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1803



# ÍKALA

Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura



**Artist:** Victoria Ortiz



Master Victoria Ortiz is an engraver, graphic designer and former university professor. She was born in Medellín in the middle of the 20th century. Since she was a child, drawing, painting, and architecture were her inspiration, as well as the great European masters in these disciplines.

In 1973, she graduated as a graphic designer, with studies in architecture, from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, in Medellín. Between 1974 and 1977, she continued her training in graphic design at Chelsea School of Art, in London. She, then, specialized in printmaking with a Master of Fine Arts from Slade School University College, and a Master of Arts from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, also in London.

Between 1980 and 2012, she devoted herself to teaching at several universities both in Colombia and abroad. This is how she worked in institutions such as Slade School University College, in London; University of California at Santa Barbara, United States; Escola Superior Artes e Design, in Caldas da Rainha, Portugal; Universidad de Los Andes, in Bogotá, Colombia; and Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana and Universidad de Antioquia, in Medellín, Colombia.

In her engravings, recurring themes are the tropic, life in the open air, birds, the beach, and women. According to the artist, this is due to her "nostalgia for the tropics, as a result of many years living away from it." The engraving technique allows Master Ortiz to use cuts, strong strokes, and color spots, without much detail, in an expressionist and semi-figurative approach that stands out in each of her works.

Master Ortiz has participated in individual and collective exhibitions in cities as iconic as London, Paris, New York, Washington DC, and Bogotá. Also, she has presented her oeuvre in cities like Tavira and Caldas da Rainha in Portugal; Willdenhausen in Germany; Williamsburg and Montecito, in the United States; and Medellín, in Colombia

Her great work earned her an invitation by the Cuerwen Gallery to do two paintings for the P&O Royal Princess, in London, in 1980. It has also given her the opportunity to participate in several important exhibitions such as the one entitled "Beyond Encounter", in Washington and New York, in 2021; and the upcoming Latin American Triennial, in New York, United States, in 2022.

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You may look at a broader sample of the artist's work [here](#).

Works reviewed in this issue:

**Cover:** *Exótico*, woodcut, 60 x 49.5 cm.

**Dividers:** *Zapzurro*, woodcut, 60 x 49.5 cm. *Tucán*, etching, 30 x 34.5 cm. *Dreams*, etching, 14 x 14 cm. *Meeting*, etching, 30 x 30 cm. *Silleteros*, wood engraving, 28.5 x 40 cm.

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**Escuela de Idiomas**



# UNIVERSIDAD DE ANTIOQUIA

## Escuela de Idiomas

*Íkala, Journal of Language and Culture*, is a refereed scientific journal published by the School of Languages at University of Antioquia in Medellín, Colombia. Its main objective is to provide an academic forum for respectful informed discussion about current subjects related to language and culture, linguistics, literature, translation, and teaching and learning foreign languages, among others. The journal continuously receives empirical studies, literature reviews, theoretical and methodological articles, case studies and book reviews written in English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese. These articles are gathered in three issues, each with an average of twelve articles, and they are published in January, May and September yearly.

Once a year, the journal publishes a special issue on topics of great interest for the field. Some of those topics have been about the professional development of language teachers, translation, terminology and specialized languages, global languages and local identities, academic writing, and literacy studies in Latin America. Other topics in publications from 2021 to 2023 include systemic functional linguistics applied in language education, the use of technology and information communications (TIC) in the teaching of languages, and audiovisual translation. These special issues are generally published in May yearly, and they are available online in open access as the regular issues.

The journal expects that manuscripts submitted to regular and special issues uphold the following: meet the highest standards of academic excellence; advance theoretical knowledge by addressing current and cutting-edge topics in applied linguistics; reflect critically on theory and practice; show topic originality; contribute to or stimulate current debate; offer new, original interpretations of the topics of interest; demonstrate rigor in data collection and analysis; present interesting results, discussions and conclusions with a great depth of analysis; be well written with sophistication, precision and conciseness; avoid biased or prejudiced language; meet the specifications of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, APA* (7.<sup>th</sup> Ed.); and in general, make a significant contribution to the field.





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# PRESENTATION

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This 2023 finds many of us full of hope that we will be able to leave the pandemic behind once and for all, that we will be able to walk among crowds without fear of catching the virus, that we will be able to go everywhere without a mask, and that we will be able to forget about the nightmare we had to live through, among other kinds.

Nonetheless, 2023 also finds us full of fear and frightful premonitions that there will be a global economic recession, that as a minimum, there will be an increase in the inflation rate in most countries which will augment hunger and poverty everywhere, and that most countries will be so focused on acquiring fuel and gas to survive the winter that they will not be able to reduce greenhouse emissions, and therefore, the environmental crisis we are already living through will just get worse.

The articles that comprise this first volume of 2023 — which can be divided into 8 written in Spanish, and 4 in English; 5 empirical studies, 3 case studies, and 1 theoretical article — renew our hope for a better world post-pandemic, or at least, a better way to communicate among ourselves through the use of learning management systems (Afzali, Mohammaddockht & Fathi's article) and various social networks which have become crucial in this modern world, such as Whatsapp (García, Lengeling, Mora and Conaway's article), Twitter and Instagram (García & García's article).

They also provide a space to increase our knowledge of linguistic concepts, such as interactional metadiscourse markers used in academic discourse (Boginkaya's article), relativizers in the Spanish of cosmopolitan Latin American cities such as Medellín (Arias' article), and the recently born language of cryptocurrencies (Casañ's article). Key in the development of this knowledge are foreign language instructors whose role is addressed in Bailey, Corrales, Rey, and Rosado's article about the challenges they face in these times of crisis, and in Aristizabal and Ortiz's article on how to use the English classroom to work on peace projects.

Moreover, the articles shed light on social phenomena that have been taking place for years but have now become commonplace, such as the erosion of heritage languages like Croatian language in Argentina (Bilić, Cuneo & Franić's article), the displacement of indigenous communities such as the Embera Chamí to urban centers like Bogotá (Alarcón & Rojas' article), and the use of linguistic prejudices in research projects, specifically in interviews (Figueroa's article).

Finally, as a solace in our compendium, and a great read for those not so interested in online instruction, social media communication, linguistic analysis, corpus linguistics, language instructors' professional development, or sociolinguistic phenomena stands the article by Vargas, who masterfully analyzes how Colombian writer Cepeda Samudio used filmic resources in the writing of his novel *La casa grande*.

We hope that you enjoy this and the other 11 articles in the selection, that all our hopes for this year materialize, and that all our fears fade away as we navigate this surprisingly complicated 2023. Our expectation is to be right there with you, taming the troubled waters and keeping faith up.





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# FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TIMES OF CRISIS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

DESARROLLO PROFESIONAL DE DOCENTES DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS EN ÉPOCAS DE CRISIS: DESAFÍOS Y SOLUCIONES

DÉVELOPPÉMENT PROFESSIONNEL DES ENSEIGNANTS DE LANGUES ÉTRANGÈRES DANS DES TEMPS DE CRISE : DÉFIS ET SOLUTIONS

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## ABSTRACT

The unprecedented situation of COVID-19 compelled many universities and colleges worldwide to reconsider both the management and delivery of classes, forcing faculty to use innovative online and mobile means. The transition also caused faculty to reevaluate their professional development (PD). This qualitative exploratory study focused on the PD experienced by a group of foreign language university instructors in Colombia during this crisis. Specifically it identified the challenges encountered and how these were tackled. Data were collected through an open-ended survey and analyzed using content analysis. Results show ten main challenges, which were then categorized into three themes: (a) adaptation to emergency remote teaching, (b) promotion of student engagement, and (c) handling of emotions. Conclusions reveal that professors embraced the crisis with a positive attitude, engaging in different PD opportunities, displaying agency, responsibility, and flexibility. Therefore, the challenges and their reaction to them fostered their PD and learning. These findings suggest that institutions should allow instructors to give input into the types of PD programs that they need for specific situations.

**Keywords:** challenges; COVID-19; emergency remote teaching (ERT); foreign languages; professional development.

## RESUMEN

La situación inédita planteada por la COVID-19 forzó a muchas universidades e instituciones de educación superior en todo el mundo a revisar tanto la planeación como la realización de sus clases, lo que llevó a los docentes a utilizar medios

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en línea y móviles. La transición también llevó a los docentes a reevaluar su desarrollo profesional (DP). El presente estudio exploratorio se centró en el DP que experimentó un grupo de docentes de lengua extranjera de una universidad en Colombia durante esta crisis. Específicamente, el estudio identifica los desafíos que encontraron y cómo los enfrentaron. Los datos se recogieron mediante una encuesta de preguntas abiertas y se analizaron usando análisis de contenido. Los resultados muestran diez desafíos principales, que luego se clasificaron en tres categorías temáticas: a) adaptación a la enseñanza remota de emergencia, b) fomento de la participación del estudiante, y c) manejo de emociones. Las conclusiones revelan que los docentes asumieron la crisis con una actitud positiva, iniciando diferentes oportunidades de DP, haciendo un despliegue de agencia, responsabilidad y flexibilidad. Por consiguiente, los desafíos y su reacción a ellos estimularon el DP y el aprendizaje de este grupo. Estos hallazgos sugieren que las instituciones deberían permitir la retroalimentación de los docentes sobre los tipos de programas de DP que necesitan para situaciones específicas.

**Palabras clave:** desafíos; COVID-19; enseñanza remota de emergencia (ERE); lenguas extranjeras; desarrollo profesional.

### RÉSUMÉ

La situation sans précédent posée par la COVID-19 a contraint de nombreuses universités et établissements d'enseignement supérieur du monde entier à revoir à la fois la planification et la prestation de leurs cours, incitant les enseignants à utiliser des médias en ligne et mobiles. La transition a amené les enseignants à réévaluer leur développement professionnel (DP). Cette étude exploratoire s'est concentrée sur le DP vécu par un groupe d'enseignants de langues étrangères dans une université en Colombie pendant cette crise. Concrètement, l'étude identifie les défis qu'ils ont rencontrés et comment ils les ont relevés. Les données ont été recueillies au moyen d'une enquête à questions ouvertes et analysées à l'aide d'une analyse de contenu. Les résultats font apparaître dix principaux défis, qui ont ensuite été classés en trois catégories thématiques : a) s'adapter à l'enseignement à distance d'urgence, b) encourager la participation des étudiants et c) gérer les émotions. Les conclusions révèlent que les enseignants ont assumé la crise avec une attitude positive, initiant différentes opportunités de perfectionnement professionnel, faisant preuve d'agence, de responsabilité et de flexibilité. Par conséquent, les défis et leurs réactions ont stimulé le DP et l'apprentissage de ce groupe. Ces résultats suggèrent que les établissements devraient permettre aux enseignants de participer du feedback sur les types de programmes de DP dont ils ont besoin pour des situations spécifiques.

**Mots clef :** défis ; COVID-19 ; enseignement en ligne en situation d'urgence (ESU) ; langues étrangères ; développement professionnel.

### RESUMO

A situação sem precedentes imposta pela COVID-19 forçou muitas universidades e instituições de ensino superior em todo o mundo a revisar o planejamento e a entrega de suas aulas, levando os professores a usar mídias online e móveis. A transição também levou os professores a reavaliar seu desenvolvimento profissional (DP). Este estudo exploratório enfocou o DP vivenciado por um grupo de professores de línguas estrangeiras de uma universidade na Colômbia durante esta crise. Especificamente o estudo identifica os desafios que eles encontraram e como os enfrentaram. Os dados foram coletados por meio de uma pesquisa



de perguntas abertas e analisados por meio da análise de conteúdo. Os resultados mostram dez desafios principais, que foram classificados em três categorias temáticas: a) adaptação ao ensino remoto emergencial, b) incentivo à participação dos alunos e c) gerenciamento de emoções. As conclusões revelam que os professores assumiram a crise com uma atitude positiva, engajando-se diferentes oportunidades de DP, exibindo agência, responsabilidade e flexibilidade. Consequentemente, os desafios e a reação a eles estimularam o DP e a aprendizagem desse grupo. Essas descobertas sugerem que as instituições deveriam permitir o feedback dos professores sobre os tipos de programas de DP de que precisam para situações específicas.

**Palavras chave:** desafios; COVID-19; ensino remoto emergencial (ERE); língua estrangeira; desenvolvimento profissional.

## Introduction

At the organizational level, a crisis is defined by Gigliotti (2019) as “the events or situations of significant magnitude that threaten reputations, impact the lives of those involved in the institution, [and] disrupt the ways in which the organization [regularly] functions”(p. 49). At this level, the role of crisis management and leadership is to ensure and provide support for immediate needs while planning long and short-term strategic goals (Gigliotti, 2020). At the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the tumultuous impact was felt in educational institutions, businesses, and life in general. Thus, the unprecedented activities brought by COVID-19 compelled many universities and colleges worldwide to reconsider both the management and delivery of classes to ensure an equitable and quality education for their students. In turn, this impelled a rapid start of virtual instruction (synchronous, asynchronous, or a mix), creating an opening for “opportunity, innovation, and reinvention” (Gigliotti, 2020, p. 14) to meet the challenges of this transition to emergency remote teaching (ERT), which is “a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances” (Hodges et al., 2020, para. 12). Such a change has dramatically impacted PD as we know it.

To clarify, teacher professional development (PD) is defined as the improvement of teaching practice by strengthening knowledge and skills (Avidov-Ungar & Herscu, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). This includes not only the way PD is delivered but also teacher learning (Scherff, 2018). PD, in general, has many different approaches for its delivery: (1) on- or off-site; (2) one-off or with follow-up support; (3) short, middle, or long-term; (4) insider or outsider; or (5) top-down or bottom-up (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Sansom, 2020; Seidel & Shavelson, 2007). PD also implies formal activities, individually or collaboratively (King, 2004; Villegas-Reimers, 2003), or informal activities such as “reading professional

publications, watching television documentaries related to an academic discipline, etc.” (Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p. 9). PD can be passive or active (Meijs et al., 2016), local and situated in communities of practice (Li & Krasny, 2019), non-formal and social (e.g., coaching), and job-embedded (Scherff, 2018). Finally, PD can be implemented through “1) self-directed learning experiences; 2) formal PD programs; and 3) organizational development strategies” (Caffarella & Zinn, 1999, p. 242).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis has led to more innovative approaches to teaching through online and mobile means, taking traditional PD by surprise. Although there is much literature supporting and discussing teaching and learning at the onset and during the pandemic (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Kim & Asbury, 2020; Lepp et al., 2021; Rannastu-Avalos & Siiman, 2020; Robinson-Neal, 2021), few studies have addressed PD during the transition to ERT. Some research interests have included crisis pedagogical strategies in a language teacher program (Castañeda-Trujillo & Jaime-Osorio, 2021), university instructor preparedness and burnout (Izquierdo et al., 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020), and challenges primary teachers had encountered (Brown et al., 2021). In the same vein, this study contributes to scholarship that explores what foreign language university faculty are doing in worldwide contexts. Such research will facilitate decision making for the design of post-crisis PD that responds to contextually identified needs during challenging times (Watson-Todd, 2020).

This study explored the PD of a group of instructors from a foreign language department in a Colombian private university as they responded to the COVID-19 crisis. We sought to explore the challenges faculty faced and how they met said challenges. In doing so, this research considered the questions: (1) What were the challenges instructors faced in the shift to emergency remote teaching? (2) What strategies or approaches did instructors use to confront these challenges?

## Theoretical Framework

Professional development for online teaching during a crisis such as COVID-19 is full of challenges such as technological problems and knowledge, stress management, and students' engagement. Therefore, it is not only necessary to recognize the traditional needs of PD, but also to address the understanding and use of technology as well as the emotional needs of those involved in it. Thus, our conceptualization of PD is nested in the definitions and ideas provided by three frameworks: PD for teachers, PD integrating technology, and PD for social and emotional learning.

### PD for Teachers

Conventional PD paths for faculty include systematically planned activities in which a teacher engages to develop their skills, knowledge, and expertise (Avidov-Ungar & Herscu, 2020) and improve teaching practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Most generally, PD involves "processes through which teachers learn to learn, learn to teach, and improve their pedagogical, innovation, and research skills in the development of their teaching, extension, and research activities" (Palacios-Sánchez et al., 2017, p. 2). Furthermore, as described by Spilker et al. (2020), PD in education is conceptualized from different perspectives (Kennedy, 2005, 2014), which are derived from models of teacher learning or change (Desimone, 2009; Guskey 2002). This includes a permanent and continuous commitment to tackling learning needs and challenges (Scherff, 2018; Villegas-Reimers, 2003) that encompass both the pedagogical and professional fields as well as the social and personal life of the educator (Cárdenas et al., 2011).

In terms of PD, the Continuing Professional Development Framework (CPD) proposed by the British Council (2015) targets educators of all subjects. This framework involves a plan in which teachers develop their professional competences within four stages of development (i.e., awareness,

understanding, engagement, and integration) and voluntarily engage with 12 distinct professional practices comprising a series of micro-practices. Teachers can move at their own pace through these stages, attaining skills and knowledge and applying these to well-planned and self-directed goals. For the purposes of this study, we focused on seven of those professional practices that seem more relevant during times of crisis. Table 1 summarizes the relevant elements.

