Contents

The Family Reunion as a turning point in T. S. Eliot's Verse Drama:
Analysis and Suggestions for Translation[1]

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Abstract:

T. S. Eliot wrote *The Family Reunion* (1939) while he composed the *Four Quartets,* twelve years after his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927. The play erects a bridge between the author's early stage productions (*Sweeney Agonistes, The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral*) and the later society plays (*The Cocktail Party, The Confidential Clerk* and *The Elder Statesman*). Moreover, in his 1951 essay "Poetry and Drama," Eliot delves into the strengths and weaknesses of *The Family Reunion* and links this play with his own experiments with a "conversational line" which introduces popular theatrical conventions wrapped in the patterns of poetry that may appeal to theatre-goers. This paper deals with Eliot's proposals for verse drama present in an incipient form in *The Family Reunion*, and explores the possible ways of translating these resources into Spanish. It focuses on Eliot's own explanations in "Poetry and Drama" about the way in which to adapt blank verse to the stage. Furthermore, this essay explores metrical concepts such as stress and caesura and applies them to wider aspects concerning dramatic patterns and inner/outer voice in characters.

Keywords: *The Family Reunion*, Eliot's verse drama, theatre translation, blank verse, metrical concepts.

1. Introduction

Compared to his poetry and essays, T. S. Eliot's verse drama has received so far scarce critical attention. In the following pages, I intend to contribute to a closer appreciation of this drama through one of his plays, *The Family Reunion*, which marks an unmistakable turning point in his dramatic career. I center my analysis on three aspects. I consider *The Family Reunion* a bridge between Eliot's earlier and later dramatic experiments, a fact which Eliot himself discusses in his essay "Poetry and Drama (1951);" I analyze the way in which Eliot's characters embody simultaneously real and transcendent voices, a technique which he developed in later plays; and, lastly, I assess the choices for a viable translation into Spanish of Eliot's verse form, especially the "conversational line" which he introduced in *The Family Reunion*. Eliot's poetic/dramatic register evolved in time: his plays gained in dramatic action and characterization through language, over other elements such as symbols, props or ritualistic staging.

    In terms of methodological focus, this article follows Merino Álvarez's textual approach to drama translation (1994b, 127-138). From this standpoint, I deal with *The Family Reunion* as a whole unit of language—the micro level of drama translation—, from which I depart in order to analyze both the specific utterances within the whole—the macro level—as well as their relationship with former translations and other plays by the same author—the intersystemic level—. Merino Álvarez's further differentiation among the three possibilities of drama translation as translation, version and/or adaptation, however, exceeds the limits of this work (1994a, 27).

    Eliot's idea of the conversational line, towards which his practice as a playwright gravitates from *The Family Reunion* onwards, can be understood in terms of the descriptive drama translation concept known as "speakability" (Windle 2012, 115) which refers to the oral nature of the theatre play, that is, it places the emphasis on the naturalness of language in both the source and translated text. I follow Francis R. Jones's approach to poetry translation which encourages the use of "recreative translation," that is, a middle point between literal translation and the creation of a new poem. Within this recreative translation, I choose the analogical mode, defined by Jones as "a target form with a similar cultural function to the source form" (2012, 126). My proposals for the use of well-known Spanish meters for the translation of Eliot's conversational line are in line with Jones's approach.

2. Eliot as a Dramatist: The Creation of Verse Drama

In addition to being a major poet and influential essayist who together with Pound shaped the modernist aesthetics in the 1930s, T. S. Eliot added a new dimension to his already prodigious oeuvre: that of a dramatist. Prior to *The Rock* (1934) and *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), he had made an earlier attempt with the unfinished 1926 jazzy farce *Sweeney Agonistes*. Although considerably different, Eliot used Sweeney's plot, based on the classical myth of Orestes, in *The Family Reunion* (1939), a connection studied by Carol Smith (1967, 113-115). Eliot claimed that the evolution of a writer from poetry to drama is the correct trajectory for a writer. In his analysis of Shakespeare's plays as early as 1921 in "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (2014, 278-285), Eliot remarked that poetry had to be subservient to the purposes of dramatic action. Moreover, Eliot referred to the dialogic or dramatic qualities of his own poetry in which he identified three different voices depending on whether the poet is talking to himself, to a real or imaginary audience, or whether he uses an imaginary character as a mouthpiece addressing another imaginary character ("The Three Voices of Poetry," 1953).

Although Eliot's aims differed from those of the Spanish poets known as the 1927 Generation, his defense of verse drama is nevertheless comparable to their search for a "teatro de los poetas" ("drama of the poets") during the 1920s, a period also known as the Silver Age (Cuesta Guadaño 2017, 15-16; 42-46). In both cases, the poet-playwright aspired to do away with the prevailing realistic and naturalistic conventions and restore the stage to the musical cadences of poetry. Spanish authors such as Eduardo Marquina, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, Francisco Villaespesa or Federico García Lorca embraced a mixture of folk, symbolist and surrealist techniques set in a remote, timeless or dream-like verse. In contrast, from *The Family Reunion* onwards Eliot privileged contemporary, recognizable drawing-room settings and recommended "the capturing of the verse –its music– implicit in [colloquial] speech" ("The Music of Poetry," 1942, 110). In this he explicitly admitted his debt to Yeats who, in Eliot's words, "solved his problem of speech in verse, and laid all his successors under obligation to him" ("Poetry and Drama," 1951, 595). At the same time, he praised the natural poetic speech and the rural setting present in Synge's Irish Literary Theatre, which, however, did not exactly serve his own purpose of creating a poetic conversational line: "The poetic drama in prose is more limited by poetic convention […] as to what subject matter is poetic" (*ibid.*, 594).

In order to fully understand Eliot's move towards theatre, it is necessary to refer to his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927. Thanks to the ritualistic, communal characteristics of theatre, Eliot considered it the ideal vehicle for the superimposition of the transcendent on ordinary reality. Thus, his characters

act on two simultaneous planes and enact a "struggle of spiritual awakening" (Smith 2014, 253). His first two commissioned plays, *The Rock* and, above all, *Murder in the Cathedral*, anticipated this self-imposed task which he will develop in all of his plays. As a matter of fact, Eliot tried his hand at verse drama quite successfully in *The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral*, despite having admitted that he had arrived at a dead end. The historical, therefore remote plot of *Murder in the Cathedral* allowed for a classic *mise-en-scène* by means of a chorus and the solemnity of prophetic verse.

When Eliot analyzed *Murder in the Cathedral*, he acknowledged that he had managed to convey through verse drama the duality of the transcendent and the ordinary, but that this did not help him to continue doing so in dramas that were set in a contemporary period. Verse is naturally accepted in a historical and religiously themed work, but it does not function in the same way in a contemporary urban upper middle-class setting ("Poetry and Drama," 596-597). Anticipating criticism of future detractors of verse drama, Eliot contended that poetry is no more alien to real speech than elaborated prose. He concluded that poetry conveys moments of heightened consciousness much more intensely.

Yet the transition from *Murder in the Cathedral* to *The Family Reunion* was influenced by the simultaneous composition of the *Four Quartets*. Helen Gardner clearly relates Eliot's religious conversion with his later preference for the comedy, a genre which is more tolerant of man's sins than tragedy. Eliot's last three plays *The Cocktail Party* (1949), *The Confidential Clerk* (1953) and *The Elder Statesman* (1959), consolidate his search for a verse drama in the manner of conversational speech:

> The earlier plays, like the earlier poetry, communicate a sense that life is agonizingly trivial and meaningless, unless some power from without breaks in to create a gleam of meaning (…) But in the course of *Four Quartets* a change of mood is clearly apparent. There is a progress towards acceptance of the conditions of life in this world, the kind of acceptance that underlies the comic writer's realism, sympathy, human compassion, and moral concern (Gardner 1966, 155).

After *Murder in the Cathedral*, Eliot abandoned historical drama and focused on his particular version of the "drawing-room comedy," one through which he could accommodate his Christian values in an upper middle-class contemporary milieu. *The Family Reunion* inaugurates this new line, even though it cannot be considered a comedy.

3. *The Family Reunion:* Preliminary Views

Although *The Family Reunion* is still far from accepting "the conditions of life in this world," it nevertheless lays the foundations for the dramatic pattern—or Eliot's "double pattern"—which he will develop later in "Poetry and Drama." Eliot's "double pattern" consists in accommodating a varied confluence of opposites: conscious/unconscious, verse rhythm/conversational speech rhythm, the quotidian/the transcendent, and popular theatrical conventions/highbrow literature. All these opposites are encompassed by a larger divine design, that confers on the play its final purpose, duly summarized by Agatha in her role of contemporary sibyl: "So the knot be unknotted / The crossed be uncrossed…" (*TFR*, 350). Other signs similar to Agatha's message can be traced in the seasonal rebirth—the spring that struggles to arrive—and even in the division of the play into only two acts: a first, in which the protagonist's ordeal is exposed, and a second in which the intercession of two crucial characters, Dr. Warburton and Agatha, propitiates the denouement.

In *The Family Reunion,* Eliot resorts again to the mythical method, which sets up an onstage parallelism between antiquity and contemporaneity. Thus, Aeschylus's *The Eumenides* serves as a reference point to a modern tale of sin and expiation (Tanner 1970, 127-128). The apparition of the Eumenides, or Furies, disturbs the placid setting of a twentieth-century country manor. In the play, dialogue and casual exchanges are interrupted by Agatha, and by the rest of Amy's relatives who impersonate a Greek chorus. At certain moments, the characters speak "beyond character", and their irrelevant, everyday remarks are invested with transcendent wisdom.

All these obvious strategies are more subtly blended in Eliot's further plays. Hence, from *The Cocktail Party* onwards, the strategy of the double nature of the action will rely on the shifts and changes in verse rhythm and cadence, that is, on the very dynamics of verse drama, rather than on any extralinguistic resources. Eliot reflections document this evolution:

> These passages [Agatha's and the chorus's] are in a sense "beyond character," the speakers have to be presented as falling into a kind of trance-like state in order to speak them. But they are so remote from the necessity of the action that they are *hardly more than passages of poetry* ("Poetry and Drama," 599; my italics).

Eliot's ultimate goal was to take verse drama to average theatre-goers. He did not want "to transport the audience into some imaginary world totally unlike its own," to "an unreal world in which poetry is tolerated" ("Poetry and Drama,"

596). By focusing on language instead of on staging techniques, by eliminating lyric passages with no real connection to dramatic action, Eliot attempted to introduce major innovations in contemporary dramatic art. A closer look at some key passages in *The Family Reunion* allows us to assess the scope of Eliot's endeavor and realize the path-breaking nature of this play.

4. A Metrical Analysis of *The Family Reunion*

Eliot defines his attempt to use a dramatic verse form that sounds like conversation through the technicalities of metrics:

> A line of varying length and a varying number of syllables, with a caesura and three stresses. The caesura and the stresses may come at different places, almost anywhere in the line; the stresses may be close together or well separated by light syllables; the only rule being that there must be one stress on one side of the caesura and two on the other ("Poetry and Drama," 599).

If we try to apply Eliot's general rule to the opening line of *The Family Reunion*, this may be a plausible reading with a possible set of accents:

> AMY.   Not yét! I will ríng for you. // It is stíll quite light.
> <div align="right">(TFR, 285)</div>

Amy (Lady Monchensey), the owner of the house, asks the maid not to draw the curtains yet. She is introduced as a strong character who, despite her many disillusions in life, still tries to force her will upon others. Because of the length of the line, the first two stresses may fall before the caesura. The second part of the line does not contain an order but a remark. Thus, the stress may fall on two of the three contiguous monosyllabic words ("still", "light"). Their similar semantic load makes the choice difficult: time and light in contrast with darkness are central to the meaning of the play, and Eliot always recommended stressing semantically loaded words. However, the earlier mention of "still" sets up a contrast with "yet" at the beginning of the same line.

Critics have often contested Eliot's three-stress verse pattern, arguing that in fact he uses a four-stress pattern. Relying on testimonies from Eliot's close collaborator Martin Browne, Marjorie Lightfoot concludes that the predominant pattern of expectation in the play as well as in this passage is the 4-stress line (1964, 262-263). Patrick Dudgeon also identifies four stresses instead of three in the same opening lines (1953, 36); while Alfredo Olivera, the translator of three of Eliot's plays into Spanish, reaches a similar conclusion in his

introductions to *The Cocktail Party* (*Cocktail Party,* 1950) and *The Confidential Clerk* (*Su hombre de confianza,* 1959).

Critics and translators agree, however, on the fact that Eliot consciously avoids the overuse of the iambic pentameter, which had been the most frequently used form in blank verse until the twentieth century.[2] In addition, these critics highlight the importance of Eliot's search for a system of accents flexible enough to reproduce the cadence of conversation in a 3- or 4-stress pattern. In Lightfoot's words:

> The 4-stress line [3-stress line for Eliot] appears in *The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral*, as well as in "Four Quartets," together with *many other* verse forms. But it is the *basic* line in *The Family Reunion, The Cocktail Party, The Confidential Clerk,* and *The Elder Statesman* (…) The dramatist experimented with this line, from play to play, through changes of diction, style, syntax, and characterization, in his growing desire to find a verse form which would contain the rhythm of contemporary speech, but would not *call* attention to itself as verse as it does in *Sweeney Agonistes* (1968, 189).

Moreover, critics have consistently remarked that Eliot resorts to verse form as a characterization strategy. Concerning *The Family Reunion,* Dudgeon recalls Browne's remarks about the way in which characters are distinguished by meter and stress: thus, Ivy speaks in dactylic feet (a stressed syllable, followed by two unstressed syllables), monosyllabic strong strikes are employed in the case of Violet, and relaxed, smooth tones for Charles (1953, 37). Likewise, D. E. Jones analyzes a conversation of these characters in Scene I from Part I based on "the degree of control that the verse gives over characterization and dramatic tension" (1963, 119). Taking this technique to the extreme, Wyman contends that, in Eliot's plays, "the words *are* what happens" (1991, 44).

This conception of the play privileging dialogue over action, often used as a critique of the lack of action, seems adequate for the overwhelming frequency with which the characters use verbs and expressions related to language itself: explain, think, express, understand, see. Harry's chauffeur, Downing, seems an especially eloquent case. As for Harry, the protagonist, he repeats several times that he would need to command another language to be able to explain his inner anguish. Eliot himself argues in his 1944 Introduction to Bethell's *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition* that the characters in verse drama should

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2   "[F]or I was persuaded that the primary failure of nineteenth-century poets when they wrote for the theatre (…) was their limitation to a strict blank verse which, after extensive use for non-dramatic poetry, had lost the flexibility which blank verse must have if it is to give the effect of conversation" ("Poetry and Drama," 596).

"disclose (not necessarily be aware of) a deeper reality than that of the plane of most of our conscious living" (504). This disclosure of a deeper reality through verse is what allows dramatic action to unfold, which I am going to analyze in the following examples.

By means of his own analysis, Eliot offers a deeper understanding of why verse form in *The Family Reunion* sets the standards for his future dramatic career. The three or four stress conversational line coexists here with other identifiable, highly stylized verse forms through which dramatic action is interrupted. On these occasions, characters speak as if in a trance, unconscious of their momentary inclusion in a larger-than-life design. These interruptions often confer a fleeting perception that they contain something strange in themselves ("What have we been saying?"). As early as Scene I, the Sibyl-like voice of Agatha interrupts the ongoing conversation:

> GERALD. That will be a little difficult. /
> VIOLET.   Nonsense, Gerald!
>   You must see for yourself it's the only thing to do.
> AGATHA. Thus with most careful devotion
>   Thus with precise attention
>   To detail, interfering preparation
>   Of that which is already prepared
>   Men tighten the know of their confusion
>   Into perfect misunderstanding,
>   Reflecting a pocket-torch of observation
>   Upon each other's opacity
>   Neglecting all the admonitions
>   From the world around the corner
>   The wind's talk in the dry holly-tree
>   The inclination of the moon
>   The attraction of the dark passage
>   The paw under the door.
>
>   (*TFR*, 290)

No transition is marked here from Gerald's and Violet's conversational line to Agatha's shorter, rhymed lines. Agatha's verse changes the mood: suddenly there is rhyme, and the theme of the previous lines is changed. Furthermore, the choice of matter-of-fact language gives way to the symbolic inclusion of remote elements such as "the dry holly-tree", "the moon", "the dark passage", "the paw." This elusive, oracle-like blending of imagery, metrics and language, so reminiscent of Eliot's poetry in general and of *Four Quartets* in particular, will be completely eliminated in the later plays.

Agatha's citation above does not advance Eliot's search for a conversational line embedded in dramatic action and characterization. In contrast, in *The Family Reunion* the characters express themselves in the rhythm of common speech, putting into words a pedestrian worldview; it is where Eliot most successfully provides factual information for the plot while he subtly discloses a deeper reality. This is where the conversational line allows him to further explore its possibilities, leaving all unreal speech elements behind. I will try to prove this hypothesis using the text itself. In order to do this, I will return again to the play's opening lines:

> AMY.   Not yet! I will ring for you. It is still quite light.
>   I have nothing to do but watch the days draw out,
>   Now that I sit in the house from October to June,
>   And the swallow comes too soon and the spring will be over
>   And the cuckoo will be gone before I am out again.
>   O Sun, that was once so warm, O Light that was taken for granted
>   And the night unfeared and the day expected
>   And clocks could be trusted, tomorrow assured
>   And time would not stop in the dark!
>   Put on the lights. But leave the curtain undrawn.
>   Make up the fire. Will the spring never come? I am cold.
> AGATHA. Wishwood was always a cold place, Amy.
>
> (*TFR*, 285)

The mood is set in these first apparently simple informative lines invested with solemnity, as in *Murder in the Cathedral*. They seem dramatic soliloquies predicated on symbolic opposites (light and dark, spring and winter) that add to the resonance of the place itself, Wishwood. Amy's discourse resembles Burnt Norton's philosophical reflection "time present and time past." This tone is more clearly evoked in Ivy's reply to Amy:

> IVY.   I have always told Amy she should go south in the winter.
>   Were I in Amy's position, I would go south in the winter.
>   I would follow the sun, not wait for the sun to come here.
>   I would go south in the winter, if I could afford it,
>   Not freeze, as I do, in Bayswater, by a gas-fire counting shillings.

Ivy's idle chatter, trivial as it sounds and resentful of her lack of wealth, contains an insistent repetition, an echo, of a crucial verse in *The Waste Land*: "I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter" (*TWL*, 61). Eliot's critique of the wastelanders' escapist evasion of winter and darkness in an attempt to avoid the

natural cycle is repeated here (Patea 2011, 97). At the same time, "I would go south in the winter" sounds like a perfectly banal comment both in Ivy's as well as in Countess Marie Larisch's confession in *The Waste Land*.[3] At this point the double pattern is successfully achieved not only at a denotative level of the words used but also on a connotative plane.

Consequently, the main challenge of any translation into Spanish must reproduce Eliot's particular strategy. It must convey the mere facts of the situation and the conventionality of the characters, and it should simultaneously open up spaces, like a sounding board for the "beyond character" dimension of the protagonists. Moreover, the staging of the scene must show the proper correspondence between meaning and stress transmitted by the metrics of the conversational line and regardless of the spectators' perception of a prose or verse dialogue. As the Spanish poet Claudio Rodríguez aptly remarked, referring to Rimbaud's poetic rhythm: "La palabra significa en la medida que suena" (2004: 91), that is, "the word is invested with meaning as long as it sounds." Rodríguez's statement may well be applied to Eliot's innovations in verse form.

5. Translating *The Family Reunion* into Spanish

Before approaching the issue of translation, I would like to consider he nature and tradition of Spanish verse. At the time when Eliot attempted to transform English blank verse into his particular version of the conversational line, Spanish and Spanish-American poets were also experimenting with a conversational line in varied ways. Inspired by Walt Whitman's verse, Jorge Luis Borges, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Pablo Neruda, Vicente Aleixandre, Vicente Huidobro or Carlos Bousoño began to incorporate English verse to a poetic tradition which, until then, had almost exclusively relied on French literature and in particular, the Symbolist movement. From the first decades of the twentieth century onwards, Spanish-American poets adopted Anglo-American free verse and wrote poems of varied strophic lines and syllables. In this respect, Eliot's innovations are similar to Spanish verse experimentalism: the blurring of barriers between poetry and prose, and the introduction of specific stress patterns that maintain this in-between verse-prose cadence (Utrera 2003, 303-333).

As regards the transgression of barriers, Borges emphasized that free verse is indebted to an archaic world without limits between verse and prose (*Ibid.*, 308), while Jiménez related it to "the naturalness of the prose and to the principle

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3   Countess Marie Larisch was the niece of the last empress of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Eliot's verse evokes her own words in her memoirs, *My Past* (1913), as well as private conversations he had with her.

of the genuine expression of subjectivity and personal rhythm"[4] (*Ibid.*, 320). Concerning stress patterns, Bousoño concluded in his analysis of Aleixandre's use of free verse that:

> The possible irregularities within the general predominance of the hendecasyllable rhythm can be perfectly assumed within the poetic structure, since the dislocated rhythmic units are absorbed by the majority rhythmic mass of the poem (Utrera, 323).[5]

Bousoño's statement confirms that the main rhythmic pattern of the new innovations within Spanish verse are those of the hendecasyllable, which arguably expresses the length of an average utterance. Contemporary critics and Bousoño's poet-fellows argued that this is, in effect, the verse form that prevails over the irregular rhythmic cadence of free verse.

The translation of English poetry into Spanish constitutes a serious challenge, since English metrics like Latin and Greek are measured by units of different length called feet, while Spanish verse is based on syllabic stress and all syllables have the same length. Olivera's own evolution in his translations of Eliot's theatre clearly shows that there can be more than one possible approach to his drama. For *The Cocktail Party*, Olivera prefers the Spanish fourteen-syllable line, also called alexandrine (*alejandrino*), as the prevailing rhythm instead of the hendecasyllable (Olivera 1950, 9-16). His choice seems to be in consonance with Eliot's own indications about the use of caesura in his conversational line, since the alexandrine specifically consists of two seven-syllable parts divided by a caesura. Moreover, it gives more scope to the translator for the introduction of Spanish words which are usually longer than English words.

Both the hendecasyllable and the alexandrine are verse forms with a long tradition in Spanish poetry. The hendecasyllable is the meter used in Spanish sonnets. Conversely, translators from English into Spanish usually opt for the alexandrine when they translate English sonnets, precisely because of the length variation between the two languages. That is the reason why Olivera's choice of the alexandrine for Eliot's conversational line seems in principle adequate, even if the hendecasyllable prevails in Spanish free verse. This is how Olivera

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4   "a la naturalidad de la prosa y al principio de expresión auténtica de la subjetividad y el ritmo personal."

5   "Las posibles irregularidades dentro del general predominio del ritmo endecasilábico se asumirían perfectamente dentro de la estructura poemática, ya que las unidades rítmicas dislocadas quedan absorbidas por la masa rítmica mayoritaria del poema." Unless otherwise indicated, all the translations from Spanish poets included in this article have been translated by its author.

translates the opening lines of *The Cocktail* Party, translated as *Cocktail Party*. I am marking the rhythmic accents of the Spanish syllables in bold type, so as to differentiate them from the diacritical sign that indicates word stress. In contrast, the underlined syllables show possible alternative accents:

ALEX   You've míssed the póint // complétely, Julia:
                  There *wére* no tigers. // *Thát* was the póint.

ALEX.   **Ju**lia, no has compren**di**do // la **gra**cia de este <u>cuen</u>to.
                  No *hubo* tales <u>ti</u>gres. // En *eso* está la **gra**cia.

<div align="right">(*CP*, 19)</div>

Olivera renders these lines in two perfect alexandrines. In the second line, he reproduces the same accentual pattern as the original (*were/hubo; that/eso*), whereas in the first one he has to make some changes.[6] He moves "the point" ('la **gra**cia') to the second part of the line and lets the stress fall on the first syllable of the verse ("**Ju**lia"). With this decision, Olivera privileges the alexandrine above other metrical forms.

A recent alternative to Olivera's metrical choice is provided by the Eliot scholar and translator Dídac Llorens-Cubedo in a still unpublished translation of the same play. Llorens-Cubedo renders these two lines in nine-syllable and twelve-syllable forms, thus approximating his choice to the hendecasyllable instead of the alexandrine:

No has enten**di**do // **na**da, Julia:
No había **ti**gres. // *Ahí* está la clave.

Commenting on his 1959 translation of *The Confidential Clerk (Su hombre de confianza),* Olivera admits some shortcomings in his previous metrical choice and attempts a different solution: he adopts a complex system that relies more on a particular use of the classic feet than on any available syllabic Spanish lines. I must admit that I find his technical explanations somewhat confusing, but his intentions are unequivocal:

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6   There is an implicit fundamental difference between the "accentual pattern" of languages whose poetic rhythm is based on feet (English) and the prevailing "rhythmic accents" in Spanish long verse lines. In the latter case, stress is provided by the verse form itself and does not always coincide with the stress of each word (see Torre, 1999: 32).

> The abundance of dactyls will confer the desired agility and lightness to the scene. In turn, the absence of rhyme and of any regular syllabic meter (elements are also not found in the original) will eliminate that drum beat that the ear of an average audience is used to calling verse, so that many will believe that they are listening to prose, like their colleagues in an English audience" (1959:19).[7]

It is true that in Spanish the continuous use of the alexandrine, even if unrhymed, will always sound like poetry. Therefore, this verse form is far from being a Spanish desirable equivalent to Eliot's conversational line. At the same time, Spanish free verse shows a clear tendency to adopt the stress patterns of the hendecasyllable. This tendency is reinforced when the hendecasyllable alternates with the alexandrine, especially when translating from English, a language in which, unlike Spanish, monosyllables abound to a high degree. Consequently, a combination of these two verse forms may well serve the purpose of translating Eliot's conversational line into Spanish. This affects lines that naturally fluctuate between nine and twelve syllables close to the hendecasyllable –Llorens-Cubedo's choice– and longer lines similar to the alexandrine that usually have between thirteen and sixteen, or even eighteen syllables. Such a translation renders the smooth flow of a prose/verse rhythm, and is an adequate equivalent to Eliot's conversational line. As for the caesura, it continues balancing accents along the line.

It is a pity that the 1953 translation of *The Family Reunion* by novelist Rosa Chacel, *Reunión de familia,* should not include any explanations about her own decisions.[8] This is how Chacel translates the opening lines:

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7   La abundancia de dáctilos dará al diálogo una ligereza y levedad muy deseable en la escena, y la ausencia de rima y de toda métrica regular silábica (elementos que, por otra parte, tampoco se hallan en el original) eliminará ese tambor que el oído de un público medio está acostumbrado a llamar verso, de modo que muchos creerán estar oyendo prosa, como sus colegas del auditorio inglés.

8   There is also a typed 1956 version of *Reunión de familia,* of which a single copy is kept at the *Archivo General de la Administración,* in Alcalá de Henares, together with the attached censorship file 101-56 (05-04-1956). On the cover page can be read: "Traducción ('Translation'): Elisa Fernández-Cancela; Revisión poética ('Poetic revision'): Carmen Conde". Using this copy, the play was staged that year in Madrid by the Dido, Pequeño Teatro Company. The reviews referred to the translator as "Elizabeth Gate." Carmen Conde argued that she used free verse ('versos blancos') when adapting Eliot's conversational line (*Ya,* 19/06/1956). However, Rosa Chacel's translation, published by Emecé in Buenos Aires, and the manuscript by Gate/Conde are *the same text.* Admitting that there is an unresolved mystery, we provisionally hold to Chacel's authorship, since her version appeared three years before the other one.

> AMY.   Todavía no; es de día aún. // Yo la llamaré.
>   No me queda otra cosa que hacer // sino ver cómo crecen los días.
>   Ahora me quedo en casa // desde octubre hasta junio.
>   Y la golondrina llega muy temprana // y la primavera ya se habrá acabado
>   Y se habrá ido el cuclillo // para cuando yo vuelva a salir.
>
>   (*RF*, 46)

In this passage we can see the tendency towards the alexandrine in lines one, three and six, each line has sixteen, fifteen and seventeen syllables, respectively. The other two lines are twenty and twenty-four syllables long. Chacel tries to maintain the caesura and does not seem to be so concerned with length. Her translation overcomes prose/verse boundaries. In my own translation, I try to reduce the length of longer lines so as to let the rhythmic accent fall more clearly on meaningful words, while I avoid too conspicuous stress patterns of hendecasyllables and alexandrines:[9]

> AMY.   ¡Todavía no! Ya la llamaré. // Aún hay claridad.
>   No tengo nada que hacer // salvo ver pasar los días,
>   Ahora que estoy en casa // desde octubre hasta junio,
>   Y se adelanta la golondrina // y se irá la primavera
>   Y el cuco se habrá ido // cuando yo vuelva a salir.

In this case, the lines count seventeen, fifteen, fifteen, eighteen and fifteen syllables, respectively. I have maintained a uniform syllable pattern so as to create a similar mood as in the original, halfway between the implicit and the explicit, the factual and the lyrically elusive. "Claridad" ('clarity') is an appropriate term for the "light" symbolism recurrent in the play and, as such, it needs to be stressed. Both my translation and Chacel's naturally reproduce the original predominance of other crucial words like 'ahora' and 'casa' ("now" and "home") in line 3. Yet, in order to shorten the fourth line, I have changed Eliot's noun and verb phrase order, which Chacel maintains. However, the final position of two four-syllable nouns of equal stress on the second-to-last syllable ('golondrina' and 'primavera', that is, "swallow" and "spring") maintains the stressed accent of the original. All this requires a translation technique that must allow for intuitive changes of meter, accent, word sound and position in the line while

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9   A way of writing poetry that does not "sound" so conspicuously like poetry is favored in Spanish by asymmetric stress ('acentuación asimétrica') which consists of accentual choice that does not let the syllabic stress be uniformly identified with the rhythmic one.

always trying to reproduce conversational speech. As for the syntactic parallelism between the two halves of the line, emphasized in Eliot's original through the lines that repeatedly begin with "And", both Chacel's and my own translation are faithful to the original patterns.

The correct translation would be a medley of several verse forms gravitating towards the hendecasyllable or the alexandrine. Amy's opening lines tend towards the alexandrine, a solemn verse form *per se*, very adequate for a situation in which the protagonist wants to convey the impression of being in absolute control of the situation. Later in the play (Part II, Scene III), when she gradually discloses her more uninhibited self, she transmits anger and drops social etiquette, her speech becomes emotional, rich in monosyllables, interrogations and exclamations. In this example, in which Amy addresses Agatha once intentions have been revealed, the verse approaches the hendecasyllable:

> … I *would* have sons, // if I could not have a husband:
> Then I let him go. // I abased myself.
> Did I show any weakness, // any self-pity?
> I forced myself // to the purposes of Wishwood;
> I even asked you back, for visits, // after he was gone,
> So that there might not be // ugly rumours.
> You thought // I did not know!
>
> (*FR*, 340)

This is how Chacel translates this passage:

> Ya que marido no tenía, tendría hijos.
> Entonces le dejé que se marchara. Me rebajé.
> ¿Es que mostré debilidad, tuve alguna piedad para conmigo misma?
> Me sacrifiqué en aras de Wishwood;
> Llegué a invitarte a visitarme después que él se marchó,
> Para evitar rumores desagradables.
> ¡Creíste que no lo sabía!
>
> (*RF*, 132)

In Chacel's version, only lines 4, 6 and 7 come close to the hendecasyllable. The conversational tone is maintained and it does not depart too much from the original syntax and word order, except for the first line. My own version is:

> *Tendría* hijos, // ya que no marido:
> Luego lo dejé marchar. // Me rebajé.

¿Mostré autocompasión, // debilidad?
Me entregué a lo que Wishwood // requería;
Hasta te volví a invitar // cuando él se fue,
A fin de acallar // molestos rumores.
¡Creías que no lo sabía!

In this provisional translation, all the lines resemble the hendecasyllable. Line 4, for example, is a perfect hendecasyllable. Moreover, it reproduces the traditional rhythmic accents of the type called *endecasílabo melódico* (melodious hendecasyllable), with stresses on the third and sixth syllables, besides the required stress on the tenth syllable ("Me en/ tre/ gué a/ lo que/ Wish/ wood/ re/ que/ rí/a"). The remaining lines include different variations of stresses that avoid a highly marked poetic rhythm indebted to verse, although on the whole, prose and verse have the same importance.

The line choice depicts Amy's psychological process, inasmuch as it combines alexandrines and hendecasyllables. Such an evolution can be noticed when we compare Amy's introductory exclamation ("¡Todavía no! Ya la llamaré. Aún hay claridad") with her second outburst ("Tendría hijos, ya que no marido"). The former presents an ordered parallel structure before and after the caesura with a constant alexandrine pattern, while the latter shows a more fluent structure, because of its shifting length and caesura. As regards syntax, the lines that Amy utters towards the end of the play favor enjambment, a characteristic of key characters like Agatha and Dr. Warburton who influence Harry's development. The following passage confirms Amy's final understanding of life:

At my age, I only just begin // to apprehend the truth
About things too late to mend: // and that is to be old.
Nevertheless, I am glad // if I can come to know them.

<div align="right">(FR, 345)</div>

For the translation of this passage, I propose a blending of the alexandrine and the hendecasyllable—the first lines have 16 and 17 syllables while the third has 12—as a rhythmic index of Amy's coming to terms with her inner dilemma:

A mi edad, empiezo apenas // a discernir la verdad
Sobre cosas que ya no puedo enmendar: // eso es ser vieja.
Sin embargo, me alegraré // de entenderlas.

6. Further Considerations

The evolution of Amy as a character who also undergoes a partial process of enlightenment or dramatic anagnorisis is relevant when she resorts to the conversational line. In this she differs from characters like Harry, Agatha or Mary, who switch to verse forms which Eliot explicitly identified as "beyond character" strategies. In this sense, Amy anticipates the development of characters such as Edward in *The Cocktail Party*, Colby in *The Confidential Clerk* or Lord Claverton in *The Elder Statesman* who confront their selfishness, true vocation or public image, respectively. These three figures live moments of revelation similar to Amy's, but their speech does not abandon the usual verse pattern. Hence:

> Edward in *The Cocktail Party*:
> The self that wills – he is a feeble creature;
> He has to come to terms in the end
> With the obstinate, the tougher self;
>   (*CP*, 381)

> Colby in *The Confidential Clerk*:
> The person I used to be, returns to take possession:
>   (*TCC*, 463)

> And Lord Claverton in *The Elder Statesman*:
>   I've been freed from the self that pretends to be someone.
>   (*TES*, 582)

Such crucial moments are naturally blended in the flow of the text with no warning. These moments of awareness resemble the meditations of the *Four Quartets*, as well as the inner, monologic voices of Eliot's early poems. They take place among trivial scenes and futile dialogues without any choruses or modifications of the conversational line. Only Monica and Charles's love lyrics in *The Elder Statesman* are the exception to the rule.

In play after play, Eliot experiments with verse forms in order to insert these crucial moments of awareness into the natural course of events, a strategy with which he sets up a correspondence between words and action. Despite its length, I quote Smith's eloquent analysis:

> In his last comedies, Eliot worked to eliminate the poetic effects he felt had drawn attention to verse in *The Family Reunion*—runic passages, lyric duets like

those between Harry and Mary, and the choruses. In *The Cocktail Party,* to avoid the musical effects of spoken verse, he turned instead to other "poetic" effects such as extended images, repetition of phrases, and structural repetitions of all kinds available in the patterning of comedy. In *The Confidential Clerk* the verse is further 'thinned', the dialogue less stylized and the comic effects limited to the traditional comic situations of misplaced children and divine intervention to solve issues of identity. In *The Elder Statesman,* while the verse form hast been technically preserved, the tone is more sombre, and the lyric passages are saved for the young lovers, to emphasize the theme of human love as an instrument of purgation and salvation (2014, 261).

The relevant feature is that dramatic characterization of this kind is honed upon a verse form not intended to be perceived as such and which is only very subtly used as an indicator of a deeper reality. Moreover, it is not by chance that Eliot declares in "Poetry and Drama": "My sympathies now have come to be all with the mother, who seems to me, except perhaps for the chauffeur, the only complete human being in the play" (601). Unlike other characters, such as Agatha, Amy's psychological development is rendered through the parameters of the conversational line which is crucial for character development as well as apt for plot progression. Eliot conceives dramatic action as the accrued revelation of deeper meanings through surface speech, since in Wyman's phrase "the words are what happens."

The Family Reunion marks a turning point in Eliot's dramatic career. It inaugurates new strategies. Chronological sources besides the author's own testimony in "Poetry and Drama" confirm this assumption. As Lightfoot argues:

> In "The Need for Poetic Drama," broadcast in 1936, the poet stated that in verse drama versification should be *emphasized* rather than minimized (…) In "Religious Drama: Medieval and Modern," 1937, Eliot expressed both a desire to see religious principles embodied in serious drama, and an awareness that verse drama must compete with the popular theatre on its own grounds. This was the turning point. (1968, 191).

All of this evidences a well-thought decision of ample scope, which involves not only theatrical praxis but also a *Weltanschauung* expressed through an experimental verse form.

7. Conclusion

For the purposes of translation into Spanish, the translator must pay close attention to Eliot's use of the conversational line when his dramatic characters

experience heightened moments of consciousness. Those almost unnoticeable signs of speaking "beyond character" in the course of a casual conversation need to be carefully identified in translation so as to avoid an excess of formality. The translator needs to render the Eliotian spirit of simultaneous dramatic patterns, the intersection of the real and the transcendent.

