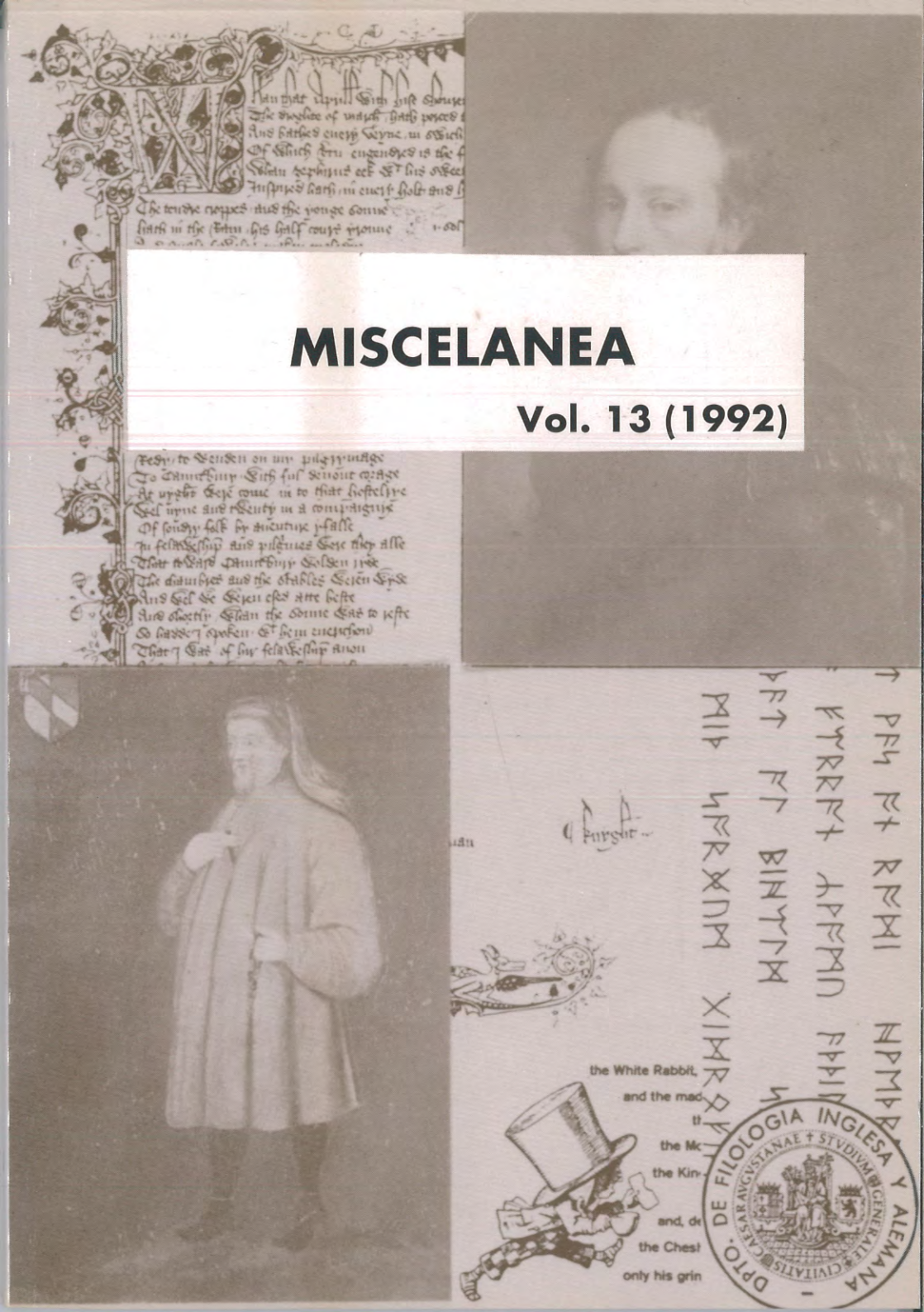

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CICLOS CREATIVOS EN LA POESÍA DE JAMES JOYCE

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I. INTRODUCCIÓN

Al hablarse de la poesía de James Joyce suele hacerse referencia, con el beneplácito de gran parte de la crítica, a fragmentos bien conocidos de su obra en prosa, ya sea al parágrafo con que concluye "The Dead" en *Dubliners*, a los pasajes epifánicos de *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a textos de monólogo interior en *Ulysses*, por lo común a aquellos que reproducen la actividad mental de Stephen Dedalus, o al desconcertante portento lingüístico de *Finnegans Wake*. No nos cabe la menor duda de que en tales fragmentos se dan cita artificios estilístico-formales y convenciones ideológicas que justifican su adscripción al ámbito de la lengua poética, pero este hecho no debe ocultarnos que Joyce fue *poeta* en el sentido más tradicional del término, y de ello se deriva, a nuestro parecer, la conveniencia, cuando no la necesidad, de distinguir los innumerables pasajes poéticos diseminados por Joyce a lo largo de su obra narrativa de aquellos en los cuales se manifiesta una contundente *voluntad de forma* arraigada de manera ostensible en procedimientos líricos tradicionales.

En efecto, Joyce publicó dos libros de poemas, frecuentemente preteridos a causa de la excelencia de su obra narrativa, así como otras composiciones independientes, sin contar entre éstas los numerosos versitos de circunstancias, principalmente *limericks*, que sus biógrafos, en particular Richard Ellmann, han ido descubriendo en manos de familiares y amigos.[1] El primero de tales libros reúne bajo el título de *Chamber Music* treinta y seis poemas cuya datación exacta es tarea considerablemente difícil, aunque de las afirmaciones de su hermano Stanislaus Joyce podamos concluir que se gestaron entre 1898 y 1904. En el periodo final de su estancia en Belvedere College, Joyce

comenzó a recopilar un crecido número de poemas bajo el título de *Moods*, prueba evidente, según aquél, de su esfuerzo por mantener "the spirit within him alive in the midst of all-pervading squalor and disintegration" en el seno familiar (Stanislaus Joyce 1982: 100). Poco después, Joyce inició una colección semejante llamada *Shine and Dark*, con clara referencia a un verso de Walt Whitman, pero sólo algunas de las muchas composiciones recogidas en ambos volúmenes escolares se han conservado completas, de las cuales las más conocidas son "The Villanelle of the Temptress", incluida en el capítulo quinto de *A Portrait*, y el poema II de *Chamber Music*, originalmente titulado "Commonplace".[2] Asimismo, nos consta, en apoyo de 1904 como fecha *ante quem*, que los cuatro últimos poemas de este libro fueron escritos durante su primer viaje a París en 1902-3 (Stanislaus Joyce 1982: 222), y que hacia 1904 los poemas VI, VII, XII, XVIII y XXVI habían ya aparecido en revistas tales como *Speaker*, *Dana* y *The Venture*.

El libro fue publicado en Londres a primeros de mayo de 1907 por el editor Elkin Mathew, tras grandes dificultades parcialmente vencidas merced a las recomendaciones de Yeats y Arthur Symons, dificultades a las que no siempre fue ajeno el propio Joyce quien, en un típico arrebato contra su propia obra (recuérdese que en 1908 arrojó al fuego su manuscrito de *Stephen Hero* [Gorman 1940: 196]), quiso telegrafiar desde Trieste para evitar que *Chamber Music* se publicara, y si no lo hizo fue por la eficaz intercesión de su hermano (Ellmann 1959: 270). Las reseñas y los comentarios no tardaron en aparecer. Fue particularmente favorable la opinión vertida por Symons en el periódico *Nation* de Londres el 22 de junio de 1907, así como las posteriores alabanzas de Ezra Pound que habrían de ser ratificadas con la inclusión del poema XXXVI de *Chamber Music* en su célebre antología *Des Imagistes* por sus extraordinarias cualidades sonoras (Read, ed. 1968: 136-37).[3] La recepción de este libro en Dublín fue, como cabía esperar, mucho más tibia. Thomas Kettle, por ejemplo, lo trata con digna neutralidad, pero no deja de censurar discretamente su escaso compromiso con las inquitudes nacionalistas de la Irlanda de la época (Ellmann 1959: 271). Es curioso constatar, en fin, que un maestro indiscutible de la prosa se iniciara con un librito de poemas que, al parecer del mismo Ellmann, era "pale beside his other work" (1959: 270).

La segunda colección de poemas de Joyce, *Pomes Penyeach*, apareció en París el 5 de junio de 1927 en la editorial Shakespeare and Company, la misma que cinco años antes había dado *Ulysses* a la estampa, y a pesar de que Ezra Pound desaconsejó su publicación, Joyce insistió en ella no sólo por sus constantes necesidades económicas sino también para acallar las críticas dirigidas contra su *Work in Progress* demostrando que podía escribir con sensatez si se lo proponía (Ellmann 1959: 603-04, 606). Consta esta colección de trece poemas explícitamente fechados con su lugar de composición, sin que pueda concebirse un libro de menores dimensiones cuyos orígenes sean más cosmopolitas, pues, de estos

trece poemas, uno fue escrito en su versión primitiva en Dublín (1904),[4] ocho en Trieste (1912-15), tres en Zurich (1916-18) y uno en París (1924). Con todo, este libro no logró ninguno de los propósitos mencionados, siendo su repercusión tan irrisoria que incluso Joyce llegó a creer que el único que había tenido "the melancholy distinction" de reseñarlo había sido George Slocombe en el *Daily Herald* (Slocombe 1936: 220).

Al margen de *Chamber Music* y *Pomes Penyeach*, Joyce publicó otros poemas sueltos como "Ecce Puer," *The Holy Office* y *Gas from a Burner* recogidos, junto con los dos libros citados, en la edición de sus *Collected Poems* que Harry Levin ofrece en *The Essential James Joyce*. El primero de ellos, perteneciente como se verá al ciclo de *Pomes Penyeach*, apareció en el periódico *New Republic* de Nueva York en 1932 y fue compuesto con la ocasión de la muerte de su padre, John Joyce, y el nacimiento de su hijo Stephen. Los otros dos son extensos poemas satíricos, radicalmente ajenos al canon instaurado por el resto de su obra lírica, que Joyce editó a sus expensas en 1904 y 1912, respectivamente. *The Holy Office* versifica con socarronería escatológica su desdén por los círculos intelectuales del Dublín de principios de siglo, haciendo alusión a los defectos y debilidades de figuras literarias de desigual talla tales como W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, John M. Synge, Oliver Gogarty, Padraic Colum, John Eglinton, Seumas O'Sullivan y George Russell. Por otra parte, en *Gas from a Burner* Joyce desahoga su indignación por el hecho de que las hojas ya impresas de *Dubliners* hubieran sido destruidas ante el temor de que la censura iniciara acciones legales contra la editorial y la imprenta en las que esta obra iba a publicarse. Ambas composiciones están redactadas en clave de crudísimo humor que recuerda, salvando las oportunas distancias, ciertos pasajes de *Ulysses*. No serán, sin embargo, objeto de nuestras reflexiones, que habrán de centrarse en la poesía más convencional de *Chamber Music* y *Pomes Penyeach*.

Aunque el máximo interés de Joyce como figura literaria radique sin duda alguna en su prosa, no cabe ignorar el hecho de que escribió composiciones líricas durante casi toda su vida. Como acabamos de ver, sus poemas datan de principios de siglo y aun de antes, extendiéndose hasta 1932, fecha de "Ecce Puer", el poema más tardío generalmente considerado por la crítica. Parece, pues, natural que el ánimo que indujo a Joyce a escribir poesía se modificara a lo largo de tan dilatado periodo, y con él, las motivaciones artísticas, el universo temático y el estilo de sus versos. Abandonamos paulatinamente su época juvenil de búsqueda, en la que aún subsisten las esperanzas de llegar a ser poeta junto con un apego casi normativo a las convenciones formales, para alcanzar la romántica concepción de la poesía como sumidero de la experiencia personal una vez que la trayectoria literaria de Joyce comienza a orientarse rotundamente hacia el género narrativo. De tal evolución surgen sus dos ciclos poéticos fundamentales manifestados en *Chamber Music* y *Pomes Penyeach*, respectivamente, libros entre los que se produce una apreciable

discontinuidad cuya causa no es la simple acentuación cuantitativa de rasgos, sino una verdadera y substancial modificación de la cualidad de éstos por haberse alterado el estatuto de la poesía como actividad literaria central, convirtiéndose ésta en mera válvula de escape de amarguras personales.

En el primero de tales ciclos, Joyce demuestra un perfecto conocimiento y uso de los cánones de la lírica tradicional: las imágenes, el estilo, el ideal de asepsia poético y la sistemática incorporación a *Chamber Music* de citas más o menos fragmentarias de la obra de Shakespeare, la Biblia y la poesía cancioneril isabelina de fines del siglo XVI hacen de este libro un homenaje al pasado, reafirmándonos en nuestra parecer de que la idea de intertextualidad es el único elemento común a toda la producción joyceana y el único que permite, por consiguiente, un análisis unitario de tal producción, salvo quizá de su pieza dramática *Exiles*. Aparecen nítidas referencias en el poema VIII al tipo de composición lírica cantada por Amiens en *As You Like It* (II.5), así como a la llamada a la puerta y a la sobrecogedora frase "Sleep no more!" que Macbeth imagina oír después de haber dado muerte al rey Duncan (*Macbeth* II.2.57, 64-65, 68, y II.2.34-35, 40-42, respectivamente) en el poema XXXIV:

> The voice of the winter
> Is heard at the door.
> O sleep for the winter
> Is crying "Sleep no more!"

De igual manera, en el poema XV se alude a *The Faerie Queene* al adoptar la variante ortográfica "faery", típicamente spenseriana, en lugar de la más corriente "fairy" para designar "[t]he realm or world of the fays or fairies" (*OED*). Tampoco faltan citas del Cantar de los Cantares al menos en cuatro composiciones (VII, XIII, XIV y XVIII), en donde las referencias al manzano, a las brisas fragantes, a la amada como jardín cercado o como paloma y a las caricias del amado son numerosas y no dejan lugar a la duda. Toda la colección se caracteriza, además, por el empleo de un vocabulario de gran sencillez y escasa variedad, "específico y cerrado", en atinada expresión de Bernd Dietz (1982: 30), como por ejemplo la reiterada presencia de los adjetivos *sweet* y *soft*, auténticas proformas semánticas de orientación positiva, la escasa disimilación en los términos rimados que suelen ser idénticos, circunstancia que le fue amistosamente censurada a Joyce por William Archer (Stanislaus Joyce 1982: 150), o bien el frecuentísimo uso de las palabras *eve, eventide, twilight* o *wind*, esta última con connotaciones positivas, como en el poema XIII, o negativas, como en el XXXV.

Esta mirada restrospectiva que es, en realidad, *Chamber Music* impuso a su autor el cumplimiento de ciertas convenciones formales e ideológicas. En primer lugar, la rima y el metro junto con una exquisita musicalidad son una constante en todos los poemas, reforzada, en ocasiones, por efectos aliterativos como los presentes en esta estrofa del poema XXVIII:

> Gentle lady, do not sing
> Sad songs about the end of love;
> Lay aside sadness and sing,
> How love that passes is enough.

o por el amanerado artificio de repetir el primer verso de cada estrofa del poema VIII en el tercero con una ligera amplificación:

> Who goes amid the green wood
> With springtide all adorning her?
> Who goes amid the merry green wood
> To make it merrier?
>
> Who passes in the sunlight
> By ways that know the light footfall?
> Who passes in the sweet sunlight
> With mien so virginal?
>
> The ways of all the woodland
> Gleam with a soft and golden fire—
> For whom does all the sunny woodland
> Carry so brave attire?
>
> O, it is for my true love
> The woods their rich opporel wear—
> O, it is for my own true love,
> That is so young and fair.

Por otra parte, los sentimientos y las experiencias íntimas son excluidas del libro o, en todo caso, estilizadas hasta hacerlas irreconocibles, con lo cual *Chamber Music* adquiere unos rasgos de impersonalidad muy notables achacados por críticos como William York Tindall a su fuerte dependencia de la tradición (1952: 105), especie de soporte al que Joyce acude para componer poemas sin necesidad de verter en ellos sus circunstancias personales, con un pudor realmente curioso del que iría despojándose según transcurría el tiempo y se adentraba en su ciclo de *Pomes Penyeach*.[5] En tal sentido, ha de advertirse que Joyce sigue en su poesía una trayectoria inversa a la que caracteriza su obra en prosa, pues la transformación de *Stephen Hero* en *A Portrait* se basa precisamente en un gradual proceso de despersonalización gobernado por una fuerte disciplina técnica, proceso mediante el que un "large loose baggy monster" emergió finalmente como un extraordinario relato moderno.

Chamber Music posee, asimismo, una gran coherencia de sentido articulada en torno al tema del amor juvenil que, bajo un proceso de literaturización, se ha hecho impersonal y admite junto a él otros temas marginales que vienen o ser modulaciones, aspectos o consecuencias del principal. El amor juvenil lleva a la expresión del gozo y de una refinada sensualidad, cuya cima es el poema XI:

Bid adieu, adieu, adieu,
Bid adieu to girlish days,
Happy Love is come to woo
Thee and woo thy girlish ways—
The zone that doth become thee fair,
The snood upon thy yellow hair,

When thou hast heard his name upon
The bugles of the cherubim
Begin thou softly to unzone,
Thy girlish bosom unto him
And softly to undo the snood
That is the sign of maidenhood.

pero cuando tal amor no se satisface conduce a la frustración, al desengaño y, según críticos como Robert S. Ryf (1962: 37-41), al exilio. Esto sucede en el melancólico poema XXXV compuesto precisamente en la relativa soledad de su primera visita a París:

All day I hear the noise of waters
Making moan,
Sad as the seabird is when going
Forth alone
He hears the winds cry to the waters'
Monotone.

The grey winds, the cold winds are blowing
Where I go.
I hear the noise of many waters
Far below.
All day, all night, I hear them flowing
To and fro.

De esta forma, queda completa la secuencia temática de *Chamber Music*, que es también una secuencia narrativa, afirmación fundada en la cuidadosa disposición de los poemas en el seno del libro de la que se ocupó, con gran acierto, Stanislaus, no James, quien dejó esta tarea en manos de su hermano (Stanislaus Joyce 1982: 222, 225). Multitud de estudiosos han emitido opiniones divergentes acerca del significado de la citada disposición, pero todos ellos coinciden en manifestar que *Chamber Music* es un libro cuyas creaciones están rigurosamente organizadas, hasta el punto de que Bernd Dietz ha llegado a hablar de relaciones de contigüidad o sintagmáticas entre los poemas (1982: 30), y tal organización ayuda eficazmente a configurar una secuencia narrativa ficticia sobre la volubilidad del amor en la que "[t]he number that each poem has, its place in the order of the whole, is the key to the nature of that whole" (Williams 1952: item 44). La cohesión del libro también se ve acrecentada por la homogeneidad cronológica de los poemas, compuestos por Joyce en un tiempo

relativamente corto y en el cual su visión de la lírica no había cambiado substancialmente. La celebrada delicadeza de los poemas, su compromiso con la tradición y con las "dainty songs of the Elizabethans" (*A Portrait* 176) han hecho exclamar a Augusto Guidi que el ciclo de *Chamber Music* es "la parte meno joyceana dell'opera di Joyce" (1954: 110).

No obstante, el pasó del tiempo alteró progresivamente los supuestos estéticos e ideológicos sobre los que se asentaba *Chamber Music*. Ante la muy subalterna calidad de sus versos, Joyce parece haber renunciado a hacerse un nombre como poeta y quienes lo rodean no desconocen esta circunstancia, si sirven a tal efecto las reflexiones de Buck Mulligan en torno a Stephen: "—They drove his wits astray, he said, by visions of hell. He will never capture the Attic note. The note of Swinburne, of all poets, the white death and the ruddy birth. That is his tragedy. He can never be a poet" (*Ulysses* I, 535). Nos encontramos en 1927 (adviértase: veinte años después), fecha de aparición de *Pomes Penyeach*, y aunque el libro se fue gestando a lo largo de este periodo, el último poema data de 1924. Sus composiciones son más íntimas, más instintivas, con ciertos toques de sentimentalismo. Ya no estamos ante la convención legada por los siglos, aunque los ecos de Shakespeare, Dante y Nash sean aún perceptibles, sino que muchos de estos poemas están inequívocamente motivados por acontecimientos del ámbito de lo personal, adquiriendo así razón de ser su interpretación biográfica. Según Petroski, *Pomes Penyeach* es la obra de un autor "ageing in exile" (1974: 1024-25), consumido por la nostalgia y deseoso de regresar a Dublín, aun con todos los defectos que le hicieron abandonar esta ciudad de modo definitivo en 1912.

No existe en *Pomes Penyeach* el afán de evasión que pudo haber dado origen a *Chamber Music*, pues Joyce, tras los múltiples desengaños de todos los órdenes que sufrió, tras adquirir la madurez que de ellos deriva y el convencimiento de que la poesía no era su camino, fue apartándose progresivamente del ideal de pureza lírica tan propio de su primera colección. Aún existe rima excepto en "Tilly", poema que abre *Pomes Penyeach* y establece el tono confesional del libro, pero los versos ya no muestran la exquisita regularidad estrófica, la brillantez técnica y el artificio tal vez excesivo de sus composiciones anteriores:

He travels after a winter sun,
Urging the cattle along a cold red road,
Calling to them, a voice they know,
He drives his beasts above Cabra.
The voice tells them home is warm.
They moo and make brute music with their hoofs.
He drives them with a flowering branch before him,
Smoke pluming their foreheads.

Boor, bond of the herd,
Tonight stretch full by the fire!

I bleed by the black stream
For my torn bough!o

El ritmo de los poemas cambia, alcanzando una mayor fluidez, al tiempo que las imágenes se alejan de los cánones de la tradición y se hacen sorprendentes, inquietantes y personalísimas, con lo cual nos acercamos al Joyce que andaba innovando la prosa narrativa de manera inusitada. La composición de términos, como por ejemplo *loveblown, blueveined, moonrise, sindark, straknell,* etc., se convierte en procedimiento común ampliamente experimentado en sus novelas, e incluso el título se basa en un juego de palabras entre *pome* "manzana" y *poem* "poema" que ha sido muy celebrado (Petroski 1974: 1021-23).

Los poemas de *Pomes Penyeach* son ocasionales, casi de circunstancias. No poseen, por tanto, una ordenación sistemática que añada sobretonos y matices al significado individual de cada composición. No tiene aquí objeto alguno el hablar de secuencia narrativa, pues el único criterio ordenador es el cronológico, proporcionado por la fecha de cada poema que lo vincula sólidamente a las circunstancias personales de su composición. Tampoco ofrece el libro una temática unificada desde el punto de vista del producto, como en *Chamber Music,* sino del autor y sus experiencias, en su mayor parte amargas. Así, en "Watching the Needleboats at San Sabba" se nos refiere una carrera de canoas empañada por la nostalgia de la juventud perdida; en "A Flower Given to My Daughter", el delicado regalo de una rosa; en "She Weeps over Rahoon", un extraño triángulo amoroso basado en sus propias relaciones personales y documentado también en su obra en prosa; en "Alone", sus ensoñaciones adulterinas con Marthe Fleischmann, y, hacia el final, en "Bahnhofstrasse", el desconsuelo que sufre Joyce por su dolencia visual y el inevitable paso de los años. Como puede verse, sólo desde la perspectiva biográfica es concebible la correcta intelección de tales poemas.

Según dijimos, "Ecce Puer" no fue publicado junto con *Pomes Penyeach,* pero su adscripción a este ciclo creativo no presenta ningún tipo de dificultades. Primeramente, ha de tenerse en cuenta el criterio cronológico, ya que 1932, fecha de "Ecce Puer", no parece la época más propicia para la restauración de los objetivos de impersonalidad poética que dieron origen a la lírica de Joyce de principios de siglo, sino más bien para la culminación del acercamiento del autor a su obra. Por otra parte y como consecuencia de lo dicho, contamos con el criterio de la motivacion autobiográfica. En efecto, "Ecce Puer" no guarda la menor afinidad con los convencionalismos ideológicos de *Chamber Music,* sino que surge de la experiencia inmediata de Joyce ante el caprichoso hermanamiento de muerte y vida en su entorno familiar al que ya aludimos en los primeros parágrafos de este artículo:

A child is sleeping;
An old man gone.
O, father forsaken,
Forgive your son!

Así pues, "Ecce Puer" puede considerarse como un verdadero epílogo de la obra lírica de Joyce no sólo en virtud de su fecha de composición, que por sí sola no determinaría nada, sino porque representa el compendio y el punto terminal de una evolución coherente hacia actitudes intimistas de neta filiación romántica.

NOTAS:

1, La biografía de Ellmann está repleta de paemillas jocosos y mordaces escritos por Joyce. He aquí un limerick escrito para Ezra Pound sobre su novela *A Portroit:*

There once was a lounger named Stephen
Whose youth was most odd and uneven
He throve on the smell
Of a horrible hell
That a Hottentot wouldn't belive in.

Este otro satiriza la figura de A. Percy Bennett, cónsul británico en Zurich, con quien tuvo problemas derivados de su neutralidad y "open indifference to the war's outcome" (Ellmann 1959: 436):

There's an anthropoid consul called Bennett,
With the jowl of the jackass or jennet,
He must muzzle or mask it
In the waste paper basket,
When he rises to bray in the Senate.

En el que sigue, se alude a la donación de ropa de vestir que recibió de Pound en París para oliviar sus continuas necesidades económicas:

A bard once in lakelapped Sirmiane
Lived in peace, eating locusts and honey
Till a son of a bitch
Left him dry on the beach
Without clothes, boots, time, quiet or money.

Y, por último, una divertida parodia de *The Waste Land* que reproduce con insospechada exactitud el ritmo del original, lo que no debe extrañarnos viniendo, como viene, de uno de los más grandes estilistas de nuestro siglo:

Rouen is the rainiest place getting
Inside all impermeables, wetting
Damp marrow in drenched bones.
Midwinter soused us coming over le Mans
Our inn at Niort was the Grape of Burgundy
But the winepress of the Lord thundered over that
grape of Burgundy

And we left it in a hurgundy.
(Hurry up, Joyce, it's time!)
I heard mosquitoes swarm in old Bordeaux
So many!
I had not thought the earth contained so many
(Hurry up, Joyce, it's time)

Mr Anthalogos, the local gardener,
Greycapped, with politeness full of cunning
Has made wine these fifty years
And told me in his southern French
Le petit vins is the surest drink to buy
For if 'tis bad
Vous ne l'avez pas payé
(Hurry up, hurry up, now, now, now!)
But we shall have great times,
When we return to Clinic, that waste land
O Esculapios!
(Shan't we? Shan't we? Shan't we?)

Es obvio que la idea de un Joyce satírico, ocurrente y brillante se realiza mejor en estos versitos que en sus dos libros de poemas, como de inmediato se verá.

2. Otros críticos, sin embargo, no admiten que "The Villanelle" fuera un poema juvenil engarzado más tarde en *A Portrait* en su hechura original; antes bien, sostienen que Joyce lo compuso específicamente para esta obra o, en todo caso, que lo revisó de manera muy substancial con el fin de que sirviera en *A Portrait* de contrapunto irónico a las elevadísimas miras artísticas de Stephen Dedalus (Reynolds 1976: 43-44).

3. No sólo Ezra Pound se sintió atraído por este poema, sino que incluso críticos actuales como David Lawson siguen admitiendo su fuerte peculiaridad dentro de *Chamber Music*: "From a critical standpoint this poem is the most developed in *Chamber Music*; it is the most grandly sonorous and presents a series of terrifying images. As a full-bodied work, it stands in contrast to its predecessors in much the same way as the final short story in *Dubliners*, 'The Dead,' contrasts with all those that have come before" (1986: 84).

4. Para el proceso de revisión sufrida por este primer poema de *Pomes Penyeach* titulado "Tilly" véase Anderson (1958) y Scholes (1956).

5. Aun cuando disentimos de ella, no podemos menos que mencionar la opinión de Tindall según la cual *Chamber Music* es un perversa *dirty joke* que encierra, bajo una apariencia tersa e inocente, un sinfín de exquisitas pracacidades; véase Tindall 1952 y 1954.

6. Para la interpretación autobiográfica de este poema, véase Ellmann (1959: 142); para situarla en un contexto de alusión literaria y cultural, consúltese Scholes (1965), Lobner (1972) y Shawcross (1969).

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THE ROLE OF EPISTEMIC MODALITY IN ENGLISH POLITENESS STRATEGIES

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0. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

It is well-known that deontic modality (that is, the kind of modality which concerns obligation and permission) plays an important role in the expression of politeness in English: a directive, such as *Open the door*, can easily be softened by modal expressions, such as *You may open the door* or *You could open the door*. In this paper I will analyze the influence on politeness of another kind of modality which has received less attention in this respect: epistemic modality, that is, the kind of modality which concerns judgements about the truth of the propositional content of an utterance. The devices language has to express epistemic modality will be called "epistemic expressions." Epistemic expressions may specify several factors about someone's (normally the speaker or writer's) knowledge or belief in the truth of the proposition:[1]

1) the degree of *confidence* in the truth of the proposition, which may range from absolute certainty ("I *know* Mary's at home") through a higher ("I'm *sure* Mary's at home") to a weak possibility ("Mary *might* be at home"). From now on, I will call the expressions of the first two groups "strong epistemic expressions" and those of the last group "weak epistemic expressions." Strong epistemic expressions enhance the commitment of the speaker or writer (henceforth S) to the truth of the proposition, whereas weak epistemic expressions lower it.[2]

2) I will also consider as epistemic those expressions that do not indicate doubt with respect to the truth of the proposition, but to the linguistic *codability* of the knowledge S wants to transmit, as in "Mary's*about* six feet tall," "They started *sort of* chanting," because they weaken S's commitment with respect to the truth of the proposition by indicating the imprecision of S's knowledge.[3]

3) finally, there are other expressions which do not specify S's judgement towards the truth of a proposition, but the *(dis)agreement* of its truth or falsity (which is already known by S) with *previous expectations* that S had, or that S supposed the hearer or reader (henceforth H) to have. In other words, reality is confronted with a previous epistemic judgement of S or H:

(1) Of course Mary passed the exam

(the truth of the proposition agrees with S's (and H's) previous expectations)

(2) To my surprise, Mary didn't pass the exam

(the truth of the proposition disagrees with S's previous expectations).[4]

It may be noticed that modal expressions are grammatically diverse: they can be modal verbs (*must, may*), parenthetical expressions *(I think, I believe, I suppose)*, adverbs *(really, certainly, perhaps)*, adjectives *(sure, likely, probably)*, indefinite adjectives or pronouns (which indicate that S does not know who the referent is: *someone, something)*, tag questions ("Fine day, *isn't it?*"), hedges *(kind of, sort of, more or less)*, even contradictions, which indicate that the propositional content is true, but only to some extent (*He is here and he isn't here* (implicature: "he is here, but he is no use to us").

Once I have made clear what I understand by *epistemic expressions*, I will specify that, as far as politeness is concerned, I will follow Brown and Levinson's (1987) approach, in which it is assumed:

> that all competent adult members of a society have (and know each other to have)
>
> (i) "face," the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects:
>
> (a) negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction —i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.
>
> (b) positive face: the positive consistent self-image or "personality" (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants.
>
> (ii) certain rational capacities, in particular consistent modes of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends. (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61).

Individuals are conscious that, in order to be polite, they have to fulfil others' positive and negative face needs, and at the same time they must protect their own, so that others are polite towards them. *Positive and negative politeness* are concerned with the satisfaction of individuals' positive and negative face needs respectively. However, S occasionally wants (or feels obliged) to make face-threatening acts (FTAs), that is, acts which involve a risk against the positive and negative face needs of H or, less commonly, about S's own face needs. To avoid the risk, S uses *positive politeness (PP) strategies* if positive face is threatened, and *negative politeness (NP) strategies* if negative face is threatened.

Like all speech acts, FTAs involve an exchange between S and H. I will divide them according to Halliday's (1985: 68-69) two criteria:

1) the commodity exchanged: goods and services vs. information;

2) the role that S assigns to her or himself in the exchange: giving vs. demanding. In so doing, S assigns the opposite role to H:

	Commodity exchanged:	
	Goods and services	Information
giving	COMMISSIVE	STATEMENT
demanding	DIRECTIVE	QUESTION[5]

S's role in the exchange

The labels "commissive," "directive," "statement" and "question" are often considered as kinds of illocutionary acts,[6] so that we can say, for example, that a certain FTA is a directive, or that it has the illocutionary force of a directive.

So as to analyze the use of epistemic expressions in politeness strategies, I have first divided the politeness strategies into their two basic kinds: negative and positive.[7] Then I have divided the epistemic expressions into strong and weak, according to the strength of S's commitment to the truth of the proposition. I have proceeded to analyze the individual strategies which belong to each of the four groups, indicating, among other things, the situations in which they are likely to occur, and whether they are mostly found in directives, commissives, statements or questions. In each case it is specified whether the strategy is borrowed from Brown and Levinson (1987) or it is proposed here. Finally, I have also considered the patterns of a PP strategy followed by an NP strategy, as well as the strategies speakers normally use in two cases where there is some conflict between more than one face need: answers to invitations, and contradictions.

1. EPISTEMIC MODALITY AND NEGATIVE POLITENESS

As we have already seen, negative face concerns the wish that persons have not to be imposed upon. The FTAs which affect NP consist, therefore, in that S puts some pressure on H to do something for her or him. NP strategies are thus mostly used to protect H's negative face in expressing *directives*, although, as we will see, this is not true for all the cases.

1.1. NP strategies which make use of weak epistemic expressions

a) *Be conventionally indirect.*[8] S uses this strategy so as to leave it apparently open to H whether or not to perform the act S wishes H to do, by stressing her or his insecurity about the "felicity conditions."[9] However, the epistemic expressions are so conventionalized that the directive seems quite straight, the choice given to H being purely formal:

(3) You could perhaps pass me the salt. (BL 135)[10]
(4) I'd like to borrow a cup of flour if I may. (BL 142)

b) *Don't presume / assume.* S also leaves apparently open to H the decision whether to comply with the directive or not, by indicating lack of security not only about the felicity conditions (as in a)), but also about H's *will* to do S the favour. The expressions are more indirect than those used in a). They are often more subjective (*I think, I suppose...*), so that S does not appear to be imposing on H:

(5) I wonder if you can help me in this difficult task.
(6) I think you shouldn't smoke. (cf. "Don't smoke").
(7) You must go to the market tomorrow, I suppose.

(S does not seem to be the source of H's obligation to go to the market, but appears to be merely reporting it).

c) *Be pessimistic.* This strategy is used when S wants to emphasize (more strongly than in a) or in b)) the fact that S does not take for granted that H will fulfil the demands expressed in the directive. The epistemic expressions used for this strategy are, then, very weak, and they tend to cooccur:

(8) I don't suppose there'd be any chance of you... (BL 174)
(9) Perhaps you'd care to help me. (BL 175)
(10) I was wondering if you could help me in this difficult task.

In this strategy epistemic expressions are meaningful, so that H does not think they are a mere formality, but that they do give her or him an excuse not to be imposed upon by S. Then it may readily be deduced that this strategy is more likely when the FTA is serious, whereas Strategy a) is more often used for small favours, such as passing the salt during a meal or closing the door.

Strategies b) and c) may also be found in the expression of *commissives*. Here S is likely to be in a position of inferiority with respect to H, and the strategies help S to give a sensation of modesty in her or his claim that s/he can help H:

(11) I wonder if I could help you. (Strategy b)
(12) I don't suppose I'll be able to solve your problem, but I could try. (Strategy c)

S can also be pessimistic about a third person's (usually superior to S in status) having done something for her or him:

(13) I suppose the editor's not been able to read my script yet.

d) *Communicate S's wants not to impinge on H.* Here S not only does not take for granted that H will do what is indicated in S's directive (as it occurred in Strategies a), b) and c)), but also communicates to H explicitly that it is not S's particular wish to impose on H. Here it is usual to *impersonalize S and H* (see Brown and Levinson (1986) NP Strategy 7), which can be done by means of impersonal epistemic expressions, which lack subjectivity and thus permit S not to state explicitly that it is s/he who formulates the FTA, and/or that it is addressed to H.

(14) It appears / seems (to me) that someone is trying to open the front door.

(implicature: "please go and see what is happening").

S may also pretend not to know who s/he is referring to, by replacing the pronouns "I" and "you" by indefinites:

(15) I can't guess who has left the bathroom in a mess.
(16) Some one (I know) has left the bathroom in a mess.

(implicature in both cases: "you have left the bathroom in a mess, so (please) clean it").

This lack of knowledge of the referents is sometimes so obviously false that it can be funny, for example when it is used by mothers to command their children. Paradoxically, such an indirect strategy as d) may be found in very informal contexts.

e) *Be ambiguous.* This is the most indirect NP strategy. When S chooses it, S wants her or his utterance to be ambiguous, so that H may or may not understand that the FTA has the illocutionary force of a directive. The illocutionary force of (17b) and (18b) cannot be said to be unambiguously a directive, in contrast to the force of (17a) and (18a):

(17a) Tidy your room, please.
(17b) I think it would be a good idea for you to tidy your room.
(18a) Papers must be handed in before December.
(18b) It appears (to me) that papers must be handed in before December.

Strategy e) may also be used in *questions*, especially in questions about delicate topics, an answer to which is compromising for H. Strategy e) makes the illocutionary force doubtful: the utterance may be considered as a question, but also as a statement about S's mental state of doubt, so that H can decide whether to answer or not:

(19) I wonder if John has lost his job.

f) *Avoid disagreement 1.* [11] This strategy, unlike the NP strategies seen up to now, is used in the elicitation of *statements* (not in directives). H is normally of higher status with respect to S. As Givón (1990: 823) says, "in communicating to an interlocutor of higher status, one downgrades one's own subjective certainty." Weak epistemic expressions serve S to soften her or his assertion when S believes that H holds a contrary belief:

(20) Perhaps you may wish to consider an alternative... (Givón 1990:822)
(21) I'm not sure about that, maybe... (Givón 1990: 822)

1.2. NP strategies which make use of strong epistemic expressions

Strong epistemic expressions are not easily found in NP strategies because these strategies often involve *tentativeness* (which is mainly achieved by weaker expressions) on the part of S. However, there is one NP strategy in which, contrariwise to what happened in the others, strong expressions are more polite than weak ones. It is the case of apologies:

g) *Apologize.* S expresses her or his reluctance to the impingement on H (as in d)). Epistemic expressions tend to be highly subjective, because S stresses that it is s/he who is going to make the FTA (directive) , and who doubts about its convenience for H. The stronger the epistemic expression is, the stronger S's reluctance to impinge on H seems. Here are different examples of epistemic expressions used in apologies:[12]

– admit the impingement:

(22) I'm sure you must be very busy, but... (BL 188)
(23) I know this is a bore, but... (BL 188)

– indicate reluctance:

(24) Look, I know I've come to the wrong person, but...

– beg forgiveness:

(25) I hope you'll forgive me if... (BL 189)

– promise that S will do her or his very best not to let that kind of situation happen again. In this way, S makes optimistic epistemic judgements that H will not be further impinged on:

(26) I promise you that this will never happen again.

2. EPISTEMIC MODALITY AND POSITIVE POLITENESS

PP concerns positive face, that is, the human wish that one's wants should be thought as desirable. PP plays a remarkable role in the two ways of exchange of goods and services (S stresses that s/he is collaborative towards H in *commissives*, or supposes that H is going to be collaborative towards S in *directives*), and also in the exchange of information (especially when S makes *statements* about S's own opinions: positive face needs motivate both S's and H's desire that their opinions should be respected).

2.1. PP strategies which make use of strong epistemic expressions

h) *Notice, attend to H (H's interests, wants, needs, goods).* S suggests that s/he does not take into account only S's situation and wants, but also H's, thus making a statement about H, concretely a *deduction* about H's wants. Strong epistemic expressions are often used: then S's certainty about what s/he says about H is stressed, and therefore S appears to be more polite. These strategies are often followed by a commissive or a course of action which could be taken by both S and A:

(27) I can guess how tired you are. Let me drive now.
(28) You must be hungry, it's a long time since breakfast. How about some lunch? (BL 103)

i) *Presuppose/raise/assert common ground.* This PP strategy is very similar to h), but is stronger in that S does not merely deduce S's wants, but claims *knowledge* of them.

(29) I know you like rock cake. How about a small piece?

Strategies h) and i) may also serve S to claim knowledge of H's feelings. S's purpose is then to give empathy, not to suggest a subsequent course of action:

(30) I can imagine how hurt you must feel now.
(31) A: Oh, this cut hurts terribly, Mum.
B: Yes dear, it hurts terribly, I know. (BL 119)

The ways of expressing interest in H by rules h) and i) are adequate only when H can feel that S's concern for H is polite, and not that S is intruding in H's privacy. The use of these strategies is therefore much more likely between intimates than when the relations are more distant.[13] Imagine how one would feel if a neighbour that one meets about once a month said the following:

(32) You must have been out this month, because I have not seen you draw the curtains of your home these days.

Strategy i) can also be used to claim S's own positive face needs instead of H's: then S claims H's knowledge not about the details of the story S is going to tell (which only S can know), but of that kind of situation in general (examples: BL 120):

(33) I really had a hard time learning to drive, you know.
(34) I'm just walkin' down the street, you know; and I damn near get run over...