Another model presented by TESOL International (n. d.) provides professional teaching standards within the categories of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and performance indicators which is measured by the either *approaching, meeting, or exceeding* the set standards, respectively. Additionally, an online version aimed toward TESOL professionals (TESOL International, 2021) lists activities such as developing materials and sharing ideas, conducting research, writing for publication, becoming lifelong learners, and focusing and investing in personal time and institutional responsibilities to foster PD. Besides the aforementioned areas current PD requires the effective integration of technology into teaching.

### PD Integrating Technology

A consensus in the literature demonstrates the importance of technological expertise and integration regardless of the means of learning (i. e., face-to-face, online, blended, virtual, or remote) which implies knowledge and principles, skills, and an understanding of the techniques and theories that underlie technologically mediated instruction (Okojie et al., 2006). One of the most widely used frameworks to identify technological competencies in teaching is *technological pedagogical content knowledge* (TPACK) (Rientes et al., 2020). The TPACK framework, designed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), integrates content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge. The elements are relevant to current PD needs as the intersection of the three areas demonstrates effective technological



**Table 1** Summary of CPD Professional Practices and Defining Elements

Professional Practice	Defining Elements
Planning Lessons and Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Learner needs</li> <li>* Learning needs</li> <li>* Anticipating problems</li> </ul>
Understanding Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Making decisions by understanding learners' characteristics</li> <li>* Conducting needs analysis</li> <li>* Reflecting on approaches to understanding learners</li> </ul>
Managing the Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Responding to unexpected events</li> <li>* Monitoring learning engagement</li> <li>* Checking understanding</li> <li>* Selecting resources</li> </ul>
Managing Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Developing and adapting material</li> <li>* Using materials</li> <li>* Evaluating effectiveness</li> </ul>
Integrating ICTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Developing effective strategies</li> <li>* Promoting autonomous learning by exploiting digital content</li> <li>* Developing strategies for resolving issues</li> </ul>
Assessing Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Applying principles and practice of assessment</li> <li>* Utilizing a range of different types</li> <li>* Using appropriately and providing feedback</li> </ul>
Promoting 21 <sup>st</sup> -Century Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Developing awareness of digital literacy</li> <li>* Creative and critical thinking</li> <li>* Collaboration and communication</li> </ul>

Source: British Council (2015).

pedagogical knowledge (Rientes et al., 2020). This can be seen in Setiawan et al.'s (2019) review of research articles from 2011 to 2017 characterized emerging TPACK development. The authors found a gap in the use of technological tools by in-service teachers, which also seems to be the case for Colombia. Studies in Colombian English classrooms show a passive, consumer approach to integrating technology by focusing on very traditional uses in the classroom (e.g., grammar applications and ready-made worksheets) (García Chamorro & Rey, 2013; Herrera Mosquera, 2017). Regarding teacher use of resources and interaction, Izquierdo et al. (2021) revealed that

teachers lack the “knowledge and experience on the use of software and applications for language education” (p. 674), suggesting the need for teacher PD to focus on an effective use of technology in the classroom.

Studies have reported that teachers often experience a transition period in which they explore new mediums for delivery during a shift from face-to-face to online teaching and, thus, adjust accordingly (Salmon, 2011). Gregory and Salmon (2013) indicated that, during such a shift, teachers will generally revert to an apprenticeship stage (i.e., a more novice role) as they relearn teaching practices for this medium. Therefore, while facing difficulties and taking risks brought about by this transition, their beliefs are challenged. In this sense, support for these teachers is decisive to their development. Hence, Gregory and Salmon (2013) proposed a pedagogical model for a successful shift to online learning, namely: (1) adapt whenever possible; (2) contextualize the learning; (3) create apprenticeship during the online activities; and (4) advocate the ideas and programs provided.

When looking at the literature on faculty development, pre-pandemic scholarship shows a robust body of literature on how institutions have supported PD by integrating technology. Studies on the topic evidence that institutions generally select the approach that best suits their context and resources, use role models, ask students for help using technology, and develop strategies to overcome technophobia (Gregory & Martindale, 2016; Herman, 2012). What can be extracted from the above information is that teachers, in an emerging online environment, need to develop technological knowledge and match the content with the appropriate technology. They also require acquiring knowledge quickly and being willing to work with peers. Furthermore, they need to engage in a facilitation strategy, online course design, and instructional design. Finally, teachers need to manage groups and meet students' needs.

## Social and Emotional Learning

The final aspect is social and emotional learning. Stress can be overwhelming during crises, and while some faculty will demonstrate better coping skills, others' emotions could be detrimental to their success. In times of crisis, there are many concepts to consider, including agency, responsibility, flexibility, and choice, to create an *effective learning ecology* (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). On a similar note, emotional intelligence (EI), self-awareness, and emotional management (inter and intrapersonal processes) are also essential aspects of PD to help ensure teacher effectiveness. As Gregory and Salmon (2013) posit, when educators are forced to modify their teaching practice significantly, some may feel that they relive the experience of being novice teachers. Extremera (2020) suggests working with faculty by enabling and aiding them to discover healthy habits to stay well and learn to deal with negative emotions that could arise over time. By doing this, instructors could also apply these practices to help students check in with their feelings and willingness to participate (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020) and create an environment of empathy and care (Darling-Hammond & Hyster, 2020).

## Method

This section describes the context, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures of this exploratory qualitative study.

### Context

This study was carried out at a private university in Colombia which serves approximately 13,000 undergraduate and graduate students. At this institution, the Department of Foreign Languages has 105 faculty, including tenured, non-tenured, and adjunct professors who teach English, German, French, or Portuguese. During ERT, these instructors were affected by some external challenges including a lack of dependable electricity and internet service as well as difficulties with cell phone

signals which impacted the smooth transition to online teaching and learning.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, educators began teaching remotely on March 30, 2020, and up to the time we wrote this article, they continued to do so. Before moving to remote classes, instructors were allotted two weeks to prepare for the shift from face-to-face teaching to ERT. During that time, the academic departments of the institution worked to define what ERT would be for their context. Therefore, ERT for this department was conceived as a combination of synchronous and asynchronous sessions with a minimum of two hours per week devoted to synchronous lessons. The other two hours consisted of independent work on which instructors would review and give feedback. In addition, during these two weeks, the university's *Center for Teacher Excellence* offered PD activities and mandatory campus-wide training in the institution's technological platforms to be used. This was delivered in two modalities: Face-to-face and synchronous.

Further workshops focused on organization, lesson planning, and assessment design throughout the remaining part of the academic semester. Other PD, in the form of one-on-one or small group mentoring, collaborative course design, and online training, was offered by our department and related directly to the needs of faculty. These sessions were voluntarily led by the more tech-savvy instructors who offered to help their colleagues.

### Participants

Faculty in the department teach either English, German, French, and Portuguese and are a mixture of Colombian and non-national instructors. All instructors were invited to participate in the study but only 71 accepted the invitation. Participating faculty were informed of the study's parameters and were asked to sign the informed consent. Each of them has been teaching for between 3-30 years at the university level. Concerning online education, some had previous experiences with

**Table 2** Faculty Demographics of Participating Professors

English	Language Program			Nationality	
	French	German	Portuguese	Colombian	Non-national
88 %	4 %	2 %	6 %	79 %	21 %

learning online, but the vast majority had never taught online. Table 2 shows faculty demographics.

### Data Collection and Analysis

At the end of the semester, in order to explore faculty’s PD during the shift to ERT, participants were asked in an open-response survey about the most significant challenges they faced and how they dealt with them. Because of the variety of native languages, participants were asked to answer in English. They were also assigned a number (coded P#) to ensure anonymity.

Data were analyzed by identifying keywords and categorized using content analysis (Elo et al., 2014). Challenges were identified and organized according to the frequency of the responses from the most to the least frequent. In this analysis, ten main challenges emerged as shown in Table 3. To build intercoder reliability, each researcher analyzed the responses individually and then discussed the categories to agree upon the final list.

### Results

When analyzing the ten challenges that instructors reported, three themes became apparent (see Table 3). The first relates to the process that instructors experienced in the transition to remote teaching: *adapting to ERT* (which encapsulates challenges 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8). The second aspect refers to encouraging students to participate in the remote classes: *student engagement* (which comprises challenges 2, 9, and 10). Finally, the third theme reveals the challenge of dealing with both instructors’ and students’ emotions during the time of crisis: *emotional issues* (in which challenge 5 is embedded). The challenges in Table 3 were numbered from most (1) to least (10) frequent.

The following paragraphs describe and illustrate these findings with excerpts from the participants’ survey responses.

### Adapting to ERT

Unsurprisingly, adapting to ERT was the challenge that instructors claimed the most (with 68 % of the total responses), which makes sense since all of them had to shift from face-to-face to remote teaching. This theme encompassed a wide variety of issues and methods that instructors used to cope with and/or mitigate.

**Table 3** Themes and their Associated Challenges

Themes	Associated Challenges	Percentage of incidences
Adapting to ERT	Challenge 1: Learning new technologies	23
	Challenge 3: Issues with electricity or internet connection	17
	Challenge 4: Adapting teaching practice to ERT	13
	Challenge 6: Time spent on grading and giving feedback	6
	Challenge 7: Supporting students’ transition to ERT	5
	Challenge 8: Adapting material to online classes	4
Student engagement	Challenge 2: Level of student engagement or participation	18
	Challenge 9: Students’ refusal to use cameras	3
	Challenge 10: Student absences	3
Emotional issues	Challenge 5: Emotional issues in times of crisis	8



*Learning new technologies* (challenge 1) was the one that instructors reported the most. One instructor (P22) stated that she had to develop her “digital skills and the use of social networks as learning tools [sic].” To face this, instructors learned to use various platforms, apps, software, and Google extensions, through various formal and informal PD activities. The selection and use of different educational technology tools were also influenced by the department’s philosophy of learning, which involved promoting active learners through student-student and student-teacher interaction. Furthermore, teachers took into account the nature of language teaching, which entailed boosting the use of all language skills (i.e., listening, reading, writing, and speaking). As Instructor 31 stated:

Teaching online restricts the type of communicative activities you can do. It is up to the teacher to change aspects of some activities or to leave others out because there is no practical way to do them. There are some virtual platforms and tools that are very useful.

Some technology-based tools that teachers used included Flipgrid and Vocaroo for the development of oral skills; Google Docs for writing; YouTube videos for listening; and Jamboard, Mentimeter, Pear Deck, and Nearpod for interactive classes, among others, as can be observed in the following statement:

I planned the classes in such a way that all the students could be involved and not just listening. I used Mentimeter, breakout rooms, and many activities that allowed the students to feel part of the class and not just observers. (P52)

An interesting finding was that some instructors mentioned having also included students’ suggestions in relation to which technology to employ.

The second factor, *issues with electricity or internet connection* (challenge 3), refers to managing conditions that were external to the class, some of which were entirely out of the hands of instructors while others were under their control. Therefore, in order to cope with this challenge, instructors implemented various actions. First,

to teach online classes successfully, some had to upgrade their computers and their internet capacity. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, electricity and internet services are not entirely reliable in Colombia, thus affecting the adequate delivery of classes for both instructors and students. Thereby, instructors realized that they had to plan in case of interruptions that could occur during their synchronous classes. Some of these strategies included having possible parallel activities with those students who lost connection, creating WhatsApp groups to keep an ongoing communication channel, and changing platforms used for synchronous sessions. Many also recorded their classes to allow students to access them at their convenience. In addition, some instructors decided to extend their office hours and deliver smaller group class sessions to allow students to participate when they could. Furthermore, educators learned to accept that many aspects of the teaching-learning process during ERT were out of their control. One of the instructor’s responses summarizes many of the challenges mentioned above:

The biggest challenges are the lack or failure of internet connection and power outages. Also, there are students who do not have the necessary equipment and only have a cell phone but can’t afford an internet plan. Several students could not connect for many days and they missed everything in the synchronous sessions, they did not send the assignments, and they did not present the scheduled evaluations, so I had to work with them on this. (P4)

Regarding the next aspect, instructors reported that a significant challenge was *adapting teaching practice to ERT* (challenge 4). Some of these changes resulted from formal PD described previously. Others emerged from trial and error, personal experience, sharing insights with colleagues, learning autonomously with tutorials, watching YouTube videos, reading articles, and soliciting direct feedback from students. One instructor asserted that they “had to study videos to learn to use tools like Collaborate, and also learned with the [sic] YouTube tutorials about Meet, Hangouts, Google Classroom, Flipgrid,

etc.” (P4). Instructors also indicated specific strategies that were necessary to adapt from what they usually employed in face-to-face classes such as leaving more time during the sessions for students to ask questions, giving clear instructions, and being flexible with timing and deadlines. In order to create an appropriate online learning environment, instructors mentioned that they maintained a calm attitude when there were issues during synchronous classes. Many of these factors can be seen in the response below:

After listening to the comments of the students, I decided to group the activities by weeks so that they knew with certainty which ones they should do and when. Besides that, I selected the most relevant activities and content for them and for the course, and I focused on them to reduce the stress generated by having many activities due. In this way, I decided to do two or three activities per class and to have them done within the session to avoid conflict with other subjects. (P65)

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Another adaptation that instructors made concerned the time spent on grading and giving feedback to students (challenge 6). Because of assessment changes to fit the online learning environment and the addition of autonomous student work for the asynchronous classes, instructors stated that in ERT grading assignments required more time. Using their prior experience to face this challenge, instructors, first, invested extra time in these tasks and, second, learned to be more flexible with themselves regarding the time they took and the method they used to grade students’ assignments. For example, some used new tools for grading (e.g., Google Forms, Socrative, Quizizz) and sent oral instead of written feedback via WhatsApp (P43), which they believed saved time.

With regards to students, although they have been called digital natives, the shift to ERT has shown that they are rather social media natives since many struggled to cope with the technology needed to learn remotely. This became the seventh challenge (i.e., *supporting students’ transition to ERT*) for faculty, who not only taught content but

also helped students to adapt to the new means of learning. First, instructors taught their students to use educational technology tools and the platforms through which they delivered their classes. Many claimed that every time a new tool was introduced, they walked students through how to use it. Second, they had to adapt their class plans to include different interaction patterns and activities to keep students engaged. Finally, they adopted an attitude of “being the calm in the storm” (P51) by showcasing patience, understanding, flexibility, and a positive attitude toward students’ struggles.

Finally, adapting material (Challenge 8) was the last aspect identified under the theme of adapting to ERT. Faculty indicated that it was necessary to create or adapt the typical materials they used in their face-to-face classes (P36). For example, if they previously gave students a task to carry out in class, in this modality, they had to transform it through tools such as Liveworksheets, Kahoot, Quizizz, or embedded videos. In order to make sure these materials supported student learning, some instructors asked students to provide feedback. This was one way to keep students at the center of the shift. Instructors also shared student feedback with their colleagues in the process of creating new material collaboratively.

All the aspects stated above were acknowledged by faculty as an opportunity to learn and allowed them to maintain a positive attitude during the transition. One instructor stated that they embraced the shift “with a lot of enthusiasm” and added: “I have learned that challenges are nothing more than opportunities to grow, learn, and prove what you are made of. It was gratifying to see how each day was a new beginning, each day better than the previous one” (P54).

### Student Engagement

One of the challenges of online education, in general, is to maintain students’ attention and offer opportunities to engage with and participate in

class. This was the second most reported theme (with 24 % of the total responses) since it was something that instructors noticed very early in the transition and became a key topic in faculty discussions. The three main aspects identified in this theme included the low level of student engagement, the fact that students did not want to turn on cameras, and student absences.

Instructors met challenge 2 (*level of student engagement or participation*) by initially focusing on bettering their online teaching practice. To do this, they participated in formal PD activities such as attending institutional training and workshops, carrying out autonomous activities including watching webinars or tutorials, and sharing experiences with other instructors. All of these ultimately helped them plan their lessons more appropriately. Additionally, instructors indicated that they needed to adopt positive attitudes toward the online shift in general and students. For example, as mentioned earlier, they became more flexible with assignments' due dates, more attentive to learners' needs, improved communication by creating class WhatsApp groups, and emailed those who were not participating in the class to follow up on them. Instructor 66 emphasized this when he said, "fortunately I had WhatsApp groups because I like to be attentive to the needs and concerns of the students."

The second aspect that instructors noted was the lack of student use of cameras (challenge 9). In the classroom, having visual contact with students would allow faculty to read their body language and adjust the lesson plan and activities accordingly. However, during this transition, many students were loath to turn on their cameras, and instructors felt they missed valuable opportunities to promote a better teaching-learning process. To face this challenge, instructors asserted that they turned on their cameras to model how they felt an appropriate online class should be and invited their students to follow their example (P36).

