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Contents

Articles	6
Co-constructing the curriculum through Exploratory Practice.....	7
Generating and using scripted role-plays in the teaching of interpreting and language....	18
Peer learning for post-beginner students of Japanese and Japanese students	37
The Linguistic Rebel: Semantic and Syntactic Peculiarity in the Use of Sound Symbolic Forms in Italian Disney Comics	49
Sexismo lingüístico. El tratamiento de algunos términos en los diccionarios ELE.....	67
Reviews	89
Daring to Speak. A Review of the Language Learning and Teaching Conference: Developing Speaking Skills (University of Leeds, 15 th September 2017)	90
Scholarbits	96
Grammar Teaching Ditty.....	97
Videos.....	102
Ártemis: Poetry in the Age of Eversion	103

Articles



Co-constructing the curriculum through Exploratory Practice

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Key words: English for Academic Purposes/ EAP, Exploratory Practice, Curriculum, Teacher development, Pre-sessional

In this paper, I outline the principles behind the development of an English for Academic Purposes pre-sessional programme, using Exploratory Practice as a framework. Through this framework, I argue, we are able to move beyond the issues of deciding what language and skills to teach, and when to do so, towards a more collaborative approach to language learning and teaching. This fits with the overall goal of EAP teaching, which is to meet student end need rather than work through arbitrarily created 'language levels'. By providing space within the curriculum for 'puzzlement' we move towards a 'praxis of not being sure' (Meyer & Land, 2005), thus encouraging students to take greater control of their own language learning journey and allowing opportunities for teachers to engage in scholarship within and through the curriculum, the syllabus and their own classroom practices.

INTRODUCTION

Where do you start when developing a curriculum for language teaching? With the whole language system available for potential inclusion, it can be difficult to know where to begin (and end). This becomes increasingly problematic when you are teaching students who come from a wide range of educational backgrounds, with differing levels of proficiency both in terms of knowledge of the code itself and of the ability to harness the various communicative skills needed to demonstrate this knowledge. What content is used as a vehicle to further develop these skills and understandings? How much time should be dedicated to the explicit teaching of structure in comparison to development of fluency? When the focus of language learning is to develop an understanding of, and ability to study within, a specific academic discipline, as is the case in teaching and learning English for Academic Purposes (EAP), to what extent is it necessary for the teacher and student to study language within the disciplinary context and through that particular discourse? In this paper I suggest a different approach to language (specifically EAP) curriculum development that removes the need to firmly answer the questions posed above and places the development and agency of both student and teacher at the centre. This moves the curriculum away from, as Lather (in Meyer & Land, 2005: 375) puts it 'one who knows' to a 'praxis of not being sure' or 'stuck places', where both student and teacher are conceived of as learners.

In order to do this, I argue that Exploratory Practice (EP), viewed as a pedagogical disposition, can become a principled underpinning for the theoretical and practical implementation of a curriculum. I also suggest that working through EP enables a move towards a more complex identity of multi-directional practices. With this position as a starting point, I outline here how, using EP as a framework to encourage 'curriculum as practice' (Young, 1998), I attempted to encourage and develop a more scholarly approach to both teaching and learning within and through a Higher Education, EAP curriculum.

WHAT IS EXPLORATORY PRACTICE?

Exploratory Practice is a framework of seven key principles upon which to base language classroom practice and pedagogy (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009). It works to combine research and practice within the everyday life of the classroom, encouraging collaboration between, and co-construction of learning amongst, teacher and learner; EP claims that this leads to both empowerment and greater quality of life for all involved. To date, Exploratory Practice (EP) has been described within this principled framework using language and concepts that speak directly to the (language) teaching and (language) learning practitioner. In this way alone it begins to act as a powerful tool in bridging the well documented gap between research and practice in education, arguing that it takes teacher research, action research and reflective practice 'a step further' (Hanks, 2015). By grounding itself so firmly in the everyday practice of the language learning classroom, it has been criticised for lacking theoretical foundations. However, EP does, in fact, claim connections with, and speak to, a strong, rich and eclectic theory base. This ranges from the more practically grounded work on language learner identity of both Kramsch (2009) and Norton (2000, 2016) to Freire's (1973) work on the dialogic relationship between educator and educatee. Whilst this is the most commonly cited influence on the development of EP (see Hanks, 2017), Hanks (2017) has also connected EP to Heidegger's concept of Dasein, or being-in-the world.

EXPLORATORY PRACTICE WITHIN THE EAP CONTEXT

My own experience of working through EP within an EAP context had, I argue, encouraged both a re-invigorated interest in my students (Bond, 2017) and a questioning of my own role and identity as a scholarly teacher (Bond, 2015). I consequently began to wonder whether a curriculum with EP principles at its heart would encourage a similar questioning approach amongst other EAP teaching staff, as well as their students. This questioning converged with a need for curriculum change on a particular EAP pre-session programme, an institution wide strategic focus on the scholarship of learning and teaching, and a generally shifting landscape within UK EAP practices.

EAP currently occupies a liminal space within UK Universities. Units sit uncomfortably both within service departments and a range of academic Schools (linguistics, education, business, for example). Those working in EAP frequently self-identify as non-academic language teachers, yet find themselves working within an academic environment. We are therefore at the epicentre of neoliberal activity within a University; easily privatised as a service unit and the focus of strategies of Internationalisation (Ding & Bruce, 2017).

Increasingly, 'becoming academic' is seen as a means of resisting privatisation (ibid), but also as a duty to our students if we are to truly support them to develop an understanding of the academic discourses and cultures they will be working in throughout their own academic career in a UK university. There is an 'expectation that we do not keep secrets, whether of discovery or of grounded doubt' (Schulman 2000: 50) and also that we continue to engage and question our own practice: 'not only does scholarship potentially contribute to knowledge it also acts as feedback for the practitioner in providing critique and comments' (Ding & Bruce, 2017).

However, with a full teaching timetable, little or no time allocation for research or scholarly activities and conflicting identities, resistance to scholarly engagement can be strong. In order to overcome this resistance, there needs to be a perception of time being available and of any scholarship activity having a direct impact on practice. This directly echoes the

principles of Exploratory Practice: that time spent on puzzling should not be burdensome and should reflect and be part of our usual classroom practices.

Arguably, scaling my own individual practice up into curriculum design for delivery by many could be seen as contradictory to the sense of agency and autonomy that are central to EP's theoretical principles. Yet, if we see the terms 'learner' and 'practitioner' (as used by Allwright & Hanks, 2009) as interchangeably referring to both teachers and students, the 5 statements about learners:

'Learners are both unique individuals (1) and social beings (2) who are capable of taking learning seriously (3), of taking independent decisions (4), and of developing as practitioners of learning (5)' (2009: 149-153, numbers added), and the principles for practitioners (2009:15):

- *Put 'quality of life' first;*
- *work primarily to understand classroom language learning life;*
- *involve everybody; work to bring people together;*
- *work also for mutual development; make the work a continuous enterprise;*
- *integrate the work for understanding into existing curricular practices (minimise the burden, maximise sustainability)*

also become interchangeable and applicable for all.

In this way, EP can be viewed as the underpinning, primary value on which the layers of curriculum design, curriculum enactment, syllabus development and individual lesson planning and teaching are placed. The enactment of the principles is phenomenological, requiring all participants to unlearn habits, to see strangeness in the ordinary and view classroom life differently. Teaching and learning practices become dynamic because they are not predetermined, dialectic through the need to synthesise contradictions without the obligation to become consensual, and dialogic as negotiation and puzzling for understanding takes place.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Teaching English for Academic Purposes can be seen to be formulaic, with parallels having been drawn with working in a factory on a production line (Hadley, 2015; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Bond, 2017; Morgan, 2009). The EAP practitioner becomes viewed as a technician and the curriculum based on indoctrinating students via a study skills approach to academic language use. However, increasingly there is a body of work that argues against this approach to EAP, ranging from work on Critical EAP (Benesch, 2001); the Academic Literacies movement (Lea & Street, 1998), as well as more recent discussions around the wide knowledge base required to work within the field of EAP (ranging from Systemic Functional Linguistics, genre theory; discourse analysis to corpus studies) (Ding & Bruce; 2017).

Whilst much has been written about the pedagogical implications of this work, with suggestions for practical implementation by the individual practitioner, there is less literature on how this can be framed within a fully developed EAP (pre-sessional) curriculum. Where there is direct reference to curriculum design (Bruce, 2011; Alexander, Argent & Spencer, 2008) discussion is largely around analysis of theoretical approaches or suggestions are based around the division of teaching into skills sets, with practical examples. Alternative literature is in the form of coursebooks (Alexander & Argent, 2010; de Chazal & Rogers, 2013), which do not allow for institutional peculiarities. This does not generally, therefore, create a clear picture of how to develop a curriculum which draws all aspects of EAP teaching together into a coherent, principled whole, whilst meeting the specific contextual needs of individual students and institutions.

However, the discourse does seem to suggest that curriculum design needs to allow for teachers and students to develop a more reflexive, investigatory and agential approach to their learning. This again connects to the EP propositions around 'learners' (Allwright & Hanks, 2009). Taking this approach to EAP, curriculum design needs, therefore, to consider both the teachers, the students and the context or purpose for learning. This includes the

knowledge base of our students' future academic discipline, including its epistemology and ontology. Essentially, an EAP curriculum needs to account for the agents involved in meaning making, and how they do and will interact and engage with each other.

Taking the principle of puzzling through EP as a starting point for a curriculum review, then, I re-framed the question 'How do we best teach EAP?' to the more grounded, practice-based and contextualised question of 'Why do we teach EAP the way we do in Leeds?' Through removing the theory-led, *best practice* question, a more reflexive and collective questioning was encouraged, basing work around *current* practice (Lefstein & Snell, 2015). Again, through integrating 'the work for understanding into existing curricular practices' (EP principle 7, Allwright & Hanks, 2009), this question also worked through the other EP principles of: working to understand classroom language learning life; involving everybody; working to bring people together and working for mutual development (Allwright, 2003; Hanks, 2017). In this way, the development of the curriculum took place within a shared and negotiated space, where all practitioners were given a voice and we worked together to develop and frame our understanding of what EAP meant in our own specific context.

CURRICULUM ENACTMENT

The curriculum itself also incorporated the principles and propositions of EP. One of the main truisms of EAP practice is that the curriculum should be based on a needs analysis. Yet this is fraught with problems and contradictions. The needs of whom? The students, who come from diverse educational backgrounds, with a range of linguistic strengths and weaknesses? Or the receiving departments, who have an equally diverse range of discourses, technical and conceptual vocabulary? A truly needs based curriculum cannot, therefore, predict and formulaically reproduce materials or plans for learning prior to the registration of a specific cohort of students. It is, however, possible to conclude that students **need**: to understand the expectations their specific subject will have of them both academically and linguistically (at Masters' level this includes the ability to carry out

research); to develop their abilities to think both independently and critically; to find ways of taking control of their own language learning within and through their disciplinary studies. In short, the aim of an EAP curriculum should be to support students in a way that empowers them through the knowledge and understanding they develop on our programmes. Again, these broad 'needs' correlate directly to the EP propositions about learners.

By including a specific EP project in Term 1 of a 4 term pre-session programme, students are encouraged to develop an understanding of all of the areas outlined above. They are encouraged to identify their own puzzle around their own specific language learning journey, within a new UK HE context and work to investigate and understand this puzzle. This removes the focus on pre-planned formulaic language teaching which may or may not be useful for the cohort, and places the responsibility for learning directly with the student. The teacher works to support a diverse range of needs – moving from working as a technician towards the more demanding role of expert advisor, meanwhile also working to understand their own puzzles around the work carried out within the classroom.

Understanding their own language learning puzzles encourages students to take ownership of their learning and moves understanding away from language as seen as something learned in a linear and structured fashion. Working through Exploratory Practice also speaks to the principles of task-based language learning and moves students towards an understanding of what a research-led pedagogy might look like. This transition towards student-as-researcher continues throughout the curriculum in Terms 2-4 as students move beyond the language classroom towards a more specific focus and investigation of the language, discourse and cultures of their chosen discipline.

My own current research suggests that this work is vital in helping students make a shift across the liminal space of language as a threshold concept (Meyer & Land, 2005), where they begin to see their L2 not simply as a code or an 'inert crust' (Voloshinov et al, 1973:48) but as carrying underpinning 'psychological and ideological elements' (Pilcher & Richards, 2017) that can only be constructed and understood within specific contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

EP began as a novel approach to language practitioner research that worked to directly include students as powerful actors in the process of learning and teaching, rather than as objects of study. I would argue that at its most powerful, EP is (both simply and complexly) an attitude and approach to teaching and learning which embeds the principles of co-construction and co-operation that are increasingly highlighted as a goal of higher education practices. By using EP principles as a central focus of curriculum development and enactment they become a constant; the work becomes 'a continuous enterprise' (Principle 6). These principles are vital in order to meet the specific needs of specific students within a general EAP curriculum, and to maintain teacher engagement, development and scholarship. Allowing scholarship and development to take place both within and through the curriculum and teaching practices, the perceived burden of time is removed and the natural ebb and flow of interest and engagement made allowance for. The curriculum becomes a dynamic space for empowerment and for dialogic and dialectic learning and scholarship to take place.

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Generating and using scripted role-plays in the teaching of interpreting and language

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Key words: scripted role-play, teaching interpreting, language learning, speaking skills, participation

INTRODUCTION

In response to undergraduate calls for more vocational modules for students of French at the University of Leeds, I designed a level-2 'Introduction to Professional Translation and Interpreting' (IPTI). Students participate in role-plays throughout the year and so learn, through experience, observation, and feedback/discussion, the interpreting skills on which they are assessed.¹ In this article, we shall look at the rationale behind the use and form(s) of role-play in the teaching of interpreting. We shall explore the ideas that scripted role-plays 'work' better than semi- or unscripted scenarios, and that generating scripts is preferable to 'borrowing' existing scenarios. There will then follow some comments on how role-plays can be used in a 50-minute seminar. To conclude, we shall discuss more general benefits of using scripted role-plays in the teaching of foreign languages.

Role-play scenarios – whether scripted, semi-scripted, or unscripted – are used in a wide variety of pedagogical contexts (for example, see Alden, 1999; Schweickert & Heeren, 1999;

¹ In semester 1, students submit a portfolio (including a glossary and reflection). In semester 2, assessment is based on a 10-minute exam consisting of an interpreting role-play and sight translation.

Kettula & Berghäll, 2013). The principal reasons cited by non-linguists for using role-play in their teaching are that they:

- promote participation;
- enhance engagement;
- allow students to experience different perspectives.

In the case of teaching interpreting, as well as improving confidence in speaking skills, role-plays enhance other skills such as emotional intelligence, and can also be used to inform students about health issues.

In IPTI, the mode of 'community interpreting' (see below) is used: most scenarios involve a GP and a patient. Whichever mode is chosen, questions soon arise regarding the framing, composition, and presentation of the role-plays. For example, is it more realistic, and/or more beneficial for student learning, for the GP and patient *not* to be able to see each other's lines? Is there anything to be said for providing scripts with both roles in English (and so expecting the GP, for example, to sight-translate his/her role)? How should students be expected to prepare for the role-plays?

The mode of 'community interpreting'

Interpreting can take many forms. Without wishing to get embroiled in taxonomy, the mode chosen for this module is 'community interpreting' (CI). Roughly put, this can certainly be understood as distinct from simultaneous interpreting (but not necessarily from *chuchotage*) and can justifiably be seen as different to interpreting in the contexts of conferences, business, and the courts. Many understand CI as the relevant mode when enabling non-speakers of English, for example, to access services such as health and social care in the UK.²

² Some writers would include 'court interpreting' in their definition of 'community interpreting'. See Holly Mikkelsen, 2017.

Choosing CI as the mode of interpreting for this level-2 module offers many advantages over other modes. In business interpreting, for example, it is common practice to interpret in the third-person. In CI, '*Oui!*' would be rendered as '*Yes!*' and not as '*Madame Bovary agrees strongly with that.*' By reducing the amount of grammatical manipulation required, CI is arguably – and appropriately, at this level – easier to perform.³

The style of CI is relatively informal. This makes any need to seek clarification or repetition less daunting.⁴ Moreover, whilst all students will have personal experience of seeking health advice, not all students will have experience of participating in formal conferences, business meetings, or legal proceedings. The context of CI is one to which all students can relate. This helps them to produce language that is appropriate, authentic, and meaningful in context.

A potential argument against the use of CI is that – in interpreting in the first-person – the interpreter 'becomes' the patient. This is recognised as a risk for interpreters working with patients with PTSD, for instance.⁵ One solution is to avoid certain subjects that may be deemed either distressing or 'near the bone'. Another solution is to teach students that refusing to interpret is a perfectly acceptable choice (see Hale, 2007: 150-51 & 157). The same would pertain where a student with strong religious beliefs or certain cultural traditions, for example, would be uncomfortable with role-playing in a situation involving 'taboo' subjects – for some – such as abortion. Empowering and encouraging students to make this decision – should they feel the need – itself improves assertiveness and raises professional awareness of ethics and codes of practice.

To script or not to script?

³ Oddly, however, this appears to be counter-intuitive to students, who will typically begin interpreting with the frame of 'S/He's just said...'

⁴ Before role-playing, students are taught to 'Leave the Ego at the door'. Briefly, this means not 'blagging' or 'bluffing'. Students are encouraged to seek clarification when they have not understood/heard something or if their notes/memory mean that they have forgotten something.

⁵ Identifying with a patient with PTSD can have an adverse effect on the interpreter. For example, see Lor, 2012; Berthold & Fischman, 2014.

Scripts are not the only option. For some, 'authentic spoken dialogues are the optimal teaching instrument' (Rudvin & Tomassini, 2011: 140). Another ideal involves two teachers who 'act as if they really need the services of the student interpreter' (Sandrelli, 2001: 173-96). Hale discusses another ideal, which involves 'service providers in classroom role-plays to provide authentic practical experience for both students and providers' (Hale, 2007: 171). After a brief analysis of the suitability of these formats, we shall look at different ways of presenting scripted role-plays.

In the context of IPTI, using 'authentic spoken dialogues' would be unwieldy and impractical in the classroom. Moreover, interpreting disembodied voices cuts out the human: body language is sidelined, spontaneity is impossible. Moreover, what the dialogues gain in realism is arguably lost every time that the pause button is pushed. There is also the ethical issue of confidentiality to overcome – where would these 'real-world' recordings come from? Beyond that, and beyond the classroom, however, the format itself would work well as a complementary way for students to practise on their own (see Hansen & Shlesinger, 2007). Having two teachers play roles for the benefit of one student at a time is again – in the context of IPTI – unfeasible. With small groups and at a higher level, perhaps, this format would work well. It certainly remedies the issue of spontaneity, as Sandrelli discusses (Sandrelli, 2001). In IPTI, however, it has the disadvantage of reducing opportunities for students to role-play and to see the interpreting process for themselves through the eyes of the doctor and patient.

A potentially more attractive alternative – whilst prey to the same issues as in having two teachers play the roles – is to involve real service providers. Establishing links with professional communities outside the university would be progressive and mutually beneficial, as Hale suggests. However, the barrier here might be financial or due to the workloads of such service providers. That said, if only one 'real' service provider were to participate somehow in one seminar per term/semester, all parties concerned would be enriched and gain new insights.

As for scripts, we cannot assume that *all* students in any given group will have the confidence, imagination, or knowledge to improvise a patient/doctor role from a skeletal (unscripted) scenario. Hale summarises the dilemma very well:

Scripted dialogues are useful for controlling content, grammatical structures and vocabulary, but unless they contain features of spoken discourse and are well acted out, they will sound stilted and artificial. On the other hand, unscripted dialogues, where actors are provided with a scenario to improvise, can be useful for spontaneity but may lack depth of content and richness of language. (Hale, 2007: 171).

Given that IPTI students will participate in some 18 role-plays in the course of the module, their (scripted) role-playing will evolve diachronically with practice and through routine.

Scripted roles offer the advantage of enabling everyone – regardless of confidence or readiness to take risks – to participate in the scenarios, from the first to the last. They facilitate inclusivity. It could be argued that students are not assessed on their acting skills, imagination, or ability to improvise, and so should not be given this extra pressure during teaching. But improvisation and ‘Theoretical Theatre’ (in the form of unscripted role-play) are innovative and experiential teaching formats that could work well, with appropriate training and introduction (see Seyfang, Hargreaves, & Lorenzoni, 2017).

Some students embrace role-play with gusto. These students are *not necessarily* the ‘best’ – in terms of language production – but my hypothesis is that they will improve quickest, through being ready to ‘take risks’. Other students, on the other hand, may well laugh or even cringe at the invitation to ‘ham up’ the role of the patient. And these students – who may seem more shy or insecure – are *not necessarily* those with the least developed language skills.⁶ For me, inclusivity is a key factor and is best facilitated by scripted role-plays. Scripts also reduce the risk of the scenario coming to an embarrassing halt.

⁶ Interpreting is a great leveller. In training students, the tutor may well see pride come before a fall – in the over-confident student – and tears from the quiet perfectionist.

The fact that different triads perform the same (scripted) role-plays in the same seminar/session is also beneficial when it comes to feedback and discussion. Different translation strategies and solutions for particular (shared) problems will inevitably arise and so provide useful material – within the seminar/session – for comparison and reflection. Semi- or unscripted scenarios are arguably better in terms of offering more realistic material – facilitating human contact and the naturalness of language, for example. Expecting students to improvise the roles of GP and patient, however, is quite demanding. It involves level-2 students coming up with the specialist language of a French-speaking doctor, asking questions and delivering content in a natural, convincing manner, and in a suitable register. This could potentially be overcome by giving the group three ‘complaints’ to research – before role-play – and so allowing students to prepare for their respective roles. I fear, however, that this might involve an inordinate amount of co-ordination.

A borrower be?

‘Borrowing’ or adapting pre-existing role-play scenarios that can be found online, for example, might appear to be an attractive, time-saving option. In my experience, however, material appropriate to borrow soon runs out. The quality of ‘free’ material – especially online – is frequently of a standard requiring much editing and correction, thus proving to be a false economy. Rudvin & Tomassini (2011) have paved the way in publishing good quality materials, but the volume of such material remains low.