Sometimes, S wants to emphasize her or his surprise at an uncollaborative attitude of H's, who has not respected S's positive and/or negative face wants. This use of Strategy i) is not polite, because S stresses H's lack of collaboration:

(35) Why haven't you told me before? I expected you to know (PP of H towards S) I was interested in it.
(36) I'm sure you knew it was my place. (I expected you to know which my rights are (PP of H towards S), and to obey them (NP of H towards S)).

j) *Exaggerate H's qualities.* S states that S had never thought that the proposition could be true, because it is incredibly good for H. Commonly, an ability of H is exaggerated (37) or S's surprise about some fact unfavourable to H is highlighted, so that S implicates that H is too worthy to deserve that fact (38). Epistemic expressions which contrast the real truth ar falsity of a proposition with previous expectations are common here.

(37) I never thought a garden could be so well kept.
(38) I'm surprised you didn't pass the exam.

k) *Downgrade S's qualities.* A fact is again contrasted against previous expectations. In this case, S humbles her or himself to pretend to be inferior (or, at least, not superior) to H, thus fulfilling H's positive face wants:

(39) Gosh, I was sure I flunked that exam! (accepting congratulations)

l) *Intensify interest to H.* S indicates that what S is going to say will be a surprise to H, something unusual, and, therefore, a matter of interest. S does not express her or his own epistemic judgements about the proposition, but states those of H (that is, H's ignorance of what S will say):

(40) Do you know what I dreamt of last night?
(41) Guess what I heard about her.
(42) You just can't imagine what I went through at the customs!

Epistemic expressions used in Strategies j), k) and l) normally have a *high subjective value:* S emphasizes that the epistemic judgements are her or his own (in j) and k)) or H's (in l)).

m) *Seek agreement.* In this case, S uses strong epistemic expressions to stress the fact that s/he does agree with H.

(43) She looks very happy.
Yes, she certainly does.
(44) Do I look all right in this shirt?
Yes, you look really great.

Tag questions often seek H's agreement. In this case, S uses them mostly in mid-utterance, as a check for the taken-for-grantedness of what is being said:

(45) I think the most difficult thing is that when you love someone half the time you forget their faults don't you still maybe love them but I mean... (Coates 1988)

However, when the content of the proposition is unfavourable to S, tags have the opposite function: they indicate H that s/he must negate the truth of the proposition in order to fulfil S's positive face needs:

(46) I'm getting fat, aren't I?
(47) I look old for my age, don't I?

Negative questions play a similar role to tags; by using them, S presupposes that H is going to elicit an affirmative answer, thus sharing S's feelings or judgements:

(48) Don't you think it's marvellous?
(49) Isn't it a beautiful day?

When S supposes H's view is different from her or his own, S may seek agreement by claiming to be objective, thus implicating that H has no point in disagreeing with S. This claim of objectivity can be achieved in several ways:

- stress the general acceptance of S's ideas:

(50) anyone can see that...
(51) it's common knowledge that...

- stress the difference between appearance and reality: in these cases, a weak epistemic expression is followed by a strong one:

(52) you may think... but I'm pretty sure that...
(53) it may seem... but actually...
(54) on the surface it appears as if... but the truth of the matter is obviously...

When agreement has been achieved because S yields to H's opinion, S states it explicitly, so as to make it clear that agreement has been achieved, but tends to use some expression to justify S's own change of mind (in other words, the modification of S's epistemic judgement about the truth of the proposition), in order not to give the impression that s/he is weak (thus fulfilling her or his own positive face needs):

(55) now that I think about it...
(56) on secand thought...

n) *Avoid disagreement 2.* S's main aim is not to seek agreement, but to avoid a conflict which could be motivated by a divergence of opinion but, at the same time, S does not want to yield to H's viewpoint. S is likely to use expressions with a high subjective value, indicating that her or his epistemic judgement is strong but personal (*my guess is, I honestly feel, I'm positive, to my mind, to the best of my knowledge...*).[14]

o) *Be optimistic.* This strategy, which is oppposite to c) "Be pessimistic," serves S to fulfil S's own positive face wants. This strategy, unlike all the previous PP strategies, refers to the exchange of goods and services: more concretely, it is used to demand them (therefore, to elicit *directives*). Here S imposes upon H, but wants H not to think that S is ordering H, but that S sees H as a collaborator:

(57) Look, I'm sure you won't mind if I borrow your typewriter.
(58) You'll lend me your lawnmover for the weekend, I hope.

Strategy o) is adequate when S is in a position of equality with respect to H. If H is in a position of superiority, the familiarity that this strategy involves could make H feel that S is treading on her or his rights; if H considers s/he is an inferior to S, H would consider S's camaraderie as inadequate.

The strategy of being optimistic may be used, like that of being pessimistic, in predictions about a third party. Then it may be said that Strategy o) is used to elicit "educated guesses." By using strong epistemic expressions, S enhances her or his concern about others' welfare, implicating that s/he shares one of H's values (to be glad about others' qualities or welfare), and therefore s/he fulfils H's PP needs:

(59) That'll be Marilyn: She said she would ring at six.
(S stresses Marilyn's punctuality)
(60) I'm sure he'll be all right again in a couple of weeks.

2.2. PP strategies which make use of weak epistemic expressions

p) *Avoid disagreement 3.* S may diminish the force of a statement expressing disagreement by means of weak epistemic expressions (usually *hedges*), so that S appears not to be fully compromised with the truth of the proposition:

(61) I really sort of think/hope/wonder... (BL 116)
(62) I don't know, like I think people have a right to their own opinions. (BL 116).[15]

q) *Understate.* S may utter an understatement in accepting a compliment, so as to appear to be more modest, or not inferior to H, thus fulfilling H's positive face wants:

(63) H: What a marvellous place you have here.
S: Oh I don't know , it is a place. (BL 219)

r) *Be ironic.* Weak epistemic expressions are ironic when it is obvious that they have lost their literal meaning, i.e., that S believes the statement to be true (or false), and they serve S to appear to be more indirect. However, the true effect of irony is often the opposite: weak epistemic expressions are often used together, and such a great insistence on doubt suggests that what S pretends is to focus on the truth (or falsity) of the proposition (examples (63) and (64): BL 122). Irony can also be expressed by the pretension not to know who or which the referents of the proposition are (examples (65) and (66): BL 226):

(63) I think maybe John just might be a little bit of a genius.
(64) It's not as if I warned you or anything.
(65) Looks like someone may have had too much to drink.
(66) Perhaps someone did something naughty.[16]

s) *Be vague.* S may pretend not to be sure about her or his knowledge or about its codability. The difference between this strategy and q) "Be ironic" , lies in that S uses epistemic expressions with the opposite effect: to downtone, not to stress, the truth or falsity of the proposition.

Strategy s) is often used when the transmission of the information contained in the statement involves a certain degree of responsibility. The reasons why speakers avoid full commitment to the truth of the proposition in such cases are stated in Givón's (1990: 824) "hazardous information principle":

a. Knowledge is power, but power is responsibility.
b. Information may be coveted, it may also be hazardous and socially destabilizing.
c. Transmitting new information may yield a clear social advantage, but it also incurs some risks.
c [sic]. Therefore, being identified explicitly as the author of information may be unwise, and must be avoided.

Here are examples of good news, about which S emphasizes the fact that s/he is not sure, because making a mistake would be considered as a serious *faux pas:*

(67) I believe Mrs Robinson has won a million pounds at the football pools.
(68) It seems as if the Smiths are moving to a better house.

However, Strategy s) is mostly used when S wants to say something negative (and consequently delicate) which may concern H directly, or a third person. S fulfils H's positive face needs suggesting that s/he shares one of H's values ("be tactful when talking about delicate topics"):

(69) She looks very sort of matronly really. (Coates 1988)

[Speaker describes old friend she had recently met].

(70) It could be the case that Helen divorced last year.

S can also use this strategy to satisfy S's own positive face wants instead of H's, when S is afraid of being depreciated (which would mean a breach in S's positive face needs of being appreciated by others):

(71) Maybe what I did was wrong. (BL 159)[17]

[S knows that what s/he did was wrong without any doubt].

3. THE PATTERN: PP STRATEGY + NP STRATEGY

When S feels obliged to perform an FTA which involves an imposition on H, S has a variety of means at her or his disposal to achieve a better condition to perform the FTA. Among these means there are several combinations of strategies, which consist of a *statement* that contains a PP strategy (often realized by a strong epistemic expression) followed by a *directive* containing an NP strategy (often realized by a weak epistemic expression):

3.1. Start flattering H. S decides to enhance first H's positive face needs, so that S feels flattered and therefore more disposed to be imposed on by S:

(72) I know you're very good at English... (PP). You might possibly help me translate these three pages (NP).

3.2. Start claiming H's knowledge about S's needs. S fulfils her or his own positive face needs, supposing H is a collaborator:

(73) You know I've been very tired these days (PP), so I wondered if I could take a couple of days off (NP).

4. CASES OF STRATEGIES IN CONFLICT

In ordinary conversation, it is not difficult to find coincidences of two (or more) face needs which require opposite linguistic means to be fulfilled. S can manage to satisfy all of them by the use of certain specific devices. Here I will deal with two of these cases, in which epistemic expressions play an essential role: immediate answers to invitations, and contradictions.

4.1. Immediate answers to invitations often include weak epistemic expressions. S prefers not to state her or his acceptance or refusal immediately, because an immediate acceptance would mean a risk against H's negative face wants (that is, giving little importance to to S's imposition on H) whereas an immediate refusal would

not be satisfactory for H's positive face wants (H would feel rejected). Here is an example of how S accepts, but uses epistemic expressions to weaken the force of her or his acceptance:

(75) H: I'll give a tea party tomorrow. Will you be coming?
S: Oh, I don't think I should. That's too nice of you. What time will it be starting?
H: About seven o'clock. Does that time suit you?
S: Oh yes. As far as I know, I haven't got any other engagement, so I could join you...

4.2. Contradictions indicate that S cannot be tellling the truth, since nothing can be true or false at the same time. The use of contradictory statements is frequent when there is a conflict between two or more face needs, or between a face need and sincerity.

(76) H: Are you upset about that?
S: Yes and no. I am and I'm not.

In (76), S wishes to fulfil both H's positive face wants (according to which S should not say s/he is upset, because H would have to pretend to share S's feelings so as to be collaborative) and S's positive face wants (which make S want her or his own feelings to be taken into account).

Other contradictions may resolve a conflict between H's positive face needs (in this case, H's dislike of criticising other people) and S's wish to be truthful. For instance, one might say of a drunken friend to a telephone caller:

(77) Well, John is here and he isn't here.

5. CONCLUSIÓN

For a better understanding of the following exposition of the conclusions that have been arrived at from what has been set forth above, I consider it appropriate to write an index of the NP and PP strategies which may be realized by means of epistemic expressions:

a. NP strategies which make use of weak epistemic expressions

a. *Be conventionally indirect*
b. *Don't presume / assume*
c. *Be pessimistic*
d. *Communicate S's wants not to impinge on H*
e. *Be ambiguous*
f. *Avoid disagreement 1*

b. NP strategies which make use of strong epistemic expressions

g. *Apologize*

c. PP strategies which make use of strong epistemic expressions

h. *Notice, attend to H (H's interests, wants, needs, goods)*
i. *Presupose/raise/assert common ground*
j. *Exaggerate H's qualities*
k. *Downgrade S's qualities*
l. *Intensify interest to H*
m. *Seek agreement*
n. *Avoid disagreement 2*
o. *Be optimistic*

d. PP strategies which make use of weak epistemic expressions

p. *Avoid disagreement 3*
q. *Understate*
r. *Be ironic*
s. *Be vague.*

From the analysis carried out hitherto, it may be concluded that the relationship between the different kinds of

a) speech acts (directive / commissive / statement / question);
b) politeness strategies (NP / PP); and
c) types of epistemic expressions (strong / weak),

can be summarized by the following chart, where each letter stands for its corresponding strategy in the index (notice that certain strategies appear in two places):

b) *strategies* and c) *epist. expr.*	NP Strong	NP Weak	PP Strong	PP Weak
a) *Speech acts*				
directives	g	a,b,c, d,e	o	
commissives		(b,c)	(h,i)	
statements		h,i,j,k, l,m,n,o		p,q,r,s
questions		e		

The chart above corroborates the following conclusions which were hinted by the analysis:

A) the kinds of speech acts where politeness strategies are more likely to be found are *directives* and *statements*.

B) *Statements* is the most suitable speech act for *PP strategies*, which is logical, since the transmission of information may:

1) give S an opportunity to stress her or his attention to H or to flatter H, so that H feels that S is appreciating her or him (Strategies h, i, j, k, l, m, n and o). In this case, S uses *strong* epistemic expressions to emphasize her or his commitment to the truth of the proposition;

2) involve a certain degree of responsibility, especially when the topic is delicate and H's (or less commonly S's) needs to be appreciated are likely to be threatened (Strategies p, q, r and s). Here S avoids full commitment to the proposition by the use of *weak* epistemic expressions. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that in Strategy r) ("Be ironic") weak epistemic expressions can ironically enhance S's commitment to the truth of the proposition although the topic may be delicate.

C) Unlike statements, *directives* easily threaten H's negative face needs not to be imposed upon, and are consequently prone to be realized by means of one of the *NP strategies* which make use of *weak* epistemic expressions (a, b, c, d, e). These strategies permit S to insist that s/he does not take for granted that H will comply with the directive.

D) Besides the common patterns described in B) and C) above, both statements and directives can realize other kinds of politeness strategies:

a) *Statements* may concern *negative politeness* (Strategy f: "Avoid disagreement 1") when S assumes that H will see S's disagreement with H as a threat to H's right that her or his ideas or opinions should not be questioned, when H is in a position of superiority with respect to S.

b) *Directives* readily admit *strong* epistemic expressions in two cases:

1) in *apologies* (Strategy g), where the strong expressions do not insist on H's performing the FTA, but on S's consciousness about that FTA. In fact, this NP strategy shares an interest in H's needs with PP strategies h) and i), the difference being only that in g), but not in h) and i), the expression of concern towards H is motivated by an ensuing threat of H's negative face needs by S. As an illustration to this difference, epistemic expressions in apologies are often followed by a directive (78, 80) while in Strategies h) and i) they are usually followed by a commissive, or a suggestion of a course of action which (S claims) would be beneficial for H (79, 81):

> (78) You must be very tired, but could you possibly help me clean this carpet? (NP Str. g): "Apologize")
> (79) You must be very tired. Let's sit down and have a cup of tea. (PP Str. h): "Notice, attend to H...")

(80) I know you're very tired, but could you possibly help me clean this carpet? (NP Str. g): "Apologize").
(81) I know you're very tired. Let's sit down and have a cup of tea. (PP Str. i): "Presuppose / raise / assert common ground")

2) when S, in uttering the directive, does not stress S's imposition on H, but S's hope that H will be collaborative and consequently will not refuse to do S the favour (PP Str. o): "Be optimistic").

E) *Commissives* and *questions* seem to be much less often realized by politeness strategies. The grounds of this fact may well lie in that these kinds of speech acts are not very likely to menace H's face needs. Concerning *commissives*, politeness strategies are mainly used in the following two cases:

1) when S wants to soften her or his presupposition that s/he can perform the action which (s/he claims) will be beneficial for H, putting stress on her or his modesty (Strategies b) and c));

2) as we have seen, commissives often follow those statements which contain PP Strategies h) and i).

The only politeness strategy found in *questions* is NP Strategy e), which is adequate when the information S asks H to give her or him concerns a delicate topic. S does not make explicit whether s/he is addressing the question or merely expressing a mental state of doubt about something, so that H can decide whether to supply the information or not.[18]

I hope to have given a hint of the importance of the role that epistemic modality plays in the expression of politeness in English. A suggestion for further research would be to make a more systematic review of the different politeness strategies, in search of a finer classification, and then to test the real frequency of each of the strategies in spoken and / or written language by means of corpora, as well as the frequency of epistemic expressions in each strategy. The importance of epistemic modality in the expression of politeness would then be measured not only in qualitative, but also in quantitative terms.

NOTES

1. I will consider as "epistemic" all the expressions that Chafe (1986) considers "evidentials" except for some of his expressions of "sensory evidence" and "hearsay evidence," like "He *sounds* like he's mad" or "It *is said* he's mad," because these do not give by themselves any indication about S's commitment towards the truth of a proposition. They may implicate it (as in (1)) but this implicature can be denied (2):

(1) He sounds like he's mad. (impl: "I believe he's mad")
(2) He sounds like he's mad, but I know he isn't.

2. Some epistemic expressions, such as *really* and *I think*, can function both as weak and strong epistemic expressions, that is, they can be used either to lower (1) or to enhance (2) S's commitment to the truth of the proposition:

(1) Do you really believe her?
He's drunk again, I think.
(2) You look really well.
I think the girls are terrific.

3. Cf. Coates (1987:118-120), where *sort of* is also analyzed as an epistemic expression.

4. I consider expressions of previous expectations as epistemic, in contrast to expressions of sensory and hearsay evidence, because here an epistemic judgement is logically *implied*, not only pragmatically *implicated*. Logical implications, unlike pragmatic implicatures, cannot be denied in any case. Compare the following examples:

(1) It is said John is ill, but I've never believed it.
(2) *Of course John is ill, but I never believed it up to now. [implication of of course: S previously believed that John was ill]

5. I have preferred to use the label "directive" and its matching term "commissive" instead of Halliday's labels "command" and "offer," because "directive" is normally used in the literature to refer to all the speech acts in which S demands H something, whereas "command" is reserved for the strongest directives, in which S's imposition on H is most direct.

6. The term "illocutionary act," which was first introduced in Austin (1962), refers to the different things S can do *in* saying something. It may be considered that the four major kinds of illocutionary acts are the four terms proposed in the chart, which could be described as follows:

a) commissive: giving / offering to give goods and services;

b) directive: demanding goods and services;

c) statement: giving information;

d) question: demanding information.

7. I have decided to consider NP before PP because I believe that it will be more pleasant for readers to proceed from the negative to the positive than to go the other way round.

8. Brown and Levinson (1987) group the strategies into different "broad mechanisms." For my purposes, I do not find this grouping necessary. The strategies set up in this paper correspond in some cases to Brown and Levinson's 1) "broad mechanisms"(then they are in bold type, italicized and underlined); 2) individual strategies (in bold type and italicized), 3) subcases of individual strategies (italicized only). Strategies not borrowed from Brown and Levinson (1986) are marked in bold type and no italics.

9. The term "felicity conditions," which applies to speech acts in which S wants to *do* something, was first used by Austin (1962). What it includes is thus summarized in Levinson (1983: 229):

A. (i) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect
(ii)The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure

B. The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely

C. Often, (i) the persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions, as specified in the procedure, and (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must so do permit H to do it.

The felicity conditions mainly concerned in NP strategies are A(ii) and C(i).

10. From now on, I will use the "BL" abbreviation to indicate that an example is quoted from Brown and Levinson (1986), independently of its consideration as an instance of the same category as in this paper, or of a different one. The following number is that of the page where the example is set in the book.

11. The strategy "avoid disagreement" , borrowed from Brown and Levinson (1987), is located in three different places in my analysis. I will assign a letter to each, as if they were three different strategies, although they could also be considered as subtypes of a single one.

12. The first three substrategies of "Apologize" are Brown and Levinson's (1986: 187-190); the fourth is mine.

13. In other words, the higher Brown and Levinson's (1987) D ("social distance") variable is, the fewer cases of Strategies h) and i) are likely to be found.

14. These are some of Keller's (1981) "gambits." Keller defines gambits as semantic introducers which give clues about S's conversational strategies.

15. The only difference between this strategy and f) "Avoid disagreement 1" consists in that here S's motivation to use the strategy lies in S's concern not with H's negative face needs, but with H's positive face wants (in this case, H's wish that her or his ideas should be respected).

16. Cf. the use of indefinite pronouns in NP Strategy d) "Communicate S's want not to impinge on H," where their effect is also ironic.

17. A similar effect is achieved by S's use of *weaker quantifiers* than the ones S should use to express all s/he knows about something, so as to fulfil either S's or H's positive face needs:

(1) Sometimes I didn't remember to do the dishes. (S never remembered to do the dishes)
(2) Sometimes you didn't remember to do the dishes. (H never remembered to do the dishes).

S may also decide later to tell the truth. It may then appear that S incurs in a contradiction, but this is not the case: S gives priority first to face, later to sincerity:

(3) I ate some of the biscuits, in fact all of them.

18. NP Strategy e) shares with PP Strategies p), q), r) and s) the likelihood to be used when handling delicate or compromising topics. The former strategies are used when S supplies the compromising information, while Strategy e) is appropriate when S wants H to supply information of this kind.

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A VISION OF HELL IN *ANCRENE WISSE* AND *SAWLES WARDE*

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"Mors tua, mors Christi, nota culpe, gaudi celi,
Judicii terror, figantur mente fideli"
(*Ancrene Wisse:* p. 123)

Ancrene Wisse and *Sawles Warde* are two religious prose works of outstanding importance in thirteenth century English literature. MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402 containing the former and MS Bodley 34 containing the latter and some other works seem to have been written originally in the same literary dialect and to share the same spelling. They were products of an active centre of the early thirteenth century and scholars like Dobson (1976: 115) locate them "either in northern Herefordshire or southern Shropshire."

The two works were written for a feminine audience: in the case of *Ancrene Wisse,* three young sisters known to the author who had chosen the solitary life of the anchoresses. *Sawles Warde,* an allegory on the custody of the soul, is, as the other works conforming the *Katherine group,* not addressed to individuals, but rather to a more general audience whose first language was English.

Imagery and metaphor combine throughout both works to communicate sensations, ideas and emotions to the reader, with the ultimate end of moving to action or / and improving her conduct.

Ancrene Wisse presents the pervasive image of life as a pilgrimage and mortal existence as a perpetual battlefield. The wayfarer must behave as if dead to this world, since "this world nis bute a wei to heouene oder to helle" (a reminder which is repeated throughout the work).

There is a long and rough road before the pilgrim, in the course of which God tries his endurance "as a goldsmith tries gold in the fire" (Salu 80). He sends illness to man, but an illness which turns out to be the health of the soul, an aid to make man see and understand what he is, how insignificant he is compared to the power of the Lord and how precarious and vain worldly happiness is. The suffering in this world is presented as ridiculous compared to the suffering in hell

> God hit wat leoue sustren al the wa of this world is ieuenet to helle alre leaste pine. al nis bute bal plohe. al nis nawt swa muchel as is alutel deawes drope. togeines the brade sea ant all worldes weattres (AW 95)1
>
> (All the pain in this world, compared with hell, is a very slight suffering. It is all nothing but playing at ball; it is all just the size of a small drop of dew compared with the wide sea and all the waters of the world) (Salu 80)

The author encourages the reader to overcome the difficulties she may encounter along the toilsome road leading to the bliss of heaven and advises:

> Gath nu thenne gleadluker thenne dusie worldes men gath bi grene wei toward te wearitreo ant te death of helle (AW 98)
>
> (go more cheerfully than foolish, worldly men go by the green way which leads to the gallows and death in hell) (Salu 83),

finally reminding them:

> Betere is ga sec to heauene then hal to helle. to murhthe with meoseise. then to wa with eise (AW 98)
>
> (It is better to go sick to heaven than whole to hell, to happiness in discomfort than to misery in ease) (Salu 83)

In this painstaking mission the part played by the senses is vital. They appear as the guardians of the heart,[2] an image present in *Sawles Warde*, too, where the five senses act as the outer servants, subject to Reason —the head of the household (= man)— and whose duty is to keep the house treasure (= man' s soul) safe day and night .

Man will be tried once and again in the course of his pilgrimage, and those readers who think that they are not being tempted should fear greatly, since that may be a sign of their belonging to the devil's court already. At the very beginning of Book IV on temptations,[3] the author of *Ancrene Wisse* warns the anchoresses against this impending fact :

> Ne wene nan of heh lif that ha ne beo itemptet. mare beoth the gode the beoth iclumben hehe. itemptet then the wake . . . . Se the hul is herre of hali lif ant of heh. se the feondes puffes the windes of fondunges beoth strengre thron ant mare (AW 92)

> (Let no one of holy life think that she will nat be tempted. The good, who have climbed high, are more greatly tempted than the weak . . . . The higher the hill of holy, exalted life, the more and the stronger will be the devil's blasts and the winds of temptation.) (Salu 78)

Although the religious women to whom the work is addressed are taken to be in the highest state possible on this earth, they must watch and be constantly awake, the same as the servants (=senses) in *Sawles Warde*, because the wilderness of solitary life is often threatened by temptations taking the shape of predatory animals that lie in wait to kill the wayfarers who dare travel about that way.

Without God's help it is easy to become a prey to the seven evil beasts and their young cubs. The author of *Ancrene Wisse* proceeds to an orderly classification of the seven deadly sins in their animal shape, without parallel in any former literary work. Thus, the reader is warned against the presence of the lion of pride, the serpent of venomous envy, the unicorn of wrath, the bear of deadly sloth, the fox of covetousness, the sow of gluttony and the scorpion with its tail of stinging lechery:

> theos witheriwines folhith us on hulles (AW 100)
>
> (These persecutors pursue us in the hills...) (Salu 86)

The readers are encouraged to be strong and follow the example of those who strove to get to the promised land, to the victors' camp:

> Bi this wildernesse wende ure lauerdes folc as exode teleth toward te eadi lond of ierusalem that he ham hefde bihaten. Ant ye mine leoue sustren wendeth bi the ilke wei toward te hehe ierusalem .the kinedom that he haueth bihaten his icorene (AW 101)
>
> (Through the wilderness Our Lord's people went to the blessed Land of Jerusalem, which He had promised to them. And you, my dear sisters, go by the same path to the heavenly Jerusalem, the kingdom which He has promised to His elect.) (Salu 86)

Even such prominent figures as St. Benedict or St. Antony hod to withstand the devil's thrusts, but they resisted all those temptations and therefore were awarded the victors' crown. The image of purification by fire is again present as a help to the reader's understanding of the need of keeping their soul unspotted:

> Alswa as the goltsmith cleanseth that gold ithe fur. alswa deth godd te sawle i fur of fondunge (AW 121)
>
> (just as the goldsmith purifies gold in the fire, so God does the soul, in the fire of temptation.) (Salu: 104)

Those who wish to be crowned must beforehand strive with all their stength and will against these three enemies: the world, themselves and the devil. The fight may be

harsh and the reader may feel weakened at times and even on the point of giving up. Then the author of Ancrene Wisse advises:

> betere is forte tholien thurst. then to beon iattret. let lust ouergan. ant hit te wule eft likin. Hwil the yicchunge least hit thuncheth god to gnuddin. ah threfter me feleth hit bitterliche smeorten (AW 123)
>
> (It is better ta endure thirst than to be poisoned. Let the desire pass, and later you will be glad. Scratching may seem a good thing if one is itching, but later one feels the bitter smart.) (Salu 106)

One must not throw away one's weapons until victory is a given fact. Only after having made sure that the devil's army has been defeated can one leave those weapons for a while and in his rest thank God for His help. The pain and humiliation are conceived as providing a training in self-control and the fuller use of the higher powers. The crown of everlasting life is to be worn by those who go into strict training. Many a holy man in medieval times is called *athleta* or *agonista Dei*. The eremitical life is presented to the reader not as a state of acquired grace, but as a progress towards sanctification. After so much hardship and long labour one finds great ease and can enjoy the sweetness of that rest. If, on the contrary, one is not watchful, he is asking to be wounded with the wounds of hell. When one gives in to temptations, the sinner is dead in the eyes of God. But for the devil he lives and serves in his court.

In *Sawles Warde* Fear of Death, Death's messenger, comes to warn the four cardinal virtues of Death's arrival. He has come "to frighten those who are too bold and encourage the careless to stay more alert." His physical appearance seems to be an admonition of what is to arrive after him, and even a first image of the nature of the place he has come from, hell:

> for lonc he is ant leane, ant his leor deathlich. ant blac ant elheowet. ant euch her thuncheth thet stont in his heaued up (SW 169, l.3-5)
>
> (he is tall and thin, and his face is deathlike and pale and livid, and every hair in his head seems to be standing on end) (Millett 89)

His depiction of hell to the four daughters of God presents a vast and "illimitably deep" space, where enough room is provided for the exercise of the most hideous tortures that humans can ever think of. The reader is led to imagine it as an everlasting burning place of such dimensions that it cannot possibly be compared with any earthly fire.

The sensations described and the limited range of colours seem to transcend the text and involve the reader, so effective are the brush strokes of this picture. Thus, hell is

> ful of stench untholelich. for ne mahte in eorthe na cwic thing hit tholien (SW 170 , l. 22)
>
> (full of intolerable stench, for no living thing on earth could tolerate it.) (Millett 91)

The darkness there is so thick that it can be grasped, a choking smoke blinds the eyes of those who are there, and there seems to be a clear preponderance of black items which helps to emphasize the idea of darkness, blindness and total lack of light —which corresponds rather with descriptions of heavenly bliss and the joy of sharing God's riches—. Therefore, according to Fear, "black things can be seen in that black darkness," things which are identified later as devils whose leader is also "the black devil."

The actions carried out by them are endowed with a remarkable charge of violence: "devils beat" those souls, "the fire consumes them," "they are boiled in the pitch," they suffer the "heavy blows of the devils' steel-bound clubs," and are "tossed by them," "with red-hot flesh-hooks." This dreadful picture of the house of death is moreover aided by the presence of most loathsome and horrifying animals, whose actions and movements speak for themselves: "dragons with tails swallow" the souls and "vomit them out again" or "tear them to pieces" and "chew up every fragment." The climax, as it were, of this apocalyptic vision is achieved when the series of worms and reptiles appear on stage:

> the lathe helle-wurmes, tadden ant froggen, the freoteth ham ut te ehnen ant te nease- gristles. ant sniketh in ant ut neddren ant eauroskes . . . et muth ant et earen, ed ehnen ant ed neauele ant ed te breoste holke, as meathen i forrotet flesch . . . . (SW 172 , l.5-11)
>
> (creeping things of hell, toads and frogs, gnaw out their eyes and the gristle of their noses . . . adders and water-frogs crawl in and out through mouth and ears, through eyes and navel and the hollow of the chest, like maggots in rotten flesh) (Millett 93)

The souls of those who, living on earth did not protect their house from the vices and wiles of the devil, now, in the depths of hell, have to suffer this pitiable and terrible sight: unholy "spirits of hideous shapes," of "savage and terrible faces," they have to stand "their roaring" and are thrown now to the fire, then to the icy waters:

> thet fur ham forbearneth al to colen calde, thet pich ham forwalleth athet ha beon formealte . . . and eft acwikieth anan to drehen al thet ilke, ant muche deale wurse, a withuten ende (SW 172, l. 17-20)
>
> (suddenly they shift from the heat to the cold, and they never know which of the two seems worse to them . . . each state gives more pain because of what went before.) (Millett 93)

Alliteration, a device so commonly used not only in *Sawles Warde* , but also in the other works belonging to the *Katherine group*, helps to make the picture even more vivid, supporting the different sensations felt throughout the passage. Thus, we find:

> Se thicke is thrinne the thosternesse (SW 171, l.18)

where the repetition of the dental fricative reinforces the idea of thickness and helps to evoke the difficulty implied to see in such a dense darkness;

a smorðride smoke smeche forcuðest (SW 171, l.21)

where the alveolar fricative *s* adds up to the sensation that something is in the air, that something volatile is in the atmosphere.

To a swuch bale bute bote (SW 171, l. 3)

The repetition of the bilabial *b* reinforces the idea that the souls in hell will have to face the same suffering once and again.

To grisle ant to grure (SW 171, l.4-5)

The cluster *gr* may lead the reader to think of the verb *groan* , with its connotations of pain, suffering, and the like.

lforrotet flesch (SW 172, l.11)

Just as the air escapes in the production of the labio-dental fricative *f*, its presence may indicate that something is in the process of vanishing, of dissapearing.

Ferliche ha flutteð from the heate . . . . (SW 172, l.13)

Again the idea that something is fading; here it is the victims that are consuming.

Ich hefde a thusent tungen of stele ant talde . . . . (SW 173 l.6)

With the repetition of the plosive *t* the author may have tried to sound very impressive, very straightforward in order to dissuade

Ant heren hare rarunge. ant hu ha wið hokeres (SW 173, l.18)

In this line, with the constant presence of the glottal fricative *h* the reader may experience himself an echo of their voices in the form of a threatening whisper at the back of his mind.

Later on a succession of pairs of words showing alliteration confirms the fondness of the author for this "special effect," at hand to the medieval writer:

wununge of wanunge (SW 173, l.24) ,
of grure ant of granunge (SW 173, l.25)
heatel ham (SW 173, l.1)
buri of bales ant bold of eauer-euch bitternesse (SW 173, l.1-2)
laðest lont (SW 173, l.2)
grisle ant of grure (SW 174, l.4)

Quite a few adjectives throughout the passage show themselves as unusually expressive, carrying their qualities to their most:

wið wiðute met (SW 90, l.26)
deop wiðute grunde (SW 90, l.26)
brune uneuenlich (SW 90, l.26)
stench untholelich (SW 90, l.28)
sorhe untalelich (SW 90, l.29)
smeche forcuðest (SW 90, l.32)
meast pine (SW 92, l.14)
laðest lont (SW 94, l.3)

Occasionally the use of hyperboles is present also:

Se thicke is thrinne the thosternesse thet me hire mei grapin (SW 90, l.30)

(The darkness there is so thick that it can be grasped) (Millett 91

Or contradictions of the sort

thet fur ne geueð na liht, ah blent ham the ehnen the ther beoð (SW 90, l. 31

(that fire gives no light, but blinds the eyes of those who are there.) (Millett 91, l. 32)

All these devices contribute to present the vision more vividly. The work was written to be read aloud, in such a way that as sounds are repeated they emphasize this or that sensation, evoke this or that idea, and the reader builds up a picture in his mind which is at the time supported by the aid of such suggestive sounds. The reader therefore becomes more immersed in the text and is more liable to act and behave according to the warning here presented (the primary aim of the author of *Sawles Warde*).In this way this device used to persuade is successful.

This is the threatening future that awaits the reader of *Sawles Warde* that does not withstand the fiend. However hard the latter might try to shoot at one with riches and worldly pleasure one must be strong enough and not lessen his faith in God. The painful destiny which awaits those who are not ready on Death's arrival is already foreseen —although in a very concise form— in the Gospels (St. Matthew 22.13-14).

The bitterness and sorrow predicted are such, that the author of *Sawles Warde* concludes:

the swuch wununge ofearneth for ei hwilinde blisse her o thisse worlde, wel were him yef thet he neauer ibore nere (SW 174, l. 9-11)

(the man who earns such a home for any passing pleasure here in this world, it would be better for him if he had never been born.) (Millett 95)

And then the moral of the story follows, in the words of Prudence:

> yef we wel werieth ant witeth ure hus, ant Godes deore tresor thet he haueth bitaht us, cume Death hwen ha wule (SW 174 , l. 19-21)
>
> (If we defend and protect our house well, and God's precious treasure which he has entrusted to us, let Death come when she will.) (Millett 95)

Ancrene Wisse develops the theme of temptation and its outcome in Book IV. Here the author presents the reader with an original parade of the seven deadly sins, each of them bearing the shape of a dangerous beast which threatens the wellbeing of the human soul, aided moreover by their numerous whelps.

When man gives in to any of the vices mentioned, that is, once the seven beasts in the wilderness of solitary life and their offspring have attacked and killed the sinner, he is given an office at the devil's court and his function there will be one according to his most particular sin. In this way man is brought down from his former place of dignity in the hierarchy of God's created world to the figure of a slave in the lower world of hell. The "evil physician of hell" (the devil) will be the king of this court and will keep on laughing and laughing at the stupidity of his trapped victims.

The order in which the sinner-courtiers are presented coincides exactly with that kept before for the listing of the seven deadly sins. Thus, the first of these being the Lion of Pride, we first find at the devil's court *the proud,* who play the role of trumpeters: they draw in wind with worldly praise and then blow it out in a vain boasting.

The envious (those who have been stung by the Serpent of Envy, which came second) are the jesters, who make faces or twist their mouths out of shape to make their lord laugh.

The slothful sleep in the devil's bosom and welcome his teachings.

The covetous are cinder-jacks who heap together many heaps of ashes, blow them up and blind themselves with them, causing the devil to laugh until he bursts.

The greedy gluttons are the devil's manciples but they are always in the cellar or the kitchen, thinking of food and drink.

The lechers are called by their proper name. They have lost their shame completely, and defile themselves as well as their companions. With their stinking smell they give more pleasure to the "deceiver of hell" than any sweet incense could do.

All these sinners constitute the devil's court where, as we have seen, they are servants, buffoons and victims to their lord. When Doomsday comes they will suffer the wounds of the same vices which made them stand out while on earth. The warning appears clearly at the beginning of Book IV in *Ancrene Wisse* :

> Godd schal o domesdei don as thah he seide. Dohter hurte thes the. dude he the spumen i wreaðde oðer in heorte sar. i scheome oðer in eani teone. loke dohter loke he seið hu he hit scahl abuggen. Ant ther ye schule seon bunkin him wið thes deafles betles thet wa bið him thes liues. (AW 97)
> (On the day of judgement God will act as though He were saying: "Daughter, did this man injure you? Did he make you stumble into anger or grief of heart, into shame or any vexation? Look, daughter, see how he shall pay for it." And there you shall see him beaten with the devil's mallets until he wishes he had not been born.) (Salu 82)

All the dead will rise that day and will be judged, and their misbehaviour will be severely punished. Thus, the author foretells:

> na prud bemere ne schal beon iborhen (AW 109)
> (no proud trumpeter shall be saved.) (Salu 94)

About the envious (jesters at the devil's court):

> theos bodieð biuoren hu the eateliche deoflen schulen yet ageasten ham wið hare grennunge. ant hu ha schulen ham seolf grennin ant niuelin ant makien sur semblant for the muchele angoise i the pine of helle (AW 110)
>
> (They foreshadow beforehand how they themselves will later be terrified by the grimaces of loathsome devils and how they themselves will twist and distort their features, grimacing from their great suffering in the torment of hell.) (Salu 94)

The "reward" of the wrathful (knife-throwers) is described as follows:

> the deoflen schulen pleien wið him mid hare scharpe eawles. skirmi wið him abuten ant dusten ase pilche clut euch toward oðer. ant wið helle sweordes asneasen him thurh ut. thet beoð kene ant eateliche ant keoruinde pinen (AW 110)
>
> (the devils will play with him with their sharp hooks, they will juggle about with him and fling him from one to another like a piece of old fur, and thrust him through with the swords of hell, that is, with sharp, fierce, piercing tortures.) (Salu 95)

The slothful will be fiercely awakened by the terrible sound of the angels' trumpets and will keep an everlasting vigil in hell. The covetous (cinder-jacks) will have a loathsome destiny, too:

> Ant al thet he rukeleð ant gederеð to gederes. ant ethalt of ei thing thet nis bute esken mare then hit neodeð. schal in helle wurðen him tadden ant neddren (AW 111)
>
> (All that he heaps up and gathers together and keeps for himself, more than is necessary, of anything that is thus mere ashes, shall turn into so many toads and adders for him in hell) (Salu 95)

God's threat to the greedy glutton is:

> gef the kealche cuppe wallinde bres to drinken. geot in his wide throte thet he swelte inwið. agein an gef him twa (AW 111)
>
> (Give the tosspot boiling brass to drink! Paur it into his open throat that he may die from within. For every one, give him twa.) (Salu 96)

And finally the lechers will have to suffer their own unbearable stench in the lower world:

> Ant he schal bidon ham. pinin ham wiđ eche stench ithe put of helle (AW 112)
>
> (he [the devil] shall defile them and torture them with everlasting stench in the pit of hell) (Salu 96)

God is shown at this moment as a stern Father who does nat allow the sinners to go away without their corresponding punishment. Those men who have been seized by the seven deadly sins, who have "married the seven hags," are to be greatly hated and shunned. The author of *Ancrene Wisse* makes use of some persuasive devices to convince his readers that the path leading to God is other but this one.

This depiction of hell abounds in references to movements of a violent sort: jesters *twist* their mouths, *squint* their eyes, make ugly faces, *grimace* and *distort* their features; the devils *juggle, fling* and *thrust* the sinners here and there and the lord devil *bursts* with laughter.

The instruments of torture are all sharp objects, to inflict the more pain: there appears a succession of swords and knives, sharp and cutting swords, sharp point, sharp hooks, all of them conforming "sharp, piercing tortures."

To this monstrous spectacle contributes the presence of such loathsome creeping creatures as those found in *Sawles Warde:* toads, adders and worms, but the reference to them is short this time, the unpleasant sensations being moreover concentrated in the repetition mainly of smell and sounds: lechers stink, theirs is a "stinking smell," a stench; reference is made to a rotting corpse, a terrible sound and the loathsome quality of the devils.

Bearing all these items together it is not difficult to understand that the sinners are terrified when aware of their painful fate, although the vision of hell as depicted in *Ancrene Wisse* seems at first sight nat so dreadful and threatening as the one presented in *Sawles Warde*. The former comes as ane coherent scene with many actors, the interest being focused on the evil actions of the devil's courtiers and the just payment they get at the Last Judgement. The vision in *Sawles Warde* appeals more to the reader's senses: sounds, colours, awful creatures, disgusting actions and movements. The author's major aim is to move the reader in an only possible way: listening to Fear of Death and keeping watchful over her soul, the most precious treasure she has been endowed with. His is a sart of alarm through which he intends to see an immediate action on the part of the reader, since this seems to be the real aim of his work.