This was only partially successful, so instructors also had to ensure participation by asking frequent questions, especially about personal application of topics covered in the class. Finally, some of them mentioned that they decided to trust that students were paying attention to the class and not worrying about this aspect.

The last, challenge 10 (*student absences*), relates to decreased students' attendance. This may have been associated with several factors: (1) external issues with electricity and internet service, (2) the waiving of the institutional attendance requirement, and (3) students' attitude and motivation. Since the first two factors were out of instructors' control, they addressed the third aspect by trying to teach more effectively online to motivate students to connect to the synchronous sessions.

The way instructors faced the three challenges of this theme can be summed up in the following quotation:

I addressed the motivation of my students, always keeping in mind the human part and developing interactive classes for them. Regarding the use of the camera, I was always a model for them and had it on throughout the class. I also spoke of the importance of seeing them and that in certain activities it was vital to have the camera on [...] During this transition, I have been active, trying new applications and tools to be able to apply them in my classes. (P34)

### Emotional Issues

Learning has always been influenced by emotional factors. In the pandemic, *emotional issues* (challenge 5) were especially visible during the shift to online environments. Instructors contended that their emotions affected the teaching-learning process, having feelings normally found in novice faculty. This sentiment can be clearly seen in the following quote: "We went through unimaginable times in which the teaching and learning models we knew demanded radical changes. For most teachers, the effects of the pandemic meant working like never before." (P61).



Not only did instructors need to manage their emotions but also the emotions and anxiety expressed by their students. One instructor showed the need “to be able to understand [her] students in their [sic] personal problems. Not everything is academia. Emotions play a very important role in learning” (P21). Therefore, faculty implemented strategies at the student, faculty, and personal levels. At the level of the students, some instructors indicated opening a weekly time during the synchronous session to discuss feelings, creating activities to address the emotional challenges of students, and reporting students to the *Student Services Center* when they identified severe cases of anxiety and depression. Faculty also stated that one way to alleviate their own anxiety was to talk to their colleagues and explore ways to deal with both student and personal emotions. Lastly, several instructors highlighted the need to take care of themselves in order to be able to address the needs of their students. For instance, one instructor remarked that “learning to teach also means learning to take care of yourself, knowing your limits and possibilities. It means meeting with other educators, through collaborative networks that help build learning” (P61). Others did this by exercising, doing yoga, and making time for personal hobbies.

### Discussion

Faculty adaptation to ERT was supported by the PD opportunities offered by the institution. During the time of crisis, the challenges instructors faced and how they met them fostered their PD and learning. In our case, similar to what Watson Todd (2020) found, “many teachers had a healthy attitude towards seeking support where needed and experimenting with different approaches” (p. 11). Instructors recognized the challenges posed by the crisis, were determined to find solutions by being proactive, and embraced the transition to ERT.

This positive attitude helped faculty to adapt strategies to face ERT. These adaptations align

with those identified in the PD literature (Avidov-Ungar & Herscu, 2020; Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Sansom, 2020; Scherff, 2018) and the framework proposed by the British Council (2015). In our case, instructors reported that they learned to adapt materials, plan, and manage lessons and resources, and integrate ICTs and content knowledge (Herrera Mosquera, 2017; Mishra & Koehler, 2006) by increasing their TPACK (Cabero-Almenara et al., 2020; Eyo, 2016; García-Pérez et al., 2016; Izquierdo et al., 2021; Porlan & Sanchez, 2016; Rientes et al., 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020) to be empathetic with learners and to assess learning in this modality (British Council, 2015). In that process, they also adjusted to external contextual issues regarding electricity and internet connections and helped their students adapt to emergency remote learning by providing different pathways to solve emerging challenges.

Furthermore, teachers’ PD was influenced by their own and their students’ emotions. That is to say, the attention they paid to students’ psychological and academic issues was fueled by their own emotions and the uncertainty of the situation. Current PD recognizes the human aspect as part of instructors’ understanding of learners and their needs. In other words, instructors’ increased awareness of the social-emotional side of teaching and learning helped them develop their capacity to focus on emerging needs, recognizing and proposing authentic and formative strategies to, in turn, help create an empathic and caring environment. Therefore, faculty started to incorporate a *humane aspect* into their remote teaching practice to ensure not only students’ cognitive but also their social and emotional presence (Garrison & Anderson, 2005).

Another area where the emotional aspect manifested in teacher development was in the perception that some had of their inability to adjust and adapt sufficiently to this modality despite their previous education and experience. Nevertheless,

when confronting the shift, instructors were able to take control of the situation and reinforce their faculty development to the point of eventually feeling comfortable teaching remotely.

Keeping students engaged and active in remote foreign language courses also impacted strongly faculty's PD. Even though students are often considered digital and social natives (Brandtzaeg, 2016), which is a status that presupposes familiarity with and the use of personal computers, learning management systems, cell phone applications, and social media (Castellanos et al., 2017; Marín, 2013; Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2019; Šorgo et al., 2017), they seem not to be as competent in their management of technology as expected. This means that rather than "[being] 'digital natives,' students are 'routine experts,' i.e., they know how to use technology but not intelligently" (Cabero Almenara & Valencia, 2020, p. 222). Hence, in order to promote active learning in the new online environment, instructors learned to integrate more interactive tools that tapped into students' existing knowledge of social media and technology to engage them in effective academic learning.

Another aspect that, for teachers, impeded student engagement was the refusal to turn on cameras and microphones. To support student engagement, instructors learned how to mediate interaction with technology (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) by using features inside the various meeting platforms such as *blur* and *background change*. This was important because, similar to what González (2021) found, ERT has invaded instructors' and students' learning spaces in a way that not only brings a sense of closeness and connection but also discloses living conditions that perhaps many would rather remain private. In addition, this challenge also relates to the fact that in the face-to-face classroom, learners and often instructors are not expected to be constantly the *center of attention* or be seen at all times but rather include faculty-led activities, engagement with materials, or group work. For this reason,

instructors had to learn how to use technology to motivate student participation with respect.

In this study, PD occurred not only by engaging in the external, institutional offer made available to instructors but also through other more bottom-up, faculty-driven strategies. One recurrent area that we noticed was the role that collaboration among peers played in faculty development, similar to what Quezada et al. (2020) discuss. Since successful ERT implementation requires time and effort from teachers, especially in delivering remote language courses and designing materials and assessments to meet students' needs, in this study, many instructors approached this task collaboratively. Cabero-Almenara et al. (2020) indicate that collaborative work stands out as one of the digital competences that instructors must possess. Some of the strategies that they used included tutoring each other on the use of platforms and educational technology tools, sharing materials and assessment, and stimulating PD by sharing articles, tutorials, and research with each other.

The vulnerability instructors experienced when transitioning to ERT seemed to have triggered a need for engaging in PD. In light of this forced shared experience, they learned about themselves and their students as well as technology and its effective use in ERT. Thus, this study has found that a crisis stimulates PD and faculty learning. Surely, as more studies surface on the impact of emergencies, a new body of knowledge will reveal more understanding of how PD takes place and what instructors have learned in different parts of the world.

## Conclusions

We began this paper by exploring the PD process of a foreign language department in times of crisis. In our study, faculty demonstrated a positive attitude to the emergency, the PD opportunities, and what they were learning. When confronted with a particular challenge, faculty displayed agency, responsibility, and flexibility in finding

what worked best for them and their learners. They received support from their peers and made their own informed choices. In addition, instructors coped with negative emotions and empathetically supported their learners in coming to terms with the abrupt change in their lives and educational experiences.

Forced by the crisis, teachers faced ERT by attending educational sessions provided by the institution. As time went on, they began implementing what they learned and took control of their PD through self-directed individual and collaborative learning. Furthermore, the collaboration with their peers strengthened their practice and stimulated the growth of organic learning communities. This study demonstrates how crises can positively affect teachers' PD and learning. Thus, PD happens unexpectedly and perhaps without notice, but it happens.

As teachers begin to return to face-to-face situations, we encourage institutions to use what has been learned during this experience to advance teacher development. We suggest that PD be conceived from a perspective that recognizes teacher agency and knowledge. Hence, this sort of development should include opportunities for instructors to make decisions and choices on what PD they need, how they need it, and for what they need it. The findings reported here are expected to enrich the literature on PD and guide institutional policies regarding future teacher development programs.

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# EXPLORING IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE USE OF LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN ENGLISH CLASSES

UNA EXPLORACIÓN DE LAS ACTITUDES DE LOS DOCENTES DE INGLÉS IRANÍES FRENTE A LOS SISTEMAS DE GESTIÓN DE APRENDIZAJE EN LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS

UNE EXPLORATION DES ATTITUDES DES ENSEIGNANTS IRANIENS D'ANGLAIS LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE VERS LES SYSTÈMES DE GESTION DE L'APPRENTISSAGE DANS LEURS COURS D'ANGLAIS

UMA EXPLORAÇÃO DAS ATITUDES DOS PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUA INGLESA IRANIANOS DIANTE DOS SISTEMAS DE GESTÃO DA APRENDISAGEM NAS AULAS DE INGLÊS

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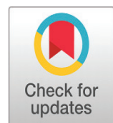
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## ABSTRACT

This research was set to uncover Iranian English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers' attitudes toward the use of learning management systems (LMS) in English classes. Employing a mixed methods research design, the researchers recruited 168 Iranian EFL teachers from several schools and language institutions as research participants and sent them a valid self-report questionnaire to gather quantitative data. Simultaneously, they conducted semi-structured interviews with 15 teachers to collect qualitative data. Findings revealed that Iranian EFL teachers adopted both positive and negative perceptions of LMS use. The positive perceptions included ease of access, knowledge sharing, suitability for crowded classes, variety of learning tasks, and more advanced assignments and feedback. In turn, negative views comprised inadequacy of teacher training programs, inappropriacy for productive skills, complexity of functions, and students' unfamiliarity with the systems as well as lack of interest. These results may offer significant insights into EFL practitioners' perceptions of a variety of measures that can be taken by teacher development programs to encourage the use of LMS in EFL contexts.

**Keywords:** EFL teachers, learning management systems, teachers' attitudes, teachers' perceptions

## RESUMEN

Esta investigación se propuso mostrar las actitudes de los docentes iraníes de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) frente al uso de los sistemas de gestión de aprendizaje (LMS) en sus clases de inglés. Mediante un diseño de investigación de métodos mixtos, los investigadores reclutaron a 168 docentes iraníes de ILE de diversas instituciones educativas y centros de enseñanza de lenguas del país y les enviaron un

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cuestionario válido de autorreporte con el fin de obtener datos cuantitativos. A la par, realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas con 15 docentes para recopilar datos cualitativos. Los resultados muestran que los docentes iraníes de ILE adoptaron percepciones tanto positivas como negativas respecto al uso de LMS. Las percepciones positivas incluyeron la facilidad de acceso, la puesta en común de conocimientos, su adaptabilidad a grupos numerosos, la variedad de actividades de aprendizaje, y lecciones y retroalimentación más avanzados. A su vez, las opiniones negativas incluyeron insuficiencia de programas de capacitación de docentes, destrezas productivas inadecuadas, complejidad de las funciones y falta de familiaridad de los estudiantes con los sistemas de gestión de aprendizaje, además de la falta de interés. Esos hallazgos ofrecen claridades importantes sobre las percepciones de los profesionales de ILE en cuanto a diversas medidas adoptadas por los programas de desarrollo profesional docente para promover el uso de los LMS en contextos de ILE.

**Palabras clave:** docentes de ILE, sistemas de gestión de aprendizaje, actitudes de docentes, percepciones de docentes

### RÉSUMÉ

Cette travail de recherche vise à montrer les attitudes des enseignants iraniens d'anglais langue étrangère (ALE) envers l'utilisation des systèmes de gestion de l'apprentissage (LMS) dans leurs cours d'anglais. À l'aide d'une méthode de recherche mixte, les chercheurs ont recruté 168 enseignants iraniens d'ALE issus de divers établissements d'enseignement et instituts des langues du pays et leur ont envoyé un questionnaire d'auto-évaluation valide afin d'obtenir des données quantitatives. Dans le même temps, des entretiens semi-structurés ont été menés avec 15 enseignants afin de recueillir des données qualitatives. Les résultats montrent que les enseignants iraniens d'ALE ont adopté des perceptions à la fois positives et négatives de l'utilisation des LMS. Parmi les perceptions positives, citons la facilité d'accès, le partage des connaissances, l'adaptabilité aux grands groupes, la variété des activités d'apprentissage, ainsi que des leçons et un retour d'information plus avancés. Parmi les points négatifs, citons l'insuffisance des programmes de formation des enseignants, l'inadéquation des compétences productives, la complexité des rôles et le manque de familiarité des apprenants avec les systèmes de gestion de l'apprentissage, ainsi que le manque d'intérêt. Ces résultats offrent un aperçu important des perceptions des professionnels d'ALE concernant les différentes mesures qui ont été adoptées peuvent être prises par les programmes de développement professionnel des enseignants pour promouvoir l'utilisation des LMS dans les contextes ALE.

**Mots-clef :** enseignants d'ALE, systèmes de gestion de l'apprentissage, attitudes des enseignants, perceptions des enseignants

### RESUMO

Esta pesquisa visou mostrar as atitudes dos professores iranianos de inglês como língua estrangeira (ILE) em relação ao uso de sistemas de gestão de aprendizagem (LMS) em suas aulas de inglês. Usando um projeto de pesquisa de métodos mistos, os pesquisadores recrutaram 168 professores de ILE iranianos de várias instituições educacionais e centros de ensino de idiomas do país e enviaram-lhes um questionário válido de auto-relato para obter dados quantitativos. Ao mesmo tempo, foram realizadas entrevistas semi-estruturadas com 15 professores para coletar dados qualitativos. Os resultados mostram que os professores de ILE iranianos adotaram tanto percepções positivas quanto negativas do uso dos LMS. As percepções positivas incluíram facilidade de acesso, compartilhamento de conhecimento, adaptabilidade a grandes grupos, variedade de atividades de aprendizagem, e lições e feedback mais avançados. As opiniões negativas incluíram programas insuficientes de treinamento de professores, habilidades produtivas inadequadas, complexidade das

funções e falta de familiaridade dos alunos com os sistemas de gestão de aprendizagem, além de falta de interesse. Essas descobertas oferecem importantes clarezas sobre as percepções dos profissionais do ILE e sobre várias medidas a serem adotadas pelos programas de desenvolvimento profissional de professores para promover o uso dos LMS em contextos ILE.

**Palavras chave:** docentes de ILE, sistemas de gestão de aprendizagem, atitudes de docentes, percepções de docentes



## Introduction

Recent advancements in technological devices along with more learner-oriented methodologies in the educational arena have paved the way for the expansion of novel instructional techniques (Benkovic & Dobrota, 2012; Lenkaitis, 2020; Rahimi & Fathi, 2021, 2022). Parallel with such developments, online instruction has gained momentum and has turned into a necessary element of traditional face-to-face classrooms (Mayer, 2019). As a result, the amalgamation of online learning with the traditional approaches to pedagogy has been introduced as blended learning, which is argued to cause active and effective learning and teaching (Fathi et al., 2021; Knutzen & Kennedy, 2012).

In the meantime, the wide recognition of information and communication technology (ICT), accompanied by convenient access to mobile technology devices, has led to the ever increasing popularity of e-learning as a global movement in learning and instruction. E-learning is usually conceptualized as employing technology tools either synchronously or asynchronously for pedagogical purposes. One of these tools is a learning management system (LMS) which provides a Web-oriented instructional context. The emergence of LMS has boosted the need for the internet and the use of a blended mode of instruction in educational contexts (Mohammaddokht & Fathi, 2022; Park et al., 2016; Turnbull et al., 2019). Taken together, a LMS allows practitioners to develop and disseminate content, supervise learners' participation or involvement, and evaluate their performance (Cheng & Yuen, 2018; Eraslan Yalcin & Kutlu, 2019). In addition, it provides learners with the opportunity to employ interactive functions including threaded discussions, conferencing, and forums (Cheng & Yuen, 2018).

With regards to the EFL context, a LMS can provide great potential in terms of content integration, delivery, and evaluation at the same time (Pina, 2010; Terzioglu & Kurt, 2019). This platform can provide students with authentic audio-visual

content and give them a variety of tasks, presentations, as well as hyperlinks. Plus, more reciprocal online interactions are possible via LMS (Terzioglu & Kurt, 2019). In addition, the latter provides the opportunity of having both real-time synchronous and asynchronous communications. Lastly, more objective assessments can be carried out by requesting students to construct electronic portfolios and take online exams (Emelyanova & Voronina, 2014). Concerning administrative issues, a LMS can offer many benefits. For instance, practitioners can trace the attendance of learners, monitor their assignments, and provide them with feedback (Erben et al., 2009). As far as the announcement and organization of tasks are concerned, teachers can have more effective cooperation with pupils and also help them to feel a sense of agency (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003).

