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Cool Precariousness: The Discursive *Trendinization* of Youth Precarity in Spanish Digital Press

Precariedad cool: La trendinización discursiva de la precariedad juvenil en la prensa digital española

Abstract
This paper analyses the discursive construction around the *trendinisation* of youth precariousness in the Spanish digital press. Within this context, the emergence of both alternative practices and coping strategies in the field of consumption is no longer represented as a problem or a public controversy, but as a trend embedded in youth lifestyles. From a critical approach and based on a sample of 24 articles published in the digital press between 2014 and 2019, this de-problematisation was explored employing two analytical tools: relexicalisation and reframing. The strategic replacement of certain terms by others which are less connotative affords a new frame creating a new interpretation of the phenomenon. Finally, the appeal to welfare and its presentation as an opportunity for personal transformation contributes to this naturalisation, enhancing the symbolic effectiveness of these discourses.

Resumen
El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la construcción discursiva en torno a la trendinización de la precariedad juvenil en la prensa digital española, donde la emergencia de prácticas alternativas y estrategias adaptativas en la esfera del consumo es representada ya no como un problema o una controversia pública, sino como una moda inscrita en los estilos de vida juveniles. Desde una aproximación crítica y a partir de una muestra de 24 artículos publicados en prensa digital entre 2014 y 2019 se explora esta desproblematización a partir de dos herramientas analíticas: la relexicalización y el reenmarque. La sustitución estratégica de ciertos términos por otros con menor carga connotativa posibilita un cambio de marco que da lugar a una nueva interpretación del fenómeno. Finalmente, la apelación al bienestar y su presentación como una oportunidad para la transformación personal contribuye a esta naturalización, potenciando la eficacia simbólica de estos discursos.

Keywords
Trendinisation; youth precariousness; discourse analysis; media discourse; digital press

Palabras clave
Trendinización; precariedad juvenil; análisis del discurso; discurso mediático; prensa digital

1. Introduction

Friganismo: la última dieta hípster es coger comida de la basura
Freeganism: the latest hipster diet is getting food out of the garbage [1]
(*El País – Tentaciones*. March 24th, 2016).

Tiny House, el nuevo concepto de vivienda que ha llegado a Europa y que ya arrasa Estados Unidos
Tiny House, a new housing concept has arrived in Europe and is on the rise in the USA
(*El Mundo*. November 23rd, 2017).

Dumpster diving, la moda de buscar "tesoros abandonados" en los contenedores de basura
Dumpster diving, the trend of looking for 'abandoned treasures' in dumpsters
(*El Mundo – Fcinco*, June 3rd, 2018).

Freeganism, tiny houses, and dumpster diving are merely three examples of the ubiquity of the expansion of precarity and its contemporary manifestations, as pointed out by Bourdieu (1999). It is a precarity that is "present at all times, in all minds" (1999: 121) and that, in our days, is expressed through a wide array of heterogeneous discourses and diverse trajectories and practices. Precisely because of its multidimensional and multiform character, precarity constitutes a "category in expansion" (Somoza, 2016: 248) that affects not only the sphere of work but extends over the totality of life. Along the same lines, its effect is not restricted to the popular classes alone but acquires an increasingly evident impact on the lifestyles of the young middle classes (Alonso, Fernandez Rodríguez and Ibáñez Rojo, 2017). From eating out of the garbage to living in tiny houses to sifting through dumpsters in search of discarded objects, all of these practices illustrate the mediatization of processes of youth precarity as translated into trend models. The goal of this article is to examine this process of *trendinization* (Martín Rojo, Fernández-González and Castillo González, 2020: 98) undertaken by the media in recent years, which has led to conceptualizing the impoverishment of young middle classes in terms of a "non-conflictive adaptation" (Alonso, Fernández Rodríguez and Ibáñez Rojo, 2011: 357) and as a desirable lifestyle.

Together with media logics such as spectacularization [2] (Debord, 1967; Peñamarín, 2017) and aestheticization (Pardo, 1998), *trendinization* presents the described practices in light of an emerging new trend, as an opportunity and a personal choice that is embedded in people's lifestyles and which, as we shall see below, is presented as beneficial for emotional well-being. As can be seen in the previous headlines, this *trendinization* is built into media discourse and manifests itself in the deployment of resources and discursive strategies that minimize the most harmful aspects of the process of precarization, while also granting preeminence to others, circumscribed to the terrain of the anecdotal. In this sense, media as active generator of frames (Tarrow, 1997), and in particular digital press, have echoed these practices recurrently over the last years, giving rise to increased media production around these issues. The deep changes produced in the social structure after the economic crisis of 2008, together with the expansion of neoliberal policies of the last decade, have placed the processes of impoverishment, precarization, and loss of social status as objects of attention in the establishment of the media agenda (McCombs and Shaw, 1972) over the last five years. This journalistic attention has run parallel to the emergence of a discursive change that has subverted the news outlets' treatment of precarity as a social problem - stripping it of the category of public problem - (Gusfield, 1991), and turning it, therefore, into a new normality that promulgates "new trends for new forms of life" (Moruno, 2018: 22).