In its premiere in Madrid in 1956, *Reunión de familia* received the same mixed appreciation as in London in 1939. Overall, dialogues were praised for their brilliance while lack of action was signaled as the main flaw. One review stated that "the lyric choruses are splendid. The dialogue is slow, obscure and uninteresting, since it gravitates towards an anti-dialogue" (*Estafeta literaria Madrid,* 23/06/1956).10

By trying his hand at verse drama once he achieved fame as a poet, Eliot's craft was put to the test at home and abroad. Such circumstance did not deter him from exploring new poetic and dramatic paths ultimately conducive to the use of new verse forms which had never before been applied to drawing-room drama. Whether Eliot's achievements onstage are considered satisfactory or not—a controversial issue to this day—, the analysis of his dramatic praxis, together with his own theoretical speculations on this issue, enhance his oeuvre. I hope this article provides some suggestions to those who will take up the challenge of translating Eliot's theatre into Spanish.

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10 "los recitados corales, estrictamente líricos, son espléndidos. El diálogo, lento, oscuro y poco interesante, por orientarse hacia un anti-diálogo."

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Critical Literacy in ELT Classroom Testing

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Abstract:

Critical Literacy (CL) has lately influenced English Language Teaching (ELT) in Brazil, mainly after the publication of the National Guidelines for High School Teaching, and several practitioners have started to use CL perspectives in their ELT contexts. Besides, CL and Critical Language Education have been the focus of much research in Brazil. Nonetheless, these alternative approaches have not yet made their way into testing and assessment. This paper focuses on the relationship of CL and English Language testing. First, we present an overview of important concepts in the area of testing and assessment in ELT. We also discuss important concepts of CL and other critical approaches to ELT. Then, we briefly discuss the possibility of using CL together with CA in English teaching. To illustrate, we summarize a course in ELT, which has used CL and CA at university level. Finally, considering tests as part of the social practices in educational contexts, we demonstrate that, just as CL may be used for Citizenship Education and Social Justice in English classes, the same approach should be used when testing, particularly due to the use of language as a tool for social reconstruction and critique for the exposure of inequalities. Principles for developing critical practices in testing and assessment are discussed along the paper.

Keywords: Language Teaching, Evaluation, Critical Literacy, Teacher Education

1. Introduction

Critical Applied Linguistics, as proposed by Pennycook (2001) and others, has now influenced many areas of professional practice and scientific research in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) and Language Teacher Education (LTE). However, in our view, testing – especially classroom language testing – is still an area where more critical perspectives have not yet made an impact on either research or practice. Critical Literacy (Cervetti, Pardales & Damico 2001; McLaughlin & DeVoogd 2004) has lately influenced ELT in Brazil, mainly after the publication of the National Guidelines for High School Teaching, in 2006, and several classroom practitioners have started to use Critical Literacy (CL) perspectives together with the Communicative Approach (CA) (Mattos & Valério 2010; Valério & Mattos 2018) in their ELT contexts. In the same vein, CL and Critical Language Education (Ferraz 2010, 2015; Mattos, Ferraz & Monte Mór 2015; Monte Mór 2009) have been the focus of much research in Brazil. Nonetheless, these alternative approaches have not yet made their way into testing and assessment, despite the evidence of the roles played by language testing on social and political levels (Shohamy 2004).

This paper[1] focuses on the possible relationship of Critical Literacy and English Language testing in critical teaching contexts, since it is a meaningful effort in order to understand classroom practices, and further actions towards a more consistent use of tests in regards to teaching perspectives, methods, philosophies, and approaches.

First, we present an overview of important concepts in the area of classroom testing and assessment, especially in ELT. We also describe and discuss important concepts of Critical Literacy and other critical approaches to ELT. Then, we briefly discuss the possibility of using CL together with CA in teaching English as an additional language. To illustrate, we will summarize a course in ELT, which has used CL and CA at university level (Mattos 2014, 2018a). Finally, considering tests as part of the social practices in educational contexts, the main objective is to demonstrate the association to the fact that, just as CL may be used for Citizenship Education (Vetter 2008) and Social Justice (Hawkins 2011; Mattos 2014) in English classes, the same approach should be used when testing (Pascoal

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2018), particularly due to the use of language as a tool for social reconstruction and critique for the exposure of inequalities. In doing so, we also try to elaborate on possible principles for developing critical practices in testing and assessment in the language classroom.

2. Important concepts in classroom testing and assessment

As a research subject in Applied Linguistics, assessment has been constantly revisited (Alderson & Banerjee 2002), which signals an important movement. Grillo and Lima (2010) indicate that this allows the integration of new contexts, new information, and a dynamic expansion of the term.

As a practice, assessment may be used in distinct circumstances, incidentally or intentionally (Brown 2004). Assessments have, as most practices, intentional and unintentional consequences, and can affect teaching, learning and general social life contexts (Scaramucci 2011).

According to Davis, in language teaching, "evaluation, assessment, and testing are used for achieving a common aim: enabling individuals to better understand and change any of the elements that constitute language programs" (2018, 5255). The author says evaluation, assessment and testing may be taken as points on a continuum, in which evaluation takes the broadest possible perspective on a wide range of programmatic functions and processes, and assessment is a more narrowly focused term directed toward student learning. The author also states that, although testing may present definitions and practices that overlap with those referring to assessment, "certain widely held connotations suggest that testing is more narrowly focused than assessment" (2018, 5256). Others that, in the past, have argued in the same vein are Ur (1996) and Genesee and Upshur (1996). In this sense, evaluation may be considered an umbrella term encompassing both assessment and testing.

Brown defines assessment as the ongoing process that is intrinsically connected to teaching. Thus, for the author, "a good teacher never ceases to assess students" (2004, 4). In such process, teachers can use different tools to observe and assess, including tools that admit self or peer assessment. Fulcher and Davidson (2007) assert that assessing is a meaningful action and, ideally, presents the purpose of enlightening teaching and learning, stimulating the reflexive action upon improving teaching and enhancing learning efficiency.

Therefore, in ELT classroom assessment contexts, a great variety of procedures and tasks may be employed according to perceived needs and purposes. They are in the generalized spectrum of summative, formative or diagnostic assessment.

One of the long-lasting debates in teaching—and testing—any subject is the debate over summative and formative assessment. In ELT it is just the same. Summative assessment refers to the action of testing students after a certain point in the curriculum, for instance, the end or the middle of a course or unit, to check their understanding and their development (Brown 2004). According to Brown (2004), the teacher has a choice to change summative test, a test that is used to translate what students have learnt into quantitative information, into a more formative test, turning it into an opportunity to learn, not only an opportunity to generate data, namely numbers as grades and scores. Goertel more recently defines summative assessments as types of evaluation that are "used to determine if students have mastered specific competencies and to identify instructional areas that need additional attention" and formative assessment as types of evaluation "used to provide ongoing direction for improvement and/or adjustment in learning and instruction" (2018, 2053).

Formative assessment encompasses a wider variety of assessment practices, not only testing. The assessment aims to inform the teacher about the learning process but in a way that helps the parties to focus on the students' growth, the development of skills and an array of competences. Formative assessment may be done as informal assessment and, in this case, one example that is given by Brown (2004) is comments and informal feedback from the teacher. There must be a means of delivering this feedback that is understood by teachers and students, and an internalization on the students' end. Both actions allow the continuation of the process and, therefore, the students' growth.

Considering classroom environments, diagnostic assessment is reported by Brown (2004) as tests done in the beginning of a course or before specific topics or skills have been taught or developed in a given class. This type of assessment may also be considered a sub-type of formative assessment (Boraie 2018). Luckesi (2008) analyzes the distinction made firstly by Freire (1975) who explores the students' domestication and humanization as two opposite pedagogical directions. Luckesi (2008) couples these thoughts to the contemporary assessment practices. According to the author, the domestication pedagogy uses assessment as a controlling and disciplinary tool "not only regarding cognitive behaviors, but also social ones" (2008, 32). As for the humanization pedagogy, in this case assessment is used as a means for diagnostic, not as a controlling mechanism, but as a democratic tool that allows for students' autonomy and that aims at improvement and growth.

In any test, whether it is diagnostic, summative, or formative with a summative tendency, the test maker must make decisions beforehand. This is because, in order to have good information about what is sought, the test needs to be a well-informed test, in terms of how to collect and why to collect the

information (Hughes 1989). Aspects such as the types of items created, language used in stimuli and in instructions, and the response expected from the test takers are some of the decisions to be made.

In addition, some other aspects need to be taken into account, for example, the practicality, validity, and reliability of a test. Practicality refers to the aspects that make a test practical, and, as Brown (2004) asserts, these can be aspects such as the amount of money, time, and personnel involved in the process as a whole, from the preparation of the test to the scoring. Such an aspect has to do with costs. Hughes argues that, besides reflection upon the test characteristics regarding being "easy and cheap to construct, administer, score and interpret", it is also important to ask questions that focus on the costs "of not achieving beneficial backwash" (1989, 47).

Washback effect, also named backwash effect, refers to the impact, influence or consequence of a test (Quevedo-Camargo 2014). Alderson and Banerjee (2001) describe test washback as a complex aspect, given the fact that there are many factors influencing its nature. Washback, as the authors point out, is the impact tests may have on teaching and learning, which can be either negative, in the case of a bad test, or positive, in the case of a good one (Alderson & Banerjee 2002). Richards and Schmidt define the term on an even broader manner, considering washback effect as the impact of a test on "individual test takers, other stakeholders (e.g. teachers, parents, school administrators, or test developers), educational systems, or society" (2010, 272). As the authors construe such an effect, they rephrase that the impact of a test can cause the teachers to teach to the test, that is to say that the teachers would focus on teaching the tests' abilities or skills:

> For example, if the education department in a country wanted schools to spend more time teaching listening skills, one way to bring this about would be to introduce a listening comprehension test component into state examinations. The washback would be that more class time would then be spent on teaching listening skills. When teaching is found to exert an important effect on testing, this impact is called a reverse washback (Richards & Schmidt 2010, 634).

What the authors mention is one of the possible scenarios of washback effect on teaching environment, through the perspective of large-scale tests, in which the decisions fall on the education department hands. Other circumstances in which tests change teaching and/or learning practices may also be found. However, these will not be discussed here as this is not the focus of this paper.

Other important aspects of tests are validity and reliability. According to Hughes, "a test is said to be valid if it measures accurately what it is intended to

measure" (1989, 22). There are four types of validity: content validity, criterion-referenced validity, construct validity, and face validity. According to Palmer and Bachman (1981), content validity considers that the tasks proposed on a test are coherent to the content it intends to assess. To investigate the content validity of a test, one needs to sample and describe the competences being tested. Criterion-referenced validity is seen by the authors as controversial, due to the nature of this type of validity. It refers to "the extent to which a test predicts something that is considered important" (Palmer & Bachman 1981, 136), but when a test shows this validity, it may not mean that what the test measures is known, in other words, it may not be clear enough. Construct validity is used to support positions through hypothesis formation and testing, and it allows one to understand the competence of test takers, according to the "relationship between a test and the psychological abilities it measures" (Palmer & Bachman 1981, 136). Finally, the authors also discuss face validity, which is considered the least important of the four types, due to the lack of statistics or procedures involved in the process of measuring it. Palmer and Bachman state that a test exhibits face validity when it seems like it measures what it is supposed to measure (1981, 135).

A more recent approach to validity in assessment research considers it as an argument used, by any stakeholder, to understand and use a test, and the reliability as the evidence of validity (Scaramucci 2011). Reliability has been termed as the consistency of a test that measures what the test assesses. Fulcher and Davidson (2007) consider the consistency of a test, which entails that, if replicated, it should have an interpretable and meaningful score, and should also be reproducible. A reliable test is built considering that the answers given by students are the only factor that would change the scores, for instance, ensuring that the response to a test item relies only on this item, and does not depend on another, or that enough items were included to have a meaningful score (Fulcher & Davidson 2007).

Language assessment and language pedagogy are intertwined areas. Hancock (2006) defends that the validity and the reliability of a test depend on the alignment between teaching and testing. For instance, the methodology, tools, activities, philosophical position, and theoretical foundation or practical experiences in which teachers might base their choices and decisions must find their way in the tests. If this is so, critical approaches to English language teaching (ELT) must be considered when designing a test in a course based on such approaches. For this reason, in the next section, we discuss recent developments in the area of critical approaches to ELT, more specifically, Critical Literacy, which will help us support our arguments for using this same approach in testing.

3. Critical literacy in English language teaching and testing

Lately, researchers and practitioners in the area of language teaching have been prioritizing more critical perspectives, drawing on the work of Pennycook (2001), who makes a case for Critical Applied Linguistics (for a quick review, see for example Mattos, 2018b). In Brazil, these more critical perspectives in language teaching have recently experienced a boom, especially after the publication of the *National Guidelines for High School Teaching* (Brazil 2006), when Critical Literacy (CL) was officially presented as a suggestion for teaching English at High School level, with the objective of teaching language for citizenship education and social transformation. The document advances pedagogical suggestions that emphasize the representations and analysis of differences, such as background, race, sexuality, gender, class, and discussions about who wins or loses in certain social relationships. The document also proposes a view of language as sociocultural practice as well as a view of learning as meaning-making. Based on critical literacy perspectives, the suggestions seek to develop students' critical conscience on various social practices and on the possibility of feelings of oppression or exclusion that may be generated in those who are not allowed/don't want to participate.

Crookes understands CL as an overarching term for several critical pedagogical proposals for language teaching that "invite the language user and learner to develop tools for seeing the ways in which language has position, interests, power, and can act to disadvantage those on the lower rungs of a hierarchical society" (2013, 28). According to Janks, critical literacy is not a teaching methodology *per se*, but a perspective or a point of view, a way to look at the world and to interpret it through diverse lenses. Janks states that "essentially, Critical Literacy is about enabling young people to read both the word and the world in relation to power, identity, difference and access to knowledge, skills, tools and resources. It is also about writing and rewriting the world" (2013, 227).

Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001), in a groundbreaking article, compare and contrast the origins, perspectives and objectives of two educational possibilities: critical literacy and critical reading. The authors say that, although the two perspectives have a few points in common, since both are approaches to literacy, they also differ in many ways. Besides having different theoretical origins, as the authors discuss, the two perspectives also present different visions of how knowledge, reality, authorship and discourse should be understood. Moreover, critical reading and critical literacy also present different perspectives on the objectives of education. Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001) define critical reading as a set of skills that allow the reader to "investigate sources, recognize the purpose of an author, distinguish fact and opinion, make inferences, form judgments, and detect propaganda strategies" (2001, 42). These skills, which

extend the capacities of the individual beyond what has been called functional literacy (Castell, Luke & MacLennan 1986; Soares 1998), allow for "higher levels of analysis and understanding," as asserted by Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001, 42), but need to be taught explicitly, since they do not develop naturally in readers. Critical literacy, however, has even more ambitious goals.

Bond and Wagner clarify that "critical reading is the process of assessing the authenticity and validity of material and formulating opinions about it" (1966, 283). Contrary to critical reading, in critical literacy the aim of readers is not to evaluate or to formulate opinion, but to construct meanings from the text. Moreover, according to Cervetti, Pardales and Damico, in the perspective of critical literacy, "textual meaning is understood in the context of social, historical and power relations, not just as the product or intention of an author" (2001, 46). Therefore, the process of reading, as Freire and Macedo (1987) have posed, come to be seen as a process of knowledge of the world, and not only of the word (or written text), and is aimed at social transformation.

McLaughlin and DeVoogd argue that critical literacy considers "readers as active participants in the reading process and invites them to move beyond passively accepting the text's message to question, examine, or dispute the power relations that exist between readers and authors" (2004, 14). These authors agree with Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001), when they say that critical literacy "promotes reflection, transformation, and action" (McLaughlin & DeVoogd 2004, 14), according to the Freirian view of social transformation. Morgan asserts that the practice of critical literacy leads readers to question "who constructs the texts [or perspectives / discourses / ideologies] whose representations are dominant in a particular culture at a particular time; how readers come to be complicit with the persuasive ideologies of texts; whose interests are served by such representations and such readings; and when such texts and readings are inequitable in their effects, how these could be constructed otherwise" (1997, 2).

Thus, critical literacy highlights the power relations that prevail in our society and is especially concerned with the differences between race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, etc., examining them "not as isolated occurrences but rather as part of systemic inequities and injustices", as Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001, 46) point out. Some of the major concerns of critical literacy are summarized in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. Main concepts of Critical Literacy
(adapted from Cervetti, Pardales & Damico 2001, 50)

Area	Critical Literacy
Knowledge (epistemology)	What counts as knowledge is not natural or neutral; knowledge is always based on the discursive rules of a particular community, and is thus ideological.
Reality (ontology)	Reality cannot be known definitively, and cannot be captured by language; decisions about truth, therefore, cannot be based on a theory of correspondence with reality, but must instead be made locally.
Authorship	Textual meaning is always multiple, contested, culturally and historically situated, and constructed within differential relations of power.
Instructional goals	Development of critical consciousness

Cervetti, Pardales and Damico (2001) argue that the foundations of critical literacy are based on revolutionary values, stemming from the assumptions of critical social theory, but also based on Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy (Freire 1982; 1984) and his view of language as an empowering element. According to Mattos, critical literacy is "committed to values such as justice and equality, [and] aims at promoting social change, inclusion of marginalized groups and citizenship education" (2014, 129).

More recent research on Critical Literacy in language classrooms, and especially in ELT contexts, have also tried to make the case for critical language teaching. According to Dooley, Exley and Poulus, research on introducing Critical Literacy in English teaching has lately flourished and a "key finding […] is that English can indeed be taught critically to second language learners—in EFL settings such as Taiwan [and Brazil], as well as in English-dominant settings such as Australia, the UK or the US" (2016, 39). The authors state that critical literacy is an instrument of justice and define it as "an act of cultural and political power dedicated to the pursuit of human freedom, equality and emancipation" (2016, 39). Based on the political philosophy of Nancy Fraser and her multidimensional model for conceptualizing (in)justice, the authors explain that "Critical literacy is often concerned with the ways that differences of culture, race, gender and so forth are construed" (2016, 41). Their effort in the article is focused on reviewing some Critical Literacy in EFL setting programs in order to try to answer the question of "whether and how critical literacy programs achieve their emancipatory promise" (2016, 61). The programs these authors have reviewed seem to provide instruction on critical thinking and tried to juxtapose critical teaching with more conventional pedagogy, as well as ensuring textbook critique.

One of the main concerns mentioned by the authors "are the constraining effects of one or another examination or testing regimen" (2016, 61), a topic we also address here. Huh (2016) revises several instructional models of critical literacy and also discusses the possibility of balancing more conventional pedagogy and critical literacy perspectives in EFL contexts.

Bobkina and Stefanova also argue in favor of introducing Critical Literacy into the language classroom, this time through the use of literature. They contend that critical language teaching "has recently been enhanced by scholars who argue for the need of introducing *critical literacy pedagogy* into the language teaching curriculum as a means of promoting social justice" (2016, 679; italics in the original). The authors present a model for teaching critical thinking skills, which involves "interpretation of the world; self-reflection; critical awareness; intercultural awareness; reasoning and problem-solving and language use" (p. 684) and they offer a detailed example of how to apply the model. In Brazil, some researchers have also developed possible models and principles for using critical literacy in the EFL classroom with detailed practices and examples of activities. For example, Valério and Mattos (2018) have used film as input text for critical practices in the EFL classroom, and Duboc (2013) has proposed a similar model as the one developed by Bobkina and Stefanova (2016).

In another paper on the inclusion of Critical Literacy practices in an English-Spanish bilingual dual language classroom, Esquivel discusses a case study which "examined the power discourses and the critical literacy practices that help Latinx bilingual students become critical readers, negotiate meaning, and enhance their literacy skills in English and Spanish" (2019, 207) by incorporating several types of activities with the aim of enhancing students' critical skills and disrupting power discourses present in texts and images. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the theoretical framework, the author analyses discussions and writings produced by the students, as well as their drawings, from a CDA and social semiotics perspective. Results show that "the participants' experiences, funds of knowledge, and power discourses were essential components for completing the activities" and in the dual language classroom, "issues of power, discrimination, and injustices were addressed bilingually" (Esquivel 2019, 224). According to the author, "The participants used critical literacy practices to reaffirm and become conscious of the systems and institutions that subjugate people to advantaged and disadvantaged social functions" (2019, 224).

Although critical literacy is not a methodology in itself, but a perspective or attitude as we have seen, it may be coupled with language teaching methods, such as the Communicative Approach (Mattos & Valério 2010; Valério & Mattos 2018), and used as an approach to classroom teaching. However, in doing so, evaluation also has to follow critical perspectives, as highlighted in Pascoal (2018).

Grillo and Lima (2010) explain the pedagogical activity as having three processes at play: teaching, learning and assessment. These processes affect each other and exist in one another. Moreover, the authors consider that assessments translate the teachers' theoretical and methodological beliefs. Therefore, as discussed in Pascoal (2018), a course based on critical perspectives and citizenship promotion must follow the same direction when it comes to assessments, either formal or informal. Otherwise, at least two issues soon come to mind: The first is the lack of actual evidence on the development of learners' competencies and skills, especially those worked with during or after lessons; The second refers to the course validity and reliability in itself. Such a rupture of rationale, curriculum coherence and consistency, may create confusion and mistrust among stakeholders, along with the possibility of lowering student's levels of motivation. These issues are related to, respectively, learning and teaching processes in the pedagogical activity when assessment processes do not follow the same directions.

4. Becoming critical in testing

In keeping with the principles of critical literacy in teaching and testing, which will be discussed ahead, in this section we will describe and discuss two of the evaluation procedures used in an introductory undergraduate course for first-year English Majors preparing to become English teachers, at a big university in Brazil, namely the Final Written Test and the Oral Test.

The course in which these evaluation procedures were used was designed based on the principles of Critical Literacy, using the Communicative Approach as the main teaching methodology (Mattos & Valério 2010; Valério & Mattos 2018). Although this is an introductory course, the students enrolled usually present an intermediate level of proficiency in English. This course has been taught with this content since 2011 during a whole semester (60 hours). The course is fully taught in English and both authors of this paper have taught it several times.

In general terms, the course involves integrated practice of the four language skills, such as oral and written production and oral and written comprehension, grammar and vocabulary micro-skills, as well as an initial focus on pronunciation and introductory notions of phonology[2]. The themes and activities included in the course seek to provide students with opportunities for critical reflection on questions of social inequality and spaces to dispute some of the established truths in our society and, at the same time, their own introjected truths and

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2   For more details on the course itself and its proposal, see Mattos (2014).

beliefs. The main objective of these activities is to promote reflection on some critical issues that contribute to social injustices and unequal power relations in our society. The course is organized around four different projects, each focusing on a specific critical issue that is the focus of the reflection carried out in classroom. The projects are developed over 4 to 5 weeks with class meetings twice a week. The themes covered during the course include critical issues such as stereotypes, gender roles, and various types of physical, mental and virtual violence that may be common nowadays. Each project also includes a linguistic focus, which is selected from among the several possibilities offered by the texts chosen for the discussion of each theme. Table 2 below summarizes the themes and the linguistic content included in the course.

TABLE 2. Course summary (adapted from Mattos 2014)

	Project I	Project II	Project III	Project IV
Themes	Stereotypes	Gender differences	The cyber world	Bullying/ violence
Linguistic Focus	The English verb system (time, tense and aspect)	If-clauses	Modals	Modals (cont.)

The assessment of student learning in the course uses summative and formative formats, as required by the university, seeking to evaluate students both throughout the learning process and at the end of the course. The types of assessment used have always sought to follow the precepts of the communicative approach in relation to evaluation, aiming also to test the four language skills and the micro-skills in a balanced way and with a focus on the communicability of the proposed tasks. To name a few, there are writing tasks that focus on academic writing, paragraph writing more specifically, in which the assessment is done by the comments and conversations between teacher and students, in a formative manner; another example is the production of vlogs, as a way of furthering the speaking practice of students and of creating opportunities for them to express themselves in ways that they couldn't have done in the classroom in front of more than forty other students, either due to time constraints or their own choice. Both examples of tasks are connected to the themes and integrate more than one skill.

During the course, two written tests are used, one in the middle of the semester (Mid-Term Test) and one at the end of the semester (Final Test), in addition to an oral test, also applied at the end of the semester. These three types of assessment are considered summative, as they test the students' knowledge at the end of the learning process in an objective way, assigning them a formal grade. However, both

the written and oral tests have been designed to mirror the types of critical activities developed in classes. Thus, the texts used to test written and oral comprehension skills also address the same critical issues already discussed during the semester, such as gender differences and violence against women. Due to reasons of space and focus, in this paper we will only discuss the Final Written Test and the Oral Test.

The Final Written Test is composed of four integrated sections: listening, reading, language in use, and writing. As the last critical theme discussed in the course relates to several types of violence, we have chosen to use this theme also in the test throughout the several activities. We intend to go through the principles of Critical Literacy and the Communicative Approach perspectives as we discuss each section of the test. We believe that tests should also be used as a further chance to teach issues that are relevant for students' growth and improvement of critical thinking. Since teaching, learning and assessing are processes that affect each other greatly, in assessing, teachers should include teachable experiences for the students as well (Grillo & Lima 2010). They may rely on expanding a theme through reading, adding vocabulary, exploring critical thinking and making students rethink their own opinions and those of others', or on analyzing their assessment results and learning from them.

4.1. The Listening Section

Stemming from what we have discussed previously, for the listening section of the test, we chose an authentic text for the listening input. According to the principles of the Communicative Approach, which in this case correspond to the perspectives of Critical Literacy teaching (Mattos & Valério 2010; Valério & Mattos 2018), authentic texts are those developed to circulate in society as social literacy practices and not texts which are designed and/or adapted with the only purpose of teaching English. The purpose of the listening section is to check students' comprehension of aural stimuli. However, this text also allows for critical thinking and connecting students' previous knowledge and social experiences to the content of the test and their language learning practices. In choosing this text for the listening section, we had in mind its potential to explore social issues and to foster a sense of responsible citizenship.

The listening section of the test used a commercial[3] by Budweiser on the responsibility of not driving after drinking, an issue intended to raise critical awareness of students and aiding in their education as critical citizens. Besides, this topic is related to the topic of violence as discussed during classes. The

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3 Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56b09ZyLaWk (Last accessed on December 5th, 2015).

commercial is only about a minute long and brings a song that talks about making a plan to always come home to those you love. The short film portrays a young man and his dog, from the moment he brings the puppy home and all the moments they share together, such as playing, sleeping on the couch and going out with friends. One night the dog is left alone at home while his owner goes out to drink with friends. The dog waits the whole night for his owner who is taking too long to get back home. During the commercial, a song is played, which talks about coming home for those who are waiting for you, while on the screen we see sentences saying "for some, the waiting never ended". The end of the commercial is surprisingly happy, which gives students a sense of hope in humankind. We used the lyrics of the song and the sentences used by the young man to test students' listening skills (task 1) and the sentences written on the screen to test their critical thinking (task 2), as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Final Written Test, Listening Part

As we can see, the first task assesses students' listening skills through a listening cloze (Brown 2004). The blanked words were carefully chosen to explore listening and not to allow students to use only their reading skills to respond, which shows that it is a valid listening task. However, in order to make things a little easier to students with lower proficiency skills, the first letter of each missing word was provided. The second task explores the students' critical thinking through two open-ended questions. Both questions ask for students' interpretation of either

the situation presented or the song. As it would seem, scoring the task may not show much practicality and may affect levels of reliability, due to the nature of a critical thinking practice and a short answer production. A short response of a communicative interpretation procedure, which involves authentic text comprehension and production, may generate different answers from students, and the teacher may take a significant amount of time scoring and considering them. However, for the purposes of the course in hand, these open-ended questions do not present themselves as bad options, since the course design has at its core the empowerment of the learner's critical stands, experiences that may foster the expression of learner's voice, and the encouragement of different length productions, which are all principles in Critical Literacy perspectives. The purpose of such questions, then, is not simply to identify the message underlying the stimuli, but to identify and interpret it with the learner's own voice on a theme that contributes to citizenship education, which had already been covered in previous class experiences. Therefore, the main purpose is achieved by providing students with opportunities to reflect critically on the topic and to further develop critical awareness on the issue. A critical teachable moment is, thus, provided by the test.

4.2. *The Reading Section*

As mentioned in Table 2, there is a range of social issues that were approached during the course. For the reading section, we chose a text that explores issues previously discussed in class, so students could activate their background knowledge on the subject. Besides the theme, once again we also observed and attended to the authenticity of the text. Having such a meaningful experience in tests allows students to notice language in use beyond the classroom context.

When it came to attending to language structure and covered vocabulary during the course, we considered[4] which experiences students had in class during the course, and used this section as a chance to practice and test their understanding in authentic use and the potential to produce authentic texts of their own. This may be seen as the ramification in the section 'language in use', Figure 4, in which the students must return to the text to notice certain required structures.

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4   Notice here the purposeful use of "considered". This is because an authentic text may have different language structures, so that we are not bound to work only with studied structures in this section, since it tests reading comprehension. The purpose here is to gather information on what students can do when considering their reading skills, not limited to grammar and vocabulary use skills. Although the choice of such stimulus, presenting these structures adds to the contextualized use of language, precious to both Critical Literacy and the Communicative Approach.

There is a significant opportunity to work with texts in ways that elicit Critical Literacy practices. For instance, the text in the reading section presents a situation that happened to a prominent figure of the music industry, the choices they made and contemplated consequences. It prompts the reader to an understanding of the use of a person's voice to help others, and, in doing so, to promote social change using their voice. We also catered to the use of different genres (music, news piece with embedded interview, for example), which is also a principle of both the Communicative Approach and Critical Literacy, as social literacy practices never stick to one or two (or even a few) possible genres.

In the reading section, as a stimuli text, we have chosen to use a text related to the fight between Rihanna (the award-winning singer) and her boyfriend Chris Brown[5], since we had already approached the theme of violence against women during the course. The text included a statement from the singer on her decision to speak about the incident to serve as an example to other women in the same situation. Figure 2 below represents the part of the original text that was included in the test:

FIGURE 2. Final Written Test, Reading Text

Part II – Reading

Singer Rihanna Speaks Out To Young Women About Domestic Violence

Author: Dawn Olsen
Published: November 05, 2009 at 10:22 am

It's been 9 months since superstar singer and fashion icon Rihanna was thrust in the spotlight for something other than her hit singles. This time it was for something she describes as "embarrassing" and which made her feel "ashamed."

News broke of the incident when Rihanna's scheduled appearance at the 2009 Grammy Awards was canceled. Soon after, reports surfaced of the attack, which happened the night before the Grammys when Brown and Rihanna were leaving an awards party. The fight began in Brown's car, and then spilled out onto a residential street, and was so heated witnesses called the police. Brown was later arrested for the attack and making criminal threats. The aftermath and media maelstrom was a disaster for both stars, which included a leak by the LA police department of pictures showing the extent of abuse Rihanna suffered.

While singer Chris Brown spent his efforts looking for every opportunity to excuse his behavior instead of issuing a heartfelt apology, Rihanna remained silent. That was until now, and boy, does she have some compelling and anguished feelings about her domestic abuse.

Speaking exclusively to Diane Sawyer on ABC's *Good Morning America*, Rihanna made it clear she was not proud of her choice to initially take her abusive boyfriend, Chris Brown, back after the brutal beating.

Rihanna broke the typical cycle of abuse by leaving after the first beating, she told Diane it usually takes a woman closer to 9 beatings before they leave – and some never leave. That's what Rihanna couldn't live with. While strong and definitely resolute during parts of the interview, Rihanna became very emotional and close to breaking down during this quote:

"When I realized that my selfish decision for love could result into some young girl getting killed, I could not be easy with that part. I couldn't be held responsible for telling them, 'Go back.' Even if Chris never hit me again, who's to say that their boyfriend won't? Who's to say they won't kill these girls?"

Rihanna acknowledged she was weak and perhaps even a bit selfish in her initial desire to get back with Brown, but it's obvious she made the right decision for all the right reasons in choosing to walk away from the abusive relationship.

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5 Available at http://technorati.com/entertainment/article/singer-rihanna-speaks-out-to-young/ (Last accessed on July 2, 2011).

The reading comprehension component of the test focused on the critical theme of keeping silent after suffering domestic violence. Figure 3 shows the two main questions on this issue:

FIGURE 3. Final Written Test, Reading Comprehension Questions

a) Why didn't Rihanna go to the 2009 Grammy Award?

_____

b) How long did Rihanna remain silent after the incident?

_____

These questions have a few things in common with the listening tasks, particularly the fact that they are open-ended questions. Besides, the task to which the questions belong is authentic and communicative and critical thinking is called for. To answer these questions, students were supposed to read the text and focus on the critical incident of domestic violence reported in it. Moreover, an important part of Rihanna's interview was highlighted in italics, namely the part in which she refers to her reasons for ending the abusive relationship. This is another teachable moment in which the test helps students further develop their critical awareness on the issue, and emphasizes textual multimodality in the genre "news" (Kress 2003; Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006).

In addition, following the precepts of the Communicative Approach (Mattos & Valério 2010; Valério & Mattos 2018), grammar and vocabulary issues were always used in contextualized ways. The section on "language in use" used sentences and contents of the reading text to evaluate students' learning in relation to the grammatical points addressed in the course, rather than isolated and decontextualized phrases. Figure 4 represents the section on Language in Use:

FIGURE 4. Final Written Test, Language in Use

Part III – Language in Use

3 – Go back to the text and underline all the verb phrases that contain a modal. Rewrite these verb phrases below and state the meaning they convey:

_____
_____

4 – Rewrite the sentences below using the modals provided on the right in a way that they keep the same meaning of the original sentence:

a) Rihanna surely felt embarrassed and ashamed of what happened.	**MUST**
b) It would have been good if Chris Brown had apologized.	**SHOULD**
c) It was wrong that Rihanna went back with Chris.	**SHOULDN'T**
d) Perhaps Rihanna has been weak and selfish in her desire to forgive Brown.	**MIGHT**

As it is possible to see, the two grammar tasks focus on Modals, which is the linguistic focus of the two final projects in the course. Although the tasks focus on grammar, the sentences used to test students' knowledge of modals are contextualized in the reading text from the previous section. Students have the chance to go back to the text and reread it, if they are unsure about the meaning of the modals (task 3 above). The sentences in task 4 are not isolated sentences either. They are all based on ideas represented in the text, although they were not literally taken from the text. In this way, students have a better chance of responding to the sentence transformation task correctly and/or learning with these tasks. The task also allows students to create sentences that may express their critical takes on the subject at hand, their own analysis of the facts. Once again, the levels of reliability and practicality suffer, but the task validity has good levels, since students can demonstrate their understanding on the uses of the modal verbs from the task and, by the same token, can express their voices.

4.3. The Writing Section

In terms of written production, during the course students had learnt about paragraph structure. This is the information we needed to gather in the end of the students learning process. As the genre is pre-set (the paragraph), we contextualized the writing task to the theme from the Reading section; the students will use their knowledge on violence and bullying, topics which were discussed during the course, to solve a problem they choose from the task proposal. They will be engaging in a thinking process that is focused on power struggles, social injustice and taking a step towards social change. Through this task, we were able to assess what students had learnt about paragraph structures, and the students will get feedback that will help them in understanding and revising their writing. Finally, we were also able to have feedback about the social impact of discussions held in class, which allowed for reflection on our praxis and planning for forthcoming courses.

The written task in the Final Test and the Oral Test also dealt with the themes already used and debated in the classroom. Figure 5 shows the examples of questions included in the writing section of the Final Test.

As discussed in Mattos (2014), after debating these themes together for a whole semester, students had enough vocabulary to talk about the topics, but they still had to prepare the written text, that is, the paragraph, at the time of the test. Therefore, students had to organize their ideas in an academic paragraph, using vocabulary and grammar topics learned during the course. We believe this was again a further opportunity for them to rethink the topics discussed during the course and display their own understanding of these critical issues, once again expressing their voices.

FIGURE 5. Final Written Test, Writing Part

Part IV – Writing

5 – Choose one of the topics below and write a short paragraph about it. Don't forget to indicate which of the topics you have chosen.

a) What do you think is the best way to reduce domestic violence?
b) What's the worst mistake a person can make when they are suffering domestic violence, and what advice can you give them?
c) What can be done to prevent domestic violence?

4.4. The Oral Test

Oral tests are well-known for being the nightmare of every foreign/second language learner (Mattos 2000). To diminish this thrilling sensation in our students, we created prompts based on the same topics discussed during the whole semester. In this way, they had already compiled a range of background knowledge, since the classroom debates, and the course activities in general, gave them the necessary tools in terms of vocabulary and grammar, working as a scaffold without, however, putting words in their mouths (Mattos 2000).

In addition, during the semester, the speaking practices were focused on students' needs in future academic practices, such as small group discussions, whole-class discussions and short speeches in vlogs. Therefore, the oral test needed to focus on one of those practices. Due to time and number of students enrolled in the course, the short group discussion was the best choice in our context. Therefore, groups of 4-5 students were tested together, simulating small group discussions, which they were already acquainted with.

The goal of the test was to gather information on students speaking skills in group discussions. The prompts (see Appendix) designed as input for the test involved situations proposing problem solving discussions in different contexts students might face in the present or in their future professional practices. They were invited to engage with their group members and talk about their opinion, coming up with answers to the prompts and developing a line of thought. They could also engage in practices that involve authorship and instructional goals, as presented in Table 1—first because the prompts allowed for the possibility of different opinions and beliefs to come up, and the perception of meaning as multiple, contested and culturally situated; thus, the instructional goals were used as a means to develop critical consciousness.

5. Conclusion

The course segment presented in this paper is based on Critical Literacy perspectives trying to put together the precepts of the Communicative Approach,

as suggested by Valério and Mattos (2018). In doing so, we have discussed several principles for developing critical literacy tasks and activities for language tests, be them formative or summative. The main limitation we have found in trying to develop and apply Critical Literacy principles in testing and assessment in an English course at university level was the lack of background theories and example practices that we could use to depart from. Therefore, such principles, although still in their embryonic stage and lacking further reflections, may help develop future research and practices in language testing from a Critical Literacy perspective.