Additionally, it is also claimed that teachers' attitudes toward online education significantly contribute to the real use of technology in the classroom. Employing social constructivist approaches, several researchers have investigated teachers' and students' perceptions of online teaching (Cole et al., 2021; Woo & Reeves, 2007). Although a significant bulk of empirical studies have suggested that teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward online instruction, many of them are reported to face shortcomings in online teaching (Appana, 2008; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). These limitations include lack of technical support for online courses, teachers' inadequate digital literacy, inappropriate teacher training programs for online teaching, and low interaction between teachers and learners (Dashtestani, 2013).

Regarding LMS, some studies have investigated the attitudes of both teachers and students toward LMS in EFL contexts (e.g., Basal, 2015b; Cheok & Wong, 2015; Dogoriti et al., 2014; Holmes & Prieto-Rodriguez, 2018; Ushakov, 2017). However, these studies have not led to conclusive results and few of them have focused on teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis such systems. Overall, it seems that less empirical

research has been devoted to uncovering teachers' attitudes toward online language instruction (e.g., Al-Zaidiyeen et al., 2010; Baföz, 2016; Banas, 2010; Canals & Al-Rawashdeh, 2019; Hismanoglu, 2012). More particularly, the attitudes of Iranian EFL teachers towards the use of LMS in English classrooms have remained relatively unexplored. Therefore, employing a mixed methods study, the present study set out to explore the perceptions of Iranian English teachers toward the effectiveness of LMS in EFL classrooms.

### Theoretical Framework

Parallel with rapid advances in technology in recent years, online learning has been the target of much interest by many researchers (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Godwin-Jones, 2018; Lin et al., 2017; Salmon, 2013). E-learning has been recognized as an effective educational technique since its emergence at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mijatovic et al., 2012). Regarding the growing use of online tools, this new learning paradigm is a shift from teacher-fronted towards student-centered education (Emelyanova & Voronina, 2014). A large body of work on virtual learning environments (Van Raaij & Schepers, 2008), factors influencing e-learning adoption (Kanwal & Rehman, 2017), information technology (Latchman et al., 1999), and teacher acceptance of e-learning (Teo, 2010) has been reported.

Investigations in this line of inquiry have indicated that computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is constantly growing (Basal, 2015a). According to Park and Son (2020), digital technology plays an influential role in FL/L2 education given the rapid progress of the internet. Further research on technology-enhanced teaching has shown that online learning has gained popularity in traditional classes (Lim et al., 2008). It is also claimed that computers are widely used in educational settings and teachers make use of computers for various purposes (Nim Park & Son, 2009).

Along with rapid progress on the internet, significant changes have occurred in the constructs of learning and teaching (Greenhow et al., 2009). Using a LMS to support the process of learning and teaching is considered one of the important innovations regarding ICT in the last decades (Coates et al., 2005). Tsai and Talley (2014) state that adopting a LMS to enhance the quality of instruction is more common at universities. Given that teachers are on the frontline of educational regeneration, their perceptions play a crucial role in using computers inside the class (Fathi & Ebadi, 2020). In addition, Redmond et al. (2005) maintain that teachers' interests in utilizing technology and their motivation and tendency to try various things lead them to use technology for teaching. Likewise, Abrahams (2010) emphasizes the importance of teachers' willingness in adopting new educational technology for e-learning success.

From this perspective, teachers' perceptions of using technological contents affect the way they make use of these resources. In addition to teachers' attitudes, research on self-efficacy has shown that teachers' perceived efficacy of using technology for teaching is a powerful correlate of their technology uses in the classroom (Chen, 2010).

In light of the significance of teachers' attitudes concerning language teaching with technology, numerous researchers have probed teachers' perceptions towards technology integration to clarify how teachers perceive technology implementation (Ertmer et al., 2006; Fathi & Ebadi, 2020; Mollaei & Riasati, 2013). As an example, Arkin (2003) attempted to uncover efl teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology-based resources in language teaching. Specifically, the focus was on teachers' points of view with regard to using online resources such as a vocabulary frequency profiler, vocabulary level tests, and word as well as text concordance to teach vocabulary. Semi-structured interviews were administered to elicit data from English-medium university teachers.

As findings indicated, teachers believed that computers could help them complete tasks in their daily life and work easier. This suggests that, generally, they held positive attitudes toward computers. Most of the teachers used computers frequently for different purposes, including typing lesson plans, storing materials, browsing the internet, and sending emails. However, teachers' responses regarding their opinions using technological resources varied. A lot of teachers had positive attitudes towards making use of computers for pedagogical purposes. On the other hand, a large number of teachers were not certain about employing online resources for instruction. That is to say, teachers believed that they could use computer technology tools as supplementary materials rather than as the main resources for teaching.

Teachers also reported some factors that hindered them from integrating technology into their instruction practice: a) limited teacher training programs, i.e., training courses are inadequate in equipping teachers with expertise and support on how to use various online tools; b) time constraints, i.e., given that teachers are burdened with time-consuming loads of course contents to cover based on the syllabus, they cannot use online vocabulary resources; and c) inadequate integration of supplementary resources into the curriculum. Moreover, they were not sure about taking risk of using computers in class. The lack of training courses for teachers is also supported by Yıldırım (2000) who argues that pre-service teachers are not provided with enough support and guidance to acquire the necessary digital knowledge for integrating technology into their teaching practice. An increased number of studies have confirmed that teachers' lack of digital training is the major impediment to using lms in efl classrooms (e.g., Jeong, 2017; Terzioğlu & Kurt, 2019).

With respect to examining how the use of ICT could improve teaching and learning processes, Fox and Henri (2005) explored teachers' perceptions of the effect of ICT on their instructional

practices. The participants of this study were several schoolteachers who were undertaking a master's in science in ICT at a university in Hong Kong.

Findings revealed that lack of time, inadequacy of proper professional development, lack of vivid systematic leadership assistance, tight curriculum requirements, and inflexible assessment processes were the main causes for the restricted influence of ICT on the teachers' teaching practices inside the class. However, Chen (2010) argued that teachers' attitudes about the teaching resources (time, support, technological equipment) known as Context had an average effect on pre-service teachers' technology use. As a result, the relationship between Context and training suggested that preservice teachers' education experience and the degrees of their technology skills were correlated with their perception of school resources and support.

Within this line of inquiry, Ertmer et al. (2006) tried to investigate teachers' perspectives on the factors that affect their technology integration success. Data were collected through an online anonymous survey from exemplary technology-using teachers involved in technology teaching environments. As findings indicated, teachers believed that intrinsic variables, including commitment to and confidence in using technology, had a stronger influence on their ability to become effective technology-using teachers as opposed to extrinsic variables such as time and technological resources. This is to say, even when teachers faced limited time and technological resources, they could make effective use of technology due to their personal commitments to utilizing technology and beliefs regarding the influential role of technology in enhancing student learning.

Considering LMS in teaching, Emelyanova and Voronina (2014) probed teachers' and students' perceptions and their commitment to using LMS. For data collection, one section of the questionnaire



administered to students was designed to find out whether students had used a LMS or heard about it. The second part of the questionnaire was used to ask the opinions of those who had experience employing LMS. Another questionnaire was used to explore teachers' points of view and willingness to introduce LMS for learning purposes. Findings showed that both instructors and learners were at ease with computers and LMS. Students were confident with using computers and reported no difficulty surfing the internet to search for information for their studies. Moreover, the majority of them frequently used the internet (almost every day). Nonetheless, some learners believed that the convenient accessibility of LMS does not mean that it is a useful learning tool. It was also revealed that, although some teachers considered LMS as an effective medium for learners' achievement, some could not trust the results from LMS regarding students' progress.

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Employing a case study, Dogoriti et al. (2014) explored EFL students' attitudes toward employing Moodle as a LMS. Data were collected via administering a questionnaire. Findings revealed that the participants held positive attitudes towards LMS and maintained that these could enhance their communicative competencies and involvement in the learning process as well as they could foster collaborative learning.

In the same vein, Putri and Sari (2020) uncovered EFL learners' perceptions of LMS for English learning. A number of 33 undergraduate English major students in Indonesia participated in this study. Questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. Results indicated that the participants held positive perceptions toward LMS. They considered LMS as an effective platform for improving their four skills in English. Nevertheless, some EFL learners mentioned some technical problems such as the occurrence of bad gateway connection when using LMS software.

In another study, Mijatovic et al. (2012) investigated the predictors of students' adoption of

LMS as well as the effect of students' interactive usage of LMS and active student participation on their achievements. The participants of this study were 169 students from the largest university in Serbia, who used LMS for the first time during their studies. The students' active participation in the classroom was observed over the 13-week semester. After the semester had been finished, the students were offered a questionnaire associated with their perception toward using LMS. The results indicated that students' active participation in class is a stronger predictor of achievement than their interactive usage of LMS. It was also revealed that e-environment could be an effective extension of classical learning environment. This suggests the positive role of using e-learning system in students' achievements.

As far as language teaching is concerned, proper use of technology is thought to be an integral part of this field as it supports the learning process. According to Warschauer and Meskill (2000), teachers' competence in designing and implementing different activities for taking advantage of technology in language teaching is key to effectively using technology.

Regarding the impact of LMS on teaching, Basal (2015b) conducted mixed-method research to examine English language teachers' attitudes toward LMS integration into their curriculum. For gathering qualitative data, semi-structured interviews and two-open ended questions were administered. The required data for the quantitative phase was collected through a questionnaire. The participants were 122 pre-service English teachers from a state university in Turkey. The English teachers used LMS to design activities for their face-to-face courses, namely Teaching Language Skills and Contextual Grammar. Findings indicated that pre-service English teachers had positive perceptions about integrating LMS into their on-site instruction by using various web 2.0 tools. The results of this study were ratified by Kapranov's (2020) study in which pre-service

EFL teachers showed positive perceptions toward using LMS. The participants of this study were asked to write a reflective essay regarding the use of Canvas as an LMS in their EFL courses. The results obtained from the qualitative framing analysis indicated that the pre-service EFL teachers' positive perceptions toward LMS were reflected in the frames such as Canvas is helpful, easy to use, and environmentally friendly.

In another study, Park and Son (2020) aimed at exploring pre-service EFL instructors' attitudes toward adopting CALL in Hong Kong. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with six pre-service EFL teachers. As confirmed by the qualitative data, participants reported positive perceptions about integrating technology into the classroom. Some teachers believed that technology integration plays a significant role in teaching because it is correlated with affective and pedagogical aspects. For example, using technology increases students' level of motivation, the interaction between teachers and students as well as students and students' interaction, and autonomous learning. On the other hand, a few claimed that teacher-student interaction is lower while using technology.

Some factors that influenced teachers' technology integration were pointed out. First, teachers' own experiences of teaching with technology. Second, teachers' observations of other experienced teachers using technology for instruction. Several barriers regarding technology integration were also identified. First-order constraints were external barriers including inadequate support from school principals and senior teachers and lack of time. Second-order limitations were internal barriers such as teachers' willingness, beliefs, and competencies. Most participants considered external factors as the main barriers to integrating technology into teaching practice. Overall, EFL teachers were not willing to use technology for teaching although they felt confident when integrating technology.

In the similar vein, Fathi and Torabi (2019) suggested that EFL teachers' satisfaction with the features and functions of LMS affects their success in using it for educational purposes. Cheok & Wong (2015) developed a theoretical model of the factors determining e-learning satisfaction in learning and teaching among school teachers. The model was based on reviews of the past studies regarding satisfaction in the usage of information technology systems. These results of study categorized variables affecting LMS success into three categories, namely: user-related variables (i.e. anxiety, self-efficacy, attitude), organization-related variables (i.e. training, technical support, management), and e-learning-related variables (i.e. perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, interaction, flexibility). Holmes & Prieto-Rodriguez' (2018) study focused on the perceptions of staff and students at a School regarding LMS accessibility and interactivity. The relevant data were collected through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. The two groups had similar views regarding the effectiveness of LMS tools to enable interactivity. However, the students rated the contribution of LMS to their learning higher than the staff. This study also revealed that teachers' inability to induce and trace the interaction of students with course materials existing on the LMS resulted in a sense of dissatisfaction among instructors.

## Method

To meet the objective of this study, a sequentially explanatory design (Ivankova et al., 2006) was employed, that is, quantitative data were first gathered and analyzed, and then qualitative data collection and analysis were conducted to prove the findings of the previous phase.

## Participants

The participants were 168 English teachers teaching at various schools and language institutes in Iranian provinces. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants as the researchers did not have access to a wider range of institutes,

schools, or universities. The sample was comprised of male (N=74) and female (N=94) teachers with ages ranging from 21 to 38 (M=24.12; SD=76.22) and their teaching experience varying from eleven months to 15 years (M=8.024; SD=2.99). Furthermore, 15 teachers volunteered to take part in semi-structured interviews. All teachers had participated in teacher training/education courses before their employment and had been students of English majors at B.A., M.A., or Ph.D. levels. They had the experience of teaching different levels varying from beginner to advanced levels. It is worth noting that for the sake of anonymity and research ethics, pseudonyms were used in reporting the excerpts in the qualitative section.

### Data Collection

To collect quantitative data, a questionnaire on teachers' attitudes toward LMS developed by Alshorman and Bawaneh (2018) was used. This self-report scale was designed and validated by the researchers after reviewing the literature related to e-learning and the LMS. The scale includes 26 items which are measured on a five-point Likert scale constituting 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). The construct validity of this scale, investigated via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), was set for this research context [ $\chi^2/df=2.09$ ,  $p=0.03$ ,  $CFI=0.93$ ,  $TLI=0.92$ ,  $RMSEA=0.05$ ]. Additionally, the alpha coefficient for the total questionnaire was high (0.82), suggesting that the internal consistency of the items was relatively high.

The LMS scale was first distributed among a sample of Iranian EFL teachers from different parts of the country. Data collection was carried out during the fall semester of 2020. As access for teachers was not easy because of the pandemic, the electronic version of the LMS questionnaire was constructed through Google Docs. Afterward, the link to the questionnaire was shared in Telegram and WhatsApp groups including EFL teachers from various provinces in Iran. Since some respondents did not have

access to these social networks, the online link to the questionnaire was emailed to them.

In addition, to investigate the participants' attitudes toward the use of LMS in Iranian English classrooms, one of the researchers conducted individual semi-structured interviews (see Appendix) with 15 volunteers. In order for the participants to verbalize their attitudes more easily, they answered the interview questions both in their L1 and in English.

The questions for semi-structured interviews were raised so as to uncover teachers' attitudes toward the use of LMS in English classrooms. To this end, fifteen interviews were digitally recorded. The interview questions (see Appendix) were verified by the experts' opinions with regard to their face, content, and appropriateness. The interviewees were notified of the objective of the research before carrying out the semi-structured interviews.

In order to enhance the trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004) of the qualitative data, some techniques such as member checking and peer debriefing (Thomas, 2011) were employed. More precisely, peer debriefing was performed by explaining the protocols of the study and checking the data analysis with another researcher who was an expert in qualitative data analysis.

### Data Analysis

As for the data analysis, quantitative and qualitative analytical procedures were used. Descriptive statistics (i.e., mean and standard deviations) and a one-sample t-test were utilized to analyze the quantitative data. For the qualitative data analysis, the recorded interviews were transcribed and thematically coded using content analysis techniques (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). For the quantitative data analysis, SPSS 24 was used.

### Results

The results obtained from the analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data are presented



**Table 1** Descriptive Statistics for LMS Questionnaire

N.º	Items	Mean	sd
1	LMS help the learner to learn without coming to the institute/school.	4.52	1.02
2	LMS help to deliver the information to students quickly.	4.32	0.95
3	Using LMS contributes to clarifying the content of the material.	4.19	1.25
4	I feel that the use of LMS develops the teaching process.	4.15	0.98
5	I like to get more training on how to use a learning management system (LMS).	4.12	0.98
6	Learning by using the LMS will gradually replace normal education.	4.12	1.03
7	I expect that - in the future - the use of LMS will become a necessity for all teachers.	4.10	0.65
8	Using LMS increases student achievement.	4.08	0.82
9	LMS help to achieve effective and active teaching.	4.06	0.99
10	LMS encourage to change the competitive criteria of the educational environment.	4.02	1.52
11	LMS increase the capacity of educational institutions.	4.02	1.13
12	Using LMS facilitates teacher's role.	4.02	1.12
13	I see that LMS reduce the role of the teacher in the classroom and increase the role of the student.	4.01	0.68
14	I feel joy when someone talks to me about the uses of LMS in teaching.	3.99	0.88
15	Using LMS offers a great benefit in teaching.	3.95	1.08
16	LMS contribute to integrating educational resources effectively.	3.95	0.91
17	LMS help the teacher to organize his courses.	3.94	0.72
18	LMS increase the flexibility in educational institutions systems.	3.89	0.78
19	Learning by using LMS increases the chances for cooperation between educational institutions.	3.85	0.87
20	I asked for help from others in case I faced a problem while using the LMS.	3.85	1.12
21	Using LMS provides interesting learning.	3.85	0.95
22	LMS lead to a new change in course practices.	3.77	0.90
23	I discuss with my colleagues how to use the LMS.	3.75	0.74
24	LMS offer better results than normal education.	3.44	1.02
25	LMS make it easy for teachers to provide students with an individual learning environment.	3.25	1.20
26	Using LMS increases the interaction between teachers and students.	3.14	0.98
<b>(Overall)</b>		4.10	0.89

below to uncover Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the use of LMS in English classes.