Through a discursive approach, this article examines the mediatization of these processes of youth precarity that affect the descending middle classes. To this end, I propose an analysis of how *trendinization* is discursively constructed and which mechanisms participate in this process; I then subsequently address the performative potentialities of these discourses in their normalization beyond the specific practice of these trends. Be as it may, the aim is not to carry out a socio-affective analysis of the phenomenon based on the sociology of emotions (Bericat, 2000; Hoschild, 1975, 1979), but to illustrate how this *trendinization* operates at the discursive level. I examine the extent to which this discursive turn acts as a strategic element at the service of self-discipline (Alonso et al., 2011), which produces high levels of self-satisfaction in contexts of high precarity. I will first show the discursive shift on which the *trendinization* of precarity is based, and then present the methodological framework and the analytical tools. Finally, I conclude with a critical reflection on the role played by emotions, and more specifically, positive thinking (Ehrenreich, 2011) and self-induced optimism in the mediatization of the phenomenon.

1.1 Pluralizing precarity: from shame to trend

Precarity has become a central concern of contemporary societies in recent years, as well as a preferred object of study in the social sciences from very different approaches and dimensions (Santamaría, 2018). Its growing academic interest places it as an "inexhaustible subject" (Santos and Muñoz, 2017: 240) whose analysis is not restricted or exhausted in academic circuits alone but, given its centrality in our model of social organization, also receives much media attention. This journalistic interest has been revealed as central in relation to consumer practices and lifestyles youth deploy as a response to the "new precarities" (Maurin; 2006; Muñoz and Santos, 2018, 2019) that leave their mark not only on the sphere of work, but act on the totality of life (Alonso, 2008; Lorey, 2016; Zubero, 2006). This condition refers to a broader precariousness, which "is equated to uncertainty, insecurity and lack of protection" (Santamaría, 2009: 35). The multi-layered character of this phenomenon places us, in line with Foucault, within a "biopolitical precariousness" (Santos and Muñoz, 2017: 241) that "unfolds in extenso in the life of young people and in the politics of life" (2017: 240), ultimately shaping their life trajectories. Because this process affects the middle class, which is traditionally protected from worsening living conditions (Alonso et al., 2017; Marí-Klose et al., 2016), the reach of these forms of precarity on young people from the middle classes has received great consideration in public discourse over the last decade (Gil Rodríguez and Rendueles, 2019).

This "destabilization of the stable" (Castel, 1997) has had powerful effects on consumption as a structuring element of identity (Alonso, 2005). In parallel, this has led to a readjustment of consumption patterns and habits (Alonso, Fernández Rodríguez and Ibáñez Rojo, 2011) that has materialized in different ways depending on the segments affected and the type of capitals (Bourdieu, 2001) that destabilization mobilizes and compromises. Given that "the precarious condition implies a model of consumption that is completely disconnected from access to property" (Alonso, Fernández Rodríguez and Ibáñez Rojo, 2016: 361), we have witnessed the development of non-conventional practices in the field of consumption in recent years that account for such impact and show alternative ways and strategies of accumulation. Among them, for example, are new eating patterns, such as eating out of dumpsters (freeganism) or cooking with food waste (trashcooking), as well as housing formulas such as co-living, the use of commercial spaces for residential purposes or the emergence of so-called tiny houses.

All of these practices refer to multiple dimensions and diverse meanings [3] of precarity, hence our need to pluralize the concept (from precarity to precariousness) (Cingolani, 2014: 49) in light of the new "expressions" (Santos and Muñoz, 2017) and "modalities" (Tejerina et al., 2012) with which it manifests. This multidimensionality has already been highlighted by authors such as Lorey, who through categories such as "heterogéneos precarios" (2016: 23) (roughly translated to "diverse precarious people") draws attention to the variety of trajectories and profiles that this condition illustrates. From this perspective, I propose a multidisciplinary study of *trendinization* based on a broad conceptualization of precarity and using a critical discursive approach that reveals the strategies that produce it.

1.2 New discourses for new precarities

This *trendinization*, as pointed to at the beginning, entails important discursive changes that contribute to building a certain interpretation of the phenomenon of study, while also having performative effects that transcend the materiality of the discourse. From this prism, the emergence of these practices, considered a priori as novel, has run parallel to the circulation of new discourses that de-problematize their most detrimental aspects, presenting them, instead, as an individual and fundamentally elective issue. In addition, there is an ethical component that links these practices to recycling, reuse, and sustainable consumption (Alonso, Fernández Rodríguez and Ibáñez Rojo, 2014) and therefore makes them more attractive, pleasant, and easily integrated into daily life.