The picture of hell in *Ancrene Wisse* is not so apocalyptic. The author trusts his audience:

> ye beođ ful feor from ham (AW 112)

> (You yourselves are very far from them [= the seven deadly sins]) (Salu 97)

But he does have to warn them against these vices and their cubs, lest any forgets the painful consequences of giving up in the continuous strife against "the bright, shining devil."

In spite of these serious warnings on no account do these two works offer the reader a hopeless future: *Sawles Warde* introduces after the vision of hell a joyful messenger, "handsome and noble and finely dressed"; he is Love of Life, the messenger of Joy, who comes from heaven to cheer the four daughters of Gad and the servants (= the senses) of the house. He comforts them by saying that they need have no fear, since they will be aided by God. He tells them, moreover, what heaven looks like and the bliss one can enjoy there. Then Fortitude puts Fear of Death to flight and asks Love of Life to stay with them, deciding (advice that should be taken by the readers):

> Ich am siker ine Godd thet ne schal lif ne deđ, ne wa ne wunne nowđer, todealen us ont his luue thet al this us haueđ igarket. yef we as treowe tresurers witeđ wel his tresor thet is bitaht us to halden, as we schulen ful wel under his wengen (SW 185, l. 23-27)
>
> (I am sure in God that neither life nor death, sorrow nor joy, will separate us from the love of him who has prepared all this for us, if we as faithful treasurers guard well the treasure he has entrusted to our keeping.) (Millett 107)

The author of *Ancrene Wisse* lists a number of comforts and remedies for those who give in to temptation. The main remedy of all, outstanding among the others is Confession. The absolution following it heals the soul and helps it get to its former state of purity and health. To this is Book V entirely devoted, as a perfect continuity in the development of human actions, wrongdoings and problem solvings. Therefore there is also a hope at the reader's hand: the humble recognition of her mistakes and her sincere intention not to sin again. The presence of a chapter fully devoted to confession is within the trend of thirteenth century England: the decrees of the Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215 encouraged greatly the production of manuals of confession and *Ancrene Wisse* has this kind of manual among its eight books or chapters.

But the prime concern of Book IV was to inform the reader on the many temptations that threat her soul and the pervasive warning of ever keeping watchful, this being also the main concern of its contemporary work *Sawles Warde*. Both repeat along their pages that pain or comfort on earth, the path of our pilgrimage, is only but a shadow of what is to come after death:

> of theos fikelinde world. ne of hire false blisse: ne neome we neauer yeme. for al thet is on eorđe. nis bute as a schadewe (SW 174, l.23-25)
>
> (Let us not be concerned about this false world or its specious happiness, since everything on earth is only like a shadow.) (Millett 95)

Wa ant wunne i this world al nis bute peintunge. al nis bute schadewe (AW 124)

(Pain and joy in this world are the merest painting, shadows simply.) (Salu 107)

NOTES

1. Hereafter (in parenthetical references) *AW = Ancrene Wisse; SW = Sawles Warde.*

2. This is an extension of the *De Anima*, a work attributed to Hugh of St. Victor which is considered as one of the sources of *Ancrene Wisse* .

3. Two kinds of temptations are presented: inner and outer. All must be overcome and turned into a source of new strength. An account of the Seven Deadly Sins helps illustrate the quality and variety of the inner temptations. A remedy for each of them is accordingly suggested, but the general and best remedy against sin is Confession, the main theme of Book V, immediately following the present one.

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REFUNCTIONALISING THE PAST: SALMAN RUSHDIE'S RE-WRITING OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVELISTIC CONVENTIONS IN *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

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Of the five types of transtextuality which Genette's study provides (1982), two seem to stand out above the rest: *hypertextuality* and *archtextuality*. The former, which is defined as the relation between a text B (hypertext) and a text A (hypotext), established through transformation or imitation (1982: 11-12), has characterised most of the transtextual analyses carried out on *Midnight's Children* (Bader 1984; Reimenschneider 1984; Batty 1987; Cronin 1987; Alexander 1990). It is the intention of this paper to carry out an archtextual analysis, that is, one which takes into account the generic status of a text (1982: 11). It seems only right that *Midnight's Children* be the subject of a wide variety of intertextual approaches, a fact fully endorsed by its inclusion within the postmodern movement: a true postmodern novel "keeps one foot always in the narrative past" (Barth, 1984: 204), it "confronts the past of literature" (Hutcheon, 1989: 118). Hutcheon, closely following Barthes and Eco, reinforces the essential role of past texts (both historical and fictional) in contemporary fiction, which she defines as the "parodically doubled discourse of postmodernist intertextuality" (1989: 128). Thus, parody becomes from the very beginning a fundamental feature when analysing postmodern fiction:

Wa ant wunne i this world al nis bute peintunge. al nis bute schadewe (AW 124)

(Pain and joy in this world are the merest painting, shadows simply.) (Salu 107)

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> When we speak of parody, we do not just mean two texts that interrelate in a certain way. We also imply an intention to parody another work (or set of conventions) and both a recognition of that intent and an ability to find and interpret the backgrounded text in its relation to the parody. (Hutcheon 1985: 22)

It is according to this quotation that Defoe's novels offer themselves as one of the main textual referents for an intertextual study of Rushdie's novel. As I will presently try to show, *Midnight's Children* consciously "works" with the conventions used by Defoe, thereby giving new life to them: by means of this parodic use, "a new form develops out of the old, without really destroying it; only the function is altered" (Hutcheon 1985: 36).

By only exerting a subtle censorship on the initial paragraph of *Midnight's Children*, we may realise its familiarity. Thus, the following "censored" quotation:

> I was born in the city of Bombay . . . in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947 . . . On the stroke of midnight. (MC 9)

is very similar to the beginning of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, which runs:

> I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, thou' not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. (1987: 27)

In fact, this kind of opening paragraph turns out to be a commonplace formula in Defoe's novels, both in *Roxana*

> I Was Born, as my Friends told me, at the City of Poictiers, in the Province, or County of Poictou, in France, from whence I was brought to England by my Parents . . . (1987: 37)

and in *A Journal of the Plague Year*

> It was about the beginning of September, 1664, that I, among the rest of my neighbours, heard in ordinary discourse that the plague was returned again in Holland . . . (1987: 23)

Only a few lines below, Saleem continues with his narration:

> Now, however, time (having no further use for me) is running out. I will soon be thirty-one years old. Perhaps. If my crumbling, over-used body permits. But I have no hope of saving my life, nor can I count on having even a thousand nights and a night. I must work fast, faster than Scheherazade, if I am to end up meaning —yes, meaning— something. (MC 9)

By means of this metafictional paragraph, the mood initially imposed by the eighteenth-century beginning is brought to an abrupt end. The effect caused by this rupture is to make the reader aware of the fictionality of an apparently realist mode of narration. *Midnight's Children* plays with the reader's expectations: the initial paragraph opens the novel with a clear reference to a specific type of novel, but no sooner do we realize this than we are offered a paragraph that seems to subvert all our expectations.

For our present purposes it is important to realise that *Robinson Crusoe* was published in 1719, and that Defoe's other novels appeared in the span of five years, which places Defoe's fictional writing entirely within the first half of the eighteenth century. When we think in a wider sense, Defoe immediately brings to mind two other novelists: Richardson and Fielding, who are traditionally considered the founders of the English novel, but are in no way the sole representatives of this emerging genre. The eighteenth century witnessed a rich variety of fictions competing for preeminence; among the subgenres, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of the epistolary novel, the gothic romance, the autobiographical novel, the romantic tales of exotic pilgrimages following the pattern of the newly translated *Arabian Nights*, the imitations of *Don Quixote* and the sentimental novel. Of these, the autobiographical novel, stemming out of the picaresque and closely related to the birth of journalism, goes back to the pioneering work of Daniel Defoe in the early decades of the eighteenth century. And this is the generic relationship linking Defoe's and Rushdie's novels, as it must be clear that *Midnight's Children* relates more strongly to the "eighteenth-century autobiographical novel" than to any other eighteenth-century competing subgenre. Thus, my archtextual analysis is not so much a study of the relatioship with the eighteenth-century novel as a whole as with a very specific trend within the genre.

Ian Watt, in his classic study on the rise of the novel, characterised the eighteenth-century novel as a

> new tendency in fiction: [where the] total subordination of the plot to the pattern of the autobiographical memoir is as defiant an assertion of the primacy of individual experience in the novel as Descartes's cogito ergo sum was in philosophy. (Watt 1987: 15)

This assertion of the primacy of individual experience has no other aim than the search and final definition of the individual's identity. The way in which the novel begins its life is significant enough: the real autobiography yields its form to the "fictional" autobiography. This, of course, is not the product of randomness. The narrator's concern lies with defining her/himself, with what s/he is in the present; and nothing seems more appropriate than a recollection of past events in order to understand the present. This is precisely what autobiographies attempt to do: "Autobiographies affirm identity. The autobiographer, attesting his existence by the fact of writing, lives through his explanations, tacit or explicit, of how he came to be the person he is" (Spacks 1976: 1).

In his analysis of the eighteenth-century novel —and of the concept of realistic particularity on which it is based— Watt (1987: 17) proposes two aspects as

fundamental for our understanding of its nature: *characterisation,* and *presentation of background.*

The first of these terms becomes of extreme importance for it is implicitly related to the idea of definition of the individual. The more precise the characterisation is carried out, the more exact the idea we will have of the character in question, the more defined his identity will appear. One way of achieving more precision in the characterisation of the individual is to concentrate on the *question of names* (Watt 1987: 18). Quite a few eighteenth-century novels were entitled after their hero: Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders* and *Roxana;* Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones;* Richardson's *Pamela, Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison;* Fanny Burney's *Evelina, Cecilia* and *Camilla;* a tendency that still goes well into the nineteenth century, as some of Dickens' novels show: *Oliver Twist, Little Dorrit, Dombey and Son* or *David Copperfield,* for example. The implication of this is clear: the whole meaning of the novel is condensed in one single name. The author's concern, that of defining the identity of the main character, is first accomplished by means of naming. Rushdie's novel could very well have been named after the main character, and narrator, of the story. The fact of preferring the title "Midnight's Children" to "Saleem Sinai" is significant in the sense that it seeks to hint at the contrary aim, not the definition of individual identity, but rather the loss of identity. Identity is traditionally embodied in a name; Rushdie not only proposes to change this name for a title that would already imply a deeper ambiguity —Midnight's Child— but widens this ambiguity by adding to it a sense of plurality, of variety, of multiplicity. Identity has become too complicated a matter in the twentieth century to be defined simply by a name; in this way, the proposition that proper names "are the verbal expression of the particular identity of each individual person" (Watt 1987: 18) is here seriously questioned. Identity seems to have lost the seriousness with which it was treated in the past: thus, proper names are replaced by collective names. In fact, the question of names becomes almost a game in *Midnight's Children:* a game that enhances the fragility of the concept of identity. Names are given, or changed, or added, for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways: Mumtaz, the narrator's mother, changes her name when she marries Ahmed Sinai, and becomes Amina; a change whose importance the narrator himself is well aware of:

> And now Aadam Aziz lifted his daughter (with his own arms), passing her up after the dowry into the care of this man who had re-named her and so re-invented her, thus becoming in a sense her father as well as her new husband. (MC 66; my emphasis)

Indira Gandhi, who, we are told, changed her initial name from Priyadarshini to Gandhi, is usually referred to as "The Widow"; Picture Singh is mainly known as "The Most Charming Man in the World," or sometimes referred to as "Captain," or as "Pictureji"; Mian Abdullah, was spoken to as "The Hummingbird"; Laylah, Saleems's

wife, is known as "Parvati-the-witch"; while Saleem's sister, Jamila, also known as "The Brass Monkey," when she becomes a singer, is Jamila Singer, as well as "Pakistan's Angel," "The Voice of the Nation," the "Bulbul-e-Din," and "nightingale-of-the-faith" — where each name means an appropiation on behalf of the one who re-names.

Saleem himself realises the impartance of names; he knows that they are related to one's identity, and that as such they are an important part in defining one's self. This is the reason why, when he is unable to remember his name (one of them), he feels somewhat lost:

> You see Padma: I have told this story before. But what refused to return? What, despite the liberating venene of a colourless serpent, failed to emerge from my lips? Padma: the buddha had forgotten his name (To be precise: his first name). (MC 365)

He hasn't lost his identity, but he has lost some part of it; Saleem is confused "and is trying to recall his name. And can summon up only nicknames: Snotnose, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Piece-of-the-Moon" (MC 370).

The uneasiness, the strangeness, the void he feels within is embodied in his name, Saleem, rather, in its absence. The same would have happened if he had lost any of the multiplicity of other names he had: some part of his self would be lost, because Rushdie, taking nominalism to playful literal extremes, equates naming with being, so that each name represents a *fragment* of his life. In keeping with this equation Saleem, somewhat naively, tries to hold on to the notion that, should he recover his name, he would finally know who he is, he would succeed in defining his identity. And the truth is that by the time the narration takes place Saleem has already remembered his lost name, and finds himself, still, trying to achieve the impossible: to define his identity, which is the whole process of his narration, of his story-telling.

The feeling of a solid and coherent character was conveyed by the eighteenth-century narrator in several ways: firstly, by means of the apparent psychological evolution undergone by the character as the story progresses; secondly, by the narrator's attitude at the moment of the narration with respect to the narrated events; and thirdly, by the psychological soundness and stability of the character throughout his adventures:

> Eighteenth-century novelistic characters, although a great deal happens to them, testify their stability far more eloquently than their flexibility. Fixed in their moral natures, uncorruptible by their experience . . . , identity . . . remains solid against all external pressure, the substantiality of their being in itself suggesting their virtue. (Spacks 1976: 8)

In practice, the identity of the eighteenth-century hero is often established at the very beginning of the novel. Defoe, for example, usually begins his novels with "an act of self-assertion, of rebellion, or exclusion" (Probyn 1987: 30). This act of self-assertion

normally involves the affirmation of the hero's singlemindedness. Robinson Crusoe leaves his parental house with a single aim in mind, that of increasing the economic status of his parents. In this sense we can say that the whole novel fictionalises the accomplishment of this desire. The island and the isolation to which he is there confined is in no way an obstacle to his development; on the contrary, as Watt has pointed out, "Crusoe's island gives him the complete *laissez-faire* which economic man needs to realise his aims" (1987: 86). In this light, Crusoe's "forced" retirement onto his island like his other "misfortunes" turn out to be the necessary means for the fulfilment of his Puritan aspirations (Watt 1987: 77).

Of course, this psychological stability of the eighteenth-century character is pinpointed by the attitude with which the narrator-characters present themselves to the reader. That no characterological traansformation is suffered by the eighteenth-century character, that "to remain essentially the same, in many eighteenth-century novels, constitutes the central character's triumph" (Spacks 1976: 8) is thoroughly endorsed by the position from which the narrator speaks. The narrator-character of the eighteenth-century novel —not only Robinson Crusoe, but also Moll Flanders, Pamela, Clarissa— tells us his/her stories from a pedestal, that has apparently been earned by remaining faithful to his/her initial view of life. Thus, Pamela, the heroine of Richardson's novel, reaches her final position by holding strongly to her virtue; for she does very little, apart from stubbornly withstanding the sexual approaches of her master.

It is true that not all our narrators end high up on their pedestal; Roxana, the protagonist of Defoe's last novel, seems to be far away from it:

> Here, after some few Years of flourishing, and outwardly happy Circumstances, I fell into a dreadful Course of Calamities, and Amy also; the very Reverse of our former Good Days; the Blast of Heaven seem'd to follow the Injury done to the poor Girl, by us both; and I was brought so low again, that my Repentance seem'd to be only the Consequence of my Misery, as my Misery was of my Crime. (1982: 379)

But her final position as narrator, her strength and solidity, the full awareness, acknowledgement and acceptance of her position seems to contradict the final "dreadful Course of Calamities" into which she is led. The truth is that her final position —the stance from which she narrates— seems to differ little from the one in which Robinson utters his almost last words:

> In the mean time I in part settled my self here; for first of all I marry'd, and that not either to my disadvantage or dissatisfaction [...and] my inclination to go abroad, and his importunity, prevailed and engaged me to go in this ship, as a private trader to the East Indies. This was in the year 1694. (1987: 298)

Although both seem to find themselves in opposite positions at the end of their respective stories —Robinson at the height of his luck and good fortune and ready to make more profit, whereas Roxana seems to have reached the utmost deterioration,

with little hope awaiting her— they both seem to share a common feature: they know who they are, where they stand, and why they are there; their final position is the direct consequence of a process of which they have been conscious throughout; they are merely the product of their own choices. If there ever was an inner development within these narrator-characters, it has definitely come to an end. Their attitude while narrating, and especially at the very end of it, clearly shows that there is no place for further evolution. When Robinson, at the end of his narration, offers to tell us more about his coming adventures, the reader is little excited: conceivably, Robinson will continue to overcome any difficulty and will continue to increase his wealth; little else can be expected: now, more than ever, we realise that these "people are rewarded . . . for being themselves" (Spacks 1976: 8).

By contrast, Saleem's attitude at the end of his narration shows a totally different disposition, and this is seen in two different ways: firstly, by the picture he offers of himself at the very end of his narrative, which breaks, shatters, and smashes to pieces any possibility of defining his own identity:

> I hear lies being spoken in the night, anything you want to be you kin be, the greatest lie of all, cracking now, fission of breaking beneath the awful pressure of the crowd, bag of bones falling down down down, just as once at Jallianwala, but Dyer seems not to be present today, no Mercurochrome, only a broken creature spilling pieces of itself into the street, because I have been so-many too-many persons. (MC 463; my emphasis)

The "greatest lie of all," that which is accepted by every single character of the eighteenth-century novel, that man can actually know who he is, and which becomes Saleem's main concern throughout his narrative ("I no longer want to be anything except what who I am. What who I am?" [*MC* 383]), is finally exposed to the light by Saleem himself. Secondly, Saleem attempts to respond to a question whose answer seems almost to have been taken for granted by the eighteenth-century "heroes." Saleem may either dismiss the question ("Don't try to fill my head with that history. I am who I am, that's all there is." [*MC* 351]), or attempt an "honest" reply:

> I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. I am everyone everything whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine. I am anything that happens. . . . . (MC 383)

Two answers, and both very far away from being effective. But who, by now, expects effectiveness? Whereas "the principles of orthodox novelistic structure . . . always demand both that something happen to people in a novel and that the people remain themselves in the face of all happening" (Spacks 1976: 8), Saleem is asked to define his identity. He fails because he tries: *Midnight's Children* demands of his hero that he confront the impossible task. But it is not only the position of the narrator throughout the whole story, as well as his final stance, that signals antagonistic

postures. The way in which the future is regarded also offers a good point of comparison between Defoe's novels and Rushdie's novel. As I have commented above, the eighteenth-century hero finds him/herself at the end of the novel with little more to do, except enjoy and relish the position reached in his/her struggle to assert him/herself throughout the narrative. The eighteenth-century heroes "all face the problem of discovering and defining their proper social positions" (Spacks 1976: 9), and this they do by the time the narration comes to an end. The end of the narration imposes a closed ending on the story. That Crusoe offers to continue his narration in the near future does not change the fact that he has reached a close ending, and so exerts small attraction on the modern reader:

> all these things, with some very surprizing incidents in some new odventures of my own, for ten years more, I may perhaps give a farther account of hereafter (1987: 299)

A reader, who, to a large extent, can take for granted the kind of adventures he/she would encounter, and is certain to know the outcome of them. On the contrary, Saleem's offering seems totally different: the passibility of his rendering further adventures is in no way a free choice, but almost an imposition, an obligation. The future, like the past, is full of uncertainties; however, Saleem already feels that he will have to recount them:

> No, that won't do, I shall have to write the future as I have written the past, to set it down with the absolute certainty of a prophet. (MC 462)

The "absolute certainty," loaded with a high degree of irony, is nothing but a statement of his right, and need, to fictionalise his future, as well as he has done in the past, in the hope of establishing it, thus hinting at the disquieting metafictional possibility that he exists primarily within the written text, that his identity depends on the written version of his life he chooses to select from a limitless range of potential possibilites. In short, that he is capable of writing himself into existence.

So, whereas identity is taken for granted and hardly poses any problems in the eighteenth-century novel, Rushdie's novel shaws that it is nothing but a linguistic construct. As we shall see, other universal truths which are implicitly taken for granted in the eighteenth-century novel, are similarly deconstructed in *Midnight's Children*.

According to Watt, the other fundamental feature which defines the eighteenth-century novel is the presentation of background. This implies a direct relation between the human being and the background in which he moves: that the individual is able to define his own identity involves that he/she has been able to establish a very "special" relationship with the world that surrounds him/her: one that we could name as a one-way relationship, where the individual's aim is to master every element which relates to him, and thus obtain the maximum profit. To do so, he/she thoroughly relies on his/her senses: "Modern realism, of course, begins from the position that truth can be discovered by the individual through his senses" (Watt 1987: 12). Society, except as a means, has little to offer, for "the pursuit of truth is conceived of as a wholly individual matter" (Watt 1987: 13).

Following Locke's "principle of individuation," the eighteenth-century novelists define their heroes' existence by relating them to a particular locus in space and time. The more details the narrator produces about his/her life, the more truthful the narration appears to be: the excess of detail, both, as to space and time, becomes the main key in showing a realist presentation of the background. Watt brilliantly referred to this point when commenting on Defoe's novels:

> he [Defoe] convinces us completely that his narrative is occurring ot o particular place and at a particular time, and our memory of his novels consists largely of these vividly realised moments in the lives of his characters, moments which are loosely strung together to form a convincing biographical perspective. (Watt 1987: 24)

Thus, a continual acknowledgement of temporal details becomes a constant in Crusoe's narrative; his first reference appears in the first sentence of the novel, where he tells the reader about his birth date, which seems to be of extreme importance, for in this way he places himself within history. The reader is spared chranological detailing until his arrival on the island ("It was, by my account, the 30th of Sept. when . . . I first set foot upon this horrid island" [1987: 81]), where he immediately makes clear the importance of knowing the day in which he lives: "and thus I kept my kalendar, or weekly, monthly, and yearly reckoning of time" (1987: 81). In order to help himself in this purpose he decides to keep a journal, in which every day will have its own record:

> September 30, 1659. I, poor miserable Robinson Crusoe, being shipwrecked, during a dreadful storm, in the offing, came on shore on this dismal unfortunate island. (1987: 87)
>
> October 1. In the morning I saw . . . .(1987: 87)
>
> From the first of October to the 24th. All these days entirely spent in many several voyages . . . . (1987: 87)

In this way Defoe continues for a while:

> Nov. 14, 15, 16. These three days I spent in making little squore chests or boxes. (1987: 89)

In Defoe's "Kalendar," as we can see, the temporal references are being complemented by spatial ones. In his diary —that utmost faithful mirror of reality— there is hardly any reference to inner reality, or to any comment revealing psychological depth. Thus, emotionally important dates, such as Christmas, receive small comment:

> Dec. 24. Much rain all night and all day; no stirring out.

> Dec. 25. Rain all day.
> Dec. 26. No rain, and the earth much cooler than before, and pleasanter. (1987: 91)

Apparently, Crusoe "has no time" for feelings of any type: what produces little material benefit must not be taken into consideration, it is only what his senses can perceive that merits to be recorded in his diaries. The predominance of the external world over the internal world is conspicuous here, in accordance with the principle above described: the need to fully control the background: "The body precedes the soul in Defoe's work, just as the first challenge is controlled by the individual of his or her physical environment" (Probyn 1987: 29).

Salman Rushdie takes up this diary-wise technique and also the technique of specific and cumulative detailing, but for his own particular aims, which stand opposite to Crusoe's. What for Crusoe is the natural means of expressing a reality, the obvious way of rendering what his senses apprehend, for Saleem becomes a way out from a position that he feels unable to confront as narrator. Salman Rushdie uses this eighteenth-century convention very consciously, in such a way that he empties it of its previous meaning by showing how it no longer serves its initial aim: the specifity of time, as well as that of place, offers no help in defining the individual's identity.

Saleem begins his narration by establishing the date of his birth; this fact, by means of which Crusoe signals the starting point of his life, allows Saleem to realise that his life, in fact, began a long time ago. Saleem manages to be much more precise than Crusoe, and he pinpoints the exact moment of his birth; but little he gains by this, except establishing the important link with history. The parodic use of the diary form can be realised throughout the whole of *Midnight's Children,* reaching its peak at several moments. In *Book One,* when Saleem does not exist as character, the narrator makes use of a diary-like narrative, not lacking in personal experience (which should be regarded as totally impossible):

> ...On April 6th, 1919, the holy city of Amritsar smelled (gloriously, Padma, celestially!) of excrement. And perhaps the (beauteous!) reek did not offend the Nose on my grandfather's face. (MC 32)
>
> It is April 7th, 1919, and in Amritsar the Mahatma's grand design is being distorted. The shops have shut. the railway station is closed. (MC 34)

However distant these events seem to be from the present, the reader can assume that Saleem, both as narrator and writer within his story, has done some research and is able to tell what happened. But all the efforts on behalf of the reader to give credibility to his narrator are entirely shattered when Saleem, still in a diary-like form, manages to recount the actual dialogue between his grand-parents:

> It is April 13th, and they are still in Amristar. 'This affair isn't finished,' Aadam Aziz told Nasseem. 'We can't go, you see: they may need doctors again.'
>
> 'So we must sit here and wait until the end of the world?'
> He rubbed his nose. 'No, not so long, I am afraid.' (MC 35)

In fact, the exactitude with which the narrator tells about such distant events is nothing new, for he has been doing so throughout his narration; but now, by going one step further, by pointing out the temporal coordinate, he forces the reader to be aware of the excess of detail, and to question the validity of such a mode of narration.

The fact that in books Two and Three Saleem exists as a character in his own story changes little as to the mode of narration. His presence in his own story adds little extra knowledge; besides, it would be difficult to surpass the exactitude of the narrative in Book One. Again, in books Two and Three, all temporal references have a very different function from those in the eighteenth-century novel. In a broad sense, these can be said to point at two different aims: *firstly,* by establishing a clear and conspicuous parallelism between the national and international events and those occurring to his family he draws the reader's attention to the artificiality of the narrative, and to the banality of using specific dates as a means of achieving verisimilitude. *Secondly,* by showing that these details are only the last resort which the narrator can make use of to hold his narration together, it completely reverses the function of dates as carried out by the eighteenth-century novelists. That is, when Crusoe places his events in time, his intention is that a precise date will render realism to his narration: the date becomes a complement to any other aspect of his recounting. But when it is Saleem who uses dates, it is done with a very different purpose: for him dates are the only certain thing that can be sometimes told; dates are a substitution, not a complement, for what-actually-happened. Saleem himself realises this when he says:

> There are things which took place on the night of March 25th which must remain permanently in a state of confusion. (MC 357)

It is by being extremely precise with dates that Saleem attempts to overcome that state of confusion which he encounters when trying to tell a series of events. What, in fact, the narrator is trying to do is to apply the old and traditional modes and ways of measuring and understanding to a "reality" —a new reality— that can no longer be measured and understood according to traditional canons. Saleem, in a desperate attempt, struggles to scan a reality which appears to be irrational, fantastic and incomprehensible.

In this same effort to measure this new reality, to carry out a faithful presentation of its background, the detailing of space and what composes that space becomes, yet again, vital. So, Salman Rushdie makes continual use of this eighteenth-century convention, but his intentions are very different. The effect in Defoe's practice offers no doubt, as the critics have continuously acknowledged: "the endless details beget a feeling of confidence" (Ross 1987: 18). But when reading *Midnight's Children* the reader cannot feel the same kind of certainty, for the excess of detail paradoxically offers nothing but confusion, mistrust, suspicion. As we have seen, it is when Saleem finds himself at a loss by the confusion he encounters that he resorts to this eighteenth-

century convention, in a futile attempt to counteract the overwhelming reality. The result seems twofold, and in both ways going against what seemed to be Defoe's aims: firstly, it signals the artificiality and self-reflexivity of the narrative, whereas Defoe apparently "maintained that his novels were not invented but discovered, not fictions but ready-made history" (Probyn 1987: 1). Secondly, and most importantly, Saleem's detailing, which ought to be defined as extraordinary rather than excessive, underlines the inadequacy of language to represent reality, especially this "new reality." But, paradoxically, it is by acknowledging this inadequacy, by becoming conscious of it, and thus making use of it, that Saleem —and language— becomes closer to its purpose. A fantastic and marvellous reality deserves a language in keeping with it.

Thematically; it is mainly when Saleem tells about the most macabre events that he uses this technique —when he recounts the massacre at Amritsar:

> They have fired a total of one thousand six hundred and fifty rounds into the unarmed crowd. Of these, one thousand five hundred and sixteen have found their mark, killing or wounding some person. (MC 36)

When he tells about the assassination of Abdullah, numbers are also important: first, perhaps, as if attempting to portrait faithfully:

> Six new moons came into the room, six crescent knives held by men dressed all in black, with covered faces. (MC 47)

but very soon realising that faithfulness, and so, realism, is an impossible task. The exaggeration and exuberance in language becomes poetic rather than realistic.

> In Agra there are maybe eight thousand four hundred and twenty pie-dogs. On that night, it is certain that some were eating, some . . . . Say about two thousand of these; that left six thousand four hundred and twenty of the curs, and . . . . They went noisily, like an army, and afterwards their trail was littered with bones and dung and bits of hair. (MC 48)

This last sentence by Saleem reminds us of one by Crusoe:

> nor is it possible to express the horror of my mind, at seeing the shore spread with skulls, hands, feet, and other bones of humane bodies . . . . (MC 172)

But in spite of their similarity, the difference between both is clear enough: when Crusoe narrates we see nothing more than what he tells, his words (numbers and depictions) portray what he sees; whereas when Saleem narrates, his words are only part of that reality he is trying to describe, but in no way a mirror or a substitution for it. This difference is reinforced by the importance that is given to the presence of the narrator: Crusoe makes it clear that what he is recounting is true because he was there and saw it with his own eyes ("I observed," he shrewdly pinpoints); Saleem, on the contrary, thinks little of his actually being there at the right moment and place: reality is

far too complex to be validated by the narrator's mere presence, his attempt towards exactitude should be considered as naively presumptuous and boastful.

To sum up: Saleem's attitude towards very detailed narration can be seen in the following quotation: there is place for such a narrative, but in no way can it be conceived of as a guarantee for verisimilitude. It is immediately questioned by Saleem himself:

> On Friday, December 27th, a man answering to my grandfather's description was seen, chugha-coated, drooling, in the vicinity of the Hazratbal Mosque. At four forty-five on Saturday morning, Haji Muhammad Khalil Ghanai noticed the theft, from the Mosque's inner sanctum, of the valley's most treasured relic: the holy hair of the Prophet Muhammad.
>
> Did he? Didn't he? If it was him, why did he not enter the Mosque, stick in hand, to belabour the faithful as he had become accustomed to doing? If not him, then why? There were rumours . . . . (MC 277)

There is no doubt that thematically, subversiveness becomes one of the main traits in Rushdie's novel. It could not be otherwise, for, as Kundera has pointd out, "the novel is incompatible with the totalitarian universe" (1990: 14-15). But it is not only thematically that *Midnight's Children* is presented as a subversive novel, it is also subversive in its self-conscious awareness as a work of art that belongs to a literary tradition, and that is based on a series of literary conventions which it cannot avoid: "it is an act of sedition, committed not just against the state, but against a prescribed conception of literature (Batty 1987: 64). The attempt to undermine a coherent, stable view of society is paralleled by the attempt to undermine the conventions which the literary works belonging to that culture are based upon.

In this way, Rushdie has superbly shown how the heavy burden of tradition, which John Barth and Harold Bloom among others referred to, can be used to the writer's own benefit. One of *Midnight's Children'* s concerns is to stress its awareness of the place it occupies in the literary tradition. It is essential to realise that the undermining of this literary tradition does not imply a rejection, but rather a refunctionalisation of the old, worn-out conventions for its own particular aims. The two features by which parody is defined are "repetition with critical distance," whose immediate consequence is that the parodic forms "signal less an acknowledgement of the inadequacy of the definable forms of their predecessors than their own desire to refunction those forms to their own needs" (Hutcheon 1985: 4).

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ESTUDIO EXPERIMENTAL SOBRE EL EFECTO DE TRES COMPONENTES DE CONOCIMIENTO PREVIO EN LA LECTURA DE TEXTOS INGLESES POR ESTUDIANTES DE INGLES COMO LENGUA NO NATIVA[1]

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1. INTRODUCCION

La investigación llevada a cabo sobre la comprensión durante la lectura con hablantes nativos de inglés ha mostrado que la habilidad para entender textos se basa no sólo en el conocimiento lingüístico del lector, sino también en su conocimiento general del mundo y en la medida en que ese conocimiento se activa durante el proceso mental de la lectura. La investigación con nativos adultos ingleses ha mostrado que cuanto más capaz es un lector de acceder al conocimiento previo bien sobre el área de contenido de un texto (Bransford y Johnson 1972, 1973) o sobre la estructura formal de un texto (Kintsch y van Dijk 1975; Kintsch 1977; Rumelhart 1975; Thorndike 1977; Mandler 1978) más capaz será de comprender, almacenar en la memoria a largo plazo (long term memory) y recuperar el texto. Además, esta investigación con hablantes adultos de inglés ha mostrado que la experiencia previa individual del lector influye en las estructuras de conocimiento previo o *esquemas de conocimiento* (Bartlett 1932; Rumelhart 1980) que el lector activará para interpretar un texto.

Mucha menos investigación se ha llevado a cabo para investigar el papel de los esquemas o conocimiento previo en la comprensión de la lectura en una lengua no

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Mucha menos investigación se ha llevado a cabo para investigar el papel de los esquemas o conocimiento previo en la comprensión de la lectura en una lengua no

nativa. Sin embargo, hay estudios recientes de lengua no nativa (tanto en inglés como lengua segunda como en inglés como lengua extranjera) (Steffensen, Joag-dev y Anderson 1979; Carrell 1981a y Johnson 1981) que demuestran que los lectores de inglés como lengua no nativa leen, entienden y recuerdan mejor los textos que tienen que ver con su propia cultura, esto es, materiales para los que poseen un conocimiento previo bien desarrollado, que textos que versan sobre una cultura menos familiar, esto es, materiales para los que carecen de los esquemas apropiados. Un estudio diferente es el de P. Carrell (1981b), quien estudia el efecto de esquemas formales y de contenido en inglés como lengua segunda y como lengua extranjera. Otro tipo de estudio sobre los esquemas muestra los efectos beneficiosos en la comprensión durante la lectura de la inducción externa de un esquema (Hudson 1982).

1.1. Los tres componentes de conocimiento previo

En este artículo, intentaré realizar un estudio experimental acerca del uso en la comprensión de un texto escrito de los tres elementos que se distinguen en la literatura como componentes del conocimiento previo —transparencia, contexto y familiaridad— por parte de estudiantes españales de inglés. Esta división se apoya en una serie de estudios empíricos con hablantes nativos de inglés llevados a cabo por Bransford y Johnson (1972, 1973) en los que estos autores señalan que los dos componentes del conocimiento previo que afectan a la comprensión son (1) el conocimiento previo de que el texto va a versar sobre un área de contenido particular y (2) el grado en que las señales léxicas en el texto revelan el contenido del texto durante su procesamiento. El primer componente recibe el nombre de contexto en Bransford y Johnson (1973); el segundo componente es denominado la concreción o abstracción del texto si bien Carrell (1982) lo denomina transparencia, nombre que adoptaré aquí. En otro estudio empírico, también con hablantes nativos de inglés, Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert y Goetz (1977) identificaron un tercer componente del conocimiento previo que afecta a la comprensión de la lectura: la familiaridad del lector con el área de contenido del texto. Carrell denomina a este componente familiaridad y ese es el nombre que se adopta en el experimento que voy a desarrollar.

1.2. Una misma línea investigadora

Antes de desarrollar este estudio experimental quiero enmarcar el mismo dentro de una línea investigadora. Con este fin, recogeré algunos de los artículos que realizan una investigación en este sentido para exponer algunas de sus conclusiones. Creo que, de este modo, las conclusiones a que puedo llegar el presente artículo podrán verse a la luz de otros estudios sobre el tema.

He recogido una serie de experimentos, un análisis de los cuales indica que el lector debe relacionar satisfactoriamente la información nueva con conocimiento

poseído para entender y recordar esa información nueva: en este sentido se orienta la investigación de Bransford y Johnson (1972) sobre el inglés como lengua nativa, al igual que Clifton y Slowiaczek, quienes en "Integrating new information with old knowledge" (1981) investigan en tres experimentos la integración por parte de los lectores de información nueva con viejos conceptos sobre personajes famosos. Su hipótesis de trabajo era que la habilidad del lector para comprender y recordar información nueva depende de lo que éste ya sabe. Los resultados de sus experimentos sugieren que la activación de conocimiento ya poseído, facilita la integración de la información nueva. Otros experimentos intentan relacionar la interdependencia entre conocimento poseído y nuevo con otras variables. En el experimento de D. P. Birkmire en "Text processing: The influence of text structure, background knowledge, and purpose" (1985), estas nuevas variables son: a) la estructura del texto y b) el propósito del lector. En el caso de la lectura en inglés como lengua no nativa, en particular, en inglés como lengua segunda, S. V. Adams en su artículo "Scripts and second language reading skills" (1981) sigue la misma dirección que los experimentos recogidos antes, y apoyándose en estudios sobre la lengua nativa que muestran la importancia del conocimiento previo del lector en la comprensión de la lectura, aborda una investigación de los posibles efectos del conocimiento previo relevante en un aspecto de la comprensión de especial importancia en la lectura en una lengua segunda: la deducción del significado de vocabulario no familiar. Este estudio reveló la importancia de preparar a los lectores para lo que van a leer, teniendo en cuenta en la selección de material de lectura el conocimiento previo del lector. También en el área de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua segunda, Patricia Johnson en su artículo "Effects on reading comprehension of building background knowledge" (1982), realiza un estudio experimental que investiga los efectos en la comprensión de la lectura del conocimiento previo. Su hipótesis de trabajo era que el conocimiento cultural del tópico o tema de que trata un pasaje influye en la comprensión de la lectura. Esta autora pretendía averiguar si la experiencia cultural previa ejerce efectos diferentes en los estudiantes de inglés como lengua segunda dependiendo de que la información que reciban esté ligada a un aspecto familiar de una costumbre o esté ligado a un aspecto desconocido de esa costumbre. El análisis de la recuperación del pasaje y de una tarea de reconocimiento de oraciones indica que la experiencia cultural previa prepara a los lectores para la comprensión de la información familiar sobre el tópico (Halloween) de que trata el pasaje escrito.

P. L. Carrell se apoya para su artículo "Three components of background knowledge in reading comprehension" (1982) en la investigación sobre lengua nativa (inglés) y sobre lengua no nativa, que ha mostrado que la comprensión de los textos en ambos casos se basa no sólo en el conocimiento lingüístico del sujeto, sino también en el conocimiento general del mundo y en la medida en que ese conocimiento se activa durante la lectura de los textos.

Esta autora separa los tres componentes del conocimiento previo identificados en la literatura:

(1) conocimiento previo de que el texto es acerca de un área particular de contenido (contexto *versus* no contexto).

(2) el grado en que las palabras (lexical items) del texto revelan el área de contenido del texto (transparente *versus* opaco).

(3) familiaridad previa con el área de contenido del texto (familiar *versus* nuevo).

Carrell lleva a cabo un estudio el cual muestra los efectos tanto individuales como interactivos de cada una de estas tres variables en la comprensión durante la lectura por parte de lectores nativos (ingleses) y no nativos (estudiantes de inglés como lengua segunda). Este estudio añade algo nuevo al estado de conocimiento existente. Primero, mientras previamente se habían estudiado los tres componentes del conocimiento previo separadamente, el estudio de Carrell los reúne en un sólo estudio, proporcionando una manera de medir los efectos tanto individuales como interactivos. Segundo, mientras esta línea de investigación se ha limitado a lectores nativos (ingleses), este estudio extiende la investigación a lectores no nativos de inglés, y reuniendo en un mismo experimento a hablantes de inglés tanto nativos como no nativos, puede realizar comparaciones de manera directa entre lectores nativos y no nativos. Finalmente, al introducir tres niveles diferentes de competencia de los lectores no nativos (nivel elemental, intermedio y avanzado), pretende buscar diferencias entre estos lectores.

En este experimento, el primer componente (contexto / no contexto) se controla mediante la presencia de un título o un dibujo precediendo al pasaje el cual informa al lector acerca del área de contenido relativo al cual debe leerse y entenderse el pasaje del texto. La presencia de contexto debería estimular las habilidades predictivas, cognitivas del lector, y por tanto facilitar lo que en la teoría de los esquemas se denomina procesamiento *top-down* [2] del texto.

El componente "transparente / opaco" se controla mediante claves textuales relativas al contenido del texto. La presencia de claves textuales transparentes debería estimular la construcción por parte del lector del significado del texto, esto es, debería facilitar lo que en la teoría de los esquemas se denomina procesamiento *bottom-up* del significado del texto (ver nota 2).

El componente "conocido / nuevo" se controla mediante la posesión o no por parte del lector de conocimiento o experiencia previa respecto al contenido del texto.