Two of the formal assessment instruments used in the course and discussed in this paper, i.e. a written and an oral test, were offered as means for comprehending how critical approaches can be part of the pedagogical practices in language classrooms as a whole — being explored in teaching, learning and assessment processes. Especially when considering that teaching and learning do not cease when an assessment takes place, which leads us to believe that assessments are teachable and learnable moments – just as assessments can be informal and can happen during teaching and learning.

As we have discussed, it is possible to use tests and assessment opportunities to further teachable moments, including critical issues pertaining to the realm of Critical Citizenship Education. Wielewick says that "one of the basic aspects of how schooling is structured, in general, is evaluation" and adds that "learning at school is disconnected from what is done in the 'real' world" (2011, 55). She suggests that critical literacy may be a way to contribute "to a better articulation of schooling with the real contexts of production, dissemination and reception, or consumption, of texts" (2011, 57). However, the author questions how we may be able to accomplish this, if we remain clinged to traditional, conventional molds of practices, including in evaluation. Thus, she asserts that "school may and must contribute to citizens' critical positioning" (2011, 57). In our view, the examples discussed in this paper may be a possibility for introducing Critical Literacy not only in teaching, but also in assessment practices.

Just as Education may be "not merely formative, but also transformative" (Wenger 1998, 263), in our view the same can be said about tests.

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Appendix

Prompts for the Oral Test

1. You are a group of university students. One of your teachers has asked you to write a paper discussing the problems that having stereotypes can bring to the modern society. In your group, discuss what you would like to include in the paper.

2. You are teachers in a public school. Your coordinator has told you that there is going to be a meeting with the school principal to discuss the problems that stereotypes may cause in the school and the actions and attitudes that teachers should have. In your group, discuss what you would like to tell the principal.

3. You are a group of teachers that work with very young children. You believe it is your role to prepare these children for future insertion in our society, and you are worried about how to prepare boys and girls equally for future jobs that they may want to take. In your group, discuss the differences between boys and girls and the reasons that might make them so different.

4. You are teachers in a public school. Your school has just been selected for o governmental program that will give one computer for each of the students in the school so that they will be able to have access to the Internet during classes. You want to get prepared for these changes and want to think of ways of using the Internet in your classes. In your group, discuss some advantages and disadvantages of the Internet.

5. You are a group of teachers in a public school. Your school principal has asked you to prepare a report discussing some ways to reduce bullying in the school to be presented at a whole-school meeting. In your group, discuss what you would like to include in the report.

6. You are a group of teachers who have had a few problems with bullying in your classes. You are planning together a meeting with all the parents of your students. In your group, discuss the mistakes that parents make when their child is being bullied, so that you can better advise the parents during the meeting.

7. You are a group of teachers who have had a few problems with bullying in your classes. You are planning together a meeting with all the parents of your students. During the meeting, you want to give advice to the parents on how to help their kids face bullying. In your group, discuss what you would say to the parents.

8. You are a group of school principals from different areas in the city, who have been selected to talk to the Secretary of Education about a problem that is recurrent in your schools: bullying. You want to suggest several ways for schools to prevent bullying. In your group, discuss what you would say to the Secretary of Education.

'All ages and no age': Memory, and Self-Narration in Irma Kurtz's *Then Again: Travels in Search of My Younger Self*"[1]

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I have walked through many lives
Some of them my own,
And I am not who I was,
Though some principal of being
Abides, from which I struggle
Not to stray.

Stanley Kunitz, "The Layers" (1978)

Abstract:

In her recently published text *Out of Time: The Pleasures and the Perils of Ageing* (2013) Lynne Segal argues that, in relation to the ageing process "what essentially matters is neither the sociology nor the biology of ageing but the narrative of the self, the stories we tell ourselves" (Segal 2013, 9). Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas, suggests that in order to achieve a functioning personal narrative, each individual requires a perspectival mapping of his/her "internal topography" as the past does not simply lie dormant awaiting some form of resurrection but holds the potential for creative collaboration. One recent text which specifically engages with the pivotal role that memory plays in the ageing process and whether it is possible to, as Bollas suggests, "make the past available for the self's future" (Bollas 1993, 3) is Irma Kurtz's travelogue/memoir entitled *Then Again: travels in search of my younger self my Younger Self* (2003). Born in New Jersey in 1935 to Eastern European immigrants, Irma Kurtz has written four autobiographical texts, several

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1   The phrase "All ages and no age" was originally used by D.W. Winnicott (1986) in *Home is Where We Start from: Essays by a Psychoanalyst* (Penguin: Harmondsworth). Qtd. in Lynne Segal, *Out of Time* (London: Verso, 2013) 4.

novels as well as a number of publications related to her long-standing role as 'agony aunt' for Cosmopolitan magazine. My reading of Kurtz's *Then Again* will focus not only on Bollas's perspective on what he terms the "psychic signifiers" that are implicitly linked to the creative use of memory and how this concept can be applied to Kurtz's text but also suggests that Stephen Frosh's view on the importance of the achievement of a personal narrative which creatively engages with what he terms the "hauntings" of the past is also relevant to the central thematic concern of *Then Again*. Kurtz's emphasis upon the threads of continuity that enable us to both differentiate and recapitulate past experiences as we experience the crisis of old age, will be specifically linked to the belief expounded by both Frosh and Bollas that ageing represents a multiplicity of continuities over time and how a successful negotiation of the ageing process depends upon an ability to make use of the self as an object of memory that simultaneously is, and is not, equivalent to its present manifestation(s). This article attempts to depict the central roles that memory and narration must play if such possibilities are to be achieved.

Keywords: Kurtz, Memory, Narrative, Ageing, Temporality

In the introductory chapter to Lynn Segal's *Out of Time*, a text which provides a provocative and engaging overview of contemporary trends within ageing studies and literary gerontology, she confides how, at various times when writing the book, she asked herself the question: "why write about ageing when this troubling topic is so daunting, so complicated?" (Segal 2013, 1). Thankfully, the enquiry is of rhetorical significance only, as Segal's suggestive and occasionally polemical journey through current literary, philosophical and theoretical perspectives on ageing provides a compelling narrative regarding how the subject of humanistic gerontology has moved from a position of cultural neglect and disparagement, surviving on the periphery of academic enquiry, to occupying a prominent position within various fields of interdisciplinary study. She also points out that one strategic approach that has acquired increasing visibility within literary gerontology is the acceptance that "what essentially matters is neither the sociology nor the biology of ageing, but the narrative of the self, the stories we tell ourselves" (Segal 2013, 9). Perhaps the most prominent contemporary philosopher who has engaged with the question of the centrality of narrative to the individual subject is Paul Ricoeur, who, in texts such as "Life in Quest of Narrative" (1991), the three volume *Time and Narrative* (1984, 1986, 1988) and *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2000) outlines his belief in the dynamic circularity connecting life and narrative. This intersection is, according to Ricoeur, based on the central premise that experience has "a genuine demand for narrative" since "life can be understood only by the stories we tell about it" (Ricoeur 1991, 29). We are inevitably "tangled up in stories that must be recounted" (Ricoeur

1991, 29) and as these stories emerge the implied subject also emerges and narrative identity is constituted. By applying narrative configurations to the story of one's life it becomes possible to construct it into a coherent story that demands attention. Ricoeur maintains that narrative identity is a response to the imperative of integrating both the conditions of change and permanence into a functioning self-image and for this reason he divides identity into the categories of *idem* -corresponding to the condition of continuity and permanence over a lifetime -and *ipse*, which involves the activity of self-reflection and the telling of a life-narrative. This project is facilitated through the deliberate recovery of what Ricoeur terms "memory traces" which serve to trigger a re-examination of the subject's life experiences and the constitution of their narrative identity. He asserts that personal history can be viewed as " a knowledge of traces" which point to " the significance of a passed past that nevertheless remains preserved in its vestiges" (Ricoeur 1988, 120). This "trace" is consequently " something present standing for something past" (Ricoeur 1988, 183) and a mechanism which " invites us to persue it, to follow it back (Ricoeur 1988, 120). Ricoeur's belief in the inextricable link between the experience of such "traces" and the creation of a coherent narrative identity serves to emphasise how a strong sense of continuity between the events of the past and the life of the present is an essential prerequisite of a genuine narrative identity. His suggestion that the creation of a coherent narrative identity is less about what is lost and more about what remains is intimately linked to his conviction that without autobiographical memory -something which Penelope Lively has termed "a comet trail of completed time" (Lively 2013, 43) – it is impossible to convert the experiences of the past in a manner that provides emotional ballast for both the present and the future.

Such a perspective aligns Ricoeur with some prominent contemporary theorists within the discipline of Psychoanalysis such as Stephen Frosh and Christopher Bollas, who have sought to draw attention to the creative potential of memory in relation to narrative identity. Frosh has written how.

> In order to mould time into personal meaning we need to reflect on the contents of our experiences and to filter them through our own sensibility. It is through such processes of self-knowledge that we can arrive at what Paul Ricoeur and other philosophers of the psyche call "a narrative identity" – that is a sense of self which is derived not only from a purely chronological continuity but also from a significant shaping of our own lived story. (Frosh 2013, 115)

Frosh continues by stating how "for the full achievement of a personal narrative, we need a kind of perspectival mapping of our own lived time, a balanced vision of its internal topography"(Frosh 2013, 115) and maintains that in relation to the

subject's experience of the ageing process, the achievement of a personal narrative involves challenging and problematizing the common belief that there exists a simple chronological relationship between past and present and to recognise that ageing is not a simple, straightforward linear process. This suggests that, as we age, we retain, in one manifestation or another, traces of all the selves we have been as within our inner world it is possible for all scales and layers of time to exist simultaneously. For Frosh, the 'now' cannot be prised out of the sequence of the immediate past, implying that "we may be, affectively speaking, several ages at once" (Frosh 2013, 110), thereby making it possible to access the past in the psychic flux and mutations of mental life in the present. This implies that, "we can always see continuities across a lifetime, suggesting also that as we age we retain a certain access, consciously or not, to all the selves we have been" (Frosh 2013, 117). In other words, the threads of continuity which enable us to differentiate and recapture past experiences as we negotiate the ageing process accords us access to many different subjectivities or "self-states" through the possible revisiting of our earlier selves. Christopher Bollas similarly contends that "as we age, we are nonetheless inhabited by thousands of inner constellations [and] psychic realities' and maintains that the experiences of the old unfold and collapse back into narratives that are rarely realisable to age itself, but rather reveal themselves in "multiple threads that remain visible" (Bollas 1993, 3). This is a view reiterated by Anca Christofovic who suggests that there is no 'true' older self as such, but only what she terms "permanently fluctuating relationships between younger and older selves" (Christofovic 1999, 271), a perspective corroborated by French psychoanalyst André Green who identifies "the existence of the strange, recurring residues of the past in the present and of the present in our recollections of the past," a condition he refers to somewhat cryptically, as "the heterochrony of psychic temporalities" (Hoffman 2009, 110). For Green, unconscious psychic processes remain 'timeless' as they display a lifelong indifference to forms of temporality and there will always exist some form of temporal vertigo in relation to our experiences of ageing due to the timelessness of the unconscious and the existence of the psychic past within the present.

This increasing interest in the concept of narrative identity within the field of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical theory is perhaps not surprising given that the creation of a coherent narrative identity is inextricably linked to the creative use of memory and as Stephen Frosh has pointed out "In a sense, psychoanalysis started as a theory of memory and its discontents" (Frosh 2013, 97). Bollas defines memories as "underground wells in the deserts of time […] sources [that] can liberate private experiences and unconscious associations that prevailed in the past" (King 2000, 179). The unpredictable, often digressive and sometimes involuntary processes of affective memory serve to construct a sense of identity

and, as Nicola King claims, the concept of the self which is constructed by these memories is dependent upon the assumptions we have about its function and the kind of access it gives us to the past (King 2000, 67). Memory, in this context, can be viewed as an ever-changing repertoire of possibilities rather than an accurate representation of past events. Bollas claims that memory "makes the past available for the self's future," as it "does not lie dormant in the past awaiting resurrection but holds the potential for creative collaboration" (King 2000, 180). Such a perspective suggests a creative alternative to the accepted view of reminiscence as being an indicator of debilitating nostalgia. As Erwin Mortier writes, all too often we categorise memory as something that "threatens to harden into a country house, open on Sunday, from two to five, guided tours on request, please don't touch anything" (Mortier 2015, 21).

One comparatively recent text which explicitly engages with the pivotal role that memory plays in the ageing process and whether it is possible to, as Christopher Bollas suggests, "make the past available for the self's future," is Irma Kurtz's part memoir, part travelogue, *Then Again: Travels in Search of My Younger Self* (Kurtz 2003). Born in New Jersey in 1935, to parents of Eastern European descent, Kurtz has written four autobiographical texts in addition to a number of publications related to her long-standing role as a so-called 'agony aunt' for the well-known Cosmopolitan magazine.[2] *Then Again* relates how, in the summer of 1954, when she was an eighteen-year-old Jewish American teenager studying English Literature at Bernard College in New York, she embarked upon her first trip to Europe on-board the Italian ship Castel Felice. While travelling to and from various destinations in Europe by bus, boat and train, Kurtz recorded her myriad impressions in a notebook specially bought for the occasion. More than fifty years later, she discovers the journal hidden in her mother's closet and decides to retrace the journey that, both literally and figuratively, changed the direction of her life. *Then Again* reproduces the original eighty-three diary entries of varying length – the longest being thirty-two lines and the shortest a mere six words – which began in July 1954 and end at an unspecified date in the same year. The text employs the literary device whereby Kurtz comments upon each of the original diary entries from the vantage point of an ageing expatriate who has lived most of her life in Europe. While these frequently humorous, occasionally caustic and invariably absorbing, ongoing commentaries provide ample

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2   Her autobiographical texts, all of which to a greater or a lesser degree engage with the subjects of ageing, gender and cultural ideologies are *The Great American Bus Ride* (1993), *Then Again* (2003), *About Time* (2009) and *My Life in Agony* (2015). Kurtz began her writing career in Paris, producing P.R. copy for *The American Army Times* before becoming a founding member of the editorial team of the 1970s magazine *Nova*. She joined the staff of *Cosmopolitan* in 1975.

opportunities for Kurtz to illustrate the naivety and self-absorbed pretentions of her former eighteen-year-old self, her main interest resides in attempting a form of psychological excavation, a desire to question assumptions about the function of memory and the kind of access it gives us to the past. This article argues that the central thematic concern of *Then Again* -which has never been subjected to any academic, critical evaluation- revolves around Kurtz's desire to excavate previous episodes and experiences in her life which possess a potential for the creation of a cohesive narrative identity and how this aim can be fruitfully explored within the conceptual framework of theoretical concepts outlined by Stephen Frosh and Christopher Bollas. These concepts relate specifically to experiences pertaining to "Hauntings" and "Psychic Residues", both of which are perceived by Frosh and Bollas as an intrinsic part of the ageing process and which can provide an alternative to the conventional view of reminiscence as an indicator of escapist nostalgia and a strategy of non-engagement with the external world.

At this juncture it is important to position *Then Again* in relation to current debates within both literary gerontology and contemporary discourses relating to the complex issue of ageing. According to Segal, recent prominent views pertaining to the ageing process tend to privilege two specific narratives, and embody an approach which exemplifies a debilitating binary logic; that is, ageing "badly" and/or ageing "well." In relation to the former perspective, while acknowledging that "being old, honestly old has never been more problematical," Segal bemoans the plethora of literary texts in which an abhorrence of old age is presented as a given and she laments how such texts exemplify "a regressive search for the imaginary unities of youth, the prospect of loss without reparation, absence that cannot become potential presence" (Segal 2013, 29). There exists, in such texts, a disturbing proclivity to conflate the ageing process with a seemingly irreversible decline into physical and spiritual atrophy, a dominant fixation on the trope of the ageing and disintegrating body and a rejection of the diverse distinctiveness and shifting peculiarities of the ageing process. A representative example of this perspective can be found in the words uttered by David Kepash, the central protagonist in Philip Roth's novel *Everyman* who, at one point in the narrative, exclaims "Old age isn't a battle, old age is a massacre" (Roth 2006, 156).

Not surprisingly, such an essentialist depiction of the seemingly inevitable decline in the ageing individual's mental and physical faculties has been increasingly challenged by an equally strident counter-narrative, extolling the virtues of so-called "positive ageing." These so-called "narratives of resistance," challenge the conventional discourse of decline and encompass a broad spectrum of possible approaches; these range from the nuanced life-review research found in Barbara Hernstein Smith's concept of "the Senile Sublime" – where she affirms the link between ageing and creativity in relation to a number of elderly visual

artists (Segal 2013, 53) – to the banal "call to arms" mentality found in popular culture where, with almost insufferable exuberance, we are informed that with due diligence and sheer will power it is possible to subvert, delay and ultimately eradicate the ageing process itself. Such views have become so ubiquitous in various social media that cultural theorist Lauren Berlant has suggested that they have fostered a sensibility defined by what he terms "cruel optimism" (Segal 2013: 228). Equally, Jane Miller, author of the autobiography *Crazy Age* has written how, in the twenty-first century, "It is as if not seeming old is the main achievement the old may decently aspire to" (Millar 2010, 11).[3]

Kurtz's text both acknowledges such debates while simultaneously attempting to transcend such material frames of reference. In the opening passages of *Then Again*, Kurtz is refreshingly forthright concerning the motivations behind her seemingly impulsive decision to immerse herself in what she terms "the primitive squiggles" of a journal she has found languishing among the decaying papers, souvenirs and postcards residing in a long-forgotten cardboard box stashed at the bottom of one of her mother's domestic oubliettes; noting how "As I opened the old notebook and started to read, I wanted more than ever to go back and find her on the deck among the other American Youngsters outward bound for the first time" (Kurtz 2003, 7), her curiosity is predicated on the hope that the journal's contexts will imaginatively transport her into "a glitch of time," where the excitement of her first trip abroad can provide a map, a kind of documented pathway, into the events of the past. Acknowledging how "To remember […] is the final industry of the decrepit imagination" (Kurtz 2003, 46) her conscious act of reclamation can be viewed as an interesting example of what feminist poet and theorist Denise Riley has defined as "retrospective identification" (Segal 2013, 186), According to Riley this involves an attempt to discover the indelible link that connects the metamorphosis of the sensibilities which accrues from the experience of ageing, with recognisable versions of our younger selves. Kurtz's project of reclamation is undertaken not only with eager anticipation but also trepidation; recognising how "to understand too late is an existential defeat more poignant than remorse" (Kurtz 2003, 335), and aware of how the topology of memory is multi-layered and multidirectional, she confesses to asking herself the question "would I know myself as I was then?" (Kurtz 2003, 17). Such misgivings are quickly supplanted by an urge – expressed obliquely but nevertheless present throughout significant sections of her memoir – to discover whether it is possible to conflate past and present life experiences into a single perception which contains liberatory potential for an ageing woman viewed by the younger generation as "dried up and past desiring" (Kurtz 2003, 9).

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3   These narratives are skilfully deconstructed in Catherine Myer's monograph *Amortality: The Pleasures and Perils of Living Agelessly* (London: Random House, 2011).

Kurtz's (2003) attempt to uncover a cohesive narrative of the self through strategically linking the recorded past as revealed in her notebook with the lived present, immediately encounters the problem of nomenclature. In her commentaries on the original eighty-three journal extracts, she employs numerous forms of address to the eighteen-year-old girl she used to be, many of which exemplify an initial uncertainty regarding her true relationship to the person she refers to as "my younger version" (12). Authorial interjections such as "she and I, me and I, you and I" (9), "the girl who used to be I" (235), "You, my own self" (80), "Young one of me" (204), "little alter I and other ego" (169), reveal how she alternates between feelings of intimate identification with the "girl she used to be," to suggestions of psychic dissonance in relation to the young, occasionally conceited and pompous Irma who sailed on the Castel Felice. She invariably negotiates these contrasting responses with a wry humour and enjoys the opportunity to chastise her earlier incarnation's self-importance by adopting the persona of an older, wiser and decidedly worldlier sixty-eight-year-old. Noting how, at the age of eighteen, she was "lacking in self-confidence, lacking in self-awareness and to a great extent lacking in self" (26), she comments that now, as a woman approaching her seventh decade, she "carries an infection hostile to your exuberance and your very life: I am infected with the debilitating and mortal condition of experience" (322). After stating "I am more pessimistic than you, I have lost your faith, little girl, in cures for the worst of what ails human beings" (122), she dutifully acknowledges that such sentiments are provoked by her recent immersion in what she terms "geriatric melancholy," a condition she defines as "a profound and permanent new keynote of old age" (271).

Such commentaries suggest that Kurtz takes a detached and elegantly distanced view of her past life, engaging with, yet at the same time holding herself somewhat aloof from, aspects of her younger self. While this may be broadly true in relation to the first half of the text, which relies heavily upon an ironic contrast between the young Irma and the sixty-eight-year-old writer who revisits her earlier experiences, as the narrative progresses and the author travels to the cities and countries she originally visited in 1954, there is a discernible shift in focus; Kurtz seems less interested in comparing the youthful and inexperienced young girl she once was with the older woman who now "knows a thing or two" (Kurtz 2003, 50), and more inclined to explore the question of whether the distinction between our past and present selves can fruitfully be deconstructed, leaving open the possibility of a type of psychic continuum. This continuum partly manifests itself in the manner by which, for Kurtz, specific memories seem to be preserved and provide access to earlier states of experience which she is able to fleetingly inhabit when these particular memories are evoked. Re-engaging with her journal serves to connect her with what she terms "the ghost," of her younger self,

subjecting her to a form of "haunting" where "ghostly phantoms" (Kurtz 2003, 116) from her past alight into the foreground of her conscious awareness. This ghostly presence impinges itself in the present moment as, within the psyche where "memories flash as vivid as hauntings," salient and vestigial traces of the past remain ever present.

In relation to the concept of "haunting," Stephen Frosh, in his influential monograph *Hauntings: Psychoanalysis and Ghostly Transmissions* (2003), suggests that while on occasions it is conceivable for the future to haunt the present moment – that is, it is possible for the aged individual to be haunted by obscure trepidations as to the inevitable ravages of the future – it is more common that the relentless pressure which comes from unconscious life, leaves us at the mercy of unmediated spectral whispers from the past. Arguing that we are inhabited by inner structures which "can be felt whenever their name is evoked," Frosh uses the term "haunting" to describe those singular yet repetitive instances "when the-over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's in your blind spot comes into view. Haunting raises spectres and it alters the experience of time [and] the way we separate the past, the present and the future" (Frosh 2003, 4). Given that the present is always necessarily saturated with both the visual images and literal sounds of memory, this implies "that without a certain degree and kind of haunting, there is no possibility of a present" (Frosh 2003, 2). To quote Frosh:

> To be haunted […] is to be influenced by a kind of inner voice that will not stop speaking and cannot be excised, that keeps cropping up to trouble us and stops us going peaceably on our way. It is to harbour a presence that we are aware of, sometimes overwhelmed by, that embodies elements of past experience and that will not let us be. (Frosh 2003, 29).

He mentions how the temporal disturbance caused by haunting is possibly its key feature, making it unsurprising that the subject routinely employs psychological defences to ward off the "uncomfortable, threatening otherness" we sometimes catch irrefutable glimpses of. However, while the notion of haunting seems to imply that the past's disturbance of the present is frequently experienced as frightening, according to Frosh it nevertheless entails acts of "continuous […] creative self-making and the compositions it creates over time […] are personal and our own" (Frosh 2003, 4). Haunting can therefore serve as a condition of possibility, involving what he terms "a liberatory practice" (Frosh 2003, 41).

In *Then Again*, Kurtz (2003) mentions on several key occasions that she is "haunted" by the ghost of the girl she sometimes affectionately calls "baby sister" and sometimes disdainfully "sugar" or "honey." She actively solicits a connection with the "young phantom punster at my side" (279), and confides

at the beginning of her narrative how she hopes the re-enactment of her original journey to Europe will facilitate "a stumble into a glitch of time, where the ghost of my ship is forever slipping into port, so [that] from the cliffs above I can look down and see the ghost of myself dancing" (30). Kurtz perceives the evocation of her ghostly travel companion as being linked to the intricate workings of memory, which unfolds into narratives that reveal multiple threads of accessibility. While in Rome, she reveals how "memories, triumphant and quintessential, transformed me there and then into the ghost of myself" (242), and notes how "suddenly an ancient memory grabbed me and pushed me into one of senescent reveries that can make an old lady miss her stop on the journey across places haunted by her younger self" (260). Indeed, on one conspicuous occasion, Kurtz suggests that a *lack* of haunting actually constitutes a greater danger to the subject's sense of self as this absence creates a "now" which is lacking in depth and personal meaning. While revisiting Cannes, she finds herself searching for recognisable landmarks from her past and remarks, "I found none, not one; nothing appeared even remotely familiar" (287). Nearing panic, she confesses to feeling "invisible, crazy, a ghost lacking genesis and effect" (288). This experience – signified by the loss of a perception of time as a continuum that extends into the past, present and future – tallies with Frosh's belief that "a lacking of haunting would seem to be a truly precarious and disturbing experience." (Frosh 2003, 96).

According to Christopher Bollas in his text *Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self Experience*, the inadvertent summoning of our "ghostly pasts" is intimately linked to what he describes as "our travel in a rendered world of psychic signifiers" (Bollas 1993, 3). These signifiers, defined by Bollas as "things" or more specifically as "objects" can, when encountered, trigger what he defines as "an inner psychic constellation laden with images, feelings and bodily accuities" (Bollas 1993, 30). Arguing that the true self is not an integrated phenomenon but only "dynamic sets of idiomatic dispositions that come into being through encounters with the object world" (Bollas 1993, 30), he describes how "objects, like words, are there for us to express ourselves" (Bollas 1993, 3), and contends that "we amble about in a in a field of pregnant objects that contribute to the dense psychic textures that constitute self-experience" (Bollas 1993, 30). We can therefore potentially use the lexicon of objects, each of which has a potentially different evocative effect by virtue of its specific form, to initially place and then evoke the ghost of our previous selves. Bollas writes:

> Certain objects, like psychic "keys" open doors to unconsciously intense – and rich – experience in which we articulate the self that we are through the elaborating character of our response. This selection constitutes the jouissance

of the true self, a bliss released through the finding of specific objects that free
idiom to its articulation. (Bollas 1993, 17)

As objects are embodied with what Bollas describes as a "dense psychic texture,"
and we constantly endow these objects with a kind of idiomatic significance,
it is possible that, long after we have invested an object with importance, we
encounter it again and something of the self-experience prevailing at that time
is revived. Such objects seem to preserve or provide access to earlier states of
being which we fleetingly inhabit when particular memories are evoked. We can,
in other words, use actual objects to "walk amidst our own significance," as, to
quote Bollas, "encounters with objects lift us into some utterance of self available
for deep knowing" (Bollas 1993, 42).[4]

Interestingly, on several occasions in *Then Again*, Kurtz (2003) reiterates
her conviction that particular objects can be endowed with psychic significance
and meaning. Confessing that "things more than aid my memory, things
contain them" (1), she relates now "countless objects return me instantly to
points along the journey and where it all began" (1). A noteworthy example
of how a particular memory can exist as a condensation of psychically intense
experiences contained in a simple object, occurs when she originally rediscovers
the notebook she lost more than fifty years before; when revealing her initial
shock at finding the "leather cracked old notebook bound in black library
tape"(2), she confesses how "The moment I saw it my breath caught and
there I was again eighteen, exultant and trembling on the deck of the Italian
ship Castel Felice about to embark on a journey that was going to change my
life" (2). On other occasions objects, frequently of the seemingly most banal
and unimportant kind, serve as a kind of textual and spatial association to an
apparently long forgotten experience. While Kurtz is eating a tasteless lunch in
a run-down café on the Isle of Wright, the waitress "plunked a bottle of salad-
cream in front of me. And Bang! A whiff of old smoke and river, and there was
London as I had first encountered it here in the 1950s" (58). Equally, while in

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4   In another contemporary autobiography that deals with the ageing process, Jane Shilling,
    The Stranger in the Mirror: A Memoir of Middle Age (London: Chatto Windus, 2011), she
    conveys a remarkably similar attitude to objects and haunting as those mentioned by
    Kurtz in *Then Again*. She writes how, in her later years, "I kept the habit of identifying with
    certain places and things" (203), and when visiting an old church she used to frequent in
    her childhood, confesses "To return here was like hearing again faintly the sound of music
    I'd known a long time ago. Accumulated layers of memory and experience more recent
    and more vivid had almost obliterated it but then something – a change combination of
    notes, the mud, the water, the owl on the storm – something woke up that sleeping sense
    of belonging, somewhere, so intensely that you are the place and the place is you" (166).

Nice, as she begins a somewhat leisurely lunch at a restaurant on the seafront, she "smeared yellow mustard on a piece of baguette and the sting on my tongue returned me immediately to hunger as I had known it in Paris" (272). For Kurtz, it is as if past details become saturated with new meanings which are created through the very act of retrieval itself, and it is suggested that she acquires a specific insight into the nature of self-experience from such intense and evocative moments. On two occasions, Kurtz's revisiting of an actual geographical space containing objects recognisable from her original visit, triggers a senescent reverie, during which all scales and layers of time could be said to exist simultaneously. These experiences, which seemingly entail a form of psychic realignment and reconfiguration, are profoundly integrative in character and serve to dissolve the emotional distance between the elderly narrator and her younger self. For instance, while in Spain she spends some meditative moments gazing at an ocean she first saw more than fifty years before and relates how; "It was then, in the moments of a Spanish sunset when time shifts gears and friction is suspended, in these silken moments, you became I, child" (217). Equally, when approaching the Vatican, she "remembered being you in just that place fifty years before; I felt your delight, you pure untested strength. And for a moment I felt the wonder and thrill of beginning" (242). The possibility to access and relive earlier experiences such as wonder and joy – even if only momentarily – can be viewed as providing generative possibilities out of which newness can emerge. Frosh has described such moments as "experiences of momentary disappearance in which the subject comes back fundamentally changed" (Frosh 2011, 3), and they serve as strategic pointers to how it is indeed possible to conflate past and present into one unified perception and be, literally rather than figuratively speaking, "all ages and no age."

These visionary moments problematize any simple chronological relation between past and present and imply, as Lynne Segal has done, that "we may be, affectively speaking, several ages at once" (Segal 2013, 12). Such experiences also suggest that the process of ageing is less about what is lost and more about what actually remains, and provide a potential strategy for evoking the psychic residues of the past in a way that, as Bollas suggests, makes the past available for the self's future. While Erwin Mortier claims that "we hang motionless, impotent, between what we don't want to remember and what we can't bear to see" (Mortier 2015, 18). Kurtz's text intimates that successful ageing depends upon our ability to make use of the self as an object of memory, as it is "only in old people [that] memory can achieve its art and apogee." If memory represents, as Walter Benjamin claims, "the capacity for endless interpolations into what has been" (King 2000, 19), it can also deepen into what is virtually a new emotion

and provide an opportunity for creative collaboration. Kurtz certainly suggests as much when by informing us of how she intends to live her life after vacating the apartment she has lived in for more than twenty years, in order to move into a new studio flat: "So what will I do in this new life and new space? I will remember, I will repeat myself, saying old things in new ways, saying new things drawn from aged perception" (Kurtz, 2003, 247).

It can be argued therefore that *Then Again* can be viewed as entailing a reconfiguration of Kurtz's life narrative through the recovery of, and immersion in, memories that trigger a re-reading and re-examination of her past experiences. Her creative engagement with the "psychic residues" and "hauntings" of the past facilitates a dismantling of the conventional discourse which views old age as essentially defined by the experience of decline. Kurtz's refusal to comply with our jejune society's neglect and scorn of "antique" memories, a stance which amounts to what she herself refers to as "a passive theft of each life's final treasure" (Kurtz 2003, 253) is perhaps the predominant reason why *Then Again: Travels in Search of My Younger Self*, is such a welcome addition to the burgeoning field of literary memoirs of ageing. As she herself candidly states: "where is there a library anywhere in the world as well stocked with cautionary volumes for the young as an experienced old memory?" (Kurtz 2009, 180).

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Re-Visiting the Sources of "Hans Pfaall": A Tentative Approach to Include Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*[1]

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Abstract:

Dealing with the sources authors have historically had for the composition of their pieces is not always an easy task, especially if we considered writers like Edgar Allan Poe, who was an extensive reader. In the particular case of "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall" even more issues should be brought to the debate, for this short story constitutes an early attempt of Poe towards the creation of (satiric) science-fiction. In consequence, the reference to scientific and pseudo-scientific texts needs to be constant. However, the aim of this article is not the discussion of these (for they have already been studies, as shown below) but the inclusion of a new source, Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*, which has been overshadowed to the present day and which offers a new, enhancing vision of Poe's narration. By doing this, it is also the aim of this article to offer a reevaluation of "Hans Pfaall" through the lens of American-ness, a topic already widely discussed in reference to Poe and which has been proven as being among the most influential the Bostonian acquired during his career.

Keywords: "Hans Pfaall", *Modern Chivalry*, sources, letters, science-fiction

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In 1925, Killis Campbell already showed how Poe was an extensive but uneven reader who had a certain knowledge of different Western traditions that had been incorporated into his tales, poems, novels and essays (1925, 166). Campbell also noted that the widest part of Poe's literary connoisseurship came from works produced during his own lifetime. This is especially relevant because Poe lived in a period in which science was experiencing a *crescendo* like it had not been seen before in human history, favoring the coinage of pieces that paved the road to the later development of science-fiction. Although science-fiction is today considered as a subgenre aimed to push the boundaries of human knowledge, during the first half of the 19th century it had a different purpose, for it was used by the pioneering authors who attempted to create pieces of this kind (Poe among them) as a way of satirizing current society.[2] So, vices, social practices or prominent members of different communities were presented under the patina of a futuristic scenario. That is the case of "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall" (1835), in which the science-fictional voyage to the Moon disguises the critique to Pfaall's creditors and Rotterdam citizens. That was also the case of some previous works (published both in Europe and in the United States) that had depicted similar situations.[3] The goal of this article to offer a re-evaluation of how Poe knew and used some of those previous examples (Herschel, de Bergerac, etc.) in his first long narration, but with a new detail that has gone unstudied to the present day. More specifically, this essay is going to focus on the question of whether Hugh Henry Brackenridge's (1748-1816) *Modern Chivalry* (1792-1815) can be included among the sources employed in the creation of "Hans Pfaall." To do so, this essay is going to rely on two different types of sources: the short story itself and Poe's letters, for they offer pieces of information that deserve to be included in the discussion.[4]

Poe usually relied on American models in order to construct his own compositions, instead of looking for them abroad (in more fashionable or exotic countries like Great Britain, France or Germany).[5] As Shawn Rosenheim and Stephen Rachman point out in the introduction to their seminal book *The*

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2   See Suvin (1972), Russ (1973), Roberts (2002) or Canavan and Suvin (2016), among many others. We only have to pay attention to Poe's own "Some Words with a Mummy" (1845) to notice this.

3   See Brantlinger's (1980), Stableford's (2003) or Correoso-Rodenas's (2019) texts included in "Works Cited."

4   Lesley Ginsberg (2019) explains how Poe's letters can also be used in order to reconstruct the life of the Bostonian, something particularly interesting when addressing the core of this article, as seen below.

5   Although, as mentioned, Poe knew about these traditions.

American Face of Edgar Allan Poe (1995), scholars who have approached different aspects of Poe's production have recognized the American-ness of each of them, from the charlatanism proposed by Charles Baudelaire to the exploration of more novel concepts such as those of plagiarism or the development of detective fiction itself. So, although not reaching the extremes Walt Whitman would during the next literary generation, America was a key theme in Poe's fiction (and non-fiction), being the author interested in knowing and praising his country and the artists that had already contributed to the greatness it started to experience during the American Renaissance.[6] Some of his tales, such as "The Elk" (1844) or his novels *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) and the unfinished *Journal of Julius Rodman* (1840) constitute good examples of this circumstance.

During the last century, many different approaches have been undertaken considering which works were in the mind of Edgar Allan Poe when he composed his most famous pieces. From the complete and extensive notes included by editors (Mabbott, Pollin, Ostrom, Rigal-Aragón, among others) in the different academic editions[7] to particular articles and chapters on specific *oeuvres*, Poe's sources have received an interesting deal of attention. Among the authors who have tried to follow the path of Poe's readings, names like the aforementioned Killis Campbell or John Robert Moore (1951) should be included. The latter, although focusing on a particular novel by Walter Scott, offers an interesting evaluation of how Poe's "Gothic perspective" was conceived, being it one of the most important features included in his production. On the story that is going to be analyzed here, the best approach is offered by the editors, as mentioned above. However, some essays deserve to be included here, for they touch the topic that is going to be explored in the following pages. The first of them is Meredith Neill Posey's "Notes on Poe's Hans Pfaall" (1930), followed by J. O. Bailey's "Sources for Poe's Arthur Gordon Pym, 'Hans Pfaal,' and Other Pieces" (1942). Even today, decades after they were composed, these articles offer valuable explorations of Poe's "mental map" when composing the voyage of "Hans Pfaall."[8]

As the story dealt with what is considered among Poe's science-fictional hoaxes, the bibliography of this (sub-)genre also needs to be mentioned. Of course, Harold Beaver's edition of Poe's science-fiction stories comes to mind,[9]

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6   As see, for instance, in Barbara Cantalupo (2014) or Kerry Dean Carso (2015).
7   Here, biographies and books like *The Poe Log* should be mentioned as well.
8   Posey explores how "Hans Pfaall" can relate to Herschel's treatise on Astronomy, establishing the parallels these two works show; on the other hand, Bailey's major achievement is establishing a connection between Poe's major voyages of scientific speculation, along with other pieces that discuss science.
9   Among other things, Beaver offers and interesting evaluation of the relations of Gothic and science fiction, two of the most influential literary trends incorporated into Poe's fiction:

along with Giacomo Cosentino's study *The Science Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe*. However, more names need to be included here, like those of E. Reiss (1957),[10] who deals with the scenario of "Hans Pfaall," C. Olney (1958),[11] E. F. Bleiler (1982), M. J. Bennett (1983),[12] who explores the role played by Poe in "Selenite" literature, D. E. E. Sloane and M. J. Pettengell (1996), P. Swirski (2000),[13] or J. Tresch (2002),[14] among many others. From different perspectives, these studies have contributed to the consolidation of the current scholarship about Poe's science-fiction. More recently, *The Oxford Handbook of Edgar Allan Poe* (2019) has also contributed to expanding the lore of knowledge this field contains.[15] More concretely, the chapters authored by Paul Grimstad and Maurice S. Lee explore the relations of Poe's production with science-fiction and the scientific implications "Hans Pfaall" presents, respectively.