Ultimately, I have found it more time-efficient to write my own scripts. Having chosen a medical setting for the role-plays, I mine relevant information by consulting France’s most popular online health site, *Doctissimo*. With a particular complaint in mind – say, insomnia – I will research realistic signs and symptoms for the role of the patient. The site also provides real advice and treatment which can be cannibalised for the role of the doctor. The logic and conventions of a GP appointment mean that there is, in a sense, a formula to follow, and this makes composition relatively easy.

Writing the scripts myself has enabled me to choose certain complaints for certain reasons. For example, potentially embarrassing or taboo subjects such as STDs can be broached in the role-play. From an interpreting point of view, this may represent a test of maturity, neutrality, and *sang-froid*. Linguistically, the challenge may be one of vocabulary. And given the average age of my students, the health advice contained in the role-play (and bolstered by the accompanying sight-translation) could serve their own well-being. Sadly, for example, depression is currently rife among students. For this reason, in the run-up to Christmas, I use a scripted role-play and sight translation on the subject of depression/SAD. For the sake of variety, other complaints have included: gastroenteritis, hypoglycemia, head injury, asthma, eczema, flu, stress, and stomach ache.

In writing the scripts, the tutor can ensure a balance between content that is relatively easy to translate and material that may prove more challenging. Idioms, proverbs, metaphor, and culturally-loaded language can be incorporated into the script in order to ensure that any unthinking word-for-word translation is exposed as inadequate. For example, in one scenario, the English-speaking patient says, '*That's a relief, doc! I thought it was my ticker!*' Many level-2 students may attempt to give an interlineal translation such as '*C'est un relief, doc! J'ai pensé (que) c'était mon tiqueur!*' This rendering could give rise to all sorts of discussion and reflection:

1. The French '*relief*' only overlaps with the English '*relief*' in the sense of 'raised pattern'. The meaning is synonymous with 'Phew!' and so a more communicative translation might be '*Quel soulagement!*' This raises the issue of 'false friends'.
2. For '*doc*', students might be expected to raise the register in French (by rendering it as '*docteur*'), to match the formality of the setting.
3. The simple past in English would not be rendered, here, with the *passé composé* in French – which is the tense that many level-2 students would choose (out of habit). Either the imperfect or pluperfect would be more idiomatic in French: '*Je pensais / J'avais pensé.*'

4. The use of *franglais* could show a lack of understanding of the original – in which case, clarification should be sought. Alternatively, it exposes an inability to find a synonym or alternative rendering with the same meaning (for example, through transposition: ‘*un problème cardiaque*’). Rendering ‘ticker’ as ‘*cœur*’ is accurate, communicative, and appropriate in terms of register.

As we see, this compact intervention raises issues of lexis, register, grammar, and practice. They are examples of issues that students would be expected to tackle – should they arise – in subsequent discussion.

SCRIPTS: A CHOICE OF STYLES AND APPROACHES

If writing scripts is a tutor’s preferred choice – for reasons of time, space, money, logistics, practical organisation, and in view of different students’ needs and capacities – another question presents itself: how should the scripts be presented?

The EN-EN model⁷

For reasons of expediency, I began by using scripts with both roles in English – EN-EN (see Figure 1): the target-language (TL) speaker is expected to sight-translate the role (EN>TL) on the spot. Sight-translation is another valuable skill that is developed by the module. However, if it is poorly executed, then this is not a fair challenge for the interpreter: the TL that is produced risks being inauthentic, unidiomatic, and unintelligible. It can be a case of ‘garbage in, garbage out’. With my level-2 students, who have typically not yet spent a term or year in a French-speaking country, the EN-EN model has not worked well. It might be best to drop this model and allow students to focus on one skill at a time: that is, strive for maximum realism in the interpreting exercises and practise sight-translation separately.

⁷ I first devised scripts to teach CI to groups of adult learners with various languages: it was not uncommon for one group to be made up of speakers of TLs as diverse as Chinese, French, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Mirpuri, Pashto, Polish, Slovenian, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Producing EN-TL scenarios for each language was understandably unthinkable (for innumerable practical reasons).

You are an African national in the UK, pregnant with your second child. A midwife has come to your home with an interpreter, as you speak very little English.

[Whilst the text, below, is in English, as part of the role-play, (sight-)translate it into idiomatic French. Ham up the role of the patient as much as you like!]

I. Midwife: How are you feeling today?

1. Patient: I feel a little bit nauseous in the mornings and sleepy during the day.

II. Midwife: Let's hope that will wear off soon. It generally does. I'd like to start by checking some details.

2. Patient: That's fine. I'm all ears.

III. Midwife: I have your name down as Fatou Ndeke. Your date of birth is 16 July 1995. Are you married, single, divorced or widowed?

Figure 1: Sample of EN-EN script (IPTI course materials).

The temptation for the patient to translate too literally, or word-for-word, seems too great for most level-2 students – *especially* when they have the EN text in front of them. In this example, patients quickly run into trouble when faced with the adjectives 'nauseous', 'sleepy' and the expression 'to be all ears'. If they come up with '*nauséuse*', '*endormie*', and '*être tout(es) oreille(s)*', there is in fact every chance that the interpreter will translate these correctly – that is, as the intervention reads in the original EN. However, this is not helpful in interpreter training or language learning: it exposes the interpreter to TL that is neither authentic/idiomatic or of appropriate register. Nor does it demand the same dexterity or ability to re-phrase the TL into idiomatic EN.

The EN-TL model

A more 'realistic' way to present the script is with one EN role and the other as a TL role. Some of my role-plays are set in the UK, so the doctor's role is in English and the role of the patient (whether a francophone tourist or asylum-seeker) is in French. This can be flipped (see Figure 2). The EN-TL model ensures that the TL (French, in this case) is correct,

idiomatic, and suited to the level.⁸ This allows the francophone role-player to concentrate on his/her accent, pronunciation, and intonation. More importantly, perhaps, this represents a fairer challenge to the interpreter.

You have been asked to interpret at a GP appointment in France: the patient is an elderly British expat.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| I. Docteur: | Bonjour. Asseyez-vous. Alors, dites-moi... Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas? |
| 1. Patient: | It's mostly my stomach, doctor. For the last day or so, I've had diarrhoea. But my whole body aches and I feel nauseous. |
| II. Docteur: | Avez-vous d'autres symptômes? Des maux de tête, par exemple? |
| 2. Patient: | Yes, I do/have. I've been feeling very tired. |
| III. Docteur: | Je vois. Y a-t-il eu un changement dans votre régime? |
| 3. Patient: | No... Wait. Yes. I did eat out, on Wednesday. At that new restaurant in town. |
| IV. Docteur: | D'accord. Je vais vous prendre la tension. Remontez votre manche, s'il vous plaît... C'est cela... Voilà. Votre tension artérielle est bonne. Vous buvez de l'alcool? |

Figure 2: Sample of EN-TL script (IPTI March exam, 2017).

Note that some elements of contextual awareness can be written into the scenario. Whether the patient replies, 'Yes, I do' or 'Yes, I have' depends on how 'Avez-vous..?' is interpreted: 'Do you have..?' or 'Have you got..?' Also note that features of spoken language – hesitation, self-correction – can be written into the scripts by the tutor. Such features keep the role-players on their toes.

The EN/TL (unseen) model

In the EN-TL and EN-EN models discussed above, the GP and patient can see each other's lines. This maximises contextual understanding and provides an opportunity for them to

⁸ Whilst I write both parts, as a non-native speaker of French I always have the text checked by a colleague who is a native speaker of French. This ensures that the language is accurate, idiomatic, and appropriate.

assess the performance of the interpreter. However, a disadvantage of this format is that they can too easily be tempted to focus on the page. This hinders eye-contact and makes body language awkward. One remedy for this is to provide the GP and patient with EN-unseen and TL-unseen scripts, respectively (see Figures 3a & 3b).

V. Docteur:	Voyons, voyons. Vous savez sans doute qu'il s'agit d'un asthme. Je vous prescris deux dispositifs d'inhalation. L'un – c'est bleu – pour les crises aiguës. L'autre – de couleur brunâtre – pour un traitement à long terme.
5. Patient:	_____
VI. Docteur:	Pour le moment, je vous conseille d'éviter la consommation de tout acide citrique. Buvez autre chose, en attendant que le traitement apporte ses fruits.
6. Patient:	_____
VII. Docteur:	Un dernier mot: consommez l'alcool avec modération. Dans le long terme, sa consommation touche bien d'autres aspects de la santé.
7. Patient:	_____

Figure 3a: Sample of TL-unseen script (IPTI course materials).

V. Docteur:	_____
5. Patient:	Will I still be able to drink champagne and white wine?
VI. Docteur:	_____
6. Patient:	Oh... Okay.
VII. Docteur:	_____
7. Patient:	Thanks for your help, doctor. Goodbye.

Figure 3b: Sample of EN-unseen script (IPTI course materials).

When the patient (reading), for example, is answering the doctor's question, the doctor cannot see the patient's text and is more inclined to look at the patient and listen to what s/he is saying. When it comes to the interpreter to relay what the patient has said, the doctor cannot 'follow' the text on the page: s/he will therefore be more likely to make eye contact

with the interpreter and will have to rely on his/her own memory in order to gauge the quality of the interpreting.

In my experience, EN/TL (unseen) has proven to be the students' preferred format. Roles and tasks are clear and achievable and the scenario 'flows' more smoothly:

- the EN patient can focus on playing the patient, has also to listen to the doctor's TL, and so can assess the quality of interpreting;
- the TL doctor can read the script in French, focusing on pronunciation and delivery, but also has to listen to the patient for information, and is thus able to assess the quality of interpreting;
- the interpreter is guaranteed to hear good quality language to interpret (both EN and TL) for a doctor and patient who will be listening to – and not following on the page – what is being said.

Realism in this form of role-play is an aspiration – up to a point – but it is not an end in itself. Students seem naturally to embrace the 'playful' aspect more than trying to be realistic. This is a timely reminder of the importance of enabling students to *role-play*.

Alternative scenarios

In the name of variety, I have also experimented with other ways of generating role-plays. For example, I based one dialogue on 'Doctor, doctor' jokes (see Figure 4). Humour – as we know – is difficult (and sometimes impossible) to translate. To be fair to the interpreter, the 'Doctor, doctor' jokes incorporated into the script had to be translatable. Thus, perhaps the most famous ('– I feel like a pair of curtains... – Well, pull yourself together.') was rejected, as the English idiom has no obvious equivalent in French. Watching different triads role-play this scenario was very revealing. Some students – in whichever role – did not get the joke(s) at all. Typically, all role-players would *eventually* understand the logic behind the scenario and the interpreter would consciously ensure that the 'punchlines' made sense. Success, in this case, was gauged by groaning/laughter.

4. Patient:	Doctor, sometimes I feel like I'm a telephone...
V. Docteur:	Alors, je vais vous prescrire des comprimés... S'ils n'ont aucun effet, la semaine prochaine, vous m'appellerez.
5. Patient:	Doctor, everyone thinks I'm a liar...
VI. Docteur:	Franchement, je ne peux pas le croire...
6. Patient:	Finally, doctor... Every night I dream there are monsters under my bed. What can I do?
VII. Docteur:	Enlevez les pieds du lit.

Figure 4: Sample of 'Doctor, doctor' script (IPTI course materials).

An even quicker way to generate pages of material is to find a decent translation (whether EN-TL or TL-EN) of a play.⁹ I have experimented with a translation of Ionesco's *La Cantatrice chauve* (The Bald Prima Donna). I selected two scenes that represented a tough test – because confusing and amusing (see Figure 5). In the real world, we do not always understand the logic behind an utterance or the way in which it is phrased. Example: when interpreting, once, with a solicitor and her client (a refugee), the solicitor seemed to snap and adopt an almost rude, aggressive tone. My interpretation switched accordingly to a similar – if not quite so forceful – tone, though I did not know why the solicitor had done this. I had a word with her, after the meeting was over. She explained that her choice had been measured and deliberate: she wanted to provoke the client into providing more detailed evidence for her case – which she obtained. It was a case of being cruel to be kind.

⁹ In this way, each triad can work with one TL version and one EN version.

MR. MARTIN:	Excuse me, madam, but it seems to me, unless I'm mistaken, that I've met you somewhere before.
MRS. MARTIN:	I, too, sir. It seems to me that I've met you somewhere before.
MR. MARTIN:	Was it, by any chance, at Manchester that I caught a glimpse of you, madam?
MRS. MARTIN:	That is very possible. I am originally from the city of Manchester. But I do not have a good memory, sir. I cannot say whether it was there that I caught a glimpse of you or not!
MR. MARTIN:	Good God, that's curious! I, too, am originally from the city of Manchester, madam!
MRS. MARTIN:	That is curious!
MR. MARTIN:	Isn't that curious! Only, I, madam, I left the city of Manchester about five weeks ago.
MRS. MARTIN:	That is curious! What a bizarre coincidence! I, too, sir, I left the city of Manchester about five weeks ago.
MR. MARTIN:	Madam, I took the 8:30 morning train which arrives in London at 4:45.
MRS. MARTIN:	That is curious! How very bizarre! And what a coincidence! I took the same train, sir, I too.

Figure 5: Sample of Theatre script – EN role (IPTI course materials).

In interpreting this nonsense, students learn to translate what they hear – not what they think they should hear. With the suspension of common sense and logic, students have to listen very carefully and remain calm and professional, though the situation is absurd.

A TYPICAL SEMINAR

Effective interpreting depends on good language skills (listening/comprehension, the ability to re-phrase/re-formulate), note-taking/memory, and preparation (of vocabulary and contextual understanding). For Simpson, 'role-play has three phases: *preparation*, *interaction*, and *discussion*'. (Simpson, 1985: 77). One way of helping students prepare for the scenarios is to give them 'vocab lists'. These can be presented as glossaries – with the EN-TL translation – or as a list of English terms, solely, requiring translation/research. For the exam, students are given a keyword.

Ideally, therefore, all 12 students will arrive at the seminar having done their research and having learned relevant vocabulary. Splitting into four triads, and moving – physically, say, to the corners of the room – so as to maximise the space (for reasons of noise/interference), students may be asked to re-cap on the skills, tools, and approaches that they are learning. For example: note-taking, ‘leaving the Ego at the door’, avoiding ‘ADO’ (addition, distortion, omission), maintaining eye contact, and being free to seek clarification. Each triad will decide which member is playing which part and is then given two scripts: one for the GP and one for the patient. The triads are then left to get on with the role-play. My approach, as tutor, is to listen – unobtrusively – to the different triads with the aim of spotting examples of good and bad practice. For each role-play, students are encouraged to:

- give feedback to the interpreter on his/her performance;
- focus on linguistic issues that proved challenging;
- discuss alternative strategies/solutions for said issues.

As each triad will work at a different pace, it is up to the tutor to be alert and ensure that this model is repeated three times – within the seminar/session – so that each member of each triad has the opportunity to play each of the roles. Time should be left at the end of the three role-plays for group discussion and reflection.

Student attendance cannot, however, be guaranteed. The tutor, therefore, must be willing to step into the breach, if one triad – for example – is short of a member. Sometimes, the only answer in the face of absentees – depending on numbers – is to ask certain students to work in couples. This can be very confusing for them – certainly initially – and is most unrealistic. But the students that I have observed in such circumstances have adapted surprisingly well – and some even prefer to work in this way.

Before the group has bonded, it may be that peer feedback verges on the trite. Students are often wonderfully supportive of each other, offering unreserved praise and congratulations on a ‘great performance’. That said, feedback will typically evolve – to be more critical

(constructive/reflective) – and students are more than able to identify challenges and discuss possible strategies/solutions. Group discussion, at the end of the seminar, is an opportunity for the tutor – armed with examples gleaned from eavesdropping – to lead further discussion on particular issues and encourage critical thinking.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

IPTI was designed as a ‘taster’ for students interested in professional translation and interpreting. Few – if any – of the students on this module may ever practise professionally as interpreters. What has stood out, however – from what I have observed and learnt from student feedback – is that:

- IPTI (level-2) students are very keen to use their TL;
- students see interpreting as a challenge;
- through practice/role-play, students gain better understanding of certain aspects of translation theory.

Having never – typically – spent a term/ year in a French-speaking country, their confidence in speaking, in particular, may be at a low, given that they are still concentrating on grappling with grammar and building vocabulary. With a framework for acquiring vocabulary (the glossary), an understanding of the dangers of *faux amis* (through research), and being regularly obliged to use their EN/TL language skills (in a scripted role-play), students have ample opportunity to use the TL. Through practice (of speaking and listening), students learn where their TL weaknesses lie: whether in certain aspects of grammar (for example, choice of tense) or, more generally, in their ability to paraphrase (through re-formulation, re-structuring, or translating ‘phrase function rather than structure’ – see Armstrong, 2005: 120).

¹⁰ Hale has listed myriad aspects – or ‘points of departure’ – that may be prompted by role-plays for ‘discussions on language- and communication-related features’. See Hale, 2007: 141.

Interpreting is certainly a challenge. It exposes the interpreter's ability in both languages, demands professionalism, understanding of ethics, as well as preparation/research, and is physically and mentally demanding. In addition to language skills, it requires stamina, emotional intelligence, empathy, resilience, and (quick) lateral thinking. Learning about the theory and practice of interpreting and practising interpreting skills, I should argue, is a win-win for students. It helps them to decide whether interpreting is for them, career-wise, whilst enabling them to improve the above qualities and skills.

The process of interpreting is itself beneficial more generally to language acquisition and understanding how languages 'work' – in context. Students make more of an effort to avoid word-for-word translation (especially TL>EN) in an interpreting setting – with their peers – than they would in writing. When the language is serving a tangible purpose – for example, getting a patient to roll up his/her sleeve – the success of interpreting can be gauged immediately. Students quickly learn the importance of paraphrasing – if only to save face. With its stock of prefixes and suffixes, medical language is useful in enabling students to discern 'patterns' (for example: *appendicite*, *dermatite*, *hépatite*, *méningite*, *thrombophlébite*). It also exposes unfathomable cultural differences in the usage of French and English. For example, the impersonal French structure (*J'ai mal à la jambe*, 'I have pain/ache in *the* leg') in contrast with the English structures: 'My leg hurts', 'I've (got) a pain in *my* leg'. Another cultural difference concerns register. For example, the highly technical *arcade sourcilière* ('superciliary arch', 'supraorbital arch/ridge') is used commonly in France. In everyday English (and at the GP's), this is simply the 'eyebrow'.

In conclusion, scripted role-plays might have their drawbacks but they present many advantages. For students, scripted (CI) role-play scenarios:

- minimise stress and maximise inclusivity;
- build confidence in performing the interpreter's role and in speaking, generally;
- allow them to understand the interpreting process –reflectively – from three angles;
- involve risk-taking (in a safe environment) which can be fun/exciting/challenging;

- can have a positive impact on students' well-being and awareness of health issues;
- improve understanding of grammar;
- improve knowledge of vocabulary – including specialised vocabulary;
- serve to help prepare students for their term/year abroad.

For tutors, generating and using scripted role-plays affords:

- a chance for the tutor-cum-playwright *manqué* to design and control the content of the learning material;
- the possibility to tailor language complexity according to level;
- an opportunity to include information that will be beneficial to students in view of their term/year abroad and general health/well-being.

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Peer learning for post-beginner students of Japanese and Japanese students

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Key words: Peer learning, Japanese language, post-beginner, students of Japanese, Japanese students

This paper discusses two peer learning projects, namely the Joint Presentation Project and YouTube Video Project, involving post-beginner students of Japanese and Japanese year abroad students at the University of Leeds. The discussion will focus particularly on the merits of the projects and some problems arisen. The results of a pilot study in 2015-16 suggested the need to reconsider the role of the teachers, as some students did not contribute to the projects as much as we expected them to do. Thus, the structure and assessment of the projects were revised and the teachers were given more active roles as supporters and facilitators in order to promote the students' peer learning activities beyond the classroom. Student online feedback at the end of each semester showed that the projects not only increased student opportunities for in-depth communications using the target languages, but also enhanced their cultural and linguistic awareness, as well as their motivation and personal development through the sense of achievement and collaboration. In addition, the issue of unequal contributions to the project observed in 2015-16 seemed to have been resolved to some degree, due to changes in the structure and assessment of the project. However, it was also noted that the timing of the project should be more carefully planned so as not to conflict with other academic commitments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Joining a degree programme and settling into student life can be stressful. Some students adapt well on their own, while others struggle to settle in. For international students, studying in the UK can be an overwhelming experience as they adjust to life in an English-speaking environment. It requires a major transition both in their personal lives as well as in University life.

At the University of Leeds first year students who are placed on the Japanese language course for post-beginner level particularly take time to become accustomed to the teaching methods used at the University. They are often uncomfortable practicing Japanese in conversation. Apart from practicing the language with their fellow students or teachers, other opportunities to use and practice the language are limited, and this sometimes causes them to lose motivation (Morimoto, 2014). At the same time, some students from Japan who come to learn English at Leeds feel isolated and lonely because they have insufficient confidence in their ability to communicate in English outside the classroom.

Peer learning, where both Japanese and Leeds students can meet and learn together, was introduced into the Japanese language curriculum for post-beginner level students as a pilot study in the 2015-16 academic year. The aim of this was to develop the students' learning in a more comprehensive manner including enhancing cultural awareness and communication skills. The benefits of this innovation were presented at the 20th Symposium on Japanese Language Education in Europe, at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, July 2016 and published as "A Showcase of Peer Learning for Post-beginner Students with Japanese students". This new paper is the second report of the study and examine the effectiveness of peer learning.

2. PEER LEARNING

Topping (2005: 631) defines peer learning as ‘the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions’. It is a ‘learning process in which learners learn from their peers’ (Lincoln and McAllister, 1993: 18). Boud *et al.* (1999: 413) describes peer learning as ‘teaching and learning strategies in which students learn with and from each other without the immediate intervention of a teacher’. Peer learning encourages students to work with others and interacting helps them to develop essential skills and professional abilities in their life (Boud *et al.*, 1999; Falchikov, 2001). Piaget (1971: 180) claims that cooperation ‘is most apt to encourage real exchange of thought and discussion’. Vygotsky (1978) also emphasises the importance of peer learning. He says in his theory of the ‘Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)’ that learning occurs when learners are interacting and cooperating with their peers. Although the subjects of Piaget and Vygotsky were children, the same concept might apply to university students. All these studies suggest that peer learning is significant and can be applied to language learning in higher education.