Para el propósito de este estudio de P. L. Carrell, cada uno de los tres componentes es tratado como una variable doble, con dos valores opuestos cada uno. Los resultados del mismo indican que en el caso de los hablantes nativos los tres componentes de conocimiento previo juegan un papel significativo en la lectura, comprensión y recuperación de un texto. Estos utilizan el contexto en un

procesamiento *top-down* para realizar predicciones cognitivas acerca del contenido del texto a medida que leen, así como claves textuales de transparencia, sobre todo claves léxicas, en un procesamiento *bottom-up* para confirmar esas predicciones cognitivas y construir una representación mental acerca de lo que trata el texto a partir de la información en el texto. Finalmente, los hablantes nativos se ven influidos por su conocimiento previo del contenido del texto de modo que la información nueva parece ser más saliente y más fácilmente recordable que la información familiar, al menos en la memoria a corto plazo (*short-term memory*).

Por el contrario, los lectores no nativos no muestran efectos significativos respecto al conocimiento previo. Los hablantes no nativos de inglés, en su lectura en esta lengua, no leen como los hablantes nativos. En términos de esta visión esquematista[3] de la lectura como un proceso interactivo entre el lector y el texto, los resultados de este estudio sugieren que los estudiantes intermedios e incluso avanzados de inglés como lengua segunda, tienden a estar ligados lingüísticamente al texto sin realizar las conexiones necesarias entre el texto y la información previa apropiada. Incluso cuando reciben la información previa apropiada, esto es, cuando se les da el contexto y un texto transparente, no usan la información previa. Los estudiantes de inglés no utilizan el contexto o las claves contextuales. No son eficaces procesadores *top-down*, que realizan predicciones apropiadas basadas en el contexto, ni tampoco son eficaces procesadores *bottom-up*, que construyen una representación mental del texto basada en la información léxica en el texto.

Sólo la familiaridad emerge como un componente significativo del conocimiento previo que afecta a la recuperación de un pasaje para el grupo avanzado de estudiantes de inglés, de modo que cuanto más novedoso es el texto, más saliente es y es mejor recordado en la memoria a corto plazo.

2. PRIMER EXPERIMENTO: PLANTEAMIENTO

El punto de partida de mi primer experimento son las conclusiones del estudio que acabo de exponer de P. Carrell (1982). Como hemos visto, esta autora muestra que para los lectores nativos los tres componentes de conocimiento previo juegan un papel significativo en la lectura. Sin embargo, los resultados son diferentes en el caso de que los lectores no sean nativos. Estos no muestran efectos significativos respecto al conocimiento previo. Los resultados de Carrell son rebatidos por D. Wolff (1987) que señala que no se puede hablar de tal diferencia entre una lengua nativa y una lengua no nativa puesto que existe una variable más: la lengua (L1 o L2) en que se realice la reproducción o resumen del texto. Ante sus resultados, la misma P. Carrell se plantea si los lectores no nativos conceptualizan el proceso de la lectura en su lengua nativa o en su lengua segunda.

La hipótesis sobre la que trabajo es que supongo que si se obliga, como es el caso del experimento de Carrell, a realizar la recuperación en la lengua no nativa, la competencia del sujeto en esa lengua interferirá en su capacidad de expresión, y es en este sentido en el que se orienta esta investigación.

Pretendo averiguar si los tres componentes de conocimiento previo ejercen un efecto significativo en los estudiantes de inglés en la comprensión de un texto (recordemos que según P. Carrell no lo ejercen) así como qué cantidad y calidad (familiaridad, transparencia, contexto) de la recuperación está en función de la lengua en que se haga.

Para este experimento usaré los mismos textos empleados por P. Carrell, los cuales son una adaptación de "Washing Clothes" y "Balloon Serenade" de Bransford y Johnson (1973), el primero definido como un texto familiar y el segundo como un texto no familiar.

2.1. Procedimiento

Se reparte cada texto, uno familiar y uno no familiar, en una versión transparente y en su versión opaca. La versión transparente del primer texto contenía formas léxicas como "clothes" y "washing machines" mientras la versión opaca contenía formas léxicas como "things" y "facilities". La versión transparente del segundo texto contenía formas léxicas como "guitar" y "music" mientras la versión opaca contenía formas léxicas como "instrument" y "sound". Cada texto, tanto en su versión transparente como en su versión opaca, aparecía con título ("Washing Clothes"; "Balloon Serenade") o sin título y con o sin dibujo (dando o no el contexto respecto al cual debía leerse) de modo que en total se repartían ocho textos en este orden:

1. No contexto – Opaco – Familiar.
2. No contexto – Opaco – No Familiar.
3. No contexto – Transparente – Familiar.
4. No Contexto – Transparente – No Familiar.
5. Contexto – Opaco – Familiar.
6. Contexto – Opaco – No familiar.
7. Contexto – Transparente – Familiar.
8. Contexto – Transparente – No Familiar.

Las hojas entregadas iban precedidas de instrucciones que informaban a los sujetos de que se trataba de un estudio acerca de cómo leen inglés los hablantes de español, así como la manera en que entienden y reproducen pasajes de diferentes tipos en diferentes contextos. Se indicaba que debían leer los pasajes y tratar de entenderlos y reproducirlos. Además, se advertía de que cada pasaje tenía un título y un dibujo que representaban el contexto relativo al cual debían leer y entender el pasaje. Se les indicaba que para algunos de ellos el texto no tenía título ni dibujo y que en esa circunstancia no había contexto dado en relación al cual debían leer y entender el pasaje. En este caso se les decía que debían leer y tratar de entender el relato lo mejor que pudieran en relación con cualquier contexto que pudiesen crear por sí mismos para el texto.

Los sujetos tenían que leer el pasaje una sola vez para después, tras entregar el texto, reproducir lo que pudiesen recordar del pasaje. Se les pedía escribir todo lo que recordasen pero no se esperaba que recordasen el pasaje completo. Estos resúmenes proporcionaban el porcentaje de proposiciones del texto. Las proposiciones eran designadas a priori y correspondían bien con oraciones simples, claúsulas semánticas básicas, o frases. He analizado el texto "Washing Clothes" en 17 proposiciones y el texto "Balloon Serenade" en 14. La novedad de este experimento respecto al de Carrell es que un grupo debía realizar la reproducción en inglés y el otro en español pero de modo que la reproducción no fuese una traducción de la reproducción inglesa sino un resumen en español del texto. De esta manera, pretendía averiguar no sólo el efecto de los tres componentes de conocimiento previo en los resúmenes sino también qué cantidad y calidad (familiaridad, transparencia, contexto) está en función de la lengua en que se haga.

2.2. Sujetos

Un grupo de sesenta estudiantes de quinto curso de Filología Inglesa participaron en el estudio. Este grupo se dividió a su vez en dos grupos de treinta personas cada uno. Uno de los grupos debía realizar la reproducción en inglés y el otro grupo en español. Los estudiantes eran españoles de aproximadamente el mismo nivel de conocimiento de inglés.

2.3. Resultados

Se examina el porcentaje de proposiciones recordadas de un máximo de 17 para el texto "Washing Clothes" y un máximo de 14 para el texto "Balloon Serenade" por cada individuo. Se adjunta porcentaje de proposiciones en anexo bajo epígrafe "Cell means for 1st dependent variable". Tabla (A): Inglés. Tabla (B): Español. F= Familiar, N= Nuevo. FA,FB,FC,FD son las variables dependientes:

FA corresponde al caso de No Familiar No Contexto No Transparente
FB corresponde al caso de No Familiar Contexto No Transparente
FC corresponde al caso de No Familiar No Contexto Transparente
FD corresponde al caso de No Familiar Contexto Transparente
NA corresponde al caso de Familiar No Contexto No Transparente
NB corresponde al caso de Familiar Contexto Transparente
NC corresponde al caso de Familiar No Contexto Transparente
ND corresponde al caso de Familiar Contexto Transparente:

La primera observación que podemos hacer es que el porcentaje de proposiciones es superior en las reproducciones en español que en inglés. Tras esta primera observación, intenté obtener resultados más detallados.

Para determinar qué significan los datos obtenidos en términos de los efectos individuales e interactivos ejercidos por los tres componentes de conocimiento previo: Contexto, Transparencia y Familiaridad, sometí los datos a un test estadístico denominado Test for Related Measures, que fue, a su vez, contrastado con un análisis computacional de los datos. Este análisis es un triple análisis de variación en el que se comparan los efectos de las tres variables, contexto, transparencia y familiaridad (adjunto análisis de "means" y "standard deviations", así como el análisis de variación de las tres variables tanto de las reproducciones en inglés (tabla A) como en español (tabla B) en anexo. Los resultados que obtenemos son los siguientes (ver los mismos en las tablas de anexo):

INGLES: No se observa un efecto significativo de la Familiaridad: La tabla (A) en su epígrafe "Analysis of variance for 1st dependent variable" así lo indica F(1,29) = 0.44, p = 0.5135

Sí es muy significativo el efecto de la Transparencia: Así lo vemos en la tabla F(1,29) = 33.15, p = 0.0000. Transparente mejor que No Transparente.

Además, se da un efecto muy significativo de las Claves Contextuales: F(1,29) = 72.02, p = 0.0000. Contexto mejor que No Contexto.

Existe una interacción significativa entre Familiaridad y Contexto: F(1,29) = 6.06, P = 0.0200. El efecto del Contexto es más evidente cuando F = -F.

Existe una interacción significativa entre Transparencia y Contexto: F(1,29) = 4.94, p = 0.0341. El efecto del Contexto es mayor cuando T = -T.

ESPAÑOL: No se observa un efecto significativo de la Familiaridad Esto lo vemos en la tabla (B) bajo el epígrafe "Analysis of variance for 1st dependent variable": F(1,29) = 0.17, p = 0.6855.

Sí es muy significativo el efecto de la Transparencia: F(1,29) = 93.25, p = 0.0000. Transparente mejor que No Transparente.

Es muy significativo, asimismo, el efecto del Contexto: F(1,29) = 159.32, p = 0.0000. Contexto mejor que No Contexto.

Se da una interación significativa entre Transparencia y Contexto: F(1,29) = 11.71, p = 0.0019. El efecto del Contexto es mayor cuando T = -T.

Existe una significativa interacción entre Contexto y Familiaridad: F(1,29) = 0.12, p = 0.7311. El efecto del Contexto es mayor cuando F = -F.

Así, y resumiendo estos resultados, nos encontramos con que

(1) Contexto y transparencia ejercen un efecto positivo en los resúmenes de los individuos tanto en el caso de que la reproducción sea en español como en inglés.

(2) Respecto al tercer componente, la familiaridad, esta variable no ejerce un efecto significativo, tanto en el caso de que la reproducción sea en inglés como en español.

Se puede concluir destacando el efecto significativo de Contexto y Transparencia en ambos casos, lo que contradice los resultados de Carrell.

Es destacable, también, la ausencia de efecto de la Familiaridad en las reproducciones en español. Asimismo, es muy importante el hecho de que hay mayor número de proposiciones reproducidas en los resúmenes en la lengua materna.

Los sujetos, podemos decir, sí utilizan el contexto, tanto en el caso de que la reproducción se realice en lengua nativa como en lengua no nativa, para realizar predicciones (top-down) y claves textuales para confirmar esas predicciones. Sin embargo, se da un mayor número de proposiciones reproducidas en el caso de que la lengua usada sea español con lo que parece que la lengua interfiere, como era nuestra hipótesis, en cierta manera con su capacidad de expresión.

2.4. Algunas implicaciones pedagógicas

Si los resultados de este estudio son fiables, éstos tienen, creo, implicaciones importantes para la enseñanza de la lectura en inglés como lengua no nativa. Aunque una investigación teórica del tipo desarrollado en este estudio no tiene una traducción directa en la pedagogía de la clase, sí puede tener implicaciones para una investigación en la enseñanza de la lectura de inglés como lengua segunda, lo que a su vez, tiene implicaciones directas en la clase. Diferentes aproximaciones a la enseñanza del inglés como lengua no nativa pueden ser posibles maneras de enseñar a los lectores no nativos a acceder y utilizar información ya poseída durante la lectura. Otras aproximaciones relacionadas se presentan como maneras de proporcionar al lector de inglés en lengua no nativa el conocimiento previo necesario en primer lugar, especialmente cuando esa información es específica de la cultura de la lengua no nativa y no forma parte de la experiencia o conocimiento previo del lector en lengua segunda. Estas aproximaciones requieren una comprobación empírica para determinar su eficacia y plausibilidad en situaciones pedagógicas reales. En esta dirección, el estudio de Adams que citaba en el apartado "Una misma línea investigadora" revelaba la importancia de preparar a los lectores para lo que van a leer, teniendo en cuenta, en la selección de material de lectura, el conocimiento previo del lector.

Creo que, a la vista de los resultados teóricos expuestos aquí, los cuales nos indican que los lectores españoles de inglés utilizan información previa en su comprensión de la lectura, sería positivo ayudar a crear esquemas o conocimiento previo a través de actividades previas a la lectura.

2.5. Apéndice

He recogido libros de texto que adoptan esta perspectiva aquí expuesta. Esto no es sino un apunte, pero queremos resaltar su importancia y su interés como tema de trabajos de investigación. No es posible extenderse en este punto, pero queremos

introducirlo y recoger alguno de los textos que adoptan una perspectiva similar. F. Grellet (1982) considera la lectura como una habilidad (skill) activa que supone deducción, predicción, comprobación y realización de preguntas a uno mismo durante ésta. Podemos relacionar las ideas de esta autora con la teoría de los esquemas, lo que ella no hace. Grellet está siguiendo una aproximación a la lectura según la teoría de los esquemas, como una interacción entre lector y texto, donde el lector es tan importante como el texto, y la comprensión de la lectura se viene a ser la construcción por parte del lector del significado del texto. Esta autora considera que una consideración activa de la lectura debe tenerse en cuenta a la hora de realizar ejercicios de comprensión de la lectura. Es posible, nos dice, desarrollar los poderes inferenciales de los estudiantes mediante práctica sistemática, o la introducción de preguntas que ayuden a los estudiantes a anticipar el contenido de un texto a partir de su título o de ilustraciones. En su libro *Developing Reading Skills: A Practical Guide to Reading Comprehension Exercises* expone ejercicios de inferenciación: deducción del significado y el uso de palabras no familiares mediante claves contextuales.

En *Preparing for Proficiency* de Andrews (1983), encontramos ejercicios en los que se estimula a usar conocimiento general para completar oraciones. En *Progress To Proficiency* de L. Jones (1989), encontramos ejercicios de complexión de palabras usando el conocimiento que pueda poseer el estudiante, y dando la primera letra de la palabra desconocida. También encontramos preguntas que tienen como excusa un texto pero que requieren conocimiento del lector. En *Learning to learn English* de Ellis y Sinclair (1989) se interroga al alumno sobre el significado de las palabras en contexto (este contexto es el tópico del texto, el tópico de la oración y la posición de la palabra en la oración). Se realizan ejercicios en los que el alumno recibe un texto en el que algunas palabras han sido reemplazadas por palabras sin sentido y tienen que intentar adivinar cuál era la palabra original.

Pasemos ahora a nuestro segundo experimento.

3. SEGUNDO EXPERIMENTO

3.1. Introducción a nuestro segundo experimento

Este segundo experimento pretende dar un paso más respecto al experimento anterior y analizar el efecto que ciertas señales lingüísticas tienen en la comprensión de un texto. Pretendemos analizar cómo se reflejan en las reproducciones de los estudiantes las señales lingüísticas y las relaciones semánticas de un texto así como la relación entre su utilización y el conocimiento previo del lector del tópico del texto comparando los resúmenes del texto familiar transparente y opaco y estos, a su vez, con el texto no familiar transparente y opaco.

Con este segundo experimento queremos investigar, tras comprobar que el conocimiento previo prepara a los lectores para la comprensión de un texto, siendo capaces de extraer más información, si sus resúmenes escritos reflejan más acertadamente las señales lingüísticas y las relaciones entre proposiciones en el texto transparente y con contexto.

Hoey (1983) aborda el problema de la percepción de la organización del discurso por parte de los usuarios del lenguaje mediante un test de habilidades de construcción del discurso que mostró que la mayoría de los sujetos eran capaces de un grado considerable de reconstrucción del discurso. Además, los estudiantes no sólo eran capaces de reproducir el orden original del discurso sino que además cuando éste no era correcto, la confusión se manifestaba en un número limitado de maneras.

R. M. Stanley en "The Recognition of Macrostructures: A Pilot Study" lleva a cabo un estudio en el que examina cómo procesan los lectores nativos y no nativos textos complejos y compara la medida en que los lectores nativos y los no nativos son capaces de reconocer y utilizar la estructura discursiva subyacente de los textos ingleses.

La estructura discursiva de solución de problemas es uno de los modelos que combinan un estudio lingüístico de la superficie y niveles locales de análisis del texto con la estructura completa del texto. Este modelo se utilizó en el experimento de Stanley para analizar una serie de textos, a partir de los cuales se construyeron cuatro resúmenes, tres de los cuales rompían o distorsionaban la estructura discursiva original. Los sujetos tenían que leer los textos originales y luego ordenar los resúmenes en términos de calidad (según reflejasen más claramente la estructura del texto original). Uno de ellos omitía las secciones referidas al "problema", el segundo omitía todas las referencias a la "solución" del problema, el tercero se construía de una manera arbitraria resumiendo cada tres oraciones de los textos originales.

Los resultados del estudio mostraron bastante claramente que los sujetos eran, en general, capaces de identificar no sólo los resúmenes que reflejaban más claramente la estructura de los textos originales, sino también aquellos que la reflejaban menos claramente, independientemente de si hablaban inglés como lengua nativa o como lengua segunda.

Las diferencias más significativas entre nativos y no nativos surgen de un examen de las razones que exponen para su elección de orden. Estas indican que aunque los hablantes nativos mostraban habilidad para identificar los mejores y los peores resúmenes, esto parece reflejar una habilidad adquirida, subconsciente. Los hablantes no nativos parecen más conscientes de la estructura de los textos. Esto tiene otra cara de la moneda pues aunque son estudiantes avnzados de inglés, no se han despojado de su impresión del inglés como lenguaje, en vez de como un medio de comunicación o de expresión de información.

Existe, por tanto, una evidencia firme de la existencia de la estructura discursiva de solución de problemas puesto que es reconocida por individuos que no han sido entrenados para ello.

En este sentido, M. S. Steffensen realiza en "Changes in cohesion in the recall of native and foreign texts" (1988) un estudio dirigido a averiguar los cambios que suceden en la estructura del texto cuando un lector reproduce un texto en una lengua nativa o en una lengua extranjera.

Esta autora parte de conclusiones extraídas de otras investigaciones para la realización de su estudio. La investigación llevada a cabo en el marco de la teoría de los esquemas señala hacia una evidencia considerable de que los lectores entenderán y recuperarán más información si los textos incluyen un tópico familiar para el que poseen el conocimiento previo relevante (Anderson et al. 1977; Rumelhart 1977; Anderson y Spiro 1978; Steffensen, Joag-dev y Anderson 1979). También, algunas investigaciones defienden que los medios cohesivos son también un potencial (Steffensen 1986), esto es, si los lectores poseen el marco general del texto que están leyendo, la mayoría de los nexos cohesivos presentes en el original deben ocurrir en la recuperación del texto porque serán anticipadas, entendidas y recuperadas bajo la dirección del esquema relevante. Se predecía que un análisis de los nexos cohesivos (referencia, repetición, sustitución, elipsis y conjunción Halliday y Hasan 1976) en las reproducciones de textos extranjeros y nativos mostrará una mayor presencia de los mismos en el texto nativo puesto que al comprender más sobre un texto basado en la propia cultura (Steffensen et al. 1979) este entendimiento se reflejará en un mayor uso de ciertas categorías de cohesión.

Este estudio se apoya en una teoría que relaciona cohesión y coherencia pero que no defiende que la cohesión causa la coherencia (*weak view of coherence*). Si una relación lógica entre ideas, acciones y conceptos es percibida, o si las actividades y secuencias son familiares, se espera que un lector se concentre en las principales secuencias, actores y acciones. La recuperación reflejará esta estructuración con un alto número de nexos cohesivos. Esta autora suponía que esto se cumpliría gracias a la mayor coherencia del episodio por parte del lector informado. En el caso de un lector no informado, la recuperación será fragmentaria y episódica, con un bajo nivel de nexos cohesivos, lo que refleja una percepción del suceso que carece de enfoque y estructuración.

Su experimento consistía en que después de leer el texto, veinte sujetos indios y otros tantos americanos tenían que reproducir el texto, mantener el orden original de sucesos, usar las mismas expresiones o paráfrasis próximas. Los resultados obtenidos fueron que la premisa de que una recuperación más coherente, que refleje un mayor entendimiento de los sucesos presentes en el texto tendría un mayor número de nexos cohesivos no se cumplió. El escaso mayor nivel de cohesión en las reproducciones no nativas puede ser el resultado de usar muchas repeticiones para consolidar la

información que se está aprendiendo o puede ser el resultado de concentrarse en la comprensión del contenido en vez de en la comunicación. Como en el experimento anterior, ante información no comprendida, se usan más medios cohesivos en relaciones erróneas. En estos casos, los nexos cohesivos muestran explícitamente que no se ha comprendido el pasaje.

Por el contrario, en el experimento de P. Johnson del que dábamos cuenta en nuestro primer experimento, los sujetos no eran sólo capaces de extraer más información cuando tenían experiencia previa con el tópico del texto, sino que sus oraciones individuales en la recuperación escrita reflejaban más acertadamente los nexos cohesivos y las relaciones entre proposiciones en la sección familiar del pasaje.

La cohesión textual puede entenderse cuando el lector identifica apropiadamente el tópico de un pasaje según un esquema determinado. El reconocimiento de que un texto es sobre el tópico de "Halloween" parece hacer posible el procesamiento de elementos cohesivos o la continuidad semántica en el texto. Sin embargo, el reconocimiento del tópico puede resultar en una pérdida de cohesión textual en la recuperación cuando hay carencia de información previa sobre el tópico. Los problemas con el lenguaje parecen ser problemas causados por la ausencia de conocimiento previo sobre el tópico. El conocimiento previo tiene un efecto beneficioso en la comprensión de la lectura y en su reproducción escrita en inglés. El análisis de las recuperaciones muestra que los lectores intentan hacer una intrepretación cohesiva de material que no han comprendido y aparecen relaciones incorrectas entre proposiciones.

3.2. Planteamiento

En el marco de todos estos resultados contradictorios, intentaré desarrollar este experimento. Para este segundo experimento, he tomado los dos textos del experimento anterior, el texto familiar en su versión con contexto, opaco y con contexto transparente, y el texto no familiar en su versión con contexto opaco y con contexto transparente. Los textos son analizados en sus elementos cohesivos y en sus señales léxicas de relaciones semánticas constitutivas de una estructura semántica, es decir, en su coherencia local y global. La estructura semántica analizada para el texto "Washing Clothes" es la de Solución de Problemas y la estructura semántica analizada para el texto "Balloon Serenade" es también la de Solución de Problemas..

Pretendo averiguar, como ya he dicho, cómo se reflejan esas señales y relaciones en las reproducciones de los estudiantes y la relación entre su utilización y el conocimiento previo del lector del tópico del texto. Mi hipótesis es que una mayor comprensión supondrá, gracias a que los lectores poseen conocimiento sobre el tópico, más nexos y relaciones semánticas en los resúmenes o reproducciones.

3.3. Procedimiento

Tras el análisis previo de los textos que someto a experimentación, analizo las reproducciones en inglés de los textos indicados y averiguo el porcentaje de señales cohesivas y señales (subordinadores, conjunciones y señales léxicas) de relaciones semánticas en esas reproducciones así como la relación entre la utilización de los mismos y el conocimiento previo del lector del tópico del texto, comparando en este sentido, los resúmenes del texto familiar con contexto opaco y con contexto transparente y estos, a su vez, con el texto no familiar con contexto opaco y con contexto transparente.

Las señales (subordinadores, conjunciones y señales léxicas) son:

En el texto familiar: "First", "the next step", "after", "eventually", "complicated", "everyday life", "however", "important", "problems", "but", "otherwise"; "but", "then"; "if", "and", "but", "that is" (señalizadoras de relaciones semánticas).

En el texto no familiar: "if","since", "since", "since", "if", "then", "then", "but" (señalizadoras de relaciones semánticas).

3.4. Resultados

En primer lugar, no es muy elevado el número de señales reproducidas por los estudiantes (adjuntamos porcentaje de las mismas).

En segundo lugar, los resultados nos indican que de las 17 señales léxicas que hemos analizado del texto familiar, el porcentaje de las mismas encontrados en el texto transparente es superior al del texto opaco. Además, se encuentran más nexos cohesivos en las reproducciones de la versión transparente.

En el texto no familiar, con nueve señales léxicas analizadas, el porcentaje de nexos reproducidos es similar a la versión transparente. El número de nexos cohesivos es, como en el caso anterior, mayor en la reproducción de la versión transparente.

Sólo la variable Familiaridad tiene un efecto significativo: F(1.29)= 7.89, p=n 0088.

Comparando los porcentajes de señales reproducidas podemos decir que es en el texto no familiar donde se encuentra un mayor porcentaje de señales reproducidas (pero no muy superior), por lo que parece que es la novedad del texto lo que facilita su reproducción. Los lectores se ven influidos por su conocimiento previo del contenido del texto de modo que la información nueva parece ser más saliente y recordable que la información familiar, lo que se traduce en un mayor número de señales reproducidas.

3.5. Implicaciones pedagógicas

A la vista de estos resultados, podemos decir que los elementos discursivos del texto (y, por tanto, sus macroestructuras) son explicitadas en la lengua, indicadas

explícitamente mediante una combinación de señales léxicas y sintácticas, y los lectores son conscientes de ello pues lo reproducen, aunque no en tanta medida como sería de esperar.

En este sentido podemos decir que el docente, creemos, ha de tener en cuenta la señalización de la función discursiva. Esta habilidad para reconocer y usar señales, creemos puede ser muy beneficiosa para los estudiantes de una lengua segunda, en este caso de inglés.

Además, la realización de una relación de distintas maneras en la lengua permite al que enseña la lengua introducir construcciones gramaticales de una manera sistemática y motivada desde un punto de vista discursivo.

4. CONCLUSIONES GENERALES

En el primer experimento se confirma la hipótesis introducida pero no de una manera completa. Contrariamente a los resultados de Carrell (1982), las reproducciones tanto en inglés como en español muestran un efecto significativo de Contexto y Transparencia. Contexto y transparencia (+T, +C) parecen tener un efecto positivo. Respecto a la familiaridad, no se observa un efecto destacado de ésta.

Parece que la lengua en que se hace la reproducción influye en el efecto de esos tres elementos. Los estudiantes sí parecen usar esos tres elementos en ambos casos, sí utilizan el contexto para realizar predicciones (*top-down*) y claves textuales para confirmar esas predicciones; pero sólo se da un mayor número de proposiciones reproducidas en el caso de que la lengua sea español, con lo que parece que la lengua interfiere, en cierto modo, con su capacidad de expresión en esa lengua.

Creo que estos resultados son muy importantes para el problema de la adquisición del vocabulario, puesto que comprueban el uso del conocimiento previo por parte del lector (su uso del contexto o conocimiento sobre el área de contenido del texto y de las claves textuales) en su comprensión y recuerdo de información durantre la lectura. Respecto al segundo experimento, los estudiantes reproducen las señales léxicas en los textos transparentes y con contexto y cuando el texto les resulta llamativo por su novedad, también se dan más casos de cohesión en las reproducciones transparentes, con contexto y no familiares de los textos. Esto apoya nuestra hipótesis de que los lectores se ven influidos por su conocimiento previo del contenido del texto y sostiene nuestra creencia de que cuando los lectores han identificado un pasaje según un esquema determinado, esto hace posible el procesamiento de señales léxicas y de nexos cohesivos y la continuidad semántica del texto. Es importante ver cómo la familiaridad no ejerce un efecto significativo en las reproduciones de proposiciones y, sin embargo, ese efecto sí es evidente en el segundo experimento. Parece, por tanto, que ese efecto sí existe, aunque no es

evidente mediante un análisis de proposiciones pero sí se hace aparente mediante un análisis de señales lingüísticas reproducidas. El lector va leyendo sobre claves evaluadoras para entender, no sólo el contenido semántico, sino también el conjunto, la organización retórica profunda.

ANEXO: Tablas de datos

A

CELL MEANS FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE

	R	S	T	MARGINAL	
FA	1	1	1	14.90000	14.90000
FB	1	1	2	37.30000	37.30000
FC	1	2	1	30.83333	30.83333
FD	1	2	2	48.03333	48.03335
NA	2	1	1	21.43333	21.43333
NB	2	1	2	38.73333	38.73333
NC	2	2	1	35.56667	35.56667
ND	2	2	2	42.43333	42.43333
		MARGINAL		33.65417	33.65417
		COUNT		30	30

STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE

	R	S	T	
FA	1	1	1	16.72155
FB	1	1	2	25.89122
FC	1	2	1	25.13012
FD	1	2	2	25.49136
NA	2	1	1	11.98183
NB	2	1	2	26.23983
NC	2	2	1	18.59863
ND	2	2	2	23.09304

A

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE — FA FB FC FD NA NB NC ND

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	D. F.	MEAN SQUARE	F	TALL PROB.
MEAN	271824.70417	1	271824.70417	113.14	0.00001.
ERROR	69673.67083	29	2402.54037		
	189.03750	1	189.03750	0.44	0.51352.
ERROR FAMILIARITY	12524.33750	29	431.87371		
	7425.93750	1	7425.93750	33.17	0.0000
3. ERROR TRANSPARENCY	6492.43750	29	223.67716		
RS	292.60417	1	292.60417	3.69	0.9647
4. ERROR	2300.77683	29	79.33693		
	15248.20417	1	15248.20417	72.02	0.0000
5. ERROR CONTEXT	6139.67083	29	211.71279		
RT	893.20417	1	893.20417	6.06	0.0200
6.ERROR	4273.67083	29	147.36795		
ST	916.50417	1	916.50417	4.94	0.03417.
ERROR	5376.37083	29	185.39210		
RST					
8. ERROR	102.70417	1	102.70417	0.72	0.4046
	4163. 17083	29	143.55761		

CPU TIME USED 0.228 SECONDS

B

CELL MEANS FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE

	R	S	T		MARGINAL
FA	1	1	1	16.46667	16.46667
FB	1	1	2	48.70000	48.70000
FC	1	2	1	37.83333	37.83333
FD	1	2	2	62.53333	62.53333
NA	2	1	1	23.36667	23.36667
NB	2	1	2	46.23333	46.23333
NC	2	2	1	43.30000	43.30000
ND	2	2	2	56.63333	56.63333
		MARGINAL		41.88333	41.88333
		COUNT		30	30

STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE

	R	S	T	
FA	1	1	1	17.27612
FB	1	1	2	23.10267
FC	1	2	1	26.35577
FD	1	2	2	22.45721
NA	2	1	1	13.20784
NB	2	1	2	21.22244
NC	2	2	1	19.51330
ND	2	2	2	22.30275

A

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE —
FA FB FC FD NA NB NC ND

SOURCE SUM OF SQUARES	D. F SQUARE	MEAN	PROB.	F	TALL
MEAN	421011.26667	1	421011.26667	194.21	0.0000
1. ERROR	62866.23333	29	2167.80115		
R	60.00000	1	60.00000	0.17	0.6855
2. ERROR	10399.00000	29	358.58621		
FAMILIARITY					
S	16104.81667	1	16104.81667	93.25	0.0000
3. ERROR	5008.68333	29	172.71322		
TRANSPARENCY					
RS	88.81667	1	88.81667	0.39	0.5356
4. ERROR	6554.18333	29	226.00632		
T	32526.81667	1	32426.81667	159.32	0.0000
5. ERROR	5920.68333	29	204.16147		
CONTEXT					
RT	1612.01667	1	1612.01667	11.71	0.0019
6.ERROR	3992.98333	29	137.68908		
ST	1092.26667	1	1092.26667	7.66	0.0097
7. ERROR	4137.23333	29	142.66322		
RST	15.00000	1	15.00000	0.12	0.7311
8. ERROR	3612.00000	29	124.55172		

CPU TIME USED 0.230 SECONDS

NOTAS

1. Este estudio experimental se aplica a estudiantes españoles de inglés que estudian esta lengua como lengua extranjera.

2. El término "top-down" procede de la Inteligencia Artificial. Según este modelo computacional de la comprensión del lenguaje, el procesamiento del discurso aparece como una combinación de, al menos, dos actividades. En una parte del procesamiento deducimos los significados de las palabras y la estructura de la oración, y construímos un significado para la oración (*bottom-up processing*). Al mismo tiempo estamos prediciendo, en base al contexto mpás el significado de las oraciones ya procesadas, lo que la siguiente oración quiere decir (*top-down processing*).

3. En una aproximación según la teoría de los esquemas a la lectura, el lector se considera al menos tan importante como el texto, y la comprensión de la lectura es considerada como la construcción por parte del lector del significado del texto, de modo que el significado no reside sólo en el texto sino que surge de la interdependencia entre el conocimiento previo activado del lector y lo que hay en el texto.

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HOW TO PROVIDE FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR WITH TYPOLOGICAL-DIACHRONIC ADEQUACY

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0. INTRODUCTION

One of the strongholds of the theory of Functional Grammar (henceforth FG) as devised by Dik (1989) is its typological adequacy. Indeed, more than eighty languages —most of which are not Indo-European— have been discussed from the point of view of FG. Outside the realm of Typological Adequacy, although intimately related to it, is the topic to which we devote this paper: How can we provide the theory of FG with Typological-Diachronic Adequacy (henceforth TDA) once it is beyond all doubt that Typological Adequacy has been achieved?

This paper is organised as follows: in section 1 we revisit the standards of adequacy from the point of view of FG and Transformational Grammar (henceforth TG). In section 2 we concentrate on the specifications for Descriptive Adequacy and pay special attention to these specifications in the realm of FG. In section 3 we deal with the constraints imposed on the power of FG and in section 4 we define and explain the new concept we have coined: TDA. In section 4 we also discuss how to provide Dik's FG with TDA. Finally, we answer the question whether new constraints arise from the TDA discusssion or not (section 5).

1. STANDARDS OF ADEQUACY

After stating that previous linguistic theories cannot account for the human capacity of creativity —the capacity that all native speakers of a language have to produce and

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1. STANDARDS OF ADEQUACY

After stating that previous linguistic theories cannot account for the human capacity of creativity —the capacity that all native speakers of a language have to produce and

understand an infinitely large number of utterances that they have never heard before— Chomsky (1957) devoted the chapter entitled "The Goals of Linguistic Theory" to the problem of the justification of grammars. Chomsky's claim that the inductive system that had been used by the structuralists should be put aside was logically followed by the remark that the new theory, which was based on a finite set of empirical observations, must predict new phenomena by constructing general rules. The problem that arises is that of how to develop criteria for selecting the correct theory of language —the correct grammar.

In a previous step to the discussion of different levels of adequacy that justify the new grammar, Chomsky (1957: 61) describes three possible relationships between the general theory of language and a given particular grammar that follows from it:

Firstly, the theory must provide a practical and mechanical method for constructing the grammar, given a corpus of utterances. The theory is conceived as a machine with a corpus as its input and a grammar as its output. This is called *discovery procedure* for grammars.

Secondly, the theory must provide a practical and mechanical method for determining whether or not a grammar proposed for a given corpus is the best grammar of the language from which this corpus is drawn. In this case, the theory is a device with a grammar and a corpus as its inputs and the answers "YES" / "NO" as its outputs, as the grammar is or is not the correct one. This is called *decision procedure* for grammars.

Finally, given a corpus and two proposed grammars, the theory must tell us which is the best grammar of the language from which the corpus is drawn (a theory with grammars G1 and G2 and the corpus as inputs and the more preferable of G1 and G2 as output). This is the evaluation procedure for grammars.

In *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax,* Chomsky (1965: 24) formulated the concept *observational adequacy,* which is taken to be the weakest requirement for any grammar of a language. A grammar of a language is said to be observationally adequate if it correctly specifies which utterances are well formed in the language from a phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic point of view.

The following level of adequacy is called *descriptive adequacy:*

> A grammar can be regarded as a theory of language; it is descriptively adequate to the extent that it correctly describes the intrinsic component of the idealized native speaker. The structural descriptions assigned to sentences by the grammar, the distinctions that it makes between well-formed and deviant, and so on, must, for descriptive adequacy, correspond to the linguistic intuition of the native speaker (Chomsky 1965: 25).

According to this definition, a grammar is descriptively adequate if it correctly specifies which sentences are well-formed from a phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic point of view and also describes properly the phonological,

morphological, syntactic and semantic structure of the infinite set of sentences of a particular language.

The ultimate goal that TG seeks, a universal grammar that consists of a finite set of rules that generates the infinite set of utterances that are correct in all languages, leads Chomsky to the conclusion that descriptive adequacy may not suffice the purposes of the approach; thus the importance given to explanatory adequacy, which is considered the highest level of adequacy:

> A theory of grammar may be descriptively adequate and yet leave unexpressed major features that are defining properties of natural languages and that distinguish natural languages from arbitrary symbolic systems. It is for just this reason that the attempt to achieve explanatory adequacy —the attempt to discover linguistic universals— is so crucial at every stage of understanding of linguistic structure, despite the fact that even descriptive adequacy on a braad scale may be an unrealized goal. (Chamsky 1965: 36)

Descriptive adequacy, as we have just seen, lacks explanatory power for, as Horrocks (1987: 18) points out, *a theory that excludes nothing as impossible can in turn explain nothing.* In Chomsky's terminology a theory that selects the best available descriptively adequate grammar for a given language is said to be *explanatorily adequate* .

So far, we have considered the different levels of linguistic adequacy from the point of view of TG. Following the path of TG, Dik puts forward that FG should conform to the standards of descriptive adequacy as described by TG:

> The aim of the theory of FG is to provide the means and principles by which functional grammars of particular languages can be developed. And the highest aim of a functional grammar of a particular language is to give a complete and adequate account of the grammatical organization of the connected discourse in that language. Such a grammar should be able to specify all the linguistic expressions of a language by means of a system of rules and principles in which the most significant generalizations about the language are incorporated. (Dik 1989: 12)

It is interesting to notice here that the formalists have also developed the concept of descriptive adequacy by considering three qualities that, in their opinion, provide a grammar with such adequacy. Radford (1988: 28) has stated that the first condition that must be imposed on any adequate linguistic theory is that it should attain *universality:* the theory should be able to describe adequately the grammar of any particular language. Radford's second condition —since he cannot consider pragmatic adequacy for obvious reasons— is that the theory is maximally constrained. According to Radford,

> We want out theory to provide us with technical devices which are so restricted in their expressive power that they can only be used to describe human languages, and are not appropiate for the description of other communication

> systems. Any such constrained (i.e. restricted) theory would then enable us to characterise the very essence of human language. (1988: 29; my italics)

The same steps are taken by Radford when he discusses the third condition that any adequate linguistic theory must meet, *psychological reality*. Radford (1988: 29), following Chomsky (1986), remarks that language is an *internalised system*, a product of the human mind. Therefore, the ultimate goal of linguists should be to characterise the nature of the *internalised linguistic system* which enables humans to speak and understand their native language, this capacity being innate.

The apparent identity of descriptive adequacy in TG and FG has led Miller to conclude that

> FG is a subtheory of the standard theory of TG with respect to a set of intended interpretations . . . i.e. for any grammar that can be formulated within FG an equivalent grammar with respect to this set of intended interpretations can be formulated within the standard theory, but not vice versa. I.e. FG is a constrained version of the standard theory with respect to this set of intended interpretations. (1986: 175)

Departing from the concept of descriptive adequacy, Miller devised a method for comparing linguistic theories with regard to strong generative capacity (henceforth SGC). According to Miller (1986: 171) *all grammars equivalent in SGC will have the same descriptive adequacy*. The aim of this method is to compare theories with respect to what they say about the sentences which are derived by the grammars that are considered descriptively adequate by these theories.

Miller (1986), however accurate his method for comparison might be, does not take account of the basic assumptions of the functional paradigm and compares a theory based on formal explanations with another one based on what Dik calls *functional explanation:*

> A functional explanation of grammatical phenomena will typically not be based on an assumption of simple form-function correlations, but will instead involve a network of interacting requirements and constraints, each of which may be understood in functional terms itself, but which counteracts in complex ways and in a certain way "competes" for recognition and expression in the final design of linguistic expressions. (1986a: 18)

Although Dik's (1989: 18) emphasis on the utmost importance of functional explanation as the starting point of FG is enough to make it clear that TG and FG are not comparable as to SGC, we should like to quote here Nuyts' (1986: 227) statement that FG *consciously opts for a radical meaning-first view of utterance generation*. Indeed, the fundamental conception that language is a means of social communication through which speakers convey meanings by using the forms socially established in their linguistic code makes it impossible for a theory based on such a

standpoint not only to be a subtheory of but even to be compared on the grounds of SGC with a theory that claims that it is the grammatical competence of the ideal speaker-hearer and how he / she attaches meanings to the linguistic expressions generated by an autonomous syntactic component that linguists must study.

2. FURTHER SPECIFICATIONS FOR DESCRIPTIVE ADEQUACY

Up to this point, we have revisited the standards of adequacy of TG and have insisted on the concept of descriptive adequacy —both from the postulates of TG and FG— since it has led to the comparison with respect to SGC; afterwards, we have seen how the formalists specify the concept of descriptive adequacy. Now, we are going to discuss the specifications of the concept of descriptive adequacy from the perspective of FG by concentrating on pragmatic adequacy, psychological adequacy and typological adequacy.