Thus, in the face of the conflictive and/or punitive dimension that usually penetrates or weighs on discourses of poverty and social insecurity (Wacquant, 2010) along with the recurrence of shame (Sennett, 2003) or guilt as stigmatizing elements linked to the situation of poverty, we find a discursive framework that subverts the press's conventional treatment of the processes of precarization as a public problem. Instead, we are witnessing a de-dramatization of the phenomenon in the public sphere supported by the deployment of a new discursive order that conceptualizes deprivation and its adaptive strategies as a matter of style, sublimating this experience.

2. Methodology

In order to characterize the discursive formation and to analyze the constitutive features around this new mediated -and social- understanding of youth precarity in the middle class, I propose a critical approach

to the study of discourses that integrates our object of study. To this end, I have compiled an *ad hoc* corpus of 24 journalistic articles, [3] published in the digital generalist press (native and non-native) between 2014 and 2019. Since the purpose of this work lies precisely in analyzing a set of cases that, by their nature, present an intrinsic interest in discovering meanings, the data collection has been gradual and in accordance with the principles of theoretical sampling (Glasser and Strauss, 1967). In this way, and until discursive saturation is reached, the units of analysis have been selected according to the relevance of the described cases and not according to their representativeness (Flick, 2012).

Through the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach that I adopt in this paper, my position moves away from both a pre-modern vision of discourse as a reflection of reality and a solipsistic vision that only recognizes the existence of discourse. On the contrary, this approach brings together the recognition of the generating power of discourse, in which representations of events, groups, actors, and social practices are constructed. On the other hand, it considers not all discourses as possible, but rather that there are conditions of possibility in a particular time and place that allow them to emerge and circulate. This position, rooted in a Foucauldian perspective, connects the emergence of discourse with the different forms of governance. Thus, discourses that emerge in a specific time and place, like those studied here, are an essential part of political rationalities, that is, they generate knowledges and are linked to forms of power (Martín Rojo, 2020). From this position,

> Los discursos no reflejan la "realidad", no son un espejo fiel de ésta, sino que construyen, mantienen, refuerzan interpretaciones de esa "realidad", es decir, construyen representaciones de la sociedad de las prácticas sociales, de los actores sociales y de las relaciones sociales que entre ellos se establecen (Martín Rojo, 1997a: 1-2).

Hence, this work pays particular attention to tracking down these signs or discursive resources that participate in the construction of these interpretations in media discourse (Van Dijk, 1990). In line with the CDA's assumptions, and from an attentive look to the context and the performative capacity of these discourses, this approach allows us to "demystify discourses" (Wodak, 2003: 30). This pushes us to interrogate, problematize, and denaturalize what is presented to us as given (Fernández-González, 2019) or as part of an imaginary that is anchored in shared common places, relating discourses to the social processes in which they are produced. In the case examined here, this discursive shift connects with a certain vision of precariousness and the construction of agency that is revealed through four discursive procedures. Although the analysis here is focused on the first two, it should be noted that all of the following play a role:

1. A process of relexicalization in which, as we will see, "old words are replaced by new ones" (Halliday, 1998: 214). This substitution affects certain areas of the vocabulary linked to ways of life (including food, housing, work, leisure, etc.), thus conveying different subjective experiences and interpretations of reality.

2. A new frame that is activated, in line with Lakoff's (2007) theory of cognitive frames, through lexical selection and leads to a reinterpretation of the action (Goffman, 2006). For example, instead of expressing poverty as a trait through a phrase like "rummaging through garbage", relexicalization to "treasure hunting" allows an interpretation of the phenomenon as a trend (freeganism).

3. A remarkable discursive heterogeneity that contributes to the construction of a positive image of the phenomenon, through the hybridization of hegemonic discourses and alternatives ones, which gives rise to a discursive ambivalence. This can be observed in the assemblage of (inter)discursive borrowings that come from as diverse of scopes as activism, ecology, and entrepreneurship. Thus, for example, apps that distribute restaurant leftovers activate ecological arguments against waste and in favor of sustainability in order to become a business that makes that reuse profitable.

4. This combination of different elements ultimately allows the emergence of new discursive genres in the media ecosystem that often transgress narrative and stylistic conventions. They circumscribe the story to the sometimes confessional (Inoue, 2006) experience of the journalist themself to achieve reader identification. This is the case, for example, in the article entitled "Everything I've learned by eating out of the garbage" ("*Todo lo que he aprendido comiendo de la basura*", in Spanish), where the journalist makes use of a youthful colloquial register, expressed in the use of the first person, to narrate the subjective experience of those who have incorporated this new practice into their lifestyle. The new register, far from the vindicated media objectivity, is characterized, as is anything trending, by the strategic use of English (freeganism, dumpster diving, etc.). What's more, it becomes strongly convincing because it fulfills two major functions: on the one hand, it allows the dissemination of the new frame and, on the other hand, it has a legitimizing function of the described practices.