3. PEER LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THE JAPANESE CLASS

Before 2015-16, we also used to invite Japanese students to attend our Japanese language classes occasionally for various activities. However, the Japanese students were mostly treated merely as ‘guests’ and their role was often limited to that of passive assistants rather than peer-learners. Therefore, we piloted peer learning as part of the curriculum in 2015-16 with a view to enhancing cultural awareness and developing the communication skills of both the students of Japanese and Japanese year abroad students, as well as improving their target language skills. Although the two projects (see the Section 3.2) were mostly well received and the participants gave positive feedback, we recognised the necessity of reviewing the role of the teachers¹¹, as some of the participants felt that not all of their group

¹¹ The authors of this paper were involved in the peer learning activities as teachers of the Japanese language modules.

members were participating actively in their projects, particularly outside class. Therefore, although students' autonomy should be respected to develop their intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000), it was noted that the teachers also need to play a more active role as supporters and facilitators. That is, the teachers must provide the students with clear guidance, monitor their progress and encourage them to collaborate with one another and work hard (Oeda and Morimoto, 2016). With these reflections in mind, we conducted the same peer learning activities again in 2016-17 with some necessary amendments to the structure and assessment.

3.1 Participants

Both Leeds students on Japanese degree programmes (LSJ) and Japanese year abroad students (JYA) participated in the peer learning activities as part of the curriculum for the first-year Japanese language module called 'Intermediate Japanese (IJ)'. This module was designed primarily for post A-level students. We find these students, in particular, need encouragement to study autonomously and collaboratively in order to enhance their motivation for studying Japanese and prepare themselves for the year abroad in Japan in their second year. This means that they must progress rapidly in their language study, and at the same time, they are also expected to gain a substantial understanding of Japanese culture and develop confidence and personal skills through effective communications. In 2016-17, seven students¹² took the module over two semesters and all were required to participate in the peer learning activities as part of the curriculum and assessment¹³. As for JYA, two different cohort of students participated in the peer learning activities in the first and second semester ('Semester 1' and 'Semester 2' hereafter). 12 Japanese students from the

¹² Out of the seven students, six were students on Japanese degrees and participated in the activities in both semesters, while two students on other degree programmes took part for one semester only. The latter two students did not plan to study abroad in Japan in the following year.

¹³ In response to the lack of participation by a few students in 2015-16, the project accounted for 10% of the overall assessment of the module.

same Japanese university participated in the peer learning project on a voluntary basis in Semester 1, all of whom were enrolled on a six-month intensive course in academic English in the University's Language Centre (LC)¹⁴. In Semester 2, a second group of seven Japanese exchange students, who were taking courses in their specialised subjects at Leeds, volunteered to be peer learners.

3.2 Activities

3.2.1. Presentation project

In each semester the students were given a different main task to promote peer learning. The task in Semester 1 was to give a group presentation in the students' target language (i.e. LSJ spoke in Japanese, while JYA resented in English). The students were asked to form a group of 4-5 people and choose a topic freely which would appeal both to LSJ and JYA. Three in-class sessions of 50 minutes each were allocated for the peer learning activities¹⁵. The first half of each session was spent on ice-breaking activities, such as discussing the students' hometowns and recommending interesting places in Leeds. Both LSJ and JYA were allowed to speak in both languages freely to encourage effective communication. Although the main purpose was to give both LSJ and JYA an equal opportunity to use their target languages, recent studies have demonstrated that the use of L1 in the language class has some merits in its own right (Nation, 2003). There was a two-week interval between session, and the whole of the final session was spent on the group presentations followed by questions and answers. The chosen topics of the four groups were "Tea culture in the UK and Japan", "Regional specialities in the UK and Japan", "Japanese and English proverbs" and "Slang in Japan and the UK". The styles of the presentations

¹⁴ Our special thanks both to Mr. Michael Parkin and Ms. Jessica Poole for helping us to recruit volunteers and liaise with their students.

¹⁵ In 2015-16, only two in-class sessions were arranged. However, in response to the students' feedback requesting more frequent class-time meetings, we added another in-class sessions for the interim report.

were varied and included relatively formal Power Point presentations, a TV game show and a series of skits.

3.2.2. YouTube video project

Three class sessions were arranged for the peer learning activities in Semester 2 as well. The main task was for a group of 3-4 students to use their target languages to create a joint YouTube video featuring drama, skits, documentaries or game shows. Each group was also asked to provide the subtitles in the other language to make the video bilingual. The purpose of these tasks were not only to engage the students in creative and authentic linguistic activities, but also to provide them with an opportunity for in-depth communication among their group members through discussion and negotiation. Part of each session was devoted to discussion of more linguistically advanced matters, such as jokes and aspects of the target culture and people's behaviour of which they were curious. This, it was hoped, would increase the students' cultural awareness and arouse further curiosity about the target culture and society. Each class session in Semester 2 met approximately one month after the previous session so that the students could use their time for more effective planning. The out-of-class activities were monitored more closely by the teachers by making it compulsory for LSJ to submit weekly blogs about their activities with JYA and which were included in the module assessment. Although the importance of autonomous learning has been widely acknowledged (e.g. Little, 2003; Benson, 2007; Aoki, 2009), our pilot study showed the need for the right balance between student autonomy and teacher support and monitoring (Oeda and Morimoto, 2016). The final in-class session was spent on viewing the three group videos. One video featured an imaginary TV show entitled "*totsugeki intabyu* (Surprise Interview)" where the group members conducted interviews using comical questions. Another compared student life in Japan and the UK and the third was a series of skits on common stereotypes as observed in Japan and the UK. All focused mainly on informal settings and used a wide range of colloquial expressions which were not covered in

the usual class. They were also edited with effective subtitles and sounds which made the videos not only easy to follow but also entertaining both for LSJ and JYA.

4. EVALUATION

In order to evaluate the benefit and effectiveness of the peer learning activities, a set of online questionnaires – in English for LSJ and Japanese for JYA - was completed at the end of each semester. The questionnaires for LSJ and JYA were virtually identical apart from the omission of the question on preparation for the Year Abroad. The questions covered: student satisfaction; contribution; language and cultural learning; preparation for the Year Abroad; motivation for studying the target language; and personal development.

4.1. Feedback from Leeds students of Japanese

Five out of the seven students completed the questionnaire on the Joint Presentation project at the end of Semester 1. Their feedback was mostly positive, particularly in terms of learning 'real-world' Japanese and awareness of Japan's culture and society. One student commented on the benefit of the informal settings saying it was 'less daunting' to have conversations in Japanese, while another said that 'speaking to actual Japanese people in real situations was the best thing to learn from'. Also, most students seem to have felt that the peer learning activities helped them, to some degree, to prepare for their year abroad in Japan. One, in particular, appreciated 'a lot of advice on Japanese etiquette'. Furthermore, they all thought that they had contributed to the activities, and most agreed that they had made some personal development, such as acquiring inter-personal skills and social skills through the activities.

Three of the seven students completed the questionnaire on the YouTube Project at the end of Semester 2. Although it is difficult to generalise from the feedback, a couple of things could be inferred from the comments received. Firstly, all three agreed that the project had

helped them learn both the Japanese language and about the culture and society, just as the Joint Presentation project had done in Semester 1. This provides some evidence for our initial assumption that the peer learning activities with JYA would increase the opportunities for LSJ to learn the Japanese language and study the culture in a more practical way. We also discovered that the students generally felt the project had contributed to their personal development, although whether or not it had enhanced their motivation depended on the individual student. As the authors had anticipated, the students were strongly inclined to meet each other outside class more often and communicate intensively to achieve more complex tasks than those of Semester 1, such as deciding how best they could edit their videos and provide effective subtitles. Those tasks may have contributed to their sense of achievement.

4.2. Feedback from Japanese year abroad students

Nine out of 12 JYA students in Semester 1 completed the questionnaire and made mostly positive comments on the Joint Presentation project. All said that they enjoyed the project and agreed that it had helped them to make friends and socialise with other students. One commented that 'it was good to get close to the English students who are interested in Japan' and 'The members of my group have become and will continue to be my friends'. In addition, all but one thought that the project helped them learn English, and seven out of nine students even went as far as to say that they learned 'real-world' English more effectively through the peer learning activities than from their normal English class. One said it was very helpful to have his/her English script corrected by LSJ and to learn more natural English expressions, while another student said that s/he was able to communicate with LSJ in English without worrying too much about grammar as s/he did in formal classes. Furthermore, the vast majority agreed that the project was helpful both for learning about the

British and other cultures and societies¹⁶ and increasing their motivation for learning English. One Japanese student expressed his/her pleasure at being able to communicate confidently with native speakers of English because s/he had often been criticised by his/her peer learners in LC for poor pronunciation. It is also worth noting that one student felt the need to study Japanese, as well as English, since it is not uncommon to realise how little one knows about the grammar of his/her own mother tongue when questioned by non-native learners.

Five out of 11 JYA students completed the questionnaire for the YouTube project in Semester 2, and their feedback, too, was fairly positive overall. All but one of the students strongly agreed that they had enjoyed the project. One commented that it was enjoyable to exchange ideas and discuss them with the British students while making the video. Another said that shooting the video together was great fun. In terms of language learning, while all of them thought the project was useful, as the authors hoped it would be, some seemed to find it particularly helpful to add the subtitles and to listen to themselves speaking in English in the video. There were particularly positive responses to the question on cultural learning such as 'I have come to understand English student life better through the interview [for the video]. I've found it particularly interesting to hear about part-time jobs [in the UK]'. All the respondents said what they thought was the best aspect of the project; these included the promotion of real communication, a sense of achievement, friendship, cultural learning and a sense of humour.

As discussed in Section 3, one of the drawbacks of the peer learning activities in our pilot study in 2015-16 was that some of the students did not collaborate with and contribute to their group as much as they were expected to, and some of the other students, particularly JYA, were annoyed and frustrated about this. However, the problem had resolved itself

¹⁶ In 2016-17 there was only one non-British student who came from the United States of America.

somewhat in 2016-17 according to two comments of JYA that they met in their group outside the class at least once a week for discussions, to shoot the video and provide subtitles. This improvement was attributed not least to the change in assessment and closer monitoring through the weekly blogs. As Aoki (2009) argues, teachers should monitor the progress of the learners and provide them with positive feedback and advice to sustain their motivation.

5. Conclusion

In this paper a case of peer learning between the post-beginner students of Japanese and Japanese year abroad students at the University of Leeds, focusing on the merits and some problems of peer learning, was discussed. Based on the experience of our 2015-16 pilot study, in 2016-17 the structure and assessment of the projects were changed so that students met more frequently in the classroom and the teachers monitored and evaluated out-of-class activities more closely through student blogs. As a result, the problem of unequal contributions by students to the projects was resolved to some degree, and feedback both from JYA and LSJ was overwhelmingly positive. As previous studies, including our own pilot study, suggested, it was confirmed that peer learning activities do indeed enhance students' in-depth communication, cultural and linguistic awareness and personal development, such as self-confidence and motivation.

However, there were a few comments on the end-of-project questionnaire which indicated that equal contributions by all participants and student autonomy had still not been fully achieved. One student expressed strong frustration over the poor contribution of other members of the group when they created the video and s/he suggested that individual contributions, as well as those of the group as a whole, should be reflected in the module grade. Furthermore, as a couple of students pointed out, although it is important to promote autonomous and collaborative learning beyond the classroom, the timing of those activities should be more carefully planned so as not to conflict with other academic commitments.

It is worth noting that this paper is based primarily on the online questionnaires at the end of each project and therefore does not show the students' developments in cultural understanding and motivation at different stages of the projects. Also, not all those who participated in the projects completed the questionnaire and those who did complete it did not provide detailed comments on their thoughts and feelings. We believe that the use of the triangulation method, such as interviews and students' diaries, may offer more insightful observations about the peer-learning activities in the future.

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The Linguistic Rebel: Semantic and Syntactic Peculiarity in the Use of Sound Symbolic Forms in Italian Disney Comics

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Key words: sound symbolism, ideophones, onomatopoeia, Disney, comics studies

Abstract

Sound symbolic words, also known as ideophones, represent that part of language that attempts to imitate real-life senses through the vocal tract. Sound symbolism as a discipline has often been overlooked and considered as relegated to child-like media and playful linguistic exchanges. In recent years, more and more research has been dedicated to these forms, which are often characterised by uncommon linguistic elements and tend to drift away from canonical grammatical and phonetic rules; for this reason, their analysis can reveal new perspectives on language creation and linguistic iconicity. The current study aims to align itself with those enquiries that have defined sound symbolic forms as 'linguistic rebels' and does this through the preliminary analysis of a bilingual corpus of ideophones taken from Italian Disney comics and created through extensive, doctoral archival work. The results will help clarify the role of ideophones in the comic book and will focus on identifying the morphophonological stratagems that make sound symbolic words expressive and iconic.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'sound symbolism' is used to refer to 'those marked words depictive of sensory images noted for their special sound patterns, distinct grammatical properties and sensory meanings' (Dingemanse 2012, 654). These are commonly known as 'onomatopoeias' and represent the human speech's effort to imitate sensorial experiences through the vocal tract. The term 'sound symbolism' is used to refer to the sub-discipline of linguistics that studies these synesthetic depictions, which tend to eschew the canonical grammatical rules of a given language (Armoaskaite & Koskinen 2017, 149) and involve unusual morphological and phonetic patterns, to the point that they have been described as 'linguistic rebels' (Kunene 2001, 183). Despite the term 'onomatopoeia' being acceptable, this does not include all of the sensorial depictions but, instead, only focuses on the sonic ones. Indeed, sound symbolism does not only represent sound but can often attempt to iconically imitate other senses, such as touch and smell, and kinaesthetic (ie. related to motion) experiences. For the purpose of this study, the term 'ideophone' will be used to refer to any forms that attempt to represent sensorial experiences in an iconic way, whilst 'sound symbolism' will be used to refer to the linguistic sub-discipline as a whole. As such, the concept of 'onomatopoeia' will be included within the term 'ideophone'.

The present paper aims to provide a brief summary of the linguistic findings that emerged during the analysis of a corpus of Italian and English sound symbolic forms taken from 210 Italian Disney stories. The stories were published in Italy between December 1932 and January 2013, mostly in the *Topolino* ('Mickey Mouse') magazine. The corpus, comprising 4681 ideophonic forms, aims to support a preliminary historical and linguistic analysis of the use of sound symbolic forms in Italian Disney stories. *Topolino* and its stories were indeed published in Italy and aimed towards an Italian audience although, considering that the sound symbolic forms used in them are both of Italian and English origin, the resulting corpus can be considered a bilingual one.

The choice to analyse this particular magazine was motivated by various factors. Most importantly, *Topolino* magazine has been published in Italy, almost without interruption, for eighty-four years hence its pages have witnessed important changes in language in use, particularly when considering ideophones. This peculiarity makes it a very revealing medium, as it allows scholars to gain access to historical data on the diachronic evolution of the language featured in its pages. As Verda (1990, 58) comments, *Topolino* is an important 'graphical and linguistic vehicle that faithfully follows the course of time' (translation mine) and perfectly embodies the interchange of terminology typical of those mass media that were propagated in the decades around the two wars, media that served as tools readily available to experiment with language in ways that other more established means of communication (newspapers and radio above all) might not have allowed at the time.



Figure 1. First issue of *Topolino* magazine published in December 1932 (*Topolino giornale*, issue 1, Dec. 1932).

The following section will be dedicated to a theoretical introduction of sound symbolic words to investigate where this iconicity comes from and how it is expressed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Anderson (1998, 99) suggests that expressive sound symbolic words have both external and internal bases. The external basis is the 'sonic, physical, psychological or affective stimuli that are imitated or represented by means of partial resemblance' (Anderson 1998, 99)—in simpler terms, that which they are trying to depict, and this can be expressed through morphological, lexical or phonological strategies. The internal bases for iconism, on the other hand, are the actual cues that trigger iconic values, what Dogana calls 'mediators of iconic phono-symbolism' (1990, 116). The following mediators are based on Anderson (1998, 99) and Dogana (1990, 116-18) and refer to general symbolic features of language that can be experienced by speakers of all languages:

- *Kinaesthetic*: related to the 'physiology of articulation' (Anderson 1998, 100), the way human beings practically articulate sounds and use their phonatory organs to do so. It is generally accepted and has also been proven by several studies (Dogana 1990, 117) that, for instance, high front vowels are often associated with smallness and back vowels with largeness. The position of the tongue and the size of the oral cavity is, in these cases, the main origin of iconicity (Anderson 1998, 100).

- *Acoustic*: related to auditory aspects of sounds, or, in other words, how the sound waves are perceived by our ears and elaborated in our brain. The specific variations and the main acoustic parameters are often the starting point of a series of 'synaesthetic experiences' (Dogana 1990, 116; translation mine). This is very much due to the so-called sonority hierarchy, according to which more sonorous phonemes, such as vowels, liquids or nasals are perceived as continuous and soft, while the least sonorous ones (i.e. unvoiced fricatives, affricates and stops) are linked to hardness and rigidity (Anderson 1998, 103; Jawad 2010, 47).

- *Structural*: related to morphological or syntactical structures. Examples are the iconicity resulting from the position of consonants and vowels within a word or the iteration and interaction of some of its constituents. As noted by Reid (1967, 47) 'words ending in consonant, have an inherent confining and limiting effect which words ending with a vowel sound do not possess', and the higher the number of consonants before a vowel the stronger that word will be (Reid 1967, 16). Compare, for instance, the alternative version of ideophones that add a 'prosthetic s' (Marchand 1969, 427) in front of the word, which automatically becomes stronger: *grunt* and its stronger version *sgrunt* or *squack*, the modified form of *quack*. While kinaesthetic and acoustic factors are generally considered valid across multiple languages, structural iconicity might be language specific.

- *Graphemic*: due to the close relationship between phoneme and grapheme, the graphical features of the latter can sometimes contribute to the general phonetic symbolism (Dogana 1990, 117), what Anderson calls 'zigzag factor' (1998, 175). The expressive value of graphemes is in this case almost re-discovered by emphasising the native 'pictographic value' (Dogana 1990, 117; translation mine) of the written sign. The stratagem is often used in comics—see the use of trembling font for an onomatopoeia representing an earthquake, for example.

- *Socio-psychological*: another factor that can influence the perception of certain types of linguistic iconicity is the psychological or sociological background of the receiver. Certain values attributed to words, graphemes and phonemes can in fact be explained by historical and cultural factors that exclude any kind of linguistic, visual or articulatory factor. An example in Italian is the derogatory and ironic values associated with the grapheme <k> (not present in the official Italian alphabet), the so-called *kappa politico* ('political k'), which was used in post-war Italy to express discontent towards certain politicians ('Kossiga' rather than Cossiga) or ideals ('Amerikano') (Petrucci 1977, 114).

These mediators of iconism were used as a basis for the current study, as it will be described in the next section, where the methodological rationale for the inquiry is offered.

METHODOLOGY

The corpus under analysis was created through extensive archival work in several Italian comic book libraries in 2014 and 2015. The corpus was manually compiled by the author of this paper throughout a twelve-month period. During the initial visit to the libraries, pictures of all the relevant stories were taken and digitally stored. The pictures were then analysed and the sound symbolic data were manually included in the aforementioned corpus. Each form has been categorised according to different parameters, each aimed at assisting the author in several linguistic analyses. These included information in relation to the colour of the strips, their position within the page/frame and the grammatical and semantic nature of each of the forms. The different categories used in the corpus roughly match the different 'mediators of iconism' mentioned in the previous section and were created in an effort to cover all of those aspects during the inquiry. As far as this paper is concerned, the focus will be on a specific aspect of these forms (ie. their rebellious nature) hence not all the information gathered will be mentioned and/or brought forward.

The stories were selected according to archival availability before visiting the archives and an effort had been made to select an even number of stories for each of the eight decades under analysis, with roughly 30 stories for each. Not all stories were original Italian ones. Out of the 210 selected stories 84 were Italian translations of the corresponding English versions whilst the remaining 126 were original Italian creations.

In order to look into the rebellious nature of these forms, I have decided to focus on a few specific classifications directly taken from the corpus. These were expected to provide more details on certain linguistic features that are symptomatic of a certain degree of 'rebelliousness' and are hereby listed:

- (1) Syntactical and semantic variability: this focuses on how and if ideophonic forms are showing variability both in terms of a single form having multiple meanings and a single event having multiple ideophonic representations;
- (2) Neology: how and if new forms are created from scratch;
- (3) Iterativity: this category attempts to detect any forms that included phonological and morphological reduplication of sounds and letters, characteristic that has been described as having a ‘high sound symbolic value’ (Anderson, 1998, 110);
- (4) Phonotactics: ideophones are usually expected to break certain phonotactic rules of the language, which refer to the different combinations of vowels and consonants allowed within a syllable. Breaking these rules would, again, confirm that these forms are attempting to drift away from canonical language in use;
- (5) Monosyllabicity: finally, ideophonic words have proven to often include monosyllabic words, due to their brevity and quick expressiveness.

The previous points will all be discussed in the following section, which tries to bring together all of the information in regards to the rebellious nature of ideophones found in the corpus under scrutiny.

RESULTS - OBSERVED LINGUISTIC FEATURES

The following sections aim to catalogue a few of the most noticeable linguistic phenomena—mainly dealing with syntax and semantics—that emerged during the close analysis of the corpus. Sound symbolic forms share the features of phenomena that are not useful or particularly fruitful in normal language, a property defined by Anderson as the ‘grammatical diseconomy of iconic language’ (1998, 108). This includes, for instance, the use of repeated forms (see *click click*, *bang bang*) or words that go against the phonotactic rules of languages. These structures should not be seen as an evidence of the primitiveness of sound symbolism but rather as ‘sophisticated linguistic playfulness in a concentrated form’ (Ibid.). Iconic words deviate from the conventions of normal speech and do so to reach the audience in more

memorable and expressive ways. They tend to be ‘expressive or affective markers’ (Anderson 1998, 116) of iconism. Of particular interest, in this case, are the so-called ‘affective markers of iconism’ (Anderson 1998, 108), specific phenomena that are particularly fruitful in sound symbolic forms. This is to engage with studies (Kunene 2001; Newman 2001; Dingemanse 2012, 2016; Smoll 2012; Knoeferle et al 2016; Armoskaite & Koskinen 2017; Akita 2017) claiming that the ideophone tends to employ the most uncommon phonological and syntactical structures of languages, and is thus notorious for being a ‘linguistic rebel’ (Kunene 2001, 183).

