, terms of art are still there. All that's different is how the language around those terms is structured. With all this mind, if we define plain language as being about clarity, then there's no reason not to apply the principles of plain language drafting to legal translation. But to do that, we need to familiarize ourselves with those principles, which involves a much more robust analysis than that which I can offer here.

Bibliography

- Hart, H (1997). *The Concept of Law*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lessig, L. (1993). Fidelity in Translation. *Texas Law Review*, 1165-1268.
- Scalia, A., & Garner, B. (2008). *Making Your Case: The Art of Persuading Judges*. St Paul: Thomson/West.
- Sheppard, M.-A. (2020, November 18). Retrieved from Slaw: Canada's online legal magazine: <http://www.slaw.ca/2018/03/22/tomorrow-the-supreme-court-of-canada-will-start-publishing-plain-language-case-summaries/>
- Strauss, D. A. (2016). The Plain Language Court. *Cardozo Law Review*, 651-670
- Trudeau, C., & Cawthorne, C. (2017). The Public Speaks, Again: An International Study of Legal Communication. *University of Arkansas Little Rock Law Review*, 249-282.
- Wolf, R. (2017, April 28). Retrieved from USA Today: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/04/28/supreme-court-newest-justice-sticks-plain-language/100950306/>