

personales. El final de *In Cold Blood* (el encuentro ficticio entre Dewey y Susan) ni es falso ni es un exceso sentimental; es una necesidad artística y una necesidad vital» (p. 92).

A partir de aquí y ya en los apartados de las conclusiones, el profesor de la Aleja enumera las causas de la autodestrucción del novelista. Las vivencias por las que había atravesado para crear sus últimas obras se habían demostrado como demasiado fuertes para aguantarlas, y el alcohol, las drogas y el abandono de aquella sociedad que le había mimado crearon el espacio adecuado para su final. Somos conscientes de que se trata de un escritor muy peculiar, de un hombre que quiso llevar el mundo real a la novela más que la novela al mundo real y para quien la distinción convencional entre ficción y no-ficción no existe. La única realidad que cuenta es la que subyace en la imaginación del autor. Y de aquí arranca toda una nueva teoría sobre el periodismo, la novelística, el reportaje, el cuento o la crónica de sociedad; teoría que se convertirá en el gozne sobre el que gira el nuevo periodismo norteamericano. Dentro de este contexto, creo que habrá que destacar dos ideas concluyentes que, en mi opinión, son fundamentales: por un lado «la objetividad rigurosa se deshecha por imposible y se adopta una subjetividad honesta en la que el autor no pretende ofrecer una verdad inexorable, sino un punto de vista legitimado por la sinceridad con la que plantea sus intenciones al lector» (p. 99), y por otro «las circunstancias en que la mayoría de estas obras fueron escritas y los claros propósitos de denuncia o investigación por las que se llevaron a cabo eclipsan necesariamente otras consideraciones estéticas» (p. 99).

Creo que el profesor de la Aleja ha conseguido un excelente estudio monográfico sobre uno de los escritores más polémicos de las últimas décadas de la literatura norteamericana, insertándolo con una sólida argumentación, con rigor y meticulosidad dentro de una de las corrientes más heterodoxas de esa literatura. No me cabe la menor duda de que junto a su otro reciente estudio titulado *El nuevo periodismo norteamericano* serán, desde ahora en adelante, obligadas fuentes de consulta para todos los interesados en el tema.

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Félix Rodríguez González. *Prensa y lenguaje político*. Madrid: Fundamentos; Alicante: Instituto de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert, 1991, 308 pp.

Language has been described as both a mould determining thought and a means for representing it. This view, known as the «linguistic relativity» or «linguistic determinism» hypothesis, originated with Humboldt and was developed by the American anthropologists Sapir and Whorf. Later it became a subject of intense interest to Orwell, whose linguistic insights and preoccupations are expressed throughout his literary production. In Félix Rodríguez González's collection of studies *Prensa y lenguaje político* we find this idea as one of its recurring concepts.

However, this ample view is complemented by notions that stem from the discipline of sociolinguistics, a basic recognition of which is that language varies in relation to different social parameters and areas of social activity. Thus distinct styles of language will characteristically be employed by different social groups and institutions. Finally, a third theoretical framework underlying Rodríguez's book is provided by structuralist linguistics and its concepts of linguistic sign, form and meaning.

The author focuses specifically on the domains of politics and the media, whose discursive features—mainly lexical—constitute the central object of his interest. The multiplicity of theoretical frames allows a rich perspective on various aspects such as semantic and morphological changes, word-formation, borrowing of lexemes from other cultural areas or the use of expressions to signal social identity.

The first chapter, «Sociolingüística del tratamiento político: a propósito de Orwell,» may be seen as belonging to the tradition of qualitative sociolinguistics. Here the reader is presented with a detailed study of the social meanings of nominal and pronominal terms of address in Orwell's work. This analysis makes use of the concepts of «power» and «solidarity» proposed by Brown and Gilman and later applied by practitioners of «Critical Linguistics» (Fowler and others). Rodríguez amply illustrates these notions by discussing the use of terms of address in times of social transformation, as well as their variants in totalitarian régimes. In this way he stresses the role of the linguistic sign as carrier of social, political and ideological connotations, as a reflection of social structure and as a transmitter of social stereotypes.