Internal Variability

Occasionally the basic form of an ideophone, which may be a commonly used and thus well-known form, undergoes phonic and graphical modifications that produce alternative secondary creations, defined by Akita as ‘superexpressive forms’ (2009, 23). The following are only some of the variants detected, listed according to their intended meaning (the first form shown is considered to be the basic one):

Astonishment and surprise: GULP/glub/ulp/lab/guap(p)/ulb;

Fear: URGH/(g)urgl(e)/urg(h)/urk/urp/urf/unk/argh/erk;

Disapproval: GRUNT/sgrunt/sgrulf/grumf/sgrutt/grunf.

Animal cry: ROAR/broar/proar/pror;

Noise caused by explosion: BANG/sbrang/sbren/beng/sbarabang;

Noise caused by hitting object: BAM/sbram/sbam/sbem/sblem;

These secondary forms are semantically identical to but graphemically divergent from the original. This shows, once again, the great degree of linguistic flexibility offered by ideophones, a flexibility that is possibly unobtainable by any other class within a language (Kunene 2001, 183).

Productive Neology

Another typical characteristic of iconic words is their tendency to welcome neologisms and non-lexicalised forms in a more open fashion than in conventional language. Neology therefore plays a big part in the creation of ideophones, as it fulfills the need to depict the myriad of sensorial experiences that are shown in comics. From a linguistic point of view, ideophonic neologisms are deeply linked to the sensory values attached to certain phonemes and clusters of phonemes, a sub-area of sound symbolism called 'phonaesthesia'.

When speakers/writers feel that the language does not already provide a successful term to describe a specific situation, one of the available linguistic strategies is to coin new forms that cover the requested iconicity. In this respect, the device certainly promotes linguistic imagination by forcing both the creators of comics and their readers to experience the more unexplored edges of the language system. Moreover, it keeps languages alive and vibrant by forcing their users to reflect upon the language system itself and to subvert established linguistic conventions.

Examples of neologisms found in the corpus include many non-lexicalised forms that have been created from scratch by cartoonists and translators. See, for instance, vowelless paraverbals, consonant-only forms often used to depict mechanical sounds and that cannot usually be found in dictionaries. These include, among the rest: (1) *zzzz*, used for sleeping characters, (2) *rrrr*, employed for engine sounds, (3) *bzzz* used for the sound of bees flying and, finally, (4) *fzzzz* often found next to the image of spraying liquids. These are just some of the most common examples found in the corpus. A good percentage of them are only used once but others keep reappearing throughout the decades and end up becoming crystallised within the language of comics. More examples of these will be offered later in the analysis.

Polysemy

Linked to the flexibility already discussed, polysemy refers to those instances in which a single ideophone is used to describe different and/or opposite situations or it has more than one meaning in a single context. It is not rare to witness one single form being employed in two different contexts or, alternatively, to observe the same event, act or emotion being expressed with divergent ideophones, sometimes even in the same story or panel.

Examples include the use of the Italian ideophone *ciuf ciuf* (equivalent to the English *choo choo*) not only for trains but also for rockets and the form *zzzzz*, widely used to describe a character sleeping, being employed for the sound of boiling potions. In the case of Italian comics, this polysemy is taken one step further, as both the Italian and English forms normally linked to a single phenomenon are sometimes employed adjacently creating an interesting multilingual sensorial experience. For instance, in an original Italian story published in 1975 the pain felt by a character is expressed by inserting both the Italian and the English forms in two adjacent balloons, respectively *ahi* (this being an Italian interjection and not an ideophone) and *ouch*, which is an English interjection. Similarly, in another panel from May 2000, *arf*, *bau* and *growl* are inserted in the same comic to describe a dog barking. The Italian ideophone *cra cra*, which depicts the croaking of frogs (see the English *ribbet ribbet*), is also used to describe a flock of crows. Other examples include the appropriation of English-borrowed forms and the consequent departure from their original intended meaning. So the ideophone *sniff* may be used not only to refer to the action of sniffing but also to a character crying and *(g)ulp* may represent surprise and also fear. This shows once more the intrinsic polysemous nature of ideophones and the versatility of the device and its linguistic and semantic ambiguity. According to Akita the polysemy of ideophones has 'long been one of the unexplored fields of their study' as there have been 'few attempts to analyse its mechanism in detail' (2009, 57). It follows that even a small-scale examination of the use of this particular stylistic feature in comics could make a significant contribution to this particular research field.

Iterativity

This phenomenon refers to the tendency of ideophones to feature repetition, characteristic shared by many iconic forms around the world (Anderson 1998, 110). This characteristic of ideophones is considered one of their most productive features (Akita 2009, 36). It enhances the mimetic and expressive power of these forms by representing ‘temporally extended processes’ (Wartenberg 2012, 100) through lexical length and by conferring visual and iconic effectiveness. There are three different linguistic phenomena that use iterativity as a form of iconism (cf. chart 1 below for information regarding their percentage of occurrence):

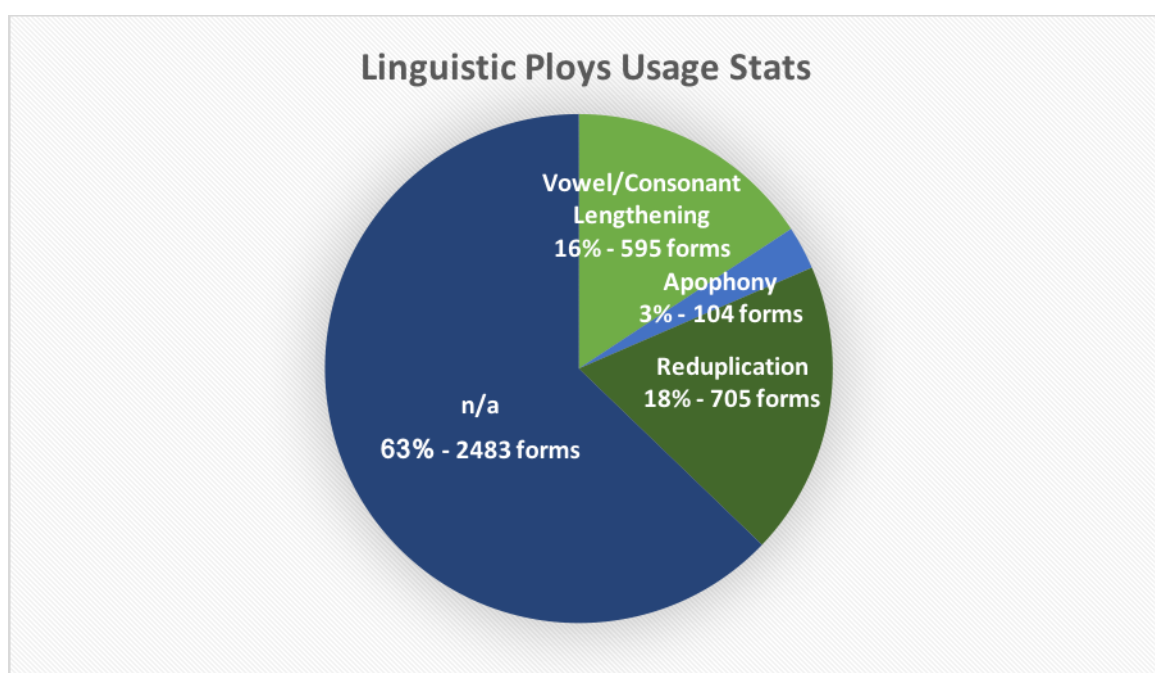


Chart 1. Linguistic ploys usage statistics for the whole corpus. ‘N/a’ refers to those forms that did not involve any linguistic ploys.

- *Vocalic and consonantal lengthening*, also called phonological reduplication, is seen in forms such as *skreeeeek*, *bruuuum*, and *gnamm*. This feature is, together with morphological reduplication, the most used in the corpus with 595 forms out of 3887 (16%);
- *Morphological reduplication*, which can be total (i.e. *sniff sniff*, *tut tut*, *crasc crasc*) or partial (i.e. *pepereppe*). This is a high marker of iconism (Anderson 1998, 113) and it is in fact the

most consistent ploy throughout the whole corpus, being featured in 705 forms out of 3887 (18%);

- *Apophony*, which refers to vocalic or consonantal alternation (i.e. *pim pum pam*, *dlin dlon*, *tonk bonk*), has been considered as being of particular benefit by Italian users, as it tends to stage a polar opposition that has been employed in some idiomatic expressions that are particularly effective in oral language (i.e. *di riffe e di raffe*, *senza dire né ahi né bai*, *senza arte né parte*, *tric e trac*, *così o cosà*, *tra ninnere e nannere*) (Beccaria 2010, 97-8). It is indeed ‘widespread in Indo-European languages and it often involves the /i/-/a/ opposition’ (Marchand 1969, 429) (*pim pam*, *bim bam*, etc.) as the higher vowel tends to precede the lower one. The symbolism behind apophony is mainly due to the polarity that in this case assumes ‘various semantic aspects’ (Marchand 1969, 429) involving humour and heightened expressivity. Again, the main aim is to give a sense of playfulness through unconventional polar structures that are not necessarily semantically justifiable. The first lexeme in these forms is usually the one carrying an iconic function, the second one is there mainly to bring playfulness. This ploy is not particularly widespread in the corpus, with 104 forms out of 3887 (only 3% of the total).

Phonotactic Deviation

Ideophones commonly ‘exhibit special features and [...] idiosyncrasies in terms of their syllable structure’ (Smoll 2012, 5), tending to violate specific phonotactic constraints. In an attempt to convey expressivity through linguistic means, ideophones often contain adjunction and combination of phonemes and graphemes that would not usually be allowed according to canonical language rules but that become a vehicle of playfulness when transposed to the ideophonic world. A straightforward example of this practice involves the creation of the so-called ‘vowelless paraverbals’ (Anderson 1998, 110), strings of consonants that do not include vowels and are often used to represent loud noises. The vowelless structure is not contemplated in Italian as it goes against many language rules. Vowelless paraverbals are often used for ideophones expressing mechanical sounds or strong emotions. The latter

include the well-known *grrr* (anger), *tsk tsk* (disapproval) and *brrrr* (feeling cold) and the one-off example *ghf ghf* (fear). Omitting vowels is in these cases a fruitful stratagem, since forms without vowels are less sonorous, and are able to convey a harsh, rigid iconicity as a result.

Another common deviation involves combinations of phonemes that break Italian phonotactic rules in syllabic onsets. The cases detected in the corpus are:

/t/, /d/, /v/ + lateral /l/—in forms such as:

- *tlac, tloc, tlin, tlip, tlop, stlok, tloing*;
- *dlen(g), dlin(g), dlon(g)*—often used for the sound of church and door bells;
- *vlac, svlam, svlac, svlek, vloosh, vlamf, vlap*;

/p/ and /s/ + postalveolar affricate /tʃ/: in forms such as *pciù* (/ptʃu/), *used* to represent two characters kissing, or *sciaff* (/stʃaf/), *sciac(k)* (/stʃak/) and *sciapp* (/stʃap/) used for punches. These forms are sometimes used in spoken Italian and they not only break a phonotactic rule but also a graphemic one as the cluster ‘sci’, which would usually be executed with a voiceless sibilant /ʃi/, in this case has to be read as /stʃ/;

/z/ + palatal nasal /ɲ/: *sgnap* (/zɲap/) and *sgnac* (/zɲak/); although this one comes from the verb ‘sgnaccare’ (meaning ‘to press’ or ‘to push something’), which is actually lexicalised (present in De Mauro dictionary, 2000), thus being the only word in Italian starting with this combination of sounds. These forms are often used to depict characters biting and chewing;

/v/ + /r/: see *vrrr*, *vr(o)om(p)*, *vruum* and *vritch vritch* (found only once in the corpus and employed to describe the action of tying a knot) most of them used to depict the noise of cars and other means of transport;

/p/ + /f/: see forms such as *pfui*, *pfing*, *pfuff*, *grumpf*, *pfiu*, *umpf*, *pfsh*, *crpff*.

Monosyllabicity

The use of monosyllabic forms is a common characteristic of iconic words (Anderson 1998, 116). Despite not being a prominent feature—indeed not all monosyllabic words are ideophonic and not all ideophones are monosyllabic—monosyllabicity is still considered a marker for iconism, even if a latent one (Anderson 1998, 116). Its presence does not necessarily make the word ideophonic—or, at least, is not as evocative as when phonotactic deviation or phonological/morphological reduplication are used. When the ideophone does contain a vowel it tends to be included in a (C)CVC(C)¹⁷ structure, which is indeed the most common syllable structure in both original (36.5%—1023 forms out of 2799) and translated (36%—330 forms out of 916) stories in the corpus. Examples include *whir*, *crash*, *smack*, *sciac*, *crach* from a 1933 translated story and *sbem*, *swiss*, *gnaf* and *svisc* from one of the first Italian original stories published in October 1948 with the title *Topolino e il cobra bianco* ('Mickey Mouse and the White Cobra'). The results in this case do not change cross-linguistically. The most common phonotactic structure among Italian- and English-derived ideophones (and also interjections) if considered separately is indeed CVC(C) for both (CVC for Italian and CVCC for English)—so still a monosyllabic word.

Brevity does indeed go hand in hand with expressivity as it perfectly meets the need for ideophones to be readily iconic. This is true particularly for onomatopoeias, as the inherent nature of sonic events is perceived as being quick and fleeting, a feature that thus pairs well with short monosyllabic forms.

¹⁷ In this case 'C' refers to a 'consonant' while 'V' refers to a 'vowel', showing a typical monosyllabic structure with a vowel in the syllabic nucleus and consonants in both syllabic onset and coda.

Semantic Shift

Borrowing words directly from the lexicon of other languages has inevitably triggered some changes in sound symbolic forms over time and a certain degree of ambiguity in the interpretation of the meaning conveyed by certain lexemes, to the point that some of them have completely lost their original intended meaning. This shift can happen both with English and Italian words, although it does tend to happen for Anglophonic importations more often. The most-cited examples are probably the ideophones *mumble* and *smack*. The original meaning of 'to mumble', to 'say quietly in an unclear way that makes it difficult for people to know what you said' (definition from 'Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary' 2016) has been extended through the last 80 years of its use in Italian Disney comics (Eco 2008). Indeed, the 'De Mauro dictionary of Italian language in use' (2000) indicated 1964 as the year of its first appearance in written sources and listed it as an interjection with the following entry: 'English expression specific of comics language used to depict the act of reflecting, overthinking and it is sometimes accompanied by a whispered gabble'. 'Mumble' can now be found in panels that describe a character whispering, feeling angry and confused or, more frequently, lost in thought, full of doubts or sometimes even sick, thus plainly extending the initial English meaning. 'Mumble' appears in the corpus 20 times, for the first time in a translated story from October 1951 and constantly reappears throughout the decades (1953, 1960, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1972, 1979, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009) with its newly-acquired meaning. The lexeme 'smack' (first attested use in 1964 as recorded in 'De Mauro' 2000), for example, is used to refer to a kiss and only rarely to the action of kicking (only one occurrence in the corpus). It should be noted that to refer to kissing other Italian forms are often employed, such as *(p)cium*, *p(t)ciù*, *sptciuah* or the Italianised *smec* and *smuack*. Other significant examples include (number of occurrences in brackets): the use of 'slap' (54) and 'slash' (1) to describe a dog licking, 'zowie' (1) to indicate a character running, 'pat pat' (8) to describe an on-going fight (so not just a mere patting of shoulders) and 'flush' (1) used to depict the emerging of a boat from the sea, rather than submerging as one would expect.

CONCLUSIONS

This brief semantic and morphological analysis of the use of ideophones in Italian Disney comics has provided more data that confirms the highly rebellious nature of sound symbolic words. Their semantic behavior is often erratic as their intended meaning is inherently flexible and, as expressive words, they foster multiple interpretations from the reader. The fact that most of these words are not even included in dictionaries further perpetuates this semantic ambiguity, which indeed is not seen as an obstacle but, rather, as a chance for the ideophone to freely express different meanings depending on the situation depicted. If these semantic peculiarities have not showed this enough, the status of the ideophones as linguistic rebels was again confirmed by several morphological and phonological processes detected: firstly, the fact that these forms are not often characterized by a set spelling, showing their highly malleable nature, but also the fact that they often break the long-established phonotactic rules of a language providing further evidence of their unusual linguistic behaviour.

Studies such as the present one can help understand why humans have felt the need to create an array of iconic forms that, in an attempt to be as expressive as possible, are prone to drift away from canonical language use, almost creating a sub-language of their own characterised by totally different phonomorphological rules. These peculiarities clearly show the creative potential of human speech and the never-ending effort to perform real-life events through our vocal tract. The limitations of these processes are evident as our phonatory capabilities are limited to a set number of phonetic renditions but, nevertheless, sound symbolism proves that linguistic rules are, in certain contexts, easily breakable and this does not necessarily confuse the user/reader but rather fosters imagination and creativity. It thus does not surprise at all that these forms are often used in literature and media aimed at a younger audience, particularly when we consider the fact that children, as newcomers to their mother tongue, 'have an intense awareness of and sensual relationship with language' (Lathey 2010, 204).

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Sexismo lingüístico. El tratamiento de algunos términos en los diccionarios ELE.

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Key words: linguistic, sexism, Spanish, dictionaries, non-native

This study aims to determine whether Spanish dictionaries commit *linguistic sexism* and what the effect on a non-native subject would be. *Linguistic sexism* in Spanish (García Meseguer 2001, Portal 1999) and its occurrence are defined, allowing the exploration of the use of masculine/feminine voices and analysis upon different semantic fields in three selected three dictionaries.

1. Introducción.

El propósito de este trabajo es determinar si los diccionarios de *Español como Lengua Extranjera*,¹⁸ incurren en “sexismo lingüístico” y cómo afectaría a un usuario no nativo, cuya competencia lingüística y cultural difiere mucho de los estudiantes de otros entornos educativos de español. Para este fin, hemos elegido tres de los diccionarios de español para extranjeros o alumnos de secundaria en España muy conocidos: *el Diccionario Salamanca*, *el Vox* y *el SM*¹⁹.

Observaremos el uso del género masculino/femenino de algunas voces para poder determinar el tratamiento general lexicográfico en las acepciones, definiciones y ejemplos de uso que ofrecen para ilustrarlos. Hay que ser conscientes de que en español, como explica Ana M^a Portal, “la connotación de género como cuestión relativa a la construcción de lo masculino y lo femenino solo se comprende en función del género gramatical”²⁰ pero en muchas ocasiones se puede considerar como “relación entre los sexos, o como simbolización o construcción cultural” (1999: 551-2).

¹⁸En adelante nos referiremos a este ámbito con las siglas *ELE*.

¹⁹Es importante notar en el caso del *Salamanca*, existe una reedición de 2006 y para el *Vox* de 2011. Sin embargo, el *SM* parece no haber reeditado su diccionario probablemente, porque la editorial posee un diccionario on-line, *Diccionario Clave. Diccionario de uso del español actual*.

²⁰De acuerdo con la RAE la categoría gramatical es “inherente en sustantivos y pronombres, codificada a través de la concordancia en otras clases de palabras y que en pronombres y sustantivos animados puede expresar sexo”

Tampoco podemos olvidar que en la enseñanza-aprendizaje del español como lengua extranjera existe una tradición metodológica en la que se aúna lo lingüístico y sociocultural, ya que se persigue que los estudiantes adquieran una competencia sociolingüística y cultural que les permita comunicarse y adaptarse a un contexto específico, por lo que la atención al posible sexismo lingüístico es muy importante. Esta perspectiva conecta con lo que explican Pascual y Olaguíbel en su artículo “Ideología y diccionario”:

“El lexicógrafo no puede conformarse con ordenar la realidad a que se refieren las palabras sino que ha de conseguirlo además con un metalenguaje lo más neutral posible y cuya elección coincida con la mayor parte de sus coetáneos. Lo cual no carece de importancia ni está exento de dificultades, dado el hecho de que una tarea lexicográfica consiste en presentar a los demás una realidad enfocada según las ideas sociales existentes sobre ella y no según unos determinados principios científicos para clasificarla” (pág. 80)

En conclusión, nuestro análisis tiene como objetivo vislumbrar si el denominado sexismo lingüístico se encuentra presente en los diccionarios elegidos.

2. El sexismo en la lengua española.

Es importante aclarar desde el principio, que en este trabajo no nos proponemos defender ninguna tesis sobre si el español es un sistema lingüístico sexista o no, en función del hablante oyente, el contexto, oral o escrito, y la lengua como sistema²¹. Por este motivo, no entraremos en la polémica suscitada por el trabajo de Ignacio Bosque, “Sexismo lingüístico y visibilidad de la mujer”, que estudia y reflexiona sobre numerosas guías de lenguaje no sexista publicadas en los últimos años²².

²¹ Para este particular nos remitimos al trabajo del profesor Álvaro García Meseguer, “El español, una lengua no sexista”, que presenta un magnífico estudio sobre el particular, que a nosotros nos ha servido de guía para abordar algunos conceptos.

²² “No deja de resultar inquietante que, desde dependencias oficiales de universidades, comunidades autónomas, sindicatos y ayuntamientos, se sugiera la conveniencia de extender —y es de suponer que de enseñar— un conjunto de variantes lingüísticas que anulan distinciones sintácticas y léxicas conocidas y que

Tampoco entraremos en las reacciones de sus detractores, que le han tachado de adoptar una actitud sexista y de reconocer con su informe la existencia del sexismo tanto en la familia, la sociedad, como en los medios de comunicación²³. Postura que a su vez ha generado un manifiesto, suscrito por quinientos lingüistas en apoyo a Bosque y que podemos encontrar en Internet²⁴. En nuestro caso, la polémica nos sirve para evidenciar la importancia del tema que nos ocupa.

En opinión de García Meseguer, estos planteamientos sobre “actitudes sexistas” en la lengua, son un fenómeno bastante actual, y que él resume en cuatro fases²⁵, siendo en el último período, el actual, en el que, parafraseando su idea, “es un fenómeno frecuente identificar el género gramatical femenino de nuestra lengua, con el sexo de la mujer, y sobre esto, construir recomendaciones para no utilizar la lengua de forma sexista”.