### Quantitative Phase

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that the mean score for attitudes of EFL teachers towards LMS is generally high (4.10), revealing that Iranian EFL teachers hold positive attitudes towards employing them in English classrooms.

The items have been presented in descending order based on their mean scores. The items with the highest mean scores were the first four items. More particularly, the teachers maintained that

LMS could help students to study the materials without coming to the institute/school. They also believed that LMS could help them to deliver the information to students more quickly. In addition, employing LMS could contribute to clarifying the content of material more effectively. Finally, the teachers expressed their willingness to receive further training on how to use such systems.

On the other hand, the items with the lowest mean scores indicated negative attitudes. More specifically, teachers were not very certain about the fact that LMS could enhance the interaction between instructors and learners. Likewise, they did not

**Table 2** Themes Uncovered about EFL Instructors' Attitudes Toward LMS

Positive perceptions	Negative perceptions
Ease of access and knowledge sharing	Inadequacy of teacher training programs
Suitability for crowded classes	Inappropriacy for productive skills
Variety of learning tasks	Complexity of functions
Additional assignments and feedback	Students' unfamiliarity and lack of interest

agree with the idea that LMS could provide instructors with the ability to create a personal learning context for learners. Also, they were skeptical about the fact that LMS could offer better results than normal instruction.

Moreover, as a follow-up analysis, the whole LMS questionnaire was analyzed by using a one-sample t-test to explore the general direction (i.e., positive or negative) of the EFL teachers' attitudes towards employing LMS in English classrooms. The analysis allowed for comparing Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes with answers of 3, i.e., the neutral point in the five-point Likert scale, regarding their experience of using LMS. Overall, results demonstrated that Iranian teachers' attitudes towards their experience of using LMS were positive and significant ( $M=4.10$ ;  $SD = 0.89$ ;  $t = 13.36$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

### Qualitative Phase

The purpose of this phase was to draw upon the qualitative findings to elucidate and clarify the understanding of the data obtained from the quantitative phase. In doing so, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 15 English teachers selected through purposive sampling. Taken together, the thematic analysis of qualitative data revealed both positive and negative perceptions toward the use of LMS in English classrooms. The uncovered themes presented in Table 2.

### Positive Perceptions

The analysis of the qualitative data showed that most teachers held positive perceptions towards LMS. These positive perceptions were divided into four categories, each of which is explained below.

#### Ease of Access and Knowledge Sharing

The vast majority of teachers believed that LMS could provide them with the opportunity to share knowledge with their students more easily and conveniently. For example, Mina stated,

I think LMS was useful and comfortable for the learners. I could share materials very easily without consuming time or cost. I could provide them with extra materials and resources very easily. (Mina, interview, translated)<sup>1</sup>

The teachers contended that LMS are particularly effective for absentees because they could access the offline link to the recorded classes. For instance, Mehran said,

I could teach and provide students with knowledge without any need to visit them and attending the class. Even if they were absent, they could access the recorded classes and watch them wherever and whenever they wished. (Mehran, interview)

#### Suitability for Crowded Classes

Another uncovered theme pointed out by the participants was the appropriateness of LMS for more crowded classrooms. They asserted that these online classes could save time for them and handle bigger classes more easily. Sara, for example, claimed,

I prefer LMS for more crowded classes. I used to have less time for more crowded classes because much of the class time was devoted to answering their questions or other issues. But LMS helped me to manage such classes much better. (Sara, interview)

<sup>1</sup> The interviews not originally stated in English language were all translated.

Mina also noted,

there was no disruption that I used to have with the so-called back-row distractors in my crowded classrooms. (Mina, interview, translated)

### Variety of Learning Tasks

The English teachers also believed that LMS could provide them with further use of various learning activities. In addition, they could share relevant and useful materials with their pupils in the classrooms. For instance, Sepideh stated,

In some topics, I could search the net and share the relevant page or resources at that moment. Therefore, I can say that LMS helped me to give extra resources to my students and add variety to the class. Different learning tasks can be used at that moment. (Sepideh, interview)

Reza added,

I could give my students a bundle to choose from because I could share different pages and materials available online. (Reza, interview)

### Additional Assignments and Feedback

The last theme uncovered for the positive perceptions of Iranian English teachers towards LMS was its convenience in giving assignments and proving feedback. For example, Shahla mentioned,

LMS is useful for assignments. I can collect the assignment of students more easily. (Shahla, interview, our translation)

Saeed added,

I could give them the necessary feedback in my convenient time. (Saeed, interview)

Referring to quick teacher feedback, Sara mentioned,

The very good point was that I can give further feedback and I also can access the archive of the assignments. (Sara, interview)

### Negative Perceptions

In addition to the positive perceptions, some teachers held negative attitudes towards the use of

LMS in English classes. These negative views are explained below.

### Inadequacy of Teacher Training Programs

Most teachers who did not favor the use of LMS in English classrooms maintained that the major obstacle is the fact that they had not previously received sufficient teaching training to use LMS. For instance, Shadi said,

We should have been previously trained and got familiarized with how to use systems more appropriately. (Shadi, interview)

In this regard, Zahra added,

The TTC courses that we had previously passed had not given us familiarity with LMS. And after the breakout of the pandemic, we got surprised and felt frustrated. (Zahra, interview, translated)

Some teachers also pointed out that, although they had attended technology-related teacher training courses, such courses failed to equip them with practical techniques and knowledge to use technology in the classroom. For instance, Mehran affirmed,

I had previously received technology teacher training courses but such courses only provided us with theoretical knowledge and failed to give us adequate practical skills so that we can teach English with technology more effectively. (Mehran, interview)

Sara supported this assertion by saying

I think LMS could have been much more effective if we had received a more proper teacher education and technical support. (Sara, interview)

### Inappropriacy for Productive Skills

Some teachers questioned the appropriateness of LMS for productive skills in L2 learning and teaching. For example, Sina pointed out,

Over the last years, I have used online classes using LMS. I doubt the usefulness of LMS for productive skills in general and writing in particular. At least, my own experience of teaching writing with this online system was not effective. (Sina, interview)



Some others cast doubt on the effectiveness of LMS for L2 learning in general and maintained that L2 learning requires more authentic and natural contexts with face-to-face interactions. In this vein, Arash stated,

Learning a foreign language requires face-to-face interaction and real attendance in classroom. So I don't believe in the appropriateness of LMS for English classrooms. (Arash, interview, translated)

### Complexity of Functions

Another theme uncovered for the negative attitudes of Iranian English teachers towards LMS was the complexity of functions. Some teachers believed that LMS are not user-friendly and they had difficulty teaching with these platforms. Mina, for example, said,

LMS is not very convenient to me. It is difficult to operate with LMS. I prefer more discussion-based classrooms. The discussion board of LMS could not be very useful if much explanation was required. (Mina, interview)

Sina also confirmed the inconvenient functions of LMS by pointing out:

Some of our colleagues do not have computer literacy and cannot use LMS functions properly. I suppose both teachers and students need special training in this regard. Because the students also had problems with using LMS. (Sina, interview)

### Students' Unfamiliarity and Lack of Interest

Finally, the last theme uncovered vis-a-vis negative perceptions towards LMS was students' unfamiliarity with LMS and their lack of interest in using this platform for learning purposes. For instance, Ali claimed,

Some of the students are not accustomed to using technology for learning something. So they do not pay serious attention to the materials and assignments in LMS. It is like a big burden for them and they do not like to take the responsibility to self-study something. (Ali, interview)

## Discussion and Conclusions

In line with research on students' perceptions of online learning (see Armstrong, 2011; Famularsih, 2020; Godwin-Jones, 2018; Ilgaz & Adanır, 2020; Smart & Cappel, 2006; Wei & Chou, 2020), the present research aimed at exploring the attitudes of EFL teachers towards LMS in English classes. Specifically, the present study focused on how Iranian EFL instructors perceive integrating technology into their curriculum in order to support student-oriented classrooms. Findings revealed that the majority of participants hold positive perceptions towards LMS. In other words, it might be concluded that EFL teachers evince their tendency to implement technology for teaching English in their classes. This finding is in line with the extant literature on teachers' perceptions of technology integration which has substantiated teachers' positive attitudes toward online instruction in general (Adnan, 2018; Arkin, 2003; Aldunate & Nussbaum, 2013; Dashtestani, 2012; Famularsih, 2020; Shin & Son, 2007; Teo, 2008).

As an example, Shin and Son (2007) sought to investigate Korean EFL instructors' attitudes toward the use of technology integration for teaching purposes. Results indicated that Korean EFL secondary school instructors showed positive attitudes toward adopting the internet for teaching purposes. A further study by Arkin (2003) suggested that EFL teachers had generally positive perceptions about technology resources for vocabulary teaching. As for the current study, the qualitative data revealed that most of the EFL teachers favor the use of LMS in English classrooms due to four reasons: (a) ease of access and knowledge sharing, (b) suitability for crowded classes, (c) variety of learning tasks, and (d) further assignments and feedback.

As for the advantages of LMS, the participants of this study believe that LMS could provide English instructors with a plethora of resources and materials by which they could help more struggling learners and monitor them more effectively. They

regard LMS as useful teaching aids that offer a variety of presentation modes and online resources for practicing English in their classes. The increased access to experts and skilled teachers is another merit of LMS, as expressed by the interviewees. Since in the Iranian context there are deprived areas and provinces with less access to experts, LMS might be viable alternatives to further access to English learners who are distant from the center of the country. In addition, the EFL teachers hold positive attitudes towards the use of LMS because of their suitability for crowded classes, potential in providing a variety of learning tasks, and convenience for teachers giving further assignments and feedback to the learners. Moreover, they grant absent students access to the offline link to the recorded classes so that they do not miss the sessions.

However, some teachers express contradictory beliefs on the effectiveness of LMS and maintained that English classrooms require face-to-face interaction. A similar finding was revealed by a few pre-service EFL teachers (Park & Son, 2020), who claimed that too much reliance on technology would decrease the interaction between students and teachers. It can be claimed that such discrepancies in attitudes might be attributed to teachers' digital literacy and their previous levels of experience in teaching online courses.

Furthermore, the results of the qualitative data indicated that a number of teachers doubt the usefulness of LMS for productive skills, especially writing. In addition, some EFL teachers are not inclined to use LMS because of its complexity and technical issues that could impede their effective use of this platform. The inadequacy of teacher training programs is the major obstacle perceived by Iranian EFL teachers. Some teachers believe that teacher education programs are not adequately supporting EFL teachers in using technology in general and LMS. More specifically, they consider that teacher development programs only provide pre- and in-service teachers with the knowledge or familiarity with technology rather than the practical skills of how to use technology

in classrooms. This finding has been previously confirmed in the literature (Comas-Quinn, 2011; Compton, 2009; Fathi & Ebadi, 2020; Habibi et al., 2019; Li & Ni, 2011). This finding also lends support to Arkin's (2003) and Yildirim's (2000) studies in which teachers asserted that there were inadequate training courses to equip themselves with the necessary skills regarding technology integration. Likewise, Terzioğlu and Kurt (2019) identified the lack of teacher training as the most common barrier to implementing LMS in EFL classrooms. The final negative perception of the participants in the current study is students' unfamiliarity and lack of interest in using LMS. For this reason, some EFL students may prefer traditional face-to-face instruction.

Taken together, the findings of this mixed-methods research revealed that the overwhelming majority of the instructors held positive perceptions towards the use of LMS in English classes. This finding can be taken as evidence for some studies which have shown the same results (Basal, 2015b; Kapranov, 2020; Toland et al., 2014). Nevertheless, some EFL teachers do not favor using LMS due to some obstacles such as the inappropriateness for productive skills, complexity of functions, students' unfamiliarity as well as a lack of interest, and more importantly, inadequacy of teacher training programs. Since a scant amount of information regarding teachers' attitudes towards LMS is at hand (e.g., Kapranov, 2020; Terzioğlu & Kurt, 2019), the findings of the present study enrich the existing literature on the barriers Iranian EFL teachers face while using LMS.

### Pedagogical Implications and Future Research

Even though the findings of the present research seem to be promising with regard to LMS integration, implementing this type of instruction in the EFL classroom is not a straightforward matter. It implies the necessary skills/competence and adequate digital literacy and experience beforehand in order to use LMS in any EFL course. Given the

overall positive perceptions of teachers towards LMS, it may be implied that these platforms can be integrated into EFL courses to increase the effectiveness of language development among learners. Yet, the successful integration of any kind of technology into the regular curriculum requires that both teachers and learners be equipped with technological competencies that are of great significance for the useful employment of technology for educational purposes (Baylor & Ritchie, 2002). Therefore, it might be necessary that teacher educators take the initiative to develop training programs in order to equip the pre-service EFL instructors with requisite technological abilities as well as encourage them to integrate technology into their L2 instruction. Since Iranian EFL practitioners basically apply traditional pedagogical techniques in their classes, the use of web 2.0 technology and LMS in particular might be an effective alternative.

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Undoubtedly, success in online learning, in general, is attributed to the competence in effective management and reconciliation of instructional approaches, course design, and technology acceptance of learners and practitioners. In other words, effective online instruction requires recruiting and training qualified English teachers through continuous teacher development programs in order to equip them with both positive attitudes and working abilities which they require (Desai et al., 2009). As Fathi and Yousefifard (2019) argued, EFL policymakers and teacher educators should provide practitioners with pedagogical and technical support to employ technological devices in their classrooms. Moreover, students' acceptance of technology and technical support should be also taken into account as the provision of orientation for learners and technical technology support significantly affect teachers' adoption of technology in the classroom (Canals & Al-Rawashdeh, 2019).

Still, a number of limitations can be pointed out for this research. First, a cross-sectional survey may not be appropriate to delve into the attitudes

of teachers toward LMS in EFL contexts. Hence, future research, such as a longitudinal study, might be needed to explore the teachers' perceptions in a longer period of time. In addition, since the participants of this research were limited in number and were not from a representative sample of Iranian EFL teachers, future researchers are recommended to carry out similar studies with a larger sample size from various contexts and with various teaching experiences.

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## Appendix. Interview Questions

1. Do you have the experience of teaching English using Learning Management Systems (LMS) during this coronavirus pandemic?
2. What is your attitude towards using LMS in the Iranian EFL classrooms?
3. Do you agree or disagree with the use of LMS in foreign language classrooms? Why?
4. Do you believe that the use of LMS in English classrooms is limited by any impediment(s)? What are they?

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# ENVISIONING PATHS TOWARDS PEACEBUILDING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

VISUALIZANDO CAMINOS PARA LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE PAZ EN LA FORMACIÓN DE DOCENTES DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

ENVISAGER DES VOIES POUR LA CONSTRUCTION DE PAIX DANS LA FORMATION DES ENSEIGNANTS DE LANGUES ÉTRANGÈRES

VISUALIZANDO CAMINHOS PARA CONSTRUIR A PAZ NA FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS

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This article is based on a research study conducted to obtain a Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching in a Colombian University.

## ABSTRACT

In a country struggling to emerge from the shadows of a relentless armed conflict, where media manipulation puts a stable reconciliation process at risk, foreign language educators are called on to act. This article presents the results of a study conducted with three foreign language students studying in one of the sites of a public university in the Department of Antioquia, Colombia, located in a region affected by cultural, structural, direct, and ecological violence. The study resorted to critical peace education and critical media literacy theories as well as to local contributions from a pedagogy of memory to foster critical consciousness about the armed conflict in Colombia. Data collection methods included a survey, recordings of class discussions, samples of students' work, and individual and group interviews. Data showed that the participants reflected critically on the role of different war agents, increased their capacity to question media messages, recognized the relevance of including the victims' voices, and created counter-texts to contest dominant narratives about the conflict. Findings confirm the urgent need to prepare future foreign language educators to respond to their learners' harsh social realities and exert their agency to generate transformations. They also highlight the need to do more interdisciplinary work in ELT and to value the contributions of local knowledge that helps us both understand the dynamics of violence in our contexts and envision possibilities for peacebuilding in Colombia.