Since the theoretical foundations of FG differ deeply from those of TG, there exist differences with respect to explanatory adequacy, i.e. with respect to the criteria which would allow us to decide which of two descriptively adequate grammars is preferable.

Dik (1989: 12ff) interprets explanatory adequacy as how accurate a theory of language can be. The level of accuracy is measured in terms of three criteria: (i) Pragmatic Adequacy, (ii) Psychological Adequacy and (iii) Typological Adequacy. It is important to remark here that, although these three criteria aim to verify how coherent a given theory is —thus further specifying the concept of explanatory adequacy— these three types of adequacy are included within the realm of descriptive adequacy for they try to discriminate the well-formed utterances produced by the theory. This interpretation has three clear advantages:

(i) it is a way of explaining further what explanatory adequacy is;

(ii) t allows FG to make a difference —by introducing the pragmatic component in this discussion— between its standards of adequacy and the ones of TF, which has set the pace with reference to this topic so far;

(iii) and, finally, it makes it possible for Dik (1989: 16) to speak of relationships among the standards.

2.1. Pragmatic Adequacy

The inclusion of pragmatic adequacy within the discussion of the explanatory adequacy of the theory of FG is the logical result of the importance given to the pragmatic component of the theory: since communication is regarded as the primary function of language, the rules that govern social and verbal interaction —pragmatic rules— do not fall behind the rules that give shape to linguistic expressions — phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic rules. As Martín Mingorance has pointed out,

> las reglas semánticas, sintácticas, morfológicas y fonológicas se consideran instrumentales con respecto a las reglas pragmáticas, constituyendo la pragmática el marco descriptivo global en el que se encuadran la sintaxis y la semántica. (1988: 122)

As a result, pragmatic adequacy aims to give informative status to the linguistic expressions uttered by the addresser, who aims to produce an effect on the addressee in a given context. In Dik's words:

> We must not think of linguistic expressions as isolated objects, but as instruments which are used by a Speaker in order to evoke some intended interpretation in the Addressee, within a context defined by preceding expressions and within a setting defined by the essential paramaters of the speech situation. (1989: 13)

These words follow the line of one of the major points of criticism TG has come in for: its concern whith an idealised native speaker-hearer and its putting aside contextual and situational matters. Despite the importance given to the pragmatic component, some linguists, such as Butler (1990: 6) have noticed that this is ane of the weakest components of the theory of FG. With this point we do not agree: the meaning-first approach, the central position of the lexicon, the top-down organization and the pragmatic perspective of the morphosyntactic and semantic components provide the theory with pragmatic adequacy. Moreover, the proposal for a hierarchical structure of the clause,[1] in which the layering hypothesis[2] has ultimately resulted, adds a clear pragmatic perspective to the general organization of FG.

2.2. Psychological Adequacy

The second criterion discussed by Dik is psychological adequacy:

> A grammar that strives to attain pragmatic adequacy . . . must also aim at psychological adequacy, in the sense that it must relate as closely as possible to psychological models of linguistic competence and behaviour. (1989:13)

It follows logically from the concern with the behaviour of addresser and addressee in real situations of communication that a pragmatically adequate grammar must also be adequate from the psychological point of view by taking account of the models of production and comprehension of linguistic expressions. According to Butler (1990: 13) pragmatic adequacy can be interpreted in two different ways:

(i) the grammatical form should be compatible on the basis of the psychological properties of the human mind that determine it.

(ii) the adequacy that should exist between the form of a linguistic expression and the psychological mechanism that the speaker triggers off with a communicative end.

Again, the boundaries of explanatory and descriptive adequacy respectively are explored by these interpretations. Their advantage over the model of psychological adequacy proposed by the formalists is its concern with aspects of communicative performance, which allows the linguist to take account of both psychological and pragmatic factors, far beyond the restricted —for it is mentalist and idealist— study of grammatical competence proposed by TG.

Indeed, FG has followed a different path: its concern has been with psychological reality and psychological validity. As regards these concepts the difference appears to be that the formalists concentrate upon syntax as abstracted away from the meaning that the utterances have in their contexts whereas the functionalists try to demostrate how syntax reflects semantic and pragmatic factors and how these factors eventually determine what the syntactic organization is like. The difference, in fact, has further-reaching implications: some scholars working with the FG model (such as Nuyts 1985) have proposed a shift from a Functional Grammar into a Functional Procedural Grammar in which the degree of integration of linguistics and psycholinguistics is higher.

The psychological adequacy of the theory is once more reinforced when Dik (1986b) puts forward a linguistically motivated knowledge representation. He argues that a system which is able to process natural language data in a communicatively adequate way will need a vast data base containing sources of different types of knowledge and that most of the relevant knowledge types can be represented in the form of predicate frames and predications as defined by the theory of FG. This discussion of the knowledge model led to the proposal for computer applications of FG (Dik 1986c), which is introduced as follows:

> The computational processing of natural language data is sometimes approached as a purely practical problem, for which "anything goes" as long as the results are reasonably acceptable. Given sufficient ingenuity of the analyst, this approach may yield short-term successes, which will, however, be of limited theoretical interest. As a theoretical linguist, I am more interested in attempts at finding more principled, linguistically and psychologically motivated solutions to the problems involved. (Dik 1986c: 1)

Finally, Dik (1989: 5) proposes the concept *psychological correlate of a natural language*, the natural language user's (henceforth NLU) communicative competence, i.e. his/her ability to carry on social interaction. With this definition Dik wants to state that communicative competence is a concept related to a functional paradigm, different from the concept grammatical competence coined by Chomsky:

> Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech-community who knows the language perfectly. This seems to have been the position of the founders of modern linguistics . . . . To study actual linguistic performance we must consider the interaction of a variety of factors, of which the underlying competence of the speaker-hearer is

> only one. We must make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations). (Chomsky 1965: 21)

Dik's proposal for the psychological correlate of a language has the advantage of allowing the linguist to study gramatically ill-formed expressions that have good communicative results, for they also belong to the communicative competence of the NLU.

One may conclude, therefore, that the concern with production and comprehension aspects, along with the emphasis on problems of knowledge representation, the computional developments of the theory and the coinage of the concept of *psychological correlate of a language* provide the theory with clear insights in the psychological standard of adequacy. The latest studies within the framework of FG seem to confirm this tendency: Meijs (1990) has explored the problem of how to spread world-knowledge activation once the activation of the linguistic knowledge has been suffuciently dealt with in FG, and Dik (1990) has insisted on the concept functional logic, on how it is possible for the NLU to derive new pieces of knowledge from given pieces of knowledge by means of relational logic.

2.3. Typological Adequacy

After revising pragmatic adequacy and psychological adequacy we are going to focus on typological adequacy, the last standard of adequacy proposed by FG.

One of the most controversial postulates of TG from its very beginning has been its ultimate goal of giving birth to a universal grammar. Horrocks comments on this goal of TG that

> at the outset of the research programme inspired by Chomsky the existence of an interesting theory of universal grammar was little more than an article of faith. But over the last fifteen years a theory has begun to emerge which incorporates quite abstract principles of considerable explanatory power. As a result many of the properties of the grammars of individual languages may now be viewed as consequences of the internal organisation of the theory. (1987: 19)

In spite of these words, it seems beyond a doubt that TG has restricted its analysis almost exclusively to English and that the heavily formalised apparatus devised by transformational grammarians has been an obstacle for the application of TG to languages other than English. FG, on the contrary, has proposed a simplified model (Dik 1979a), which allows not only for the study of many languages from this perspective but also for the integration of the advances that have taken place in other languages within the framework of the standard theory.

To provide his theory with typological adequacy, Dik (1989: 15) insists on two aspects:

(i) that the theory must not be too concrete because such a theory would not yield descriptively adequate theories of particular languages and would not reach typological adequacy.

(ii) that the theory must have the lowest level of abstractness —meaning by *abstractness* the distance, measured in terms of rules and operations to be applied, between the actual linguistic expressions of a language and the underlying structures in terms of which these expressions are analysed. The power of the theory must be constrained so that it does not become too strong —too abstract— and therefore unable to define the notion *possible human language* or, to put it in other words, incapable of explaining what people do with language.

3. CONSTRAINTS UPON THE POWER OF THE THEORY

Dik (1989: 17) proposes the following constraints on the power of FG:

a) Avoid transformations:

FG prefers derivations, i.e. gradual expansion of underlying structures, rather than transformations, structure-changing operations that effect changes in underlying structures. This constraint is a deep gap with respect to TG, which allows structure-changing operations such as deletion, substitution and permutation of constituents. None of these operations is allowed within the framework of FG.

b) Avoid filtering devices:

Filtering devices (Chomsky 1965, 1977, 1981 and 1982) attempt to get rid of undesired results produced by transformations and ill-formed expressions. Dik bans filtering devices:

> The use of filtering devices leads to counter-intuitive types of description, in which the grammar is allowed at some stage to produce structures which are produced only to be discarded later on. (1989: 20)

This constraint is justified on the grounds of the excessive freedom for the formulation of grammatical rules that filtering devices allow, since the undesired results of such rules can be filtered out by devices belonging to the theory.

c) Avoid abstract semantic predicates:

The last constraint imposed upon the theory to limit its level of abstractness is the avoidance of abstract semantic predicates. This constraint results in the treatment given to lexical items: all basic contentive lexemes of a language are contained in the lexicon in the form in which they actually appear in the linguistic expression of a particular language.[3]

4. TOWARDS TYPOLOGICAL-DIACHRONIC ADEQUACY (TDA)

In the preceding sections, we have revisited the standards of adequacy of TG and have insisted on the concept of descriptive adequacy —both from the postulates of TG and FG— since the comparison with regard to SGC is based on such a standard; afterwards, we have seen how TG specifies the concept of descriptive adequacy and have discussed the specifications for the concept of descriptive adequacy from the perspective of FG by concentrating on pragmatic adequacy, psychological adequacy and typological adequacy.

Now, it is time for us to decide whether or not the standards of adequacy which have been revised so far are sufficient to justify FG and evaluate the level of accuracy of the theory, given the advances of linguistic sciences in the last decade.

Following Greenberg (1966), Dik (1989: 25) defines linguistic universals as *statements pertaining to the full set of particular languages* and distinguishes four main types of universal.[4] This classification results in the consideration of the concept of *hierarchy*, which Dik defines as follows:

> Hierarchies epitomize in compact form the typological organization of a certain sub-domain of the language system. They are powerful tools for capturing the underlying cross-linguistic pattern, while at the same time providing a systematic specification of how languages may differ from each other in the relevant sub-domain. (1989: 29)

Although the remark that hierarchies can be seen as constraints on language change, the brief discussion of some corollaries related to this type of hierarchies and the study of several priorities that affect the above mentioned hierarchies make for the clarification of the relationship that exists between Diachrony and Typology, the theory of FG as stated by Dik (1989) still lacks a detailed discussion of the problem of linguistic change and the relation between Diachrony and Typology. Our point here is that such theoretical reflexion on the very boundary between Diachrony and Typology would provide the theory of FG with Typological-Diachronic Adequacy, while the conclusions would be a constraint on the level of abstractness of the theory and would contribute to the descriptive power of FG —from a synchronic point of view— since it is possible to explain many synchronic phenomena in terms of diachronic change:

> Synchronic regularities are merely the consequence of diachronic forces. It is not so much again that "exceptions" are explained historically, but that the true regularity is contained in the dynamic principles themselves. (Greenberg 1966: 186)

On the other hand, we would not do justice to the research project of FG in general and Dik's studies in particular if we did not take account of several studies, such as Dik (1986a), Kefer (1986), Geeraerts (1986), Rijkhoff (1986), Bossuyt (1986), Dik (1989), etc.

As far as linguistic change is concerned, Dik (1986a: 21) includes the following points when setting up the framework of a functional explanation:

(i) There is a continuous competition between different functional prerequisites; the actual synchronic design of a language is a compromise solution, a precarious balance in efficacy with respect to different functional prerequisites.

(ii) This means that language may change, oscillating between different compromise solutions, even if the functional prerequisites remain constant. This may be called *internally motivated change*.

(iii) In contrast to this, *externally motivated change* is involved when languages respond structurally to changes in the functional prerequisites.

(iv) As a consequence of the potential divergence of functional prerequisites, a change in favour of F_i which at the same time disfavours F_j may be followed by a further *therapeutic change* repairing the damage done to F_j.

(v) The operation of linguistic change is *local* in the sense that it is unusual for a change favouring F_i to be blocked in order to avoid adverse effects with respect to F_j.

(vi) Saying that a certain feature of linguistic design or change cannot be functionally explained is tantamount to saying that we have not yet been able to find a functional explanation for that feature.

We should underline here the emphasis on the dynamic character of language, which can be explained both in terms of use and change, and the need for functional explanations for all the processes of change in language. Departing from these standpoints, our proposal is that the descriptive adequacy of the theory —given the interpretation of the explanatory adequacy we have referred to above— would be improved by developing the concept of TDA.

The ultimate goal of the inclusion of TDA is to move into what Croft has termed the *dynamic paradigm* without leaving the functional paradigm:

> The sychronic system is a constant state of flux, and what the speaker knows about his or her language are the dynamic principles that govern the flux (and, of course, the language-specific conventions that represent stabilizing factors in the synchronic situation. This is the heart of what may turn out to be a new linguistic paradigm, in which the study of types of linguistic variation —cross-linguistic (typology), intralinguistic (sociolinguistics and language acquisition) and diachronic (historical linguistics)— are unified. (Croft 1990: 259)

In the light of these considerations, we can provide the theory of FG with TDA as follows:

(i) To start with, the theory should meet the objectives of historical linguistics:

a) description of the different synchronic stages of a particular language at the four linguistic levels,

b) comparison between these stages,

c) description of the changes that have taken place and

d) explanation of these changes.

From the objectives these three requirements follow:

(ii) The theory must be provided with a model of linguistic change coherent with the functional paradigm, i.e. based on functional explanations.

(iii) We assume that the theory is pragmatically, psychologically and typologically adequate and can deal satisfactorily with synchronic descriptions.

(iv) Finally, the typological data that are extracted from synchronic cross-linguistic comparison must perspectivize diachronic research and conclusions.

Croft (1990), following Greenberg (1966 and 1978), Givon (1984) and Comrie (1981) among others, has recaptured a number of hypotheses and developments of synchronic typology that could be succesfully applied to diachronic typology. These hypotheses may prove relevant for our study, although our concern is with typological diachrony rather than diachronic typology for we try to enrich our diachronic studies by taking account of typological data but not viceversa; otherwise, our discussion would take place within the realm of the typological adequacy of the theory.

Croft's starting point is that changes in the linguistic structures are changes of grammatical properties that enter some of the cross-linguistic patterns; therefore,

> it should be possible to classify typologically linguistic changes themselves, and look for relationships among linguistic processes in the same way as typologists seek relationships among linguistic states. (Croft 1990: 203)

Afterwards, Croft (1990: 204ff) discusses the hypotheses we have just referred to[5]:

(i) Hypothesis of uniformitarianism: the first application of typological studies to historical linguistics was the hypothesis that a reconstructed protolanguage must be of the same type as an attested language state. Since languages of the past are not different from languages of the present the linguistic universals discovered in contemporary languages should also be applied to reconstructed languages.

(ii) From states to stages: the observation of languages such as Latin and modern Romance languages revealed another fact about language change: that certain linguistic changes (SOV to SVO, for instance) bring about a change of linguistic type. As a result of these observations, modern diachronic studies view language types as stages languages pass through rather than states languages are in.

(iii) Hypothesis of connectivity: given a set of attested language stages defined by a set of typological patterns, a language can shift from one stage to any other stage. The connection need not be direct; it can take place through a number of intermediate stages. Given an implicational universal WX — YZ, the change towards XW — ZY would take place through the intermediate stage WX — ZY.

(iv) Hypothesis of stability: it represents the likelihood that a language will pass from a language stage to another one. According to this hypothesis, linguistic types are ranked according to their likelihood to shift from one order to its opposite: stable vs. unstable linguistic types.

(v) Hypothesis of frequency: frequency is the likelihood that a linguistic type will occur, i.e. how likely a language will pass through a stage involving that type. The hypotheses of stability and frequency can be related to each other in the following way: there are linguistic phenomena that illustrate all possible combinations of stability and frequency:

a) *Frequent and Stable* linguistic phenomena are areally widespread and common in genetically related languages.

b) *Stable and Infrequent* linguistic phenomena are scarce in the languages of the world but common in the genetic groups in which they occur.

c) *Unstable and Infrequent* linguistic phenomena are scarce and sporadic.

(vi) Hypothesis of dominance and harmony: stability and frequency combine with other typological concepts to produce a typological diachronic analysis that accomodates exceptions to certain synchronic universals. Greenberg (1978) proposed a rule that relates dominance and harmony so that dominant constituent orders could occur at any time but recessive constituent orderings could only occur if they were harmonic with some other dominant order. Given the implicational universal WX — YZ, its harmonic patterns would be WX — YZ and XW — ZY and the recessive one XW — YZ; if the dominant order is XW — YZ the languages to which this implicational universal attain can go from WX — YZ to XW — ZY only through XW — YZ and vice versa, from XW — ZY to WX — YZ through XW — YZ.

(vii) Hypothesis of gradualness: this is the assumption that a language cannot shift directly from stage S1 to stage S3 without passing through stage S2. A gradual change then is a change of a grammatical feature at a time. This hypothesis is related to the hypothesis of connectivity: during the change from a linguistic stage WX — YZ to XW — ZY a given language must go through an intermediate stage WX — ZY, as the hypothesis of connectivity suggests; the hypothesis of gradualness adds that the intermediate stage WX — ZY coexists with XW — YZ in such a way that the change takes place in a gradual way.

(viii) Hypothesis of diachronic prediction: the consideration of stability, frequency, dominance and harmony logically leads to the prediction of what the changes might be like. As to predictions, Kefer has explored the extent to which language universals, linguistic changes and language-specific rules are functionally motivated or explainable:

It is a commonplace that language change is not predictable in a deterministic way. But it should be clear that language-internal considerations make some changes impossible and certain types of change more probable than others. There is some kind of restricted predictability. (1986: 53ff)

Kefer (1986: 63) demonstrates that functional motivations are more predictive in the case of language universals than in the case of language change. By insisting, following Dik (1986a), on the fact that explanations of linguistic universals and language change must be functional, Kefer hints that the power of the extended theory —once diachronic and typological data have combined with synchronic ones— must be constrained. Kefer, however, does not remark clearly the necessity for more constraints upon the power of the theory, neither does he explain what the constraints should be like. We shall go back to this topic in section 5 below.

(ix) Hypothesis of transitory language stages: this hypothesis accounts for synchronically exceptional language stages. According to this hypothesis these stages may take place because they represent diachronic transitions from one well-attested and well-explained stage to another.

(x) Hypothesis of unidirectionality. This hypothesis is a constraint on possible language changes: since sequences of changes appear to take place only in one direction, half of the logically possible language changes are cut out. The implication of this hypothesis, as Croft (1990: 228) has remarked, is that even language changes that appear to be bidirectional turn out to represent two distinct unidirectional changes that involve different mechanisms of language change or involve different intermediate language stages. Therefore, diachronic studies having a typological approach should concentrate on the discovery of unidirectional language processes. This hypothesis, however, poses a problem as regards the interpretation of the hypothesis of connectivity, which states that it is possible for a language to go from a stage to any other stage. If the change from YZ to ZY is unidirectional the change ZY to YZ is impossible and all the languages would eventually become ZY languages. The solution proposed by Croft (1990: 229) is that language processes are unidirectional and cyclic when viewed as changes from a language stage to another.

5. CONCLUSION: DO NEW CONSTRAINTS ARISE?

After the revision of the standards of adequacy of FG we have made a proposal for a new standard of adequacy: TDA, i.e. that the theory is capable of generating diachronic explanations from a typological perspective. Afterwards, we have put forward a means of providing FG with TDA. The question now is whether or not new constraints arise from the increase in the descriptive power of the theory that is necessary for it to achieve TDA. As a matter of fact, this question is to be interpreted as two different problems:

(i) Does the TDA enlargement impose new constraints on the descriptive power of the theory?

(ii) Is it necessary to consider new constraints apart form the ones proposed by Dik (1989: 17) once the descriptive power of the theory has been enlarged so that FG can be provided with TDA?

We are going to answer the two questions by discussing whether the TDA proposal is an enlargement or a constraint on the theory. Our point here is that TDA is both an enlargement of the descriptive power of the theory and a constraint on its abstractness.

Indeed, the descriptive power of the theory is enlarged by taking diachonic, synchronic and typological data into account. On the other hand, we reduce the scope of our method by paying special attention to diachronic explanations that are given from the point of view of cross-linguistic studies and putting aside, for the sake of the method, other explanations, such as purely synchronic ones.

Although the abstractness of the theory might increase by considering diachronic and cross-linguistic data when dealing with synchronic phenomena, the fact that our explanations are given within the functional paradigm imposes a major constraint since they must be functional explanations, which avoid abstractness and a high degree of formalisation.

Therefore, the answer to (i) and (ii) is that since the devices which are necessary for FG to achieve TDA constitute both an enlargement and a constraint on the descriptive power of the theory it is not necessary for us to consider new constraints on the condition that we produce functional explanations when considering diachronic data from the typological point of view.

NOTES

1. See Dik (1989) and Dik and Hengeveld (1990).
2. See Hengeveld (1988) and Butler (1990).
3. See Dik (1978, 1979 and 1989).
4. Four main types of universal are distinguished:

	unconditional	implicational
absolute	Type A	Type B
statistical	Type C	Type D

Example of Type A: All languages have the property P.

Example of Type B: Almost all the languages have the property P.

Example of Type C: For all languages, if a language has the property P then it also has the property Q.

Example of Type D: Statistical implicational universals are statements of the form of the preceding example for which no absolute validity is claimed to hold.

5. In this discussion, I draw on Croft (1990:240ff), who follows Greenberg (1966, 1978). Unless they are explicitly acknowledged, the examples and the remarks from the point of view of FG are mine.

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READING WALLACE STEVENS IN PLATO'S LIGHT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The capacity of the work of art to represent another reality fictitiously while bringing it to mind is one of the most central aspects not only of the work of art but of every sign relation. The classics alluded to this quality of the work of art by means of the traditional name of "mimesis." It must be noticed, though, that mimesis, always a basic tenet in literary theory, is just as relevant at the level of a more general discussion of meaning. As a matter of fact, mimesis may take place within the realm of art as well as within the realm of the non aesthetic and, of course, it may occur in simple as well as complex systems of meaning.

It may be due to this general semiotic relevance of the idea of mimesis that the very term 'mimesis' has become equivocal, and its practicality questionable; but this quality, "equivocalness," of the term is increased by its duplicitous sources, Plato and Aristotle, who wrote on mimesis from different vantage points. The differences between both, as it might be expected, already start at the foundation level of their respective sign-theories.

Even though they hold different standpoints on the matter of mimesis, both authors have laid the foundation stone for a never-ending discussion on the problem of representation which this paper will retake and respectfully use for the sake of illuminating Wollace Stevens's texts.

It is my assumption in this article that Stevens shares with Plato a certain view of the worlds of fact and fiction which is not to be severed from the related concept of

mimesis which sustains it. In this they both diverge from the paths of realism as opened by Aristotle's philosophical writings.

2. STEVENS'S READING OF PLATO: A QUEST FOR VISIBILITY

Plato's theory of the sign and mimesis is developed in one of his Dialogues, *Cratylus*, where he defines the mimetic sign in relation to its linguistic counterpart, the noun, without his excluding the consideration of the mimetic in the realm of the art forms. In *Cratylus* the noun is itself a case of mimesis because it is a relation of representation by which the essence of things is recalled by means of letters and syllables. Plato calls this relation 'mimetikos' or the imitation of the thing in its reality. In *Cratylus* (1977: 151), Plato makes Socrates say:

> Correctness of a name, we say, is the quality of showing the nature of the thing named.1

According to Socrates the rightness of a noun lies in its capacity to render something "visible" to someone. In other words, a noun is right if it (re)presents the nature of the thing by means of sound. That is, what nouns do when they make meaning is to expose us to the nature of things.

Some poets have appreciated the power of words to bring to life the things they represent. For example, what Wallace Stevens does in one of his poems is to deal with the theoretical issue of sign and meaning while apparently dealing with a vision or perception of a surface impression.

His poem starts by describing a wintry afternoon scene of a beach where there can only be seen a white man walking alone on the white sand, and the scene includes a deserted white cabin. But the writer never mentions that either the man or the beach are white. It is the textual arrangement of his description that allows us to "see" it. The design of the poem plays with a set of textual elements, partaking of the linguistic and the semiotic, which, I think, must necessarily be taken into account for an adequate understanding of the poem.

The poem reads as follows (I add italics and bold type):

> Farewell to an idea ... A cabin stands,
> deserted, on a beach. It is **white**,
> as by a custom or according to
>
> An ancestral theme or as a consequence
> Of an infinite course. The flowers against the wall
> Are **white**, a little dried, a kind of mark
>
> Reminding, trying to remind of a **white**
> That was different, something else, last year
> Or before, not the **white** of an aging afternoon.

> Whether fresher or duller, whether of winter cloud
> Or of winter sky, from horizon to horizon.
> The wind is blowing the sand across the floor.
>
> *Here, being visible is being* **white**,
> *Is being of the solid of* **white**, the accomplishment
> Of an extremist in an exercise ...
>
> The season changes. A cold wind chills the beach.
> The long lines of it grow longer, emptier,
> A darkness gathers though it does not fall
>
> And the **whiteness** grows less vivid on the wall.
> The man who is walking turns *blankly* on the sand.
> He observes how the north is always enlarging the change,
>
> With its frigid brilliances, its blue-red sweeps
> And gusts of great enkindlings, its polar green,
> The color of ice and fire and solitude.

We find repeated references to white things and to whiteness, a pervasive whiteness. These references can be orderly arranged in a semiotic hierarchy where the reference to a quality stands first —which Peirce (1955: 74-119) would call a firstness, this is the colour white—, then a series of objects —Peirce's "secondnesses"— which incorporate whiteness to things, the only way for qualities to be perceived. And finally these "secondnesses" can be referred to by means of the corresponding word-symbols, 'whiteness' and 'white', the linguistic carriers of the symbolic idea of whiteness.

To white Wallace Stevens opposes the idea of darkness. But darkness is not totally present, in fact it is described as slowly gathering from the north. The passing from a presence of white into the imminence of darkness, which is *per se* invisibility, is accompanied by an intermediate stage of blue-red and green leading into blankness. But blankness is more than an impending threat to "the man who is walking and turns blankly on the sand" while awaiting the fall of darkness.

At this point Stevens provides us with the symbolism of these intermediate stage colours: blue-red and green are "the colour of ice, fire and solitude" in Wallace Stevens's own words.

The change from present whiteness into future darkness involves "a farewell to an idea," as the first line of the three parts of the long poem repeats all through. The change from white visibility into dark blankness is made especially hard by the premise, a condition defined right in the middle of the poem, that

> *Here, being visible is being white*

This premise can be read as a condition: *if* something (or somebody) is white, *then* it must be visible, and conversely, *if* it is dark, *then* it must be invisible. This engenders a situation of partiality which, obviously, discriminates against darkness and builds a perceptual universe of white uniformity.

The perspective of change is not very promising in Stevens's view. He faces us with blankness, which in English may mean a state of meaninglessness and lack of sense. Meaning, though ideological and partial, is ordered and culturally bound but blankness is chaos. The poem is conservative in its fear of change but it is progressive in its unveiling the homology of semiosis (meaning) and culture.

Reading the poem we notice that this process of change occurs in a particular spot, "a beach" placed somewhere called "here" in the poem which, we dare say, may very well symbolize the poet's land, America, to the readers.

3. WALLACE STEVENS VS. RALPH ELLISON. AN EXEMPLARY CASE OF INTERTEXTUALITY

Ralph Ellison may well have been one of the readers for whom Wallace Stevens's poem would read as symbolic. The overt reference to a man on a beach might symbolize a man in America. In that case, it is quite likely that his novel *Invisible Man* fetched this title from, or in reference to, Wallace Stevens's line, thus establishing an intertextuality between both texts, Ellison's novel on the situation of coloured people in The United States and Wallace Stevens's symbolic poem on whiteness and darkness.

By choosing a negro protagonist Ellison would be signalling him out of darkness into visibility. Then the protagonist —rightly and properly called "invisible" in the novel's title, on condition of its reference to Wallace Stevens's poem— would paradoxically be visible and his name inappropriate or "not right" in the Platonic sense of rightness.

To Platonic Wallace Stevens the black man is rightly named invisible because the poem says "here [in America], being visible is being white" —do we need to develop the syllogism? With respect to Plato's *Cratylus*, the black man is rightly named invisible in Stevens's world because in it "darkness" stands for, on the one hand, "blankness or meaninglessness" and, on the other, for "invisibility."

Furthermore, for Stevens there are two mutually dependent facts, meaning and perception, and naming is the same as making the named perceptible. So Plato's as well as Peirce's philosophy establishes a semiotic continuum of mimesis which dismisses the tendency to see nature as a collection of facts external to both the human perceptual apparatus and the linguistic capacity. In this respect Plato's semiotic continuum is a far cry from Aristotelian strict realism.

If being visible is being white, the man we see mentioned in the poem must be white, although there is not the least clue that he is so. But were he to be black he could not have been the object of perception; he would have been invisible and, consequently, left out of the poem's language.

The place where one needs to be white —or considered to be so— to be visible at all renders it impossible for a black man to be visible, or in other words, present to the world. Being black in such a place would be tantamount to being imperceptible and, failing to be known, he would consequently be non-existent to the others.

Curiously enough, there is another poem by Stevens with partially the same subject and phrasing. It is a long poem entitled "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction," which is divided into ten parts. In part six we read:

> Not to be realized because not to
> Be seen, not to be loved nor hated because
> Not to be realized.
> ... ...
> Yellow thins the Northern blue.
> *Without a name and nothing to be desired,*
> *If only imagined but imagined well.*
>
> My house has changed a little in the sun.
> The fragrance of the magnolias comes close,
> False flick, false form, but falseness close to kin.
>
> *It must be* visible *or* invisible,
> Invisible *or* visible *or* both:
> *A seeing and unseeing in the eye.*

Here again the reference is to both visibility and invisibility, which are dealt with in connection with perceptibility. It is a kind of vicious circle by which invisible and unnamed things are "not to be realized because not to be seen" or viceversa; and, furthermore, they are "not to be loved nor hated because not to be realized." That is to say that things invisible and unnamed are excluded from the mechanisms of desire,[2] they are not wanted, not to be desired, perhaps they can only be imagined, never had.

Obviously, Ellison's is an ironic reference to both of Wallace Stevens's poems. In consequence not only does his negro become visible, he also becomes a protagonist, taking the leading role inside the universe of fiction.

4. OTHER READINGS OF PLATO:

Ohmann (1987), Reyes (1986), Shklovsky (1925, 1971), Barthes (1977), Girard (1984), Aristotle.

The evidence provided by the discussion of the former literary example may help us see that, as a matter of fact, Plato's mimesis falls within the realm of linguistics and

neutralizes the naïve assumption that mimesis is just iconic similarity, or in other words, imitation of spatial features. In Plato's *Cratylus* it can be read that mimesis is both the well-made primitive noun, which is mimetic in its capacity to represent the nature of a thing, and also the noun which keeps some kind of sensory resemblance to the thing or action represented, as is the case with, for example, onomatopoeic words.

It follows that in Plato's aesthetic theory all types of literary art are mimetic. The objects of their representation are not sensory phenomena (*aistheta*) but essential truths aprehended by the mind (*noeta*) and fuzzily perceivable in the phenomena. The apprehension of truth is a type of fascination (*psikhagogía* or spell of the soul) that is not brought about dialectically. That is why the poet is divine, as in *Ion* and *Phaedrus*, though at times the poet deserves banishment from the republic, as *The Republic* defends.

Socrates, in Plato's *Phaedrus*, underlines that the *logos*, or discourse, should represent a *zoon*, or organism, in its quality of being a wholeness from which nothing can be taken off without damage; that is, a literary text is mimetic because it resembles or imitates nature in its quality of organic wholeness. This type of similarity is mimesis between forms (original and copy), a relation of homology, a penetrant and omnipresent resemblance, between linguistic text and external world; were it otherwise the world could not possibly be understood or, for that matter, spoken about.

In this Plato advances what the modern pragmatists, like Ohmann (1987), defend in their own terms. Ohmann understands literary mimesis as speech-act mimesis. In other words, literary mimesis is not a type of speech act, it is the use of speech acts for a mimetic representation that lacks illocutionary force, for fiction. Says Ohmann:

> A literary work is a discourse whose sentences lack the illocutionary forces that would normally attach to them. Its illocutionary force is mimetic. By mimetic I mean purportedly imitative. Specifically, a literary work purportedly imitates (or reports) a series of speech acts. (Ohmann 1971: 14)

The same author (Ohmann 1972) declares that it was unfortunate for the theory of literature that Aristotle fixed the use of the term "mimesis" in reference to the performance of tragedy when drama is just one particular type of imitation. In Ohmann's view, centering the critical discussion upon mimesis as found in tragedy can only lead to a missing of the deeper similarities which connect all the genres and its oral or written forms through mimesis.

Highlighting this vantage point we have Alfonso Reyes's words:

> A la ficción llamaron los antiguos imitación de la naturalezo o mimesis. El término es equívoco, desde que se tiende a ver en la naturaleza el conjunto de hechos exteriores a nuestro espíritu, por donde se llega a las estrecheces del realismo. Claro es que al inventar imitamos, por cuanto sólo contamos con los recursos naturales, y no hacemos más que estructurarlos en una nueva integración. Pero es preferible el término ficción. Indica, por una parte, que oñadimos una nueva estructura —probable o improbable— a las que ya existen. Indica, por otra parte, que nuestra intención es desentendernos del suceder real. Finalmente, indica que traducimos una realidad subjetiva. (Reyes 1986: 86)

Aristotle's criterion in his *Poetics* is, at least, implicitly critical towards Plato's. Aristotelian mimesis is clearly developed in his definition of dramatic action as *mimesis praxeos* or imitation of an action. In Aristotle, mimesis or imitation seems to indicate not a homological relation between forms —as in Plato—, but an inner relation analogous to that which is established between form and content in some schools of structural linguistics.

In other words, if in the Saussurean school tradition the linguistic form is phonic matter and the content is meaning matter or concept, there is an analogy established between two different relations (the relation Signifier / Signified is analogous to, if not identical with the relation Phonic Form / Semantic Content).

Now, the extrapolation of this Saussurean sign-relation to the field of drama would render the original reality analogous to the Signified and the play analogous to the representing Signifier: the original then would be a signified content to be recovered by means of a signifying copy.

For instance, tragedy is a dramatic form (analogous to the Signifier) representing an aspect of life and nature that lends it its meaning (or Signified, following the former analogy). It is from this perspective that it is possible to affirm that in the Aristotelian tradition, inherited by the Saussureans, the literary work is signifying matter that the author composes from an aspect of life that provides it with its meaning.

That is to say that Aristotle makes tragedy into a text ancillarily dependent on nature: "art is nature's maid," and the Saussureans make language dependent on an already given state of the world which is not affected by language. For us linguists, this certainly is a most naïve concept of language which Benjamin L. Whorf (1956) has accurately criticized in his *Language, Thought and Reality*. Whorf's hypothesis of linguistic relativity goes beyond Aristotelian (also Saussurean) semiology and is contained within Platonic (and also Peircean) semiotics.

Nevertheless, when facing the difficulty to relate the particular in nature and the universal in art, we observe the Aristotelian artist's need to resort to a form of submission to principles foreign to —if not contradictory with— his/ her own art.

In other words, the Aristotelian artist is submissive to principles — extraliterary and normative— of conventional arbitrary adequacy of his / her art to units, measure and decorum relative to a particular literary form, that have little to do with the data of experience either in nature or art.

Truth, in the Aristotelian case, is not Plato's *aletheia*, a quality of the work of art understood as an autonomous organism produced by a demiurgic artist. Quite differently, Aristotle's truth in art is verisimilitude relative to the rectitude with which, according to certain modes and genres conventionally established on unity principles,

a tragedy succeeds in correctly imitating the action of the human being.

Plato and Aristotle deal with the term *mimetikos* in different ways. While Plato's term is comprehensive and covers all textual phenomena, which have the capacity to analogically represent —through their own wholeness— other wholenesses. Aristotle's term is restrictively applied to the literary mode of imitation of an action or sequence of actions through certain poetic conventions of which the text does not seem to be self-conscious.

Conventionality is all-pervading. T. Hawkes uses the simile of a chess game that V. Shklovsky coined in 1925:

> Conventionality, the operation of tacit unquestioned structural 'rules' emerges as the animating principle of literary art. Whether that art has pretensions towards 'realism' or not, it remains as 'bound' by conventions which act as rules as much as a game of chess does (Hawkes 1977: 72-73)

But V. Shklovsky himself writes in his fiction book *Zoo: or, Letters Not About Love*, where part of his literary theory finds a place:

> There are two attitudes towards art. One is to view the work of art as a window on the world. Through words and images, these artists want to express what lies beyond words and images. Artists of this type deserve to be called translators.
> The other type of attitude is to view art as a world of independently existing things.
> Words, and the relationships between words, thoughts and the irony of thoughts, their divergence —these are the content of art. Art, if it can be compared to a window at all, is a sketched window. (1971: 80)

In this passage, Shklovsky, critic and writer, recognizes two distinct attitudes towards the conventionality of art: one attitude is translatory and indexical: "Through words and images, these artists want to express what lies beyond words and images," and another attitude that keeps fiction and the real world in different independent symbolic realms, "art as a world of independently existing things." The former attitude, indexical of external reality, sustains a type of mimetic relation that is not far from Aristotle's definition. The latter attitude towards art stands on a higher semiotic level, predominantly symbolic, where the fiction is a drawing opening into a drawing, a form opening into a form, which brings us back to Plato.

The simile of the sketched window open to the sketched landscape has a lot to do with a more complex idea of mimesis than the one contained in the simile of a sketched window opening to a real landscape.

The indexical idea of mimesis, acknowledged but discarded by Shklovsky, is parallel to Barthes's "inner mimesis." We read in Barthes:

> [...] the text itself plays (like a door, like a machine will 'play') and the reader plays twice over, playing the Text as one plays a game, looking for a practice which re-produces it, but, in order that that practice not be reduced to a *passive*, *inner mimesis* (the Text is precisely that which resists such a reduction), also playing the Text in the musical sense of the term. (Barthes 1977: 163)

In speaking about a kind of "passive, inner mimesis" Barthes seems to have in mind another type of mimesis which would be active and external but, as a matter of fact, he only mentions the former type, passively reproductive of and dependent on the conventional reading of the work of art. By so doing, Barthes is making room for the latter type, mimesis that opens the text into self-productivity and the reader's productivity.

Girard (1984), though being himself a structuralist, thinks there are two types of mimesis too: simple and complex. Simple mimesis is that which is indexical of the external world, while complex mimesis, found in what he calls literature of mimetic revelation, is that which establishes not only the simply mimetic character of the literary text, but the complex mimetic character of a text that discloses the mimetic mechanism that organizes the real world.

For Girard, the literary texts that are secondarily mimetic can be called great literature and, it is his opinion that, when facing the great literary texts, the critic cannot be critical in the habitual sense. (S)he must be critical but balanced so as to allow the study of the superior perspective of knowledge that great literature, which he calls the literature of revelation, can offer.

5. WALLACE STEVENS: A LITERARY EXAMPLE OF SECONDARY MIMESIS (IN GIRARD'S TERMS)

The literary text can represent human passions and desires and teach that "real life" desires are purely mimetic. Here again we can use a literary example.

The poem "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" by Wallace Stevens explicitly connects the two drives: desire and imitation in life and literature. It is crowded with repeated references to "the double," especially in part IV. Some are literal like "every latent double in the world" while others are not, for instance: the repeated references to mirrors, glass and crystal, all producers of second images and doubles. What's more, we have a reference to a world which is in fact "a second earth" a duplicate of the first one. We have its inhabitants, us readers, who the poem refers to as being mimics, that is, actors and imitators, if not imitations ourselves. We, the readers partaking of humanity, are made conscious that "there was a myth before the myth began," that "the poem refreshes life" that everything has its double in fiction as well as in language.

> The first idea was not our own. Adam
> In Eden was the father of Descartes
> And Eve made air the *mirror* of herself.

Of her sons and of her daughters. They found themselves
In heaven as in a *glass; a second* earth;
And in the earth itself they found a green—

The inhabitants of a very varnished green.
But the first idea was not to shape the clouds
In imitation. The clouds preceded us

There was a muddy centre before we breathed.
There was a myth before the myth began,
Venerable and articulate and complete.

From this the poem springs: that we live in a place
That is not our own and, much more, not ourselves
And hard it is in spite of blazoned days.

We are the mimics. Clouds are pedagogues
The air is not a mirror but bare board,
Coulisse bright- dark, tragic chiaroscuro

And comic colour of the rose, in which
Abysmal instruments make sounds like pips
Of the sweeping meanings that we add to them.

But the closure of the leading idea is found later on, in part VIII of the poem, where we read:

logos and logic, crystal hypothesis,
Incipit and a form to speak the word
And every latent double in the word,
Beau linguist...

At this point the poem establishes the link between mimesis —the main topic in part IV— and logos / linguistics explicitly in agreement with Plato's theory of the sign and mimesis as sketched before.