3. Definición de “sexismo” y “sexismo lingüístico”. Formas.

En primer lugar, parece que lo inmediato es recurrir al *DRAE* en línea para ver las definiciones que los académicos nos ofrecen sobre la palabra “sexismo”: **sexismo**: *1. m. Atención preponderante al sexo en cualquier aspecto de la vida. 2. m. Discriminación de personas de un sexo por considerarlo inferior al otro*²⁶

prescinden de los matices que encierran las palabras con la intención de que perviva la absoluta visibilidad de la distinción entre género y sexo. La enseñanza de la lengua a los jóvenes constituye una tarea de vital importancia. Consiste, en buena medida, en ayudarlos a descubrir sus sutilezas y comprender sus secretos. Se trata de lograr que aprendan a usar el idioma para expresarse con corrección y con rigor; de contribuir a que lo empleen para argumentar, desarrollar sus pensamientos, defender sus ideas, luchar por sus derechos y realizarse personal y profesionalmente. En plena igualdad, por supuesto”.

²³ Se pueden ver los distintos foros y blogs que circulan por Internet con estas argumentaciones. Por ejemplo, <http://bastadesexismo.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/sexismo-linguistico-e-invisibilidad-de.html>.

²⁴ El sitio web del manifiesto para su consulta es: <http://manifiestolinguistica.weebly.com>.

²⁵ “La primera, que dura hasta mediados de los sesenta en la que desconoce el *sexismo lingüístico*; la segunda, en los ochenta cuando se descubre; la tercera, en la que el movimiento feminista lo combate y por último, la cuarta que es donde hay un conflicto entre los que defienden las normas y quienes las atacan” (2001:23)

²⁶ <http://dle.rae.es/?id=XI6VetE>

En los diccionarios de español para extranjeros elegidos encontramos distintos planteamientos. Así, en el *SM* no encontramos más información que en el *DRAE*, sin embargo, hay que mencionar que, en este caso, el editor o los lexicógrafos del *SM* ofrecen un ejemplo para contextualizar el término, lo que puede aclarar su significado: “*Se debe evitar el sexismo en la educación*” (pág. 1.265 *SM*).

En el *Salamanca*, sin embargo, es interesante ver que la definición va precedida del adjetivo “peyorativo”, que alerta al usuario de que se halla ante un concepto negativo. Además, en su definición²⁷ se refiere al sexismo como una actitud, es decir, como un comportamiento que alguien manifiesta ante una situación.

Y por último, sorprende que no se halle esta voz en el diccionario *Vox*, aunque queda perfectamente justificado en el apartado “selección y ordenación de las entradas”, en el que los autores explican el proceso para la elección de los términos que conforman el diccionario.

Por tanto, los diccionarios consultados, de una forma u otra, nos aclaran que el “sexismo” es una actitud discriminatoria de aquellas personas que infravaloran o menosprecian a otras por cuestión de sexo o bien, desean hacer una clara distinción de las personas según su sexo.

Aunque parece ilógico buscar el significado del término “sexismo”, ya que evidentemente es una palabra archiconocida, es necesario acudir a los diccionarios, tanto el normativo *DRAE* como los escolásticos, para poder partir de una base semántica sólida y no confundirla con tendencias o modas más socioculturales.

Una vez que ha quedado evidenciado el sentido semántico de esta palabra clave para la reflexión que nos ocupa, pro seguiremos con el planteamiento sobre el llamado ***sexismo lingüístico***.

4. ¿Existe el llamado ***sexismo lingüístico***?

En opinión de García Meseguer, un hablante incurre en el llamado ***sexismo lingüístico*** cuando “admite un mensaje que, debido a su forma (es decir, debido a las palabras escogidas o al modo de enhebrarlas) y no a su fondo, resulta discriminatorio por razón de sexo. Por el contrario, cuando la

²⁷ “s.m. (no contable) PEYORATIVO. Actitud de las personas que valoran o discriminan a otras por razón del sexo: *El sexismo está arraigado en muchas sociedades*” (pág. 1.458)

discriminación se debe al fondo del mensaje y no a su forma, se incurre en sexismo social” (2001: 20). Los ejemplos que ofrece aclaran mucho: “Quien diga que las *mujeres son menos inteligentes que los hombres*, incurre en sexismo social; en cambio, la frase *los varones y las hembras son inteligentes por igual*, no incurre en sexismo social pero sí en sexismo lingüístico. Luego distingue entre: “*Sexismo léxico* por razón de utilizar ciertas palabras que pueden identificarse aisladamente” y “*Sexismo sintáctico* cuando la discriminación se debe a la forma de construir la frase y no al empleo de una cierta palabra aislada” (2001:20). De los dos, en su opinión, el sexismo sintáctico es “más importante y significativo que el léxico, pues revela en quienes incurren en él un arraigo más profundo de la mentalidad patriarcal que yace en el fondo de sus subconscientes” (2001:21)

A la hora de hacer un estudio objetivo sobre rasgos sexistas en la terminología y definiciones usadas en los diccionarios de español, conviene tener presente también, la perspectiva de género que indica Ana Portal, y que en muchos aspectos coincide con el trabajo de Meseguer: “a) cómo separar el sexismo lingüístico del sexismo social; b) formas de sexismo lingüístico; c) la importancia del contexto; d) epatas recorridas en el estudio del sexismo lingüístico; e) el sexismo del oyente; f) la confusión entre género y sexo; las relaciones entre género gramatical y sexo; h) la sensibilidad feminista y la ambigüedad semántica; i) neologismos creados para la mujer (1999: 553)

Es evidente que si la comunidad de hablantes de español tuviera claras estas diferencias notorias entre “sexismo lingüístico” y “sexismo social”, no sería necesario, a nuestra forma de entender mensajes como:

“Esta página utiliza lenguaje no sexista. Las referencias a personas, colectivos o cargos citados en los textos en género masculino, por economía del lenguaje, debe entenderse como un género gramatical no marcado”

Hay que suponer que el texto nace de la sana intención de evitar problemas entre una comunidad de hablantes, sea cual sea. Ya que quizás es más fácil lanzar este mensaje que explicar que “el sexismo lingüístico” solo hace mención a un lenguaje que resulta o puede resultar discriminatorio por

su forma, es decir, como explica el profesor Meseguer, debido a las palabras o estructuras específicas elegidas.

Por eso, es normal que al hablar de esta confusión tan frecuente entre sexismo social y lingüístico degeneren en algunos usos disparatados de nuestra lengua, como la inolvidable mención a los “miembros y miembras de una comisión” que la entonces Ministra de Igualdad, Bibiana Aído, anunció en el Congreso, en un contexto social para informar sobre la puesta en marcha de un teléfono “de información exclusivo para maltratadores”.

¿*Lapsus linguae*²⁸? Pues muchos lo dudan o lo dudamos... Más bien parece la torpe confusión entre el mencionado “sexismo lingüístico” y “social” o en este caso, ¿se puede hablar de “sexismo de Igualdad”?

Sea como fuere, los “miembros” de la RAE se vieron obligados a destacar y advertir del uso erróneo del término “miembra” y otros, haciendo uso de su “buena pluma”, como es el caso de Pérez Reverte, nos dejó un inolvidable artículo que hará que nos sonriamos *per tempore*...

Se veía de venir. Empezamos con los ciudadanos y las ciudadanas, llegamos a los frailes y las frailas, y al final remata el Boletín Oficial del País Vasco, llevándolo todo, negro sobre papel blanco, al documento oficial. Pura coherencia, por otra parte. Y hablar de papel no es baladí, pues las papeleras van a tener que doblar su producción, cuando -no les quepa duda de que está al caer- todos los documentos oficiales de la España del buen rollito imiten el asunto. Tengo entendido que la Junta de Andalucía, por ejemplo, no está dispuesta a quedarse atrás ni harta de morapio. Pero de eso, para no liarnos, hablaremos otro día (...) ²⁹

²⁸ Lapsus que se comete al hablar, especialmente al decir mal una palabra o decirla en lugar de otra.

²⁹ <http://www.perezreverte.com/articulo/patentes-corso/56/las-miembras-y-los-miembros/>

5. Confusión entre género y sexo.

Quizás conviene aclarar que en la lengua española existe la concordancia de género entre las palabras, algo que no se da en otras lenguas y que trae de cabeza, por ejemplo, a los estudiantes ingleses de español. Por ello, es frecuente que muchos alumnos extranjeros cometan multitud de errores cuando hablan o escriben en español. Hay multitud de ejemplos, pero los más comunes suele darse con: palabras de género masculino que terminan en –a (*tema, sistema*); el artículo masculino “el” ante sustantivos femeninos que empiezan por vocal a- (el agua); epicenos, es decir, de forma única que pueden ser masculinos (*personaje, tiburón*) o femeninos (*persona, víctima*), cuya concordancia depende del género gramatical del sustantivo y no del sexo del referente; posibilidad de doble género (*el mar, la mar*), etc.

Además, el español ofrece flexión de género en los atributos de persona –como en los nombres de profesiones– por lo que en las últimas décadas, tal como se viene utilizando en el lenguaje el género masculino, a veces no se reconocen ciertas realidades extralingüísticas, por lo que subsisten ciertas asimetrías lingüísticas reflejo de la sociedad y la cultura, lo que genera cierta incertidumbre en cuanto a las personas, varones o mujeres.

También hay que tener en cuenta que en la lengua hay palabras que no tienen marcado específicamente el sexo femenino o masculino (por ejemplo: *foca, mosca, criatura*) sin embargo, son de género femenino y por ello, es habitual que muchos hispanohablantes proyecten la imagen de la sociocultura patriarcal que alberga su subconsciente³⁰ y así, no es extraño que pensemos en sexo femenino cuando se trata solo de género femenino en la lengua española. ¿Quién ha dicho o dónde está escrito que la *mosca*, la *criatura* o la *foca* sean hembras?

Desde luego, para el estudiante extranjero, dependiendo de su procedencia y cultura, no percibirá de la misma forma la perspectiva de género que se pueda encontrar en un diccionario.

³⁰ Toda esta teoría se evidencia en el ejemplo de García Meseguer, cuando nos ofrece la frase “TODAS ERAN VARONES” y nos pregunta si la frase es correcta o incorrecta. Si la respuesta es que es una oración incorrecta, esto revelará que se confunde el género con el sexo y por ello, revela una mentalidad sexista ya que podemos decir, “Aquella noche nacieron cinco criaturas en la clínica. Todas eran varones”

6. La elección del corpus para el análisis de los diccionarios. Palabras con doble forma y forma única animadas.

En este epígrafe comprobaremos el tratamiento que los diccionarios hacen de las palabras con doble forma y con forma única animadas relativas a personas para intentar averiguar cómo los diccionarios ayudan o no a los estudiantes que consultan cuestiones de género en estos diccionarios.

El análisis del vocabulario lo basaremos en la elección de “palabras de doble forma y forma única” solo en el vocabulario “animado” relativo a personas. Para determinar el corpus de trabajo partimos de la clasificación del trabajo de García Meseguer y las palabras por éste seleccionadas, así como algunos de los términos que Luciana Calvo Ramos elige para su trabajo con el objeto de determinar si existe sexismo en el léxico de estos diccionarios.

Para las “palabras de doble forma pertenecientes al mundo animado”, palabras con la misma raíz, pero con terminaciones en masculino y femenino (-o/-a), analizaremos las siguientes voces:

hermano, amigo, pintor, niño.

Observamos que los tres diccionarios en sus entradas recogen el masculino y la terminación para el femenino así, por ejemplo, **hermano, na**. En sus descripciones siempre utilizan la palabra de sexo no marcado “persona”. En el *Vox* también encontramos la palabra “animal” alternando con “persona”. Además, observamos estructuras sintácticas de tipo “el que...” para introducir las acepciones de sus artículos, “el que sólo tiene en común con otro u otros la madre o el padre” (*Vox*).

El diccionario *Vox* siempre toma para sus ejemplos el género masculino (*eran hermanos gemelos; eran hermanos mellizos; han separado a los hermanos siameses; somos hermanos de leche*) y solo hallamos el femenino en: *Somos dos hermanos y dos hermanas*. Algo parecido sucede en el *Salamanca* donde solo encontramos, *Las hermanas de la Caridad o Son dos lenguas hermanas*. De los tres analizados solo en el *SM* utiliza ambos géneros para ilustrar las acepciones, así por ejemplo: *Me parezco a mi hermana la mayor; Operarán a las hermanas siamesas* o en el caso “~ de sangre”, en la acepción “amigo íntimo”, cuyo ejemplo es, *Mi vecina y yo somos hermanas de sangre*.

En la voz pintor [**pintor, -ra / pintor, -tora**] encontramos de nuevo que los tres diccionarios usan el término neutro “persona” para definir su artículo. En cuanto a los ejemplos, observamos lo mismo que para la palabra anterior. El *Salamanca* y el *Vox* solo usan ejemplos con el género masculino (*los pintores vendrán* o *el pintor le dejó el coche*) frente al *SM* que ofrece por lo menos un ejemplo con género femenino (*pintora paisajista*) pero curiosamente en la acepción está referida a la rama artística y no profesional (decorador). En esta línea encontramos la expresión coloquial “~ **de brocha gorda**” para referirse en el *Salamanca* al varón “pintor” y no a la mujer.

En el caso del sustantivo [**niño, -a / niño, -ña**] vemos en las descripciones del artículo que los diccionarios optan por estructuras sintácticas neutras del tipo “que tiene”, “que está”, “que muestra”, “persona”. Si leemos con detenimiento los artículos aparecen ciertos elementos interesantes para el tema que nos ocupa. En el diccionario *Vox*, para la expresión “~ bien/bonito”, habla de un “joven que pertenece a una familia con dinero y que se comporta de manera superficial y presumida. *Los niños bien solo quieren vestir a la última moda → pijo*”. Parece que estamos ante un evidente “sexismo lingüístico”, léxico y sintáctico, ya que igualmente podríamos hablar de “niñas bien”, “niñas bonitas” y “pijas”. Sin embargo, en los otros dos, en los ejemplos se emplea el género femenino: *Petra es la niña bonita de la clase (SM)* y *Eres la niña bonita del profesor (Salamanca)*. En el *SM* además, hallamos la expresión “la niña de [mis/tus/sus] ojos: *col. Persona preferida por otra: Mi hijo es la niña de mis ojos*”, gracias al ejemplo elegido, género masculino, el usuario extranjero no pensará que la expresión “la niña de mis ojos” se refiere solo al sexo femenino, ya que es posible su uso para ambos. Además, con toda probabilidad el usuario extranjero no sabrá que “la niña” en este caso, se refiere a una parte del “ojo”. Es interesante que los autores recojan la explicación en el mismo artículo (5. “en el ojo círculo negro y pequeño”).

Por otra parte, el *Salamanca* recoge una expresión que no encontramos en los otros diccionarios, “~ **pera**, Niño elegante y caprichoso, de buena familia. *Mi hermana tiene un novio que es un niño pera*”. En este caso, la lengua española solo utiliza esta expresión con varones, nunca con mujeres. La expresión en sí misma es “sexista” y por tanto, los autores no hacen un tratamiento sexista del término, sino que se limitan a presentar una actitud social concreta.

Por último, en la palabra **amigo** de nuevo, hallamos estructuras impersonales en las definiciones. En cuanto a los ejemplos, confirmamos que el *Vox* sigue usando ejemplos con el género masculino (*Roberto no es amigo de hacer favores; (...) por ayudar a un amigo*). En cambio en el *Salamanca* hay ejemplos con ambos géneros (*Es amiga de mis hijas; Es un amigo de la familia*) y lo mismo en el *SM* (*No soy muy amiga de madrugar; En los momentos difíciles se reconoce a los verdaderos amigos*).

Este sustantivo además, nos permite en una de sus acepciones, reflexionar sobre el sexismo lingüístico. Nos referimos a la palabra “amigo” como sinónimo de “amante”. En el *SM*, el usuario puede leer: “s. col. Amante. *Me presentó a su amigo y me dijo que pronto se casarían*”. En el *Vox*, “m. f. familiar. Persona con la que se tiene relaciones amorosas o sexuales: *la mujer pidió el divorcio cuando se enteró de que su marido tenía una amiga*”. Por último, el *Salamanca*: “peyorativo [persona] que es amante de otra: *Tiene un amigo ahí, en el piso, desde hace dos meses. Es la señorita amiga del profesor del piso de arriba*”. En los dos primeros, por la elección del ejemplo, el usuario podría pensar que el uso se refiere exclusivamente a la figura masculina (*SM*) y el otro, solo a la femenina (*Vox*). El *Salamanca*, sin embargo, da ejemplo de ambos géneros pero aborda el término como “peyorativo”, es decir, transmite una idea despectiva, cuando en nuestra sociedad actual se puede usar este término sin un matiz negativo. En los tres casos, aunque de forma distinta, podríamos decir que estamos ante un tratamiento sexista de una palabra, originado probablemente por una idea culturalmente sexista de las relaciones de las parejas. Recordemos que la sociedad española en el pasado, tenía una visión más puritana y cerrada de las mismas.

En resumen, en los diccionarios revisados para las “palabras animadas de doble forma”, hemos observado que en las descripciones de los artículos no se produce en general, un tratamiento sexista, pero sí en los ejemplos que los ilustran. Solo en el caso de la acepción “niño pera” o del término “pintor”, advertimos sexismo en toda la entrada. En el primer caso, estaríamos ante un sexismo cultural, ya que no se contempla “niña pera”.

Hay que aclarar que el **sexismo cultural** se entiende como la desvalorización sistemática impuesta por los patrones culturales en los que impera el androcentrismo, como expone Nancy Fraser: “las

representaciones estereotipadas en los medios de comunicación que las trivializan, redifican y denigran [...] la sujeción a normas androcéntricas frente a las cuales las mujeres aparecen como inferiores o marginales y que obran en desventaja de las mujeres” (1997: 9).

El término **sexismo** se identifica con el poder que ejerce un colectivo humano sobre otro en razón de su sexo. Victoria Sau en su obra “Diccionario Ideológico Feminista”, define el sexismo como: “Conjunto de todos y cada uno de los métodos empleados en el seno del patriarcado para poder mantener en situación de inferioridad, subordinación y explotación al sexo dominado: el femenino” (2002: 121).

Por otra parte, el adjetivo calificativo **cultural** (del latín *cultus*) se usa para designar hechos, situaciones, objetos o personas. Así, el adjetivo puede ser aplicado a muchos fenómenos o elementos. Sin embargo, por lo general, se utiliza para hacer referencia a hechos o ítems entendidos como artísticos, pero también se asocia con las civilizaciones, el progreso y las facultades intelectuales del hombre.

Por tanto, la unión de ambas palabras, esto es, **sexismo cultural**, se identifica frecuentemente con las actitudes sobre el género en las creencias, las costumbres y los estereotipos tradicionales de una sociedad.

En cuanto a las profesiones, es evidente que el sexismo tiene que ver con el desempeño frecuente en nuestra sociedad de ciertos trabajos realizados por varones y menos por mujeres por tanto, por un arraigo laboral concreto. Las ocupaciones de las mujeres solían ser de carácter servil, como apunta Lucia Calvo, lo que ha dejado una huella en la lengua. Esto es algo que va cambiando poco a poco como se observa ya en las algunas voces (arquitecta, abogada, etc.).

En conclusión, en el caso de estudiantes de español como lengua extranjera, el tratamiento del vocabulario analizado a veces podría confundir al usuario cuya competencia lingüística y sociocultural es limitada, y por tanto, derivar en un uso incorrecto de los términos cuando se comunique.

7. Elección del corpus para el análisis: (II) Palabras de forma única animadas para personas.

Palabras de **género masculino**.

- Las que designan **un colectivo y no marcan el sexo**: *ejército, comité*. En los tres diccionarios las formas son presentadas como *m.* [masculino]. Son grupos o colectivos en los que se pueden o no incluir a las mujeres, sin embargo, no afecta al tratamiento de las palabras, que siempre permanecerán invariables. No se observa un tratamiento sexista en estas voces.

- Las que designan a **individuos**:

a) Para designar varones: **cura, comandante**.

En el caso de **cura** [s.m., col., sacerdote católico o de la iglesia católica], designa un colectivo que tradicional está compuesto por varones. Sin embargo, si consultamos la voz *sacerdote* en el diccionario *SM* recoge una acepción referida al género opuesto: “para indicar el femenino, se usa como aposición detrás de un sustantivo: *una mujer sacerdote*”. Así es como este diccionario refleja que en otras culturas hay mujeres que consagran su vida a Dios, por ejemplo, en la iglesia anglicana. En el *Salamanca* y el *Vox* no hay ninguna alusión de esto, pero en nuestra opinión, el sexismo de estos diccionarios no radica en las palabras escogidas o el modo de presentarlas, sino en el sexismo social y cultural.

Lo mismo ocurre con la voz **comandante** [s. *com*], al igual que el resto de los empleos del ejército, no se observa un tratamiento sexista en las definiciones de los diccionarios estudiados, si bien, se echa de menos algún ejemplo femenino para que los estudiantes del ELE comprendan la dualidad del uso. Observamos que la *RAE*³¹ reconoce que existen normas para el tratamiento del género femenino en ciertas profesiones o cargos que históricamente han sido ocupados por varones.

b) Las que designan a individuos y también colectivos: **hombre**.

Como colectivo, la palabra **hombre** se refiere a “miembro de la especie humana”, así aparece en el *SM* y en el *Vox*, aunque en este último es la segunda acepción ya que en la primera hallamos: “individuo adulto de sexo masculino de la especie humana”. Creemos que se debería invertir el orden

³¹ “Independientemente de su terminación, funcionan como comunes los nombres que designan grados de la escala militar: *el/la cabo, el/la brigada, el/la teniente, el/la brigadier, el/la capitán, el/la coronel, el/la alférez*”. En <http://lema.rae.es/dpd/srv/search?id=Tr5x8MFOuD6DVTIDBg>

para evitar confundir al usuario extranjero. En el *Salamanca* encontramos sexismo léxico cuando leemos: “Hombre s.m. (macho y hembra) *Homo Sapiens*. Ser vivo con una inteligencia desarrollada”. En nuestra opinión, los autores deberían haber usado el par varón/mujer en lugar de macho/hembra, utilizado preferiblemente para el reino animal.