3. Results

In the following sections I will share some of the results of the analysis of our corpus. Due to space limitations, I will focus on two of the discursive strategies (relexicalization and reframing), both of which are crucial to the operation of the discursive shift referred to above.

3.1 Relexicalization

The process of relexicalization is fundamentally a selective operation; that is, it affects some areas of the vocabulary and not others. Both the choice of those aspects of social reality that will be emphasized and the language that will be used for their representation converge in this process. In the following examples, we see how this lexical selection, through a reflexive use of language, is expressed through terms such as "*ventajas*" (advantages) (example 1), "*furor*" (frenzy) (example 2) or "*molar*" (to be cool) (example 3). The interpretation of such lexical items infuses a positive quality into the different practices and experiences of precarity they refer to, while also allowing for an inversion of their meaning. In example 1, we see how the journalist recounts her (forced) move to the periphery and selects the term "advantage" to qualify it, instead of another more typical and expected one within the still existing frame of reference that points out and emphasizes its negative effects.

1. *Estas son las ventajas de vivir lejos del centro por culpa de la gentrificación*
   Here are the advantages of living farther from the center because of gentrification
   (*El País – Tentaciones*. April 1st, 2018)

2. *El furor de las minicasas*
   The tiny house frenzy
   (*El País – Negocios*. November 4th, 2017)

3. *Manifiesto de los 'treinteenagers' o por qué los 30 molan más que los 20*
   The 'thirtyteens' manifesto or why your 30s are cooler than your 20s
   (*El Mundo – Fcinco*. May 29th, 2016)

In this sense, lexical selection plays a decisive role in the process of *trendinization* and permits a change in the construction of representations insofar as it attenuates the pejorative elements that generally accompany these practices. From this perspective, the processes of precarization with regard to housing are de-problematized to the point that the imposition of moving to the periphery due to gentrification is perceived as an "advantage" (example 1). Similarly, the proliferation of real estate with a surface area of less than forty square meters causes "*furor*" ("frenzy" in English) (example 2), which shows the emotional intensity that generally characterizes these types of practices. In the final example (3) we find, however, a somewhat different relexicalization. Instead of a substitution of what would usually be the selected term, a new category is created, the "*treinteenagers*." This hybrid term, a blend of Spanish word for 30-year-old ("*treintañero*") with the English category of "teenager," represents the life of non-adolescents as a form of adolescence. The creation of this lexical unit makes integrating the lives of 30-somethings with those of adolescents possible, discrediting their difficulties of being on their own, as illustrated by the fact that only one in five young people under the age of 30 can become independent (Consejo de la Juventud de España, 2019). This positivization is declared, hence the use of the term "manifesto", as a phenomenon that "is cool" (example 3).

As can be seen from this last example, the use of blending, such as *treinteenager*, and its Spanish counterpart "*adolestreinta*,"[5] again resulting from the combination of thirty-year-old (*treintañero* in Spanish) and teenager (*adolescente*), is another common relexicalizing procedure that contributes to the sublimation of these events. This is the case for the term *trabacaciones* (example 4), where the combination of vacation (*vacaciones*) and work time (*trabajo*) is presented as a new strategy for the management of one's professional career.

4. *Trabacaciones en retiro: otros turismos emergentes*
   Workcation Retreat: Other Emerging Tourisms
   (*El País – Retina*. October 8th, 2018)

The same goes for the use of the term "*friganismo*", (freeganism in English), which is derived from the combination of the English words "free" and "veganism," used to designate the practice of eating salvagable food scraps found in the garbage.

5. *Friganismo: la última dieta hípster es coger comida de los contenedores de basura*
   Freeganism: the latest hipster diet is getting food out of the garbage

This term, which refers to the Freegan movement (see freegan.info) and promotes strategies for "sustainable living beyond capitalism" has been trended through the strategic selection of a set of terms that attribute positive values. As a result, this previously stigmatized "diet" gains its new, current meaning as demonstrated by the use of the syntagma "the latest diet." It is also linked to the prestigious youth subculture of the "hipster." This intentional and reflexive use of language indexes class positions in relation to a young, urban, and educated style of speech and permits the construction of a new point of view regarding socially condemned practices such as eating out of the garbage.