Besides this, Wallace Stevens establishes a series of balancing ideas which pair through the ten parts of the poem to build its semantic structure: the central pair is that between what is "abstract" (this and other related terms are underlined in the text) and the "concrete" individual (in bold type in the text). The theoretical principle falls within the realm of abstraction and within the realm of concretion falls the particular "exponent," as we see Stevens calls it. Again, 'the commonal' is also abstract while 'the singular' is concrete; this set of oppositions is dealt with in part X of the poem which says:

The mayor *abstraction* is the idea of man
And major man is its exponent, abler
In the *abstract* than in his singular,

More fecund as *principle* than particle,
Happy fecundity, flor- abundant force,
In being more than an exception, part,

Though an heroic part, of the *commonal.*
The major *abstraction* is the *commonal,*
The *inanimate,* difficult visage. Who is it?

As a matter of fact, the last tercet establishes a subsidiary connection between the abstract commonal and the inanimate, thus opening a secondary pair (animate / inanimate) which completes the first one (concrete / abstract) by adding a balance between the animate particular individual and the inanimate abstract idea. But, while abstraction is the product of reasoning the animate individual is beyond this constraint. The constraints of logos / logic / or linguistic thought do not apply to what in fact already is, and this results in a praise of a certain kind of ignorance which opens the eye to the original idea of things, so we read:

Begin, ephebe, by perceiving the idea
Of this invention, this invented world,
the inconceivable idea of the sun.

You must become an ignorant man again
And see the sun again with an ignorant eye
And see it clearly in the idea of it.

... ...

How clean the sun when seen in its idea,
Washed in the remotest cleanliness of a Heaven
Thot has expelled us and our images ...

... ...

Phoebus is dead, ephebe. But Phoebus was
A name for something that never could be named.
There was a project for the sun and is.

There is a project for the sun. The sun
Must bear no name, gold flourisher, but be
In the difficulty of what it is to be.

Together with the praise of this type of ignorance, we find in the poem a derogatory mention of academies, described as "structures in the mist" in the last tercet of part VII:

The truth depends on a walk around a lake,

... ...

We more than awaken, sit on the edge of sleep,
As on an elevation, and behold
The academies like structures in the mist.

This derogatory view of institutional knowledge can only be understood against Wallace Stevens's platonic view of the poet as a demiurge, whose poetry lines

approach truth more closely than the academics' could. As the poem proceeds, we start seeing a pattern where two types of knowledge emerge, one is the product of academic reasoning (which adopts the form of nouns, thoughts, images), the other is the apotheosis of poetic clairvoyance (which adopts the idiom of song).

> The romantic intoning, the declaimed clairvoyance
> Are parts of apotheosis, appropriate
> And of its nature, the idiom thereof.
>
> They differ from *reason's click-clack*, its applied
> *Enflashings*.

One type of knowledge walks hand in hand with logic, reason and language, "reason's click-clack," which can bring about some "enflashings" of the mind but never "apotheosis," which is attained by the second type of knowledge, that is, knowledge that rests on a "deepened speech," "a leaner being of greater aptitude and apprehension" (part VIII),

> As if the waves at last were never broken
> As if the language suddenly, with ease,
> Said things it had *laboriously spoken*.

But what is symbolically couched here is that the logos and logic mentioned before rest on breaking the easiness of undivided original knowledge which has been substituted for by the laborious language of hypotheses and lexical antitheses. Against it the poet, this time in part IX, proposes a language of poetry and song.

> My dame, sing ... accurate songs.
> Give... no names

It is as if the poem, though resting on words, were a special language, able to restore the original candour, the immaculate whiteness of the first idea, which seeks refuge in its metaphors. Stevens puts it in these words in part II and III of the poem:

> the first idea becomes
> The hermit in a poet's metaphors,
> Who comes and goes and comes and goes all day.
> ... ...
> The poem refreshes life so that we share,
> For a moment, the first idea... It satisfies
> Belief in an immaculate beginning
>
> And sends us, winged by an unconscious will,
> To an immaculate end.
> ... ...
>
> The poem , through candour, brings back a power again
> That gives a candid kind to everything.

In a different place we can read that life's events lack relation, the poem's metaphors relate facts or things that resemble or mimic each other. "Alikeness" —mimesis— becomes the fundamental principle of poetry which is the stuff of life too, life being an invention, too recent and meaningless in its plurality when compared to the first idea of it.

We read:

> *We [poets] say: At night an Arabian in my room,*
> *with his damned* ***hoobla- hoobla- hoobla- how,***
> Inscribes a primitive astronomy
>
> Across the unscrawled fores the future casts
> And throws his stars around the floor. By day
> *The wood- dove used to chant his* ***hoobla- hoo***
>
> And still *the iridescence of ocean*
> *Howls* ***hoo*** *and rises and howls hoo and falls.*
> **Life's nonsense pierces us [poets] with strange relation.**

Wallace Stevens exemplifies this theory in his work and says that the poet perceives a similar sound, "a hoobla-hoobla-hoobla-how," in facts as different as an Arabian's song, the wood-dove's song and the ocean's song, for which he invents the mentioned onomatopoeic phrase. By so applying this term to all the three sounds the poet is underlining a hidden similarity which he, a poet, can make visible by linguistic means.

It is Stevens's view that the poet's task is to make one what was one —at the imagined beginning of the world— and which became multiple later on with the apparition of the logos.

Again we may resume the theme of visibility and invisibility in relation to the power of language to illuminate and, so create areas of perception, and of metaphor to place the facts of life and nature in a close relation of resemblance which corresponds to the mimetic character of phenomena. Mimetic rules govern the poem and mimetism governs the world. Truth is sought after by the monastic mon as much as by the philosopher and the artist but truth is in desire only and desire brings mimesis, the atraction of becoming what it is not.

The basic law of mimesis is beautifully summarized when the text says in part II:

so poisonous

> Are the ravishments of truth, so fatal to
> The truth itself, the first idea becomes
> The hermit in a poet's metaphors.
> ... ...
>
> The monastic man is an artist. The philosopher
> appoints man's place in music, say, today.
> *But the priest desires. The philosopher desires.*

And not to have is the beginning of desire.
To have what is not is its ancient cycle.
It is desire at the end of winter, when

It observes the effortless weather turning blue
And sees the myosotis on its bush.
Being virile, it hears the calendar hymn

It knows that what it has is what is not
And throws it away like a thing of another time,
As morning throws off stale moonlight and shabby sleep.

In these lines of the poem winter is personified. Winter, together with the natural processes that accompany it when it starts to be spring, becomes the embodiment of the forces leading the artist, the monk and the philosopher in their quest for truth. Truth is the target and the trigger of nature, poetry, religion and philosophy in Wallace Stevens's view.

This is particular in Stevens but, if we take heed of what we have been discussing from the beginning of this article, Stevens's vision of the world is circular, which he shares with so many of his fellow writers, the modernists. For Stevens Myth and History from Adam and Eve to Descartes become an explanatory circle where progress does not really take place unless we see progress in the continual superimposition of imitation after imitation and so on till the first idea is theoretically reached.

The drive to imitate is the force that stems from the need of being or having what is not yet. The very earth is described in the poem as an invention, a complex mirror where people have the role of mimics. Reality becomes fiction and fiction reality, thus subverting Aristotelian realism.

6. CONCLUSIONS

As for Wallace Stevens, Girard and Plato, we can say that their theories are not too distant from one another.

Plato inaugurates this theory of the world as a double, imitation, or mirror image of the former world of ideas. In *Phaedrus* Plato theorizes about the psyche that remembers the ideas once contemplated in the company of the Gods; ideas which the soul wishes to contemplate again even if in the image of a less exact copy or imitation.

Girard's view is that reality is mimetic and art forms can represent it through particular means and techniques. Being himself a structuralist, Girard substantially differs from other structuralists in his revaluation of mimesis as still relevant to art criticism. It is my idea, too, that an adequate handling of mimesis can help the critic to illuminate certain aspects of the literary work, which, after the formalists, did fall in discredit.

As Fredric Jameson (1972: 82-83) puts it, the formalists defend a radical inversion of the literary work's priorities. They relegate to the background one aspect of mimesis to foreground another. Shklovsky, for example, knows that the literary work of art can be understood to be mimetic in a double sense. In the first sense mimesis is the imitation or depiction of realities which are external to the work of art. For him, this kind of mimesis is disregarded as an accidental or external kind of explanation of the literary work. For the formalists the essential factor in explaining the formation of a text of art is its character of efficiency as a formal entity.

Reality in their theoretical scheme is a counterpoint of the text of art which can be obviated. With independence of this type of external reference to the counterpoint reality, the art form primarily refers to other art forms, so that their fundamental mimetic character derives from their being a structural whole analogously referring to other structures.

All types of mimesis imply some kind of referent, be it internal or external to the work of art, but mimesis is consistent only with those theories which posit meaning as the aim of language and literature.

Other schools of thought (I mean post-structuralism) defend, against Plato-Peirce and Aristotle-Saussure alike, the inviability of a consistent theory of mimesis. Jacques Derrida's post-structuralism (Derrida 1976, 1978, 1981) takes to an extreme the structural tenet that language is just about language. This presupposition questions the capacity of language to speak about reality and makes literature irrelevant. Even more, Derrida's presuppositions render language irrelevant. For him, language and literature become collections of traces, the playground of absences and deletions where meaning can be always deferred. The emphasis on the continual making and unmaking of the sign-processes leaves the reader at a loss.

This poem by Stevens affirms that poetry is fiction pointing towards another fiction, the world (or "the earth" as we read in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction"), a world which in turn mirrors a first idea not within human reach because of the falsifying refraction of logos and language. It is for the critic to further ask if poetry is fiction because it is mimetic in the linguistic / aesthetic sense the term has in Plato.

The Aristotelian understanding of mimesis seems to explain well the literary genre of tragedy against other literary forms which do not rely so heavily on a structure of actions and characters. Mimesis in its Platonic sense, which we claim to be more comprehensive than the Aristotelian one, is as relevant to the explanation of the lyrical poem as to that of tragedy. By making the *onoma* mimetic, mimesis primarily enters the linguistic and secondarily permeates the literary. Texts exact their mimetic character from their being semiotic objects and / or, also, meaningful objects of fictive art.

In terms of the tradition of thought inaugurated by Plato's semiotics and continued by present-day thinkers like Peirce, Ohmann, Reyes, Girard, Shklovsky, and Barthes, as we have discussed before, all art forms are semiotic artifacts which, as such, must be

mimetic *per se*. Then, using for the best the vantage point inaugurated by Aristotle's semiotics and maintained by the Saussurean school, some art forms are secondarily mimetic in their iconicity or, grossly speaking, in their being imitations of physical features, actions and ideas actually present in the external world.

The fact is that both traditions have different conceptions of the sign and, consequently, their conceptions of mimesis diverge. But, this said, our view of the matter is that both concepts of mimesis are not mutually exclusive.

If adequately delimited, mimesis in the wide primary sense will help to integrate the study of all kinds of texts, which will obviate the problem of literariness and genre and can justify the integration of theatre in the realm of literature, something which has sometimes been questioned. It is when mimesis is taken only in its restricted Aristotelian sense that the matter of literariness / genre becomes a problem.

But why should we worry about it all when it is the poet that offers the answer to us again and again, this time in another of his poems: "A High-toned Old Christian Woman" (Stevens, 1953), where Wallace Stevens humorously writes the best of epilogues for us to close the present discussion of mimesis or fiction in reference to the non-narrative? He says that, beyond other literary forms, poetry is the supreme fiction and also a jovial hullabaloo among the spheres. By so saying Stevens manages to introduce another, this time ironic, intertextual reference to Plato and the music of the spheres, which was taken for the ideal model of poetry.

> Poetry is the supreme fiction, madame.
> (...)
> A jovial hullabaloo among the spheres.
> This will make widows wince. But fictive things
> wink as they will. Wink most when widows wince.

NOTES

1. ὀνόματο,ˇ φαμέν, ορθότηˇ ἐστὶν αὕτη, ᾗτιˇ ἐνδείξεται οἷόν ἐστι τὸ πραˆγμα.
2. The term refers to Girard's notion of mimetic desire (Girard 1978), which we shall discuss later.

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"I AM THE ANDROGYNE": REFLECTIONS ON GENDER AND LANGUAGE IN THE POETRY OF SYLVIA PLATH, ANNE SEXTON AND ADRIENNE RICH.

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I am the androgyne
I am the living mind you fail to describe
in your dead language
the lost noun, the verb surviving
only in the infinitive
the letters of my name are written under the lids
of the newborn child.

"The Stranger" (Rich 1973:19)

Contemporary women poets often write about woman's identity from the point of view of gender and of language. Though the speaker's gender in Adrienne Rich's "The Stranger" is not specified —"walking as I've walked before / like a man, like a woman, in the city" (Rich 1973: 19)— the quotation I am going to discuss in this essay can be understood as referring to female identity, not only because this is a pervasive theme in Rich's poetry, but because the poem conveys ideas that are central to women's writing, both theoretical and creative, in our time.

The first term of the definition, "I am the androgyne," can be associated with what E. Ann Kaplan calls "utopian" postmodernism, derived from feminism, deconstruction and Lacanian psychoanalysis: "a thinking that transcends the . . . binarisms of Western philosophical, metaphysical and literary traditions" (Kaplan 1988: 5). One of these binarisms is the opposition between the feminine and the masculine. As Hélène Cixous puts it,

Where is she?

Activity / passivity,
Sun / Moon,
Culture / Nature,

Day / Night,

Father / Mother,
Head / heart,
Intelligible / sensitive,
Logos / Pathos.

. . .

Man
—
Woman (Cixous 1980a: 90)

The concepts and values associated with "Man" have traditionally been considered as models, and therefore woman becomes man's "other," his negative image.

In "The Stranger" these dualities are rejected as "dead language" and replaced by the concept of androgyny, which does not necessarily involve bisexuality, but is rather a means of transcending philosophical and cultural oppositions that for centuries have trapped women into restricting roles. Virginia Woolf was among the first female writers to argue that the artist's mind should be androgynous, including both masculine and feminine qualities. Otherwise, "The vision becomes too masculine or it becomes too feminine; it loses its perfect integrity and, with that, its most essential quality as a work of art" (Woolf 1979: 48). Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic theory that the child, either biologically male or female, inhabits the semiotic "chora" before gaining access to the symbolic order seems to run along similar lines: "The semiotic . . . precedes all unities, binary oppositional structures and hierarchical forms of organization" (Grosz 1989: 43) and emerges in adult discourse, and especially in poetic discourse in the form of disruptive, irrational, subversive speech patterns that defy the symbolic.

Yet, despite the fact that the semiotic is shared by both men and women, French feminists have often emphasized women's difficulties in gaining access to the symbolic, for psychological reasons —as Freud argued—, but especially for political reasons, since the patriarchy actively alienates women from the language of the Law. In this sense, and using Kristeva's words, "the pre-established harmony of primal androgyny" is invalidated, and women and men should reach "an acknowledgment of what is irreducible, of the irreconcilable interest of both sexes in asserting their differences" (Kristeva 1986: 184). Thus, a second question emerges: what kind of language is available for women to express themselves and to construct their own identity? In Rich's poem, the answer has at least four implications:

1) Woman is defined by "the lost noun," which could be equated with silence in Elaine Showalter's account of "muted" culture:

> dominant groups control the forms or structures in which consciousness can be articulated. Thus muted groups must mediate their beliefs through the allowable forms of dominant structures. Another way of putting it would be to say that language is the language of the dominant order, and women, if they speak at all, must speak through it (Showalter 1986: 262).

Consequently, if women have no access to the dominant order, they must remain both unnamed and silent. In Alicia Suskin Ostriker's words, women writers often use images of "nonexistence, invisibility, muteness, blurredness, deformity" to describe themselves (Ostriker 1986: 10). However, one of the projects of feminism, especially in the Anglo-American tradition, is to give voice to the self: in Audre Lorde's words, "If we don't name ourselves we are nothing" (quoted by Ostriker 1986: 59).

2) Woman is defined by "the verb surviving only in the infinitive." This relates to Luce Irigaray's argument that

> the language of the female has nothing to do with the syntax which we have used for centuries, namely, that constructed according to the following organization: subject, predicate, or: subject, verb, object. For female sexuality cannot be subsumed under he concept of subject. Which brings into question all the syntactical norms... (Irigaray 1990: 82)

The "verb surviving / only in the infinitive" in Rich's poem suggests the supposedly undefinable quality of women's language, its instability. According to Cixous, woman's writing "can only keep going, without ever inscribing or discerning contours" (Cixous 1980b: 259)

Such a theory of language has received abundant criticism, even from feminist quarters. Kristeva, for instance, argues that "it is all too easy to pass from the search for *difference* to the denegation of the symbolic. The latter is the same as to remove the 'feminine' from the order of language" (Kristeva 1986: 11). Though it is probably an exaggeration to describe the concept of "feminine writing" as "a high-falutin version of the sexist view that women babble" (T. Eagleton 1986: 215), there is no empirical evidence of a "genderlect" for women (Cameron 1990a: 24), and even if there was, it could be argued that women need to command "male" syntax in order to fight against oppression: "politically speaking, it is only the symbolic, a new symbolism, a new law, that can challenge the dominant law" (Mitchell 1986: 102).

3) As a corollary of this definition of women's identity through "feminine language," women's "name" is "written under the lids of the newborn child." Feminine language being associated with the semiotic, and the semiotic with the maternal, woman is defined in terms of her biology. The quote from "The Stranger" suggests that women may find an identity through motherhood, which to Kristeva, for instance, is the only possibility for them to have a validated position in the symbolic —she studies the

semiotic transgression in avant-garde literature by men, but when she writes about women in such essays as "Stabat Mater" (Kristeva 1986a: 160-186) or "Women's Time" (Kristeva 1986c: 187-213) her theme is motherhood. In Showalter's opinion, "some theorists seem to have accepted the *metaphorical* implications of female biological difference in writing" (Showalter 1986: 250), and this may become a new restriction to the female creator.

4) On the other hand, the allusion to the "newborn" in Rich's poem can be interpreted in a wider sense as a metaphor for individuation, woman giving birth to her own self unhampered by male definitions of femininity and acquiring creative power in the process. Ostriker describes this process as

> an attempt by women to retrieve, from our myth of a dominating abstract father god who creates the universe ab nihilo, the figure on which (according to feminist historians of early religion) that god was originally based —the female creatrix. (Ostriker 1986: 219)

This creatrix reunites and integrates gender polarities and is therefore androgynous to some extent.

All these views on female identity and language subvert traditional gender polarities. Yet, as I have tried to show, their implications are contradictory: androgyny can be interpreted as creating either silence or an overflow of irrational language, and transcending gender may lead to asserting a kind of femininity not totally dissimilar from that imposed by tradition. In this respect, the quote I am discussing here mirrors some of the contradictions existing in feminist thinking since the late 1960's and is relevant to contemporary poetry written by women, where the question of female identity becomes central.

*****

In the following sections of this essay I am going to illustrate the different theories of gender and language I have outlined above with reference to the work of three influential American women poets belonging to the same generation: Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich. Plath died in 1963, that is to say just before the emergence of contemporary feminism, and therefore her views on poetry as expressed in her work were not directly influenced by these theoretical issues. Sexton died in 1974 and admitted to having been strongly influenced by Plath (Sexton 1985a: 93). She was familiar and sympathetic with "women's lib" (Sexton 1985b: 197-201), though this kind of feminism became part of her life only when she had been writing poetry for years. As to Rich, her career from the late sixties has been closely connected with feminism, which she has not only been influenced by, but which she has helped shape through her activist involvement and her poetic practice. Nevertheless, however different from each other, Plath, Sexton and Rich share an interest in the problem of identity, which to them is linked to both gender and language.

SYLVIA PLATH

Plath started her poetic career within a male tradition. She worked at intricate metrical and rhyming patterns and her poems were consequently trapped by sophisticated forms (Nims 1970: 136-152). To her, poetry was a highly rational, controlled task, and the concept of poetry expressed in many of her early poems relates to the Yeatsian ideal of art as superior to life: the apprentice in the art of poetry is advised to "metamorphose the mollusk / of vague vocabulary / with structural discipline: / stiffen the ordinary malleable mask / to the granite grin of bone" (306).

Yet even at this early stage tensions can be detected. Masculine, ordering reason and feminine emotion and intuition are presented as fighting against each other, and the poet is therefore "racked between / the fact of doubt, the faith of dream" (308). As Plath's poetry develops, these two opposing sets of values become more specifically gendered. Traditional femininity is associated with fertility and creativity in many poems, and upheld as more positive than the masculine principle. In "Two Sisters of Persephone," for instance, the masculine sister who "works problems on / A mathematical machine" is seen as involved in a "barren enterprise" (31) and defined as "no woman" (32), while the other sister is associated with "pollen" and "Grass-couched in her labor's pride, / She bears a king" (32). She is an Earth Mother figure, and this figure is a model of female creativity in Plath's early poetry. Paradoxically, though, Plath's intellectual control over language is closer to that of the masculine woman in "Spinster," who sets "a barricade of barb and check" (50) against the "babel" (49) of feminine, fertile nature.

As a result, the masculine / feminine polarity creates tensions, often violent ones in Plath's poetry. In "The Shrike" for instance, an earth-bound wife feels envious of her husband's "royal dreams" (42), the life of the spirit from which she feels alienated, and she finally tries to destroy him. Though in other early poems, such as "Wreath for a Bridal" (44-45) the union between the male and the female appears as fertile, Plath's early female figures often feel uncomfortable within the boundaries of gender. The woman in "Crystal Gazer," for instance, wants "To govern more sight than given to a woman / By wits alone" (55), though her aspirations lead her to a vision of destruction and sterility

Consequently, from the start of her poetic career Plath often uses images of sexual ambivalence in order to transcend gender polarities. The angel is one of these images. In "Black Rook in Rainy Weather" the "skeptical," rational speaker waits for "the angel, / For that rare, random descent" (57) of the visionary. The angel is sexless, but it is also connected with female fertility since it was an angel, Gabriel, who, according to the Christian tradition, announced Christ's birth to Mary. In the above-mentioned "Wreath for a Bridal" the lovers are "bedded like angels, two burn one in fever" (45), the masculine and the feminine fusing and being reconciled.

However, the androgynous angel's beneficial powers are denied in Plath's later poetry. In "The Zoo Keeper's Wife" angels create "sheer boredom" (155), and in "Three Women: A Poem for Three Voices" "the cold angels" are masculine, identified with "the abstractions" (177). Far from transcending masculine and feminine cliches, the angel's sexlessness, which has traditionally been expected from women, becomes oppressive. In this respect the angel could be equated with the virginal moon-Mary in "The Moon and the Yew Tree" (172-173) and with the sterile "other" that Plath's female personae often struggle with, for instance in "The Rival" —where the rival woman is "White and blank" like the moon, "annihilating" (166)— or in "The Other," in which the persona's aggressive fertility —"Navel cords, blue-red and lucent, / Shriek from my belly like arrows, and these I ride"— is opposed to the other woman's sterility or moon-like "womb of marble" (202).

In Judith Kroll's words, the mythical moon-goddess symbolizes "the cycles of birth, life, death and rebirth; and the female functions of menstruation, and fertility or barrenness. And she is symbol of the origins of poetic inspiration" (Kroll 1976: 39) The moon in Plath's poetry can be considered androgynous to the extent that it reunites polarities: it is related to the menstrual cycle and therefore to female fertility and conventional femininity, yet it is also white, pure, cold, sexless and sterile, and these qualities are associated with masculine rationality and control in Plath's poetry. They are masculine characteristics in another sense, too: they are part of the masculine ideal of virginal womanhood.

Plath's women cannot fully identify with either side of the moon, and their attempts to heal the split between the two sometimes lead them to death —in "Edge" "The woman is perfected" (272) because she has given up the struggle and has yielded to the static, barren aspect of the moon, usually associated with silence. For instance, in "Barren Woman" the moon is "Blank-faced and mum as a nurse" (157). Yet this is not the only way in which the drama of gender is performed in Plath's poetry. More often the women in her poems achieve an aggressively feminine identity that fuses the motherly and the phallic, feminine fertility and masculine power.

Such a fusion is suggested in an early poem, "Ouija" in which an "old god" (77), identifiable with Pan in "Dialogue over a Ouija Board" (276-286) symbolizes the poet. Pan can be seen as an androgynous figure in that he is half man, half beast, that is to say a mixture of rationality (traditionally masculine) and instinct (traditionally feminine). Yet this androgynous god does not pay homage to the angel "Gabriel" but to a female, "the rotten queen with saffron hair" (77), who, like the protagonist of Plath's "Lady Lazarus," is a "bawdy queen of death" (77). Lady Lazarus's language is a chaotic "shriek" (246), and poetry under the influence of the "rotten queen" is also irrational, "a marriage with the mire," "words" that the god "dribbles" (77). As a poetic muse, the "rotten queen" inspires the subversive, surreal language that feminist critics came later to associate with "feminine writing," and also the language characteristic of Plath's later poetry.

A gain in power compensates for this loss of "masculine" articulateness and control. While it is true that in such poems as "The Arrival of the Bee Box" the "unintelligible syllables" (212) of the feminine mind become threatening to the persono who aspires to order, in Plath's late poetry, especiolly in the poems of the bee sequence, the violence of the feminine unconscious becomes fertile. In the bee poems this fertility is symbolized by the figure of the Queen Bee. While remaining assertively feminine, the Queen Bee is androgynous to the extent that she reconciles polarities. In Lynda K. Bundtzen's words, "The bee colony offers a double image of femininity . . . adequate to Plath's conflicted feelings towards her womanhood and her own creative power as an artist" (Bundtzen 1983: 186). The Queen Bee stands between the conventionally masculine drone and the feminine drudge.

As the persona's "alter ego," she is the protagonist of "Stings," a poem about female identity: "I / have a self to recover, a queen." (215). The self is recovered at the price of death —the death of the old false gendered selves—, yet an impression of power and life is conveyed: "Now she is flying / More terrible than she ever was, red / Scar in the sky, red comet / Over the engine that killed her— / The mausoleum, the wax house" (215). She is both "red comet" and "red scar," penis and vagina, both destructive and creative. In "Ariel," similarly, the female "I" is an "arrow" sexually penetrating "the red / Eye, the cauldron of morning" (240), and striving for rebirth, associated with language and childbirth —"The child's cry" (239). As Jo Brans points out, the persona of "Ariel" is "metaphorically somehow both sperm and womb, the creation autogenetic" and, in general, the poems of *Ariel* "show the creator while working to be androgynous" (Brans 1988: 216). Like "A Birthday Present," where the woman envisages self-mothering after phallic penetration —"And the knife not carve, but enter / Pure and clean as the cry of a baby, / And the universe slide from my side" (207), these poems enact an encounter between the masculine and the feminine. This encounter is violent and deadly, but from it an empowered female self may emerge.

ANNE SEXTON

Similar tensions between the masculine and the feminine, between the control of silence and the disorder of speech can be detected in the work of Anne Sexton. As Alicia Ostriker points out, "Her early poems before she hits her stride tend to be too stiff, her late ones tend to be shapeless" (Ostriker 1988: 265). The apparent shapelessness of her language is a reaction to the restrictions of gender, a rebellion against the masculine principle of order imposed on the female poet —in "Said the Poet to the Analyst," for instance, the female persona's words are "like swarming bees" (12)[2] whose feminine fertility and luxuriance the male analyst wants to check. Like Plath, Sexton searches for a subversive female identity.

Sexton's rebelliousness against traditional femininity begins early on in her poetry. In "The Farmer's Wife," for instance, the woman does not dare voice her complaints against the man, but aspires to "living / her own self in her own words" (19-20). The masculine and the feminine are unreconcilable opposites in several poems. In "The Black Art," for instance, the female writer's art is based on feeling and domestic life and includes "cycles and children," while male writing comes from the intellect, "erections" and the public world of politics, economy and war. The union between the feminine "I" and the masculine "you" is sterile: "when we marry, / the children leave in disgust." (89). In "Hurry Up Please It's Time" Sexton will suggest that gender polarities are more a result of social conditioning than something inherent in sexual difference — "I have swallowed an orange, being woman. / You have swallowed a ruler, being man. / Yet waiting to die we are the same thing." (385). Yet this is not Sexton's standard view of gender. Her poems are usually spoken by a woman in her roles of mother, daughter, wife or lover, and her search for identity is closely allied to her attempts to define femininity, either as opposed or in relation to masculinity.

In trying to define her female self, Sexton tends to adopt two main positions. On the one hand, she presents, like Plath, female fertility as a model of womanhood and of creativity, partly using traditional notions of femininity and motherhood, yet adding to them an emphasis on the sexual and the erotic that has often been absent from tradition. On the other hand, and like Plath too, Sexton explores the concept of androgyny as a means of transcending gender.

In Estella Lauter's words, some moments in Sexton's poetry are "affirmations of female creativity and sexuality as principles 'heavy' enough to counter death or God" (Lauter 1988: 155). One of the poems in which female creativity is most explicitly affirmed is "In Celebration of my Uterus," where the uterus becomes a metaphor for poetic creativity: "let me sing / for the supper, / for the kissing, / for the correct / yes." (183). This "yes" is the language of female identity asserting itself against imposed silence —"They said you were immeasurably empty / but you are not" (181), "I sing for you. I dare to live" (182). In "For the Year of the Insane" a feminine, motherly figure, Mary, is "The giver of breath" (132) and of language that may rescue the female poet from "the domain of silence." In a much later poem, "Jesus, the Actor, Plays the Holy Ghost," a persona identifiable with the poet seeks union with Mary in order to regain creativity —"I take the yellow papers / and I write on them / but they crumble like men's ashes" (456). Mary is the "Gentle Mother" associated with the fertilizing "bee" (457). Through identification with her the poet wishes to "be born again / into something true" (457), possibly a new creative female self.

Yet the motherly principle is not always so fertile. In "March 7th," for instance, the female creator has an alter ego, a "toad": "She is knitting up a womb, / knitting up a baby's foot" (601), and yet she is not a true mother but a threatening "mother-in-law" (602) preventing her from writing. Similarly, the female body becomes oppressive in

"The Poet of Ignorance," not a source of identity but a trap from which the speaker wants to be freed: "Perhaps I am no one. / True, I have a body / and I cannot escape from it" (434). She has "an animal," "a crab" (434) inside her which can be interpreted as a female self that she cannot either give birth to or reconcile with God, the male principle: "Perhaps God is only a deep voice / heard by the deaf, / I do not know" (434). In "The Consecrating Mother," too, the feminine principle becomes unreachable: "I could not define her, / I could not name her mood, her locked-up faces" (555).

As a result, Sexton often "seeks connections with a masculine god; she no longer projects her own feminine images into a vision of a patterned, containing and loving universe" (Demetrakopoulos 1988b: 358). The connection with the masculine principle is often attempted through androgyny in Sexton's poetry. In "Consorting with Angels," for instance, the persona wants to transcend gender: "I was tired of being a woman," "I was tired of the gender of things" (111). She dreams of a city were "the nature of angels went unexplained, / no two made in the same species / . . . each one like a poem obeying itself." In this dream, androgyny is associated with power and with poetry. The poet gets rid of gender: "and I lost my common gender and my final aspect," "I was not a woman anymore, / not one thing or the other" (112). Yet the allusion to Joan's death, the image of chains, and the reference to Christ in the final lines —"I'm no more a woman / than Christ was a man"— relate androgyny to martyrdom. The androgynous self appears more as a mystical utopia than as a real option.

The androgynous self is similarly defeated in "To Lose the Earth" where a piper, a possible alter ego of the poet, is both a female creator, or "midwife," and an androgynous figure: "He is both a woman / and a man." The cave he inhabits is similar to a womb, from which a renewed self may be born. Yet an enigmatic male dwarf seems to frustrate this rebirth. "He is the other half" (125) and therefore creates division rather than integration. His "song" is violent and unmusical, and he "will not listen" (125).

In "Rumpelstiltskin" the dwarf is androgynous like the piper in "To Lose the Earth," but his androgyny is identified with sexlessness —he has a "no-sex voice" (234) — and sterility — "no child will ever call me Papa" (234)—, and totally rejected. He is biologically male, and his apparent androgyny masks a barren masculinity. Significantly, he threatens to dispossess the feminine queen of her child, her creation. Yet the queen, like a poet in control of language, manages to name the dwarf, who then becomes split: "one part soft as a woman, / one part a barbed hook, / one part papa, / one part Doppelgänger." (237). Thus, by destroying the androgynous dwarf through language, the queen becomes powerful. As Stephanie Demetrakopoulos argues, "The current theories on the healthy arrival of androgynous personality to the mature person is belied by her [Sexton's] canon" (Demetrakopoulos 1988a: 139). Sexton has an ambiguous position to the issue of androgyny. In "The Other," for instance, the masculine Doppelgänger is both "My brother. My spouse" and "My enemy. My lover" (317).

Sexton's wavering between asserting a feminine identity and acknowledging the androgyny of a split self relates to the conflicting images of language that appear in her poems. As I argued in relation to "In Celebration of my Uterus," Sexton sometimes expresses faith in "the possibilities of the word" ("Letter Written during a January Northeaster," 91), a word that comes from a strong feminine self. Writing is like giving birth in "That Day," where female "blood" "brings forth a tower," the "reconstructed city" (180) of a unified self.

Yet this unified self is often aborted: "I am filling the room / with the words from my pen. / Words leak out of it like a miscarriage. / . . . Yet there is silence. / Always silence. / Like an enormous baby mouth" ("The Silence," 319). The alternative to this silence is accepting to some extent the fragmentation of the self. This is Sexton's attitude in "The Civil War": "I am torn in two / but I will conquer myself" (418). The God of the poem can be identified with the persona's self that "feels like thousands" and who is "whore," "old man" and "child" (418-419), possessing all genders. The combination of all these selves produces poetry, "an anthem, / a song of myself" (419).

Yet Sexton is conscious of the dangers of this position. In "Talking to Sheep," for instance, "the wise medical men," embodying the masculine principle, offer only two options to the female poet: "to cry *Baa*" and forsake rationality as women have traditionally been expected to do, or to remain silent —"not let a word or a deadstone sneak out" (485). The poet chooses the first option, "the multi-coloured, / crowded voices" (485) that give expression to a self that is both fragmented and beyond gender —"The transvestite," "My mother," "My father," "My great Aunt" (486). However lively this "transvestite" self appears, though, dissolution of identity may follow: "my mind plays simple-minded, / plays dead-woman in neon" (486).

ADRIENNE RICH

In 1974 Rich envisaged "a poetry which could affirm woman or the female, which could affirm a bisexual vision, or which could affirm a whole other way of being male and female" (Rich 1975b:113). All these possibilities are implicit in her poetry, as they were in the poetry of Plath or Sexton, and they emerged in her work as soon as she started to question gender polarities and the masculine language of rationality that had been the basis of her first two books.

Like Plath, Rich started writing within a male tradition (Rich 1975a: 90-98), using a tightly controlled and conventional language. Such poems as "At a Bach Concert" (6-7)[3] or "The Diamond Cutters" (20-21) present rational order and distancing from emotion as essential to art. Yet from the start several women in Rich's poetry fight against gender roles and male oppression —the protagonists of "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" (4) or "An Unsaid Word" (5) are instances of this— though their rebellion is more implicit than explicit.

For some time, however, Rich's models will remain masculine. In "The Roofwalker," for instance, Rich identifies with "a naked man fleeing" (49), and in "Antinous: The Diaries" (38-39) her persona is a male, though homosexual. A similar male alter ego is Orion, whom she defines as her "fierce half-brother" ("Orion," 79). This animus or masculine principle within herself is nevertheless a source of sterility, and the female speaker fails to give birth to an integrated self: "a dead child born in the dark" (79).

In later poems Rich will try to achieve what Claire Keyes calls "a radical sense of the nature of the self which points beyond the 'androgynous wholeness' of Jungian psychology toward a feminist vision where the self is not locked into gender-specific roles" (Keyes 1986: 49). Yet androgyny is the first step towards this vision, and in several poems ("The Stranger" among them) Rich searches for an androgynous self. This is the case with "I Am in Danger—Sir—," where Emily Dickinson becomes an androgynous model for the poet: "you, woman, masculine / in single-mindedness" (71). Yet androgyny creates "silence" in Emily's life, and though this silence appears as positive, the opposite of the "spoiled language" of the patriarchy, Rich will later on emphasize the need of an assertive voice for women rather than this kind of subdued duplicity. Androgyny is still upheld in "Diving into the Wreck" —"I am she: I am he" (164), but she will eventually dismiss it: "There are words I cannot choose again: *humanism androgyny*" ("Natural Resources," 262). At this point, as often in her poetry, she considers feminine fertility a model of creativity: "to help the earth deliver" (263).

Yet Rich's attitudes to femininity, identity and language are no less complex than Plath's or Sexton's. Though she often expresses belief in the capacity of women to mother themselves and create a new, powerful sort of femininity, she is also aware of the difficulties: "and pregnant women approach the white tables of the hospital / with quiet steps / and smile at the unborn child / and perhaps at death" ("Poem of Women," 91). Similarly, she believes in women's capacity to produce coherent, forceful language —"Only were there is language there is world" ("The Demon Lover," 84)—, and sometimes she presents this language as related to the rhythms of the female body: "Take the word of my pulse, loving and ordinary" ("Implosions," 95). Yet many of her poems show how self-mothering and identification with the body can bring about disintegration of the self and of language: "The strain of being born / Over and over has torn your smile into pieces" ("Leaflets," 103). In "Nightbreak," for instance, she enacts disintegration through imagery and through the blank spaces within the lines. She strives to integrate the broken self, but silence, not language is the outcome: "Time for pieces to move / dumbly back toward each other" (99).

This fragmentation of the self and of language can be politically subversive — "Revolution is poetry," she argues in "Ghazals. Homage to Ghalib" (107)—, yet transcending it is the next step:

this word I paste together
like a child fumbling

with paste and scissors
this writing in the sky with smoke

this silence

this lettering chalked on the ruins
this alphabet of the dumb

this feather held to lips
that still breathe and are warm.

("Photograph of the Unmade Bed," 136)

The word, however, does not always win over silence and over chaotic "feminine" language, and going back to a supposed primal, unconscious female language does not necessarily empower women: "Go back so far there is another language / go back far enough the language / is no longer personal // these scars bear witness but whether to repair / or to destruction / I no longer know" ("Meditations for a Savage Child," 181).

As a consequence of these doubts, a new attitude to the issue of female language emerges in Rich's poetry of the late 1960's and early 70's. This attitude can be summarized by two lines of "The Burning of Paper Instead of Children": "this is the oppressor's language // yet I need it to talk to you" (117). Rich acknowledges here women's need to use some of the weapons that the the patriarchy has used against them. This attitude accounts for the limits that Rich sets to experimentalism in her poetic practice (she remains an articulate, reasoning poet) and for her emphasis on women's education —in "Education of a Novelist," for instance, she blames Ellen Glasgow for not teaching her black servant-friend to read and write ("But you never taught her," 315). Moreover, Rich's suspicion of linguistic experiment has led her to place language in a less central position when it comes to defining woman's identity.

In an essay on Emily Dickinson, Adrienne Rich argues the following:

> Poetic language —the poem on paper— is a concretization of the poetry of the world at large, the self, and the forces within the self; and those forces are rescued from formlessness, lucidified, and integrated in the act of writing poems. But there is a more ancient concept of the poet, which is that she is endowed to speak for those who do not have the gift of language, or to see for those who —for whatever reasons— are less conscious of what they are living through. (Rich 1979: 119)

Very often in Rich's poetry female identity results not from constructing an isolated self, but from the female self's involvement with women as a group. In "The Spirit of Place," for instance, identity for women is inseparable from solidarity in a political

sense: "It was not enough to name ourselves anew / While the spirit of the masters / calls the freed woman to forget the slave" (298).

As a consequence, though Rich continues to consider specific forms of creativity for women that are related to female natural fertility —"our ancient art of making out of nothing" ("Turning the Wheel," 307)—, her emphasis now is on community and power rather than on biological, psychological or cultural definitions of woman: "I am not the wheatfield / nor the virgin forest" ("From an Old House in America," 216). Her definition now takes into account geography, history and community as well as gender: "I am an American woman" (215). To this definition new elements will be added throughout Rich's poetic career. One is lesbianism —"I am a lesbian" ("Mother-in-Law," 292)—, which to Rich is not only a matter of sexual choice, but a feminist commitment to women , "woman identification and woman bonding" (Rich 1986a: 23) Another element of the definition is Jewishness, a theme central to Rich's latest two books, *Your Native Land, Your Life* and *Time's Power*.

Probably as a result of considering nationality, historical inheritance and race, not only gender, as central to the self, Rich seems to have recovered an interest in the male's search for identity: "She is listening for shreds of music. / He is searching for his name" ("Poetry: I," 1986b: 66). For the first time in many years men in Rich's poetry have a positive part to play in changing society and in destroying gender divisions: "we who refuse to be women and men as women and men are chartered" ("Yom Kippur 1984," 1986b: 78).

Time's Power, Rich's last book to date, has a much less self-assured tone than some of the poet's previous work. The definitions of the self she attempts bear some resemblance to earlier definitions of the female self ridden by either silence or inarticulateness:

Unnameable by choice.
So why am I out there, trying
to read your name in the illegible air?

—vowel washed from a stone,
solitude of no absence,
forbidden face-to-face

—trying to hang these wraiths
of syllables, breath
without echo, why?