Algunas acepciones bajo esta voz parecen responder al sexismo cultural que se transmite a través de la lengua. Por ejemplo, “hombre de pelo en pecho” o “muy ~” (*Vox*) para designar la valentía, sin que encontremos un homónimo para la mujer o bien, “ser un ~ hecho y derecho”, para referirse a la madurez exclusivamente del sexo masculino.

c) Para designar mujeres: **putón, marimacho**.

En el término **putón** (no aparece en el *Vox*, sí en los otros dos), voz despectiva y vulgar para hablar de una prostituta o según las definiciones del diccionario: “una mujer de excesiva libertad sexual”, normalmente usado como insulto. En este término encontramos el típico caso de sexismo cultural y social, ya que esa llamada “excesiva libertad sexual” en los hombres, se considera habitualmente un comportamiento varonil y pocas veces es censurado.

Para la voz **marimacho** en el *SM* encontramos: “adj. inv./ s.m. **1 col. desp.** [Referido a una mujer, que tiene aspecto o modales que se consideran masculinos](#). Sinónimo: [machorra](#), [machota](#). **2 vulg. desp.** → [lesbiana](#)”. El mismo artículo se repite en el *Salamanca* con el matiz: “o se comporta como se cree que deben hacerlo los hombres”. Solo el *Vox* describe la acepción “lesbiana” (“mujer que se siente atraída sexualmente por otras mujeres”), y desde el punto de vista morfológico, únicamente en el *SM*, el usuario puede hallar información para su uso: “se usa también como femenino: *una marimacho*”.

Estos términos evidencian el sexismo léxico con arraigo social, ya que responden a una forma peyorativa de tratar a las mujeres debido a su aspecto, modos o inclinaciones sexuales. Pero no ocurre solo hacia las mujeres, no olvidemos que la sociedad crea estas mismas formas también para el sexo contrario. Así el adjetivo **afeminado** con “características propias de las mujeres”, que en el

caso del Vox nos remite a “marica o mariquita” –que veremos luego– términos vulgares que igualmente tratan de forma despectiva a una persona por sus modos o actitudes. Se podría hablar entonces de una visión sexista de la sociedad reflejada en la lengua.

d) Sin sexo determinado: **bebé, personaje**

Nos encontramos ante dos sustantivos epicenos, que hablan de un conjunto de seres humanos, marcando el género masculino/femenino mediante el artículo: *el bebé, la bebé*. Solo el diccionario SM utiliza el sustantivo “persona” como genérico para definir su artículo, sin embargo, los otros dos consultados emplean “niño” (Ej.: “niño que acaba de nacer”) y ejemplos con el uso del artículo masculino (“un bebé precioso”) por lo que podríamos decir que existe un tratamiento sexista desde el punto de vista lingüístico y sintáctico, ya que el usuario extranjero solo puede identificar el término en una dirección, teniendo en cuenta que el término está precedido de las siglas m./ s.m.

En contraste, vemos que los tres diccionarios consultados para la palabra “personaje”, hacen un uso del sustantivo “persona” para la descripción del artículo. El *Salamanca* en particular presenta una acepción que no vemos en los otros dos, el uso coloquial/irónico del término: “Ese tipo es todo un personaje”, en el que los autores podrían haber utilizado un sustantivo femenino como ejemplo (“esa mujer/señora/chica es todo un personaje”), para ilustrar una palabra que no especifica un género determinado y aclarar su uso.

Observemos ahora las palabras de **género femenino**.

Sucede algo similar al género masculino pero en los casos que veremos el género gramatical que prevalece es el femenino aunque igualmente, no se marca el sexo.

a) Para designar varones: **maricona, mariposa**.

En el *Salamanca* la entrada se halla en masculino, “**maricón**”, y la definición dice: “vulgar, peyorativo, insulto; intensificador en femenino. Hombre homosexual”. Para el ejemplo usa el género femenino: “El otro día tres mariconas querían que las invitara a una copa”. En el SM los autores presentan la palabra como “maricón, co.na (pl. *maricones, -nas*) adj./s. vulgar. desp., *marica*. Se usa como insulto”. Por último, en el Vox encontramos “marica” o “maricón” este último sin la acepción para el femenino.

Si consultamos el término **mariposa** en el *SM*, para el sentido que nos ocupa, el diccionario presenta el término solo como coloquial, “hombre afeminado u homosexual. *A los homosexuales no les gusta que les llamen mariposas*. En el *Vox*, esta vez hallamos la voz como familiar y despectiva, “hombre de modales femeninos: *dicen que Juan es ~ porque trata mucho con mujeres*”, y nos remite al término “marica”. Para finalizar el *Salamanca*, en su última definición dentro de “mariposa”, clasifica al término de coloquial: “Hombre homosexual o de aspecto afeminado: *Por este bar vienen muchos mariposas*”

Como podemos observar, en los tres casos los diccionarios recogen con mayor o menor acierto los artículos y ejemplos de estas voces. Sin embargo, no podemos decir que por las palabras escogidas en sus definiciones o por su forma de presentarlas, los autores incurran en ningún sexismo lingüístico. No obstante, estamos ante un claro sexismo cultural que se muestra en el léxico. Los términos proceden de un entorno social poco permisivo con la homosexualidad y derivan por este motivo, en términos despectivos o insultos.

b) Para designar mujeres: **mujer, institutriz**.

Cuando se consulta la voz “**mujer**” en los diccionarios ELE, el usuario se encuentra con un universo de conceptos claramente sexistas, como denuncia Luciana Calvo del *DRAE* en su trabajo. Así, por ejemplo, en el artículo del *Salamanca* encontramos: “~ de la calle”, prostituta, frente “hombre de la calle” término positivo que designa a un hombre anónimo representante de una comunidad”. En el caso de “~ de la limpieza”, no encontramos en el mismo diccionario su análogo, “hombre de la limpieza”. Otros como “~ de su casa”, o los connotados negativamente, “~ fatal” y “~ fácil”, tampoco tienen su correspondencia con los varones. Finalmente descubrimos: “~ pública, de la vida o de la mala vida” con significado de prostituta frente a “hombre público”, con un sentido positivo, “que participa en la vida política”. Solo la expresión “~ objeto” la encontramos referida para ambos sexos con un mismo sentido.

Excepcionalmente, en el diccionario *SM* descubrimos abundantes acepciones positivas o neutras equivalentes al sexo femenino en la entrada “mujer”. Así, encontramos: “~ anuncio”, “~ del tiempo”, “~ orquesta”, “~ rana”, o la locución adverbial “de mujer a mujer”, equivalente a la del hombre y con

idéntico sentido, “de igual a igual, francamente o con sinceridad”, que también se repite en el *Salamanca*.

También en lo referente al “estado civil”, solo refleja el de casada “con respecto a un hombre, la casada con él”, olvidando otros estados civiles (divorciada, soltera, etc.)

Una vez consultada la voz “mujer”, podemos decir que los artículos reflejan la visión sexista de la mujer, resultado de un contexto social donde prevalece la figura masculina que se repite, como hemos visto, en el ámbito de las profesiones, trabajos, oficios, roles sociales, el estado civil o ciertas cualidades relacionadas con el sexo, como veremos a continuación, peyorativas y enfocadas, como dice Luciana Calvo “desde una ética y una moral muy puritana” (pág. 52). En este contexto específico no podemos olvidar la voz “**mujeriego**”: “hombre aficionado a ir con mujeres, con unas y otras, y no se limita a una sola”, y de nuevo, sin correspondencia en el femenino. Otra vez, es un claro ejemplo de “sexismo sociocultural” que se refleja en la lengua.

Como explicamos antes, las profesiones de las mujeres eran habitualmente de carácter servil. La palabra **institutriz** es un término que responde a una figura antigua que fue sustituida por la de profesor/a o maestro/a³². En los tres diccionarios consultados aparece descrita como “mujer que se ocupaba de la educación de los hijos de una familia” (*Salamanca*). Proviene del latín *institutrix* pero es importante tener en cuenta que también existe el término “instituto” (lat. institūtor, -ōris), no registrado en los diccionarios ELE pero sí en el *DRAE* como: “2. m. Col. Profesor, pedagogo, maestro”. Por tanto, tenemos un claro ejemplo en el que la lengua se decanta por el femenino por

³² El papel de la institutriz no era tan común en familias humildes o con menor poder adquisitivo, ya que su presencia permanente hacía que fuera un lujo casi imposible para la mayoría de la población. Al mismo tiempo, como la educación permanecía también como un privilegio para algunos pocos, la necesidad de que los niños fueran instruidos no se daba en los grupos sociales más empobrecidos. El rol de la institutriz entraría en clara decadencia con la aparición de la escuela y de la educación pública y abierta para toda la sociedad, fenómeno que se hizo bien claro a fines del siglo XIX y a lo largo de todo el siglo XX. Definición ABC: <http://www.definicionabc.com/social/institutriz.php#ixzz2JCzutJDV>.

¹⁶ “Sustantivos epicenos. Son los que, designando seres animados, tienen una forma única, a la que corresponde un solo género gramatical, para referirse, indistintamente, a individuos de uno u otro sexo. En este caso, el género gramatical es independiente del sexo del referente. Hay epicenos masculinos (personaje, vástago, tiburón, linco) y epicenos femeninos (persona, víctima, hormiga, perdiz). La concordancia debe establecerse siempre en función del género gramatical del sustantivo epiceno, y no en función del sexo del referente [...]” <http://lema.rae.es/dpd/srv/search?id=Tr5x8MFOuD6DVTIDBg>

contexto social y sexista. La profesión a la que se refiere era ocupada habitualmente por mujeres de ahí que apenas tengamos conocimiento del uso masculino.

c) Sin sexo determinado: **víctima, criatura**.

Víctima es un sustantivo epiceno³³, es decir, tiene forma única y se refiere indistintamente a ambos sexos. De hecho, en los diccionarios ELE se habla de “persona o animal que sufre un daño”. En todos los ejemplos encontramos sujetos genéricos como en el caso del *SM*, “todas las guerras causan víctimas”, salvo en el caso del *Salamanca*, que utiliza un sujeto femenino para su primera definición: “Ella ha sido víctima de un atraco”. Aunque no existe sexismo lingüístico, contextual o social, sin embargo, creemos que es un error usar en este caso, un ejemplo con sujeto femenino, ya que como sustantivo/femenino epiceno que es, puede causar confusión desde el punto de vista morfológico cuando un estudiante extranjero haga uso de él.

Sin embargo, en la voz “**criatura**” tanto el *Vox* como el *SM* presentan un artículo que por la elección de la palabra “niño” para sus definiciones, nos permitiría hablar de sexismo lingüístico. Para evitarlo, el *Salamanca* utiliza el femenino y masculino en su definición: “niño o niña pequeños” y un ejemplo genérico: “Has tenido una criatura preciosa”.

8. Otro campo semántico: Prendas, cosmética y complementos.

Es evidente que en los diccionarios con los que hemos trabajado, no encontramos un corpus de palabras como el que Lucía Calvo encuentra en el *DRAE*, lleno de términos arcaicos para referirse a prendas de vestir, cosméticos y otros complementos de mujer. No obstante, el campo semántico nos lleva a la consulta de algunos términos y al hallazgo de algunos datos curiosos.

Así, encontramos la prenda de vestir, **pantalón**, en la que es evidente el sexismo cultural reflejado en la lengua, no en la definición de la prenda, sino en las expresiones derivadas del uso habitual de ésta por parte de los hombres: **llevar los pantalones**: uso coloquial, “imponer la propia autoridad en un sitio, especialmente en el hogar: ¿En tu casa quién lleva los pantalones?” (*SM*, pág. 1037). En el

Vox, esa misma expresión y una nueva, **ponerse los pantalones**: “fam. fig., hacer valer una persona su autoridad en una situación de desorden”, se acompañan de ejemplos con mujeres, “en su casa es la mujer la que lleva los pantalones” y “la madre se pone los pantalones y les regaña”. En el *Salamanca* encontramos idéntica situación que en el *Vox*, aunque en este caso ambas expresiones se recogen en una sola entrada: “llevar/ponerse los pantalones”. Pero el sexismo se produce igualmente hacia los varones. Así el **rímel**, está descrito en los tres diccionarios sin alusiones al sexo, como un cosmético que “da color y espesor a las pestañas”. Sin embargo, en los ejemplos, el *SM* elige solo el sexo femenino, “mi hermana suele ponerse rímel antes de salir”, por lo que podemos decir en este caso, hace un uso sexista de la lengua. El *Vox* o el *Salamanca* optan por un ejemplo sin un sujeto específico (“Si lloras se te correrá el rímel”).

9. Conceptos de **sexo**, **sexualidad** y **sensualidad**.

Para la voz **sexo**, el único que sigue la definición comentada por Lucía Calvo³⁴ en su trabajo, es el diccionario *Salamanca* ya que los otros dos han eliminado de los artículos la referencia al “sexo débil/sexo fuerte”, hablando en su lugar de: “condición orgánica...; “órganos sexuales...”, “lo que está relacionado con el placer...”, etc. (*SM*, pág. 1265)

En lo referente al sustantivo **sexualidad** los diccionarios de ELE han cambiado la definición más arcaizante “propensión al placer carnal” por otras más actuales por ejemplo, en el *Vox*: “Actividades y comportamientos relacionados con la atracción entre los sexos” (pág. 1.047).

Por último, en cuanto a **sensualidad**, solo el *Vox* abandona la definición de “gusto exagerado por los placeres de los sentidos” por “tendencia a buscar los placeres de los sentidos”. En cuanto a los ejemplos, hemos encontrado que en el *Salamanca* para esta voz, se utilizan ejemplos relativos a la mujer y no al hombre: “Olga busca la sensualidad en todos los detalles de su casa” o “Ella tiene una gran sensualidad”, como si fuera algo propio solo de éstas.

³⁴ “Podemos observar en esta definición cómo conceptos tan subjetivos como la belleza, la fealdad, la debilidad o la fuerza se predicen de la mujer y del hombre por inveterada tradición y se mezclan con una definición biológica” (1998: 57)

De nuevo, observamos en alguno de estas entradas un uso arcaizante del término en el que se incurre en sexismo lingüístico como reflejo de una sociedad patriarcal y en muchos casos machista.

10. Conclusión

Una vez finalizado el estudio de los términos elegidos, hemos llegado a la conclusión de que por norma general, los autores de los diccionarios consultados no incurren en “sexismos sintácticos”, ya que no hallamos una discriminación aparente en la forma de construir la frase. Así, es frecuente encontrar en sus artículos, sustantivos genéricos como “persona” o descripciones impersonales del tipo: “el que tiene”, “el que está”, “el que muestra”.

Sin embargo, en los ejemplos de palabras con doble forma, masculino/femenino, donde la voz femenina suele designar a la mujer y la masculina al varón, pero también a personas en general, observamos que en la mayoría de los ejemplos que ilustran las entradas, los autores optan por el género masculino (sin sexo marcado) como puede parecer lógico. No obstante, en el caso de un diccionario pensado para no nativos, puede ser bastante problemático porque los estudiantes ELE, utilizan frecuentemente el contexto para entender el uso, por lo que la consulta podría derivar en confusión, y de ahí en un uso incorrecto de la lengua. De los tres diccionarios, el más cuidadoso a la hora de elegir ejemplos representativos de ambos géneros es el *SM*.

Por otra parte, hemos constatado que los diccionarios siguen reflejando en muchos casos el llamado sexismo léxico, como resultado de un claro “sexismo social” es decir, casos en los que la discriminación se debe al fondo del mensaje y no a su forma, que muchos estudiosos vinculan a una sociedad patriarcal. Así, se ve claramente cuando contrastamos las voces mujer/hombre, el género femenino sale históricamente peor parado que su contrario: descripciones peyorativas y cualidades orientadas desde una moral puritana y antigua, con constantes anacronismos respecto al papel de la mujer en la actualidad. Esto enlaza directamente con las palabras que designan profesiones, trabajos y ocupaciones que se alejan de una visión actual, como vimos en el caso de *pintor/pintora* y en la que se observa claramente un caso de sexismo lingüístico debido a una visión social muy

sesgada, como también ocurre en las palabras que designan relaciones sexuales o personales, que vimos en el caso de *amigo* en el sentido de “amante”.

El sesgo lingüístico también se recoge en voces algo más banales como “pantalones” y “rímel”, que muestran curiosamente la unión e identificación de ciertas palabras con un sexo determinado. Así, parece que los pantalones se asocian culturalmente con el hombre y de ahí la metáfora, “llevar los pantalones”, como si no fuera cosa de mujeres. De igual forma, parece que el rímel no lo utilizaran los hombres, que algunos lo hacen. Lo mismo ocurre si nos detenemos en las voces: *sexo*, *sexualidad* y *sensualidad*. Los autores de los diccionarios ELE olvidan al público meta de sus obras, obvian la realidad extralingüística y presentan conceptos discriminatorios, si se limitan a hablar de “sexo débil/fuerte” o ilustrar la “sensualidad” como si fuera algo único en las mujeres. De esta forma, corremos el riesgo de dar una imagen social poco actual y retrógrada que nada tiene que ver con nuestra sociedad ni con los objetivos de la enseñanza del ELE, siempre pendientes de fomentar el aprendizaje sociolingüístico y cultural en contextos apropiados y lo más reales posibles.

Lo que es un hecho es que el estudio de ciertas voces ha evidenciado que el sexismo en nuestra sociedad y cultura continua reflejándose en algunas voces o en los ejemplos de estos diccionarios. ¿Esto nos permite catalogar a los diccionarios ELE de “sexistas”? Yo creo que para hacerlo deberíamos analizarlos más profusamente. No obstante, lo que si podemos decir sin temor a equivocarnos, es que los diccionarios consultados necesitan una revisión para reflejar con rigor los cambios sociales acaecidos, para mostrar contextos actuales y evitar caer en estereotipos culturales y sociales que nos ligan, a los ojos de un usuario extranjero, a una sociedad patriarcal o machista atrasada y poco moderna.

Los diccionarios deberían contemplar ciertas asimetrías lingüísticas, teniendo en cuenta el carácter activo de la lengua y la existencia de circunstancias contextuales o extralingüísticas, con criterios ajustados a una realidad social que aún no aparecen fijados en la expresión lingüística de muchos términos en los artículos o en la elección de los conceptos. Esto no quiere decir que llevemos la lengua al extremo de la simpleza inventando términos inexistentes, como el famoso caso “miembros y miembras”, que refleja el desconocimiento de la prelación del masculino sobre el femenino (-o / -a)

y que los profesores Meseguer o Ignacio Bosque denuncian y explican en sus trabajos y que son apoyados una amplia comunidad lingüística.

Sobre los diccionarios consultados, creemos que el diccionario de *SM* es el que ofrece un tratamiento del léxico más cuidado en el sentido que nos ocupa, el sexismo lingüístico, ofreciendo a los estudiantes de ELE artículos claros que se distinguen por su tratamiento más genérico, con ejemplos abundantes para ilustrar el componente masculino y femenino, siendo fieles a su declaración de intenciones:

“[...] estas limitaciones no pueden constituir un obstáculo insalvable que prive a los estudiantes de español de un repertorio que les ofrezca la norma viva y actual convenientemente documentada y con la suficiente información para entender y producir enunciados orales y textos escritos en español con la garantía del buen uso” (2002: 7)

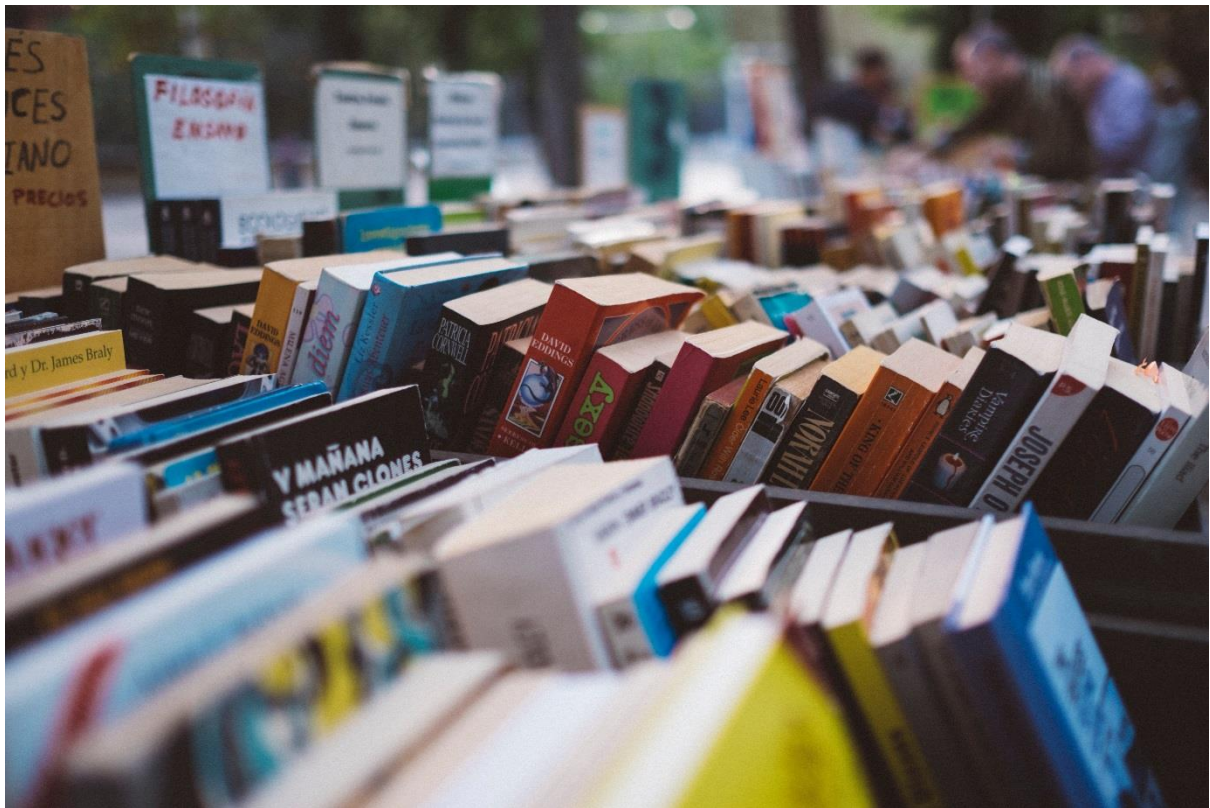
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Reviews



Daring to Speak. A Review of the Language Learning and Teaching Conference: Developing Speaking Skills (University of Leeds, 15th September 2017)

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Key words: speaking skills, oracy, technology-enhanced language learning, learner-oriented assessment, tasked-based learning.