Before groundbreaking the core of this article, some considerations about *Modern Chivalry* need to be offered. It was one of the earliest novels produced in the already independent United States, published by Hugh Henry Brackenridge[16]

"Itself [science fiction] an offshoot of gothicism, the new genre was to evoke a horror both of the future and of the science which could bring that future about. By adentifying with the collapse of technology, it was already critically undermining that technology" (1976, xv).

10 As seen in Reiss's article, "Hans Pfaall" is a clear representation of the dual nature of Poe's writings, halfway between the serious and the comic, something that can also be widely applied to Brackenridge's.

11 Which offers an early view on Poe's leading role in the conception of modern science fiction.

12 Here. Bennett accounts something that will be further expanded below in this article, for he analyzes how Poe understood the "Moon voyage genre," even offering an evaluation of the most relevant elements these pieces should have (according to Poe): "Poe thus announces the defining elements of the genre he has just endowed with its basic form: an emphasis on fact as defined and retrieved by empirical science, the analogical application of this fact to that portion of the universe which remains unknown, and a focus on the interstellar world opened to man by the achievements of modem astronomy" (1983, 137).

13 Swirski's main addition to the discussion is based on the gathering of Poe's science-fictional tales and essays with his philosophical and cosmological visions. Issues and terms such as artificial intelligence or the ethical implications of scientific practice are seen along with *Eureka* and other texts that can be incorporated to the scholarship of scientific Poe.

14 Tresch's revision of the genre and its implication continue the path already led by Bennett, continuing with the exploration of the different science-fictional elements and motifs included and developed by Poe.

15 To these, the studies developed by the widespread Poe scholarship in Spain can be added. See Francisco Javier Castillo Martín 1991 and 2011, María Isabel Jiménez González 2013, Margarita Rigal Aragón and Ricardo Marín Ruiz 2014 or Cristina Pérez Arranz 2017.

16 Although *Modern Chivalry* is the only piece of fiction that Brackenridge produced, he wrote, especially during his collegiate years, some patriotic and satiric poems. Some of them are *A Poem on the Rising Glory of America* (written along with Philip Freneau in

between 1792 and 1815.[17] It follows the adventures of Captain John Farrago and his companion, the Irish bog-trotter Teague O'Regan, along the Pennsylvania frontier. Much has been discussed about the nature and purpose of creating such a gargantuan novel, but most of the critics are today inclined to follow the thesis that it was shaped after Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605-1615).[18] In consequence, much of the content of *Modern Chivalry* will fall under the categorization of satire, as it will happen with some of Poe's most acknowledged pieces, including "Hans Pfaall."[19] In the words of William L. Nance: "Satire was Brackenridge's medium, responsible for whatever the book contains of value as fiction. In view of the truism that the use of satire is one of the first signs of intellectual and artistic maturity, and examination of this element should make clearer just how conscious a literary artist Brackenridge was, and how successful" (1967, 381). As seen, many common features were shared by both

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1772), *A Poem on Divine Revelation* (1774) or "Satires against the Tories. Written in the last War between the Whigs and Cliosophians in which the former obtained a complete Victory" (undated and written along with Freneau and US fourth President James Madison -Historical Society of Pennsylvania, ms. 0336-). He also wrote some dramatic pieces. See Virginia A. Hajek 1971.

17 In the words of Ed White: "Brackenridge published the first two volumes in 1792, with a third volume appearing in 1793. Four years later, after Brackenridge's controversial involvement with the so-called Whiskey Rebellion, a fourth volume appeared. Another seven years would pass before new volumes of 'Part II' began to appear: a first volume dated 1804, a second dated 1805, and a third (confusingly labeled 'Volume IV') in 1815" (2009, x). This has provoked that many modern readers have problems when approaching the book and that it has become an editing nightmare. As Ed White states, "In the twentieth century, there was only one complete edition of the novel: Claude Newlin's 1937 edition for the American Book Company, reprinted as a paperback by Hafner Press in 1962. Another critic, Lewis Leary, prepared a heavily abridged edition -less than a sixth of the original- in 1965. More recently, Janice McIntire-Strasburg has attempted a hypertext edition for the University of Virginia Crossroads Project, though the demands of the text have been formidable. Absent an accessible edition, then, critics have treated the novel sporadically and unevenly" (2009, x).

18 Although some scholars like Aaron R. Hanlon may differ: "Thus, eighteenth-century quixotism would distort certain contextual elements of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* as it appeared in new and differing cultural spaces, but quixotes themselves would maintain the fundamentals of the character archetype: the imaginative idealism, literary sensibility, and exceptionalist deviation from the mainstream that render Cervantes' *Don Quixote* different from what Smollett understood as the 'ordinary madman.' The portability of this particular kind of eighteenth-century quixote, tested as the character was translated into English in the seventeenth century, then circulated throughout Britain and the wider Atlantic world in the eighteenth, has become a key feature of Quixote's legacy" (2017, 54). For a more detailed examination of Brackenridge's knowledge of the Spanish Golden Age literature and culture, see José Manuel Correoso Rodenas 2020.

19 See, for instance, Gary Richard Thompson 1973.

authors, although decades run between them and the styles they followed were extremely different. Besides, Brackenridge always had a purpose related to his own legal formation,[20] either satirizing the system of the new United States or offering new perspectives on how Law should be executed. In any case, *Modern Chivalry* had become one of the most famous American novels by the lifetime of Edgar Allan Poe. Following what Ed White states in his introduction to the most recent complete edition of *Modern Chivalry*,

> Henry Adams […] described de novel as 'universally popular throughout the South and West,' and as work that 'filled the place of Don Quixote on the banks of the Ohio and along the Mississippi.' It is difficult, from this distance, to assess the novel's popularity; but for various reasons –Brackenridge's educational background, his remoteness from urban publishing, his professional career– it is clear that *Modern Chivalry* was an anomaly in U.S. writing at the time (2009, xxviii).[21]

A contemporary to Henry Adams, Mark Twain, also acknowledged the influence of *Modern Chivalry*, as explained by Joseph H. Harkey, who follows the similarities between Pudd'nhead Wilson and Captain Farrago (1980-1981, 12).

Whether Poe read *Modern Chivalry* or not is technically unknown today, for as Killis Campbell states, "Poe kept no diary or journal so far as we now know; and he left no biographical account of himself beyond the brief and very inaccurate memorandum that he sent to Griswold in 1841. Nevertheless, it is possible to glean from his writings a good deal about what he had read" (1925, 166). Besides, no review or marginalia piece has been discovered discussing Brackenridge's novel, although chivalry was a key topic along Poe's epistolary and non-fictional production.[22] To get acquainted with what Poe could know about *Modern Chivalry*, it is necessary to turn to his letters. From late October to late November 1841, Poe maintained an epistolary conversation with Frederick William Thomas in which both authors discussed, among other issues, the publication of a manuscript that Brackenridge's son, Henry Marie Brackenridge

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20 For instance, see Dana D. Nelson 2002.
21 All the quotations from *Modern Chivalry* will be taken from Ed White's edition published by Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. in 2009.
22 As an example, see his reviews and pieces of marginalia, where he addresses authors such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Washington Irving (1783-1859), James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878), Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873), William Harrison Ainsworth (1805-1882), William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870) or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), among many others. As known, these authors discussed chivalry (in its many forms) in several of their literary examples.

(1786-1871) wanted to submit to a journal.[23] At that moment, Brackenridge Jr. was serving as a judge in Pennsylvania.[24] The manuscript contained a biography of Hugh Henry Brackenridge, as recognized in a letter he sent to Thomas on November 6, 1841: "About ten days ago I gave to our friend W. Colton, Esqr. a MSS biography of my late father, H. H. Brackenridge, with a view of having it published in the N. American, or some other journal of Philadelphia."[25] That same day, Thomas addressed a letter to Poe discussing some details of this business and asking him to read Brackenridge's manuscript as, according to Dwight R. Thomas and David K. Jackson, the judge had required: "Brackenridge asks Thomas to send his letter to Poe, who can then obtain the biography for his consideration […]" (1987, 347). However, what is interesting here is what is introduced by Thomas as a *post scriptum*. There, the journalist asks Poe: "You have read 'Modern Chivalry' of course — What do you think of it — The biography is true and very good — Is it too long for your Magazine." Unfortunately, Poe's response to this relevant question is lost to this day. Thanks to Poe scholars' interpretations, it is known that he should have written back to Thomas on November 8 or 9, for Thomas replies back on November 10 and references this lost letter: "This morning I received yours with regard to Judge Brackenridge's MS: Thanks for your punctuality and promptness. I read the Judge what you said (of course leaving out what Graham said about its 'heaviness') at which he seemed much pleased."[26] Finally, the last "episode" of this conversation would take place on November 23, when Thomas acknowledges the submission of Brackenridge's manuscript to the journal: "Judge Brackenridge's MS came safely to hand and has been transmitted to the Messenger, from whose editor I received all kinds of a courteous letter."[27]

As surmised from the letters referenced above, Poe had a certain knowledge of the Brackenridge family. Although the response to Thomas's *post scriptum* would have been the definitive confirmation, it is also easy to deduce (both because of Thomas's tone and because Poe's role in editing Brackenridge Sr.'s biography) that the author of "Hans Pfaall" had come across the novel, especially if we bear in mind what Brackenridge Jr. also wrote to Thomas on November 6: "This publication was intended as a precursor to the publication of a new and

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23 According to Dwight R. Thomas, to *Graham's Magazine*. However, *The Southern Literary Messenger* is pointed as a second option by Frederick W. Thomas: "Since he told me he thought I was right and he would like to have the biography published in your Magazine, or the Southern Literary Messenger" (1978, 283).

24 For more information about Henry Marie Brackenridge, see William F. Keller 1956.

25 https://www.eapoe.org/misc/letters/t4111060.htm.

26 https://www.eapoe.org/misc/letters/t4111100.htm.

27 https://www.eapoe.org/misc/letters/t4111230.htm.

improved edition of 'Modern Chivalry' now about to be put to press by: Messrs. Kay, brothers & Co."[28]

The previous paragraphs have shown how Edgar Allan Poe was acquainted with the existence of *Modern Chivalry* and that there is a reasonable doubt that he had read Brackenridge's novel. However, that does not explicitly prove that Poe had in mind *Modern Chivalry* when writing "Hans Pfaall," especially when the sources for this story seem to be clear today. So, most of the scholars agree in mentioning scientific and pseudo-scientific works like Johannes Kepler's *Somnium* (1634), Cyrano de Bergerac's *Selenarchia* (1659), Daniel Defoe's *The Consolidator* (1705), Rudolf Erich Raspe's *The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1816), Abraham Rees's *Cyclopædia* (1802-1819), George Tucker's *A Voyage to the Moon* (1827),[29] Sir John Herschel's *A Treatise on Astronomy* (1834),[30] or the "Great Moon Hoax" articles (1835) among its most suitable sources. However, this list is not definitive and scholars have been varying its inclusions and exclusions since, at least, 1942. That same year, J. O. Bailey recognized that "Poe's sources for 'Hans Pfaal' are complex. Poe turned to sources in both science and fiction for material" (1942, 522). That same complexity is what has left the possibilities open to the present day, with Maurice S. Lee's list among the most definitive ones, giving a more or less well-established canon Poe followed when composing "Hans Pfaall" (2019, 339). The topic of the Lunar exploration has fed literary examples in many different traditions, especially since the Early Modern period, when telescopes first allowed to accurately observe the satellite (some of these examples are included in the aforementioned list).[31] As it happens with many other literary structures, the purposes of authors dealing with voyages to the Moon has been quite diverse, varying from scientific discussion to hypothetical "lost worlds." Obviously, Poe was not alien to this. As Paul Grimstad acknowledges: "[…] Arthur Hobson Quinn writes that while 'Hans Pfaall' began as a parody of tales of trips to the moon, Poe 'could not content himself with mere burlesque' and became drawn to the challenge of creating a 'plausible' account" (2019, 737).[32]

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28 https://www.eapoe.org/misc/letters/t4111060.htm.

29 Probably, the anonymous abridged version and review appeared on the *American Quarterly Review* in 1828 (under the pseudonym of Joseph Atterley), which Poe mentions at the end of "Hans Pfaal."

30 Although the simmilarities between *A Treatise on Astronomy* and "Hans Pfaall" seem to be clear, it cannot be forgotten that Sir John Herschel belonged to a prominent family of astronomers, in which his father William discovered Uranus and other celestial bodies.

31 Including the adventure of one Torralba referenced by Don Quixote in Cervantes's novel (1615, second part, chapter 41).

32 Something that had already been announced by Burton R. Pollin in 1994: "Poe was not

However, there is one source that is missing from the list and, surprisingly, has been so for many decades. As the reader may guess, it is Hugh Henry Branckeridge's *Modern Chivalry*. The subsequent discussion will only focus on the eighth chapter of the second part. There, Farrago and O'Regan are in a community settled among the Delaware natives in western Pennsylvania. After discussing the role of religion within the structure of state, a fire breaks and the meeting has to be dissolved. However, that turmoil is seen by the bog-trotter as a chance to dictate a fictional account of his celestial travels, gathered by a pedagogue in the form of a manuscript. The eleven short paragraphs that compose that intercalated narration are the basis for the following lines of this article.[33] The manuscript contains the story of a balloon voyage towards the Moon, with later expansions to other planets of the Solar System. There is where the similarities with "Hans Pfaall" begin. As it happens with the account of Poe's Rotterdammer, the story produced by Brackenridge's character mainly focuses on the description of the journey. The descriptions offered during this journey, as it happens with Poe's narration, fall, to a great extent, within the realm of satire or comicity, relating O'Regan every celestial body he came across to a reference to the popular culture it suggested. As an example, this quotation is quite illustrative: "There were marriages going on in Venus, and in Mars, we heard the drums beat" (Brackenridge 2009, 259). There, it is clearly appreciated how classical myths are brought to the novel by O'Regan's testimony.

Setting this aside, other features appear as parallelisms, especially if we remember how short Brackenridge's text is. Following the structure established by Poe in "Hans Pfaall," the first of them is the presence of pigeons. These animals appear in both narratives, although playing different roles. While in Poe's story they are carried as cargo, in *Modern Chivalry* they are the first extraordinary element found by Teague and exposed as exotic creatures (barb pigeons):[34] "[…] we saw a bird sitting on the corner of a cloud. We took it to be one of Mahomet's Pigeons" (Brackenridge 2009, 259). Going on in Poe's narration, it is possible to get new details that can lead to think that both groups of animals belong to

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writing a 'parody of the romantic moon voyage' as Bailey, A. H. Quinn, and Marjorie H. Nicholson thought, since the only prominent modern example of the genre was a novel by George Tucker of 1827, uncirculated and unread in 1835 […]" (368).

33 We cannot forget that it is a very short narrative. In Ed White's edition, it only encompasses the length of a page.

34 An artificial breed of pigeons already mentioned by William Shakespeare in *As You Like It* (1599 [2012]): "I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen […]" (2012, 64-65). In a sense, including a kind of bird that has come as a result of human intelligence and science would match the general aim of "Hans Pfaall," in which technical devices and scientific theories are exposed.

the same species. For instance, later on Poe pays attention to how one of Pfaall's birds looks around ("[…] looking anxiously around him […]" -*Writings* 1:408-), being the plumage around the eyes one of the most notable features of barb pigeons. Besides, as Regan's pigeon was sitting "on the corner of a cloud," one of Pfaall's will have a tendency towards sitting on the rim of the balloon (even after having been liberated): "He made, however, no attempt to descend, as I had expected, but struggled with great vehemence to get back, uttering at the same time very shrill and piercing cries. He at length succeeded in regaining his former station on the rim […]" (*Writings* 1:408).[35]

The next important parallelism comes from the views Hans Pfaall enjoys from his balloon, focusing on "[…] the islands of Great Britain, the entire Atlantic coast of France and Spain […]" (*Writings* 1:407). On his part, Regan, when returning from his aerial voyage, focused on locations such as "[…] the Pyrenean mountains [that] seemed a bed of parsley, and the Atlantic Ocean, [that] was about as large as Loch Swilly" (Brackenridge 2009, 259). Since Loch Swilly is a fjord in County Donegal (Ireland), it can be counted as belonging to "the islands of Great Britain."

However, the most suggesting parallelism to be found is deduced to what happens to Hans Pfaall on April 19. That day, the Rotterdammer finally reaches the surface of the Moon and is able to leave the balloon. As an easily understandable reaction, Pfaall decides to start exploring the satellite as soon as he sets foot on it. One of the first elements of the landscape that he finds there is the evidence of a civilization of Selenites: "I had barely time to observe that the whole country, as far as the eye could reach, was thickly interspersed with diminutive habitations […]" (*Writings* 1:425). After that, the reader witnesses the encounter with the actual Selenites: "[…] a vast crowd of ugly little people, who none of them uttered a single syllable, or gave themselves the least trouble to render me assistance, but stood, like a parcel of idiots, grinning in a ludicrous manner, and eyeing me and my balloon askant, with their arms set a-kimbo" (*Writings* 1:425). Somehow, we know that those "ugly little people" are, to a certain extent, a welcoming civilization, for Hans Pfaall has managed to hide among them for five years, to instruct some of its members and to convince one of them to visit Rotterdam with the news of his journey. It can be concluded that Pfaall is settled in exile and aiming for his countrymates' pardon. Although Regan does not settle in the Moon, this is the only celestial body in which an intelligent being is set as inhabitant: "Passing by the moon we saw a man selling lands at auction. He wished us to give a bid […]" (Brackenridge 2009, 259). The

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35 All quotations from "Hans Pfaall are taken from Burton R. Pollin's edition of Poe's imaginary voyages included in "Works Cited."

possibility of starting a new life is offered, so the sales-Selenite can be classified under the label of "welcoming," even if he pursues the interest of making a profit from the land auction.[36]

To find the last parallelism between both narrations (or between both authors' minds in this case), it is necessary to turn to Poe's notes at the end of "Hans Pfaall." There, after exposing some of the details of the publication of the imaginary voyage, the author proceeds on to comment some of the scientific and technical issues that have appeared on the story. The one that is of interest here is related to Sir John Herschel's works. It has been stated above that Poe may have had knowledge of the book *A Treatise on Astronomy*. As mentioned in footnote 30, John Herschel belonged to an important family of German-British astronomers. Beyond the similarities of *A Treatise on Astronomy* and "Hans Pfaall," it is not hare-brained to think that the theories and works of William Herschel (father of John) were also known to Poe, especially if we bear in mind that William published another treatise entitled *Astronomical observations relating to the mountains of the moon* or *An account of three volcanoes in the moon*. Later on, many of these discoveries were incorporated by John into *A Treatise on Astronomy*. Considering the dates in which both astronomers lived, it is clear that the Herschel mentioned by Brackenridge is William and that this can also be (at least in part) the Dr. Herschel mentioned by Poe.

As seen in the previous pages, the context for a story, even for a well-known narration such as "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall," needs to be subject to constant revision. Edgar Allan Poe possessed a mind that was interested in many aspects of human culture, as his writings prove. Among these, he always showed a special inclination towards acknowledging improvements and discoveries performed in his own country and/or by fellow Americans (he would place an American among the first explorers of Antarctica). In relation to this, his kinship with his contemporary American authors is also a well-known feature, as seen at the beginning of this essay and proved by the amount of reviews he wrote, among which those concerning Nathaniel Hawthorne or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow stand out. That is why it seems strange that the work of such a recognized author as Hugh Henry Brackenridge could have fallen out of Poe's scope. As seen, there are evidences that can lead to think the contrary (see

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36 An easy comparison that can come to the readers' minds regarding Pfaall's landing is that of the European encounter with the Natives in the Americas. If we recall those chronicles of the first explorers or settler, the discovery of a similar schedule is now unsurprising. Only to mention one example, William Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation* offers a similar account when describing the view the Pilgrims had of the Natives inhabiting the coast of Massachusetts, first approaching the dwellings and then sharing a recreation of the generosity of those "poor peoples."

the aforementioned letter from Frederick W. Thomas). This said, we can start looking for comparisons, such as those that have been detailed in the previous paragraphs. Any reader will recognize that the task of finding the "firing gun" is not always possible when working in Literature and that the scholars can just rely on the traces that have been left by long-time departed authors. Bearing all this in mind and with all the cautions that have been already exposed, it is intriguing to see how *Modern Chivalry* already outlined some of the most iconic motifs that "Hans Pfaall" would develop decades later. The discussion probably needs to continue, especially if future researchers have access to new resources, but as for today, it can be strongly suggested that the Selenite who tried to sell land to Teague O'Regan was the forefather of those who welcomed Hans Pfaall and that *Modern Chivalry* plausibly contributed to Poe's first attempt to write a long narration. In any case, the resemblance between them, including its satirical mode, highlights.

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Testing the Reliability of two Rubrics Used in Official English Certificates for the Assessment of Writing

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Abstract:

The learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is clearly a primary concern worldwide these days. This has spurred a proliferation of studies related to it and the emergence of new methodologies and instruments of assessment. Along with these, new qualifications devoted to the certification of language competence have been created, triggered in no small part by the fact that demonstrating one's level of proficiency has become almost an imperative when applying for a job or a grant, or to enable someone to study in a foreign country. It is therefore essential to test the reliability of the instruments used for the assessment of competences. With this purpose, over a four-week period, four different evaluators have assessed the written essays of students on a C1 level course using the writing rubrics for Cambridge Assessment English's Cambridge Advance English Certificate (CAE) and Trinity College's Integrated Skills in English Exams III (ISE-III). The aim was to examine the CAE and the ISE-III rubrics' reliability through the calculation of their respective Cronbach's alpha, the Corrected-Item Total correlation, the Intra-class Correlation Coefficient and the Standard Error of Measurement. Afterwards, the results given to each essay on the basis of the two rubrics were compared so to ascertain whether their language is clear and which criteria tended to obtain higher and lower marks on average. Examiners were also surveyed at the end of the assessment process to find their opinion on the use of the two rubrics in terms of clarity. The research provided meaningful and interesting results such as the fact that although both rubrics obtained good results in the coefficients of reliability, the variance in scores is greater

when using the ISE-III rubric and that examiners tend to be tougher when assessing the learner's language resource than any other criterion. It is also worth pointing out that according to the survey, examiners' general perception of both rubrics is that some of their descriptors were confusing or vague, which suggests both rubrics should be revised and could benefit from some improvement.

Keywords: rubrics; Official English Certificates; assessment; reliability.

1. Introduction

English is currently the main language used in trade and global communication and is therefore regarded as the world's *lingua franca*. As a result, it is also the most taught and studied language, and the teaching and assessment[2] of English as a Foreign Language[3] (hereafter, EFL) has become a matter of international importance.

With regard to the EFL classroom, traditional teaching methods have been gradually substituted by certain communicative methods. Since 2001, the European Council, through the *Common Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, teaching and assessment* (hereafter, CEFR), has also been promoting communicative competence and a communicative approach. This methodological shift triggered the need to find new assessment tools as the traditional paper tests based on grammatical activities no longer worked for the evaluation of communicative competence. Hence, new instruments of assessment like rubrics have come to be key in the evaluation processes that stem from the communicative approach.

In spite of the fact that many countries like the USA have been using rubrics as a common assessment tool since the beginning of the 20th century, far too little attention has been paid to them in Spain until recently. Their current presence in textbooks and evaluations has been prompted by the CEFR and the

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2   Assessment and evaluation will be treated as synonyms in this article for stylistic convenience, although they are not exactly the same concept.

3   A foreign language, according to Richards and Schmidt, is a language which is not the native language of large numbers of people in a particular country or region, it is not used as a medium of instruction, and is not widely used as a medium of communication in government, media, etc. Foreign languages are typically taught as school subjects for the purpose of communicating with foreigners or for reading printed materials in that language (2002, 206). This is in contrast to a second language: a language that plays a major role in a particular country, though it may not be the first language of many people who use it (472).

education laws that have implemented it in our country. Research into rubrics or grading scales is still scarce in Spain, with many questions about its application, effectivity, and reliability yet to be addressed. Unfortunately, this leads to the common use of grading scales that are not valid, accurate or reliable to assess students, and thus they threaten the whole evaluation process.

Within the academic context, there are many institutions, both public and private, that deal with the granting of qualifications which certify an individual's level of proficiency in English. However, the determination of one's linguistic competence is highly complex and ardours, which complicates the evaluation process, already difficult per se, even further. Official English Certificates often use rubrics to assess writing and speaking skills. This is due to the fact that grading scales allows the examiner to measure, at the same time, different important aspects in a produced text with objectivity and precision. This is why it is so fundamental that the rubrics used are tested with the aim of finding out whether they are truly effective and reliable.

It is in this particular line of research where the current study fits as it attempts to test the reliability of rubrics used by two of the main providers of Official English Certificates: Cambridge Assessment English and Trinity College. In order to do so, four examiners have assessed various written texts using the grading scales of these institutions.

2. EFL Assessment

2.1. Historical Review

Assessment is not a new concept. In fact, according to Lavigne and Good; "forms of testing can be traced back to the [ancient] Chinese, Greek and Romans" (2014, 2). Nevertheless, it was not until the Middle Ages when examinations started to be much more formal. The 18th century saw an increasing demand to access education which would lead to an increase in evaluation, but only in form of entrance tests (Lavigne and Good 2014, 1-2). The education and evaluation processes at that time were completely different from how we currently conceive them, and were even far from our traditional concepts. Indeed, what we currently know as traditional schooling and testing was only born and developed in the 19th century. However, in that century only memory ability was tested.

Concerning EFL, Liz Hamp-Lyons (2016) locates the origins of formal large-scale examinations in the US to the period just before and just after the First World War. As for Britain, foreign languages were assessed with achievement purpose, just as ancient Greek and Latin had been examined. In 1911, the Cambridge University Senate suggested the creation of a teaching certificate

in modern foreign languages. In 1913, the Certificate of Proficiency in English was developed, prompted by an interest to improve Britain's relationships with colonies and former colonies. The test consisted of grammar and translation exercises as well as phonetic transcriptions, essays and pronunciation (Hamp-Lyons, 2016 15-17).

Another development in language testing and assessment took place in the late 1950s and early 1960s. John Carrol developed the Foreign Language Aptitude Battery which was designed to determine to what extent a person would be able to master a language. At around the same time, two proficiency tests were also developed in the United States: the certificate of Proficiency in English at the University of Michigan and the Proficiency Test of the American University Language Centre in Washington D. C, which would later develop into the now famous Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOELF). The American proficiency examinations were, however, different from the British one mentioned above, since they were influenced by advances in psychometrics and made no assumption of the learner having any previous knowledge of the language. In the same period, significant changes occurred in Britain, too. English was a very strong language owing to its importance in commerce and politics, and universities received thousands of international applications. It was therefore necessary to determine if a foreign student would be able to study in English. The English Proficiency Test Battery and the Test in English-Overseas were the two main examinations developed at this time (Hamp-Lyons 2016, 15-16).

The next change occurred in 1979 and was brought about following the appearance of Communicative Language Teaching. The British Council required a more communicative test to check proficiency within specific academic contexts. The English Language Testing Service (ELTS) was created, but it was too expensive, as well as hard to score and to carry out. It would be replaced by the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which was more generic as it did not assess each individual according to the field he or she intended to study (Hamp-Lyons 2016, 17).

The 21st century was marked by the establishment of the CEFR (2001), which aimed to "overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different education systems in Europe" (Council of Europe, cited in Hamp-Lyons 2016, 18).

In Spain, the introduction of foreign languages in school dates back only to the 20th century, when different reforms and education plans made the teaching of foreign languages compulsory for a few years at the time. The final major period started when the current Constitution was drafted (1978) and a new law was enacted (LOECE) two years later. It established the study of a foreign language, French or English, for all students in primary education. Since then, the political

parties in power have made changes in the education system through different laws: among others, the LOGSE, LOE and LOMCE (Morales et al. 2000).

2.2. *Rubrics*

Rubrics can be defined and understood in slightly different ways. Melissa D. Henning (2020, n.p.) defines a rubric as "a set of scoring guidelines that evaluate students' work and provide a clear teaching directive." According to Berkley University Center for Teaching and Learning (2020, para. 2), rubrics have four characteristics: the criteria students must achieve for a task, the indicator of quality which students should know and follow in order to pass the task (e.g., exceed expectation, meets expectation, doesn't meet expectation), the components or dimensions and the scale used as a scoring tool. However, the use of a rubric is also highlighted as beneficial, not only as a summative and formative tool, but also as a teaching tool which benefits teachers, students and the entire teaching-learning process. As Henning (2020, para. 2) explains:

> [Rubrics] "convey the teacher's expectations and they provide students with a concrete print out or electronic file showing what they need to do for the specific project. Typically, a teacher provides the rubric to students before an assignment begins, so students can use the rubric as a working guide to success"

Furthermore, they help the teacher during the assessment as they provide them with a complete range of criteria and goals in different aspects, not just grammatical. They also contain curriculum goals and standards.

Gavin Brooks (2012, 229) argues that rubrics were introduced in the L1 classroom in order to assess students' writing. Until that moment, writing tasks had been graded based on the criteria of the individual teacher, without any specific guidelines to support his or her decision. From the 70's on, rubrics also started to be used to give feedback (Brooks, 2012, 230).

Positive outcomes with regard to rubrics have been found in several studies. For instance, a study carried out in various educational centres in Spain concluded that, after using a rubric for a whole term in one subject, students considered that their motivation had increased and it boosted cooperative work (Gallego Arrufat & Raposo-Rivas, 2014).

Jonsson and Svingby (2007) did not conducted new research but instead revised seventy-five scientific studies on the reliability and validity of rubrics and concluded that grading is more consistent when they are used, and that both the reliability and validity of the assessment process increased. Similarly, Panadero and Jonsson (2013) analysed twenty-one studies, finding that rubrics provide

transparency to the assessment, reduce anxiety, aid with feedback and help to improve students' self-efficacy and self-regulation.

2.3. State-of-the art

Several studies have been carried out related to using rubrics in the assessment of writing skills, particularly in terms of the effect that showing learners the rubric in advance has. It is worth highlighting the research conducted by Todd Sundeen (2014) and Anthony Becker (2016). They both worked with several groups where some of the groups were shown the rubric and had it explained, while control groups were not. The results demonstrated the benefits on results of having access to the rubric in advance of tests. Another study conducted by Laurian and Fitzgerald (2013) also found that students obtained higher scores if they were shown the rubric previously.

In terms of research on the reliability of rubrics, Enayat A. Shabani and Jaleh Panahi (2020) examined the reliability of writing rubrics used by Official English Certificates [IELTS, Cambridge CAE, TOELF and Educational Testing Service (ETS] with a sample of 200 essays and four raters. It concluded there was very high agreement between test ratings and between raters. Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha calculated suggested high reliability, although some discrepancies were found between raters with respect to the Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC). These results were in line with similar research that assessed the reliability of some rubrics used by official institutions through different coefficients (Fleckenstein et al. 2018; Trace et al. 2016; and Rupp et al. 2019).

Even though rubrics are used all over the world, their employment as an assessment tool in Spain is relatively recent. Research carried out by Velasco Martinez and Tojar in 2015 at Spanish universities indicated that from all the rubrics analysed, only 4% of the rubrics were used in the branch of arts and humanities, and they were used primarily for the assessment of essay writing (36%).

3. Methodology

3.1. Overview

In current society, a society of information and knowledge in an increasingly globalised world, students are required to obtain official qualifications that justify their knowledge of a language in an objective way. As Sundeen (2014, 79) explains, in this new "era of accountability," learners are subjected to several assessment processes at school, at the national level and even at the international level. It is in these last two scenarios where standardized tests come into play and

most students will be required to take them. For this reason, it is essential and fair that those standard assessment processes and their instruments of assessment are held accountable in terms of their reliability, validity and effectiveness.

3.2. *Aims*

This quantitative research aimed to calculate the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the Corrected-Item Total correlation, the Intra-Class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) and the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) of two of the writing rubrics used to grade two Official English Certificates at level C1: Cambridge Assessment English's Advanced Certificate (hereafter, CAE or Rubric 1) and Trinity College's Integrated Skills in English Exams (hereafter, ISE-III or Rubric 2). Furthermore, the scores obtained by each essay when scored by the same examiner (with Rubric 1 and with Rubric 2) will be compared. For instance, if one examiner gave the same essay a "5" using Rubric 1, and a "6" using Rubric 2. Likewise, a comparison among the scores each of the essays obtained with Rubric 1 and with Rubric 2 will also be made. For example, if an essay tended to get higher scores when being scored by one rubric. This will allow the variance between scores to be determined in order to check if both rubrics are assessing the same level of proficiency and how precise they are.

The comparison of scores by criteria (e.g. organisation, language, content) will also enable us to determine which criterion tend to be scored highest or lowest, on average. And finally, the survey conducted once the assessment process is over will allow conclusions to be drawn about the examiners' perceptions of both rubrics to examine whether they consider them to be clear or confusing, easy or difficulty to use, precise or not.

3.3. *Participants*

Four EFL examiners who are used to score with rubrics agreed to participate in the study and carried out a total of thirty-two assessments of writing using the two selected rubrics. The EFL examiners did not meet any of the participating students, whose names were removed from the writings for data protection purposes. The assessed writings were produced by students (ages ranged from 22 to 56 years old) from a C1-level course of instruction at the languages centre of the UNED University during the academic year 2019-2020 in A Coruña (Spain). Participants attended lessons two hours a week and had previously passed either the B2 course at the same languages centre or a B2 official certificate that permitted them to enrol in the C1 course, i.e., they had a level of proficiency beyond B2.

3.4. Ethical Procedures

The research conducted was carried out following the five ethical research procedures. Consent from all the research participants was obtained, the risk of harm to participants was minimized, anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was protected, no deceptive practices were employed and participants were given the right to withdraw from the research.

3.5. Procedures

The study was conducted over four weeks. At the outset, examiners were given clear instructions on what the study was to consist of and what they would need to do. They were also shown the rubrics and were explained to them what each of the criteria included in the rubrics measured. In the first week, examiners were sent their first two texts to grade, one with Rubric 1 and the other with Rubric 2. They were asked to complete an assessment chart indicating the rubric they were using, the text code used to identify the essay assigned, and the scores they considered appropriate for the text on the basis of each of the criteria in the rubric. The process was the same for the three following weeks. At the end, all the examiners had examined all the writing texts selected for the research twice, once with each of the rubrics. The study was specifically designed so that they did not have to score the same text in two consecutive weeks. This way examiners could distance themselves a little bit from their previous marking of the same text. For instance, examiner 1 assessed his/her two assigned texts in week 1 with their corresponding assigned rubric. Let's imagine that examiner 1 assessed essay A with Rubric 1 in week 1. He/she would assess the same essay A but with Rubric 2 in week 3. As a result, there are at least two weeks in between the first and second assessment of the same text so that his/her scoring is not influenced by his/her previous scoring with the other rubric.

At the end of the study, examiners were asked to complete a survey with twenty-six statements about their view on each rubric in terms of precision (whether they think the rubric is precise or not), the wording of the descriptors, number of criteria, scales (e.g. from 1 to 5, from 1 to 4, from perfect to deficient), etc. and also their experiences assessing texts with each of them. Examiners answered each question on a Likert Scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was "I strongly disagree" and 5 was "I strongly agree." In addition, they had space to write down any comments, observations, or clarifications.

3.6. Instruments

The reliability of the rubrics can be measured in different ways through different formulas and coefficients. In the current study, the measures used to assess instrument reliability were: Cronbach's alpha, the Corrected-Item Total Correlation, the ICC and the SEM.

Firstly, reliability can be measured in terms of internal consistency. For this purpose, the Cronbach's alpha, or coefficient alpha, was used. The Cronbach's alpha is a tool to evaluate the internal consistency or reliability of a set of scale or test items. According to Chelsea Goforth (2015, n.p), "the reliability of any given measurement refers to the extent to which it is a consistent measure of a concept, and Cronbach's alpha is one way of measuring the strength of that consistency." This index takes values between 0 and 1 and normally 0.7 is considered the minimum acceptable value. More specifically, a coefficient alpha above 9 is regarded as excellent, above 8 as good, above 7 acceptable, below 7 questionable, above 5 poor and below five unacceptable (George and Mallery 2003, 231). Concerning the minimum acceptable value, it must be clarified that most researchers consider 0.7 as the minimum acceptable value, although some authors such as van Griethuijsen et al. (2015) and Taber (2017) consider a coefficient of between 0.7 and 0.6 as acceptable; and for Goforth (2015, n.p), 0.65 is the minimum required. Nevertheless, it is also important to mention that the greater number of items a scale has, the more reliable the resulting coefficient will be.

Secondly, the Corrected-Item Total correlation indicates the corrected homogeneity coefficient. According to Faleye Bamidele Abiodun (2008, 833), this coefficient "indicates the new coefficient of 'Cronbach's Alpha' after a weak item had been removed from the scale. The set of items having low 'Corrected Item-Total Correlation' (of less than 0.2) are those that will increase the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale when they are deleted".

Hence, the calculation of the Corrected-Item Total correlation allows the researchers to discover if the results of one specific item are interfering negatively in the reliability of the instrument as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. If so, this item can be corrected, and the reliability of X (e.g. organisation, language) would improve. This coefficient has to be positive and above zero, otherwise it would mean that the item should be delated (Ciudad-Gómez & Valverde-Berrocoso, 2014).