Acronyms constitute, along with the portmanteau observed in the two previous examples, another effective nomination strategy to reverse this disapproval and thus achieve a change of meaning that makes the process of *trendinization* possible. An example of this is the use of the word *sinkies* in the following example (6):

6. *Llegan los "sinkies", jóvenes en pareja pero sin planes de tener hijos*
    The 'sinkies' have arrived, young couples without plans to have children
    (*ABC*. December 9th, 2017)

This category, coined by Cáritas Europa (2017), brings together young couples whose salaries barely cover the amount of a decent "single income," hence their inability to develop autonomous life projects such as raising a family ("no kids"). However, instead of drawing attention to the risk of exclusion that threatens this generation, this acronym is used to point to its novelty, as is made explicit in the use of the verb "to arrive" (*llegar* in Spanish) and in line with the rhetoric of choice, suggested by the term "plans" (*planes*).

Ultimately, the use of neologisms is substantive to resignify the emergence or recuperation of practices traditionally linked to situations of misery as novel. This procedure allows for the substitution of words and/or expressions such as "eating out of the garbage" for others with less negative connotation such as "practicing freeganism," as indicated in example 5. In this context, new terminology emerges that shows how uncertainty and worsening living conditions are inscribed in youthful lifestyles, contributing to increasingly unstable life trajectories. This discontinuity is reflected in the use of expressions such as "*homo nomadus*" (example 7) which, in line with the neoliberal paradigm of mobility, extols the virtues of mobile architecture.

7. *'Homo nomadus': así es vivir con la casa a cuestas*
    'Homo nomadus': this is life with your house on your back
    (*El Mundo – EME*. March 16th, 2018)

This positivization is also transferred to the field of food patterns, where we witness the emergence of anglicisms such as "trash cooking" (examples 8 and 9) that illustrate the phenomenon of cooking with waste or garbage.

8. *Cocina de aprovechamiento: trucos para sacar al Trash Cooking*
    Cooking with what you've got: tricks to start Trash Cooking
    (*El Confidencial – Alimente*. November 1st, 2018)

9. *Diez modos de practicar el trash cooking vegano en casa*
    Ten ways to practice vegan trash cooking at home
    (*Eldiario.es – Consumo Claro*. May 26th, 2018

These designation strategies, based on the use of anglicisms, are commonly used to legitimize and present the adaptive mechanisms deployed by the young middle classes as desirable. Given their deliberate use of English, they act as an element of social distinction, as might be inferred from the following example where the term "nesting" relates to the habit of spending the weekend at home (that is, in the nest). When imported from English-speaking countries, mainly the United States, the trends, i.e. trending, are named in English.

10. *Nesting, como en casa en ningún sitio*
    Nesting, there's no place like home
    (*El Mundo*. April 24th, 2017)

In this case, the positive presentation of the phenomenon is manifested both in the use of the term "nesting" and in the evocation of a common place through the idiom "there's no place like home." This appeal to

the shared social imaginary allows its decontextualization and naturalizes the represented practice by avoiding delving into its causes and consequences, supporting an uncritical reading of the phenomenon and contributing to its social acceptance. On top of this, on more than a few occasions these headlines incorporate the affective dimension into the mediatization to increase their symbolic effectiveness, as shown in example 11.

11. *No salir de casa en todo el fin de semana rebaja la ansiedad e ilumina la mente*
Staying at home all weekend reduces anxiety and illuminates the mind
(*El País – BuenaVida*. March 29th, 2017)

In line with the previous example, staying at home appears to be intrinsically linked to psychological well-being, again giving a positive orientation to this set of practices. In this way, selection gives primacy to the most original, extravagant, and anecdotal aspects of the process of precarization. This both functions as a criterion of newsworthiness and conceals the conditions and social processes that allow the emergence of a new discursive order. This relexicalization ultimately enables the construction of a different interpretation of poverty. In this sense, relexicalization is linked to the discursive construction of a new view of certain situations, practices, and those who carry them out or experience them. The representation of the pejorative elements linked to stigma and exclusion, the result of a punitive view of precarious subjects, is transformed into another that presents them as in fashion and/or as an opportunity that distinguishes, instead of shaming, those who participate in them. The question that arises, then, is what makes this interpretation and its persuasive dissemination possible. It is at this point that the concept of 'frame' offers some answers.