("Turning," 1989: 55)

The complexities of the female self are now related to the effects of time and the loss of memory in all human beings. If the word "universal" did not have sexist connotations —the universal has traditionally been confused with the masculine—, it might be applied to many poems of the book. Though her feminism continues to shape

her poetry, Rich presents here the search for identity as a common human pursuit in which not only gender, but community and history are involved.

CONCLUSIONS

Much of the complexity and richness of the poems I have discussed in this essay probably relates to their authors' passionate search for an identity as women. To Plath, Sexton and Rich, poetry is a means of giving birth to themselves, to use an image which is central to their writing, and therefore both gender and language are important themes in their poetry. They all started their literary careers within the framework of a male poetic tradition, and their early writing, especially in the case of Plath and Rich, shows an allegiance to rationality, order and formal restraint, that is to say to values that have traditionally been labelled as masculine. Moreover, in their early work gender is conceived of in terms of unreconciled polarities, and in many of their poems women are "muted" because the only possibility of expression offered to them is the language of masculinity, one that denies woman's feelings, her body and her unconscious desires. Yet even at this early stage Plath, Sexton and Rich rebel against the restrictions of conventional femininity, and their use of gendered images and of poetic language gradually becomes more subversive.

They adopt similar strategies. As far as their use of images of womanhood is concerned, they sometimes present a biologically fertile, feminine archetype as a model of artistic creativity. Although this Earth Mother figure is inspired by traditional myths of femininity, she is active rather than passive, and powerful rather than oppressed. Often, however, Plath, Sexton and Rich show the Earth Mother's fertility as threatened or defeated by masculine destructiveness, and attempt to create an androgynous self that combines feminine fertility with masculine aggression and power. In Plath's poetry the androgynous self is born in only a few poems, and then only at the price of violence and death. In Sexton's the androgynous ideal often masks a barren sort of masculinity, or is more a utopia than a real option for women, and the same applies to the androgyne in Rich's poetry. However, both the Earth Mother type and the androgyne play important roles in the work of these three poets, since they serve to challenge traditional views on gender.

These poets' attitude to language and their use of poetic language in their work runs along similar lines. Their early restraint gives way to experimentalism in later writing. Nevertheless, even in their more experimental poetry their views on language, like those on gender, remain complex and give rise to tensions. Sometimes they associate female identity with silence. Sometimes they define feminine language as overflowing, surreal language originating in woman's unconscious and in her chaotic body. In other poems, though, the fertile female persona produces more assertive and coherent words. Their vision of identity also wavers between the unified female self

they aspire to achieve, capable of powerful, articulate language, and a fragmented, inarticulate self that is nevertheless poetically productive. Similarly, the androgynous identity that they sometimes envisage can be identified with a split, incoherent self producing irrational language, or with a self doomed to duplicity or silence.

Accordingly, the poems of Plath, Sexton and Rich are full of images of silence and of chaotic sound, as well as of homages to "the word" and attempts at assertive, forceful language. Plath's *Ariel* illustrates these contradictions: the screams, birth cries and "unintelligible syllables" described through imagery contrast with the conciseness and bareness of Plath's style in the book. The masculine symbolic and the feminine semiotic are opposite poles that these poets try to integrate.

Harmony between these opposites or between conflicting views on female identity in the poetry of Plath, Sexton and Rich is seldom, or never, achieved. In this sense, the contradictions in the work of these poets parallel those of feminist criticism in the last two or three decades. Many of their poems, both in terms of language and in terms of theme, could be related to the concept of *écriture féminine* in contemporary French feminism, but on other occasions they search for form in more "masculine" ways since they are aware of the powerlessness that a fragmented self and fragmented language may imply. Self-mothering is a central concern in their work, as it is in much feminist theoretical writing of our time and, like many feminist critics, they sometimes present this self-mothering in the literal, biological sense, and sometimes as a metaphor for individuation that does not exclude masculine aspects of the self.

Rich's case is slightly different. In recent years she has come to regard language as less central to a definition of the self, and to consider involvement with community and history as a source of identity for both women and men. Her poetry has always been more directly political than Plath's or Sexton's, and therefore more in tune with the English and American feminist tradition than with current post-structuralist theories inspired by Lacanian psychoanalysis or French feminist thinking. Her position can probably be related to the first wave of feminism in this century in that, like the feminists of that period, she is intensely preoccupied by political power, its effects on women, and the ways in which women, while keeping their identity, can appropriate power for their own purposes. To her, finding an identity for women is not a final aim, but a step towards women's liberation, and the latter depends on solidarity among women and on their capacity to fight patriarchal oppression in practical, not just theoretical, terms.

Nevertheless, Rich shares with Plath and Sexton, and with most contemporary feminists, a subversive attitude to gender. Moreover, like Plath and Sexton, and unlike some feminist theorists, she has usually refused to define women in one way only. Although feminist criticism is, in general, varied and anti-dogmatic, theoretical writing lends itself more to establishing polarities: "feminine" versus "patriarchal" language, the semiotic versus the symbolic, the biological or psychological versus the cultural or

political... In poetry, however —or at least in the work of the poets I have discussed here— such categories tend to collapse. Plath's, Sexton's and Rich's explorations of gender, language and identity lead to the idea that woman is undefinable:

> If you think you can grasp me, think again:
> my story flows in more than one direction
> a delta springing from the riverbed
> with its five fingers spread.
> (Adrienne Rich, "Delta," 1989: 32)

This is probably their most interesting challenge to a tradition of masculine thinking that has tried to define women in rigid ways while men were more frequently allowed the privilege of diversity and change.

NOTES

1. All the quotes from poems in the Plath section of this essay are from Plath 1981.
2. The quotes from poems in the Sexton section of this essay are from Sexton 1981.
3. Most quotes from poems in the Rich section of this essay are from Rich 1984. When dealing with poems not included in this edition, I give the year of the volume they belong to.

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METODOLOGÍA SEMÁNTICA DE ANÁLISIS DE TEXTOS LITERARIOS

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1. OBJETIVOS

Hoy en día es posible admitir, de acuerdo con las ideas de Leo Spitzer, que el examen de los hechos del significado puede poner en evidencia aspectos importantes del pensamiento del autor de un determinado discurso (Albaladejo 1983: 161-62). Esto convierte el análisis lingüístico de la obra literaria —la cual está, además, estrechamente relacionada con los mecanismos de la lengua poética, para muchos una modalidad privilegiada de lenguaje (cfr. Kristeva 1981: 228-32)— en una de las aproximaciones a la misma potencialmente más fructíferas, a la vez que ayuda a explicar la tendencia actual a valorar positivamente los estudios lingüísticos de lo literario.

Tras el largo periodo de aislamiento mutuo de lingüística y literatura, en el presente estado de cosas, que es consecuencia de las investigaciones de los formalistas rusos y checos, de la Estilística y del *New Criticism* (García Berrio y Vera Luján 1977: 232-34) y, de forma significativa, de las teorizaciones expuestas en el Congreso de Indiana de 1958, la lingüística se considera, de manera generalizada, como la ciencia necesaria en la evolución de la crítica literaria, reconociéndosele el alto grado de rigor que aporta (Alcaraz 1990: 82). Esta situación permite revitalizar las tesis de Spitzer y, siguiendo a Lotman, que afirma que "la idea no está contenida en unas citas, incluso bien elegidas, sino que se expresa en toda la estructura artística", propugnar que "el pensamiento del escritor se realiza en una estructura artística determinada de la cual es inseparable" (Lotman 1982: 22, 23).

La necesaria relación de adecuación entre pensamiento y forma, que exige un acercamiento inmanentista a la obra literaria, es posible trasladarla al plano operativo

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La necesaria relación de adecuación entre pensamiento y forma, que exige un acercamiento inmanentista a la obra literaria, es posible trasladarla al plano operativo

de la investigación postulando que "el pensamiento del escritor está organizado en torno a un cierto número de palabras claves y temas", los cuales responden a elecciones conscientes o inconscientes, y que "sus imágenes se pueden ordenar dentro de campos asociativos homogéneos, y en muchos casos, bien delimitados" (Alcaraz 1982: 28-29), lo cual está próximo a un reconocimiento de la existencia del significado literario objetivo, así como de la posibilidad de su determinación (cfr. García Berrio 1989: 65-66). Esto equivale a decir que el pensamiento subyacente se manifiesta textualmente en un sistema de recurrencias y paralelismos, y señala, por tanto, en la dirección del análisis de las reiteraciones lingüísticas como medio para su delimitación.

Las preocupaciones del autor, que, según esto visión, se ven reflejadas en los hechos de estilo, vendrán dadas por todos los elementos lingüísticos del texto examinados en función de su utilización con fines literarios. Ya sean estos recursos fonológicos, léxicos o sintácticos, de naturaleza oracional o supraoracional, su presencia será indicativa. Pero resulta evidente que será el plano léxico aquél en el que se podrá llevar a cabo un estudio más viable y, posiblemente, más riguroso, por la conexión más fácilmente sistematizable que existe entre léxico y significado. Los aspectos semánticos del léxico, serán, por tanto, los que conducirán de manera más directa a esas preocupaciones.

A la vista de lo anterior, será nuestro objetivo el desarrollo de una metodología práctica estilística de análisis léxico-semántico de las obras literarias que suponga un aumento de sistematización previa y un énfasis en lo lingüístico con respecto al modelo circular spitzeriano (cfr. Albaladejo 1983: 162). Para ello, será preciso, en primer lugar, determinar los elementos que intervienen en la modelación de la estructura léxico-semántica de los textos que puedan, además, hacer posible la manifestación y ordenación de recurrencias en ese plano. Habrá que definir, por tanto, unas unidades básicas y establecer las relaciones que respondan a las virtuales conexiones semánticas entre ellas. Una vez realizada esa labor de caracterización, será posible formular la metodología para la síntesis y articulación de todos los rasgos enunciados.

2. DEFINICIONES

2.1. La concepción actual del significado permite superar las trabas que imponía la perspectiva tradicional, de carácter realista. Hoy en día, tras la lógica relegación a que fue sometida por el esceptismo cientificista del estructuralismo en sus primeras épocas (García Berrio y Vera Luján 1977: 136-47, cfr. Bloomfield 1964: 161 y ss.), la semántica, para la que ha dejado de ser imprescindible lo extralingüístico, se ciñe de manera especial al ámbito de lo intensional, con lo que las teorizaciones e investigaciones relacionadas con esta disciplina han adquirido enormes posibilidades.

La diferenciación entre significado y mundo referencial, que se plasma en el triángulo de Ogden y Richards, y la distinción subsiguiente de Heger entre significado y concepto (Heger 1974: 3-5, 157-61) permiten atribuir al primero una naturaleza lingüística que se relaciona con lo conceptual, pero que no está necesariamente ligada a la realidad. Con ello, el significado deja de tener carácter de reflejo del mundo, al tiempo que se reducen los problemas que la naturaleza dinámica y difícilmente determinable de éste supone. Así se soluciona, también, la cuestión planteada por los términos sin referente, que, de acuerdo con esta postura, son elementos que se correlacionan exclusivamente con la parte del pensamiento estructurada lingüísticamente.

Esta interpretación hace posible eludir la difícil definición de significado en relación con lo extralingüístico y es, además, compatible con las teorías que suponen que el lenguaje se estructura de manera similar al pensamiento conceptual. Así, dice Jackendoff con respecto al nivel de palabra, el que más parece, desde un punto de vista extensional, vincularse con los seres, estados, procesos y acciones del mundo de la realidad o de la ficción:

> word meanings must be treated as internalized mental representations. This rules out . . . an extensional theory of meaning, which identifies the meaning of 'dog' with the set of all dogs (or with the set of all dogs in all possible worlds). It also rules out a Platonic theory such as Kotz's (1980), where words meanings are abstract objects existing independently of minds . . . word meanings are expressions of conceptuol structure . . . there is not a form of mental representation devoted to a strictly semantic level of word meanings distinct from the level at which linguistic and non-linguistic information are compatible. (Jackendoff 1986: 109-110)

Esta visión de pensamiento y lengua como estructuras entrelazadas de elementos y relaciones que se han de organizar por medio de conexiones intrasistemáticas sin recurrir a la "realidad" del mundo, es, precisamente, la que, además de estar subyacente a la correspondencia de pensamiento y formalización textual, permite una aproximación efectiva al problema de la caracterización léxico-semántica del texto.

El significado de los signos debe entenderse como el papel que éstos están jugando en un sistema de lenguaje. Puede admitirse, por tanto, que el significado es una expresión verbal de algún tipo o es traducible a una de ellas, lo cual supone adoptar la semántica intensional, al aceptar la posibilidad de representar cualquier unidad léxica por medio de otras unidades lingüísticas.

2.2. Si el análisis léxico-semántico debe limitarse al ámbito de lo intensional, dentro de él ha de orientarse de forma primordial hacia el nivel estructurado en torno a la *palabra*. Pese a que la transmisión de significado se apoya en todos los rasgos lingüísticos, desde el más pequeño a la misma disposición textual, ya que éstos

pueden corresponder a conceptos más o menos simples, la naturaleza operativa de la *palabra* como elemento nuclearizador, resumidor o integrador, de conceptos le confiere un carácter especial en la ordenación del pensamiento y en el transporte de significado: "El vocabulario es . . . objetivamente . . . el portador de mayor carga semántica de todo el enunciado," (Alcaraz 1982: 59, cfr. Jackendoff 1985: 109). Su carácter de "unidad léxica por excelencia" se debe a que responde directamente "al saber empírico de los hablantes" (Alcaraz 1982: 67, 72) y esta cualidad hace que, aunque no sea la unidad mínima de significación de su nivel, la *palabra* constituya un elemento lingüístico de gran utilidad. Así lo prueba el hecho de que la ordenación de los diccionarios, uno de los elementos más provechosos, tanto en la vida cotidiana como en la investigación semántica, se apoye en ella (cfr. Jackendoff 1985: 110).

La concepción tradicional de la unidad *palabra* presenta problemas metodológicos, como, por ejemplo, el de su difícil demarcación fuera del medio gráfico y, a veces, incluso en éste, tal como ocurre en el caso de la existencia de los "phrasal verbs" o el uso vacilante de guiones en inglés. Por ello, muchos investigadores, especialmente los que se mueven dentro del paradigma del estructuralismo de la primera época, se sirven de otra unidad, el *morfema*, salvando, así, el obstáculo (Alcaraz 1990: 68, 100). Por su parte, para eliminar las imprecisiones, Ullmann establece un triple criterio de definición de *palabra* como unidad: su cohesión en lo fonológico, en lo gramatical y en lo semántico. Esta entidad viene dada en el primero de los tres ámbitos por la interdependencia de sus elementos, ya que la articulación de uno de ellos condiciona la de los demás. También existen en las distintas lenguas mecanismos lingüísticos que contribuyen, a veces de modo decisivo, a establecer sus límites fonéticos. En lo gramatical la cohesión la proporciona su función sintáctica como elemento constitutivo de sintagmas u oraciones; y en lo semántico, viene dada por la existencia de significado aunque haya sido privada del soporte contextual (Ullmann 1962: 40-53).[1]

Pero, pese a esta triple delimitación, el concepto de *lexía*, cercano al de *palabra*, ofrece más ventajas como unidad léxica en el plano metodológico, ya que al ampliar el campo cubierto por la segunda elimina la mayoría de inconvenientes. Las *lexías simples* equivalen al concepto tradicional de *palabra*, mientras que las *paralexías*, que se dividen en compuestas y complejas, se asimilan a las unidades léxicas compuestas, palabras compuestas y frases hechas, con comportamiento sintáctico global y significado semántico similar al de una palabra. En las *lexías compuestas*, de carácter transparente o endocéntrico, se puede obtener su significado por la suma del correspondiente a cada una de las partes, mientras que las *lexías complejas* poseen carácter idiomático, es decir, no permiten construirlo mediante ese proceso de adición semántica (Alcaraz 1982: 69-71).

2.3. La concepción de significado que hemos adoptado, hace posible la sistematización lingüística del nivel de *lexía* de manera rigurosa por medio de unidades de rango inferior. Equiparando significado a contenido semántico, consideraremos, por tanto, que su formalización se puede llevar a cabo mediante dos clases de componentes: los *semas*, o rasgos de naturaleza nocional, con carácter de clase abierta, que son de ámbito paradigmático, y los *clasemas*, o rasgos categoriales, es decir, equivalentes a semas de tipo categorial, que son de orden sintagmático, ya que en ellos tienen su base las reglas de selección y combinación de términos. Así, siguiendo esta doble posibilidad, la *lexía simple* "hielo" estaría formada por un *sema*, constituido, por un lado, por la unión semántica de los cuatro *semas* que lo integran, [masa] [cristalina] [de agua] [congelada], y por otro, por los clasemas: [-animado] [+concreto] [-contable] (Alcaraz 1982: 85-86). Esto responde a la visión de Heger: "Así como el *sema*, el *significado* está unido al *concepto* por una relación de especie a género; la relación entre *significado* y *semema* es la de una variación combinatoria, o si no hay combinación disyuntiva que cree una homonimia o una polisemia, la de una simple identidad" (Heger 1974: 27).

Las analogías entre el *semema* y las unidades del lenguaje de las que se sirve la investigación estructuralista son evidentes, siendo la más significativa el paralelismo entre este elemento, "a bundle of distinctive semantic features", y el fonema, "a bundle of distinctive phonetic features" (Huddleston 1974: 3). Las correspondencias se podrían concretar aún mejor mediante una doble ecuación: la relación entre fonema y morfema es equivalente a la existente entre componente semántico y semema, y la que se establece entre rasgo fonético distintivo y fonema es paralela a la que existe entre rasgo semántico distintivo y semema (cfr. Huddleston 1974: 4-5).

Los *clasemas* equivalen, dentro de las unidades de significado, a los rasgos de la gramática generativo-transformacional (cfr. García Berrio y Vera Luján 1977: 120-21). Constituyen una clase cerrada, tienen un carácter próximo a lo universal, se presentan bajo forma dicotómica de oposición, [± animado], [± humano], etc. y, al contrario que los semas, están jerarquizados, de tal manera que el de más intensión elimina al de más extensión. Así, el clasema [+humano] supondría la presencia implícita de [+animado] (Alcaraz 1982: 90). Su naturaleza categorial les da, además, una importante función en el plano sintagmático por condicionar la relación entre unidades léxicas, ya que del quebrantamiento de las normas que imponen se derivan hechos de inaceptabilidad lingüística como "The hand walked down the street".

Pero la sistematización semántica de los elementos léxicos de un texto mediante el recurso a los clasemas no es todo lo distintiva que la relación entre pensamiento y forma exige, por lo que la otra alternativa que ofrece la doble visión del significado, es decir, el análisis de semas de clase abierta, se presenta como el procedimiento a seguir. Esto convierte a los semas, íntimamente ligados a la la idea de "mínimos" de significado, en la unidad más importante del plano semántico desde el punto de vista de nuestros objetivos.

La construcción del significado de una lexía a base de rasgos nocionales o semas puede llevarse a cabo en el terreno práctico por medio de las definiciones incluidas en algunos de los diccionarios que siguen una ordenación convencional. En este sentido es interesante hacer notar que una obra como *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* incluye un apéndice en el que figuran las aproximadamente 2.200 palabras con las que se da la definición de las más de 56.000 entradas de que consta, y con el que se puede cubrir el resto de términos de la lengua inglesa (Procter 1978: B15). Esto supone una innegable y útil prueba de la viabilidad de reducir el plano léxico a unidades semánticas elementales, o al menos elementales desde el punto de vista del análisis práctico, que lleva, además, implícito, por el carácter sistematizador de estas compilaciones, el grado mínimo de coincidencia interindividual preciso en cualquier aproximación a la lengua como producto social. Con ello, es posible llegar al semema de manera práctica y, a la vez, rigurosa.

En la caracterización sémica, junto a los *semas nocionales centrales* pueden existir *semas delimitadores*, que son el paralelo semántico de los determinantes, cuantificadores, etc. de la sintaxis. Los *semas modalizados* también tienen una función de modelación, como es el caso de [resembling]. Otro tipo de rasgo semántico que ayuda a perfilar el significado del sema o semas centrales es el *virtuema* o *sema virtual* u *ocasional*, que contribuye a una mayor precisión, como ocurre con [strong] en "chest": [large] [strong] [box] (Alcaraz 1982: 87-89).

La preferencia por una de las diversas posibilidades de significado de una lexía, clarificadas gracias a sus distintas representaciones sémicas (en la polisemia varios sememas con algún sema idéntico y en la homonimia sin ningún sema coincidente) (cfr. Heger 1974: 25-27), viene impuesta por el contexto.[1] La interacción entre los semas y clasemas de las distintas unidades léxicas determinará la selección de uno de los posibles sememas de cada una de ellas, si bien el proceso se complica en el caso de la lengua poética por su carácter abierto.

Pero la elección del semema apropiado dependerá, además del contexto lingüístico de la lexía en cuestión, del contexto situacional de emisor y receptor, en el que intervienen "todas las convenciones y presupuestos aceptados por los interlocutores", y en consecuencia, del cultural (Alcaraz 1982: 173-75).[2]

El contexto situacional y el cultural se relacionan directamente con la existencia del significado connotativo o expresivo, tradicionalmente opuesto al denotativo, descriptivo o cognoscitivo. El primero transporta un significado que se añade al segundo, pudiendo llegar a condicionarlo de manera decisiva. Así, la lexía "ride" en la frase "ride a horse" enunciada en ciertos contextos puede connotar "buena situación social" mientras que en otros no. Es necesario, por tanto, el registro del significado connotativo por medio de un sema especial o *sema connotativo*, que debe lexicalizarse e incluirse en el semema al que moldea de acuerdo con su valor contextual, y que debe ser representado con un símbolo diferenciado para que pueda distinguirse de la definición estrictamente denotativa: "saloon" = Iwealthl [big] [car]. Su presencia es necesaria porque, de lo contrario, las posibles conexiones del semema al que pertenece con otros sememas podrían pasar inadvertidas.

El tener en cuenta estas vertientes del contexto no supone, por otro lado, dejar el ámbito de lo intensional, abandonando la concepción del significado como fenómeno intralingüístico, y entrar en el plano de la realidad, sino enmarcar el análisis dentro de un punto de vista pragmático que tenga en cuenta el uso. Ello exige, sin embargo, recurrir a modelos pragmáticos que incluyan factores contextuales del ámbito situacional y del cultural para, formalizando las distintas posibilidades de significado añadido que cada uno de los enunciados del texto puede transportar, poder elegir los sememas adecuados de manera coherente y rigurosa, así como caracterizarlos connotativamente.

2.4. Al aceptar, como consecuencia de la importancia que atribuimos a la influencia del contexto lingüístico en cada unidad, que "the meaning of a lexical unit reveals itself through its contextual relations" (Cruse 1986: 84), reconocemos la necesidad del estudio de las relaciones semánticas existentes entre las distintas unidades (Lyons 1969: 427), al tiempo que abrimos una vía complementaria de representación del significado. La investigación debe basarse, por tanto, en la formalización mediante rasgos internos, por un lado, y por otro, dar como resultado, gracias al enlace entre elementos, un entramado de relaciones externas. De esta manera tendremos "concept-internal" y "concept-external information structure" (Jackendoff 1985: 112), con lo que evitaremos el riesgo de una única perspectiva.

Adoptando un punto de vista tripartito de las correspondencias semánticas, de acuerdo con el cual todas ellas obedecerían a una vinculación de similitud o identidad, a una de subordinación o a una teleológica, es decir, de causa, efecto, consecuencia o fin, es posible establecer una tipología basada en la distinción entre relaciones de *sinonimia*, como la que existiría entre "bold" y "brave", de *hiponimia*, que se produciría entre "terrier" y "dog", de *hiperonimia*, como la que habría entre "rose" y "flower", de *antonimia*, que sería la existente entre "single" y "married", de *conversión* o *reciprocidad*, como en el par "attack" y "defend", y de *implicación*, que cubriría varias posibilidades (cfr. Alcaraz 1982: 109-10).

Apoyándonos en la noción de *sense* que da Lyons para la palabra, "its place in a system of relationships which it contracts with other words in the vocabulary" (Lyons 1969: 427), admitiremos que "two items are synonymous if they have the same sense" (Lyons 1969: 446), y llamaremos *sinónimos perfectos absolutos* a los que posean exactamente el mismo semema, es decir, a los que estén integrados por los mismos semas.

Sin embargo, en la mayoría de los casos existirá una coincidencia sémica en mayor o menor medida, por lo que puede resultar más fructífero hablar de relaciones

de *sinonimia de grado* y de *sinónimos parciales*. Tendremos *sinonimia perfecta parcial* cuando un semema de una lexía polisémica sea idéntico a uno de los sememas de otra lexía, y *sinonimia parcial* cuando, aunque no coincidan los sememas, sea igual al menos un sema (cfr. Alcaraz 1982: 112-17).

En la taxonomía algebraica de Cruse, que es muy conveniente tener en cuenta por adoptar el otro extremo de la perspectiva ya que no se apoya en el significado interno de las unidades, la sinonimia se define como la relación existente entre "X" e "Y" en las oraciones "A + B + X" y "A + B + Y", cuando ambas implican "equivalent truth conditions" y "X" e "Y" tienen identidad sintáctica. Si su distribución sintáctica coincide sólo parcialmente, tenemos sinónimos parciales, como por ejemplo "finish" y "complete". Si pertenecen a categorías sintácticas distintas, se encuentran en "a quasi-relationship", y hay "para-relations" cuando éstas se definen "in terms of expectation rather than necessity", como por ejemplo, en el caso de "pet" y "dog" tomados como sinónimos, tal como viene a demostrar la actitud hacia "It's a dog but it's not a pet", que se consideraría normal, mientras que "It's a dog but it's a pet", se interpretaría como tautológica (Cruse 1986: 88, 96-97, 99).

La *hiperonimia* y la *hiponimia* son relaciones de inclusión que se complementan. En ellas una de las lexías posee mayor extensión, el *hiperónimo o superordenado*, mientras que el otro, el *hipónimo*, tiene mayor intensión (Lyons 1969: 453-55). De acuerdo con Cruse, X es hipónimo de Y (e Y hiperónimo de X) si "A is f(X)" hace necesario que "A is f(Y)", donde f(X) representa la elaboración sintáctica mínima de X para que éste funcione como complemento de "be". "This is a dog" —> "This is an animal" (Cruse 1986: 88-89). Si tenemos en cuenta su distinción de "para-relations" a que hemos aludido, "knife" será *quasi-hyponym* de "cutlery" que es su *quasi-superordinate*, ya que, por ser el primero contable y no serlo el segundo, pertenecen a categorías sintácticas distintas (Cruse 1986: 97).

La definición de la relación de *antonimia* presenta muchos problemas si tenemos en cuenta la capacidad humana de dicotomizar la realidad, ya que "cualquier elemento puede servir de objeto antitético de otro, si mediante una abstracción que fije nuestra mente en dos, por medio de una disyunción, uno es antónimo de otro" (Alcaraz 1982: 119). La clasificación de antónimos puede llevarse a cabo, por tanto, desde muchos puntos de vista, respecto a coordenadas físicas, estáticas o dinámicas, etc. A esto hay que añadir que el contraste oposicional puede producirse con respecto a cada uno de los semas que componen el semema de una lexía, como ocurre con "man" que se puede oponer a "boy", "woman", "beast", etc. (cfr. Pyles y Algeo 1970: 223). En el caso de lexías polisémicas, resulta aún más difícil encontrar una perfecta antonimia, al igual que ocurre entre las que se encuentran en una relación escalar, como "hot - warm - lukewarm - cool - cold". Ello lleva a Pyles a afirmar que "there are . . . many different kinds of opposition, so most words have several antonyms", y a distinguir entre *contrarios* y *contradictorio*. Para él, contrarios de "white" son "yellow", "grey", "pink", "red", etc; siendo "black" el *contrario extremo* y "non-white" el contradictorio (Pyles y Algeo 1970: 223). Por el mismo motivo, en el esquema de Lyons, la antonimia, junto a la *complementariedad* y la *conversión*, forma parte de lo que este lingüista denomina "oppositioness of meaning". Complementarios serían, según él, "single" y "married", conversos serían "buy" y "sell" o "husband" y "wife", mientras que existiría relación de antonimia entre "big" y "small". De esta ultima dice Lyons: "It is characteristic of antonyms of this class, 'opposites' *par excellence*, that they are regularly gradable" (Lyons 1969: 460-69).

Cruse, que reserva la noción de *contrariety* para el nivel oracional, habla de *incompatibilidad*, la cual existiría para él en el caso de "X" e "Y" "if a sentence of the form *A is f(X)* can be found which entails a parallel sentence of the form *A is not f(Y)*", como en el enunciado "It's a carnation", que exige "It's not a rose". La relación de *compatibilidad* se aplica a dos elementos, cuando siendo éstos "X" e "Y", "A is f(X)" y "A is not f(X)" son lógicamente independientes de "A is f(Y)" y "A is not f(Y)", teniendo ambos un hiperónimo común, como es el caso de "pet" y "dog" (Cruse 1986: 92-94).

Para clarificar la situación, consideraremos que existe *antonimia* entre dos lexías cuando la negación de una sea equivalente a la afirmación de la otra, siendo ésta una condición necesaria. Es decir, desde una formulación algebraica, la existente entre "X" e "Y" cuando "A = f(X)" y "A = not f(Y)" sean equivalentes e impliquen necesariamente que "A = f(Y)" y "A = not f(X)" también lo sean. Este sería el caso de la relación semántica de los elementos "single" y "married", próximos a lo que Lyons llama *complementarios* y Pyles *contradictorios*. También incluiremos en nuestro esquema como clase diferenciada la *conversión* o *reciprocidad*, que será la correspondiente a la conversión de Lyons, y que es la que existe entre pares de lexías como, por ejemplo, "buy" y "sell".

La definición de *implicación* es más compleja aún que la de antonimia, pues debe englobar, "ya que muchísimas son las posibilidades de implicar y de quedar implicado" (Alcaraz 1982: 110), muy distintos tipos. Entre ellos destaca la relación que Lyons llama antonimia, pues "A is small" implica "A is not big", la de incompatibilidad ya que "A is red" implica "A is not white", y la de consecuencia, ya que "destroy" implica "attack".

Desde un punto de vista práctico, reconoceremos que existe *implicación* cuando, no pudiendo ser clasificadas en ninguno de los otros tipos de relaciones, sinonimia, hiperonimia, etc., dos lexías estén semánticamente relacionadas, y especialmente, cuando el semema de una sea sema constituyente de la otra.

Para la resolución de ambigüedades pueden ser de utilidad las funciones léxicas de Apresyan. Estas se basan en la formalización por medio de pares tales como *lugar de la acción / acción* ("scene" / "to play"), *unidad / pluridad* ("sheep" / "flock"), etc. (Alcaraz 1982: 122).

3. METODOLOGÍA

3.1. Adaptando una visión dicotómica, es posible dividir toda proposición en dos partes, una conocida, o *tema*, situada normalmente en posición inicial, y una desconocida o comentario, denominada *rema*, que sería lo que dicha proposición aporta como novedad. Sin embargo, hoy en día también es frecuente entender el término *tema* como equivalente a *tópico discursivo*, con lo se equipara a la "proposición (o conjunto de proposiciones) sobre la que se *da* o se *pide* nueva información" (Alcaraz 1990: 132). Pese a las diferencias, *tema* es en ambos casos una noción de gran importancia desde el punto de vista textual, ya que sirve de base a distintas maneras de analizar la articulación del texto. Así, extrapolando la relación *tema-rema* al nivel supraoracional, se puede considerar el proceso de *textualización*, o formación del texto, como la contraposición textual constante entre lo nuevo y lo viejo (Bernárdez 1982: 125-34). Por el contrario, la construcción textual sería igual a un proceso de *topicalización* si el texto se entendiera como una sucesión de elementos proposicionales articulados en torno al *tema* o *tópico discursivo* por medio de mecanismos de deíxis y marcadores discursivos (Alcaraz 1990: 133-41).

Frente a estas dos visiones, nosotros preferimos definir el concepto de *tema* como la unidad del plano textual equivalente al sema del plano léxico, y reservar el nombre de *tematización* para la operación de repetición sémica. La persistencia de un *tema* a lo largo del texto le proporcionará el carácter de elemento primordial en la creación y sostenimiento de la coherencia; pero su importancia desde el punto de vista de nuestros objetivos estriba en que su elección por parte del autor, consciente, impuesta por los "motivos" o "puntos o centros de interés elegidos apriorísticamente . . . para poder organizar el entramado narrativo" (Alcaraz 1982: 152), o inconsciente, será la que deberá conducirnos a sus preocupaciones.

El proceso de construcción de la *tematización textual* se lleva a cabo mediante el apoyo en tendencias isotópicas, entendiendo por *isotopía* la repetición de un rasgo lingüístico en un discurso. El mecanismo isotópico existe, consecuentemente, en toda organización textual, pero, a la hora de efectuar análisis estilísticos, se debe distinguir, gracias a su cantidad, las repeticiones relevantes de las que no lo son. También hay que diferenciar los recursos isotópicos estilísticos de los inherentes al sistema de la lengua, que tiene en el principio de redundancia uno de sus soportes fundamentales.[3]

Un texto posee una estructura isotópica de significado articulada en forma de redes temáticas. Una red indica un mínimo semántico discursivo y "normalmente en un texto coexisten varias redes simultáneas [que] no operan en espacios paralelos sin puntos de tangencia [sino que] antes al contrario, pueden tener y tienen puntos comunes entre sí" (García Berrio y Vera Luján 1977: 206). Cada una de las redes se apoya en las relaciones semánticas denotativas así como en las connotativas, lo que

equivale a decir que cualquier rasgo lingüístico de cualquier nivel, fonético, sintáctico, etc., puede, en principio, contribuir a la creación de una línea isotópica. Esto no es más que una consecuencia del principio lingüístico que establece que cualquier elemento puede transportar significado, y que explica que la semántica sea una rama de la lingüística que se encuentre subyacente a todas las demás. Pero el hecho de que la formalización temática se realice mediante tendencias isotópicas significa, restringiendo el punto de vista al léxico-semántico, que se puede considerar a los *temas* como "las unidades de sentido del discurso formadas por la acumulación sémica, de acuerdo con las preferencias del autor" (Alcaraz 1982: 153), ya sea de semas denotativos o connotativos. La sistematización de la repetición de semas debe llevarnos, por tanto, a los *temas*.

Gracias a la ordenación del plano léxico por medio del análisis sémico, se puede descubrir, por medio de la reiteración, las isotopías recursivas, que son las que pondrán en evidencia las preocupaciones subyacentes al texto y permitirán acercarnos al pensamiento del autor. Dicho análisis, que debe apoyarse en una doble vertiente, interna en la configuración de las unidades, e interna y externa en la delimitación de su relación con otras, debe conducir a los núcleos de tematización textual.

La metodología a seguir debe basarse en tres etapas principales: la ordenación de la formalización de los campos semánticos propios del texto, la determinación del alcance de la acumulación sémica y el análisis de los hechos estilísticos del dominio léxico-semántico que supongan desviación de la norma. Si la primera, que recogerá "las tendencias isotópicas de orden paradigmático" (Alcaraz 1982: 149), aunque significativa en lo que a la cantidad respecta, tendrá como fines principales la detección y ordenación, que son, primordialmente, cualitativos, las otras dos ayudarán a la configuración y proporcionarán, además, información cuantitativa.

3.2. La primera de las fases de la metodología que propugnamos es posible gracias a las interrelaciones semánticas que existen entre los elementos léxicos. Estas dan lugar a estructuras de tipo reticular, en las que las unidades se aglutinan pluridireccionalmente alrededor de núcleos, erigiendo agrupaciones de todas clases. Entre ellas destaca de manera especial la formalización particular en un texto de los campos semánticos, que "son áreas formadas por palabras que se arraciman sistemáticamente en sectores de la experiencia de los pueblos y de las personas individuales, por lo que pueden variar de una lengua a otra, de un periodo a otro, de una persona a otra y . . . de una obra a otra" (Alcaraz 1982: 128).

Un campo semántico es una estructura formada por un núcleo léxico aglutinador al que se encuentran conectadas una serie de lexías por medio de las relaciones que hemos definido en el punto 2.4. Estas lexías, a su vez, pueden servir de enlace entre el núcleo y otras unidades, si bien, de acuerdo con los objetivos de la investigación,

se pueden establecer requisitos previos que condicionen la pertenencia de los elementos a un campo determinado, delimitando sus fronteras. De todas maneras, no hay que olvidar que un conjunto así integrado, al estar formado por unidades léxicas que están constituidas por componentes de carácter abierto es, a su vez, abierto y, por tanto, potencialmente ilimitado.

Jackendoff pone en evidencia que existen, además, unidades que son parte de un grupo semántico de forma anómala o atípica. Esto exige, según él, que las condiciones necesarias y suficientes para la pertenencia se desgranen en tres tipos diferentes: "necessary conditions", que deben poseer todos los miembros del grupo, "centrality conditions", cercanas al valor focal de la cualidad alrededor de la cual se estructura aquél en una relación de gradación, como es el caso de los colores, y "typicality conditions", a las cuales se permiten excepciones (Jackendoff 1985: 121-22). Así, en un campo semántico habrá "un núcleo formado por el término o los términos más comúnmente empleados para expresar el concepto en cuestión, y también ciertas áreas, algunas de las cuales pueden estar próximas al núcleo y otras en la periferia del campo. También es posible que una de las áreas esté contigua al núcleo debido a alguno de sus elementos, y que a la vez esté en los límites del campo debido a otros." (Alcaraz 1982: 133). Esta complicación metodológica se debe a que "fuzziness is an inescapable characteristic of the concepts that language expresses" por lo que "fuzziness must not be treated as a defect in language" (Jackendoff 1985: 117).

Para la elaboración del sistema de campos semánticos particular de una obra se pueden seguir dos procedimientos inversos: la ordenación onomasiológica, noológica, o a priori, que parte del concepto y busca las unidades léxicas en que se formaliza y, que están, gracias a él, relacionadas entre sí, o la construcción semasiológica, o a posteriori, que partiendo de los significantes estudia las posibles relaciones entre ellos (Heger 1974: 8). Ambas técnicas pueden ser útiles en los primeros pasos del análisis de un texto, pero cualquiera de las dos que se elija debe llevar aparejada al establecimiento de relaciones entre unidades por medio del análisis sémico, necesario en la estructuración interna de las lexías, la comprobación en el plano sintáctico de acuerdo con formulaciones lógicas o algebraicas similares a las que hemos hecho referencia en el punto 2.4.

La formalización de los campos semánticos que, según lo anterior, debe aunar las dos vías de caracterización del significado, constituye el primer paso y fundamental del análisis estilístico, ya que de ella dependerá el resto del estudio. En su primera configuración debe responder satisfactoriamente a las tendencias isotópicas que se hayan detectado de modo intuitivo, así como orientar con respecto a otras. En su elaboración final dentro de este estadio de la investigación, su validez debe venir dada por la solidez de cada uno de los campos obtenidos.

Deben usarse métodos estadísticos para determinar la frecuencia de aparición de las lexías que forman parte de cada campo semántico. Aunque los cálculos a realizar y los parámetros a hallar pueden ser muy variados, el estudio básico debe apoyarse en una fórmula del tipo $f_a = n_a/Sn$ donde f_a es la frecuencia relativa de una lexía en el campo de que se trate, n_a el número de apariciones u "ocurrencias" de esa lexía en ese campo, y Sn el número total de apariciones de todas las lexías que forman el campo. La comparación de frecuencias relativas de cada una de las lexías ayudará a precisar la función de cada una de ellas en el campo, así como a establecer la jerarquización de éste.

3.3. La segunda etapa del análisis debe ocuparse del examen de la acumulación isosémica por proximidad en el plano sintagmático, un fenómeno frecuente que viene a respaldar los resultados obtenidos en la elaboración de la estructura de los campos semánticos y que puede facilitar la matización de la misma desde el punto de vista cuantitativo. Su estudio es, además, una vía que, en algunos casos, puede precisar, de modo especial, la importancia de los campos cuya existencia no está directamente ligada a las exigencias del desarrollo argumental.

Se trata, en este punto, de registrar los elementos pertenecientes a las líneas isotópicas que la sistematización de los campos semánticos ha puesto de relieve, cuando exista entre ellos una conexión intrasintagmática o intersintagmática, oracional o incluso supraoracional, pero siempre en una relación de cercanía. Este sería el caso de "I will *persuade* him. / Your words had been enough *persuasion*" (Yeats 1966: 261.69-70).[4] Un ejemplo más patente aún sería "I will *mock* and *mock* that image yonder" (309.852), o el de "You are all *lepers!* There is *leprosy* / Among the plates and dishes that you have carried. / And wherefore have you brought me *leper's* wine?", donde hay una repetición del semema, que vuelve a aparecer dos veces cuatro versos más adelante y, de nuevo, en dos ocasiones cinco versos más allá (297.650-659).

La insistencia sémica puede apoyarse también, lógicamente, en las otras relaciones entre elementos distintas a la sinonimia, como la antonimia, que supone un realce por el contraste. Así ocurre en "So filled his heart with joy that it has burst, / Being grown too *mighty* for our *frailty*" (310.866).

Esta segunda parte del análisis también entraña posibles precisiones cualitativas, ya que puede poner de relieve la relación entre sememas que se han incluido en campos semánticos distintos, con lo que relacionaría campos o señalaría la necesidad de su reestructuración. Este es el caso de "No *fever* or *sickness*. He has chosen *death*" (258.18), donde, además de la acumulación que supone la presencia conjunta de las dos primeras lexías que hemos indicado en cursiva, se relaciona el campo en el que se han situado, *sickness*, con el de *death*.