The reliability of a rubric can also be checked through the analysis of the scores given by the different examiners with the same instrument. The ICC "measures the reliability of ratings or measurements for clusters — data that has been collected as groups or sorted into groups." (Glen, 2016). As such, an ICC close to 1 indicates high similarity while an ICC close to zero indicates the

values are not similar at all. Terry K. Koo and Mae Y. Lin (2016) explain that "based on the 95% confidence interval of the ICC estimate, values less than 0.5, between 0.5 and 0.75, between 0.75 and 0.9, and greater than 0.90 are indicative of poor, moderate, good, and excellent reliability, respectively."

Moreover, in relation to the results obtained by students using one or another instrument, in this case, the rubric, the SEM "provides an indication of the dispersion of the measurement errors when you are trying to estimate students' true scores from their observed test scores." (Brown, 1999, 21) The SEM, in other words, indicates how close a test taker's score is likely to be to their 'true score', to within some stated probability.

The survey was specifically designed for this research following the techniques suggested by Juan Antonio Gil Pascual (2011, chapter 5). First, it was established that the questions or items in the survey would be items of a subjective numerical scale. Hence the scale contains twenty-six items and a Likert scale from 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 the maximum. The items are related to the examiners' perception of each of the rubrics in terms of the number of criteria, scale used, the wording of the descriptors, ease of use and time involved. Some "control" items were also included which made the same points but phrased differently with the objective of determining veracity. The first items in the survey were more general and easier to answer and items became more specific as the survey progressed. The coding of the survey was a table in which each of the items was divided by a line and alternative different colours (green and white) to facilitate the clarity of the table and to avoid participant errors when writing an X under the corresponding number of the Likert scale for each statement.

As far as the essays are concerned, all the essays assessed consisted in texts of between 240-260 words. The tasks, which always consisted of a prompt that students needed to develop, were included at the top of each essay. Students were given three ideas related to the prompt of which they should develop two. A proper introduction and conclusion were required.

Example of one of the tasks:
Which facilities should receive money from local authorities?
-   Public gardens
-   Museums
-   Sport Centres

Write an essay discussing **two** of the facilities. You should explain which facilities you think are more important for the local authorities to consider, giving reasons to support your opinion.

Finally, both rubrics employed are analytic and not holistic. This is presumably due to the fact that analytic rubrics allow different aspects of the text that has been produced by the candidate to be measured, for instance, organization, lexical resource, grammatical resource, coherence and cohesion, etc. The results obtained are therefore much more precise than those obtained with a holistic rubric, as research has shown (Sundeen 2014; Becker 2016). Rubrics can be classified according to its application, in that case the Cambridge's rubric is skill-focused while the Trinity's one is a task-focused one. The reason why is that in the CAE the same rubric is used to score all the writing tasks while in the ISE-III each of the writing tasks of the exam use a different rubric. The rubrics have different criteria in terms of number, though they are similar in content, both following CEFR indicators of level for C1 writing. While the writing rubric of the ISE-III consists of three criteria: "task fulfilment", "organisation and structure" and "language control", the CAE writing rubric has four: "content", "communicative achievement", "organisation" and "language". However, the "task fulfilment" criterion of the ISE-III encompasses the same aspects as the CAE criteria of "content" and "communicative achievement" measure.

3.7. Data analysis

The in-depth analysis of the data was carried out with the IBM statistics software SPSS, which calculates, together with the above cited Cronbach's alpha coefficient, Corrected-item Total Correlation and the ICC, and other coefficients and formulas that provide the author with in-depth descriptive analysis of frequency such as standard deviation, range, variance, etc.

The formula of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is shown below, N is equal to the number of items, c is the average inter-item covariance among the items and v equals the average variance:

$$\frac{N\bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1)\bar{c}}$$

The formula for the ICC is:

$$ICC = \frac{S^2_b}{(S^2_b + S^2_w)}$$

where S^2w is the variance within subjects, and S^2b is the variance of measurements between subjects. S^2b+S^2w is the total variances. As such, the ICC is interpreted as the proportion of total variance accounted for by the within subject variation. (Howell 2018, n.p)

SEM is calculated with the following formula: $SEM = S\sqrt{1-r_{xx}}$ where S stands for Standard Deviation and rxx stands for the coefficient of reliability, in this case, Cronbach's alpha.

In order to make the comparison of the scores obtained with each of the rubrics and the scores obtained by one essay when being assessed with Rubric 1 or Rubric 2 by each of the examiners, the variance was measured, and the means were obtained. Sample variance is obtained with the following formula $Sample\ variance = \frac{\sum(x-\bar{x})^2}{(n-1)}$ and the mean with $Mean\ \bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{N}$, although IBM's statistics software SPSS and Microsoft Excel software can calculate them automatically once the data are introduced.

3.8. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study are:

H1.-The CAE rubric will obtain an excellent Coefficient Cronbach's alpha.

H2.-The ISE-III will not obtain an excellent Coefficient Cronbach's alpha.

H3.-The Corrected-Item Total Correlation will indicate heterogeneity in both rubrics.

H4.-Both rubrics will obtain a deficient Intra-class Correlation Coefficient.

H5.-The criterion related to language grammar will obtain the lowest scores.

4. Findings

The rigorous analysis on the data obtained from the examiners' scoring of the texts together with the survey conducted afterwards revealed some interesting results. These are presented below following the order of the research hypotheses.

As has already been explained, the data were examined in multiple ways in order to determine the Cronbach's alpha of each of the rubrics, the variance among scores, which criteria tend to obtain the higher or the lower marks, in which criteria there were bigger discrepancies between the raters, etc.

To begin with, the Cronbach's alpha of each rubric was calculated. Each of the texts was assessed by each of the examiners with both rubrics.

TABLE 1. Cronbach's alpha for Rubric 1

Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized elements	No of criteria used in the rubric (e.g. content, language, organization)
,951	,963	4

As it can be observed in the table above, the Cronbach's alpha of Rubric 1 shows high reliability because it is 0.951, so it is regarded as excellent.

TABLE 2. Cronbach's alpha for Rubric 2

Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized elements	No of criteria used in the rubric
,928	,938	3

The Cronbach's alpha for Rubric 2 also showed high reliability with a value 0.928 although it is slightly lower than the value for Rubric 1 (0.951), so it is not statistically significant. These two analyses prove high internal consistency in both rubrics. Consequently, H1 is supported by the results while H2 is not.

In terms of the Corrected-Item Total Correlation, if it is zero or negative for an item, the item should be deleted.

TABLE 3. Analysis of Corrected-Item Total Correlation in Rubric 1

	Scale mean if the item is deleted	Scale variance if the item is deleted	Total Corrected item correlation	Cronbach's alpha if the item is deleted
Content	8,9375	13,796	,902	,948
Communicative Achievement	9,1250	18,917	,861	,947
Organisation	9,0000	16,000	,933	,920
Language	9,3125	18,629	,939	,930

As the table shows, all the Cronbach's alpha values if one item is deleted are similar, which implies high internal consistency. The Corrected-Item Correlation values are not zero or negative so none of the items should be deleted.

TABLE 4. Analysis of Corrected-Item Total Correlation in Rubric 2

	Scale Mean if the item is delated	Scale variance if the item is delated	Total Corrected Item Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if the item is delated
Task Fulfilment	5,1250	3,983	,886	,883
Organisation and Structure	5,0625	4,329	,920	,839
Language Control	5,3125	5,962	,821	,945

With regard to Rubric 2, all the Cronbach's alpha values if one item is delated show high reliability as they are all above 0.8 and they are similar too. The Corrected-Item Correlation values are far from being zero or negative so none of the items should be delated in this case either. The results concerning Corrected-Item Total Correlation of both rubrics refute H3.

Another objective of the study was to check the scores obtained by the same text with the two rubrics. Concerning the concordance between the examiners' scores of the same text using Rubric 1, the results show variance of between 0.10 and 1.17 while with Rubric 2, it is between 1.6 and 2.6. It should also be highlighted that on three occasions, the same text obtained the same score with Rubric 1 and Rubric 2 when being assessed by the same examiner. That said, examiners tended to give a higher mark to essays when using Rubric 2 (on 8 out of 13 occasions).

All the texts were assessed by all the examiners over the four weeks of the study, first with one rubric and then with the other. The scores given by the four examiners for each essay using the same rubric were analysed so that ICC could be calculated.

TABLE 5. ICC of text scores assessed with Rubric 1.

ICC

	Intra-class Correlation	95% confidence interval	
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Unique measurements	,735	,303	,977
Mean measurements	,917	,635	,994

The ICC value for Rubric 1 indicates that there is excellent reliability since the coefficient is above 0.9. This supports the reliability of the instrument since a very unreliable rubric would produce high discrepancy in the examiners' scores.

TABLE. 6. ICC of text scores assessed with Rubric 2.

| | ICC | | |
| | | 95% Confidence Interval | |
	Intra-class correlation	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Unique measurements	,652	,198	,967
Mean measurements	,882	,497	,992

The ICC value for Rubric 2 indicates that the intra-class correlation is good since the result is above 0.8. H4 is not supported by the findings of the research.

The SEM obtained with the results from Rubric 1 is 0.722 and for Rubric 2 is 0.730 meaning that the scores obtained are reasonably close to the student's true scores in terms of probability.

The study also considered the results of each rubric by criteria so that those criteria which tended to receive higher or lower scores could be found, as well as which level of the scale was selected more frequently for each criterion.

Beginning with Rubric 1, the criterion "content" was on average scored the highest while "language" was the lowest, as can be seen in Table 7.

TABLE 7. SPSS statistics of Rubric 1 scores for each criterion.

		Content	Communicative Achievement	Organisation	Language
N	Valid	16	16	16	16
	Missed	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,1875	3,0000	3,1250	2,8125
Standard Error of the mean		,45843	,30277	,37500	,29182
Desviation		1,83371	1,21106	1,50000	1,16726
Variance		3,363	1,467	2,250	1,363

A descriptive analysis of the frequency shows that the criterion "Content" was scored with a 5 or a 4 in 56% of the assessments and with a 1 in only 6.3%. The criterion "Communicate Achievement" was scored with a 4 on 37% of occasions and with a 5 in just 6.3%. Regarding "Organisation", a 4 was given in 25% of the assessments. Finally, "Language" was scored with a 3 in 43% of cases and with a 5 only in 6.3%.

FIGURE 1. Analysis of frequency of different scores using Rubric 1.
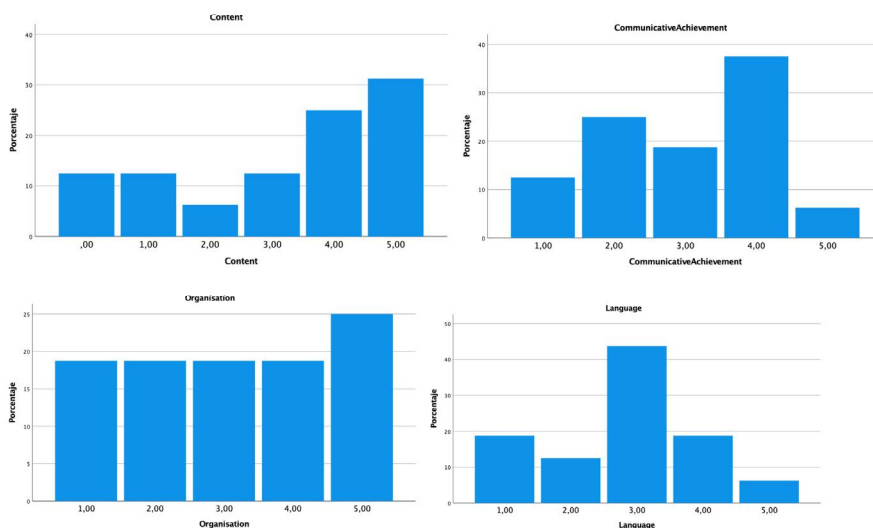
As far as Rubric 2 is concerned, the criterion "Organisation and Structure" was scored the highest on average while "Language Control" obtained the lowest marks. The data obtained related to "language control" in both rubrics support H5.

FIGURE 2. Analysis of Rubric 2 scores by criteria

		Task Fulfilment	Organisation and Structure	Language Control
N	Valid	16	16	16
	Missed	0	0	0
Mean		2,6250	2,6875	2,4375
Standard error of the mean		,32755	,29887	,22302
Desv.		1,31022	1,19548	,89209
Variance		1,717	1,429	,796

In terms of frequency, "Task Fulfilment" received either a "3" or a "4" in 62.6% of the assessments and a "0" in 6.3%. The criterion "Organisation and Structure" was scored with a "4" in 37.5% of the times and with a "3" in only 12.5%. Finally, "Language Control" obtained a "3" in 50% of the cases and a "4" in 6.3%.

FIGURE 3. Analysis of frequency of each score by criterion using R2.
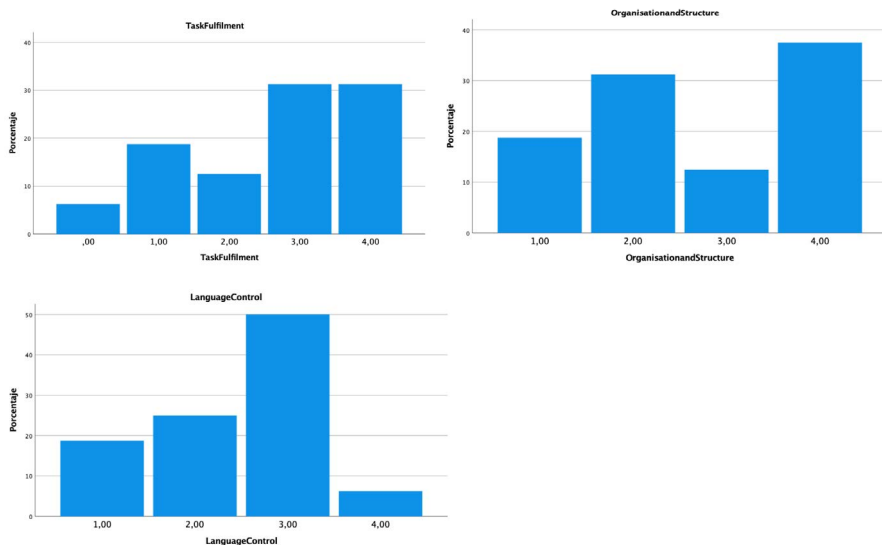
With respect to the survey conducted after the assessments, all the examiners expressed strong agreement or agreement with statements 3: "sometimes it has been difficult for me to decide the score between two levels for one criterion because the descriptors were too similar" with Rubric 1 while only 50% agreed with the same statement for rubric 2 (st. 4).

FIGURE 4. Survey results for statements 3 and 4
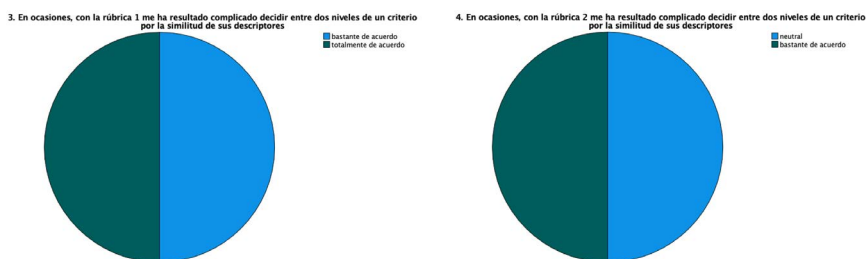
Moreover, 75% of the examiners agreed that the descriptors of Rubric 1 were confusing (st. 7) and 75% also agreed or strongly agreed that the descriptors of Rubric 2 (st. 8) were confusing.

FIGURE 5. Survey results for staments 7 and 8
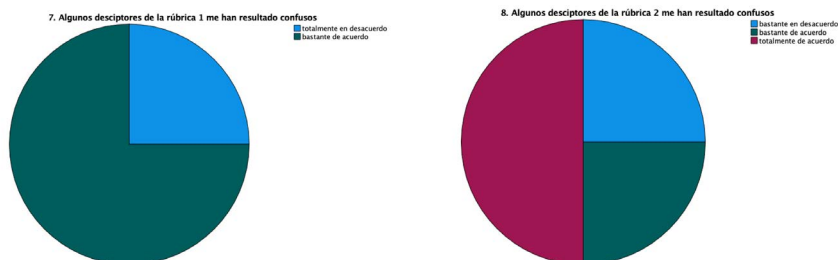
Concerning vagueness, 50% of the examiners strongly agreed that the descriptors in Rubric 1 (st. 15) were vague, the same percentage agreeing or strongly agreeing with the same statement for Rubric 2 (st. 16).

FIGURE 6. Survey results for statements 15 and 16.
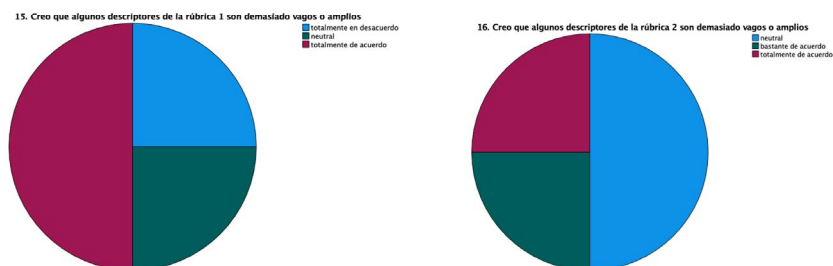
Other interesting findings obtained were the fact that 50% of the examiners wished the scale of Rubric 2 (from 0 to 4) was bigger (st. 6), and 75% that the same rubric assessed more than just three criteria (st. 12).

And finally, 75% of the examiners either agreed or strongly agreed that their assessments became more accurate over time as they felt they knew the rubrics better (st. 18).

FIGURE 7. Survey results for statement 18
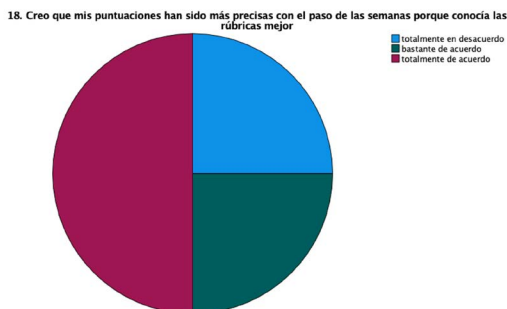
5. Conclusions

The research conducted allows reflections to be made related to many different aspects. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients calculated for the two rubrics show high indices of reliability as both rubrics scored over 0.9, which is normally considered excellent. However, as has already been noted, Cronbach's alpha index is more reliable when there are more items. In the cases analysed, the rubrics consist of either three or four items. This is very significant, particularly for the Trinity College rubric since it only measures three criteria, as it could lead to a falsely high value of coefficient alpha.

The Corrected-Item Total Correlation for the items in the CAE and ISE-III rubrics suggests internal consistency among the items of each of the two rubrics, which is slightly higher in the case of the former, where all the alpha values were above 0.9.

Some rather revealing conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of scores. First of all, the ICC for both the CAE and the ISE-III rubric were high, although it was a little better for the former. This indicates that examiners' scores using the same rubric were similar, which indicates high reliability. By comparing the scores given by the four examiners text by text, it was found that the average difference in scores awarded using the CAE rubric oscillated between 0.10 and 1.17 points, whereas with the ISE-III rubric, scores varied by 1.6 to 2.6 points. This fact suggests that scores with Rubric 1 are more precise. The variance in the ISE III rubric suggests a text could be either failed or passed with the same rubric, perhaps indicating a certain lack of exactness.

The contrast between the scores given by the same examiner to the same text with each of the rubrics indicates that examiners tend to mark a text higher when they are assessing it with the Trinity rubric than with the Cambridge

one. However, the variance is less than 0.5, which suggests that they are truly assessing the same level of proficiency.

Considering the raters' scores by criteria provides some interesting data and allows some reflections. In this respect it is worth highlighting that the criterion "Language" was always scored the lowest on average with both rubrics. In the total of thirty-two assessments that were carried out for this research, it was only given the highest score of "5" for Rubric 1 and "4" for Rubric 2 on four occasions. This raises the question of whether examiners are stricter when assessing the grammatical and lexical range of the learner than when they are evaluating other criteria. In contrast, examiners gave high scores in the criterion "Content" (Trinity) or "Task fulfilment" (Cambridge) in eighteen out of thirty-two assessments. Therefore, it appears that students are much more likely to obtain a high mark in the "Content/Task fulfilment" than in the "Language" criterion.

As far as the survey on the examiner's opinion upon the rubrics is concerned, some of their perception's should be mentioned. With regard to the Cambridge CAE rubric, all raters stated that it had been difficult for them to decide between two levels of one criterion because the descriptors were sometimes too similar. There is no doubt that in order for a rubric to be good and effective, the different levels of the scale should be clearly differentiated. This would increase the rubric's reliability and the ICC. In addition, 75% of the examiners believe the descriptors of Rubric 1 are confusing and half agree that they are too vague. In fact, some examiners have indicated in the comments section that they dislike the fact that levels 2 and 4 are not really worded since it is just said they correspond to an intermediate level between the band above and below.

The results of the survey regarding the Trinity ISE-III rubric show that half of the examiners wished the scale were bigger since it goes only from 0 to 4. They also think that the descriptors of the rubric are confusing and are often too similar for the different levels of the same criterion, although to a lesser extent than for Rubric 1. Moreover, it must also be emphasized that examiners do not regard the ISE-III descriptors as vague. In spite of this, half of them considered that it would consume too much time to use this rubric with a large number of students and 75% think this rubric is rather imprecise.

5.1. Comparison with the Findings of Other Studies

The results of this research are in line with those obtained by the study conducted by Shabani and Panahi (2020) where the official writing rubrics analysed, which included the CAE writing rubric, obtained high coefficients of

reliability. However, some variance in the ICC was found particularly with two of the raters. In that study, the ISE-III rubric was not analysed.

Moreover, the conclusions drawn from the results are similar to another research on the same topic. Similar to Trace et al. (2016), it was found that raters often show discrepancies in their understanding of descriptors. Rupp et al.'s (2019) research on the reliability of human raters also obtained high reliability coefficients among writers when using TOEFL rubrics.

Research provided by Cambridge English Assessment (2020) indicates that their measurements of Cronbach's alpha of examiners marking the CAE writing paper is 0.79 and its SEM 1.78. In this case, the results obtained by the current research concerning Cronbach's alpha are even higher (above 0.9). As for the SEM data, the results of the current study show even lower results, around 0.7, which is very positive.

No data is published on Trinity College webpage regarding reliability coefficients. Moreover, no research on the reliability of ISE-III was found in the literature, so it is not possible to compare with the findings of this research.

5.2. Research Limitations

Despite the fact that the research conducted has led to many interesting findings, they must be taken with caution, since there are multiple limitations to this study. The main limitation of the research carried out is its size. It is clear that the larger the sample of essays is, the more reliable, accurate and significant the results obtained will be. It would be strongly recommendable to reproduce the same research on a larger scale by assessing writing samples of, for instance, the participants of C1 English instruction courses of different universities.

On the other hand, the rubrics selected are supposed to be based on exhaustive investigations by an entire panel of experts, so they must be taken with the presupposed reliability they deserve. It is essential, though, to consider that they have been developed years ago and thus they may be subject of adjustments, improvements and modifications.

5.3. Implications and Future Research

Since 75% of the examiners think that their scoring became more precise as time passed because they knew the rubrics better, the relevance of training raters on the assessment with one rubric is highlighted. Even though it is presupposed that examiners for Cambridge and Trinity Certificates are indeed trained for their assessment, there are other teachers who use rubrics in their

courses or education centres that are not properly trained to assess with them. As a result, if they received some training in their university degrees or masters, examiner's own accuracy in their scoring could be raised, which will be obviously extremely beneficial for the whole evaluation process. Therefore, further research on the benefits of examiners training with rubrics is desirable, together with the analysis of the impact that a proper training of the examiners can actually have.

With regard to the findings of the research, the rubrics assessed could benefit from some adjustments. As suggested by examiners, some of the descriptors of both rubrics could be rephrased as they are often found confusing. Raters suggested that the CAE rubric is too vague as some of the bands are not really described and this is something that could be corrected. Regarding the ISE-III rubric, the examiners have emphasized the fact that the descriptors are confusing, this could obviously result in decreased reliability, so the descriptors should be reviewed. In addition, the descriptors of both rubrics have been described as too similar between the different scale levels, which could also be addressed in future revisions of the rubrics. Further research on the wording of descriptors could be conducted so that some light could be shed on how to design better rubrics that are clear, accurate and precise.

Due to the limitations of the current research that have been already mentioned, further research on the reliability of rubrics used in official English certificates with a larger number of participants is strongly recommended and could be very beneficial for the educative community and the assessment process. After all, in this era of accountability it should be compulsory that students are not only the object of a fair evaluation to demonstrate their knowledge, competence or ability, but also the processes of assessment and the instruments used for it should be subjected to analysis, examination and revision from time to time through research, so that it can be demonstrated that they are truly objective and effective.

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The Beatles in Spain: The Contribution of Beat Music and Ye-yés to the (Subtle) Musical, Cultural and Political Openness of General Franco's Regime in the 1960s

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Abstract:

From the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, the impact of American twist and rock'n'roll and British beat music, the Eurovision Song Contest, the considerable growth of the national record industry, the number of radio stations and the (still timid) deployment of nationwide TV gave rise in Spain to the development of the *ye-yé* fashion amongst the young Spanish population. This was accompanied by the development of a mild feeling of rebellion and critical spirit against the traditional conservative/Catholic *status quo* and the conventional mores of the previous generation. Indeed, from 1964-65 onwards dozens of Beatle-like bands imitated the Beatles' rhythms, language, image, poses, fashion and song lyrics. The two live performances of the Beatles in Madrid and Barcelona in 1965 disseminated their popularity even further in Franco's Spain. English became the *lingua franca* of modernity, of international tourism and of the new musical genres. In this Anglophile context, Beatlemania was to exert a relatively gentle influence on the social and political Spanish scenario of the decade and contributed to preparing the path to the country's democratization in the late 1970s.

Keywords: Spanish tourism in the 1960s; Franco's Spain; The Beatles; *Ye-yé*; Hippies; Anglicisms in Spanish

In the 1950s and early 1960s new artistic and cultural manifestations emerged in the USA and Britain in the form of bands and solo singers of various dynamic youth movements and musical styles (rock and roll, rock, soul, blues, twist, skiffle, beat, etc.). At the time Spain was still under a strict dictatorial regime, but modern European and American cultural and political ideas (and records) were slowly entering Spain through the American bases and the main Spanish commercial ports (Barcelona and Valencia). Spain's tourist boom in the late 1950s and throughout the following decade brought a joyful and spontaneous flow of a mild spirit of modernity and cosmopolitanism into Franco's Spain via a number of popular resorts such as the Costa del Sol, the Costa Brava and the islands (especially the Balearic archipelago) as well as through the main business cities on the peninsula (Madrid and Barcelona). This highly economically- and culturally-profitable phenomenon coincided chronologically with the entry into Spain of rock/beat music from the English-speaking world and with a period of economic prosperity and reforms encouraged by the most liberal sectors of Franco's dictatorial regime, the so called *desarrollismo* of the 1960-70 decade (Longhurst 2010). "Modern" music started to arrive in Spain initially in very small doses in the late 1950s, mainly from the US (Elvis, Chuck Berry, etc.) but increasingly in larger doses during the early and mid-1960s, and by that point, more from Britain. Besides, Spain's economic bonanza allowed Spaniards to travel abroad more often and become familiar with more democratic modes of life and with state-of-the-art trends in foreign musical genres. The arrival of American rhythms throughout the late 1950s prepared the way in the early 60s for the boost of British beat/rock music in Spain, the so called "British invasion".

In 1963 the Beatles caught the western world by surprise. Beatlemania contributed considerably to the reshaping of the old-fashioned post-WWII British society into a modern one. Spain was also ultimately influenced by the Beatles from as early as 1964, and this also made an impact on the country's body and soul. The Beatles had not shown much interest in the Spanish record market initially. Despite their manager Brian Epstein's (1934-67) well-known fondness for bullfighting (León, 2015) and the Spanish coastal resorts, he was not at all enthusiastic about his protégés playing live in mid-60s Spain as part of their planned European tour in 1965. In Europe and America the Beatles were selling records by the million, but in Franco's Spain they had only sold a few thousand. According to *TeleExpress*, by July 1965 only six hundred Beatles records (including the four LPs that had been released by then) were being sold in Barcelona each week (Alegret, 2020). Taking into consideration that from 1963 to July 1965 twenty-five different Beatles records altogether –singles, EPs and LPs– had been released in Spain, these meager six hundred copies a week in Barcelona is proof enough of the poor sales of their

records in Spain.[1] This did not, though, prevent them from appearing in top positions in Spanish "private" hit parades in music magazines in 1964.[2] However, in the end, thanks to the timely nine hundred thousand pesetas (5,400 euros) that a Spanish show business agent was ready to pay for two performances, Epstein yielded and the Beatles performed in the bullrings of Madrid and Barcelona in July 1965. Franco's severe Minister of the Interior Camilo Alonso Vega's initial opposition to the inclusion of Spain in the Beatles' European tour of 1965 changed when he was conveniently informed that the Queen of Britain had recently awarded them MBEs (Tarazona and de Castro, 2011).

Franco's authoritarian regime would not take kindly to an intrusion into its peaceful ideological paradise perpetrated by any of the youthful breaths of freedom blown in by the *melenudos* (long-haired) English singers,[3] but did not take them too seriously either. The Spanish *Movimiento* (i.e., Spain's dictatorial regime) tried to ridicule the modern and daring rhythms that came from abroad during the 1960s, especially during the weeks running up to the Beatles' performances and the gigs themselves were given limited or prejudiced attention. The *NODO* (Noticiario Cinematográfico Español, the Spanish regime's weekly official news bulletin broadcast compulsorily in cinemas), though obliged to give their concerts due coverage, did so in a less than a three-minute reportage ("Los Beatles en Madrid, 1965"). In this *NODO* report it was evident that the newsreader was trying to make fun of the Beatles' music and their looks, as well as of the young *fans* who went to the airport to welcome them and the audiences that went to see them play live. His remarks are eloquent enough: "la recepción que se les hace en Madrid no es apoteósica" [Madrid's welcome is not enthusiastic]; "salta a la vista que no hay un lleno" [it is evident that it is not a sell-out]; "[los fotógrafos] apuntan sus objetivos sobre los tocados capilares" [(the photographers) point their cameras at their periwigs]; "por fin salen los melenudos al tablado" [at last the long-haired musicians jump onto the stage]; "los Beatles pasan por Madrid sin pena ni gloria" [the Beatles pass through Madrid without fuss or glory] (*NODO*

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1   From 1963 to July 1965 the following Beatles singles, EPs and LPs were released in Spain: only five singles ["Please, please me"/"Ask me why" (1963); "I feel fine"/"She's a woman" (1964); "She loves you"/"I want to hold your hand" (1964); "A hard day's night"/"Roll over Beethoven" (1964) and "Ticket to ride"/"Yes it is" (1965)] and sixteen EPs with songs from the four LPs released in Spain up to that point, namely *Please, please me*, *With the Beatles*, *Qué noche la de aquel día* [*A Hard Day's Night*] and *Beatles for Sale* (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 82-84).

2   For instance, in the hit parade organized by the magazine *Fonorama* in 1964, the top position was held by "A hard day's night"; no. 8 by "I should have known better"; no 51 by "Twist and Shout"; no. 75 by "Long Tall Sally", and no. 89 by "Roll over Beethoven" (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 17).

3   *ABC*, 23/2/1964 (cited in Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 12).

1965). The conservative gossip magazine *¡Hola!* titled its (unattributed) report on their performances as "Pasaron los Beatles y no pasó nada: los hermanos Marx de la era ye-yé vistos y entrevistos" (no. 1089; July 10, 1965) [the Beatles finally arrived and nothing happened: The Marx Brothers of the *ye-yé* era have been viewed and interviewed]. The regime's moderate daily press of the 1960s did their best to ridicule them by spreading among their readership a discredited image of the English band, its wild music and their alleged unmanly looks because of their long and seemingly unkept hair. The Beatles were unfairly described as *sucios* (dirty), *salvajes* (wild), *descerebrados* (brainless), *excéntricos* (weird), *estrafalarios* (bizarre), *ridículos* (laughable), *vulgares* (vulgar), or *escarabajos* (beetles).[4] But the mocking and patronising attitude of the Spanish newspapers went no further than that. In the streets, Spanish followers who imitated the Beatles hairstyle were branded as *amanerados* (Cillero 1976, 11), that is, camp or effeminate. In the press conferences given by the Beatles in their Madrid and Barcelona hotels, the Spanish journalists' questions were extremely superficial; they only seemed to be interested in the length of their hair. The Beatles, despite being a social phenomenon, were clearly not being perceived as any danger to the solid columns of the regime or its imposed morality. In other words, the Beatles were being presented in Spanish society as the newest clowns of the western world. Only two ultraconservative newspapers, *Pueblo* and *El Alcázar* made a real fuss about the Beatles. According to them, the Beatles, who made so much "noise" with their music and posed so much danger to the healthy Spanish youth, should be perceived as potential initiators of riots and their concerts were prone to the violent and uncontrolled lascivious reactions of the female public (Isles 1997). The Francoist authorities were scared of the wild reactions of young women that had been seen at other Beatles concerts. The Beatles' European and American concerts were used by young women to loudly express their feelings of power, independence and pleasure by shouting, screaming, crying, dancing and giving free rein to their limbs or even demonstrating their sexual arousal in front of their idols as a way of protesting against the set social rules imposed upon them (Ehrenreich, Hess and Jacobs 2003, 100). Spain did not publicly reach that level of mass excitement in modern live concerts in the early sixties. During the Beatles' performances in Spain the police, ever visible at all times, would make sure that they cut short any open expression of male or female enthusiasm, let alone any lascivious dancing. Due to the vigilance of the political and ecclesiastical

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4   Sánchez and de Castro (1994, 12, 16, 26, 46, 57, etc.) give ample evidence of these derogative terms employed to describe the Beatles in numerous newspapers and magazines of the time: *ABC*, 27/2/1964 and 29/2/1964; *Lecturas*, 18/9/1964, *¡Hola!*, 10/7/1965, *TeleExprés*, 2/7/1965, *La Mañana*, 2/7/1965, etc.

authorities of the time, any such free and open expression of female joy was nevertheless much more controlled and frowned upon.

After the July 1965 concerts, the Spanish newspapers insisted that the group had not filled the venues of Madrid's Las Ventas (which is true)[5] and Barcelona's La Monumental (which is not so true).[6] They stated that when the Beatles played their brief concerts in the Madrid and Barcelona bullrings, attendance was low because Spanish youth had not shown any special inclination towards them. The truth is that the excessively high prices of the tickets –ranging from 75 to 400 pesetas (from 45 cents to 2.5 euros)– and the expectation of police interventions had kept away many potential ticket-buyers. The (mainly) middle-class audience (for they were the only social group who could afford to pay such extortionate prices) was also peppered with dozens of policemen in order to prevent any hysterical or revolutionary overreaction of the Spanish *fans* like that believed to have taken place in other venues abroad. Spectators were encouraged to remain seated and not to make fools of themselves in public. After the Madrid performance, the ultraconservative *El Alcázar* could not disguise its joy: "Afortunadamente falló la Beatlemanía" (2/7/1965) [Fortunately, Beatlemania was a fiasco]. The ecclesiastical authorities did not seem too keen on beat bands in general either. The conservative newspaper *ABC* carried an "Advertencia del Papa Pablo VI a los jóvenes contra la histeria de algunos grupos musicales" (6/7/1965, 75) [A warning from Pope Paul VI to young people against the hysteria of some music groups], published only four days after the Beatles' historic concerts in Spain. Only the music critic and journalist Alberto Mallofré (1927-2017) publicly defended the importance of the historical event that had just taken place in Barcelona and the supreme quality of their music and the gross distortion of their image by the powers-that-be in his article "Los 'Beatles' y su mito", in *La Vanguardia Española* (4/7/1965).

There is no conclusive evidence that the Francoist authorities deployed all their censorship machinery and the intelligence service to combat the potentially

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5   Madrid's Las Ventas bullring was not full on July 2, 1965: only about five thousand people attended. The sound was not of the highest quality, the shouting worsened the acoustic conditions and the tickets were extremely expensive for those days for a brief 35-minute performance of the main stars of the show. The opening acts were Beat Chics, Freddie Davis, Juan Cano y su orquesta, Los Pekeniques, Martin Brothers, Michel, The Modern 4, The Rustiks and Trinidad Steel Band (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 34).

6   At Barcelona's Monumental bullring, which reached two-thirds of its capacity, the Beatles created a very pleasant sensation in the forty frenzied minutes of their performance in front of a more devoted (or more liberated) audience than Madrid's. The opening acts were Beat Chics, Freddie Davis, Los Shakers, Los Sírex, Michel, The Modern 4, Trinidad Steel Band and Orquesta Florida (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 51).

subversive arrival of *los cuatro muchachos de Liverpool* (the four young lads from Liverpool, as they would often be referred to) in the press. Sometimes one feels that Spain was laughing at the weirdness of the Beatles. However, aware that their historic visit was being observed from the distance, Spain took advantage of the occasion to give publicity to Spanish products (e.g., sherry). The Beatles were pampered while they were in Spain and even the police would gladly take pictures of themselves in their company.