The development of speaking skills in a foreign language is for many learners the central focus of their language learning. It is also often linked to feelings of anxiety, fear and panic as communication in another language can naturally be very stressful and uncomfortable. On the other hand it can be elating and rewarding if exchanges in the foreign language are successful. Students often ask for more speaking opportunities, however few seem to engage in activities outside the classroom. New ideas for supporting students in their speaking skills and innovative ways of promoting this are therefore always welcome and it was no surprise that the recent conference in Leeds proved hugely popular, attracting delegates from the UK as well as from abroad.

Conference presentations were delivered within dedicated strands on the topics of Pronunciation, Cognitivism on Speaking Skills, Pragmatics and Interaction, Motivation, Learning outside the classroom, Technology-enhanced Language Learning, Assessment and Task-based Teaching and Learning.

An introductory keynote was given by Fumiyo Nakatsuhara from the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment³⁵ (CRELLA) at the University of Bedfordshire. She reported on her research into learning-oriented feedback and the development and assessment of interactional competence. One of CRELLA's aims is the improvement of the assessment of Academic English in HE, however the findings can easily be transferred to other languages. Fumiyo Nakatsuhara presented a checklist of criteria which were developed to assess learners' Interactional Competence such as initiating discussion, responding to the partner, avoiding monologues, negotiating towards a common decision, interactive listening and body language. Although most of these competences are most likely already being assessed in institutions all over the country and beyond, this is no doubt a very useful and comprehensive list that can add to current practice. Discussions following the presentation focused on gender and cultural stereotypes affecting assessment of intercultural competence. The question was raised as to how intercultural competence in one language can be transferred to another. The need to train learners to be confident when speaking in a foreign language was highlighted, while bearing in mind that over-confidence may be seen negatively in some cultures.

Marion Heron from the University of Surrey delivered a very interesting and highly relevant talk on oracy skills in Higher Education, oracy being defined as speaking and listening skills for effective communication and interaction (Wilkinson 1970) or to quote Heron 'how to talk in an educationally purposeful way'. Traditionally more work on the development of oracy skills has been done in schools (often in relation to employability skills) while many HE institutions seem to have shown less interest in it until now. Marion Heron argued that oracy is increasingly important in universities as teaching in Higher Education is becoming more interactive and the role of talk in learning is more widely recognised (Michaels, O'Connor & Resnick 2008). She suggested that oracy development should be more explicit in the

³⁵ <https://www.beds.ac.uk/crella/crella>

curriculum, however, appropriate materials and criteria were needed to assess these skills. A dedicated conference on Oracy Skills in Higher Education will be hosted by the University of Surrey in January 2018.³⁶

Using technology to enhance and practise speaking skills was showcased in a number of presentations. Alessia Plutino from the University of Southampton reported on her use of Twitter and Storify to improve speaking accuracy. She decided to experiment with Twitter to investigate new ways of 'speaking'. Plutino uses tweeting which is not speaking as such, but could be considered very similar to oral output, as an alternative means of practising speaking. Student output is recorded via Twitter with the aim to complement the traditional recording of students (which they often dislike). Students produce tweets on a given scenario in the target language which is then followed up by a reflective task in English. The aim is to engage students and to encourage them to recognise major mistakes and focus on those in the future.

On a similar topic Isabel Molina-Vidal from the University of Leeds talked about her use of online chats to develop oral fluency along with grammatical accuracy. Online chats are produced by students within a given time to make the situation as similar as possible to an oral face-to-face exchange. This is set up in preparation for face-to-face assessment and has led to positive outcomes in that students feel reportedly more confident in terms of accuracy but also fluency. Similar to the above-mentioned contributions on Twitter, the chats can be analysed by students afterwards to identify mistakes and work towards improved performance in the future.

Thomas Jochum-Critchley from the University of York also highlighted the teaching practitioner's dilemma between accuracy and fluency when focussing on oral skills. He reported on the use of audio and video recordings (students use their mobile phones to record themselves, i.e. asking each other questions to practise certain grammar points)

³⁶ <http://store.surrey.ac.uk/conferences-and-events/higher-education-and-technology-enhanced-learning/conferences-and-events/oracy-skills-in-higher-education-5th-january-2018>

under time pressure to promote accuracy and fluency. These tasks are not assessed, but students are able to listen to the recordings again and evaluate their output.

Anna Johnston from the University of Durham delivered a fascinating and inspiring presentation on the incorporation of content and intercultural competence into language teaching. The aim was to create meaningful speaking activities in the format of student-led mini-projects (e.g. group presentations, blogs, articles) to explore interculturality in the target language. A Mini-Mooc requiring approximately eight hours of student work was created to familiarise students with the concepts of interculturality, leading to group projects and students subsequently leading their own seminars in the target language. Students also present their research on interculturality to the university's Global Citizenship Forum. The assessment approach combines inquiry-based learning and research-informed teaching. Alison Hayes' talk based on Martha Carr's *Self-Mentoring for leadership* book (2015) described her idea of adapting the self-mentoring process to the language classroom. The development of tools for self-awareness and reflection aim to provide support for learners. However, the strategies described in the presentation would doubtlessly benefit teachers too.

Some of the ideas presented stemmed from Nancy Kline's 'The Thinking Environment'³⁷, a framework of ten behaviours for thinking. Alison Hayes quoted Kline who said that 'most thinking happens when you have time and space to do it', a statement that rings true for learners and teaching practitioners alike. While Hayes' practice of self-reflection in language learning is not new and has been investigated, i.e. in publications relating to independent learning, her talk was a reminder that, while teachers provide some tools for the learning of their students, learners themselves have responsibility for their progress. Alison Hayes pointed out that the skills of self-reflection acquired in language learning can be transferred

³⁷ <http://www.timetothink.com/>

more widely to other areas of life which is perhaps something that should be highlighted more often.

The final keynote presentation was given by Tita Beaven from the Open University. Her talk 'Speaking anxiety, motivation and grit: Reflection on informal online language teaching and learning' was highly captivating and explored several ways of supporting language learners to help them overcome anxiety, in particular when speaking in the foreign language. These include the use of language MOOCs which serve as 'bootcamps' before students start on a regular course, as well as the use of Tandem learning via italki³⁸. Tita Beaven also mentioned the ADD1 challenge³⁹ a website which dares participants to learn a language in 90 days after which they have to communicate with a native speaker for 15 minutes. While this may sound to many like a truly horrific experience, Beaven's point is that language learners, in order to progress, need to get out of their comfort zone and start talking in the foreign language.

There were several other papers which showcased very interesting ideas and practice, such as the use of theatre improvisation activities to develop spontaneity in speaking (presented by Roser Martínez-Sánchez and Helen Mayer from the London School of Economics), but unfortunately not all can be mentioned here.

It was thrilling to see how colleagues in different institutions tackle the challenges of enhancing their students' accuracy and fluency, try to build their confidence and reduce anxiety. New studies and research will no doubt enhance current practice further and it is hoped that another event like this will follow soon.

Credit has to be given to the conference organisers who put every effort into making this such a successful day. The programme contained just the right amount of keynote speakers and parallel sessions with a good range of topics to choose from. The lunch break offered plenty of opportunity for discussion, visiting the book exhibitions and seeing poster

³⁸ <https://www.italki.com/home> <http://www.timetothink.com/>

³⁹ <http://add1challenge.com/>

presentations. The book prizes that could be won by delegates were a great idea and no doubt a pleasant surprise for the winners. Thank you to the Leeds team for creating this opportunity for exchange and reflection.

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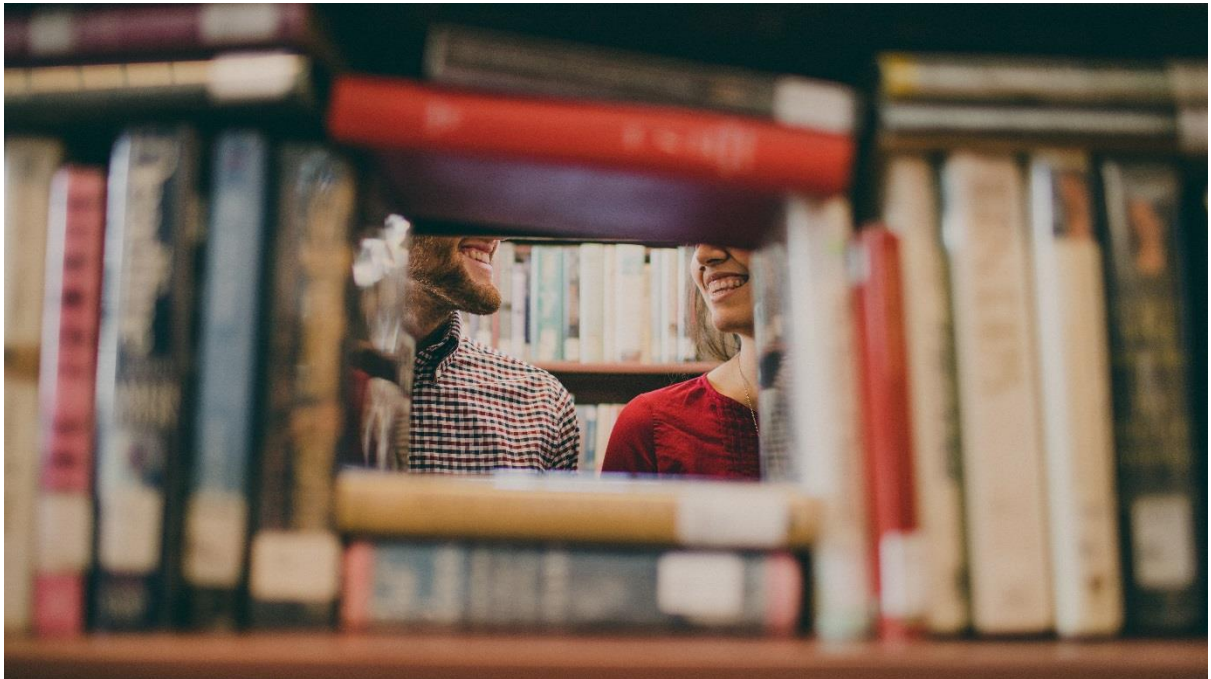
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<http://www.timetothink.com/>

Scholarbits



Grammar Teaching Ditty

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Key words: grammar, poetry, teaching

This light-hearted contribution, inspired by the tradition of doggerel or nonsense verse, employs an unlikely tone and text-type to play with (or perhaps send up?) the 'serious' topic of grammar teaching. It doing so, it grants the academy permission to gently mock itself and its preoccupations, with the aim of weaving play, humour and a healthy dose of self-reflection into academia's (arguably self-perpetuated and self-justifying) mythology of a 'weighty institution' which not only does not easily laugh at itself, but which can also on occasion rob its own *raison-d'être*, Intellectual Curiosity, of its two best friends, Laughter and Lightheartedness.

If you're into teaching grammar,
You should check your teacher's toolkit;
You'll need more than nails and hammer:
You've gotta have the tools that fit.
If the Oscars, and its glamour,
Is the pinnacle of showbiz
Then with language, in like manner,
It's the grammar where the glow is.

So here's a quick and clicky ditty –
A rhyme whose lines wind like spaghetti –
About the teaching nitty-gritty
Of words-in-combinations
(If that's what 'grammar' means! For some
A different def-in-i-ti-on
Might be preferred. For them, here's one:
'Syntactic operations').

Whatever colour grammar is,
The language teacher central wish
Is getting learners' minds to fizz
And exceed their expectations.
So, like those lovely mid-course trips
Let's journey on, pick up some tips,
Garner quips from scholars' lips
On grammar. Ah! Elation!

Way back when in times gone by
When Latin was compulsory
'*Amo, amas, amat*' we'd chant
And then '*amamus, amatis, amant.*'

Rote learning now has quite a rep -
It's rotting in the grammar skip!
So if, dear reader, you agree,
Let's jump to the 20th century.

We'll kick off audio-lingually,
In 1952 or -3
(Or thereabouts, when tapes came out
And headphones and recordings):

A stimulus and swift response
(Made straightaway and more than once)
Was meant to lead with ease and speed
To grammar structures forming.

But language learning's quite complex;
It needs more time and more context.
So, Asher's TPR, for one,
And the Direct Method came along

With a bit more inter-ac-ti-on
And feedback on pro-duc-ti-on:

Personalising grammar learning

Gets the flame of knowledge burning.

Then the structured syllabus hits the stage

And straightaway it's all the rage:

Starting with the present tense

We lead the learners on a dance

To ever greater complexity

(Like negative conditionality)

And step-by-step they get it all

(Except they don't! Well, some – not all).

Notional-functional had its day -

And Dogme: let the students say

What grammar *they* want to learn today:

Unplanned planning, that's the way!

Let's not forget the wierdier:

Here's one: suggestopedia

'Breathe with the music; let's begin!'

And lo! the grammar floats on in.

And now its logical opposite:

Grammar translation - where we sit

For hours in sad monotony -

But at least we up our accuracy.

More fun is had with grammar games
Or boarding gap-fill grammar frames;
Endless models, endless claims:
Teaching grammar goes by many names.

So, there we go. We've paused and thought
About how grammar teaching ought
Or could or might or has to go
(And we've missed some methods as space is short);

But whatever approaches you have taught
And whatever your students have thereby caught
It's done 'em good, coz, as we know
'Any instruction's better than nought'.

But when it comes to me (and here's my final summary sentence)
Methods come, they hang around a while, and then they go;
So, in a first person, adverb-modified negative present simple tense,
On grammar teaching, all I'll say is this: 'I just don't know'.

Videos



Ártemis: Poetry in the Age of Eversion

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ABSTRACT

In this position paper Antonio Martínez-Arboleda presents his Ártemis 2016 project of audio-visual digitisation of poetry, providing links to some of the 30 poems and 30 mini-interviews of the videos of the Open Educational Resources (OER) collection “Las flechas de Ártemis” (“The Arrows of Ártemis”). Antonio discusses the educational rationale behind this initiative and suggests a framing for 21st Century poetry that accounts for the old and the new in the *Age of Technological Eversion*. Some principles are advanced for the development of strategies to support learners, as they encounter the videos of this collection.

INTRODUCTION

In March 2016 I was invited by the poet Katy Parra to participate in the first Ártemis 2016 poetry festival, which would be held on the weekend of the 14 May 2016. Parra leads a poetry network in the South East of Spain called “Colectivo Di-versos” that I am part of, as I was born and lived in the Region of Murcia until the age of 26. I have known some of those poets for several years now.

The Ártemis 2016 Festival was supported not only by this network but, crucially, by Raspabook, an up-and-coming high-quality publisher who has established itself in the last years in a competitive and saturated book market by presenting its product in a very appealing way.

In the Festival, more than 30 poets would share and discuss their work in various sessions expanding over the weekend. A good deal of them are very well known nationally and even internationally and hold important awards (Enrique Gracia, Inma Pelegrín, Juan Pablo Zapater and Katy Parra herself to name a few).

As a passionate Open Educational Resources scholar, I saw immediately the potential of this event for the production of quality digital learning resources of great educational value and decided to attend the festival wearing my two hats of poet and educator at the same time.

Several months later, we have published through a variety of digital channels “The Arrows of Ártemis” (“Las flechas de Ártemis”), a collection of 30 videos of mini-interviews with the poets and another 30 videos featuring poems read by each one of the authors.

In the next paragraphs, I will provide an outline of the project and discuss its rationale with an emphasis on the educational and cultural potential of the digital assets produced and the open practice strategies proposed. There are several questions that I think deserve our attention: a) What new opportunities for using poetry in language learning does the digital paradigm present us with? b) In what ways does the digital paradigm change the relationship between poets, educators and learners? c) What critical and creative journeys can poets and students follow?



Katy Parra: "Conclusiones dramáticas sobre la eternidad" - Ártemis
2016

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229 visualizaciones

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Este vídeo forma parte de la colección de R.E.A. (Recursos Educativos Abiertos) "Las flechas de Ártemis" realizada por la Escuela de Lenguas, Sociedades y Culturas de la Universidad de Leeds.

Embedded link to the Poem of Katy Parra <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pFPcGkqIw4>

UNIVERSITIES AND ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

The role of Universities in supporting artistic external production is relatively limited for two main reasons. Firstly, there is a very well-defined line dividing the role of the academic and the role of the artist: the artist produces art and the academic reflects upon it. Universities produce research and learning resources, but, generally, do not sponsor artistic creation nor engage in artistic production as part of their core remits of research and teaching. The role of the academic in this context is meant to be as neutral as possible. She does not interfere in the dynamics and processes underpinning the production of art. Any reputational value added to the work of the artist stemming from the critique formulated by the academic is seen as an unavoidable, yet healthy, consequence of the interest generated by the work of the artist among academically qualified audiences. Secondly, academic researchers only work on areas of their research expertise. This means that often there are only a very small handful of individuals in each institution who can justify engaging with a given artistic product from a fully informed professional perspective. In the case of university departments of foreign languages and cultures the lack of specialists in minority subjects like contemporary poetry is noticeable, even in large units.

These perceived constraints present to me as many dilemmas as opportunities around two issues: 1) my own position as an academic practitioner, and therefore the position of the University, in relation to a festival that I was part of as an artist; 2) the appropriateness of an activity such as the digitisation of art, which clearly goes beyond the remit of the traditional role of academics. Perhaps in other disciplines like Fine Art or Music this situation is not that uncommon, but in Languages it is relatively exceptional.

The answer I provided to these two dilemmas stems primarily from a reflection about my own professional identity: I consider myself an educator and a scholar committed to my own students as well as to the wider global society, beyond the research frameworks established by government agencies for the funding of some of our activities. The production and dissemination of OER is clearly a part of my professional remit, which I have pursued

institutionally and personally with passion. Literature may not be my professional *research expertise*, but the integration of literature within language learning falls very well within my scholar interests and features prominently in my teaching.

Additionally, we, the language tutors, are not only a vehicle for our student's intercultural journey but, somehow, one of the destinations. Who we are, culturally and ethnically, matters slightly more for language students than for others. We, as members of the speaking community that our students are interested on, are in a way part of the subject of study. Therefore, by incorporating any relevant cultural activities of the educator, providing this does not represent a breach of our personal and social intimacy, we can enrich further our students' learning and humanistic development. This focalisation on the person who teaches is not exclusive of Languages. In other subjects of study, such as Engineering, Business or Law, an analogous relationship with the students' learning can appear when a university teaching fellow who comes from industry introduces her students, as part of the curriculum, to her industry experiences and her professional identity.

Finally, there are barriers between all sorts of communities of practice, including between artists and educators, that we must try to reduce for the common good. For our institution, I believe there are great reputational and educational reasons, which I will explore in the next sections, to engage in this project. Hopefully, this symbiotic partnership between art and education will be transformative not only for students but for poets themselves and the readers.

THE AGE OF *EVERSION*

There have been abundant discussions about what makes new media poetry distinctively different from old traditional page verse and about the aesthetics of new forms of poetic art in the digital era. One of the most informative yet insightful accounts of these debates can be found in *Poetry's Afterlife: Verse in the Digital Age*⁴⁰. In Chapter 7, Kevin Stein highlights the difficulty to identify and categorise Digital Poetry. The work of Stein gives us also a taste of the chiasm between the old poetry and the new digital poetry and the lack of interest professed by experts in both subjects for each other's field.

Over the centuries a substantial part of poetic creation has evolved, at different paces across the world, into written genres designed primarily to be read, often in silence, by an unspecific and remote audience. Paper *wordsmiths* poets can assume rightly that their audiences will also have the time to taste and decipher the elusiveness of their work. Readers can, and do, read backwards and forwards and even research and reflect as part of their experience. Moreover, the move from hand-writing poetry into type-written poetry, and later to word-processed poetry, has altered even further the creative process of traditional literary verse writing, as Stein explains⁴¹, accentuating the drift towards labour-intense poetic-production.

In our literate world, the vocally silent inner voice of the poet as she composes her strophes in writing, and the equally silent inner voice of the reader as he accesses the written text, have superseded the loud physical voices of old oral poetry. A similar point could be made about the loss of performativity and physical presence of the poet. The mediation of paper killed the star of the show, the body language and the setting for the delivery.

⁴⁰ Kevin Stein, *Poetry's Afterlife: Verse in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dcbooks.8300965.0001.001>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

⁴¹ Kevin Stein, *Poetry's Afterlife: Verse in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), pp.158-162 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dcbooks.8300965.0001.001>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

The 20th Century represented a turning point for poetry. Recording of sounds and images as well as the transmission of the recordings became possible. This paved the way for the first forms of audio-visual poetry and for the good old tapes, or audio-books. With the irruption in the 21st Century of mass-accessible tools for multimodal production, the intertwining of linguistic texts with voice, other sounds and images became mainstream. The Internet, which brought about ubiquitous instant interconnectivity, had also a transformative impact in the new poetics of the 21st Century. Additionally, software introduced the possibility of computer-generated poems, which opens the door to some sort of Artistic Artificial Intelligence (AAI). This treble revolution (media tools, internet and AAI) has provoked the appearance of the so-called digitally native poetry, designed as multimodal from its inception and sometimes supplanting the word choices of the poet with those of algorithms. However, the story does not end there. Technological changes are also shaping conventional poetic production. They have ushered all sorts of combinations of poems with amalgamated images and sounds, as well as collaborative poetry. Traditional verse poets are adapting their authorial practices to the new landscape. I dare to say that there is also a move toward more cinematic written forms and a recovery of aloud-readability as a touchstone. I believe that in the next decades more wordsmith endeavours will be directed onto the construction of new types of elusiveness and increasingly visual and sonic aesthetics.