3.2 Reframing

As Lakoff (2007) points out, based on Fillmore's work on frame semantics, the evocation of a term, or rather the substitution of one term for another, is enough to activate a frame that makes a different interpretation of events possible. The frame is, therefore, a shared cognitive model, a mental structure that encompasses a definition of the situation and/or the participants involved in it, drawing on William Thomas's proposal. As we have seen, relexicalization promotes the reframing of the described practices by means of lexical selection (like "nesting" in the previous example), which is crucial to invoke a new frame that allows the interpretation of these youthful precarities as part of a trend. Reframing constitutes, therefore, another of the procedures that most actively contributes to *trendinization* and the construction of youthful precarity and its experience as a newsworthy event. Given that reframing is inextricably linked to relexicalization, the substitution of some terms for others with less of a connotative load reframes the action and, as a result, fosters a change in media representation. Through the frame analysis we observe that there underlies an organizational principle, common to all of the analyzed articles, by which these practices are represented as in-fashion trends in accordance with the "new lifestyles and distinctive consumptions" that characterize the "new times of the postfordist consumption" (Alonso, 2004: 30). This transformation is evidenced through the use of frame terms that evoke the lexicon of trend and novelty, as can be inferred from the following headlines (examples 12 and 13):

12. *La moda de convertir un local en vivienda regresa a las calles*
The trend of turning stores into houses returns to the streets
(*El País – Negocios*. February 24th, 2018)

13. *Dumpster diving, la moda de buscar "tesoros abandonados" en los contenedores de basura*
Dumpster diving, the trend of looking for "abandoned treasures" in dumpsters
(*El Mundo – Fcinco*. June 3rd, 2018)

The stabilization of this frame is given by the use of the word "trend" (*moda*, in Spanish), which immediately evokes a frame in which people voluntarily follow a trend instead of being condemned to a given situation. In this way, a single word guides the terms in which these practices are discussed and (re)presented and mobilizes a certain interpretation of the events being narrated, thus demarcating the limits of what is sayable. From this perspective, living in commercial spaces and sifting through dumpsters in search of discarded objects are current phenomena that are anchored precisely in the novelty that accompanies such practices, as revealed by the use of the verb "to return" (*regresar*, in Spanish) (example 12) and "to establish" (*plantarse*) (example 15). This invocation of novelty is another of the attributes that decode this frame in the analyzed articles, which is also considered a criterion of newsworthiness that supports the creation of this type of content and its treatment as events of public interest.

14. *Tiny House, el nuevo concepto de vivienda que ha llegado a Europa y que ya arrasa Estados Unidos*
    Tiny House, a new housing concept has arrived in Europe and is on the rise in the USA
    (*El Mundo*. November 23rd, 2017)

15. *El 'co-living', la nueva moda de casa compartida se planta en Madrid*
    'Co-living', a new shared housing trend begins in Madrid
    (*El Mundo*. November 10th, 2018)

Residential formulas such as *minicasas* (tiny houses) or shared housing (co-living) have become object of renewed attention in this type of discourse; both initiatives are positively conceptualized as a "trend" (*tendencia*, in Spanish) (example 16). The same is true of the proliferation of mobile applications that make it possible to obtain the leftovers from bars and restaurants at a more affordable price by using business models based on social entrepreneurship (example 17).

16. *Coliving: la nueva tendencia entre emprendedores*
    Co-living: the new trend for entrepreneurs
    (*El Mundo*. November 21st, 2018)

17. *Nueva tendencia: apps para comprar las sobras de los restaurantes*
    New habits: apps to buy leftovers from restaurants
    (*El Confidencial – Alimente*. March 9th, 2019)

In line with mobility, the "ideology of entrepreneurship" (Rendueles and Sádaba, 2019: 344; Santos Ortega, 2014) constitutes another of the foundational elements of neoliberal rationality and its internalization in the processes of subjectivation, much celebrated in this type of discourse. This schema is based on the deployment of a socio-affective universe, where both positive thinking (Ehrenreich, 2011) and self-induced or "cruel" optimism (Berlant, 2011) function as strategic elements to achieve a creative transformation and a non-conflictual internalization in the face of a changing scenario, setting class differences aside. Thus, in opposition to the shame, guilt, and individual accountability that often permeate these discourses, we find others charged with a strong affective resonance where happiness (*felicidad*) (example 18), pleasure (*placer*) (example 19), and *humor* (humor) (example 20) promote self-discipline and adaptation to a progressive worsening of living conditions.

18. *40 m2 de felicidad*
    40 square meters of happiness
    (*El País*. May 23rd, 2014)

19. *'Nesting': el placer de no hacer nada*
    'Nesting': the pleasure of doing nothing
    (*El Mundo – Zen*. June 22nd, 2017)

20. *¿Treintañeros o adolescentes? Sin casa, hijos o nómina pero con humor*
    Thirty-year-olds or teenagers? No home, kids or paycheck, but funny
    (*El País – BuenaVida*. May 25th, 2016)

This last case contrasts with the idea of a "*ni-ni*" (NEETs, in English), which has been popularized over the last decade to refer to young people who neither study nor work in a stereotypical (INJUVE, 2011) and often pejorative way. Faced with the depreciation that underlies this acronym and that makes young people responsible for their condition (García-Fuentes, 2019), "humor" acts in this example (20) as an element that mitigates the impossibility of accessing housing, a stable job, or starting a family. Its presentation as a solution or alternative is also encapsulated in these discourses and acts as a legitimizing element of the practice itself, as can be seen in the following examples. In both cases, nesting is not experienced as coercion, but rather evokes an individual and elective choice (example 21), which neutralizes guilt and relies on the positive effects on well-being (example 22).