Despite the obstacles, though, Spanish popular music, culture, art and fashion became openly Anglophile. The Spanish radio began to show greater interest in the new foreign (French, Italian, British and American) musical genres by broadcasting widely followed programmes for young audiences such as *Caravana musical* (from 1960 onwards) on Red de Emisoras del Movimiento and *El gran musical* (1963) on Radio Madrid (Aguilera Moyano, 1989; Pedrero Esteban, 2000), and soon after on other radio stations, as well as the popular Sunday TV programme *Escala en hi-fi* (1961-67). A great Spanish diffuser of the new sounds was the then young Spanish journalist José María Íñigo (1942-2018), who since 1960 had been the correspondent in London on musical matters for the radio station SER and therefore a pioneer in the growth of Spanish admiration for the beat sound coming from Britain (Otaola González, 2012b). New record companies started to appear in Spain (Novola, 1964) while existing ones further consolidated their presence in the national market by widening their list of artists (Hispavox and Belter). Spanish branches of foreign record companies (EMI, RCA, CBS, etc.) were also created due to the rising demand for new Spanish beat bands and singers, many of them regular participants in the popular matinee musical concerts of the Price Music Hall in Madrid in 1962. English –no longer French– became the international language that all but monopolized the tourist industry as well as most of the cultural, artistic and musical manifestations of any youth movement in Spain that was not officially connected with Franco's regime. English started to be taken more seriously as a foreign language in the Spanish educational system. The recently created youth magazines were more than willing to contribute to the expansion of the Beatles' world in Spain. The weekly *Fans* magazine dedicated eight issues to the Beatles (from 15 to 23) in 1965. A number of "official" Beatles fan clubs were created in different cities too for the glorification of these new gods (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 62). The social and cultural impact of the Beatles in Spain has been analyzed by several music critics and scholars such as Sánchez and de Castro (1994), Crusells and Iranzo (1995), Tarazona and de Castro (2007), Álvarez (2008) and González Lemus (2010).

True to the clichéd knowledge about Spain of the British population at the time, the Beatles took advantage of their first official trip to Spain in July 1965 to immerse themselves in Spanish flamenco and bullfighting. They got off the

plane in Barcelona wearing bullfighter hats, Lennon wore a flamenco hat at both concerts, the four of them attended a *tablao* (flamenco dance show) and a wine tasting session organized by the Sherry Institute of Spain and Bodegas Domecq and they bought several copies of Picasso's *Toros y toreros* (1961), a book with his drawings and a text by Spain's leading bullfighter of the time, Luis Miguel Dominguín. The Beatles also purchased the record collection *La antología del cante flamenco*,[7] as well as a collection of recordings made by a number of Spanish bands and a real Spanish guitar (Sánchez and de Castro 1994, 59).

Coincidentally, only a couple of weeks before their live performances in Spain, at the end of June 1965, John Lennon (1940-80) had published his second book of off-kilter poems and nonsensical stories full of puns and accompanied by his own line drawings entitled *A Spaniard in the Works* (1965). On the book cover, Lennon was dressed in a Spanish bullfighting cape and a flamenco hat. However, the book title suggests Lennon's poor opinion of Spaniards: the common idiom "a spanner in the works" means to put obstacles to the realization of a work, to put sticks in the wheels. This expression implies an image of troublemaking which, together with other current English expressions such as "Spanish practices" or "old Spanish customs", points to the allegedly irregular or deceptive working capacity of Spaniards in the eyes of Britons at that time. In the first story of Lennon's book, also titled "A Spaniard in the Works", the protagonist is a Spanish immigrant, Jesus El Pifco,[8] who settles in Scotland as a stable groom and coachman. Jesus El Pifco "had imigrateful from his little white slum in Barcelover a good thirsty year ago" (Lennon 1965, 13). He is in love with a young Scottish girl, Polly/Patrick, whom he sees every day and for whom he feels unbridled passion. He is also homesick for his family, a feeling he demonstrates by "whistling a quaint Spanish refrain dreaming of his loved wombs back home in their little white fascist bastard huts" (14). However, when the protagonist's mother, "Mrs El Pifco", from "Barcelunder" (15), wishes to visit him in Scotland, he is not happy about it (15). In Lennon's story this peculiar Spanish coachman unburdens himself by talking to his horses, but they do not respond "because as you know they cannot speak, least of all to a garlic eating, stinking, little yellow greasy fascist bastard Catholic Spaniard" (15). If Franco's regime had found out about the existence of Lennon's recently-published book and his grossly derogative depiction of Spaniards by the time his band went

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7   Presumably in the edition released by Hispavox in 1958, which consisted of an album of three LPs prepared by the flamenco singer Perico el del Lunar and the musician Tomás Andrade de Silva.

8   "Pifco" was the brand name of a British company specialized in small domestic electrical appliances.

to Madrid and Barcelona to delight the "young Spanish fascists, garlic eaters, stinkers and greasy Catholic bastards" with their music, the Beatles would have certainly been in trouble and a massive international crisis between Britain and Spain might have accompanied their careers.[9]

Spain in the 1960s, still culturally and ideologically chained to the all-powerful Catholic Church and to the *Movimiento*, was trying to wake up to modernity. Indeed, the Beatles' worldwide successful record- and film-making in 1964-65 gave rise to numerous Anglophile Spanish imitators. The Spanish bands who fell under the spell of the Beatles combed their hair in youthful (but well-groomed) hairdos à la *ye-yé* in admiration of the Liverpool band. They copied the *fab four* by adopting their poses and visual aesthetics, their record covers, their outfits (suits), their beat musical style, their lyrics, their instruments (drums, lead, rhythm and bass guitars and occasionally keyboards), their English expressions and mannerisms (Del Val, Noya and Pérez-Colman, 2014, 162). Copying the Beatles was taken as a youthful demonstration of the counter-reaction to the die-hard traditions and old-fashioned mores of their parents' generation who had fought in the Spanish Civil War, endured the dark years of the postwar but found it difficult to adapt to the fresher airs arriving from Europe and America. In what Marc (2013, 125) labels as "appropriations of foreign music", dozens of Spanish bands sold thousands of records nationally by making cover versions in Spanish of Beatles hits. These "appropriations" were usually reasonable musical renderings but were frequently poor and unfaithfully freestyle Spanish translations/adaptations of the original lyrics.[10] Titles such as

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9   According to the novelist Antonio Muñoz Molina, the publication of *A Spaniard in the Works* "provocó hasta una nota de protesta del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores" ("Patriotas y aliados", *El País*, 20/2/1991).

10 Los Ángeles: "La ayuda de la amistad" (1967) ["With a little help from my friends"] and "Blackbird" (1972);
    Los Botines: "Sólo ayer" (1965) ["Yesterday"];
    Los Diablos: "Me tratas mal" (1969) ["Don't let me down"];
    Los Diablos Negros: "Mi gran amor le di" (1964) ["And I love her"], "Twist and Shout" (1964), "Lo tendrás, amor" (1964) ["From me to you"], "Me enamoré de ti" (1964) ["If I fell"], "¿Quieres saber un secreto?" (1964) ["Do you want to know a secret?"], "Déjalo así" (1964) ["It won´t be long"];
    Duo Juvent's y su conjunto: "Please, please me" (1964);
    Los Gatos Negros: "Ella te quiere" (1964) ["She loves you"];
    Los Gratsons: "Please, please me" (1964) and "Aquella noche fue" (1964) ["A hard day's night"];
    Lone Star: "Ella te quiere" (1965) ["She loves you"], "Ocho días" (1965) ["Eight days a week"], "I feel fine" (1965) and "She said she said" (1965);
    Los Módulos: "Yesterday" (1970) and "Hello Goodbye" (1970);
    Los Mustang (1964-65): "¡Socorro!" ["Help!], "Te necesito" ["I need you"], "Sabor a

"Please, please me" (covered by the Spanish bands "Duo Juvent's y su conjunto", "Los Gratsons" and "Los Mustang") would not be translated into Spanish ("por favor, satisfáceme") because of the risk or the embarrassment of having the song censured. Other Beatles song titles and lyrics were also defectively translated, as was the case with "It won't be long" ("Déjalo así" [Leave it like that], by Los Diablos Negros), "Baby's in Black" ("Niños de negro" [Children in black], by Los Mustang), "You've got to hide your love away" ("Qué ha pasado con tu amor" [What's happened to your love], by Los Mustang), or "Don't let me down" ("Me tratas mal" [You treat me badly], by Los Diablos), to give but a few examples.

Due to the worldwide influence of the Anglophone record industry, English became the vehicular language of modern music and was employed in a high number of songs played by Spanish bands in the 60s. Both Los Bravos, the most international of the Spanish bands after their international hit "Black is Black" (1966; Michelle Grainger, Tony Hayes, Steve Wadey; Decca Records), and Los Canarios –more influenced by American soul and jazz-rock and later gradually transforming their beat beginnings to a more socially and politically critical "progressive rock" (Delis Gómez 2015)– sang either most or all of their repertoire in English because they aspired to be successful in the European and American markets. Some Spanish bands were happy to make their own Spanish versions of Beatles songs for strictly national consumption and imitate the Beatles' style, thus extending even more the English band's popularity in the country. These were Los Sírex (the support band who played with the Beatles in Barcelona's La Monumental bullring), Los Brincos (who eagerly aspired to be considered the "Spanish Beatles" and did not hesitate to wear bullfighting capes as a way of affirming their Spanish identity), Los Módulos and Los Mustangs (who owed their national success and fame almost exclusively to their Spanish versions of Beatles songs), Los Pekeniques (the support band at the Beatles gig in Madrid's Las Ventas and imitators of The Shadows), and a long etc.

The Beatles' entry onto the Spanish cultural stage also opened the door of the country's musical market to other British bands (the Rolling Stones, the Animals, the Who, the Kinks, etc.) and solo singers (Tom Jones, Cliff Richard, Petula Clark, etc.), whose work now reached the ears of Spanish young people more easily through their records and occasionally also through their Spanish

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miel" ["A taste of honey"], "Y la quiero" ["And I love her"], "Quiero contarte un secreto" ["Do you want to know a secret?"], "Conocerte mejor" ["I should have known better"], "Lo que hablamos hoy" ["Things we said today"], "Niños de negro" ["Baby's in black"], "Siguiendo al sol" ["I'll follow the sun"], "Please, please me", "Nadie respondió" ["No reply"], "Un billete compró" ["Ticket to ride"], "Si te dicen que caí" ["If I fell"], "Ayer" ["Yesterday"], "Submarino Amarillo" ["Yellow Submarine"], "Qué ha pasado con tu amor" ["You've got to hide your love away"].

cover versions.[11] In the meantime, "official" Spain still insisted on promoting international tourism and melodic songs in the *Festival de Benidorm*, the *Festival del Mediterráneo* and the *Festival de Mallorca*, with only minor concessions made to modern music.

The cultural hegemony in the 1960s of Britain, unanimously believed to be the European champion of a newer and fresher type of music, was gradually gaining ground in Spain, especially among the adolescent public. This was at the expense of the French and Italian musical models, which were more clearly addressed at an older and more ideologically conservative type of listener. In the yearly editions of the Eurovision Song Contest—an international window onto the music scene in western Europe—in the 1960s and early 70s, the clash between modern and conservative musical tendencies was clearly perceptible. Songs played by Britain's more youthful rhythms almost always ranked highly: they either won (like Sandie Shaw's "Puppet on a String" in 1967; Lulu's "Boom-Bang-a-Bang" in 1969; or Brotherhood of Man's "Save your Kisses for Me" in 1976) or ended in second position (as was the case in 1959, 1960, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1968, 1970, 1972 and 1975). Spain finally won the contest for the first time in 1968 thanks to a *ye-yé* song with a superficial and repetitive "la-la-la" chorus, the Spanish alternative to the prevailing British "yeah-yeah" of the time. The winning song, "La, la, la" (1968, R. Arcusa and M. de la Calva; Novola) was performed by Massiel, a Spanish *ye-yé* girl. The following year the contest was won by Spain again, this time by Salomé, another *ye-yé* girl who sang "Vivo cantando" (1969, M. J. de Ceratto and A. Alcalde; Belter), a catchy song strategically accompanied by the choral repetition of "hey!" after every line, another concession to the Anglophile fashionable use of youthful interjections. The lyrics of both hits typically praised the happy world that Massiel and Salomé, indeed, all Spaniards, had been lucky to be born in. The image of Spain depicted in the songs produced by the Spanish beat bands and solo singers, now fully imbued in Franco's "25 Years of Peace", was of an optimist and utopian Eden-like country. The mass arrival of foreign tourists wanting to enjoy the country's goodness every summer seemed to confirm this. Thanks to the Eurovision Song Contest, Franco's Spain could show to the world that the country was modern and technologically advanced, and could now rub shoulders as an equal with other European countries on the international scene.

The Beatles were also responsible for the construction of a product of great musical and cultural popularity among the youth of the 1960s in certain European

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11 Played by Los Salvajes, who specialized in The Rolling Stones. The Animals' international hit "The House of the Rising Sun" (1964) also had a few Spanish cover versions, as "La casa del sol naciente", by Lone Star (1964), Los Cinco Latinos (1966) and Los Mustang (1970).

countries, the so-called, and aforementioned, *ye-yé* movement. It was especially intense in France and Italy, having been born under British influence, and then spread from these two countries to Spain. Especially via the French route, the *ye-yé* aesthetics gained strength in Spain. The term "ye-yé" became a Spanish word (used as both a noun and an adjective), following the French/Italian linguistic adaptation of the famous recurring chorus line employed in a good number of Beatles' songs, "yeah, yeah", and originally a relaxed and spontaneous youthful pronunciation of the English "yes".[12] The phrase "yeah, yeah" (or its variation "oh, yeah") symbolized the youthful spirit of beat or rock music followers in the early days of Beatlemania and the "swinging sixties" as a way to openly express their generation's need for fun and freedom, as well as being a spontaneous expression of vitality. Furthermore, the phrase also symbolized a way for young people to boast of their ideas of rebellion and maintain a prudent distance from their elders. The *ye-yé* phenomenon lasted several years in Spain, between approximately 1963 and 1968, coinciding roughly with the period of the Beatles' dominance in Europe. Spain's *ye-yé* movement succeeded as a simple musical expression of a state of the happiness, optimism and freshness of its bourgeoisie youth, who only timidly advocated the need for change from the obsolete ways of the Spanish older generation. No strong political intention nor any criticism of the dictatorial regime appeared in the *ye-yé* music played on the radio, TV and jukeboxes (and in their *guateques* [house parties]). Franco's military society and Church-ridden Spain made sure, however, that these tendencies did not get out of hand amongst Spanish youth.

In Spain the numerous pro-Beatles magazines *Discóbolo* (1962-71), *Fonorama* (1963-68) and *Fans* (1965-67) promoted the *ye-yé* music and aesthetic fashions of the new Anglo-French style (and to a lesser extent the Anglo-Italian style too) among their young readerships. Indeed, the first time that the term "ye-yé" appeared in Spanish was in number 4 (page 19) of *Fonorama*, February 1964, in an unattributed article titled "El Ye-ye". Spanish *ye-yé* records, magazine articles and musical radio and TV programs of the time did not hesitate to include either

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12 The Beatles' "yeah-yeah" songs were "A Hard Day's Night" (Lennon-McCartney), "Boys" (L. Dixon & W. Farrell), "Day Tripper" (Lennon-McCartney), "Every Little Thing" (Lennon-McCartney), "I Want to Hold your Hand" (Lennon-McCartney), "I'll Get You" (Lennon-McCartney), "I'm Down" (Lennon-McCartney), "It Won't Be Long" (Lennon-McCartney), "Money (That's What I Want)" (J. Bradford & B. Gordy), "P.S. I Love You" (Lennon-McCartney), "Please Mr Postman" (G. Dobbins, W. Garrett, B. Holland, R. Bateman & F. Gorman), "Please, Please Me" (Lennon-McCartney), "She Loves You" (Lennon-McCartney), "Thank You Girl" (Lennon-McCartney), "Ticket to Ride" (Lennon-McCartney), "Yes, It Is" (Lennon-McCartney) and "You're Going to Lose that Girl" (Lennon-McCartney). Several years later, in a post-yeah-yeah stage of the Beatles, there was also: "All You Need is Love" (Lennon-McCartney), "Polythene Pam" (Lennon-McCartney) and "She Came in through the Bathroom Window" (Lennon-McCartney).

English titles or expressions and terms borrowed from English (the "official" language of the movement, together, but to a lesser extent, with French) on their pages and headlines, namely: *single, LP, EP, hi-fi*, *hit parade*, *baby*, *love*, *ok*, *darling*, *fan*, *peppermint*, *picú* (the Spanish adaptation of "pick-up", i.e., portable record-player),[13] *boîte* as a synonym of disco, etc.

Spain's beat music and *ye-yé* spirit combined easily in films, song lyrics, fashion and art. Spanish beat bands and their *ye-yé* products endeavored to depict the country as a happy nation devoid of any personal or social trouble. It was a place where young Spaniards aspired to having romantic and chaste love relationships, where they had constant smiles on their faces and where they enjoyed the everlasting sunshine, especially in the summer, often in a Balearic ambiance,[14] while they listened to and enjoyed their hollow but (moderately) danceable and catchy melodies of the *canciones de verano* or summer hits. The Spanish beat singers interpreted songs with themes related to the natural joviality of healthy Spanish youth whose lyrics contained no social criticism, or if they did, it was very slight or extremely veiled social or political criticism. These songs would always be under the distant guardianship of the Franco regime and the closer scrutiny of the all-powerful Catholic Church, which was deeply committed to the vigilance of the spiritual health and education of Spanish youth. The most daring message this pop subgenre conveyed in their lyrics was closer to the youthful innocent aspiration to free themselves from their parents' old-fashioned ways of dressing and musical tastes (*zarzuela*, *flamenco*, *bolero*, folkloric dances, *pasodoble*) than to the depiction of any real political/social criticism against Franco's regime or against the widespread Catholicism of the country (Alonso González 2005, 252-53). Proof of the largely unpolitical intentions of their song lyrics is that many of them were composed in English and were therefore inaccessible to the average Spanish young person.

Spanish beat song lyrics were specifically written to avoid them from entering lusty dominions, especially after the publicly daring affirmation of Los Bravos

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13 In the 60s Spanish youngsters would socialise in the so called *guateques* or house parties, where the "picú" was absolutely obligatory, for dancing with members of the opposite sex was expected, often under the watchful eye of a responsible adult. Apart from TV and radio programs, a "guateque" was a cheap way for the local youth to familiarize themselves with the latest hits from abroad: one record could be listened to by dozens of party-goers at the same time. Jukeboxes in bars were also popular ways of disseminating the Beatles all over Spain.

14 See, for example, hits such as "Paradise of Love" (Los Javaloyas), "Me lo dijo Pérez [que estuvo en Mallorca]" (Mochi y Karina), "El puente" (Los Mismos) and "El vuelo 502" (Los De la Torre), all summer hits praising the virtues of the cosmopolitan and touristic Mallorca of the sixties, where every day was Sunday.

that "los chicos con las chicas quieren estar" (that is, literally "boys want to be with girls") in their national hit "Los chicos con las chicas" (1967, J. A. Muñoz; Columbia). The Spanish film *Los chicos con las chicas* (1967), directed by Javier Aguirre with the purpose of giving Los Bravos a commercial boost, followed the path of the Beatles films *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) and *Help!* (1965), directed by the Anglo-American Richard Lester, but was very far from them in terms of quality and innovation. However, despite the obvious lack of political/social compromise of their texts, *ye-yé* youngsters were still criticized by the most conservative sectors of Spanish society for being uncivil savages, a mixture of beatniks and thugs, nocturnal rioters and practitioners of wild music with mesmerizing rhythms of dubious morality (Alonso González 2005, 243).

Most Spanish beat artists and their *ye-yé* followers aspired to lead a certain type of (urban) life, that is, to wear unorthodox clothes—jumpers, mini-skirts and colorful shirts as symbols of protest against conventional dress codes—dance with free unclassical steps and movements, play their electric guitars, grow their hair longer and be able to speak more freely to the opposite sex. Paradoxically enough, the most popular Spanish *ye-yé* male singers who followed the modern rhythms of the 1960s were more prone to the American musical influence than that from Britain: Dúo Dinámico (originally called "Dynamic Boys") reflected their American leaning in their songs "Hello Mary Lou" and "Lolita Twist", both from 1962, and in their adaptations of Paul Anka's "Adam and Eve" and the Everly Brothers' "Bye, bye, love"; Mike Ríos declared himself "the king of twist", and others such as Mochi, Raphael, Luis Aguilé, Bruno Lomas, etc., did not appear to be overtly influenced by either the British or American scene, except in their *ye-yé* attire. As for the Spanish female disciples of the European *ye-yé* fashion such as Marisol, Karina, Rocío Dúrcal, Conchita Velasco, etc., they were all very young-looking singers of chaste youthful love songs which hardly ever ended in traumatic break-up episodes or sex. They had all begun their musical and/or film careers between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, wore youthful clothes such as mini-skirts, albeit somewhat less "mini" in Spain than in the rest of Europe, or tight jeans as a minor concession to the lustful eye. They danced with a wide display of gestures, swinging their arms like windmills and making use (only moderately, though) of their hips with characteristic freshness and a rejuvenating spirit, but they never lost one bit of their unmistakable looks of sheer innocence, or broke with the total absence of eroticism despite the inevitably frenetic rhythms of their modern songs. Their lyrics would almost invariably be about the joy of being young in a world permanently perceived as happy and therefore more naturally inclined to allow young people to fall in love. The Spanish *ye-yé* girl *par excellence* was characterized by "cantar en inglés, con el pelo alborotado y medias de color" [singing in English and having messy hair and wearing colorful tights],

as was described in Conchita Velasco's popular hit "Una chica ye-yé" (1965, A. Guijarro and A. Algueró; Belter). Indeed, the *ye-yé* girl à la espagnole was supposed to represent a modern image of the independent Spanish woman who the young women of the time supposedly aspired to emulate (Otaola González, 2012a). *Ye-yé* girls' whims were only small and tolerated liberties that did not gravely disrupt or pollute the healthy Spanish youth of the 60s.

The film *Megatón ye-yé* (dir. Jesús Yagüe, 1965; Eva Film/Mundial Film), starring the aforementioned *ye-yé* singer Mochi, aka Juan Erasmo and accompanied by a soundtrack consisting of songs performed by the beat band "Micky y los Tonys", was the first Spanish-made youth film. It is considered both a disciple of *A Hard Day's Night* and of the British "free cinema" movement of the most progressive filmic circles of the 1960s. *Megatón ye-yé* dared depict a somewhat more radicalized and socially provocative vision of the typical Spanish *ye-yé* woman: she was overtly dynamic and independent, she smoked, had her own car and wore makeup. But the film's attempt to boost the new Spanish woman of the 1960s ended up being mere wishful-thinking as her optimistic aspirations of freedom, sex equality and self-awareness would easily disappear as soon as she married her long-time boyfriend and became emotionally and ideologically dependent on her husband, like any other conventional and traditional Spanish lady of previous generations.

The *hippy* movement that followed as a social and political evolution of the *ye-yé* era was also closely backed by the musical and ideological evolution of the Beatles during the late 1960s and early 70s. It had its origin in the messages of "universal peace and love" popularized by the Beatles song "All You Need is Love" (Lennon-McCartney, 1967; Parlophone), among others. The new worldwide pacifist sentiment based on universal love and fraternity was especially encouraged by John Lennon and George Harrison (1943-2001), composers and performers of various songs with such themes—"Give Peace a Chance" (Lennon-McCartney, 1969; Apple) and "Imagine" (Lennon-Ono, 1971; Apple), by John, and "My Sweet Lord" (Harrison, 1970; Apple), by George—in their late Beatle and early ex-Beatle careers, as a result of their familiarity with Indian philosophy and oriental sounds. On the other hand, pacifism and the *hippy* ideology was also promoted by the anti-militarist protests that arose in the US after obligatory conscription during the Korean war (1950-53) and the Vietnam war (1955-75). These protestors became more radically critical of the establishment and the *status quo* than the European *ye-yé* youth. The *hippy* movement's adopted slogans, "Make Love, Not War" and "All You Need is Love", swept across the western world.

By the end of the decade a large sector of the European and American youth had drifted towards pacifism and embracing the universal love of *hippy* overtones. *Hippy* fashion brought about a new type of musical subgenre, psychedelic rock,

initiated by the Beatles' *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967, Parlophone), a musically revolutionary album that tried to reproduce the human mind's "trips" through the use of powerful electronic technology, the most advanced available at the time in recording studios. Drug consumption would liberate one's mind and let it flow in search of the essence (the truth) of existence and reach unexplored boundaries. However, this was not the case in Spain. Spain did not develop a serious interest in pacifism, or universal and free love and drug consumption (which was heavily and unmercifully penalized under Spanish law). The spirit of anti-militarism inherent in psychedelic rock did not catch on in Spain either, where every man was obliged to do military service (García Lloret, 2006).

Despite the easy-to-fall-into trap of simplifying the cultural and political atmosphere of Franco's Spain in the 60s as dictatorship/repression versus beat-*ye-yé* music/freedom, the development of Spanish national pop-rock is clearly more complex than this. Indeed, this mild liberalization of Spanish society would not have been able to grow roots in the country had it not been for some degree of tolerance on the part of the regime with regard to modernity from abroad. This was spread through the adoption of new rhythms and melodies or through the hordes of open-minded foreign tourists who patronized Spanish beaches every year. On the surface, the musical panorama in the late Spanish 60s did not allow for much of an open counter-cultural movement. This does not mean that this movement was not present in more discreet ambiances and in more subtle undercurrents verbalized in the form of social and political left-wing or nationalistic folk songs of protest (Joan Manuel Serrat, Raimon, the *Nova Cançó*). Other alternative rock subgenres such as psychedelic rock, progressive rock, folk-rock, radical Basque rock, heavy metal, Andalusian rock, urban rock, etc., developed in the later stages of the decade, especially during the early 70s—the final years of Franco's dictatorship—and during the first steps of the birth and infancy of democracy in Spain from 1976 onwards (Mora and Viñuela 2013).

International tourism did more than its fair share in the modernization of Franco's Spain. The English-speaking tourists in Spain brought pounds and dollars, very welcome and valued currencies indeed, but they also brought their eccentricities, sin, liberalism, sexuality, etc., in their luggage. During the 60s and early 70s, British and European freedom and debauchery, heterosexual and homosexual sex, orgies, alcohol, drugs and everlasting parties of which the national-Catholic regime was ignorant (or pretended to be) was supposedly concentrated on Málaga's Costa del Sol, especially in Torremolinos, its unofficial capital. The Spanish coasts and islands became the southern European capitals of the "sexual revolution" symbolizing an easy life of pleasure and luxury. The Costa del Sol was perceived by the rest of Spain as an isolated and dangerously contagious cell. The word loans borrowed from English in those days are

revealing of the type of lifestyle the international tourists led in the Spanish resorts. These terms were easily disseminated throughout the country through films, songs, radio and magazines. This vocabulary was unfailingly related to music (*rock, pop*, *top chart*, *jazz*, *blues*, *soul*, *beat, single, LP, hit parade*), leisure, fast food, fashion and (an alleged) relaxation of customs: *estriptis, snack, snack bar, barman, gin, gin tonic*, *córtel*, *sándwich*, *beicon*, *restauran(t)*, *bikini*, *shorts*, *mini* (from *mini-skirt*), etc. (Rodríguez González 2019, 801). The Costa del Sol and Mallorca (and to a lesser degree the cinematographic province of Almería) began to appeal to both the most *avant-garde* and cosmopolitan intellectuals and the most cutting-edge filmmakers and actors of the time and other modern followers of sexual liberation and advocates of the consumption of drugs and cheap booze, all attracted by the Spanish sun which encouraged light clothing and a generous exposure of bare skin on the country's beaches.

Inevitably, Beatle-influenced Spain also provided the Beatles with inspiration for their professional careers. John Lennon had visited Torremolinos in the company of the band's manager Epstein in 1963 and perceived its relaxed atmosphere,[15] while his other companions went on holiday to the more temperate Canary Islands when they were still unknown outside the British Isles and could still go unnoticed. In May 1965 fellow Beatle Paul McCartney (1942 -) travelled by car from southern Spain to southern Portugal: it was then that he wrote the lyrics to a catchy melody that had been in his head for a long time: the best-seller of all times, "Yesterday" (Lennon-McCartney, 1965, Parlophone). In 1966 Lennon travelled to Almería as an actor in the film *How I Won the War* (1967, dir. Richard Lester; United Artists). It was at his hotel there that he composed "Strawberry Fields Forever" (Lennon-McCartney, 1967; Parlophone).

In 1966 a teacher from Cartagena, Juan Carrión Gañán (1924-2017), a declared admirer of the Beatles, was using their songs to teach his students English. When he learnt about Lennon's presence in Almería for the shooting of Lester's *How I Won the War* he tried to meet him personally to ask for his help in completing the lyrics that he was transcribing by ear listening to Beatles records and Radio Luxembourg broadcasts. The journalist J. Adolfo Iglesias, founder in 1999 of the cultural association "John Lennon Almería Forever", published *Juan & John: el profesor y Lennon en Almería para siempre* (2013), where he recounted the meeting of only half an hour between the Spanish teacher and the English musician. According to Iglesias, Carrión Gañán managed to convince Lennon to

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15 Epstein only took Lennon to Torremolinos for two weeks in the Spring of 1963 in order to try to—presumably—"conquer" him: this town has named a street after the English musician. See Francis Mármol's newspaper article "John Lennon en el ambiente gay de Torremolinos", *El Mundo*, 10/06/2013.

print the lyrics of the songs on the album covers. This was done for the first time in the world on the LP *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), released only shortly after Carrión Gañán and Lennon's interview.[16]

The Costa del Sol and Almería stayed in Lennon's mind. On the album *Abbey Road* (1969, Apple) he included the song "Sun King" (Lennon-McCartney), in which, in the most *avant-garde*, telegraphic, cosmopolitan and cryptic manner, he endeavored to depict the hedonistic atmosphere of the Arcadian, festive and smiling southern Spain of the 1960s thanks to the omnipotent presence of the Mediterranean sun. In its psychedelic lyrics Lennon, an observant but peculiar chronicler, most likely under the shadowy influence of the fashionable drug LSD, described the easy life of tourists in Spain:

> Here comes the sun king
> Here comes the sun king
> Everybody's laughing
> Everybody's happy
> Here comes the sun king
>
> Quando paramucho mi amore de felice corazon
> Mundo paparazzi mi amore chica ferdi parasol
> Questo obrigado tanta mucho que canite carousel

Mallorca and Ibiza (and to a lesser extent Gibraltar) also became popular "summer pilgrimage" places for musicians in search of luxury and vitamin D. In "The Ballad of John and Yoko" (1969, Lennon-McCartney; Apple), the Beatles narrated the vicissitudes of the Lennon-Ono couple trying to get married: they finally succeeded in "Gibraltar, near Spain" (l. 15), in March 1969, as the song narrates. The Spanish authorities, always fussy about any mention of the British colony, did not like the reference to the Rock in "The Ballad of John and Yoko" and the song was banned by the Franco regime,[17] but it reached number one in the British charts.

Any study on Anglo-Spanish cultural relations during the Franco era would not be complete without an analysis of the Beatles' influence on Spain and

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16 A recent Spanish film, *Vivir es fácil con los ojos cerrados* (Paco León PC/Canal+/Televisión Española), directed by David Trueba in 2013, starring Javier Cámara in the role of the Spanish teacher, was a deserved winner of several Spanish Academy Goya awards. This film recreated this Anglo-Spanish encounter and paid tribute to this innovative teacher of English, to Lennon and to Almería's film industry of the 1960s.

17 http://www.rtve.es/alacarta/audios/canciones-prohibidas/canciones-prohibidas-the-ballad-of-john-and-yoko-16-11-13/2145563/ [Accessed January 27, 2020]

Spain's influence on the Beatles. In this article I have endeavored to show that this mutual connection went hand in hand with other historic and social milestones throughout the more liberal years of the dictatorial regime such as the development of mass tourism and the population's somewhat slow process of assimilating new cosmologies from abroad. A powerful role was also exerted by a more liberal younger Spanish generation (that of the *ye-yés*) who aspired to gain more freedom for themselves. Little did Franco's Catholic and conservative Spain know in the 1960s that a good number of streets and squares in Spanish towns and cities would end up being named after the Beatles during the democracy that followed Franco's death, and especially after Lennon's assassination in 1980.[18] This is indeed a matchless example of gratitude and recognition of the Beatles' contribution to Spanish contemporary culture as well as a much-deserved homage to the Beatles' influence in the construction of democratic Spain as we know it today.

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18 Namely: C/ John Lennon (in Mérida, El Ejido, Telde and Vilanona/La Geltru), Paseo de John Lennon (Madrid), Plaça de John Lennon (Barcelona), Plaza de John Lennon (Torremolinos), Jardins de John Lennon (Gerona), C/ Beatles (Almería), Carrer dels Beatles (Lérida), etc. Lennon has also been honored in Spain through the erection of commemorative statues: one in Plaza Flores de Almería (sculpted by Carmen Mudarra, inaugurated in 2007); another in the town of Telde (Gran Canaria, sculpted by Ana Luisa Benítez Suárez, in 2003) and another in Jardines Ménez Núñez in La Coruña (by José Luis Ribas Fernández, in 2005).

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Metaphors of Modernity: Palimpsestic Identities, Polygamous Marriages and Global Capitalism in Aidoo's *Changes: A Love Story*

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Abstract:

African routes to modernities have been marked by internal fissures and ambivalences that affect social life and political and economic structures in several ways. In the novel *Changes: A Love Story*, the Ghanaian writer Ama Ata Aidoo deals with the inconsistencies of modernities, asking whether global capitalism promotes gender equity or mainly contributes to social stratification, generating more complex hierarchies. This essay examines how Aidoo's narrative utilizes women's sexuality as an allegory to provide a vehement critique of colonial and post-independence policies, abusive indigenous practices, male privilege and corruption while shedding some light on women's condition in modern urban Accra.

Keywords: Aidoo, Ghana, Women, Literature, Modernity

1. **Introduction**

David Harvey, in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, asserts that "modernity is characterized by a never-ending process of internal ruptures and fragmentations within itself" (1989, 12). While modernity reconfigures, transforms or adjusts societies according to the parameters of global capitalism, it is also very committed to "recuperations, continuity, and repressions" (Harvey, 2). Paradoxically, then, modernity focuses on the spread of capitalism and global interconnection while also being concerned with cultural identity. If on one side, modernity perceives cultural identity as fragmented, multifaceted and palimpsestic, on the other, it foments a search for cultural essence or authenticity. This internal contradiction often contributes to the ambivalent discourses which promote democracy and development as an ideal but also generate more social disruptions and complex inequalities besides class stratification. For instance, in African nations, underdeveloped versions of capitalism generally intersect with cultural traditions and patriarchy in intriguing ways, giving shape to what Shmuel Eisenstadt denominates multiple modernities, in other words, "a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs" (2000, 2). This essay draws on modernity as an unstable idea which inscribes different realities within diverse geographical, historical and cultural contexts. Here, I examine how Ama Ata Aidoo's novel, *Changes: A Love Story*, utilizes irony and sarcasm to provide us with a narrative that reveals the contradictions of Ghanaian modernity and the ways in which the conditions of women have been affected byit. .

In Aidoo's *Changes*, while male characters take advantage of modernity to achieve personal and social recognition through the tools provided by capitalism and development, they also exhibit a certain degree of fear because modernity challenges hegemonic masculinity and male power. Consequently, Men defend an idea of identity which is often connected to essentialism, through the maintenance of cultural traditions, religious dogma and patriarchal rules. Conversely, for the women in the novel, global capitalism and modernity are mainly connected to freedom, liberation, social mobility and the challenging of specific cultural traditions which often reinforce gender inequities. For April Gordon, capitalism and patriarchy are always interrelated in African contexts. She asserts that, "social forces that defend African patriarchy […] will certainly continue to oppose many changes that favor women at the expense of male dominance – even if male dominance undermines economic development and capitalism" (1996, 10). In this sense, Aidoo's novel discusses the notion that the continued interest in maintaining hierarchies, through nationalist ideologies and

religious or cultural traditions, creates a modern society which deprives women of freedom to participate fully in the process of development.

Aidoo's narrative represents modern urban Accra as an environment where apparently naïve love stories, quotidian affairs or private relationships reveal intrinsic contradictions that always mimic socio-political structures, ingrained corruption and the shortcomings of a postcolonial society. Through the use of irony and sarcasm, the narrator reveals that by attempting to be modern, men and women in urban Accra perform ambiguous and incoherent roles which promote and reinforce the very structures they allegedly abhor. As Claire Tylee asserts; "Irony is the major means by which subordinated and disaffected groups can implicitly refuse to concur with 'official culture' – and still manage to get published" (2007, 521). Aidoo confronts discourses of modernity, playing with the reader's expectations about life and love in urban Ghana. The protagonist's name, Esi Sekyi, might be a reference to the Ghanaian author Kobina Sekyi who wrote the celebrated satirical play *The Blinkards,* performed in Ghana in 1915 and 1917. Sekyi has been perceived as "a critical voice in the African modernist tradition" (Allan 2007, 430). In his play, he satirizes Europeanized Ghanaian characters who become alienated in their own country and incapable of understanding cultural norms. In *Changes*, the narrator plays tricks on Esi, satirizing her belief that a woman can take advantage of a polygamous relationship to have more freedom and personal fulfillment.

In *Changes*, Esi Sekyi, a professional, independent and successful statistician, divorces her husband and becomes the second wife of Ali, a charming, wealthy Muslim businessman. By attempting to profit from polygamy to have more freedom and happiness, Esi also goes through a process of metaphorical deafness and blindness which leads her to alienation. By claiming to be a feminist, Esi contradictorily becomes highly individualistic, selfish and cruel, as Nana Wilson-Tagoe argues, a "devourer of people, someone who commits emotional violence" (2004, 296). In Esi's feminist and capitalist world, there is no space for solidarity between women, which should be one of the main principles of her feminism. As capitalism and modernity assume new nuances in urban Accra, and class divides become more confusing, Esi's feminism gradually gets displaced, while Aidoo reminds the reader how her protagonist carries the legacy of the celebrated Ghanaian playwright Kobina Sekyi.