**Keywords:** critical media literacy, conflict resolution, English language teaching, peace education, pedagogy of memory, teacher education

## RESUMEN

En un país que hace ingentes esfuerzos por salir de las sombras de un brutal conflicto armado, donde la manipulación de los medios pone en riesgo el proceso de reconciliación, los docentes de lenguas extranjeras están llamados a actuar. Este artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio realizado con tres estudiantes de licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras en una seccional de una universidad pública

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del departamento de Antioquia, Colombia, ubicada en una región afectada por la violencia cultural, estructural, directa y ecológica. El estudio se basó en las teorías de educación crítica para la paz, las literacidades críticas y la literacidad crítica mediática, así como en aportes locales de la pedagogía de la memoria para fomentar la conciencia crítica sobre el conflicto armado en Colombia. Los datos se recogieron usando una encuesta, grabaciones de las discusiones en el aula, muestras de trabajos de los estudiantes y entrevistas grupales e individuales. Los datos revelan que los participantes presentaron una reflexión crítica sobre el rol de los diferentes agentes de la guerra, ampliaron su capacidad de cuestionar los mensajes de los medios, reconocieron la importancia de dar lugar a las voces de las víctimas y crearon antitextos para oponerse a las narrativas dominantes sobre el conflicto. Los hallazgos confirman la necesidad apremiante de preparar a los futuros docentes de lengua extranjera para que respondan a las duras realidades sociales de sus estudiantes y ejerzan su agencia para generar cambios. También subrayan la necesidad de un mayor trabajo interdisciplinario en enseñanza del inglés y de valorar las contribuciones de los saberes locales, pues nos ayudan a entender la dinámica de la violencia en nuestros contextos y a vislumbrar posibilidades de construcción de paz en Colombia.

**Palabras clave:** literacidad crítica y medios de comunicación, resolución de conflictos, enseñanza de inglés, educación para la paz, pedagogía de la memoria, formación de docentes

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans un pays qui s'efforce de sortir de l'ombre d'un conflit armé brutal, où la manipulation des médias compromet le processus de réconciliation, les professeurs de langues étrangères sont appelés à agir. Cet article présente les résultats d'une étude menée avec trois enseignants en formation initiale inscrits au programme d'enseignement de langues étrangères dans une région touchée par la violence culturelle, structurelle, directe et écologique. L'étude s'est fondée sur les théories de l'éducation critique pour la paix, des littératies critiques et de l'éducation critique aux médias, ainsi que sur les contributions locales de la pédagogie de la mémoire pour favoriser une prise de conscience critique du conflit armé en Colombie. Les données ont été recueillies à l'aide d'une enquête, d'enregistrements de discussions en classe, d'échantillons de travaux d'élèves et d'entretiens collectifs et individuels. Les données révèlent que les participants ont présenté une réflexion critique sur le rôle des différents acteurs de la guerre, ont élargi leur capacité à remettre en question les messages médiatiques, ont reconnu l'importance de donner de l'espace aux voix des victimes et ont créé des anti-textes pour s'opposer aux récits dominants sur le conflit. Les résultats confirment le besoin pressant de préparer les futurs enseignants de langues étrangères capable de répondre aux dures réalités sociales de leurs étudiants et de exercer leur pouvoir pour amener des changements. Ils soulignent également la nécessité d'un travail de plus en plus interdisciplinaire dans l'enseignement de l'anglais et de valoriser les contributions des connaissances locales, car elles nous aident à comprendre la dynamique de la violence dans nos contextes et à envisager les possibilités de consolidation de la paix en Colombie.

**Mots-cléf :** littéracité critique et médias de masse, résolution de conflits, enseignement d'anglais langue étrangère, éducation pour la paix, pédagogie de la mémoire, formation des enseignants

## RESUMO

Em um país que luta para sair das sombras de um conflito armado brutal, onde a manipulação da mídia compromete o processo de reconciliação, os professores de línguas estrangeiras são chamados a agir. Este artigo apresenta os resultados de um estudo realizado com três professores pre-serviço de línguas estrangeiras em uma região afetada pela violência cultural, estrutural, direta e ecológica. O estudo tem se baseado em teorias de educação crítica para a paz, de letramento crítico e de letramento crítico da mídia, bem como em contribuições locais de pedagogia da memória para fomentar a consciência crítica do conflito armado na Colômbia. Os dados foram coletados utilizando uma enquete, gravações de discussões em sala de aula, amostras de materiais produzidos pelos alunos e entrevistas em grupo e individuais. Os dados revelam que os participantes apresentaram uma reflexão crítica sobre o papel dos diferentes atores na guerra, ampliaram sua capacidade de questionar as mensagens da mídia, reconheceram a importância de dar espaço às vozes das vítimas e criaram antitextos para se oporem às narrativas dominantes sobre o conflito. Os resultados confirmam a necessidade imediata de preparar futuros professores de línguas estrangeiras para responder às duras realidades sociais de seus alunos e exercer sua agência para produzir mudanças. Eles também sublinham a necessidade de um trabalho mais interdisciplinar no ensino da língua inglesa e de valorizar as contribuições do conhecimento local, pois nos ajuda a compreender a dinâmica da violência em nossos contextos e a vislumbrar possibilidades de construção da paz na Colômbia.

**Palavras chave:** letramento crítico e meios de massa, resolução de conflitos, ensino do inglês língua estrangeira, educação para a paz, pedagogia da memória, formação de professores

## Introduction

The lives of Colombian people have been marked by more than five decades of armed conflict, experiencing it directly or indirectly. In 2016, after four years of dialogues, President Juan Manuel Santos finally signed a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the oldest guerrilla group in Latin America. This historic event brought great hope of social change. However, contrary to all expectations, in a plebiscite intending to ratify it, a majority of voters said *no*. How can this be understood? Although different factors might have influenced the shocking results of the plebiscite, the preceding media campaigns to win voters on both sides undeniably played a defining role in this decision (Botero, 2017). On the one hand, the political forces supporting the peace agreement were too confident and focused on explaining and selling it as the best possible choice. On the other hand, right-wing opponents' intense media campaign proved to be effective through incendiary speech, distorted information, and the primary purpose of arousing feelings of anger and indignation among the electorate (Botero, 2017).

This transcendent event evidenced the tremendous impact of the media on public opinion, the construction of democracy, and the dynamics of politics (Reyes & León, 2016). It also revealed the urgent need to educate Colombians as critical media consumers who recognize war as a battleground of opposing narratives where the truth has been one of its main victims (Murillo, 2017); in this battle, different agents and forms of violence are legitimated (Gómez Arévalo, 2015), and some groups benefit by keeping economic and social control. Therefore, it is paramount that Colombians gain awareness of their role in perpetuating violence and discover their vast potential to contribute to peacebuilding. Undoubtedly, language educators can make a significant contribution in this direction and critical peace education can offer alternative frames of thought and action to take on this responsibility.

Critical peace educators maintain that peace can only be achieved if the causes of violence are tackled, in other words, if equitable conditions are created for everyone (Bajaj, 2015); this requires a transformation of education. Recognizing this possibility in foreign language teaching, and particularly in ELT, demands a shift from seeing language as an object of study to seeing it as a means that produces social realities (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). This move also implies seeing education and language teaching as sites to raise awareness about the way language reproduces and creates unfair power relationships (Kruger, 2012), and as intertwined in sociopolitical and historical contexts (Pennycook, 1990). Fortunately, this move has started to take place in Colombian ELT.

Recent research reveals an increasing interest in transcending instrumental approaches to English teaching and re-orienting practices to impact school communities' unequal, violent realities. Within these efforts, some researchers have identified the need to use different theoretical perspectives related to peace education. For instance, Aldana et al. (2020) used peace education to explore how fifth-grade Indigenous children, who were victims of the conflict, could build memory artifacts to re-elaborate their traumatic memories and contribute to their healing process. Similarly, using the lenses of social justice and critical pedagogy, Ortega (2020) collaborated with an English teacher in an underprivileged neighborhood in Bogotá to sensitize her ninth graders about the social inequalities surrounding them and to take action for change. By the same token, Bello (2012) studied undergraduate students' discourses of their social realities through discourse analysis and citizenship competences. Likewise, Romero and Pérez (2021) drew on citizenship and communicative competences to discuss global warming with ninth graders and engage them in reflection and the search for solutions as responsive citizens. These studies were conducted in disenfranchised contexts in public institutions across different educational levels, which confirms that it is possible to use ELT



contexts as rich scenarios to educate critical citizens who take an active role in the transformation of their realities.

At an international level, some researchers have introduced different theories and concepts from peace education (PE) and critical peace education (CPE) in teacher education programs and courses. For example, Arikan (2009) focused on preservice ELT teachers working on grammar through environmental peace education activities to discuss social issues from a global perspective in their classrooms. In addition, Christopher and Taylor (2011) used critical reconstructionist perspectives to raise awareness of social and economic injustice and the defense of human rights, which resulted in student teachers wanting to turn their classrooms into places for justice.

This type of work shows a valuable path to follow considering that our social realities in Colombia have been historically permeated by war and violence. We strongly believe English preservice and in-service teachers in our country could better respond to the demands of our social realities. This can occur if they become critically conscious of how violence operates at the micro and macro level, the role of media in these dynamics, and their potential to promote peace starting from their practices as language educators. We believe it is time that this work capitalizes on the many contributions to peace education made by Colombian and other scholars in our region that help us understand this phenomenon from our place.

Acknowledging this need, the present study targeted a group of preservice teachers in a foreign language teacher education program at a public university branch in Antioquia, a region affected by cultural, structural, direct, and ecological violence. The study resorted to CPE, pedagogy of memory, and CML to foster critical consciousness of our country's armed conflict in these preservice teachers while weaving different ways to teach English that contribute to peacebuilding. In this

vein, the study intended to answer the following research question: How can the implementation of a pedagogical unit based on CPE, pedagogy of memory, and CML enhance foreign language student teachers' critical consciousness about the representations of Colombia's armed conflict promoted by mainstream media?

### **Theoretical framework**

This study drew on critical approaches to peace education and literacy. In this section, we first introduce CPE and its principles; then we present pedagogy of memory as a critical approach within CPE and its relevance to work on PE initiatives in our context. Finally, we introduce critical media literacy's principles and core concepts as valuable frames and tools to work with English learners on the analysis of the role of media in the dynamics of violence, conflict, and war.

#### **Critical Peace Education**

PE stands as an international movement working for the elimination of all forms of violence, the transformation of educational praxis in diverse contexts around the world, and the construction of peaceful, just social structures where human rights are respected (Bajaj, 2015; Galtung, 1990; Gómez Arévalo, 2015). This study was guided by critical peace education (CPE): A political approach to PE because it maintains that social change can occur both inside and outside school, reclaiming engaged action and analysis of local contexts (Haavelsrud, 1996, as cited in Bajaj, 2008). For critical peace educators, it is paramount to analyze the connections between school and its larger social context. They claim that unbalanced relations of power and their causes generate inequality, which education and social action should dismantle; learning processes should revolve around local meanings and realities to promote students' agency, democratic participation, and social action; and all educators should critically reflect on their role and positionality regarding education (Bajaj, 2015).

Framed in these principles, CP educators attempt to unveil and disrupt direct, structural, and cultural violence. Direct violence is perpetrated by specific actors while in indirect or structural violence their perpetrators cannot be identified since this type of violence is built in the system and is evidenced in the unequal distribution of power and unequal opportunities (Galtung, 1969, as cited in Kruger, 2012). In addition, cultural violence is present in symbolic aspects of human existence like religion, art, language, science, and ideology that can be used to justify direct or structural violence (Galtung, 1990). In addition to understanding how different forms of violence operate, CP educators work to construct positive peace.

Positive peace is understood as the absence of structural violence and the elimination of its causes (Brantmeier, 2013; Galtung, 1969, as cited in Kruger, 2012). It entails the presence of social justice, equity, environmental sustainability, and the fair distribution of resources (Brantmeier, 2013). This view of peace identifies with the principles of CPE. However, mainstream discourses and initiatives towards peace understand it as the absence of direct violence disregarding the structural causes of violence; this view is known as negative peace. In sum, embracing a critical perspective on PE encompasses varied principles that include not only a deep understanding of the different types of peace and violence but also an analysis of the power structures in which they operate in specific contexts.

Critical work in PE entails analyzing and critiquing structural issues affecting society, paying attention to local meanings, and engaging different voices, encouraging equal participation, and promoting agency (Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Hantzopoulos, 2011). In the analysis of structural issues, learners pay attention to both power relationships (Brantmeier, 2013) and structural inequality (Bajaj, 2008) to question dominant narratives of peace and violence (Gounari, 2013). It is

equally important to address situations in learners' local settings (Bajaj, 2008) and consider the local understandings of peace and violence (Brantmeier, 2013) for devising possible actions to transform reality. CPE also intends to hear multiple voices, especially those coming from learners' own experiences (Freire, 2000) to compare the narratives of both dominant and disenfranchised groups.

### Pedagogy of Memory

In tune with the CPE idea that understanding and analyzing social structures to understand the dynamics of violence should be grounded on local meanings and realities, this study was also enriched by a locally developed perspective of PE, i.e., pedagogy of memory. Pedagogy of memory aims to create spaces for dialogue and understanding and strives to construct an inclusive historical culture based on the motto *never again* (Torres, 2016). It involves working with people's memories about their experiences and feelings (Aponte, 2016) as fundamental to reaching peace and justice (Arias, 2016) and avoiding human rights violations (Sacavino, 2015). Likewise, pedagogy of memory can enhance the reconstruction of social bonds by listening to victims' voices (Mayorga et al., 2017) and examining the perspectives of all war agents in their social and historical contexts (Padilla & Bermúdez, 2016). Such considerations will disrupt hegemonic representations of social groups (Garzón, 2016) and support learners in developing a more comprehensive understanding of conflicts (Padilla & Bermúdez, 2016).

By the same token, pedagogy of memory becomes particularly relevant to the Colombian context since we seem to be immersed in total obliviousness (Ospina, 2013). Such disregard for our memory is especially evident in schools where violence is not a topic of discussion; instead, civic instruction emphasizes the regulation of citizens' behaviors (Murillo, 2017). Sadly, oblivion stands as the main feature of our political culture (Garzón, 2016), which takes a toll on both

election days and the way our young students understand war.

### Critical Media Literacy

Working with pedagogy of memory also sets the need to develop critical views of the media with the student teachers participating in this study. This is because it is vital to reinforce the testimonies disclaimed by the mainstream media (Murillo, 2015) and to recognize that war is a battlefield of different narratives (Murillo, 2017). Therefore, in this study, critical media literacy (CML) principles and pedagogical tools supported the analysis and creation of media texts about the Colombian armed conflict.

CML is a practical approach to critical literacy that engages learners in analyzing and critiquing media messages regarding how power operates among audiences, media, and content (Gainer, 2010). For doing so, CML includes different forms of literacy such as the use of new technologies, analysis of mass communication, and critical consumption of popular culture; it also enhances the creation of alternative media “to challenge media texts and narratives that appear natural and transparent” (Kellner & Share, 2007, p. 4).

CML provides learners with opportunities to analyze and question media messages, unveil structural relations of oppression and make their voices heard. Through CML, learners can develop skills to uncover hidden messages in lifestyles, values, and worldviews promoted by media texts. They might also examine different issues affecting their lives, make connections to what happens in society (Kellner & Share, 2005), and make their voices heard through the creation of alternative media texts (Gainer et al., 2009). Hence, this type of work enhances the use of the media to promote social change and positions students as citizens responsible for constructing a better society (Kellner & Share, 2005). Such work is guided by CML key concepts, which can help learners deconstruct and reconstruct media messages about peace and violence and critically reflect on them.

Media educators share five key concepts that guide the critical analysis of media texts (Kellner & Share, 2005). First, media messages represent reality in a particular way (non-transparency); second, the media have their language and rules to construct messages effectively (codes and conventions); third, people may have different interpretations of media messages (audience); fourth, the media support certain values and worldviews (content and message); and finally, the media are driven by an interest in profit and power (motivation). All these guiding concepts have the potential to enhance students’ critical reflection about their own views on peace and violence, the local dynamics of power that generate violence, different types of violence that are promoted by the media in their local context, and the forms of violence they are involved in on a daily basis. In the following section, a description of the method used in this study will be presented.

### Method

This inquiry process was a qualitative case study. According to Yin (2003), a case study is useful to explore situations in which a specific intervention may produce undetermined outcomes; a case study can be used under three conditions: when trying to answer “how” and “why” questions, when the behaviors of the participants cannot be manipulated, and when investigating contemporary phenomena in a particular context. The work presented in this paper stands as a single case study since a single pedagogical intervention consisting of a CML unit was conducted; it examined a contemporary phenomenon: how foreign language student-teachers interrogated views of peace and violence promoted in local media; and it was conducted in an English oral and written communication course in a foreign language teacher education program at a public university.

### Participants

Participants were selected using criterion sampling (Patton, 1990). In this case, the three student teachers selected have had very different experiences with

the armed conflict, and they showed different levels of awareness regarding underlying media messages. We will refer to these participants as Felipe, Hernan, and William to guarantee anonymity.

Felipe is a 26-year-old FL student teacher coming from a public high school and lives in eastern Antioquia with his mother and sister; he belongs to a low social stratum and works as an apiarist. Felipe thinks he has indirectly experienced the armed conflict, mainly through the media and other people's experiences. He keeps himself updated on the country's situation through the mainstream national and local media.