With all this in mind, it seems that the division between old and new poetry is somehow artificial, as the former is being shaped by the very transformative forces that underpin the latter. A more holistic and comprehensive theoretical framework should be outlined to account for this new reality. Since changes resulting from the technological revolution are not exclusive to poetry, it is worth considering the extrapolation to our field of the idea of *eversion*, which Steven Jones advanced in *The Emergence of Digital Humanities*⁴² in order to articulate a broad framing for Humanities in the 21st Century.

⁴² Stephen E. Jones, *The Emergence of the Digital Humanities*, (London: Routledge, 2013)

Eversion is a concept originally coined by William Gibson to explain the phenomenon of the turning inside out of cyberspace. Jones represents eversion with a picture of Kelly Goeller's "Pixel pour" ⁴³street art featuring a fire hydrant vomiting water-like pixels over our old physical reality.



Picture of Kelly Goeller's artwork by Annemarie Teendler

In my view, this technological flooding, where different kinds of *immersions* and *emersions* are occurring, provides the defining and hermeneutic context for a wide range of present and future transformations in poetry and poetics. This rich metaphor acknowledges and embodies both the water-like pervasiveness and consubstantiality of the technological triad outlined before (media tools, internet and AAI), as well as the messy richness of the marsh. The great advantage of this approach is that it is totally inclusive toward traditional written poetry,

⁴³ Laughing Squid, "Pixel Pour by Kelly Goeller", Pinterest, 28 April 2008, <<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/32017847321481265/>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

bringing together a wide range of poetic realities that are exposed to the same external yet structural global forces.

THE MAKING OF THE ARROWS OF ÁRTEMIS

After receiving the invitation to participate as a poet in Ártemis 2016, and moved by some of these reflections, I contacted the organisers of the festival and suggested the idea of recording one poem and one mini-interview with each poet for our collection of educational videos. These would be then disseminated as Open Educational Resources through University of Leeds channels and beyond. I managed to recruit into the project the film-maker Dany Campos. I prepared consent forms to obtain permission to publish the recordings with an Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike Creative Commons License (BY-NC-SA). Raspabook, the publisher, the organisers and the writers welcomed the idea. After all, there is always reputational value in collaborations with Universities. The videos would help them reach new audiences. In return, they were giving their art, their thoughts, some of their time and their intellectual property to us and to the rest of the global community.

The poets were given three set of questions for the interview several weeks in advance, but they were allowed to suggest others: a) What is poetry for you? b) What do you try to achieve with it? c) Why did you start / continue writing poetry?

Through these questions, I wanted to offer the students and the audience an introduction to poetry from the poets themselves, an audio-visual synthesis of their poetic persona, a less intimidating approach to writing. I also wanted to record responses that could be of interest for research purposes in the future. In these respects, the interviews were successful.

The analysis of the responses deserves a separate article, looking at issues such as the construction of artistic identity in poetry networks. However, I cannot avoid making a quick reference to some of the interviews in the context of one of the many debates about what

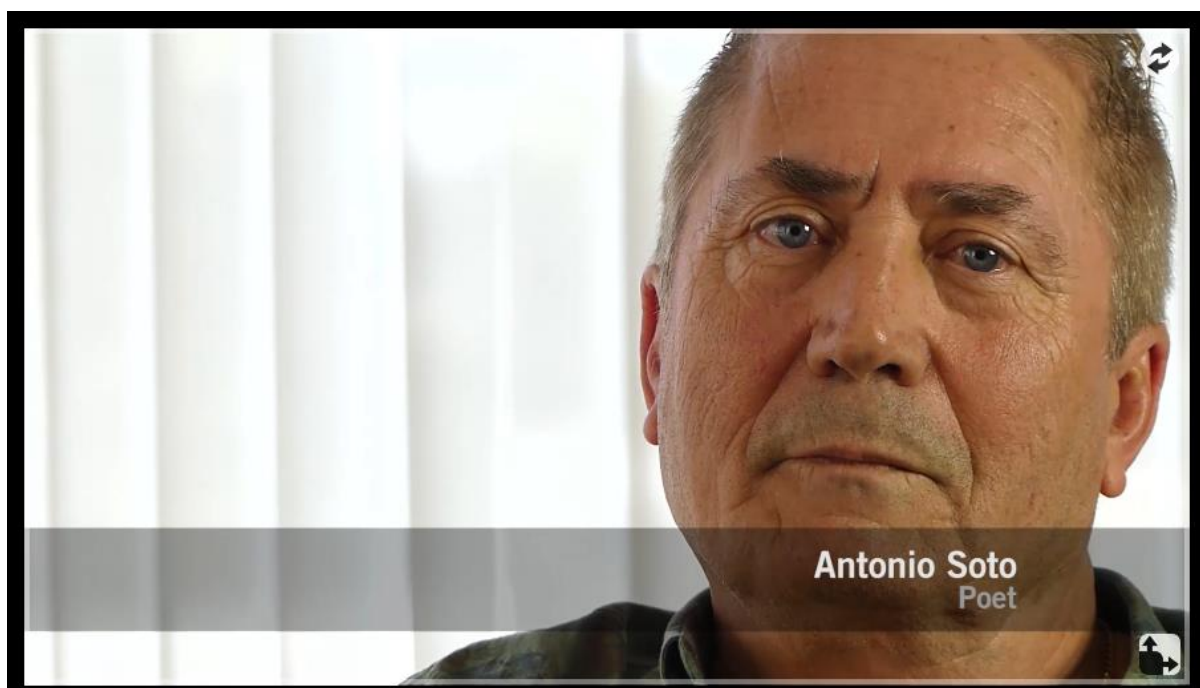
poetry, and indeed literature, is, as synthesised in the work of Emerson⁴⁴: whereas for Freud, poetry was a fantasy-play, a way of releasing guilt, a psychic safe, Vygotsky believed that art is not an antidote for humankind vice and that through literature we learn who we are not and who we will become. Foucault and other philosophers of language, meanwhile, shared this more positive view and pointed at the liberating value of literature. If we look at the contents of the Ártemis 2016 interviews, we can identify the aforementioned intellectual tensions in the words of the poets themselves and, why not, in their own conflicting discourses and identities. In their responses, a good deal of the poets described writing as a form of personal liberation. For Soto⁴⁵, poetry it is an act of redemption, “a red flower in the middle of a rubbish tip”. The provocative De la Orden⁴⁶ refers to the pressure-valve effect achieved by writing poetry as he considers it a pleasure “greater than that of masturbating”. A more matter-of-fact Gracia⁴⁷ dismisses these interpretations by saying that poetry is no cure for our inner beings, that the best remedy for that is “a psychiatrist or some good alcohol”.

⁴⁴ Caryl Emerson, "The Outer Word and Inner Speech: Bakhtin, Vygotsky, and the Internalization of Language," *Critical Inquiry* 10, 2, December 1983, pp. 259-260

⁴⁵ University of Leeds, “Antonio Soto Alcón: Entrevista - Ártemis 2016”, Youtube, 30 March 2017 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4runbodnYA>> [accessed 27 July 2017]

⁴⁶ University of Leeds, “Andrés de la Orden: Entrevista - Ártemis 2016”, Youtube, 24 March 2017 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qBHWMDBAEQ>> [accessed 27 July 2017]

⁴⁷ University of Leeds, “Enrique Gracia Trinidad: Entrevista - Ártemis 2016”, Youtube, 30 March 2017 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXVLQU52Cro>> [accessed 27 July 2017]



Embedded link to Interview with Antonio Soto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4runbodnYA>



Embedded link to the Interview of Andrés de la Orden

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qBHWMDBAEQ>



Embedded link to the Interview with Enrique Gracia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXVLQU52Cro>

The choice of the poem to be recorded in 2016 was very straightforward. Each poet was asked to read the poem that had published in the plaquette edited by Raspabook.

Although all the poems are very pleasant to the ear and enjoyable even for non-speakers of Spanish, translation is important. That is why I involved the Centre for Translation Studies of the University of Leeds. They were keen to provide their students with opportunities to work with the videos of the poems and the interviews, both translating and subtitling into English.

In the *Ártemis* 2016 collection of videos, the persona of the poet, represented by her appearance, manners, diction, accent, rhythm and texture of the voice, is a thick and rich wrapping layer of meaning that we should not underestimate. Rather than an accessory to the poem, the sound and the images take over it, yet respecting its linguistic content, amplifying the emotions. As a process of collage, the video is extremely faithful to the written poem. Not a single word of the text was changed. The voice of the poet becomes a realisation of the inner voice of the writer, albeit as it blends with the images, the video becomes a product of

its own. It can be clearly said that this collection represents an example of written-to-be-read digitised poetry or non-native video poetry. Somehow the videos are a metaphor of the digital chrysalis of written-to-be read poetry in the face of technological eversion.

The multimodal choices made in this collection were driven by the need to put the writer at the centre of the writing, with a very heavy focus on her own voice, her own work and on her reflections on it. The framing in the video reflects the esteem that universities have for the work of the poet and the poets themselves. A simple combination of two frontal takes is consistent with the desire of the producer not to intervene much in the poem, or indeed in the interview. In order to be reader-focused, or in this case, spectator-focused, paradoxically the poet needs to be the protagonist. By showing the poet's work and her persona in a warmer and more personal way, the reader-spectator will feel inclined to the type of emotional, and even interpersonal engagement that it is necessary for the fulfilment of the educational aims outlined in the next section.

60 poets have participated in the *Ártemis Festival 2017*. For this new collection, which will be the subject of future scholarly work, a wider range of questions was suggested for each poet to choose, in addition to the 2016 set of questions. These are some of them: a) Tell us a short story or anecdote that helps the audience to understand your poetics or your trajectory as a poet. b) Tell us how you work your poems through. c) Tell us how social media and dialogue with readers shape your work. d) Tell us about the sonority of your poetry. e) Tell us what triggered you to write one of your poems. f) Tell us about one of your poems and how it could blend with images and/or sound.

EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the project, an online learning prototype has been developed with the contribution of Cristina López Cal, one of our Erasmus MA students from the Universitat de Girona, in

Spain. As explained in the video below⁴⁸, the prototype includes a presentation in Articulate with exercises, both Articulate-native and from other platforms such as CILT, as well as a Wordpress blog⁴⁹. In these resources, we have realised many of the educational principles discussed below, which apply to all sort of combinations of online and traditional physical learning spaces.



Link to the YouTube video with Cristina and Antonio

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3e7-7D8868>

Ártemis learning designs have to be informed by a strong sense of inclusiveness, for teachers and learners, even in the most language-focused courses where the poems may be seen as

⁴⁸ Cristina López Cal and Antonio Martínez-Arboleda, "Las flechas de Ártemis: aplicaciones educativas", YouTube, 23 May 2017 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3e7-7D8868>> [accessed 27 July 2017]

⁴⁹ *Las flechas de Ártemis* <<https://leedspoesia.wordpress.com/>> [accessed 27 July 2017]

a mere instrument. Nevertheless, ideally the tutor will have to feel comfortable working with poetry. In this respect, one of the advantages of the poems chosen for the Ártemis 2016 collection is that they are linguistically and aesthetically accessible. This makes them suitable for a wider range of students and language teaching professionals.

Widodo et al.⁵⁰ have provided some degree of evidence about the potential of *Poetry 2.0* in foreign language learning and have shown the way forward for many tutors and students wanting to engage creatively with it. One of their conclusions is that students want their poems to be assessed according to humanistic criteria, as for them writing poetry ends up being much more than a way to learn grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or prosody. I would also add that when providing feedback for the content of the work of students, warm and content-engaged comments focused on the student responses to the poem(s) of any given task, alongside any linguistic feedback, should be the rule. The best content feedback for a poem is probably a literary response to it.

Another academic work to consider in my discussion is Widdowson's *Practical Stylistics: An Approach to Poetry*⁵¹. Widdowson criticises the role given to students in traditional poetry teaching when it comes to the exegesis of the poem. He claims that students often regurgitate the academic interpretations of the poem when confronting the text. That is why his book is aimed, amongst others, at helping tutors to equip the learner for the critical interpretation of the poem with precision regarding the very text in hand, and much less of an emphasis on the academic consistency of the interpretation of the text. This approach makes the teaching of these activities accessible to practitioners who are not research experts in the authors. It also foretells a student journey whose first leg should consist of a) combination of warm-up and

⁵⁰ Widodo, H.P., Budi, A. V. and Wijayanti F. "Poetry Writing 2.0: Learning to Write Creatively in a Blended Language Learning Environment". *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*. 13, 1, 2016, pp. 30–48 <<http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v13n12016/widodo.pdf>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

⁵¹ Henry. G. Widdowson, *Practical Stylistics: An Approach to Poetry*, (Oxford: OUP, 1992)

language discovery activities, b) viewing and commenting of the video with the poem; c) textual analysis of the poem and d) viewing and discussion of the video interview. Any qualified elaborate academic exegesis, if and when appropriate due to the nature of the course where the activity is carried out, might be provided afterwards for it not to limit student creativity. It can be argued that there always will be some kind of teacher interference. The design and delivery of the initial sequences of activities will be informed by the tutor's take on the poem, which in turn may have been influenced by academic perspective on it as well as by the producers of the video. However, this is inevitable. Such is the nature of education. In my view, providing that the tutor is aware of the dangers of over-guiding and leaves sufficient room for alternative student-produced lines of enquiry, the tasks will have achieved the gold standard of free criticality. Talking about the way the video came about may provide some extra levers for student criticality.

Widdowson also looked in his work into the well-trodden debates on whether the significance of poetry lays on the intention of the writer, on the text as an artefact or on the reader. Alongside other authors, he agrees that reader of poetry is a creator of meaning, rather than a simple animator. Despite the appearances, there is no contradiction here with the need for precision in the exegesis, but rather an invitation to reach a perfect counter-balance for a calm dialogue of equals between the artist, whose work and persona are carefully considered with little mediation, and the empowered student reader. Both principles should inspire not only the language learning activities but the whole educational strategy of the project.

This takes me to the next point about student's engagement with poetry and poets themselves. Given that today's readers are becoming also writers, perhaps in a greater proportion than ever before, it makes sense for students to be actively encouraged and supported in the production and publication of their own artistic and scholar work as part of their learning with the *Ártemis* videos. The Creative Commons licences of the collection cater for student-produced collages using images and voices of the artists. This approach is consistent with the educational ethos of creative writing courses, very popular in the States, with the ideas about

repurposing, remixing and republishing advanced within the OER movement, with Open Practice, with Papson's *bricoleur*⁵² in Digital Humanities and also with *OpenLIVES*, a pedagogical initiative aimed at increasing student writers' criticality by helping them to question and define their own position in society as producers of knowledge⁵³.

In a recent exercise that I carried out in a language class, students seemed excited about the fact that the text we had been working with, an invitation to an actual book presentation, had been written specifically to be used for the class by the writer herself and would be considered by her as the draft of the actual invitation. The value of learning with "real writers" who are alive and can be followed in social media cannot be underestimated. Authenticity makes the learner aware of how their work transcends the enclosures of education, adding an extra nudge of motivation. That is why the engagement of students with the *Ártemis* collections must be regarded as an opportunity for self-expression, artistic, scholar or both, beyond the classroom, and not just a learning strategy. Obviously, students will not be forced to publish their work in social media. As part of the teaching, however, training on the basis of Creative Commons licences will be provided. Any sharing beyond external circles will necessarily be preceded by the feedback provided by the tutor as part of the activity, as well as by guidance on how to contextualise their work and frame their sharing. That way students will have a better understanding of what specific external audience to target and how their work may be received by others.

Blogging has spurred self-publication and editorial autonomy. Communities of artists and audiences have become more inclusive. There is a huge variety of forms of engagement and interaction. New types of collaborative construction of meaning are developing thanks to the proliferation of different digitally-powered tools and platforms, alongside festivals and other

⁵² Stephen Papson, "Scholars, Intellectuals, and Bricoleurs", *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 13, 4, Oct 2014, pp. 377-394

⁵³ Antonio Martínez-Arboleda, 'Liberation in OpenLIVES Critical Pedagogy: Empowerability and Critical Action. Caracteres. Estudios culturales y críticos de la esfera digital 2, 1, 21 May 2013, pp. 112-127. <<http://revistacaracteres.net/revista/vol2n1mayo2013/liberation-in-openlives-critical-pedagogy-empowerability-and-critical-action/>> [accessed 27 July 2017]

more physical gatherings. The distribution of the Ártemis videos in social media will certainly provide a stepping stone for learners, readers and poets to discuss, construct and grow together as a community. The prominence given to the recovered sonority and the recognition of the persona of the artists in the video resources and the possibility for students to be also recognised as artists will precisely reinforce the sense of community. Any sharing and interaction in social media, whether before, during or after the creation of any outputs should be done in spaces where actual readers, educators, students and writers operate (HumBox, JISC Store, literary gatherings, Facebook, Youtube, Poetry Life and Times, etcetera). The learning of the student as a networked producer needs to be supported with strategies that recognise the evolving shape of education and poetry, two human activities whose humanistic essence should remain unaltered. Post-modernity is only a description of the state we live in, not a guiding principle.

There exist wide and exciting artistic and educational spaces where all sort of transitions and transformations will take place in the next decades. Poets and readers will navigate through different routes at different paces, usually as part of communities and networks where everyone will be a learner. The old and the new will superimpose upon each other and sometimes blend in constant and varied non-linear dialogue. This process is essentially hybrid, in the sense of hybridity advanced in the field of Education by the *Hybrid Pedagogy* school of thought⁵⁴, which looks at the intersections, rather than the contradictions, between the physical and the digital, between classrooms and digital classrooms, between individuals (teachers, students and scholars) and collaborative communities and between learning in schools and learning in the World.

TOOLS FOR THE RESOURCES

⁵⁴ Jesse Stommel, "Hybridity Pt. 2: What is Hybrid Pedagogy?", *Digital Pedagogy Lab*, 10 March 2012, <<http://www.digitalpedagogylab.com/hybridped/hybridity-pt-2-what-is-hybrid-pedagogy/>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

The tools and spaces used to design and deliver the learning resources produced as part of this project can vary according to the nature of the activities proposed and their fitting within the existing curriculum.

The open-source free software Xerte⁵⁵ is an interesting option for tutor-produced media-rich resources for students' autonomous learning. Its functionality has been substantially improved since its inception. It provides interactivity, accessibility and reusability, as it was designed as an Open Educational Resources tool. Crucially, students can also assemble and embed their own artwork and scholarship in Xerte. However, this is an aspiration more than a reality at the moment in institutions who do not have Xerte installed in their servers. In any case, there will be no technological dogma around the use of software and platforms. Articulate has been used for the delivery of interactive content by the tutor in our prototype.

As per the student production of the raw media assets, the widely available free software Audacity for sound and video editing software, such as Windows Movie Maker, will be more than sufficient. PowerPoint or WordPress are perfect for embedding text, video and sound. Whether the work produced by the student can be classed as scholar, or artistic, or digital-native is irrelevant. The interrelation between the linguistic, visual and aural ingredients of each output and the contents will depend on the type of production route followed by tutors and students in each specific group.

For classroom activities, the use of digital collaborative spaces, such as the ones recently inaugurated at the University of Leeds⁵⁶, will be ideal, but any face-to-face learning design will have a version, when possible, for traditional teaching spaces with a flip-board and flexible seating arrangements.

CONCLUSION

⁵⁵ *Xerte Community* <<http://xerte.org.uk/index.php?lang=en>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

⁵⁶ Neil Morris, "Reimagining traditional tiered lecture theatres", *Campus Developments*, University of Leeds, 12 October 2016 < <http://campusdevelopments.leeds.ac.uk/news/reimagining-traditional-tiered-lecture-theatres/>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

For Glazier, “poetry has begun a digital voyage from which there is little chance of turning back”.⁵⁷ Some commentators augur the death of traditional academic “verse”. However, “traditional” poets can and should assert the artistic potential of their poetics by allowing themselves to be embraced by growing multimodality and interconnectivity, and even cultivate some form of dialogue with Artistic Artificial Intelligence. I do not expect the non-digital poets and non-native digital poets, as collectives, to become Cro-Magnons and perish. In 21st Century poetry, the only uneasy voyage is that of individual poets climbing fast to the very top of a mountain hiding from technological eversion. Sooner or later, their published poetry and their poetics will end up trickling down to the shores of the everted world, or evaporated for it to be rained upon the rest of us.

Fascinating transformations will take place in the next decades as a result of the acceleration in human change brought about by technological revolutions. To me, there should be much more educational and academic focus on the personal journeys and even metamorphosis of individuals (readers, artists, educators) and groups, on the specific drivers for change and on the type of spaces where change happens.

Educational and scholar intervention in artistic creation and dialogue in the face of technological eversion is necessary: we should try to set down buoys, piers and lighthouses, signposting for our students, artists and the public the uncharted waters of our post-modernity.

One of the few things that will remain essentially unaltered in our foreseeable future is our ability to perceive through vision and hearing: As Stain states “we inhabit the Kingdom of the Eye and the Realm of the Ear”⁵⁸. Despite claims that human sensorial and mental processes

⁵⁷ Kevin Stein, *Poetry's Afterlife: Verse in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), p. 138 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dcbooks.8300965.0001.001>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

⁵⁸ Kevin Stein, *Poetry's Afterlife: Verse in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), p. 111 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dcbooks.8300965.0001.001>> [accessed 24 July 2017]

may be disenfranchised and transformed by brain and body robotics, sound waves and light are deeply embedded in the inevitable physicality of our world.

In 1983, an influential manifesto in the history of Spanish poetry, which originated the *Poesía de la Experiencia* trend in Spain, was published in *El País*⁵⁹. The signatories proposed a “new sentimentality” that would enable poets to detach themselves from the mythical foundation of the “yo sensible” (The sensitive I), which served, they claimed, as the moral basis of the bourgeois. Poets were invited to become aware of the deceptive and socially-constructed nature of the poem in order to assert their agency. Some decades later, it seems that time has arrived for more poets and educators to step outside their poems and reach a further layer of criticality by recognising as well the importance of the *medium* for artistic, educational and political emancipation.

⁵⁹ Luis García Montero, “La otra sentimentalidad”, *El País*, 8 January 1983.
<http://elpais.com/diario/1983/01/08/opinion/410828412_850215.html> [accessed 24 July 2017]

Note: The Project “Poesía digital: Ártemis 2017” has been granted an award by the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes of the Government of Spain as part of their Hispanex Programme for the promotion of Spanish Language and Culture abroad.