2. Modernity and Conflicting Desires: Oko's Masculinity v. Esi's Liberation

Aidoo's narrative reveals the ambivalences of modernity in Ghana through the lives of the men and women who facilitate capitalism and development, while at the same time as thwarting it. Shmuel Eisenstadt argues that the processes

of westernization and modernity are diverse. For him, Western societies do not transfer patterns of modernity to developing countries, the appropriation process happening through "the continuous selection, reinterpretation, and reformulation of […]imported ideas"(2000, 15). This process of appropriating concepts, ideologies, and ideas of development restructures political models and ideologies with respect to cultural, national and religious patterns discloses the continuous tension that marks modernity as Eisenstadt puts it, the "tension between conceptions of themselves as part of the modern world and ambivalent attitudes toward modernity in general and toward the West in particular" (15). As such, *transformations* do not take place without the incorporation and digestion of modernityThey are digested and then incorporated, into new models, not always smooth or simple, but underdeveloped capitalism changes reality which have the complexity of a puzzle which needs to recreate or reinvent some pieces.

> Oko flung the bed cloth away from him, sat up, pulled her down, and moved on her. Esi started to protest. But he went on doing what he had determined to do all morning. He squeezed her breast repeatedly, thrust his tongue into her mouth, forced her unwilling legs apart, entered her, plunging in and out of her, thrashing to the left, to the right, pounding and just pounding away. Then it was all over. (9)

After this episode, which comes to be known by both Oko and Esi as "that morning," Esi realizes that what happened between them was really marital rape.

In her office after the episode, Esi feels frustrated, and impotent, thus making up her mind that marital rape is a motive for breaking up her marriage. She attempts to imagine herself giving a conference in her countryon marital rape and male privilege, but concludes that the audience would not understand the subject of such a lecture. The audience would see it as a unimportant issuebecause there would be no word in her native language for concept of marital rape.

> "And, dear lady colleague, how would you describe "marital rape" in Akan?"
> "Igbo? … Yoruba?"
> "Wolof? … or Temne?"
> "Kikuyu? Or Ki-Swahili?"
> "Chi-Shona?"
> "Zulu? or Xhosa?" (11)

Esi concludes that since the term marital rape cannot be translated into her native language, discussion of this topic would probably not make any sense for women there. An experience that cannot be expressed in her native language would not be

considered to have any relevance in that context. Though Aidoo's protagonist is a privileged and highly educated Ghanaian woman, the novel also deals with the situation of women excluded from colonial education; those who had minimal or no access to formal education become voiceless and disempowered. When English becomes the national and official language, part of the population is excluded from the decision-making process, and women generally have less opportunity to receive formal education. The novel's satirical tone highlights the protagonist's attempt to communicate through a language that other women cannot understand.

Juliana Makuchi Nfah-Abbenyi claims that though there is not a specific term in any Akan language for marital rape, by referring to the episode as "that morning," both Esi and Oko agree that something unusual happened between them. Oko's violence against Esi is real, and, though without naming it in her native language, "her experience is inferred, is named in codes that are available in a heteroglossia that is culturally specific, culturally translatable to both Esi and Oko" (292). Nfah-Abbenyi, who is from Cameroon, explains that though in her language, Bemba, there is no specific word for rape, there is an expression that means "a girl/woman has been spoilt. Thus, people who share the same culture will understand that a woman was raped" (1999, 291).

As Esi does not accept the husband's abusive relationship, Oko starts to see her as a betrayer of her culture. He asks himself: "But, what is an African woman?" (8). In his mind, being an African woman is about nurturing the family and attempting to please the husband. He cannot understand how Esi could reject him, a faithful, devoted, monogamous husband. Considering that most men are generally involved in polygamous relationships or have extra-marital affairs, Oko seems to be one of the best men around. By depriving Esi of what he calls "Africaness", the husband utilizes culture as a way to safeguard his privileges. As he demands an African culture that is essentialist and specific, he decides that his wife cannot be a legitimate African woman if she does not perform according to his cultural expectations. If Oko understands that modernity deprives Esi of her culture, he also thinks that it threatens his masculinity. By trying to reaffirm his own masculinity, Oko searches within his culture for the parameters to control his wife by encapsulating her in the generalizing and essentialist category of "African woman."

A liberated and fulfilled woman, Esi appears to renounce her African identity because of the inherent sexism of many traditional African societies. Or if she "wishes to cherish and affirm her 'Africanness' she must renounce her claims to feminine independence and self-determination. Either way, she stands to lose; either way, she finds herself diminished" (Umeh 1986, 175). By disregarding an identity that is linked to unconditional obedience to patriarchal rules, Esi becomes a traitor to her culture. Though modernity is so concerned with restoring cultural

values and identity, modern discourses do not deconstruct the fallacy of an integral identity. For instance, nationalist discourses created a mythical "African woman" who is always ready to sacrifice herself for the sons of her nation. Ama Ata Aidoo has argued that in the works of male writers, such as Chinua Achebe and Leopold Senghor, "African women were virtually silent observers who simply fulfilled their destiny without questioning it or the structures that sanctioned the roles they were made to assume" (Nfah-Abbenyi 2004, 5). Women's identities were connected to their role as mothers, quasi-spiritual beings who would take care of national heroes. Desire or sexual pleasure was not to be part of the life of this mythical spiritual entity who assumed the role of the mother.

The rape episode becomes an instrument of Oko's power, as well as of Esi's dehumanization. As the husband aims to reinforce his masculinity, he also wants to restore what he calls "African" femininity. In this context, Esi becomes trapped in a world where patriarchal rules assert that "what a woman wants is to be desired by her husband and defined exclusively in relation to that desire" (Olaussen 2002, 6). While Esi attempts to reconcile with the ambivalence that maintains her identity, Oko remains connected to the fantasy of a stable and indissoluble cultural identity. When he asks whether or not Esi is really an African woman, he is also trying to make sure that he continues to be an African man. In this sense, another question resonates in his mind: what is an African man? Oko is a desperate man who wants to maintain his status through the control of his educated wife whom he sees "as an adjunct to his ego, a crutch to bolster his image in the eyes of his co-workers and himself" (Odamtten 1994, 16). The only way he can find to let her know that he is still a man is through violence and objectification.

Catherine MacKinnon suggests that; "If what is sexual about a woman is what the male point of view requires for excitement, for arousal and satisfaction, have male requirements so usurped its terms as to have become them?" (1989, 118). However, when Esi gets the divorce, alleging that she was raped, she tries to resist objectification, contradicting her husband's logic that being a woman means satisfying his needs. By being considered an empty vessel, an object of her husband's sexual desire, Esi's own sexual desires have not been taken into consideration. She is expected to follow the patriarchal rules and be fulfilled simply by arousing male desire. The absence of female desire is expected during sexual intercourse, As Luce Irigaray has explained, patriarchy expects women to feel pleasure through their roles of satisfying men, hence women who want to have sexual pleasure do not know how to perform female roles in a patriarchal society:

> How can this object of transaction claim a right to pleasure without removing her/itself from established commerce? With respect to other merchandise in

the marketplace, how could this commodity maintain a relationship other than one of aggressive jealousy? How could material substance enjoy her/itself without provoking the consumer's anxiety over the disappearance of his nurturing ground? How could that exchange – which can in no way be defined in terms "proper" to woman's desire – appear as anything but a pure mirage, mere foolishness, all too readily obscured by a more sensible discourse and by a system of more tangible values? (32)

Irigaray explains that if a woman is considered property and an object, she has no possibility of demanding anything, thus her sexual pleasure and desire are considered unimportant. When Esi claims her right to refuse her husband's desire, she destabilizes him, erasing his identity and forcing him to rethink his positionality. In order to deconstruct her identity and reestablish her desire, Esi must confront society and reevaluate herself. The situation becomes further complicated when Esi decides to get a divorce to be the second wife of a polygamous man.

Though Aidoo's protagonist focuses on women's rights and male abuse, the novel comes to terms with feminism and feminist language as a theory that cannot be transposed into Ghana without considering the perspectives of Ghanaian women. In *Pedagogies of Crossing* (2008), M. Jacqui Alexander remarks that the idea of a Global Feminism, a transnational feminism, or the feminism of the majority, often blurs categories of race, culture, and sexuality. Alexander warns of the dangers of subsuming the local into the global through applying the Western experience to the rest of the world. Her work aligns with that of Chandra Mohanty in advising Westerners on how to conduct their practices from the perspective that local and global interests might both converge and diverge, since categories of race, class, gender, and sexuality are differently nuanced in different locations.

Uma Narayan argues that Third World feminisms have nothing to do with importing ideas from the developed world and transplanting them into other cultural contexts. Hence Third World feminism "is not a mindless mimicking of 'Western agendas' in one clear and simple sense – that, for instance, Indian feminism is clearly a response to issues specifically confronting Indian women" (1997, 13). Narayan points out that women in Third World countries realize the necessity to forge new ways of conceptualizing feminisms which are coherent with their lives.

Here is an example of how women utilize creative language to reinvent feminist theories. he Cameroonian writer Werewere Liking created the term, "the misovire", a French neologism that means a male hater. For D'Almeida, Liking's invention is "all the more important as the creation of the word also creates the function, and the possibility of another reality" (1994, 20). The term coined by Liking has generated quite a few interesting debates for writers who struggle to

come to terms with the intersection of categories, such as, class, race, nationality, religion, sex, and others. It is worth noting, as D'Almeida suggests, that the invention of misvoire does not mean "a gratuitous act; it's done for a redressive purpose, for besides filling a linguistic void, the word aims to destabilize the status quo, and it shows the extent to which social reality and literary expression are inextricably intertwined" (1994, 21).

Obioma Nnaemeka argues that the concept of African feminism probably does not do justice to the heterogeneity of Africa as a continent, with its numerous ethnic groups, languages and cultures. For Nnaemeka, Africa's pluralism must be respected and she argues that "to speak of feminism in Africa is to speak of feminisms in the plural within Africa and other continents in recognition of the multiplicity of perspectives" (1998, 31). Despite recognizing African heterogeneity and the complexities of a diverse continent, Nnaemeka envisions herself as part of a common struggle that has its foundation in pan-African ideals. In so doing, she aligns herself with other literary critics, such as Irene Assiba D'Almeida, who have affirmed that in using the term, their intention is not one of "totalization, but of a Pan-African perspective" (D'Almeida 1994, 23).

3. Polygamous Marriages, Modernity and Women's Desire

The polygamous relationship becomes the perfect site for Esi to combine all her aspirations. Every time Ali comes to her house, Esi is sure that she has taken the right decision. She is happy in a way she never felt before. The quality of life that Esi has with Ali gives her the security to accept his proposal of marriage, to become his second wife. Though she will be involved in a polygamous relationship, she is not the victimized wife who suffers because the husband is always not at home. On the contrary, in the beginning, she feels fulfilled.. She finally has a perfect relationship where she can be herself and does not have to deal with a man who interferes with her life all the time. Ali is the perfect match for an independent woman with an established career and in her relationship with him she attempts to combine "gender equality with sexual desire" (McWilliams 1999, 348).

Molara Ogundipe-Leslie (1994), however, affirms that though some women defend the polygamous system by arguing that in traditional cultures a woman can benefit from polygamy as she will have co-wives to help with the household work, she firmly believes that there is no justification to maintaining polygamy in postcolonial Africa, especially in the cities. She considers the system oppressive and suggests that those women who accept it might be contributing to their own victimization. In some novels, the theme has been overwhelmingly discussed, often not focusing on the positive aspects of polygamy, but on women's suffering when they are forced to accept the institution.

Esi imagines that a polygamous marriage can provide her with happiness. Esi wants to marry Ali and live out her freedom. She does not consider her best friend's advice about the need to meet Fusena, the first wife, and have her acquiesce to the marriage, although she pretends to agree: "I will ask Ali to let his wife meet me before we go to see my people, Esi said a little defiantly, a little fearfully" (97). Although Esi promises her friend that she will attempt to follow traditional practices regarding polygamy, she never really puts pressure on Ali to meet his first wife. Nfah-Abbenyi points out that Esi "conceives the marriage in very individualistic ways" (1999, 295). In this sense, her decision might be seen as individualistic rather than feminist since it does not consider other women, only herself. She accepts the marriage to achieve her sexual self-determination, but she does not consider it within any social, historical or cultural contexts.

Esi tries to talk to Ali about polygamy and what it means in the modern urban African context. She thinks that perhaps they are not performing the polygamous relationship according to traditional and cultural expectations. Ali defends polygamy as a part of his identity. He points out that the practice has always existed in Africa and that its repudiation is nothing more than the acceptance of the standard imposed by colonialism. In Ali's discourse, his maintenance of polygamy is, thus, a way to defy Westernization. For him, as African Muslims, men from his culture have always chosen to marry more than one wife and this should not be a cause for shame.

> To the people who created the concepts, these are all crimes. Like homicide, rape, and arson. Why have we got so used to describing our cultural dynamics with the condemnatory tone of our masters' voices? We have got marriages in Africa, Esi. In Muslim Africa. In non-Muslim Africa. And in our marriages a man has a choice – to have one or more wives." He paused dramatically, and then ended with a flourish: "As long as he can look after them properly". (90)

Ali's position regarding polygamy, however, reveals his incoherence as he advocates the adherence to traditional institutions as a form of reinforcing his identity, while at the same time deforming traditions to further his own interestsParadoxically perhaps, the tradition in Ghanaian culture demands a man to consult his first wife before choosing another woman to marry. Here, cultural contradictions mirror the ambivalence of modernity, which often sees culture as "essentialization and substantialization" (Friedman1995, 88).

Cultural traditions are often utilized to promote anti-imperialist and -colonialist discourses. For instance, the practice of genital mutilation was widely advocated by the revolutionary movement *Mau Mau* as a form of resistance to the impositions of the Catholic Church (Levin 1986, 209). As Chantal Zabus

has pointed out, Jomo Kenyatta's *Facing Mount Kenya* "considered *irua*, the Kikuyu rite of both male circumcision and female excision in pubescent boys and girls as a source of cultural and ethnic identity and a form of resistance against missionary societies in East Africa. […] Very quickly it appears that, more so than male circumcision, female excision […] is linked with the survival of an ethnic group." (2007, 38). She/He asserts that one reason for this is that "Kenyatta considered irua as undissociated from the group's social cohesiveness. The marked Kikuyu body is a sociocultural artefact" (44). During the nationalist revolutionary struggles in Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, the country's first president, asserted that if the Kikuyu were proud of their traditions, men should not marry non-circumcised women and in line with this, his first act as Head of State was to restore the practice of female circumcision in the country. *Mau Mau* embraced female circumcision as a traditional value and part of a dismantled culture that had to be restored (Levin 1986, 209-210). Elisabeth Bekers, in her article entitled "Empathizers" states that the body of creative writing, which includes fiction, poetry and drama, in many languages, and by men and women artists, dealing with the theme of female circumcision reflects how the practice has been supported by diverse ethnic groups across the continent (1999 15). Beckers also points out that in Charity Waciuma's *Daughter of Mumbi*, the narrator utilizes the discussion over genital mutilation "to construct an anti-imperialist plea for people's right to self-determination" (1999, 19). Ngug wa Thiong'o's *The River Between* presents genital mutilation/female circumcision as a problematic issue in Kenya although he does not undermine or openly criticize the practice. Conversely, some female writers such as Nawal El Sadawi clearly dismiss the practice as a repressive and patriarchal means of controlling women's bodies. In her work *The Circling Song*, the protagonist, an excised girl, resembles a prisoner surrounded by cement walls and with a rigid body.

Elleke Boehmer emphasizes the ways in which nationalist politics in Africa excluded the discussion about gender hierarchies and the need for female participation in the spheres of power. Nationalist discourses such as Negritude have often portrayed Africa as the motherland. In this sense, African women, Third World women and women of color need to overcome, Boehmer states, the triple oppression or marginalization that the effects of colonialism, gender and a male-dominated language create, often usefully adopted from the older and more established nationalist politics of "their men" (5).

Ali, the polygamous husband, often applies nationalist and cultural identity discourses to persuade Esi to accept his personal interpretation of polygamy. At the start of their relationship Esi tries to convince him that it is not prescribed in traditional culture to give an engagement ring to the second wife. He is breaking the rules. Ali convinces her that the tradition to which she is referring is recent

because in Egypt husbands used to give rings to second and third wives. In the end, Ali says that a ring is a symbol that tells the world that Esi has become "occupied territory" (91). By utilizing patriarchal and colonial discourse which equates women's body to a territory, Ali appropriates Esi's body. Metaphors of colonized land as a virgin woman have been part of colonial discourses around the globe. Compared to a woman dispossessed of sexual desire and agency, the colonized land becomes embedded in patriarchal tales of male sexual fantasy. The land also turns into a site for the male colonizer's most perverted desires. As McClintock affirms, women become "the earth to be discovered, entered, named, inseminated, and above all, owned" (1985, 31).

For Ali, as soon as they are married, Esi becomes his property. Esi understands that Ali's power comes from a patriarchal society that benefits him and that he takes advantage of it; she accepts the deal and wears the ring. As he cannot spend enough time with her, the polygamous husband will occupy his land with cars, jewelry, art pieces, and other luxury items. With his money, he will be able to maintain his "territory" while he is away taking care of his first wife and children. In the meantime, Esi struggles with this new situation and fights to resist victimization, recalling that her mother and grandmother had advised that polygamy can be oppressive for women and that second and third wives may experience pain and suffering.

Esi ignored her mother's and grandmother's advice about the status of second wives in a polygamous marriage and married Ali because she is certain that this is the ideal relationship for a woman in her position. However, she starts to think carefully about all the advice she didn't listen to when she realizes that Ali already has a home, and, as a husband and father, has duties there. In addition, he has to perform rituals with his children, especially during the holidays when he has to stay home, give gifts to them and have dinner with them. At these moments, Esi is alone in her house, taking pills to sleep, and trying to cope with the consequences of her choices. And it is during these nights of loneliness in her bedroom that Esi remembers her mother's and grandmother's advice.

> Lying alone in bed with her eyes hard and wide-open in the dark, she remembers some of the advice her mother and her grandmother had given her. They told her to be careful and that being one of any number of wives has its rules. If she obeyed the rules, a woman like her should be all right. If she broke the rules, then her new marriage would be like a fire that had been lighted inside her. They recited some of the rules to her. They made her aware of some pitfalls. Above all, they said, there were two things she had to bear in mind at all times. One was never to forget that she was number two, and the other was never to show jealousy. (116)

After the honeymoon period is over, Esi finds herself trapped in her marriage. Ali starts to set the rules, stops calling or coming to the house, and substitutes his presence with tons of gifts on her doorstep. Esi starts to feel like the other woman in an adulterous relationship. Her marriage is a distortion of the institution of polygamy in which there are no rules that the husband has to follow. In polygamous marriages, the husband should give equal attention to all the wives, but Ali simply disappears for days, weeks, or even months. As Ali has made Esi a territory, his property, he decides what to do with her. Ali is living a polygamous life that is very convenient for him.

Later, Ali finds a new lover and his absences become longer. Esi finds herself lonely, frustrated and sex-starved. In one of these moments, Kubi, Opokuya's husband comes to the house and reveals the desire he has kept in secret for so long. When Oko reveals that he wants to have sex with Esi, she lets him know that she is ready.

> No words came. Kubi took hold of her hand maybe to lead her into the room and get her to sit down. He found himself holding her close. Then, as though he had taken a quick decision just in that minute, turned to face her and hold her closer and hard. She did not feel like offering resistance. He began to kiss her face, her neck and all over. Then they were moving towards the couch and Esi could feel Kubi's manhood rising. (163)

Esi stops Kubi, though, when she remembers that he is her best friend's husband. Although she wants to spend the night with Kubi, it could mean suffering for Opokuya, a woman who needs to work hard to survive. While Esi earns a decent wage, lives in a nice house, and gets a brand new car as one of Ali's gifts, Opokuya quarrels with her husband about a car that she never has the opportunity to drive.

As an independent woman, Esi's main goal is to pursue her own pleasure through sexual fulfillment, personal achievement, and consumerism. Göran Therborn remarks that the establishment of capitalism foresees the combination of two major actions: one individualistic and the other associative. The individualist action deals with an individual's well-being, performance, education, choice which "are … freedom/prosperity/happiness/development/welfare" (1995, 135). The associative action, on the other hand, sees "collectivity, unity, co-operation, solidarity, and organization as the best road to freedom, justice, strength, and development" (135). For Therborn, two social spheres of modernity - individualism, and association- occur mainly in the economy and the family. They can be carried out by economic agents and by parents and children, husband and wife. Although Esi has a preoccupation with women's rights, she reveals herself as an individualist who is not capable of uniting with other women to pursue a collective agenda.

Nevertheless, class divisions also play a part in preventing Esi's feminist agenda, in line with April Gordon's assertion that "efforts to promote gender equity for women under a capitalist regime include minimizing class inequality" (1996, 10).

For instance, Opokuya's aspirations do not match with Esi's vision of freedom and liberation. Opokuya's sexual desire vanishes from the narrative, the absence giving space to another desire. Her freedom is based on her right to drive a car, to buy a car, and be free from the constraints of begging to use her husband's car—a car provided by the government. In Opokuya's life, sexual pleasure appears as a secondary preoccupation, a luxury for a woman who needs to get up at five in the morning every day to go to work. It is ironic that sexual desire is not among the aspirations of a woman who does not have money to buy her own car to get to work or to take her children to school. Esi's construction of subjectivity happens at the level of her freedom to divorce and have more space in a polygamous marriage; while Opokuya's is connected to her work and capacity to survive and raise her children. Opokuya's desires are fulfilled with an old car that Esi decides to give her as a gift. At the end of the narrative, Opokuya drives freely, laughs in her car, and enjoys pleasure for the first time.

4. Fusena's Desire for Mobility

For Fusena, Ali's first wife, Esi is a concubine, not a second wife. Ali is being an adulterous husband rather than a polygamous one. In a polygamous relationship, the first wife needs to give her permission for the husband to have a second wife. However, Ali decided to marry Esi without communicating with his first wife. Ali is abusing a system in order to fulfill his desires. As Ali claims to be an African man, he is also saying that his culture gives him a license to find other wives when he wants. At the beginning of the novel, Fusena and Ali's relationship is described as a strong friendship that gradually turns to love. Fusena desires more education. She would love to go to a college and get another degree, band become a professional woman with a career. When she chooses to marry Ali and accompanies him to Europe, she makes a silent deal to forget herself. Back in Ghana, Ali opens a small business for his wife. Fusena is there most of the time, taking care of the business to the point of being recognized as one of best traders in the city. Hence, Fusena always carries the secret fear that one day, Ali will find a woman with a college degree to be her co-wife, humiliating her.

When Ali becomes involved with Esi, Fusena becomes frustrated and bitter and tries to convince her husband that his relationship with Esi cannot be considered a marriage. He is committing adultery. When Ali makes up his mind to marry Esi, Fusena goes to the village to ask the elders for advice and help because what Ali is doing is against their religion, and this marriage should not be permitted. Though

the elders listen to Fusena, they decide to help Ali marry his second wife.

Fusena's pain becomes increasingly visible as her voice starts to disappear. Fusena does not speak many complete sentences or enter into any of the discussions, instead, using short sentences and monosyllabic answers. When Ali comes home to give her the news about his second wife, she asks, "She has a university degree?" (98). That question is all she can ask before rushing to seek help from the elders. From this passage on, Fusena is silent. She stops speaking, and her silence is symbolic. As she starts to disappear, her pain becomes unimportant in a society that moves in so many contradictory directions. Consequently, Fusena's body and beauty become invisible. She appears unattractive and no longer inspires any sexuality or sensuality. Fusena's body gained importance as a commodity, a property, and existed to give birth to Ali's children. Interestingly, like Opokuya, Fusena finds freedom, fulfillment and pleasure in her car: "Before starting her car, which was a small two-door vehicle she had come to love unreasonably and fiercely, she removed her veil completely and put it together with the handbag on the passenger seat next to her. The car screeched into life" (99). As such, the car frees Fusena from religious and societal constraints, and alone, inside her car, she feels pleasure. It is also metaphoric that the car gives her back her "life", a life she finds in the confinement and solitude of a vehicle that gives her freedom to move.

Fusena and Esi happen to be part of the incoherence of urban Accra, where certain values are distorted or transformed to benefit patriarchy. On the one hand, Fusena represents tradition and religion and accepts a polygamous relationship that is unfair. Though she is a successful businesswoman, she does not divorce Ali or attempt to find happiness in other relationships. Esi, on the other hand, chooses a polygamous marriage in order to have more freedom and sexual satisfaction but is also victimized. Silently, Fusena and Esi compete for Ali, but what is implicit is how both women play a part in his life—Esi is for sex and Fusena is a housewife. Fusena is trapped in the stereotype of a self-sacrificing mother and housewife who lives for the family. Esi is the stereotyped individualist who attempts to fulfill her sexual needs through a polygamous marriage that ignores male privilege and gender roles in that context. Either way, Ali has the power to decide how he manages a polygamous relationship that provides him with the assertion of his "African" identity. While both women are competing for Ali, he gets a third woman, a new secretary who becomes his love affair.

5. Conclusion

In *Changes*, Ama Ata Aidoo's narrator shares with the reader the incongruences of modern life in an African urban city. The protagonist Esi Sekyi, a successful woman

advocates feminism and women's rights to pursue freedom. Esi, though, is not able to see that her actions cause pain to another woman, Fusena, Ali's Muslim first wife. Fusena and Esi represent different fragments of a modern society where there are opposite and even antagonistic paths down which the two women try to find freedom and liberation. While Esi emerges as an individualist and capitalist who tries to achieve freedom through sexual pleasure, consumerism, luxury items and hedonism, Fusena frees herself from religious and cultural hierarchies inside her car, which becomes a metaphor for mobility and liberation. Fusena's womanhood diverges so much from Esi's that Esi's political consciousness and struggle for freedom become displaced in urban Accra.

Polygamy is bitter for Fusena and bittersweet for Esi; by the end of the novel, both of them understand the practice is not advantageous for women. Esi misunderstands polygamy and its rules and attempts to take advantage of the system, but in doing so, she contributes to another woman's victimization and her own unhappiness. She tries to achieve self-satisfaction with polygamy because of her economic status and education, but in the end, she understands that she has taken a dangerous path in pursuit of her personal freedom. Although it contributes to her ephemeral feeling of happiness and personal fulfillment, Esi Sekyi's feminism, which is highly motivated by individualism, in fact strengthens patriarchy and capitalism in a modern world where powerful men, such as Ali, take advantage of cultural values, religion, and capitalism, to maintain women as subalterns of modernity.

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Linguistic Varieties in *Homegoing*: Translating the Other's Voice into Spanish

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Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to study the Spanish translation of Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2016), a novel that adopts the form of a neo-slave narrative to chronicle a black family's history from eighteenth-century Ghana to the early twenty-first century in the United States. The contexts in which both the source and target text were published will be described, paying attention to paratexts, to the book's reception, and to the translation's positive reviews. Gyasi's debut oeuvre depicts alterity and the non-standard linguistic varieties, such as Black English, spoken by the dispossessed Other. This paper examines the strategies that the translator, Maia Figueroa (2017), has made use of to render this interplay of voices into Spanish. In addition, it considers how her choice to standardize some fragments and to introduce marked non-standard language in certain passages affects the reflection of the narrative Us vs. Otherness in the target text.

Keywords: African American literature; Black English; linguistic varieties; literary translation English-Spanish; Yaa Gyasi

1. Introduction

This paper studies *Homegoing*'s Spanish translation by Maia Figueroa, which was published in 2017 by Salamandra. It is Yaa Gyasi's debut novel (2016) and it begins with Maame's daughters, Effia and Esi, who are born in Ghana in the eighteenth century. Effia marries a British settler and lives in Africa while Esi is kidnapped, sold into slavery, experiences the horrors of the Middle Passage[1] and ends up working in a cotton plantation in the South of the United States. *Homegoing* follows their descendants up to the early twenty-first century, it depicts several linguistic varieties and complies with some of the conventions of neo-slave narratives in the sense that it portrays the traumatic experiences and memories of slavery that have marked several generations of African Americans, as will be explained below.

The term "neo-slave narratives" was coined by Bell in reference to the "modern narratives of escape from bondage to freedom" (1987, 289) that emerged in the 1960s in the United States. Partly as a consequence of the Civil Rights Movement and its influence on the representation of slavery in fiction, black writers argued that the reconstruction of the first texts that articulated African American subjectivity—slave narratives like that of Frederick Douglass—could, as Dubey puts it, help "discuss the issues concerning contemporary racial identities" (2010, 333). When considering how neo-slave narratives shed light on the hidden history of black Americans, Rushdy (1992, 375-376) classifies such novels in the following four categories: stories of slavery in the South before the Civil War that may be narrated by a former slave, like James McBride's *The Good Lord Bird* (2013); contemporary novels featuring black people whose ancestors were slaves and who are now dealing with the consequences of this family trauma, as in Octavia E. Butler's *Kindred* (1979); books that play with the conventions of nineteenth-century slave narratives and rewrite them from a postmodern perspective,[2] like Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada* (1976); and novels that trace a black family's history back to their enslaved ancestors and represent the memories of slavery carried down from one generation to the next, as in Gyasi's *Homegoing,* especially the chapters that follow Esi's descendants.

This paper follows the tenets of Descriptive Translation Studies, so it does not prescribe how Figueroa should have rendered Gyasi's novel into Spanish.

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1   A term used to describe "the voyage of slaving vessels from African to American ports […] Abolitionists and then historians have used descriptions of the treatment of slaves aboard ships, the terror experienced by the captives, and the high mortality rates on some of the voyages to demonstrate some of slavery's worst aspects" (Rodriguez 2007, 381).
2   Dubey (2010, 339) labels this neo-slave narratives as historiographic metafiction or "postmodern novels that playfully parody established forms of historical writing."

Instead, this study examines "coupled pairs of translational problems and their corresponding translational solutions" (Toury 1985, 25) in Tables 1 to 7 in order to observe how otherness, particularly blackness,[3] is represented in both *Homegoing* and its Spanish translation. The first step is to study the contexts in which the source and target texts were published. To contextualize Gyasi's book and the translation, the paratexts that go with *Homegoing* need to be analyzed. Paratexts are "those elements in a published work that accompany the text" (Braga Riera 2018, 249) and they give readers "the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back" and not reading the text (Gennette 1997, 2). Paratexts combine linguistic and visual elements to attract the reader's attention, to explain the content and also to guide the reading. Paratexts are divided into peritext and epitext. The former refers to "footnotes and endnotes, prefaces and forewords, introductions, epilogues or afterwords, postscripts, dedications, acknowledgements, index, titles and subtitles, chapter synopsis and headings" (Braga Riera 2018, 249), as well as to visual features like illustrations and cover and dust jacket design. The epitext, is defined as "any paratext not materially appended to the text" (Genette 1997, 344) and it mainly comprises reviews and interviews with the writer, as well as publicity posters, book tours and signings at book fairs. Peritext and epitext may influence the reception of a translated book in the target culture. For example, the press reviews contribute to the construction of a certain public opinion and have "the capacity to explain, contextualize and justify a product" (Braga Riera 2018, 254). For these reasons, section 2 looks at how both source and target texts were reviewed when they first came out and to how peritexts, such as covers, may have conditioned their reception.

Since *Homegoing*'s plot expands over several centuries and across two continents, it features several protagonists and introduces non-standard linguistic varieties to create an atmosphere of realism and to characterize each of the protagonists. Sections 3 and 4 in this paper study how Figueroa has rendered this interplay of multiple voices into Spanish and what strategies she has chosen to use to recreate the source text's literary dialects. The comparison and contrast of several fragments from *Homegoing* and *Volver a casa* show whether the otherness presented by the original novel is reflected or suppressed in the Spanish version. At this point, the notion of socio-cultural narrative should be considered, which alludes to "the everyday stories we live by […] that change in

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3   Blackness is a complex concept and here it is understood as the expression of the black experience in America, in contrast to the white cultural impositions and norms. For more insight and a philosophical approach to blackness, refer to Chapter 5: "The Fact of Blackness" in Fanon, Frantz. 2008. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. London: Pluto.

subtle or radical ways as people experience and become exposed to new stories" (Baker 2006, 3). This refers to the stories that people tell each other about their place and history in the world to make sense of their lives, for instance, the narrative Us vs. Otherness that is explored by *Homegoing* and its interplay of linguistic varieties, juxtaposing standard English with the marked voice of the dispossessed protagonists.

Several scholars have studied the literary dialects portrayed in fiction and how the translator's strategies condition the portrayal of alterity in the target text. For example, Hatim and Mason (1997, 40) encourage the translator to study the function of linguistic varieties in the source text and they offer two alternatives, which are: rendering dialect as standard target language (standardization) or choosing a specific target dialect (parallel dialect translation). Tello Fons (2012, 143-144), on the other hand, invites translators to choose from a wider range of strategies, depending on the mimetic or symbolic role played by literary dialect in the source text. Apart from standardization and parallel dialect translation, she suggests creating a fictional dialect (pseudo-dialectal translation) and introducing a few non-standard variations and sayings—borrowed from different registers— that mark the target text (dialect compilation).

This paper follows Rica Peromingo and Braga Riera's classification (2015, 133-134) in that it builds on the previous studies by Hatim and Mason (1997) and Tello Fons (2012) and offers a comprehensive classification. These translation scholars point out that it is the translator's task to study the function of dialect in the source text and they suggest the following six strategies: dialect compilation, or a mixture of idioms and colloquial expressions from the target language that maintains the source setting; pseudo-dialectal translation, which consists of using non-standard registers from the target language to recreate a fictional non-regional variety; parallel dialect translation, in which a given regional dialect from the target language is selected; dialect localization, or the act of completely transferring dialect, cultural references and the setting to the target culture; standardization, which means rendering every linguistic variety into the normative level of target language and eliminating any trace of non-standard dialects; and, lastly, compensation, when a few passages marked by dialect are translated into the standard and then other passages are marked in the target text to account for this loss.

Concerning slave narratives, an example of dialect compilation and pseudo-dialectal translation strategies would be Sanz Jiménez's translation of James McBride's *The Good Lord Bird,* which is titled *El pájaro carpintero* (2017). In the "Note on the Translation" that precedes the text, Sanz Jiménez (2017, 11) comments that he decided to play with idioms, popular sayings and widespread features of colloquial and non-standard Spanish to recreate Black English in the target novel.

These strategies can be appreciated when the protagonist, a young black slave, describes his father's habits: "Muchas noches, vi cómo mi papa s'hinchaba a beber zumo de l'alegría y luego saltaba encima de la taberna de Henry el Holandés, pegaba tijeretazos y gritaba entre'l humo y la ginebra" (Sanz Jiménez 2017, 24). In contrast, standardization is the strategy chosen by Rodríguez Juiz in her rendering of Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* (2016), a novel that takes elements from nineteenth-century autobiographies by fugitive slaves and from twentieth-century neo-slave narratives. Even though the original text is marked by Black English, the slaves speak perfectly standard Spanish in *El ferrocarril subterráneo:* "Sabía que andabais tramando algo […] No parabas de escabullirte con él, pero no contabas nada. ¡Y luego vas y arrancas hasta los boniatos verdes!" (Rodríguez Juiz 2017, 66).

When it comes to parallel dialect translation, an illustrative example would be the Spanish version of Marlon James's *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2015), a novel about Bob Marley's attempted assassination that resorts to eye-dialect and depicts Jamaican patois. Faced with this challenge, translators Calvo and Guerra opted for another Caribbean linguistic variety, Cuban Spanish, as can be read in their *Breve historia de siete asesinatos* (2016): "Todos conocemos al menos a uno, ¿veldá? […] Estaba cansao de decírselo. Cansaísmo. Pero el men me soltaba esa risa suya, esa risa que se tragaba la habitación entera" (Calvo and Guerra 2016, 40). Lastly, an example of dialect localization would be translating the Black English found in, for instance, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) into Cuban Spanish and adapting the setting to colonial Cuba and its historical terminology, so that black characters would be enslaved at "ingenios", instead of plantations, and slavecatchers would turn into "rancheadores" (Piqueras 2011, 72).

2. *Homegoing's* Context and Reception

Homegoing is the first novel by Ghanaian American writer Yaa Gyasi, who won the PEN/Hemingway Award for debut fiction in 2017. She was born in Ghana and raised in Alabama, where she felt she did not belong. As a student, Gyasi turned to literature, eventually obtaining a BA in English at Stanford University (Wolfe 2016, n.p.). She continued her studies at the Iowa Writers' Workshop in 2012, where she began working on *Homegoing.* She did not rely too much on historical research, explaining that "the research wasn't crazy extensive. I say that my research was wide but shallow" (Gyasi quoted in Wolfe 2016, n.p.). She finished her first novel in 2015, her literary agent sent it to several publishers and there were ten bidders at the London Book Fair, including an astounding "seven-figure advance that she received from Knopf" (Wolfe 2016, n.p.).

Miller (2016, n.p.) explains that the novel's title is inspired by "an old African American belief that death allowed an enslaved person's spirit to travel back

to Africa." She deems *Homegoing* a breath-taking read and acknowledges that Gyasi's book is a collection of linked short stories, predisposed to anachronism, rather than a proper novel (2016: n.p.). Concerning its structure, with its intertwined chapters chronicling the lives of two Ghanaian sisters born in the eighteenth century and the fate of their descendants —up to the early twenty-first century—, Gyasi explained in an interview how she worked on this pattern:

> Initially, I had a more traditional structure in mind, one that started in present-day America and flashed back to eighteenth-century Ghana. Because I wanted this novel to be about the legacy of slavery and historical inheritance, I thought it would be sufficient to move back and forth between the first generation and the last generation, working with only four POV characters, but then I realized that I was far more interested in time, or rather [in] looking at how slavery and colonialism morphed slowly and subtly over a long period of time […] I felt like if I could stop in every generation, from the height of the slave trade to present day, I could really help make it clear that history is not this discrete thing that happens neatly and then ends. It's dynamic; it affects everything that follows. I wanted the structure to feel like that rippling effect. (Flournoy 2016, 32-33)

Among the many influences that shape Gyasi's ambitious debut novel, Kakutani (2016, n.p.) highlights family sagas like *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez and Alex Haley's *Roots,* since *Homegoing* "sets itself the daunting task of tracing the legacy of sorrow that slavery has left on eight generations of one family" (n.p.). As the plot moves forward in time, readers witness key historical events in American history, for example the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act, the Reconstruction and the Great Migration to the North, yet it might seem that the protagonists are forced to experience these events and be representative of them. On the other hand, when the novel leaves historical landmarks aside and centers on relationships between black parents and their children, Gyasi's voice emerges as an innovative and young narrator in contemporary African American fiction. As Kakutani explains (2016, n.p.), "at those moments, we feel we are not getting a history lesson, but hearing the stories of individual men and women we have come to know and understand."