21. *Seis cosas que puedes hacer debajo de una manta*
    Six things you can do under a blanket
    (*El País*. December 13th, 2017)

22. *Una manera de quedarse el fin de semana en el sofá y no sentirse culpable*
    One way to sit on the couch all weekend and not feel guilty

This accommodation together with the deployment of coping strategies of various kinds are seen as a learning process (example 23), whose integration into daily life celebrates dispossession, material detachment, and minimalism (example 24). These lifestyles ultimately promote adaptation towards self-imposed asceticism and the internalization of more sustainable and responsible consumption patterns.

23. *Todo lo que he aprendido comiendo de la basura*
    Everything I've learned by eating out of the garbage
    (*El País – Tentaciones*. September 26th, 2016)

24. *La tiny house: donde menos es más*
    Tiny Houses: where less is more
    (*El País – Alterconsumismo*. September 5th, 2017)

As can be seen in the previous examples, this new orientation – or *trendinization* – revises and updates the negative and stereotyped conceptualization that accompanies these discourses, endowing the precarious condition with a different, stylized meaning. The precarious experience of young people from the middle class thus becomes the *locus* from which inclinations, uses, or habits are promoted and called upon to configure a unique and sustainable lifestyle. This propensity for novelty and innovation (manifested in the use of neologisms with a marked presence of English), originality (with the introduction of new registers), and authenticity (through the incorporation of first-person testimonies) contributes to forming a pattern – a trend – to follow. It also provides a distinctive orientation or an alternative way of doing or performing that is presented as attractive, thus facilitating its internalization. This transformation – from public controversy to trend – operates on the basis of a discursive shift in which the deployment of this new terminology favors a new frame that popularizes and disseminates the phenomenon. This new understanding as "fashionable" or "trendy" comes to fruition within the framework of a capitalist consumer culture, revealing a journalistic trivialization of the phenomenon (Díaz Nosty, 2015) that is presented as a minor issue or soft news, prioritizing novel and superficial elements at the expense of the structural causes that trigger exclusion.

4. Discussion

Having analyzed the strategies and discursive resources that participate in this construction, and in line with the foundations established by CDA as a research paradigm, I consider it essential to draw our attention to the effects of this *trendinization* on the social order. Based on the analytical tools used in the previous section, a significant change is identified on the discursive level. This is largely articulated through a novel lexicon that, as asserted by the critical linguistic tradition (Fowler et al., 1979), allows a transformation of representations and points of view, making possible the configuration of a new system of meanings (Martín Rojo, 1997b). This exercise therefore requires new terms that are devoid of the negative connotations that traditionally accompany the representation of precarity and poverty. This allows them to "mean with cleanliness" (de Santiago Guervós, 2016: 500) under this new *trendinizing* prism. The regulation of discursive practice by means of the lexical selection refers to an operation of "verbal hygiene" (Cameron, 1995) by which the mass media purifies some terms and expressions markedly connotative, like for example "to eat out of the garbage," with the objective of minimizing their shameful effects and attenuating their conflictive dimension. Likewise, it seeks to link these phenomena with positive emotions such as happiness, pleasure, or humor, not so much to promote them, but rather to neutralize or cancel out the stigma, anxiety, or guilt that are traditionally associated with these practices. Thus, by being silenced in the media discourse through *trendinization*, shame loses its potential as an engine of action (Sedgwick, 2018), promoting discipline in its place.

On the basis of this linguistic change, a new interpretative frame is built, stabilized, and circulated around the processes of precarization (Serrano, Parajuá and Zurdo, 2013), which becomes crystalized through a new frame that crosses and structures these discourses, allowing a resignification in their representations. In this way, the adaptive strategies mentioned throughout this article no longer appear as a controversial issue or a public controversy but, contrary to dominant common sense, as a trend embedded in youth lifestyles. Also contributing to this is the reconstruction of a scheme of emotions that circulates around these practices and urges precarious youth to maintain a certain class position despite the worsening of their living conditions. Media discourse thus contributes to the creation of emotional capital for these middle-class young people insofar as it dissociates shame from their bodies and identities. Instead, these practices are associated with "high emotions," linked to fashion and consumer culture, which act as "signs of refinement" (Ahmed, 2015: 23).