Hernan is a 22-year-old FL preservice teacher, from a middle-low social stratum, who finished high school in a public institution. As a teenager, he had to deal with urban violence in his neighborhood (Narrative, April 13, 2018). He reads national magazines, watches local TV channels, and listens to local radio stations to be updated; he emphasizes the importance of verifying information received from any media source (Survey, February 26, 2018).

William is a 23-year-old FL preservice teacher coming from a middle-low social stratum. William's family was displaced by the armed conflict when he was just a newborn. Despite the tragedies he

witnessed, he got involved in NGOs by working with victims of the armed conflict. As a representative of the armed conflict victims in Antioquia, he has worked to defend human rights and in the construction of proposals for the peace agreement (Narrative, April 13, 2018). As a social activist, William often tries to be informed about the country's situation through the national mainstream media.

### The Pedagogical Intervention

The study was conducted in a foreign language teacher education program at a public university in Antioquia, Colombia, at one of its regional branches. It involved a pedagogical intervention in a fourth-semester English oral and written communication course. Classes took place four hours a week over seven weeks. This intervention integrated the course objectives with work on CML, CPE, and pedagogy of memory as illustrated in Table 1. These objectives included providing critical reflection spaces and promoting the development of the four language skills, particularly inferring main ideas from oral and written texts, composing different texts, and supporting main ideas in a talk.

As for CML objectives, the pedagogical project attempted to guide students in analyzing and creating media texts about the Colombian conflict

**Table 1** Course Objectives

Course Objectives	CML Objectives	CPE Objectives
1. To show comprehension of informative, narrative, and argumentative oral and written texts about topics of general interest and related to the field of foreign language teaching.	• To guide students in analyzing and creating media texts about the Colombian conflict in terms of authorship, audience, content, and purpose.	• To compare the voices of victims, the State, war agents, and the media.
2. To state and argue their viewpoint in oral presentations and debates in relation to academic and professional matters.		• To provide spaces for dialogue and reflection on the causes and consequences of the armed conflict in Colombia.
3. To summarize authentic argumentative, narrative, and informative texts.		• To reflect on both individual and local conceptions of peace, violence, and agents of violence.
4. To participate in conversations about controversial topics.		



in terms of authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose. In this vein, CML's guiding concepts and questions included: (i) Who created this message?; (ii) what creative techniques are used to attract my attention?; (iii) how might different people understand this message differently?; (iv) what values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?; (v) why is this message being sent? (Jolls & Sund, 2007). In addition, several pedagogical strategies from pedagogy of memory provided spaces for dialogue and reflection in the classroom to construct knowledge collectively. Such tools included questions and practical activities based on interactive techniques from qualitative research in social sciences, which are proposed by *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica* (CNMH, 2013), namely, debates, discussions about objects that elicit people's memories, analysis of photographs, and the creation of videos. Working towards CPE and pedagogy of memory involved comparing the voices of victims, the State, war agents, and the media; identifying the causes and consequences of the armed conflict in Colombia; and reflecting on both individual and local conceptions of peace, violence, and agents of violence.

Lessons were planned based on the backward design model proposed by McTighe and Wiggins (2004) to ensure they were oriented toward the desired results. This design model offers a guide to organizing content so that it makes sense in all its stages (desired results, assessment evidence, and learning experiences) without becoming prescriptive. Using this design model, one of the main learning experiences planned was the creation of counter-texts challenging official views of peace, violence, and war agents presented in media texts.

The first counter-text was a speech bubble activity in which students observed original images of war agents and created their own counter-ads using bubbles. The last counter-text was a podcast or a video presenting their views of the Colombian armed conflict as well as their own experiences.

For the creation of the different texts, students were asked to consider and make decisions about text type, format, contents, audience, and purpose. In order to do this, students were also guided by the five CML core concepts in the light of the following questions for the construction of media texts: What am I authoring? Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity, and technology? Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience? Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles, and points of view in my contents? Have I communicated my purpose effectively? (Jolls & Sund, 2007). In the following section, we describe the data collection methods used in this study.

### Data Collection

Data collection took three months and included a survey administered to the whole class, recordings of the six course class discussions, three samples of students' work, one individual interview, and two group interviews also conducted with the whole class. At the beginning of the course, students received information about the study and the selected participants signed a consent form. They also completed a survey in Spanish to provide data about their background, media consumption habits, and theme preferences.

These results informed the unit design. Through the intervention, students participated in critical class discussions that were held in English and recorded to observe both students' language performance and to examine their views on media messages, peace, violence, and agents of violence. They also created different artifacts in English including a personal narrative about their experiences with violence in Colombia and two counter-texts: A speech bubble activity and a podcast or video. These artifacts showed how learners engaged in the deconstruction and reconstruction of media messages related to peace and violence in the armed conflict of our country and whether they presented critical counter-narratives that challenged mainstream media messages. At

the end of the course, students participated in one individual and two group interviews that allowed researchers to collect data about learners' views of peace and violence and compare them to the initial views expressed in the survey, to examine new attitudes and positions towards media texts, and to know about their perceptions concerning the implementation of the pedagogical project. These interviews were conducted in Spanish. In this paper, we translated into English data that were collected originally in Spanish. Finally, three participants were selected in terms of their experiences with the armed conflict and their levels of consciousness regarding media messages about the class topics.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a constructive method in which some categories and codes were created by combining both deductive and inductive methods (Altrichter et al., 1993). Therefore, there were some pre-established categories based on the theories that guided the study and others that emerged from the data. The pre-established categories attempted to feature the critical consciousness that students may develop; they included analyzing the local context, challenging unbalanced relations of power, and identifying all sorts of violence. On the other hand, those categories emerging from the data revolved around recognizing the need to challenge mainstream media and identifying language teachers as technicians.

The process was fluid and involved managing and knowing the data, focusing the analysis, categorizing information, identifying patterns, making interpretations, tracking choices, and involving others (Suter, 2012; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). After the initial familiarization with the data, all the information was uploaded to NVivo 10 in order to code it and easily retrieve such codes (Bryman, 2012). Taking this initial analysis into account, some brief reports were written. During the process, the pre-established categories were refined, emergent categories were added, and the case of each participant was analyzed and

reported separately. These reports were discussed and compared in order to discover new patterns as well as commonalities and differences in the participants' processes and understandings; thus, the categories were reshaped, and the findings were presented in an integrated manner.

### Findings

Through this pedagogical intervention, participants could develop more complex analyses of the representations of Colombia's armed conflict in mainstream media. Critical discussions around different media texts helped students gain a better understanding of the dynamics of violence, its causes, and its multiple forms. Such texts also allowed for challenging dominant or limited representations of war agents, giving prominence to the voices of disenfranchised groups, and gaining a better understanding of the media's role in the perpetuation of different forms of violence. This section accounts for the three participants' views, contradictions, and realizations along the stages of the intervention.

#### What War Looks Like

Felipe, Hernan, and William had different perspectives on the armed conflict in Colombia. Coming from different life trajectories, these three student teachers perceived violence, war agents, and peacebuilding in different and sometimes contradicting ways. At this initial stage, students participated in a speech bubble activity based on a series of pictures taken from different media and related to the war in Colombia. They had to observe the images and respond to them in a bubble. In this activity, Felipe and Hernan focused on portraying war agents as crime perpetrators. They used sarcasm to refer to paramilitary groups (see Figure 1), the incompetence of state forces (see Figure 2) and to big scandals such as *false-positive cases*<sup>1</sup> (see Figure 3), and male prostitution in the army (see Figure 4).

1 This term was used by the Colombian media and society to refer to army personnel's involvement in the killing of civilians, who were officially presented as guerrilla mem-

Figure 1 Speech bubble text by Felipe



Source: *El Espectador*, 2016

Figure 2 Speech bubble text by Felipe



Source: Policía Nacional de Colombia, 2011, *Flickr*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/policiacolombia/5885648462>

Figure 3 Speech bubble by Hernan



Source: *Héroes Periódico*, 2011.

Figure 4 Bubble Speech by Hernan



Source: Policía Nacional de Colombia, 2011, *Flickr*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/policiacolombia/5885648462>

However, some of their reflections went further to challenge widespread representations of some war agents in the mainstream media. For instance, when referring to guerrilla members, Hernan explained that he attempted to portray them as victims since they might regret their actions, suffer when committing violent acts, and be afraid and troubled because of the horrors of war (see Figure 5). This reflection shows that he could detach from official perspectives that tend to demonize certain groups and legitimize State forces as naturally well-meaning agents.

Data also showed that students could identify direct violence. When describing their previous experiences, Felipe mostly referred to destruction, kidnappings, murders, and fear caused by the armed conflict as he described what he saw in the media:

bers killed in battle, in order to obtain promotions and other benefits.

Figure 5 Speech bubble by Hernan



Source: A. Gómez, *Flickr*, 2017, <https://rb.gy/z5sh2u>.

“the journals and TV news showing people dying, going to other places because of violence and a lot of houses resting on parts on the ground after the attacks” (Felipe, narrative, April 13, 2018). In turn, Hernan narrated how he witnessed visible manifestations of violence in his neighborhood:

[...] Many of them [my friends] died due to a war between gangs, some other [because of] the famous



*limpiezas* [social cleansing]. I really felt sadness in my heart when a young [boy] died in my neighborhood. Besides [this] feeling, I also felt gladness because it was not me; thanks to my parents, I took another way. (Hernan, Narrative, April 13, 2018)

In addition, students could perceive some more subtle forms of violence around them. In the speech bubble activity, Felipe represented gender violence and explained that female guerrilla members suffer discrimination since they have historically been assigned certain roles in society (see Figure 6). Similarly, William referred to some invisible forms of violence, including discriminatory comments against his university that portray it as an institution that trains guerrilla members (see Figure 7), which is a widely spread stereotype in the local context.

William and Hernan also expressed their views of the role the media have in the conflict. In the first-class discussion, William stated, “all the media is promoting good education and information.” (William, class discussion, March 12, 2018) On this occasion, Hernan stated that even if the FARC had committed deplorable actions, the media should present the perspective of this group so that they convey neutral information: “it’s difficult because FARC we know that they hold a wrong perspective and have done bad things, but maybe [the media should] show the perspective of the FARC too” (Hernan, class discussion, March 12, 2018). In these statements, students did not

seem to recognize that all media texts have purposes and intentions, and therefore, they cannot be neutral or naturally well-intended. However, Hernan highlighted how the media should include the perspectives of different agents in the conflict when covering the news.

A very significant finding at this stage was that the three participants recognized people’s transformative potential to change their realities and work towards peacebuilding. To Hernan, “education can cultivate critical individuals that are not easily manipulated by politicians” (Hernan, survey, February 26, 2018, own translation). He saw peace and violence as closely linked to ELT since “teachers can use English as both a means to inform about the context of our country and as a tool to teach a language” (Hernan, survey, February 26, 2018, own translation). In this same direction, Felipe and William recognized the commitment of the government, armed groups, and citizens as fundamental to putting an end to the Colombian armed conflict. William also highlighted “the need to empower people to work towards this goal” (William, survey, February 26, 2018, own translation); in fact, he was personally committed to the creation of scenarios for peace and reconciliation in his role as an activist: “We have built proposals in favor of the victims. These proposals have been presented to the government with the interest of [making the victims] part of the [government] projects. We have participated in

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Figure 6 Speech bubble by Felipe



Source: A. Gómez, *Mujeres guerrilleras*. Flickr, 2017, <https://rb.gy/z5sh2u>

Figure 7 Speech bubble by William



Source: *El Espectador*, 2016



mobilizations for the peace agreement” (William, narrative, April 13, 2018). It is interesting to see in these statements how the three students are aware of their agency in the transformation of violent realities and show different levels of personal involvement in achieving this goal.

### Interrogating Grand Narratives About the Armed Conflict

Through this pedagogical intervention, Felipe, Hernan, and William gained awareness of the role of different war agents in the armed conflict, increased their capacity to question the truths presented in media texts, and recognized the relevance of including the victims’ voices in the narratives about the conflict.

In the first place, students gained awareness of the involvement of different actors and war agents in the conflict. Felipe, for instance, moved away from his initial focus on guerrilla groups as the only party perpetrating violence; in a discussion about a newspaper article, he stated, “[the] FARC [...] had an ideology but these other armed groups they don’t have any ideology, they only fight for money and to control the traffic, the drugs and that” (Felipe, class discussion, May 7, 2018). He went further to include other actors whose actions increased the intensity of the conflict: “the armed groups, political forces that create polarization among citizens, and Colombian people who behave indifferently and do not take actions” (Felipe, group interview 1, May 21, 2018, own translation). In addition, during the implementation, students worked with several videos about 2016’s plebiscite from an online campaign inviting Colombians to reject the peace agreement. When analyzing one of these videos, guided by the five CML concepts, William claimed that even if most voters had approved the peace agreement, it would have just meant the end of the conflict with one group:

[In the] other video Colombia is showed as a best country but [if] the [YES-vote] in favor of the peace

agreement is approved it represents the [end] of the conflict with only one armed group and in Colombia there are other groups that are not included in that peace agreement (William, class discussion, March 21, 2018).

As it can be observed, William recognized the importance of including all war agents in order to work towards peace. These examples show how students could bring new elements to the analysis of the conflict by acknowledging the role of other actors who may not exert direct violence and that the peace agreement was just a beginning in the search for peace.

In the second place, data also showed that students could widely question spread narratives about the conflict in the mainstream media. In one of the class sessions, students discussed an online campaign about the plebiscite whose main argument was trying to convince voters in this video that guerrilla members would not go to prison if the peace agreement were validated through the plebiscite (*Campaña por el NO en el plebiscito* [CPNP], 2016). In this activity, Hernan cast doubt on whether “paying a guerrilla ex-combat eight million Colombian pesos for running a business would be more or less expensive than sending them to prison” (Hernan, class discussion, March 21, 2018, own translation). Moreover, he criticized the techniques used in the video to achieve its purpose as he stated, “there are no arguments in the videos, they are just playing with your feelings” (Hernan, class discussion, March 21, 2018).

Similarly, when examining another video from the same campaign (CPNP, 2016), William could unveil some omissions in it. In this text, the main argument for voting for *no* included all the economic benefits that the peace agreement would grant guerrilla members while working-class people could barely feed their families. Here, William called his classmates’ attention to the fact that the commercial did not explain how people’s poor working conditions were going to change by voting for *no* in the plebiscite, as he stated: “If the NO

[vote] wins, the situation of Javier won't change." (William, class discussion, March 21, 2018). In this activity, students could question the main arguments presented as truths in this media campaign. They assessed the validity of the information presented, the techniques used to create those messages, and what these messages omitted. This allowed them to realize that the dynamics of the conflict in Colombia are in no way black or white and that the views of the conflict presented in them have specific purposes.

Thirdly, students also emphasized the need to consider the victim's perspectives to understand the conflict better. In one of the class discussions, students scrutinized some photographs representing different versions of the conflict. They described the photographs, evoked memories of events and places marked by war, and compared the voices of the victims, the state, and war agents in the conflict. This interactive technique, which comes from social studies, intended to set up a dialogue between the content of the photographs and the interpretations students may have about the social reality of their country. In this activity, Hernan was moved by one image showing an indigenous woman who had been injured by a landmine and was smiling despite her tragedy, in this case he stated that "she lost her both hands and one eye, but in the picture she is smiling, so it's a very nostalgic image" (Hernan, class discussion, April 9, 2018). Furthermore, Hernan was able to identify the voices omitted from a newspaper article addressing issues of violence in Colombia (The Guardian, 2004). He noticed that the original article focused on the perspective of paramilitary groups; therefore, he selected a new article that addressed different situations faced by children recruited by paramilitary groups. He stated,

In this article, we found that they omit the other perspectives. They only focus [on] the paramilitaries' perspective, so that was the reason we took these two articles: BBC News and CBC News, and here we made a little comparison. For example, this [one] called our attention because this talks about the children who are in the paramilitary groups, and it was the only

[one] that mentions children in the news (Hernan, class discussion, May 7, 2018).

In the same activity, William's concern about the victims was also evident in the analysis he did of a newspaper article related to peace and violence in Colombia. He suggested an alternative heading to transform the original news article: "Victims support YES in the plebiscite", which he considered a text that advocated for making victims' voices heard: "[it] is very similar the structure of the text but the main difference is that here in this text, [the] main characters are the victims, and the voices of victims are the most important in this article" (Class discussion, May 7, 2018).

As shown before, the three participants gave prominence to the voices of victims, their suffering, and their struggles, which in many cases are overlooked in official narratives. They assessed the intentions, omissions, and techniques of media messages and took an active role as readers and viewers, these student teachers could deconstruct widely spread official narratives about war agents, their motivations, actions, and impact on people's lives.

### New Understandings, Different Perspectives, and New Texts to Build Peace

The final project in this pedagogical intervention was conceived as an opportunity for students to create a video or a podcast with their perspectives on the Colombian conflict. In their work, they decided to rebel against the stigmatization of Colombia as a violent country and give prominence to victims' voices. They also made connections on how violence is present in their daily lives, discussed media manipulation, and reflected on their potential to contribute to peacebuilding. This was in no way a linear path of achievements; there were many gains as well as doubts, feelings of frustration and sadness, and even, some rebellion in students' counter-texts.