Furthermore, *Homegoing* has been praised as "a hugely empathic, unflinching portrayal of west Africa's role in the transatlantic slave trade" (Evans 2017, n.p.). This reviewer remarks that writing such an ambitious novel is a notable feat for a debuting author and she highlights the passages portraying relationships between black men and women as the most outstanding parts of the novel. Evans criticizes the last chapters of the novel for losing the previous seriousness, although she also acknowledges that "if there must be a purpose for the creation

of yet another slave narrative other than to show how cruel, unfair, debased and horrific slavery was, it should be to convey the impact of it on modern life" (n.p.). In July 2020, Knopf published Yaa Gyasi's much anticipated second novel, *Transcendent Kingdom,* which deals with a struggling Ghanaian family living in Alabama and has received positive reviews.

The Spanish translation of *Homegoing* was published in March 2017 as *Volver a casa* by Salamandra,[4] which was at the time still an independent medium-sized publisher before being bought by Penguin Random House in May 2019 (Seisdedos, Galindo and Antón 2019, n.p.). It became a fairly successful novel since, according to the Spanish ISBN database,[5] *Volver a casa* was reprinted in July 2018 and in May 2019, a pocket edition was released in June 2019 and it was also translated into Catalan in May 2017 by Carles Andreu.[6] The Spanish translation was carried out by Maia Figueroa,[7] who translates books from English for several publishers, including Alianza, Destino and Seix Barral. In an interview (Hoyos 2017, n.p.), Figueroa commented that she is particularly fond of translating crime novels, such as Donna Leon's works, and science fiction, namely Jeff VanderMeer's *Southern Reach* saga. Salamandra published *Transcendent Kingdom* as *Más allá de mi reino* in May 2021, although it was not translated by Figueroa, but by Eduardo Hojman.

Concerning peritexts, Figure 1 below shows the different covers to *Homegoing.* The one on the left is the cover to the English hardback edition and it alludes to the chapters set in the United States in that it shows a black woman in shackles, who might be Esi or her daughter, Ness. She is surrounded by white cotton plants, hinting at slavery and blackness in the novel. It also features a quotation

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4   Salamandra originated in 1989 as the Spanish branch of Emecé, an Argentinian publishing house. Salamandra separated from Emecé in 2000 and was managed by Pedro del Carril and Sigrid Kraus, who turned it into a medium-size company and decided to focus on contemporary fiction, crime novels and young adult books. They are responsible for publishing the Spanish version of the *Harry Potter* saga, which sold over twelve million books in ten years, half of them in Latin America (Seisdedos, Galindo and Antón 2019, n.p.). When Salamandra was bought by Penguin Random House in 2019, it joined Lumen, Alfaguara, Plaza y Janés and Ediciones B in becoming one the multinational's many imprints. As Seisdedos, Galindo and Antón observe (2019, n.p.), this purchase means that Penguin Random House and Planeta own over half the Spanish book market. For more information on Salamandra's origins, refer to its website at https://www.salamandra.info/origenes

5   It can be accessed at http://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/libro/bases-de-datos-del-isbn/base-de-datos-de-libros.html

6   Gyasi, Yaa. 2017. *Tornar a casa.* Translated by Carles Andreu. Barcelona: Salamandra Català.

7   For more details about Figueroa's career and translations, refer to her personal website at https://maiafigueroa.com/

by Zadie Smith—a British writer of Jamaican descent—praising Gyasi's novel. The cover in the center of Figure 1 is that of the paperback edition. It depicts Effia and Esi looking in opposite directions and there are waves at the sides, perhaps implying that these two sisters were separated by the Middle Passage and the Atlantic Ocean. This cover too includes a quotation, by African American journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates,[8] who deems *Homegoing* "an inspiration." Lastly, the cover to Salamandra's version is the same as that of the hardcover English edition and it does not mention that Maia Figueroa is the translator—her name is only mentioned on the credits page. This book does not include any peritexts by the translator, such as a preface or footnotes, although her presence is made visible by the strategies that will be discussed in the next sections. Despite not displaying any words of praise by black authors, this cover still alludes to the blackness and slavery that target readers are going to find in the novel by reproducing the picture of a black woman in shackles surrpunded by cotton plants.

FIGURE 1. Covers of *Homegoing* (2016 and 2017)
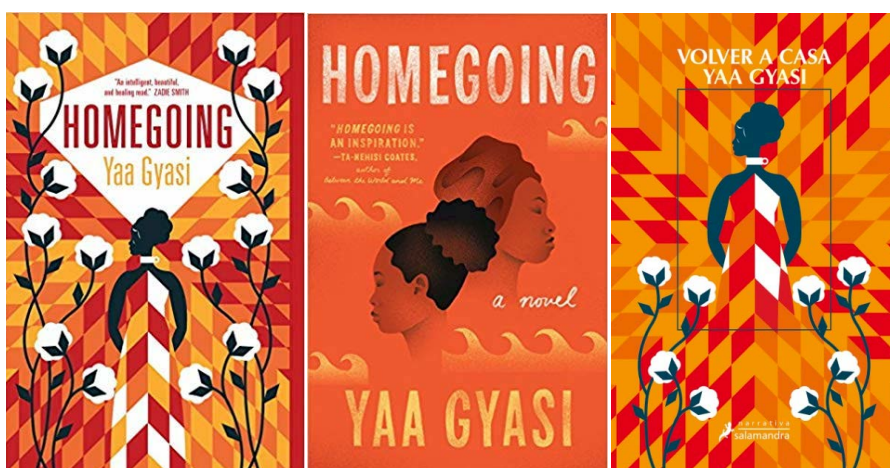
Regarding *Homegoing*'s reception in the target culture and its epitexts, Aguilar (2017, n.p.) was surprised by Gyasi's personal story of how a Ghanaian

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8   Ta-Nehisi Coates is an American journalist who wrote for *The Atlantic* on black citizens and white supremacy. In 2015, he was awarded the National Book Award for Non-Fiction for *Between the World and Me,* which encompasses his reflections on being black in the contemporary United States. Following this book's success, Coates was hired to write the *Black Panther* and *Captain America* comic-books for Marvel.

American girl raised in Alabama turned into a successful writer and won the PEN/Hemingway Award when she was just twenty-eight. This reviewer admires how the novel covers nearly three hundred years and chronicles the lives of over a dozen protagonists, with each one featuring in a different chapter where they experience several historical events, finishing in the early 2000s (Aguilar 2017, n.p.). On the novel's complex structure, Peire (2017, n.p.) claimed that "it is striking that so many centuries and historical events can fit in four hundred pages, yet this is possible thanks to the novel's techniques, such as the use of ellipsis and time jumps.[9]" As a result, *Homegoing* manages to combine stories about colonialism in Africa and slavery in the United States. It goes beyond the common ground of slave narratives and includes chapters dealing with slave trafficking within Ghana, the role different tribes[10] played in it, the imposition of European languages and religions, and Ghana's fight for independence from the United Kingdom in the 1950s.

3. Linguistic Variation in Ghana: Effia's Story

In the chapters set in Ghana, Effia leaves her village to marry James Collins, the British commander of Cape Coast Castle, a fort on the African Gold Coast that holds the slaves who have been kidnapped before they are taken to America through the Middle Passage. Effia and James have a son, Quey, who studies in England. When he returns to Ghana, Quey tries to strengthen the trade relations between the British and his mother's village, which sells black slaves, so he decides to marry the kidnapped daughter of the Asante king. Quey's son, James, has a hectic life as he endures the wars between different tribal nations, such as the Fanta, the Asante, and the Efutu. His daughter, Abena, witnesses the introduction of cocoa plantations in Ghana and the farming revolution this involves. She leaves her village and gives her daughter, Akua, to white missionaries. Akua marries and has many children, including Yaw. While her husband is away fighting in a war, she goes insane and burns her children in their home. Yaw is the only survivor and the fire scars his face. He moves to the city, goes to university and becomes a reputed teacher. Yaw eventually marries his maid, Esther, and they have a daughter, Marjorie, before they move to the United States. Marjorie

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9   This translation from Spanish into English is by the author of this paper.

10 In contrast with *Roots*'s controversial portrayal of Europeans capturing and enslaving Africans, *Homegoing*'s chapters set in Ghana illustrate how warring African tribes would kidnap people from rival villages and sell them as slaves to the Europeans, such as the British living at Cape Coast Castle. As Peire explains (2017, n.p.), Gyasi's novel is "not the typical story with bad white slavers, since it shows how colonizers took advantage of local tribes and manipulated them to take part in the slave trade and make a profit."

grows up in Alabama and she has trouble at school because she is rejected by both black and white kids. She goes back to Ghana to visit her grandmother, Akua, an outcast who lives alone for having killed her children.

Homegoing showcases an omniscient third-person narrator and, when it comes to linguistic variation, in the chapters set in Ghana—those corresponding to the lives of Effia's descendants—all characters speak Standard English because they are supposedly speaking their African mother tongues, such as Twi. The example shown in Table 1 illustrates this literary resource. In it, Quey goes to his mother's village and visits his uncle, Fiifi, to talk about the business they are conducting with the British that involves slave trafficking. Both Africans are supposed to be communicating in Twi and the source text illustrates this by having them speak perfectly standard English. This does not pose any problems for the translator, who renders this fragment as standard Spanish.

TABLE 1. Translating Standard English in Ghana

Gyasi 2017, 52-53	Figueroa 2017, 74-75
Now Fiifi was as silent as he was every other time Quey had brought up trade with the British. He looked out into the forest in front of them, and Quey followed his gaze. In the trees, two vibrant birds sang loudly, a discordant song.	Y ahora Fiifi guardaba silencio, como todas las veces que Quey había mencionado el comercio con los británicos. Miró hacia el bosque que tenían ante ellos y su sobrino le siguió la mirada. Entre los árboles, dos pájaros de colores llamativos competían con cantos altos y discordantes.
"Uncle, the agreement Badu made with my father—"	—Tío, el acuerdo al que Badu llegó con mi padre…
"Do you hear that?" Fiifi asked, pointing to the birds.	—¿Oyes eso? —preguntó Fiifi, y señaló los pájaros.
Frustrated, Quey nodded.	Quey asintió con frustración.
"When one bird stops, the other one starts. Each time their song gets louder, shriller. Why do you think that is?"	—Cuando uno de los pájaros calla, el otro empieza a cantar. y su canción es cada vez más alta y estridente. ¿Por qué crees que es así?
"Uncle, trade is the only reason we're here. If you want the British out of your village, you have to—"	—Tío, el único motivo por el que estamos aquí es el comercio. Si quieres que los británicos abandonen la aldea, tienes que…

In contrast, eye-dialect is the technique employed in *Homegoing* to portray the broken English spoken by two Ghanaian characters. This resource can be defined as "the attempt to depict on the printed page, through spellings and misspellings, elisions, apostrophes, syntactical shifts, signals, etc. the speech of an ethnic, regional or racial group" (Zanger 1966, 40), so the lines by characters who speak a non-standard variety are marked and contrasted with the pronunciation of Standard English. Eye-dialect can be found in Yaw's chapter, set in the 1950s, in the first fragment reproduced in Table 2. Yaw meets Esther, his new maid, and she speaks broken, non-standard English because her mother tongue is Twi and she does not have a university degree like the protagonist. However, the features that mark Esther's lines, such as misspellings and the omission of the third-person singular *-s,* have not been recreated or compensated for in Figueroa's rendering. The maid speaks standard Spanish and her alterity is assimilated by choosing to standardize her non-normative linguistic variety. Later in the book, Figueroa opts for a different strategy when Marjorie, Yaw and Esther's daughter, who has grown up in Alabama, returns to her parents' country and visits her ailing grandmother. As soon as she gets out of the airport, she meets a Ghanaian boy who is trying to take tourists sightseeing. The boy's lines omit the article *the* and are also marked by consonant cluster reduction—*juss* instead of *just.* Figueroa does not focus on phonological features in the target text, although she depicts the boy's poor command of Marjorie's language by reproducing the lack of articles that was present in the source novel, for instance in "te llevo a ver [el] castillo." This compensation can be appreciated as well in the third excerpt shown in Table 2, which corresponds to *Homegoing*'s last chapter. Marjorie has taken Marcus— an American friend—to Ghana and he is approached by the same boy. Once again, Figueroa compensates the Ghanaian boy's broken English by omitting the article *el* and mixing the second-person form *perdona* with the respectful form of address *señor.* Thanks to this strategy, the boy's linguistic variety and his alterity are reproduced in the target text, unlike in Esther's case. A tentative explanation for this different treatment may be that Esther is a major character in the novel who reappears in later chapters and gives advice to Marjorie. Marking Esther's lines when she meets Yaw would also mean introducing this linguistic variety in several subsequent chapters, when she talks to her daughter. Salamandra's publishers may be reluctant to print this abundance of non-standard language, whereas the native guide speaking in broken Spanish only shows up twice in the whole novel and his presence can be seen as anecdotal.

TABLE 2. Translating Eye-dialect in Ghana

Gyasi 2017, 229-230	Figueroa 2017, 290-291
"**Ess-cuse me**, **sah**."[1] Yaw looked up from his book. Esther was standing in front of him with the long handmade broom she had insisted on bringing with her, even though Yaw told her that this house had many brooms. "You don't have to speak in English," Yaw said. "Yes, **sah**, but my **sis-tah say you ah teach-ah**, so I must speak English." She looked terrified. Her shoulders hunched and her hands gripping the broom so tightly that Yaw could see the area around her knuckles begin to stretch and redden. He wished he could cover his face, put the young woman at ease. "You understand Twi?" Yaw said in his mother tongue, and Esther nodded. "Then speak freely. We hear enough English as it is."	—Discúlpeme, señor. Yaw levantó la mirada del libro. Tenía a Esther delante, con la larga escoba hecha a mano que había insistido en llevar consigo a pesar de que Yaw le había dicho que en su casa había muchas. —No hace falta que hables en inglés —dijo Yaw. —Sí, señor, pero mi hermana dice que usted es profesor y que por eso tengo que hablar inglés. Parecía aterrada, con los hombros hundidos y aferrándose a la escoba con tanta fuerza que Yaw vio que la piel de los nudillos empezaba a tensarse y enrojecerse. Le habría gustado poder taparse la cara para tranquilizar a la joven. —¿Entiendes el twi? —le preguntó en su lengua natal, y Esther asintió—. Entonces, habla con libertad. Ya oímos suficiente inglés.
Gyasi 2017, 265	Figueroa 2017, 332
"**Ess-cuse me**, **sistah**. **I take you see Castle**. Cape Coast Castle. Five cedis. You come from America? **I take you see slave ship**. **Juss** five cedis." The boy was probably around ten years old, only a few years younger than Marjorie herself was. He had been following her since she and her grandmother's housekeeper got off the tro-tro. The locals did this, waiting for tourists to disembark so that they could con them into paying for things Ghanaians knew where free. Marjorie tried to ignore him, but she was hot and tired, still feeling the sweat of the other people who had been pressed against her back and chest and sides on the nearly eight-hour tro-tro ride from Accra. "**I take you see Cape Coast Castle**, sis. **Juss** five cedis," he repeated.	—Hermana. Perdona, hermana. **Te llevo a ver castillo**. Castillo Costa del Cabo. Cinco cedi. ¿Eres de América? Te llevo a ver barco de esclavos. Sólo cinco cedi. El chico no debía de tener más de diez años, tan sólo unos pocos menos que la propia Marjorie. Llevaba siguiéndola desde que se había bajado del *tro-tro* con la empleada del hogar de su abuela. Era algo que hacían los lugareños: esperaban a que los turistas se apeasen y trataban de engañarlos para que pagasen por cosas que los ghaneses sabían que eran gratuitas. Marjorie intentó no hacerle caso, pero tenía calor, estaba cansada y aún notaba en la piel el sudor de las otras personas que había tenido pegadas a la espalda, al pecho y a los costados durante el viaje de casi ocho horas en *tro-tro* desde Accra. —Te llevo **a ver castillo Costa del Cabo**, hermana. Cinco cedi, sólo —repitió él.

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11 The non-standard features are highlighted in bold.

Gyasi 2017, 297	Figueroa 2017, 371
"**Ess-cuse me, sah**! You want go see slave castle? **I take you see** Cape Coast Castle. Ten cedis, **sah. Juss** ten cedis. **I take you see** nice castle."	—¡**Perdona, señor**! ¿Quieres **ver castillo** de esclavos? Te llevo **a ver castillo** Costa del Cabo. Diez cedis sólo, señor. Diez cedis. Yo llevo **a ver castillo**, muy bonito.

4. Linguistic Variation in the United States: Esi's Story

The second half of the novel revolves around Esi and her descendants, who have quite a different fate to those in Effia's story. Esi's village is raided by members of an enemy tribe, who murder her mother and sell Esi to the British. She is imprisoned in Cape Coast Castle, where she is tortured and raped. Esi is taken to the United States and has a daughter, Ness. The child is sold to different masters, who whip her. She meets Sam, a kind African slave, and they have a son, Kojo. With the help of the Underground Railroad, the three of them escape to the Northern states. Before being captured by slave catchers, Ness gives Kojo to her friend Ma Aku, who promises to take care of the baby boy. Ness and Sam are punished by slave catchers, but Ma Aku and Kojo make it to Baltimore.

Kojo changes his name to Jo Freeman, makes a living in Maryland and marries Anna, a free black woman. When the Fugitive Slave Act is passed in 1850, he thinks of going to the North with his son, H. However, slave catchers kidnap his wife and sell her into slavery. During the Reconstruction, H is imprisoned for assaulting a white woman and he is sent to work in a coal mine in inhumane conditions, where he meets a black community and reconnects with his old girlfriend, Ethe. Their daughter, Willie, marries Robert, a light-skinned black boy, and they move to Harlem. Willie is unable to get a job because of her dark skin, although Robert manages to pass as white and abandons her. Years later, their son, Carson, is involved in the Civil Rights Movement, but he becomes addicted to heroin and crack. One of Carson's children, Marcus, is a brilliant student who goes to Stanford University. There, he meets Marjorie, a Ghanaian American girl—Esther and Yaw's daughter. They become friends, travel to Ghana and visit Cape Coast Castle to reconnect with their African ancestors.

In contrast to the Standard English depicted in the chapters set in Ghana, a specific linguistic variety is introduced in Esi's story—African American English, also known as Black English.[12] This literary dialect refers to "the whole

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12 This paper alternates without distinction between the two denominations, Black English and African American Vernacular English. However, the features observed in *Homegoing* mentioned in this paper are not the only characteristics that define this linguistic variety, since there are sub-varieties and several variables that should be taken into account, like the speaker's place, time setting and sex.

range of language varieties used by black people in the United States […] both in cities and in rural areas, and by all age groups of both sexes" (Mufwene 2001, 291-292). As Green explains (2002, x-xi), Black English cannot be reduced to slang or mere deviations from Standard English, since it is a rule-governed vernacular that, in works of fiction like *Homegoing,* "constitutes the ideal linguistic resource to create a distinctive marked discourse commonly associated with the black race identity" by the readership (Naranjo Sánchez 2015, 418). Similar to the representation of the broken English spoken by the Ghanaian characters, eye-dialect is used to depict Black English in this section of the book.

Several of its features are portrayed in Gyasi's novel and it is revealing to observe which translation strategies Figueroa has chosen to render this dialect into Spanish. One of the Black English traits found in the source text is marked negation, which means the contraction *ain't* is the predominant negative particle and that double negation is the rule, not an exception (Green 2002, 76; Lappin-Fortin 2016, 461). Examples of marked negation can be seen in Table 3, particularly in the lines spoken by TimTam, a kind and uneducated slave who Ness—Esi's daughter—meets when she is sold to a Southern plantation. Figueroa has resorted to pseudo-dialect translation to reconstruct TimTam's marked negation, lack of auxiliary verbs and eye-dialect. These features are recreated as marked Spanish by italicizing *namás,* a contraction of the vulgar pronunciation of *nada* plus *más*. This contraction does not point to a specific target regional dialect and does not replace the novel's context for a Spanish one. Instead, it lowers TimTam's register by having him use forms from non-standard Spanish. This is the same strategy Figueroa uses to recreate Black English in the second instance below. In it, Esi takes care of Pinky, a young slave girl, and gives her some advice using double negation, marked verb conjugation—it only make*s*—and eye-dialect. The corresponding fragment from *Volver a casa* shows that Ness utters *contra más*, a vulgar corruption of *cuanto más* that tends to come up in colloquial conversations and even in some Spanish written texts.[13]

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13 On the entry corresponding to the preposition "contra," the *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* advises against this use of *contra más*. See the online version at http://lema. rae.es/dpd/?key=contra. Besides, the Fundéu—the acronym for Foundation for Urgent Spanish—warns against the extensive presence of this vulgar expression in the media. See their website: https://www.fundeu.es/recomendacion/cuanto-mas-y-no-contra-mas/

TABLE 3. Translating Marked Negation

Gyasi 2017, 76	Figueroa 2017, 103
TimTam cleared this throat and hung his head a little lower. "See, we know **ain't nothing wrong** wid her but the hiccups, but we been tryin' to get to speak, so…"	TimTam carraspeó y agachó la cabeza un poco más. —Mira, ya sabemos que no le pasa **namás** que lo del hipo, pero llevamos tiempo intentando que hable…
Gyasi 2017, 79	Figueroa 2017, 108
"**Don't pay dem no mind**," Ness whispered. "Thinking 'bout it only make it worse." She didn't know if she was speaking to Pinky or to herself.	—No hagas caso —susurró Ness—. **Contra** más lo pienses, peor. No sabía si hablaba con Pinky o consigo misma.

Regarding question formation, in African American Vernacular English there are often no auxiliary verbs in the initial position and the subject and verb are not inverted (Green 2002, 84; Rickford and Rickford 2009, 124). Marked questions are found in *Homegoing* as well, so there are fragments that include direct questions that show no inversion between subjects and auxiliary verbs, and these auxiliary verbs may even be omitted. This can be appreciated in the first fragment in Table 4, when Ness comes to the new plantation and TimTam asks her where she is from, leaving out the auxiliary verb *are*. Figueroa has recreated the black slave's literary dialect, since TimTam asks *¿de adónde?*—implying destination— instead of *¿de dónde?*—alluding to the point of departure. This linguistic error introduces a non-normative variation in the Spanish text and marks it, so it can be classified as a combination of the strategies labelled above as dialect compilation and pseudo-dialect translation, not of localization or parallel dialect translation. However, it seems that the target text is only marked in Ness's chapter pertaining to her life under slavery, because Black English is standardized in later episodes from Gyasi's novel, as the second example shows in Table 4. It belongs to Kojo's life in Baltimore, when he is playing with his children and pretends to be a federal agent asking for the papers that show they are free blacks, preparing them for what might happen in the future. Besides, Figueroa resorts to standardization when dealing with another morpho-syntactic trait of Black English, which is the use of the personal pronoun *them* as a substitute for the determiner *those* (Rickford and Rickford 2009, 110). This marked use of *them* can be appreciated in the third excerpt in Table 4—together with other traits of the literary dialect under study, such as marked negation and the lack of auxiliary verbs in compound forms. It takes place in Baltimore, too, when Kojo—here he goes by his nickname Jo—and his friend fear they might by replaced by the new wave of Irish immigrants and

lose their jobs. The corresponding passage from the target text shows that the use of *them* as a determiner and any other features of Black English have been completely standardized. This is a surprising choice after observing how Figueroa relied on dialect compilation and pseudo-dialect translation. If she had stuck to these two strategies, she may have opted for the vulgar form of postponing the demonstrative to the nouns, so that black characters would say *uno de los irlandeses esos*, similarly to the marked colloquial Spanish that Pérez de Villar introduced in her version of another neo-slave narrative, Octavia E. Butler's *Kindred* (Sanz Jiménez 2020, 148-149).

TABLE 4. Translating Marked Questions and Determiners

Gyasi 2017, 72	Figueroa 2017, 98
"**Where you comin' from?**" TimTam asked. He chewed the chaffy end of a wheat stalk and spit. "You ask too many question," Ness said.	—¿De **adónde** vienes? —quiso saber TimTam. Masticaba un tallo seco de trigo y escupía. —No preguntes tanto —contestó Ness, y volvió la cara,
Gyasi 2017, 125	Figueroa 2017, 164
He would play the federal marshall [sic], hands on his hips, walking up to each of them, even little Gracie, and saying, in a voice as stern as he could muster, "**Where you goin'?**"	Hacía de alguacil federal y, con los brazos en jarras, se acercaba a ellos uno a uno, incluso a la pequeña Gracie, y decía con toda la seriedad que podía: «¿Adónde vas?».
Gyasi 2017, 127	Figueroa 2017, 167
"I gotta go," Jo said to Poot, waving the picture frantically, hoping the wind would dry it. "You can't miss no more days, Jo," Poor said. "They gon' give yo job to **one of them Irishmen** and then what, huh? Who gon' feed **them kids**, Jo?"	—Tengo que irme —anunció a Poot. Agitaba el dibujo con desesperación, esperando que el aire lo secase. —No puedes faltar más días, Jo —respondió su compañero—. Le ofrecerán tu puesto a uno de esos irlandeses y entonces ¿qué? ¿Quién dará de comer a tus críos?

In addition, Gyasi's novel reproduces marked verb conjugation. As Rickford and Rickford explain (2009, 114), this feature of Black English comprehends overgeneralization—adding the third-person singular –s to other persons in present simple constructions—, omitting the final –s when there is a third-person subject, deleting the copulative verb that joins a subject and its respective attribute—what Mufwene (2001, 299) terms the zero copula—and the suppression of auxiliaries in compound forms such as present perfect and continuous (Green 2002, 166). In Table 5, overgeneralization can be

observed in the first fragment, when Margaret complains about newcomer Ness to her master, Tom Allan, and she says *you is*. To compensate marked verb conjugation, as well as eye-dialect and marked negation, Figueroa employs pseudo-dialect translation and adds *pa,* the short form of the preposition *para* that is characteristic of colloquial spoken Spanish. Consequently, Margaret's lines are marked in contrast to those of her white master, who speaks standard Spanish. Likewise, the second instance shows that Maia Figueroa relies on dialect compilation to include the colloquial idiom *no pegar ojo*[14]—to be unable to sleep—to mark the lines uttered by black slaves who complain about Pinky's hiccups. However, the zero copula has not been compensated for through dialect compilation or pseudo-dialect translation, but rather has been standardized. For instance, when TimTam first approaches Ness, both slaves speak unmarked Spanish in the target text, as the third excerpt in Table 5 illustrates. The same strategy is used when Pinky, a mute black child, has an accident and spills water over her master's sister's dress. She is forced to apologize, Ness intercedes and tries to explain the kid is sorry, omitting the verb copula in "she *is* sorry," yet she speaks standard Spanish in Figueroa's rendering. The last passage in Table 5 shows the omission of auxiliary verbs in compound constructions. When Ness is aggressive to TimTam, a slave woman tries to explain that he has been through a lot, and she omits the auxiliary *has* when talking about TimTam. The respective lines from *Volver a casa* show that Figueroa has not compensated for this feature, choosing standardization to make black characters speak unmarked normative Spanish.

TABLE 5. Translating Marked Verb Conjugation

Gyasi 2017, 73	Figueroa 2017, 100
"She ain't fit for da house," Margaret told Tom Allan.	—No está **pa** trabajar en la casa —anunció Margaret a Tom Allan.
"Well, let me see her, Margaret. I'm sure I can decide for myself whether or not somebody's fit to work in my own house, now can't I?"	—Deja que la vea, Margaret. Seguro que puedo decidir por mí mismo si alguien es adecuado para trabajar en mi casa, ¿no te parece?
"Yessuh," Margaret said. "**I reckon you is**, but it ain't something you gon' want to see, is what I'm sayin'."	—Sí, señor —respondió la esclava—. Seguro que puede, claro que sí. Pero lo que yo digo es que no quiere ver esto.

14 For more details on this expression and its variants, refer to the entry on *ojo* in the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* at: https://dle.rae.es/?w=ojo

Gyasi 2017, 79	Figueroa 2017, 108
"Oh Lord, **here she go**! Ain't we had enough trouble fo one day?" one of the women said. "Can't get no kinda rest **when dis girl start** to hiccup."	—¡Santo Dios, ya está otra vez! ¿Es que no hemos tenido suficiente por un día? —se quejó una de las mujeres—. Cuando le viene ese hipo, **no hay quien pegue ojo**.
Gyasi 2017, 71	Figueroa 2017, 97
"How's your day been?" TimTam asked. Ness turned toward him just slightly. "Ain't all days the same?" TimTam laughed, a sound that rumbled like thunder built from the cloud of his gut and expelled through the sky of his mouth. "**I s'pose you right**," he said.	—¿Cómo ha ido el día? —preguntó TimTam. Ness se volvió hacia él, pero solo un poco. —Que yo sepa, todos son iguales. Él se rio: el estruendo de un trueno que nacía en la nube de su estómago y salía disparado por el cielo de su boca. —Cuánta razón…
Gyasi 2017, 78	Figueroa 2017, 106
Pinky opened her mouth, but no words came out. "**She sorry**," Ness said quickly. "I wasn't talking to you," Tom Jr. said.	La niña abrió la boca, pero de ella no salió palabra. —Lo siente mucho —se apresuró a decir Ness. —No hablo contigo —contestó Tom Júnior.
Gyasi 2017, 72	Figueroa 2017, 99
"You ain't gotta be so hard on him," a woman said once Ness resumed her position in the field. The woman seemed older, mid to late thirties, but her back hunched even when she stood up straight. "You new here, so you don't know. **TimTam done lost his woman** long while ago, and **he been taking care** of little Pinky by hisself ever since."	—No tienes por qué ser tan dura con él —le dijo una mujer cuando Ness volvió a su puesto de trabajo. La mujer, de entre treinta y cinco y cuarenta años, parecía mayor pues tenía la espalda encorvada incluso cuando se erguía. —Eres nueva, por eso no lo sabes. TimTam perdió a su mujer hace ya tiempo, y ahora se cuida él solo de Pinky, la niña.

Moreover, the phonological features of African American Vernacular English are portrayed in *Homegoing* thanks to the eye-dialect technique commented above. Specifically, the three phonological characteristics that are most often depicted in the source text's recreation of literary dialect are the replacement of /ŋ/ by /n/ in verb gerunds (Green 2002, 121; Naranjo Sánchez 2015, 423), the suppression of unstressed initial vowels (Minnick 2004, 66) and consonant cluster reduction (Rickford and Rickford 2009, 104; Lappin-Fortin 2016, 461). The latter is depicted in the two fragments shown in Table 6, which are taken from Ness's chapter at Tom Allan's plantation. In them, slaves pronounce *best* as *bess,* and *told* as *tol'*. This has been standardized in the Spanish version, yet the

first excerpt contains an interesting strategy. TimTam is worried about Pinky, so Ruthie—another slave—recommends telling their master. Figueroa marks her intervention by including the short form *pa* for *para* and by adding the definite article *el* before her master's name, so that Ruthie calls him *el Tom Allan*. Both the short form *pa* and this use of articles before proper nouns are features of non-standard Spanish that mark the black characters' lines, so Figueroa's strategy to recreate linguistic variety can be classified as pseudo-dialect translation.

Table 6. Translating Phonological Features

Gyasi 2017, 75	Figueroa 2017, 103
He pushed into the room, his voice choked though there were no tears in his eyes. "I think she got what her mama had," he said. The women cleared a spot for the girl and TimTam set her down before he started to pace. "Oh Lord, oh Lord, oh Lord," he cried. "You **bess** go fetch Tom Allan so's he can get the doctor," Ruthie said. "Doctor ain't helped last time," TimTam said.	Entró deprisa. —Creo que ha cogido lo que su mamá —anunció con la voz estrangulada, aunque tenía los ojos secos. Las mujeres hicieron sitio para la niña y TimTam la dejó en el suelo y se puso a dar vueltas. —Ay, Señor. Ay, Señor. Ay, Señor —se lamentaba. —Será mejor que vayas a por **el Tom Allan pa que** avise al médico —le sugirió Ruthie. —La última vez el médico no sirvió.
Gyasi 2017, 82	Figueroa 2017, 111
"They **tol**' me Pinky spoke yesterday. I s'pose I should say thank you for that. And for the other thing."	—Me han dicho que Pinky habló ayer. Supongo que debería darte las gracias. Por eso y por lo otro.

Before closing this section, it is worth noting how Figueroa compensates a passage that is not marked by Black English in the source novel, namely the line spoken by the protagonist in defense of Pinky, who is being harassed by other slaves. Even though Ness's intervention is unmarked in Gyasi's novel, Figueroa plays with italics and pseudo-dialect translation and makes the slave say *dejarla* instead of *dejadla* in the target text. This use of the infinitive for the imperative form is a common feature of everyday colloquial Spanish,[15] not necessarily characteristic of any given geographical variety. Ness's line is marked in the target text, similarly to her intervention shown in Table 3 when discussing marked negation.

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15 The replacement of the imperative by the infinitive form is so widespread that even the Spanish Language Academy has written against this use, for example at https://www.rae.es/consultas/infinitivo-por-imperativo

TABLE 7. Compensation in *Volver a casa*

Gyasi 2017, 80	Figueroa 2017, 108

Pinky squeezed her eyes tight as a series of hiccups exploded from her lips.
 	
    "Leave her be," Ness said to the chorus of groans, and they listened.
	La niña cerró los ojos con fuerza y estalló en un breve ataque de hipo.
	
	    —**Dejarla** en paz —advirtió Ness al coro de protestas, y le hicieron caso.

5. Concluding Remarks

Regarding literary dialects, there are two separate parts in *Homegoing*. In the chapters chronicling the lives of Effia and her descendants that are set in Africa, characters are supposed to be speaking their African mother tongues, such as Twi, so the source text is written in Standard English and does not pose any additional challenges for Figueroa. Still, there are a couple of African characters—Esther and a boy—who speak broken English in a few fragments and this variety is contrasted with the protagonists' normative language. Esther's lines are standardized by Figueroa, but the boy's interventions are marked thanks to compensation, a strategy that reflects his alterity in the target text, as seen in Table 2 above.

The chapters focusing on Esi's family and their ordeals in America deal with the oppression of African Americans in the United States, including slavery, and they portray several morpho-syntactic and phonological traits of Black English. When Figueroa deals with this linguistic variety in Gyasi's novel, she alternates between pseudo-dialect translation, dialect compilation and compensation and recreates the slaves' linguistic variety by including shorts forms (*pa*), contractions (*namás*), and idioms from colloquial Spanish (*no pegar ojo*), together with a series of vulgar misuses, for instance adding an article before a proper noun (*El Tom Allan*) and replacing an imperative with an infinitive (*dejarla en paz*). By playing with spelling and introducing characteristics from non-standard Spanish, Figueroa succeeds in reflecting the otherness represented by dispossessed slaves and at contrasting it with white people's position of power and possession, since masters tend to speak Standard English. As such, the narrative Us vs. Otherness that is present in *Homegoing* is reproduced in *Volver a casa,* too, through the interplay of characters' voices and linguistic varieties that deviate from standard conventions.

Despite this achievement, it is pertinent to point out that alternative strategies to standardization—namely, compensation, pseudo-dialect translation, and dialect compilation—only come up in Ness's chapter, the one set in the Southern plantation. This may be related to the emerging convention of playing with non-standard linguistic varieties as a way of giving the dispossessed characters in neo-slave narratives their own voice, as Sanz Jiménez considers in his study

on the Spanish translations of *Flight to Canada* and *Kindred* (2020, 151-152). Although African American English also comes up in the lines spoken by black characters in the chapters focusing on Kojo and H—which are set in the 1850s and the Reconstruction, respectively—, this literary dialect becomes unmarked Spanish in Figueroa's rendering. This means that passages playing with spelling and deviating from the standard norm in the target text are limited to Ness's chapter at Tom Allan's plantation (Gyasi 2017, 70-87; Figueroa 2017, 96-117). It is interesting, though, that Maia Figueroa managed to include alternatives to standardization in a novel that was published by Salamandra, a medium-size publishing house that had not yet been absorbed by Penguin Random House in Spring 2017, when *Volver a casa* came out. Now that Salamandra is an imprint that belongs to a multinational group, it is not clear whether the publishing policies would allow for the inclusion of fragments in non-standard Spanish. As seen at the end of the Introduction, precedents like *El ferrocarril subterráneo* hint at Random House's preference for unmarked Spanish in neo-slave narratives, perhaps as a way of reaching a broader target readership.

As an extension to the current work, the strategies that were chosen by Carles Andreu to render linguistic varieties into Catalan and whether they match those employed by Figueroa could be studied. Besides, it would be most interesting to analyze *Más allá de mi reino* (2021) and Hojman's translation. Future studies could focus on how the alterity depicted in Gyasi's second novel has been translated into Spanish, as it centers on a Ghanaian American family making a living in Alabama in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It would be revealing, too, to observe whether the fact that Salamandra now belongs to a multinational publishing group affects the choice of translation strategies for dealing with non-standard linguistic varieties and the Other's voice. The description of the translation strategies used to deal with the linguistic varieties spoken by the dispossessed may serve as the basis for analyzing translation trends, the reasons why other alternatives are not employed when they are theoretically available, and the significant role played by patrons in the implementation of these strategies, as well as in the portrayal of alterity in the target culture.

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