The next contribution, «Eufemismo y otras claves sobre el lenguaje de la propaganda política,» continues Orwell's attention to the phenomenon of euphemism and its effect on people's thoughts and attitudes. Here Félix Rodríguez approaches this problem—lexical, grammatical or pragmatic—as evidenced in political texts of the English and Spanish-speaking world. Although there are frequent references to concepts deriving from discourse analysis, textual linguistics and the above mentioned critical linguistics, the author to a large extent adopts the perspective of structuralist lexicology. He begins with a survey of the most relevant lexical (sub-)fields in political discourse, and then goes on to study the question of «dysphemism,» among other «symbols» or «stereotypes,» as well as the obscurity and opaqueness of language. Within this aspect he develops Marcuse's argument on the lack of linguistic motivation in the growing number of abbreviations and acronyms occurring in the political field, which often render discourse incomprehensible.

«Metáfora y humor en el discurso político,» the third study, aims to show the importance of metaphor in political oratory. Here the traditional «expressive» function of metaphor is complemented by an «impressive» function related to the persuasive aim of this type of discourse. The author identifies recurrent themes of metaphorical expressions in politicians' speeches or in political news: war, games, show-business, religion, family terms, animals, ... . Although the sources are mainly Spanish newspapers and weeklies, Rodríguez underlines the analogies to be found in other cultural areas of the Western world.

In «Derivados de siglas de carácter político» we find a different emphasis. Here the author is concerned with a major process in many contemporary languages: the creation

and use of acronym derivatives. The paper explains the linguistic (stylistic) and extralinguistic conditioning factors as a result of which Spanish acronyms present a greater «lexical frequency» of derivatives when compared to other Romance languages like French, and even more so when compared to English. It also examines the large number of suffixes (nominal, adjectival and verbal), especially in the Spanish language, as well as the semantic changes they sometimes undergo.

«Los cruces léxicos en el ámbito político-periodístico» looks into another instance of word-formation: lexical blends. Blends make up an important proportion of new words in English, and though present in the literary work of writers like Lewis Carroll (*chortle* as the combination of *snort* and *chuckle*), they are particularly noticeable in technical and scientific English and in media discourse. In the Spanish language, however, blends have only very recently become frequent (*catastroika* as blend of *catástrofe* and *perestroika*). Often they are the product of journalists' imaginations and have an ephemeral existence. In spite of this, as the author sets out to show, their importance as a word-formation process in Spanish lies in the creation of new affixes and in the semantic change of already existing ones.

We now turn to the last chapter, «Hispanismos en la prensa política angloamericana.» Traditionally, studies of loanwords have focused on toponymy and other aspects of onomastics related to Hispanic culture (*tortilla*, *rodeo*, *sombrero*, etc.). However, as the author argues, nowadays it is the political field that provides the largest number of borrowings. The study illustrates this with a variety of examples and also discovers morphological and typographical variations in them. Although they may appear as vacillation on the part of the writer, these variations frequently correlate with stylistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic factors. This is the case, for instance, of the eponyms *franquista/Francoist*, implying distinct ideological characterizations. A glossary of Spanish loan words in political and newspaper language, together with their contexts, is included.

Each chapter is accompanied by specialized bibliography and/or a glossary of terms on the subject. In addition to this, the book ends with a selected and commented «Bibliografía sobre el lenguaje político,» which contains more than two hundred and thirty entries of works of a general character, specific studies of political and media discourse in Spain and (Latin-)America, as well as a list of 79 dictionaries and glossaries of political language in the Spanish-speaking world.

Rodríguez's articles and bibliography present a remarkably exhaustive study of various lexical phenomena typical of political and media discourse. It is around this central problem that he attempts to carry out a thoroughly integrated study of form, meaning and social use of language. Moreover, this comprehensive proposal has the further advantage of offering a highly selected corpus of linguistic data and bibliographic references. Therefore, Felix Rodríguez's book will undoubtedly prove invaluable for those interested in or undertaking further research in this social dimension of language.