El análisis estadístico contribuirá a perfilar los resultados alcanzados tras el examen de los campos semánticos. Puede llevarse a cabo, por ejemplo, una comparación mediante las sumas parciales de las frecuencias relativas de los

elementos que intervienen en cada caso de acumulación isosémica por proximidad. Por el contrario, si se trata de la misma lexía, puede obtenerse una segunda cifra para su frecuencia relativa aplicando a la cantidad obtenida con la fórmula $f_a = n_a/S_n$ del epígrafe 3.2., un coeficiente cuyo valor esté en función del número de acumulaciones por praximidad en que aparezca la lexía.

3.4. La tercera fase del proceso debe registrar la configuración sémica de los rasgos del plano léxico que, no habiéndose incluido en la etapa anterior, se estudian dentro de la desviación de la norma y se relacionan directamente con la creación de lenguaje figurado. Muchos de los fenómenos lingüísticos conocidos tradicionalmente como "figuras del lenguaje" deberán englobarse, por tanto, dentro de este apartado, destacando, entre ellos, por su frecuencia, la metáfora y el símil, la metonimia, la sinestesia y la prosopopeya, que surgen de desviaciones del sistema debidas a las interrelaciones sémicas o clasémicas de las unidades.

En este punto habrá que prestar una mayor atención al fenómeno de las "lexical collocations", que ayudará a establecer el mayor o menor grado de anquilosamiento de una determinada combinación y, por tanto, si se trata de una desviación de la norma. Para ello, puede resultar de gran interés la consulta de textos como *The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English: A Guide to Word Combinations* (Benson et al. 1986), que, apoyándose en distintos tipos de relación entre unidades léxicas según sus categorías morfológicas (1986: xxiv-xxviii), ofrece una estructuración basada en la aparición consolidada de parejas o grupos de elementos.

La metáfora, una de las desviaciones más habituales, resulta de una colisión entre unidades léxicas en el plano paradigmático para un contexto determinado, derivada de una substitución de elementos en lo sintagmático (Lodge 1977: 73-77).

De la metáfora se pueden realizar diversas clasificaciones (cfr. Wellek y Warren 1949: 200-206, Leech 1969: 158-61), pero, a efectos del análisis semántico, basta con distinguir aquellas que se han convertido en parte del sistema de las que suponen mayor creatividad. Aunque ambos tipos pueden estar conectados directamente con la construcción de líneas isotópicas y son los dos, por tanto, relevantes, en el caso de las segundas se podría hablar de un mayor grado de libertad por parte del autor a la hora de elegirlas, lo cual puede prestarles una mayor trascendencia en algunas ocasiones. Ejemplos de las primeras son: "My head whirls round" (258.26), "You have taken a great burden from my mind" (260.56), "a broken heart" (266.180) o "root up old customs, old habits, old rights" (279.331-32); mientras que no son parte del sistema: "tether the wild mind" (263.109) o "Snuff it, old hedgehog, and unroll yourself . . . I am rolled up, and yet, / Hedgehog although I am, I'll not unroll" (287.475,482-83).

Metáfora y símil son mecanismos próximos, pero "simile is an overt, and metaphor a covert comparison" (Leech 1969: 156). Esto se debe a que en el caso de los símiles, donde tanto tenor como vehículo están siempre presentes en el plano sintagmático, la colisión sémica se hace explícita por la presencia de un indicador formal (Leech 1969: 156-57), como en: "they may have voices . . . like the strings of harps" (266.169-70) y "He might . . . Be . . . bleaching us like calves / Or weaning us like lambs" (280.356-59).

Mientras que la prosopopeya se produce por la colisión del clasema [+humano] y el [-humano], un mecanismo del que se vale frecuentemente la lengua, como en: "hands so full of hunger . . . are not civil yet" (293.580-81), la sinestesia, menos habitual, consiste en la "presencia asociativa en el mismo sintagma u oración de dos lexías cuyos sememas remiten a dos sensaciones diferentes" (Alcaraz 1982: 161). En el ejemplo "ears as thirsty as your ears / For many love songs" (294.602-603) hay una combinación de prosopopeya y sinestesia. La metonimia, por otro lado, equivale a la substitución de un sintagma por una parte del mismo (Lodge 1977: 73-77), como en el caso de la conversión textual "citizens of the town" ==> "the town" que se produce en "It's small / respect you are showing to the town" (273.273-74). Otros ejemplos son "Strike at the crown" (306.817) o "The very throne be shaken" (261.69), en los que los significantes de los objetos reemplazan en el plano semántico al del poseedor.

Las desviaciones de la norma pueden ayudar decisivamente al mantenimiento de las líneas isotópicas del texto, como ocurre en "O my chicks, my chicks! / That I have nourished underneath my wings / And fed upon my soul" (309.846-48), donde las metáforas contribuyen a la tematización que se formaliza mediante el campo estructurado en torno al archisemema "hunger". Esta etapa debe tener, por tanto, como objetivo, al igual que la anterior, la matización cualitativa y cuantitativa de los resultados obtenidos, siendo de especial importancia porque puede poner de relieve cómo articula la experiencia el autor en la obra en cuestión.

4. CONCLUSIONES

La caracterización de los campos semánticos, junta a la sistematización en lo que se refiere a la acumulación sémica por proximidad y a los mecanismos lingüísticos que se engloban dentro de la estilística de la desviación, debe poner de manifiesto cuáles son las principales preocupaciones que se encuentran subyacentes en la obra analizada. Una vez seguidos los pasos indicados en la metodología propuesta, los resultados se presentarán en forma de lexías temáticas, cuya delimitación final dependerá de todos los estadios del proceso. El estudio estadístico de frecuencias de uso resultará muy significativo en este punto del análisis, ya que gracias a él se podrá precisar con mayor fiabilidad qué lexías temáticas tienen una mayor importancia cuantitativa, lo cual ayudará a la hora de determinar las subordinaciones en el establecimiento de las posibles interrelaciones entre ellas. Parece conveniente, en

primer lugar, recurrir a una proporción del tipo $n_A = N_A/SN$ donde N_A es el número total de apariciones de las lexias que contribuyen a la modelación de la lexía temática A, SN el número total de apariciones de todas las lexías que intervienen directamente en la estructuración de las lexias temáticas resultantes del estudio y, por tanto, n_A una medida relativa de la frecuencia de la lexía temática A.

En la recogida de datos no debe rechazarse ningún elemento, pues todos ellos tienen importancia. Si se trata de una obra dramática deberemos incluir las acotaciones en nuestro estudio, pues en ellas se plasma a menudo de forma clara el pensamiento del autor. Del mismo modo, en otros géneros, no se debe restringir el examen a determinados modos de discurso, como la narración, o el diálogo, pues ambos pueden ser portadores privilegiados del significado subyacente. Por otro lado, en lo que respecta a una posible selección de sectores del texto, no se debe, tampoco, primar una parte de la obra con respecto a otra, y mucho menos restringir el análisis a fragmentos aislados por muy importantes o significativos que parezcan, ya que, como hemos dicho, es en toda la estructura textual en la que se encuentra imbricado el pensamiento del autor. En este sentido, los procedimientos estadísticos de elección de secciones, del mismo modo que pueden dar resultados satisfactorios, pueden producir también desequilibrios en la interpretación, por lo que los segmentos elegidos deben ser lo suficientemente grandes para ser lo bastante significativos, debiendo articularse, además, mecanismos de prevención contra posibles desviaciones.

Todo estudio literario que intente lograr un mínimo de objetividad debe ir precedido de un examen textual profundo. Es por ello que en este trabajo, en el que no hemos pretendido llevar a cabo una teorización semántica exhaustiva, sino intentar señalar las características de un modelo que creemos que puede servir de punto de partida en el análisis, debe quedar de manifiesto la importancia de la aproximación lingüística a la obra literaria, así como la conveniencia de desarrollar más estudios que vengan a responder a las necesidades de la crítica, proporcionándole rigor.

5. APÉNDICE

5.1. Incluimos un fragmento de la obra de W.B.Yeats *The King's Threshold* con el fin de ofrecer una ilustración parcial de la aplicación de la metodología propuesta.

1 *King.* I welcome you that have the mastery
2 Of the two kinds of Music: the one kind
3 Being like a woman, the other like a man.
4 Both you that understand stringed instruments,
5 And how to mingle words and notes together
6 So artfully that all the Art's but Speech

7 Delighted with its own music; and you thot corry
8 The twisted horn, and understand the notes
9 That lacking words escape Time's chariot;
10 For the high angels that drive the horse of Time
11 The golden one by day, by night the silver
12 Are not more welcome to one that loves the world
13 For some fair woman's sake.
I have called you hither
14 To save the life of your great master, Seanchan,
15 For all day long it has flamed up or flickered
16 To the fast-cooling hearth.

Oldest Pupil. When did he sicken?
17 Is it a fever that is wasting him?

18 *King.* No fever or sickness. He has chosen death:
19 Refusing to eat or drink, that he may bring
20 Disgrace upon me; for there is a custom,
21 An old and foolish custom, that if a man
22 Be wronged, or think that he is wronged, and starve
23 Upon another's threshold till he die,
24 The common people, for all time to come,
25 Will raise a heavy cry against that threshold,
26 Even though it be the King's.

Oldest Pupil. My head whirls round;
27 I do not know what I am to think or say.
28 I owe you all obedience, and yet
29 How can I give it, when the man I have loved
30 More than all others, thinks that he is wronged
31 So bitterly that he will starve and die
32 Rather than bear it? Is there any man
33 Will throw his life away for a light issue?

5.2. El objetivo de la primera de las tres etapas que propugnamos es la formalización de los campos semánticos en los que se sustenta la obra. Para ello se precisa la definición sémica de las lexías que los constituyen, la cual servirá después de base para establecer las relaciones entre las mismas. Desarrollamos, por tanto, a continuación, los correspondientes sememas, si bien ya ordenados según las agrupaciones que es posible percibir en el texto de manera intuitiva:

a) *lack* : [need], *eat* : [take in] [food] [through the mouth], *drink* : [swallow] [liquid], *starve* : [die from] [lack of] [food];

b) *death* : [end of] [life], *die* : [stop] [living], *life* : [active] [force] [that] [makes] [animals] [and] [plants] [grow];

c) *sickness* : [illness], *waste* : [cause] [to lose] [strength], *fever* : [condition] [caused by] [illness] [in which] [the sufferer] [develops] [a high] [temperature], *save* : [make] [safe] [from danger];

d) *art* : [creation] [or] [expression] [of what] [is] [beautiful], *mastery* : [skill], *music* : [art] [of] [arranging] [sounds] [in pleasant] [patterns], *instrument* : [object] [played] [to get] [musical] [sounds], *words* : [sounds] [spoken] [together] [to represent] [an idea] [object] [or] [action], *note* : [musical] [sound], *delight* : [high] [degree] [of pleasure], *speech* : [power of] [speaking];

e) *wrong* : [be] [unfair to], *common* : [ordinary];

f) *great* : [excellent], *obedience* : [will] [to do] [what] [one] [is told to], *owe* : [have to] [pay];

g) *twist* : [turn], *whirl* : [move] [round and round], *chariot* : [two] [wheeled] [horse-drawn] [seatless] [vehicle] [used] [in ancient] [times], *mingle* : [mix];

h) *refuse* : [not] [to accept], *throw away* : [reject] [because] [not wanted], *welcome* : [acceptable] [and] [wanted];

i) *cry* : [make] [loud] [sounds];

j) *custom* : [established] [social] [practice].

Si comparamos estos grupos con los resultados obtenidos tras el análisis del texto completo, la primera conclusión que se puede extraer es que el fragmento elegido es significativo, ya que en él se encuentran —y en algunos casos en un elevado porcentaje— lexías representantes de los campos semánticos que es posible formalizar tras el estudio de toda la obra. Esta primera ordenación responde básicamente, además, a la disposición final de los campos semánticos. El análisis estadístico del texto completo basado en la recursividad de los semas y posterior interrelación de los sememas —que no podemos incluir aquí por obvias razones de espacio— da como resultado que los campos sobre los que está estructurada esta pieza teatral se articulan en torno a los siguientes archisememas: *HUNGER, DEATH, SICKNESS, ART, HONOUR, POWER, TURN, NOISE, REJECTION* y *LAW*, que se corresponden con las lexías temáticas.

Tras la definición sémica y ordenación previa de las lexías relevantes del fragmento aquí recogido, es posible establecer las relaciones entre las mismas dentro de cada uno de los apartados en los que se han agrupado. Así, *lack* es uno de los sinónimos que se articulan alrededor del archisemema del grupo a que pertenece, que se lexicaliza en *HUNGER*. Lo mismo ocurre con *starve*, mientras que *eat* y *drink* son dos antónimos del archilexema, que en el análisis del texto completo resultarán conectados con él a través de la lexía *nurture*.

En la configuración del campo semántico de *DEATH* en la porción que nos ocupa, es posible encontrar el archisemema del campo lexicalizado, así como la lexía sinónima *die* y la antónima *life*. En el resto de la obra se advierte que *life*, a su vez, sirve de núcleo para la articulación de otras lexías. En lo que respecta al campo de *SICKNESS*, aparecen en estos primeros versos del texto las lexías *sickness, waste, fever* y *save*. La primera de ellas es, precisamente, el lexema del semema central,

mientras que *save* es un antónimo que relaciona este campo y el de *DEATH*, ya que también pertenece a éste por antonimia, al igual que ocurre con *starve*, si bien esta lexía es un sinónimo del archisemema de ambos campos. En el caso de *waste* se trata de una lexía relacionada con la temática por implicación, y en el de *fever* por implicación de causalidad.

Todas las lexías del grupo siguiente forman parte del campo semántico estructurado en torno al archisemema *ART*, que está lexicalizado en el fragmento que consideramos. El análisis de toda la obra demuestra, por otro lado, que este campo semántico se estructura a lo largo de ella por medio de dos hipónimos de *ART*, *music* y *poetry*, el primero de los cuales está lexicalizado en la fracción que nos ocupa. En torno a *music* se agrupan lexías como *notes* e *instrument*, presentes en el fragmento recogido. La segunda de ellas es, a su vez, superordenado de *horn*. *Mastery* y *artfully* se relacionan por implicación con el archisemema del campo, al igual que *speech*, aunque en esta lexía la conexión se realiza a través de *words*; *delight*, por el contrario, mantiene una relación de connotación.

Las lexías *wrong* y *common* pertenecen al campo cuyo archilexema es *HONOUR*. La primera de ellas se relaciona por implicación con el sector antónimo del campo, y la segunda por connotación con su semema central. Las lexías *great, obedience* y *owe* intervienen en la construcción del campo semántico que sirve apoyo a la tematización de *POWER*. *Great* resulta tener, a su vez, carácter nuclear cuando se analiza el resto del texto, y la segunda está conectada por implicación con el archisemema del campo, lo mismo que *owe*.

En lo que se refiere a la lexía temática *TURN*, es posible encontrar en el fragmento elegido cuatro de los componentes que forman el campo, siendo *twist* y *whirl* sinónimos del semema central. Sin embargo, en el caso de *mingle* la relación con el archisemema es de implicación por causalidad, y en de *chariot* de implicación instrumental. Por su parte, los sememas de las lexías *refuse* y *throw away* son sinónimos del archisemema de *REJECT*, y *welcome* su antónimo. Las lexías *cry* y *custom*, que no es posible enmarcar en un grupo determinado por aparecer en solitario, a la luz del análisis completo de la obra adquieren su dimensión como miembros respectivos de los campos semánticos sobre los que tematizan *SOUND* y *LAW*.

5.3. En la segunda fase del estudio, nuestro interés se centra en la acumulación sémica por proximidad, para perfilar los resultados obtenidos en la formalización de los campos semánticos, tanto cuantitativa como cualitativamente.

En el fragmento que hemos seleccionado, pese a su brevedad, es posible encontrar varios ejemplos de acumulación isosémica por contigüidad que no parecen deberse exclusivamente a características propias de la expresión poética. Como ejemplo más elocuente registramos el verso número seis "So *artfully* that all the *Art* 's

but Speech" donde queda patente la importancia del contenido sémico de la lexía *art*, que condiciona, claramente, la elección del significante *artfully*. Otros casos son la repetición sémica de *"starve* and *die"* del verso 31 y la insistencia de los versos 16, 17 y 18 en el sema [illness]. El segundo de estos ejemplos puede resultar, en un primer momento, menos ilustrativo ya que podría atribuirse a las exigencias del progreso textual; pero la presencia de otros muchos casos de carga sémica similar a lo largo de toda la obra corroborará, sin ningún género de dudas, que hay una insistencia en esa lexía temática superior a lo que se consideraría normal. Algo parecido ocurre con la combinación *"whirls round"* del verso 26.

Las acumulaciones sémicas del fragmento que presentamos como muestra y, lógicamente, las del texto completo, refuerzan la estructuración de los campos semánticos, y ponen de relieve por su efecto en la configuración de la red de lexías temáticas que ésta responde a una preocupación más profunda que la impuesta por la mera necesidad argumental. Los ejemplos que hemos dado en el punto 3.3 también confirman nuestra hipótesis.

5.4. En el tercer estadio del análisis, que debe ocuparse de la desviación de la norma, podemos incluir las metáforas que aparecen en el fragmento. Entre las intralingüísticas o consolidadas en el sistema se encuentra la ya mencionada en 3.4. "My head whirls round" del verso 27. En lo que se refiere a la frase del verso 8 "twisted horn" se hace patente un énfasis en la tematización *TURN*, ya que condiciona la articulación de la experiencia. Son metáforas extralingüísticas y, por tanto, responden a una mayor creatividad las siguientes: "Time's chariot", "the high angels that drive the horse of Time" y "the life of your great master, Seanchan, / For all day long it has flamed up or flickered". En el fragmento seleccionado también aparece el símil "the two kinds of Music: the one kind / Being like a woman, the other like a man"; y un ejemplo de prosopopeya es "the Art's but Speech / Delighted". donde hay un choque clasémico de las dos últimas lexías.

A lo largo del texto completo resultará evidente que las metáforas extralingüísticas y otras desviaciones de la norma son más abundantes que las intralingüísticas, así como que el apoyo sémico en el que se afirman refuerza la tematización de las lexías a las que hemos hecho referencia en 5.2.

5.5. La clara delimitación de los campos semánticos sobre los que se estructura la obra pone de manifiesto la importancia que tienen para el autor los núcleos de significado de cada uno de ellos. De modo paralelo, la recursividad sémica en la carga por proximidad y el papel principal de esos mismos rasgos sémicos en la formalización de los fenómenos de desviación de la norma ponen de relieve que su presencia se debe a preocupaciones del autor que rebasan las necesidades del desarrollo argumental o de la expresión poética. Al mismo tiempo, esa insistencia

refuerza la modelación de cada campo, y ayuda a perfilar su jerarquización en el estudio, confirmando que la tematización textual se produce en torno a lexías temáticas claramente definidas, que son las que hemos incluido en el punto 5.2.

Junto al análisis interno de los campos, que puede evidenciar rasgos relevantes, como la estrecha relación de "música" y "poesía" y su predominio en el caso de *ART*, en el examen comparativo de las lexías temáticas, además de la jerarquización estadística basada en el estudio de frecuencias, es posible llevar a cabo distintos análisis. Entre ellos se puede destacar su clasificación bipolar en negativas y positivas. Así, en la obra que nos ocupa, incluimos en las primeras, de acuerdo con su función textual, *HUNGER, DEATH, SICKNESS, TURN* y *NOISE*, mientras que entre las segundas se encontrarían *ART, HONOUR, POWER* y *LAW*. La primera de las dos series, lexías que connotan "vacío" y "desorden", correspondería a la expresión, simbólica en mayor o menor grado, de aquello que es negativo para el autor, pudiendo entenderse la tematización de la lexía *REJECTION* como la formalización de su rechazo. La oposición binaria de lexías pertenecientes a grupos contrarios también puede revelar la antítesis existente entre ellas para el escritor, que estaría reflejada en el entramado de tensiones en que se basa la obra. De forma parecida, otro de los procedimientos puede fundarse en la observación de las conexiones entre lexías pertenecientes a un mismo grupo de la dicotomía. Así quedaría de relieve, por ejemplo, que existe una vinculación directa entre la idea de "orden", tematizada por medio de la lexía *LAW*, y la concepción de arte. Las posibilidades de análisis son muy variadas, y en el caso de su relación con otros escritos del autor, los resultados del estudio cobrarán incluso una mayor importancia.

NOTAS

1. "A series of tests designed to study the influence of context has shown that there is usually in each word a hard core of meaning which is relatively stable and can only be modified by the content within certain limits", aunque esto no significa que tanto el contexto verbal como el situacional no sean importantes, tal como reconoce a continuación Ullmann: "At the same time no one would deny the crucial importance of context in the determination of word-meanings" (1962: 49).

2. El contexto situacional no tiene por qué ser necesariamente el mismo. El caso de una obra literaria es el ejemplo más claro de falta de coincidencia del contexto de emisor con el del receptor.

3. La simple comporación de dos sintagmas correspondientes a diferentes lenguas puede servir de ejemplo de la actuación del principio de redundancia: "The happy girls" posee sólo un clasema [+femenino]; sin embargo, la frase equivalente en castellano, "Las chicas contentas", registra una triple presencia.

4. Todos los ejemplos que se ofrecen pertenecen a la obra de W. B. Yeats *The King's Threshold*. Unicamente en esta ocasión se registra la procedencia textual, indicándose sólo el número de la página y del verso en el resto de ejemplos.

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learn and use a language in dissociation from its past or present cultural affinities" (p. 154), and that "a language can be symbolically and indexically dissociated from any particular cultural affiliation" (p. 160), while Mark Roberts takes up a "philologic" position, rejecting what he considers to be two widespread and damaging view-points, namely, that "English can be appropriately taught to non-native speakers without the study of literature" and that, "the spoken language has a superiority over the written" (p. 135). In his turn, Jürgen Klein forcefully puts forward what can be described as a "continental" —as opposed to a "British"—position when he defends the integration of ""Landeskunde" into the curriculum" (p. 58) of the foreign learner of English, while David Pickett advocates the study of literature for its own sake, rejecting two widespread myths that condition its teaching. The first one, is mostly entertained by linguists, and stems from the belief that literature should be taught in order to improve the linguistic proficiency of the foreign student because literature offers the "best" possible kind of language. However, as David Pickett points out,"[l]anguage is constantly changing. So are our attributions of goodness or badness to writing and they derive from non-linguistic criteria"(p. 117)

The second myth, defended by Bateson, Leavis and the New Critics in general, confuses "moral worth" and "literary worth" and justifies the teaching of literature primarily as a way of improving the moral status of the reader. Value, however, "is not something which inheres in objects, be they literary or material; it is not an inalienable property of things. On the contrary, it is something which human beings attribute to things; it is ultimately arbitrary (p. 111). Pickett, therefore, concludes that the value of teaching literature for language acquisition "is much less than it is often claimed [...] Unless it is worth teaching for its own sake, it will not be worth teaching for its side-effects " (p. 133).

The proposal of another essayist, Christoph Bode, consists in specifying "what literature, and poetry in particular, can contribute to the teaching of English as a foreign language" (p. 166). He subsequently rejects the mere "handmaid" function (p. 169) often allotted to literature in the teaching of language, and denounces the kind of "positivistic explanation" (p. 177) that often passes for literary criticism. Bode chooses as example of poor critical practice Hans-Joachim Zimmermann's "explicating prose paraphrase" of John Betjeman's "Devonshire Street W. 1" which he criticizes heavily, offering for comparison his own hermeneutic reading of the poem, drawn on the basic assumption that "[t]o read a text as a literary one is to be aware of its symbolic dimension, of its surplus of meaning" (p. 179). Consequently, in Bode's opinion, *"Literature contributes best to foreign language teaching when it is taught as literature"* (emphasis in the original, p. 181).

Pickett's and Bode's view-points stand in sharp opposition to the proposals forwarded by Werner Delanoy (pp. 211-231), John Fletcher (pp. 233-243), R. K Gupta (pp. 391-397), and Norman F. Blake (431-445) who have no qualms in

advocating the use of literary texts — and even of simplified and specially adapted versions of them, in the case of Delanoy — for the purpose of teaching English to foreign students.

The remaining "Literary Case Studies" are practical attempts at examining specific literary texts from a cross-cultural perspective. In the English section, for instance, Nigel Alexander and Rosalind King (pp. 401-409) propose the improvement of the performance of Shakespearian plays through the "knowledge of the plays and published dramatic opinions and theories of Bertold Brecht [...] and the treatises on acting by Zeami — [the Japanese] actor, dancer, playwright and producer (p. 401), while Heinz Antor (411- 429) offers a hermeneutic reading of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, and Franz M. Kuna (pp. 447-472) describes the problems of reception and transformation in film versions of English literary works of the fifties.

The American "Literary Case Studies" section opens up with Lothar Bredella's analysis (pp. 475-521) of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, in the context of a most interesting theoretical speculation on what he takes to be the two basic stages of intercultural understanding: assimilation and accommodation. This section also includes an analysis by Vernon Gras (555-569) of Faulkner's *Light in August* from the perspective of reception theory, Monika Hoffarth-Zelloe's (570-598) study of the subversive use of white stereotypes in black American literature in general and in the writings of Tony Morrison in particular, and an illuminating essay by Peter Freese (523-553) on the translation into German and reception in Germany of novels like Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*, belonging to that new American literary trend, the "MTV novels," celebrated by the critics as "highly accomplished expressions of a changed *Zeitgeist* ." (p. 523).

The two "Geographical Stratification" sections are much more descriptive than ideological or polemical. They include interesting information about the state of minority languages in the United Kingdom and Ireland and about the linguistic and cultural phenomena deriving from the overlapping of the British and the national cultural identities of Australia, Canada and Asia in general and of Japan in particular. Especially informative are the essays written by Larry Smith and Sandra Tawake (pp. 351-364) describing the development of "a large body of literature written in English by non-native speakers [in] the last five or six decades" (p. 352), and by Wimal Dissanayake (365-389) explaining the profound changes witnessed during the last twenty-five years in Indonesian intellectual and artistic life "closely paralleling the changes taking place in the wider political and social environment" (p. 366).

The volume closes with a Postcript reproducing Peter Strevens' paper delivered at the *États Généraux des Langues* in Paris (28 April 1989). This is a most interesting essay which outlines the evolution in Europe from virtual overall monolingualism in the preceding centuries to the present-day multilingualism, itself the consequence of increasing social mobility and the improvement in the effectiveness of teaching.

Strevens foresees the continuation of this trend towards multilingualism: "in 200 years not only will vastly more people speak English than today, but many more will speak Danish, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish, too [...] The future citizen of multilingual Europe will regard it as normal, by the time of reaching middle age, to have a reasonable practical command of at least one foreign language, and commonly of two or three" (pp. 605 and 607). Strevens bases this optimistic prediction on "the *professionalization* of language teaching [for] when language teaching is truly *professional* it is consistently *successful* " (emphasis in the original, pp. 608-9). This desired professionalization will be the result of the combined efforts of both the different national Ministeries of Education and the teachers themselves:

> Ministers of Education and other employers will treat language teachers as members of a profession, not just as people in an occupation, by providing a proper career structure, by paying salaries appropriate to a profession, by rewarding excellence, encouraging research and development and giving allowances of time and money to enable teachers to upgrade their ideas. On their side, teachers will accept that initial and in-service training —career long— are essential marks of a profession, and that the privilege of membership of a profession entail continuing to develop their skills and knowledge, for example through active participation in their professional teachers' association. And when they have attained the dignity of being part of a profession, then and only then can teachers hope to influence government policy and administration in their field. (p. 609)

The undeniable quality and interest of the essays compiled in the volume under discussion is good proof that this degree of desired professionalization is not just —as Peter Strevens ironically presents it— a "Nostradamus Philogiossius Strevens" prediction (p. 605), but rather a most encouraging fact for present-day English philologists.

Review by Susana ONEGA

ABSTRACTS

CICLOS CREATIVOS EN LA POESÍA DE JAMES JOYCE

José Antonio ÁLVAREZ AMORÓS
Universidad de Alicante

This essay attempts to distinguish between two considerably different creative impulses within Joyce's poetry that give rise to his book *Chamber Music* (1907) and *Pomes Penyeach* (1927). We analyse the former as a conscious and youthful effort on Joyce's part to make his name as a poet. Hence, his care for style, contrived versification, purity of diction, and impersonality under the welcome influence of the Elizabethan collections of lyrical verse, Shakespeare's dramatic work, and the biblical Song of Songs. After twenty years of struggle and some bitter disappointments, Joyce's poetical mood altered noticeably. *Pomes Penyeach* is not the result of an intent purpose to compose a systematic book, but rather a collection of occasional poems directly derived from his experience. His formal rigour also relaxed, and personal confession replaced stylistic aloofness. In conclusion, both books seem to be poles apart, save for a common denominator: the stubborn intensity with which they incorporate material borrowed from Shakespeare, the Bible, Dante, Nashe, and others.

THE ROLE OF EPISTEMIC MODALITY IN ENGLISH POLITENESS STRATEGIES

Marta CARRETERO
Universidad Complutense

The number of recent linguistics works on politeness has given evidence that this feature accounts for the way language is used to a greater extent than it would seem at first sight. This paper will prove the pervasive influence of politeness on epistemic

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modality, that is, the kind of modality which concerns judgements about the truth of the propositional content of an utterance. I shall adopt Brown and Levinson's (1987) approach to politeness strategies in terms of 'face', 'positive politeness'and 'negative politeness' —notions which will be made clear in the paper. The most obvious conclusions drawn from this analysis are 1) that expressions of uncertainty are used as politeness strategies both in directives (to soften the speaker's imposition on the hearer), and in statements (to avoid full commitment to the truth of the proposition); and 2) that expressions which emphasize the speaker's certainty about the truth of the proposition tend to highlight the speaker's concern about the hearer's wishes or interests. Nevertheless, this analysis does not exclude other frequent patterns of the use of epistemic expressions as politeness devices, such as the cases of apologies, answers to invitations, and contradictions.

REFUNCTIONALISING THE PAST: SALMAN RUSHDIE'S RE-WRITING OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVELISTIC CONVENTIONS IN *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

Luis DE JUAN HATCHARD
Universidad de Zaragoza

Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* consciously "works" with the conventions used by eighteenth-century writers of fictional autobiographies, such as Defoe, giving them new life and a parodic function. The attempt to undermine a coherent, stable view of the self and of society is paralleled by the attempt to undermine the conventions which the literary works belonging to that culture are based upon. In this way, Rushdie has superbly shown how the heavy burden of tradition can be used to the writer's own benefit.

A VISION OF HELL IN ANCRENE WISSE AND SAWLES WARDE

Ana María HORNERO CORISCO
Universidad de Zaragoza

The aim of this paper is to bring attention to an aspect shared by two of the works which constitute the *Katherine group* : both try to persuade the reader to choose the right path leading to salvation by presenting, each one in its own style, a moving and convincing picture of hell. Imagery, alliteration and witty devices are at its best in these descriptions, making of these passages the most vivid throughout the pages of *Ancrene Wisse* and *Sawles Warde* .

ESTUDIO EXPERIMENTAL SOBRE EL EFECTO DE TRES COMPONENTES DE CONOCIMIENTO PREVIO EN LA LECTURA DE TEXTOS INGLESES POR ESTUDIANTES DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA NO NATIVA

Ana Cristina LAHUERTA MARTÍNEZ
Universidad de Oviedo

Research in native (English) and nonnative (English as a second and a foreign language) reading comprehension has shown that the ability to understand texts is based not only on the comprehender's linguistic knowledge, but also on general knowledge of the world and the extent to which that knowledge is activated during processing.

Separate components of background knowledge which have been identified in the literature are: (1) prior knowledge in the content area of the text (familiar versus novel); (2) prior knowledge that the text is about a particular content area (context versus no context); and (3) degree to which the lexical items in the text reveal the content area (transparent versus opaque).

This paper reports a study which shows the individual and interactive effects of these three separate variables on the reading comprehension of nonnative readers of English and the quantity and quality (familiarity, context and transparency) of the reproductions which depend on the language used for the reproductions, making half the students write their summaries in their native language (Spanish) and the other half in the nonnative language (English), and comparing the results.

Results indicate that two of the three components of background knowledge (transparency and context) play a significant role in reading, understanding and recalling a text, both in English and in Spanish, but show as well that the language (English or Spanish) in which the reproductions are executed conditions the quantity of information reproduced.

These findings are discussed in relation to schema theoretical views of reading as an interactive process between the text and the reader, and in relation to their implications for reading pedagogy.

HOW TO PROVIDE FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR WITH TYPOLOGICAL-DIACHRONIC ADEQUACY

Javier MARTÍN ARISTA
Universidad de Zaragoza

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how the theory of Functional Grammar as stoted by Dik (1979 and 1989) can be provided with Typological-Diachronic Adequacy. The reason why this new concept is coined is that, in spite of the fact that one of the main concerns of Functional Grammar is how to achieve typological adequacy (more than eighty languages —most of which are not Indo-European— have been successfully discussed from the point of view of FG), this theoretical framework still lacks a detailed discussion of the relationship between Diachrony and Typology.

This paper revises critically the standards of adequacy proposed by Transformational Grammar and compares them with the ones put forward in the realm of Functional Grammar. In doing so, we concentrate on the specifications for Descriptive Adequacy and pay special attention to these specifications in FG. Then, after revising the constraints imposed on the power of FG , we define and explain the new concept which is proposed here: Typological-Diachronic Adequacy. Afterwards, we go on to discuss how to provide Dik's Funtional Grammar with Typological-Diachronic Adequacy and, finally, we answer the question whether or not new constraints upon the descriptive power of the theory arise.

READING WALLACE STEVENS IN PLATO'S LIGHT

Beatriz PENAS IBÁÑEZ
Universidad de Zaragoza

Even though Plato and Aristotle hold different standpoints on the matter of mimesis, both authors have laid the foundation stone for a never-ending discussion on the problem of representation which this paper will retake and respectfully use for the sake of illuminating Wallace Stevens's texts. It is my assumption in this article that Stevens shares with Plato a certain view of the worlds of fact and fiction which is not to be severed from the related concept of mimesis which sustains it. In this they both diverge from the paths of realism as opened by Aristotle's philosophical writings.

'I AM THE ANDROGYNE': REFLECTIONS ON GENDER AND LANGUAGE IN THE POETRY OF SYLVIA PLATH, ANNE SEXTON AND ADRIENNE RICH

Marta PÉREZ NOVALES
Universidad de Barcelona

In this essay, some lines from Adrienne Rich's "The Stranger" serve as the starting point for an outline of the standard approaches to women's language in contemporary Anglo-American and French feminism. The work of three representative American female poets —Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich— is considered, in order to illustrate the theoretical issues discussed in the first part of the essay. A conclusion follows, in which androgyny is propounded as a useful concept in characterising contemporary women's poetry.

METODOLOGÍA SEMÁNTICA DE ANÁLISIS DE TEXTOS LITERARIOS

Francisco Javier TORRES RIBELLES
Universidad de Alicante

Taking into account the hypothesis that the concerns of the author of a linguistic text can be reached through stylistic features, the article claims that a semantic study of the lexical level of a text may lead to the thought underlying it. After defining the nuclear and relational units necessary in the analysis, the essay goes on to suggest a practical methodology with three main stages as a way to elicit the author's concerns: the arrangement of semantic fields, the examination of semantically related units in a disposition of syntagmatic contiguity, and the classification of deviations from the linguistic system.

FE DE ERRATAS

(Correspondiente a Miscelánea vol. 12)

Artículo "The Meeting Ground of Syntax and Pragmatics" (Frits Beukema)

P. 12. Falta el tercer párrafo, y el ejemplo (8) debería figurar como (9). El texto enmendado es:

This is aptly summarised in Gazdar's (1979) famous dictum in (8):

(8) SEMANTICS = TRUTH CONDITIONS
PRAGMATICS = MEANING minus TRUTH CONDITIONS

On the truth-conditional view the semantic content of a sentence is the link between a sentence of a language and its propositional content, which is the information about the world it succeeds in conveying. Propositional content is assigned to a sentence on the basis of the truth-theoretic content, roughly the meanings, of the expressions it contains and the syntactic configuration. In addition, the semantic component of the grammar should be capable of characterising such relations between sentences as, for example, entailment or synonymy. Grice's work has provided considerable support for the view that semantics should be concerned with articulating propositional contents associated with sentences but that utterances in fact convey far more than what is expressed by the mere words of the sentence. Consider (9):

(9) A: What's the new Pizza House like?
B: All the cooks are Italian
C: Let's go there then

(Kempson 1988: 140)

P. 13. El ejemplo (12) debería ir precedido de un asterisco:

(12) *John$_i$ saw him$_i$ in the mirror.

P. 14, ejemplo (13) b. *John* y *he* deberían llevar distinto subíndice, indicando su distinta referencialidad. Donde dice

b John$_i$ said he$_i$ came in.

debería decir

b John$_i$ said he$_j$ came in.

P. 14, primera línea del último párrafo:

... but rather the fact that it is essential to treat...

debería enmendarse a:

...but rather the fact that it essentially treats...

P. 14, última línea. *Charles* y *he* deberían llevar distinto subíndice, indicando su distinta referencialidad. Donde dice

Charles$_i$ thinks that everybody suspects that he$_i$ is very clever

debería decir

Charles$_i$ thinks that everybody suspects that he$_j$ is very clever

ÍNDICE

José Antonio ÁLVAREZ AMORÓS
"Ciclos creativos en la poesía de James Joyce" 5

Marta CARRETERO
"The Role of Epistemic Modality in English Politeness Strategies" 17

Ana María HORNERO CORISCO
"A Vision of Hell in *Ancrene Wisse* and *Sawles Warde*" 37

Luis de JUAN HATCHARD
"Refunctionalising the Past: Salman Rushdie's rewriting of eighteenth-century novelistic conventions in *Midnight's Children*" 49

Ana Cristina LAHUERTA
"Estudio experimental sobre el efecto de tres componentes de conocimiento previo en la lectura de textos ingleses por estudiantes de inglés como lengua segunda" 63

Javier MARTÍN ARISTA
"How to Provide Functional Grammar with Typological-Diachronic Adequacy" 85

Beatriz PENAS IBÁÑEZ
"Reading Wallace Stevens in Plato's Light" 103

Marta PÉREZ NOVALES
"'I am the Androgyne': Reflections on Gender and Language in the Poetry of Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich" 121

Francisco Javier TORRES RIBELLES
"Metodología semántica de análisis de textos literarios" 139

Book Review: *Text—Culture—Reception: Cross-Cultural Aspects of English Studies*. Ed. Rüdiger Ahrens nad Heinz Antor 161

Abstracts 165

Fe de erratas (vol. 12) 170

PARA CONTRIBUIR A *MISCELANEA*

La revista *Miscelánea* es una publicación anual del Departamento de Filología Inglesa y Alemana de la Universidad de Zaragoza. Difunde artículos sobre lingüística inglesa, literaturas escritas en inglés y estudios culturales del ámbito anglosajón. Se agradecen contribuciones originales escritas por profesionales de la filología inglesa, que deberán ser aceptadas por el Consejo de Redacción de la revista.

Los originales, escritos en inglés o en español, se presentarán por triplicado en hojas tamaño DIN A-4. Estarán mecanografiados a doble espacio por una sola cara. Se aconseja que no superen las 30 páginas, incluyendo referencias bibliográficas, esquemas, etc. Se incluirá asimismo un resumen en inglés no superior a doscientas palabras. De ser posible, se entregará además una copia del artículo en soporte informático MsWord para ordenadores Macintosh.

En la primera página, en el borde superior derecho, figurarán el nombre y la dirección del autor. A continuación, más abajo, el título en mayúsculas del artículo y, mediado el suficiente espacio, el texto ya del trabajo. Las páginas irán numeradas consecutivamente en el ángulo superior derecho. Las notas asimismo se numerarán consecutivamente y aparecerán al final del artículo pero antes de la sección de referencias bibliográficas. Para las referencias se utilizará el sistema que a continuación se ejemplifica:

a) *En el texto y en la sección de notas:* Se citará el nombre del autor y a continuación el año de publicación y el número de página (s). Por ejemplo:

> It has often been questioned (Adams 1981a: 87-88) whether...
> Hymes distinguishes the following speech functions (1968: 17)

b) *En la sección final de Referencias Bibliográficas:* Esta sección, ordenada alfabéticamente y a doble espacio, se presentará de manera similar a la de los siguientes ejemplos:

Davies, D. J., and S. Isard. 1972. "Utterances as Programs." In *Machine Intelligence 7*. Ed. D. Michie and M. Meltzer. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP.

Fishman, Joshua, ed. 1968. *Readings on the Sociology of Language*. The Hague: Mouton.

Hymes, Dell. 1968. "The Ethnography of Speaking." In Fishman 1968: 117-21.

Schutz, Alfred. 1953. "Common-Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action." *Texas Review* 14: 13-18.

Winograd, Terry. 1972. *Undertaking Natural Language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP.

Se ruega incluir en esta lista sólo las obras citadas en el texto. En cuanto a los detalles de puntuación, disposición de las citas, subrayados, entrecomillados, etc., los trabajos deberán adaptarse a las normas de presentación del *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Los editores se reservan el derecho de enmendar errores materiales o defectos de estilo.

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