

of the literary genres; relationships among authors; all of it within the context of Western literature. Only occasionally, so long as the contribution is especially relevant, do we publish essays on literary periods, international relationships and literary theory". This declaration, scarcely comparatist and definitely unpretentious, may sound too restrictive; but the authors do not intend to cover an extensive field of comparatism and theory, as is the case of the aforementioned *Yearbook*.

Exemplaria contains three sections: articles, notes and reviews. The first section of the first issue includes ten articles. The first one, Pierre Bruynel, is a reflection on the concepts of theme and myth as exemplified by the figure of the labyrinth. This first issue also collects essays by Francisco Abad (on comparative studies in Menéndez Pidal's school), Vicente Cristóbal (on *Anaxarete* from Ovid to Jorge Guillén), Susana Gil Albarellos (on the Renaissance debates about chivalry), Antonio Garnica (on the Spanish anticlerical novel), Eloísa Nos Aldás (on Hugh MacDiarmid and Emily Dickinson), Luis Gómez Canseco (on mythical and archetypal structures in Sánchez Mazas' novels), Carmen Pérez Romero and Lourdes Nuevo (on the functions of the proper name in the shaping of character), Luisa María Gutiérrez Hermosa (on the theory of the Golden Age novella), and José Enríque Martínez Fernández (on literary influence and textual marks).

As to the "Notes" section, this first issue of *Exemplaria* contains contributions by Miguel A. Márquez (on variations of the *carpe diem* topic in Propertius), Montserrat Martínez Vázquez (on a sonnet by Philip Sidney), Zenón Luis Martínez (on *Roman caritas* in *King Lear*), and Pablo Zambrano (on John Donne and Ovid's *Amori*). The rest is complete with excellent reviews of such recent books as D. Blow's *Mirabile Dictu: Representations of the Marvelous in Medieval and Renaissance Epic* (Ann Arbor, 1996), G. A. Kennedy's *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, 1994), J. Álvarez Barrientos and J. Checa Beltrán's *El siglo que llaman ilustrado* (Madrid, 1996), M. Alloin-Castrillo's *Paul Valéry y el mundo hispánico* (Madrid, 1995), G. Steiner's *No Passion Spent: Essays, 1978-1995* (New Haven, 1996), and P. H. Piñero Ramírez's edited collection *Descensus ad infernos. La aventura de ultratumba de los héroes (de Homero a Goethe)* (Sevilla, 1996).

Finally, we must note that all the articles and notes in this issue are published in either Spanish, French or English. We must understand that future issues will contain essays in other languages as well.

Francisca Vázquez

Ramón Ribé (with the collaboration of María Luz Celaya, Margarita Ravera, Fernanda Rodríguez, Elsa Tragant y Núria Vidal). *Tramas creativas y aprendizaje de lenguas (Prototipos de tareas de tercera generación)*, Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, Publicacions, 1997, 306 pp.

The book reviewed here represents, above all, a very interesting and relevant contribution in the complex but equally attractive world of foreign language teaching. The author and his colleagues have succeeded in presenting an exhaustive working corpus which, as I will

later on explain in more detail, gives a breakdown of the different problems of each educational level in which foreign language teaching is present. Moreover, all the information offered in this book is always supported by exercises and tests of different kinds, which are in turn subjected to a results evaluation process. Both teachers -who can find there reference points to improve the degree of satisfaction in their professional activity- and learners -who are in fact the final addressees of all these initiatives- take part in that evaluation process, as can be seen in chapter 12, which shows some prototypes that will be useful to judge the research work undertaken by Ribé and his collaborators).

Ramón Ribé is very concerned about the accuracy of terms, which explains why, before presenting any specific materials, he gives precise and up-to-date definitions of the terms, particularly for the two key terms in this work, namely *tarea* (task) and *trama* (framework). We must emphasize the importance of the latter term, as it becomes very useful when it comes to establishing the complexity and to designing the objectives of the different exercises carried out in the foreign languages class.