Underlying this new frame is also, as Lakoff argues, a social change (2007: 4) that affects both the agency and the subjectivity of the subjects represented in line with a neoliberal rationality. Thus, by presenting this set of practices as trending, that is, as an available option, this *trendinization* presumes and mobilizes an act of agency. Joining a trend, which also comes with social recognition, and incorporating these practices into life habits implies a choice by which subjects are urged to act, evaluate, and decide on their own inclinations. And it does so through a process of deliberation guided by a reflective exercise that is typical of neoliberal agency (Gershon, 2011), where the pursuit of performance (Friedrich et al., 2018; Han, 2014) and cost-benefit logics acquire an unprecedented centrality. In the face of the coercion that the processes of precarization impose on youth lifestyles, *trendinization* is presented as a fundamentally elective issue. In other words, instead of "drawing attention to the seriousness of the youth condition" (Ortega and Martín, 2012: 94), it praises and promotes a particular type of neoliberal subjectivity: that of the self-made subject, which requires sufficient courage and pride to carry out a choice in the face of the paralyzing dimension (Tejerina et al., 2012: 126) that precarity often entails.

According to this paradigm, the threat of downward social mobility (Bourdieu, 1988) is experienced as a trend; that is, as a form of being self-made to the extent that this optimization is experienced as a disciplinary technique to avoid feeling like a loser in the context of a consumer society. The internalization of such style constitutes, therefore, a form of self-capitalization insofar as it favors the increase and valorization of one's human capital, which is also linked to a form of subjective well-being in which positive thinking and resilience play a key role. Both contribute to the de-dramatization and impose an affective turn that not only molds this set of practices, but also facilitates their naturalization.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, this article is a preliminary discursive approximation [6] to the question of youth in a context where, although precarity rules, it is interwoven in their lifestyles in a myriad of ways. This destabilization has been extensively addressed in the media agenda in recent years, especially in the case of digital press, where the emergence of new, ambivalent, and heterogeneous discourses no longer represents youth precarity as public controversy, but as a trend. This *trendinization* constitutes, therefore, one of the routes of precarity and generates a lifestyle where this condition is deconflicted and positivized, giving rise to a weak or pre-exclusive precarity. Sublimation operates on the basis of a discursive change based on four strategies: relexicalization and reframing, analyzed in this article, as well as heteroglossia and the emergence of new discursive genres. In this sense, the strategic selection of terms and the substitution of words with a greater connotative load for others promote a new frame and, along with it, a new interpretation of the phenomenon.

The fact that the practices described are conceptualized as a trend implies an adhesion on the part of the subject and thus places them in the field of personal choice. Because of their elective character, they are (re)presented as an opportunity for personal transformation and individual well-being, thus promoting a type of neoliberal-style subjectivity, one that encourages self-realization, self-construction, and self-capitalization. These strategies make it possible to circumvent the perception of personal failure and, instead, act as a technique of self-discipline. The media naturalize this precarity by deploying a new discourse that both de-problematizes them and increases their symbolic effectiveness through a socio-affective universe. This emotional dimension permeates the analyzed discourses and promotes a positive and aestheticized interpretation of them. Affective mobilization – through happiness, pleasure, humor, or resilience – links the different practices to individual well-being and also reinforces this frame of trend that links these practices to an unprecedented lifestyle. By insisting precisely on their positive character and transformative potential, this representation generates a de-stigmatization that counteracts the shame, fear, anxiety, or guilt normally associated with these destabilizing processes. It also dissociates them from phenomena such as shameful poverty by showing different ways or strategies of experiencing the modes of consumption, where enjoyment, pride, and fun define this affective experience.

6. References

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Notes

1. All newspaper headlines were originally published in Spanish. All translations are my own, written for the English version of this article.

2. For a detailed analysis on the "spectacle of misery" in audiovisual documents, see Serrano and Zurdo (2013).

3. See Cingolani (2014) for a review of the diverse meanings attributed to this term in the French sociological tradition.

4. The 24 articles correspond to informative pieces published by Spanish newspapers (*ABC*, *El Confidencial*, *Eldiario.es*, *El Mundo* and *El País*), and their magazines and supplements. Most of them account for these practices by taking a testimonial perspective, hence their interest in this research.

5. This neologism has been found in other articles, like "Treinta" published by *El País* and "Ellos son adolestreinta" in *La Voz de Galicia*.

6. Since this work is a first approach to the analysis of the described discursive universe, the results shared here constitute only a section of the research, which is part of a broader ongoing project. In this sense, we maintain that media discourse participates in a more complex system of discourses that articulates this system of representations. For this reason, and in order to incur in the "mediocentric bias" (Valera, 2016), it becomes necessary to trace and consider a more extensive set of extramediatic influences that participate in this *trendinization*, make possible the emergence of these discourses and contribute to their legitimization. Hence, the need to reinforce this study with those areas of inquiry that allow to capture the complexity of the phenomenon, show the plurality of discourses that participate in this system and give voice to the social actors involved.