In a very structured way and with a clear presentation, Ribé takes us -between the Introduction and chapter 4- from the traditionally used and nowadays a bit worn-out term -*tarea*- to a much more modern conception in which tasks are becoming differentiated according to the various fields they cover. Thus, the term *tarea* is reserved for the so-called *tareas de primera generación* (first-generation tasks), that is to say, the kind of exercises that can be considered as basic, whereas what has been usually known as *tareas de segunda y tercera generación* (second- and third-generation tasks), will be given a new denomination: *tramas de desarrollo cognitivo* (cognitive development frameworks) and *tramas de desarrollo creativo* (creative development frameworks), respectively.

Taking as his main reference the above mentioned key concepts, Ribé offers -in the first part of the book (chapters 1 to 6) called *Aspectos Teóricos* (Theoretical Aspects)- a very clear and illustrative characterization of the various factors and variables coming into play from the point of view of teaching (chapter 2), distinguishing as well the problems and features which are peculiar to each educational level. Thus, emphasis is laid in these chapters on such crucial aspects as creativity (chapter 5) -which, as is explained in the book, is present in all age-groups, although differently-, language-processing (chapter 6) or the conditions and factors which shape what Ribé calls *la realidad del aula* (the classroom's reality).

Inside this first part are specially worthy of mention the samples of third-generation tasks provided in chapter 3 and based on very different sources, such as general information tourist guides about Barcelona, tales like *Little Red Riding Hood*, literary works like *Counterpoint* or *El Mundo de Sofía* (*Sophie's world*) or a song by the late Freddie Mercury ('*Living on my own*'). The variety and appeal of those topics deserves a positive appraisal on my part because it helps motivate students, which optimizes the results obtained with those learning exercises. As is said in the book, the learning process must be closely linked to the life experience of the people taking part in the process. We should never detach that learning process from what surrounds students in their everyday life.

The second part of the book (chapters 7 to 12) offers specific examples of *tramas* designed as prototypes focusing on the different educational levels (primary education -

chapter 9-, secondary education -chapter 8- and university education -chapter 10-), as well as the other side of the coin, the training of teachers (chapter 11), who are as essential in the learning process as the students who receive their teaching. This second part is complemented with an introduction on the research carried out so far as regards framework prototypes (chapter 11) and evaluation prototypes (chapter 12), which I referred to at the beginning of this review, essential for both teachers and learners to be able to assess their performance and the practical results of the different activities, projects and tasks done either inside or outside the classroom within the global context we identify as the learning process.

It becomes obvious throughout the book that the different prototypes and *tramas* proposed are the result of a thorough study and an in-depth research work on the very varied aspects of both the teaching and learning of foreign languages. The information we have access to here is, as is written at the beginning of the book, the final result of the initiative undertaken by a team of enthusiastic researchers, who are also aware of the fact that their effort, however praiseworthy it may be, represents nothing but the foundation stone -maybe the first stone in the building but also indispensable to continue. In this respect, I would like to thank the author for the wide range of bibliography references provided at the end of each chapter.

Finally, the third part of the book -called *Estudio de aspectos concretos* (Study of specific aspects)-, in chapters 12 to 16, deals with some specific fields separately, namely, the written code (which is the main topic in chapter 13, elaborated by María Luz Celaya and Elsa Tragant), the oral code (which Elsa Tragant and María Luz Celaya tackle in chapter 14) and, in chapter 15, what Núria Vidal calls '*el cambio actitudinal*' (the change in attitude) which takes place in the class, both on the part of the students and on the teachers' side. All this is complemented with Ramón Ribé's conclusions (chapter 16) in which he describes the philosophy and the objectives of the research work this book has resulted from, when he defends what he calls '*enfoque vivencial*' (life-experience approach) as an alternative to most of the current syllabuses or curricula saying that '*aprendizaje como desarrollo, autonomía del alumno y del enseñante, tareas centradas en el alumno,...evaluación del proceso o el rol del profesor como investigador son algunos elementos que no aparecen en absoluto en algunos medios de instrucción...Por lo que respecta al alumno...[cuando se pueden implementar] formas de aprendizaje basadas en un entorno de trabajo autónomo y cooperativo...los resultados sorprenden a los propios aprendientes*' (learning as development, independence for both the student and the teacher, student-centred tasks...assessment of the process or the role of the teacher as a researcher are some of the elements which are completely ignored in some instruction schemes...As far as the student is concerned...[when they can be implemented] ways of learning based on research or creative frameworks based on an environment of autonomous and co-operative work...results surprise the learners themselves).