In his project, Hernan showed other forms of violence by creating a media text that was totally

different from the ones analyzed in class. His final podcast aimed at changing the way people see Colombia and it was titled *the risk is wanting to stay*. Hernan introduced his podcast, referring to the damages caused by the armed conflict: To him, Colombia should not be a synonym for violence and fear anymore; therefore, he invited foreign people to visit our country and fall in love with its places. In his podcast, he stated: “People will realize that there are other interesting facts about Colombia despite war and drugs. You will know that Colombia is full of beautiful places to visit and that people is really different to what you may think” (Hernan, podcast script, May 12, 2018). This text shows his understanding of violence as not only direct aggression but also as the beliefs, attitudes, and actions that end up in rejection or discrimination of individuals and groups. At the same time, his view may be seen as a kind of rebellion to continue talking about war and conflict, considering that, at the end of the intervention, Hernan confessed that discussions around these topics had become monotonous to him. Interestingly, his feeling of boredom led him to create a very original text, which might show that even these unexpected reactions by students can become learning opportunities.

Regarding Felipe’s project, he decided to show the importance of telling the stories of victims whose perspectives are not usually included in the media. He made a video explaining the dynamics of the Colombian conflict. As he presented his work, he revealed the importance he gave to the victim’s testimonies, which was evident in its title *it is time to remember* and content: “In this video, [the victims] tell us their experiences in the armed conflict. In this way, we construct the narration from their memories” (Felipe, sic, video recording, April 11, 2018). Felipe also included other disregarded voices from the grand narrative of the armed conflict, particularly those of peasants and rural teachers:

Our video mainly represents the lifestyle of peasants, rural teachers, their struggles, and resistance in the

armed conflict. It also unveils the value of life, the family, and education from the victims’ point of view. For example, in the story of Mr. Arsenio Marulanda, we can rescue values such as honesty and integrity. Also, the unconditionality of how Mrs. Luz Amparo Córdoba faces the situation of [...] education in conflict areas. In addition, the snippets of poems of Amador López show us the drama of forced displacement, the longing for home and faith. (Felipe, video script, April 11, 2018).

In the same vein, William created a podcast in which he emphasized the transformative role of the victims to put an end to the armed conflict. When talking about who benefited from his message he replied: “The victims of the armed conflict, because this information is a way to sensitize others about the damage generated by the war [and] the work [done] by the victims to overcome this [situation] and not [to] repeat it again” (William, sic, podcast script, May 12, 2018). Moreover, William was aware of the causes and consequences of the armed conflict as pivotal elements to understanding this issue and trying to solve it. With his podcast, he wanted the audience to understand “the main reasons for the conflict [to start], why and how it has continued, and the current consequences that have been generated” (William, podcast script, May 12, 2018). This reflection shows how William remained consistent with his idea of the armed conflict as a complex issue whose causes, consequences, and agents need to be better understood so people can unlearn the war.

Together with their analyses of violence in Colombia, students could make very close connections between media manipulation and violence. Felipe expressed his lack of trust in the purposes of the mainstream media in Colombia since sometimes they seem to pursue noble intentions, but at the same time, they misinform people:

The truth is that I do not know what to think about violence and the whole situation in Colombia because [the media] show a lot of information and you do not know if they are really trying to help to make things right or they are simply trying to make profit and they



keep harming society. (Felipe, group interview 1, May 21, 2018, own translation).

In this regard, Hernan insisted that the media should be “neutral” while Felipe claimed that this could not be possible for they serve specific interests, and this does not allow them to tell the truth:

“The media obey different interests and while they are not neutral, they won’t be able to provide, let’s say, truthful information” (Felipe, group interview 2, May 28, 2018, own translation). This shows how Felipe stepped away from his initial trust in the pure informative nature of the media.

Of great relevance in the findings from this study was the fact that, even if this pedagogical intervention mainly emphasized the armed conflict, students could see how violence is present in every aspect of our lives. Felipe, for instance, referred to Colombia as a violent country where people do not tolerate that you support a different soccer team or that you belong to a different political party:

You can see, let’s say, in more tolerant countries, more open to many ideas that there is , let’s say, peace because you do not see those acts of violence you see in Colombia, that take place because of intolerance. Intolerance, I do not know why, because you are a member of a different soccer team, a different political party, and so forth. (Felipe, group interview 1, May 21, 2018, own translation).

Similarly, William saw violence in people’s adverse reactions towards conflict ranging from lousy management of relationships in daily life to difficulties in reaching peace in the country:

Bad management of relationships because I believe that, in the end, that is what conflict is about, isn’t it? And absolutely all conflicts happen because communication between two or more people is not well-managed. (William, group interview 1, May 21, 2018, own translation).

These examples, as well as some presented earlier in this section, show how these students went deeper in their understanding of how violence operates from an individual to a social level.

Students’ wider understandings of violence seemed to be in tune with their views of peacebuilding. From the beginning of this implementation, as mentioned earlier, they took a clear stance about the need for individual and social action to successfully build peace in our country and the potential of education, particularly of English teachers, to take actions in this direction (Survey, February 26, 2018). At this stage, William ratified his idea of peace as a collective project that all citizens can work for; he regarded “peace not only as a concern of any government program but also as a personal endeavor starting in the family and moving on to other social spheres.” (William, interview, May 31, 2018, own translation). However, he felt discouraged at some point in the pedagogical project and started to think that his work was insufficient to fight against the massive power of the misinformation campaigns promoted by mainstream media. In relation to the campaigns during the plebiscite, he stated:

I think that is disappointing and it is due to manipulation, but rather than the manipulation of information, it is emotional manipulation because that is reflected in the way the campaigns turned out, in the results [...]. There are many reasons that rely more on emotion than on reasoning. What else can you do? This is a little disappointing because you feel when you are at the university, participate in some groups and you know you can find ways to be informed and to help educate people, but you realize that there is still a lot missing and that that emotional struggle that takes place and the little things you can do, teaching, is very little. (William, group interview 2, May 28, 2018, own translation).

Despite this and the disappointment generated by the 2018 presidential election results, which he attributed to media manipulation, William stated that his involvement in this pedagogical project motivated him to continue working towards peace. Particularly, witnessing the transformation of some of his classmates, he realized that his desire to change the realities of his country had not faded:

This unit encouraged me to continue making my contribution. Some of my classmates did not know anything about these topics, and now I can see them



motivated, interested, and empowered to talk about them. This transformation makes me feel motivated to continue spreading the message of peace, since violence has marked our country and we are not always aware of this (William, interview, May 31, 2018, own translation).

William's feeling of frustration and Hernan's boredom concerning the topic of class discussions, presented earlier in this section, were certainly not expected results. Yet, their reactions and the way they dealt with them bring attention to the fact that pedagogical projects addressing sensitive topics such as war and violence are not an easy task, and they should not intend to have everything under control. Instead, these instances reveal that learning spaces, far from always being positive and ideal, encompass the tensions and challenges that humans face in their daily interactions and realities.

In sum, bringing their different life stories and experiences to the classroom conversations around media texts opened spaces for the three student teachers to gain a broader perspective on how different forms of violence operate in our local context. Students could question their own views and see more clearly how media texts can be used to create versions of the world that privilege some and disadvantage many, thus perpetuating violence and inequality.

## Discussion and Conclusions

The present study showed that pedagogical work in ELT, particularly with preservice teachers in Colombia, can be enriched by the contributions of scholars in our region working towards peacebuilding along with the international developments of CPE and CML. Participants in this study widened their perceptions of the causes and consequences of the armed conflict and its different war agents, acquiring more elements to better understand their local context, and start judging their social reality (Aponte, 2016). Such principles helped learners understand Colombia's conflict as a nonlinear phenomenon emerging

from various social, political, and economic factors (Torres, 2016). Students' participation in class discussions, analysis of photographs, and conversations with victims supported their analysis and comparisons of mainstream discourses and opened spaces to validate the silenced voices in the grand narrative of Colombia's armed conflict (Ortega, 2016). Moreover, the use of CML key concepts and questions helped students analyze and critique media messages to unveil lifestyles, values, and worldviews promoted by mainstream media texts (Kellner & Share, 2005), thus deconstructing commonly spread representations of peace and violence in Colombia, and making their voices heard (Gainer et al., 2009).

Findings from this study are consistent with those conducted with advanced student teachers in different contexts working on topics related to peace and social justice. As in Christopher and Taylor's (2011) study, student teachers realized their power to work for a more just society starting in their classrooms. This study also identifies with what was found in Arian's (2009) study, in which participants developed positive opinions about including PE topics in their English lessons. However, the present research also evidenced that addressing sensitive issues in the language classroom such as violence and social injustice may involve feelings of demotivation, disappointment, and sadness, and language educators should be aware of this as a natural part of learning.

In addition, the present study poses new elements to previous research done with preservice teachers in relation to PE. In the first place, findings revealed that resorting to the principles, core concepts, and critical theories of CPE, developed both at a local and international level, can guide foreign language educators and teacher education programs to better respond to the urgent need of working towards the eradication of violence and the construction of a more equal society in our country. This connection between English language teaching and CPE has just begun to

be explored by some Colombian researchers in English classrooms and it seems to be at an initial stage at an international level. In the second place, the pedagogical intervention conducted showed that the development of critical consciousness is greatly enhanced when students' life experiences and immediate social realities are brought into the classroom to reflect on them, problematize them, and envision actions for change (Gómez Arévalo, 2015). In the third place, findings showed that CML principles and concepts provided students with elements to identify media techniques and purposes and create their own media texts to contest grand narratives about the Colombian conflict, thus moving from reflection to action.

Regarding the limitations of this study, time constraints did not allow a more in-depth exploration of peace and violence beyond the context of Colombia's armed conflict; nevertheless, participants could make connections between the analysis of the armed conflict and some other conflicting situations in their daily lives. Further research can address foreign language preservice teachers' critical analysis of different forms of violence in both their classroom and immediate contexts, which may increase their awareness about ways to contribute to peace as a personal endeavor in every setting where they interact with others. Moreover, future studies can devise longer projects that move from the development of critical consciousness and the creation of counter-texts about violence and conflict to action involving school communities in transformative initiatives towards peace.

We hope this study can also bring some reflection on teacher education programs in Colombia. Teaching a language as if it were a mere body of knowledge to be delivered to learners does not match our mission of humanizing the world and does not contribute to building a peaceful country. Some of our future teachers disregard the realities beyond school walls and teacher education programs tend to prepare them to focus on linguistic

knowledge while inquiry about educational processes in violent contexts is scarce or nonexistent. Therefore, it is paramount that foreign language teacher education programs revise whether their curricula are preparing future language teachers to be responsive to learners' realities and to lead pedagogical proposals in their classrooms and school communities that promote the construction of peaceful environments.

This study also pointed out the need to do more interdisciplinary work in ELT to value the contributions of local knowledge. By working hand in hand with other disciplines, the field of ELT in Colombia can become a powerful ally working to educate critical citizens and transformative agents of the violent realities that inhabit our country. This study resorted to international theoretical developments such as CPE and CML and was enriched by local theories around peace and violence that allowed a deeper understanding and analysis of the armed conflict in our country. Further research is needed involving interdisciplinary work that helps us transcend instrumental views of language teaching and nurture foreign language teacher education curricula; this will contribute to preparing language educators that are sensitive to our social realities and willing to construct pedagogical proposals to support school communities' processes of transformation, reconciliation, and non-repetition.

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# USE OF WHATSAPP AS A PLATFORM TO PROMOTE ENGLISH ORAL FLUENCY AND ACCURACY: A TASK REPETITION APPROACH

USO DEL WHATSAPP COMO PLATAFORMA PARA DESARROLLAR LA FLUIDEZ ORAL Y LA PRECISIÓN EN INGLÉS CON BASE EN EL MÉTODO DE REPETICIÓN DE TAREAS

UTILISATION DE WHATSAPP COMME PLATEFORME POUR DÉVELOPPER L'AISANCE ET LA PRÉCISION À L'ORAL DANS LA LANGUE ANGLAISE SUIVANT LA MÉTHODE DE RÉPÉTITION DES TÂCHES

USO DO WHATSAPP COMO PLATAFORMA PARA DESENVOLVER FLUÊNCIA E PRECISÃO ORAL NO INGLÊS COM BASE NA REPETIÇÃO DE TAREFAS

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## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers needed to adapt their practices to continue teaching the foreign language with the use of different emerging technologies and online platforms. This required them to develop a greater number of digital skills to promote students' language production and achievement. Drawing on evidence which suggests that task repetition is beneficial for developing oral production in speaking and writing tasks, this exploratory study investigates the fluency and accuracy demonstrated by seven Mexican EFL students from a state university in a monologue narrative task performed on WhatsApp following a task repetition design. Fluency and accuracy metrics show that these skills appear to fluctuate in the students during the performance of the task. Interestingly, they also suggest that only fluency increased as the weeks went by, while accuracy development was limited. These results raise questions about the dynamic nature of fluency and how it may interact with accuracy, other language dimensions, student-related factors, and the online environment.

**Keywords:** oral accuracy, oral fluency, narrative tasks, task-based language teaching, TBLT, WhatsApp, mobile-assisted language learning, MALL, complexity accuracy fluency framework, CAF

## RESUMEN

En la actualidad, los docentes de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) se vieron en la necesidad de adaptar sus prácticas para seguir enseñando la lengua extranjera mediante el uso de diferentes tecnologías emergentes y plataformas en línea. Esto

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les exigió desarrollar un mayor número de habilidades digitales para promover la producción lingüística y el avance en sus estudiantes. Con base en evidencia que indica que la repetición de tareas favorece el desarrollo de la producción oral en tareas de habla y escritura, el presente estudio exploratorio investiga la fluidez y precisión demostradas por siete estudiantes mexicanos de ILE de una universidad pública en una tarea narrativa monológica realizada en WhatsApp siguiendo un diseño de repetición de tareas. Las métricas de fluidez y precisión muestran una fluctuación en los niveles de fluidez y precisión de los estudiantes durante la ejecución de la tarea. Es interesante notar que también indican que solo la fluidez aumentó con el transcurrir de las semanas, mientras que la precisión no mostró un desarrollo significativo. Estos resultados plantean interrogantes sobre la naturaleza dinámicas de la fluidez y su interacción con la precisión, otras dimensiones de la lengua, factores relacionados con los estudiantes y el entorno virtual.

**Palabras clave:** precisión en lengua oral, fluidez oral, tareas narrativas, enseñanza de lenguas basada en tareas, WhatsApp, complejidad, precisión y fluidez, CAF, aprendizaje de lenguas mediante tecnología móvil

### RÉSUMÉ

Aujourd'hui, les enseignants d'anglais langue étrangère (ALE) ont vu la nécessité d'adapter leurs pratiques pour continuer à enseigner la langue étrangère en utilisant différentes technologies émergentes et plateformes en ligne. Cela leur a demandé de développer un plus grand nombre de compétences numériques pour favoriser la production et la progression de la langue chez leurs étudiants. Sur la base des preuves indiquant que la répétition des tâches favorise le développement de la production orale dans des tâches d'expression orale et écrite, la présente étude exploratoire examine la fluidité et la précision démontrées par sept étudiants mexicains ALE d'une université publique dans une tâche narrative monologue effectuée sur WhatsApp suivant un modèle de répétition des tâches. Les mesures de fluidité et de précision montrent une fluctuation des niveaux de fluidité et de précision des élèves pendant l'exécution de la tâche. Il est intéressant de noter qu'ils indiquent également que seule la fluidité a augmenté au fil des semaines, quoique les niveaux de précision sont restés faibles. Ces résultats soulèvent des questions sur la nature dynamique de la fluidité et son interaction avec la précision, d'autres dimensions linguistiques, des facteurs liés à l'apprenant et l'environnement virtuel.

**Mots clef :** précision à la langue orale, aisance orale, tâches narratives, enseignement de langues basée sur des tâches, WhatsApp, complexité, précision et aisance, CAF, apprentissage de langues assisté par des appareils mobiles

### RESUMO

Hoje, os professores de inglês como língua estrangeira (ILE) foram confrontados com a necessidade de adaptar suas práticas para continuar a ensinar a língua estrangeira através do uso de diferentes tecnologias emergentes e plataformas online. Isto exigiu que eles desenvolvessem um maior número de habilidades digitais para promover a produção e o avanço do idioma em seus alunos. Com base em evidências indicando que a repetição de tarefas favorece o desenvolvimento da produção oral em tarefas de fala e escrita, o presente estudo exploratório investiga a fluência e precisão demonstradas por sete estudantes mexicanos do ILE de uma universidade pública em uma tarefa narrativa monológica realizada no WhatsApp após um projeto de repetição de tarefas. As métricas de fluência e precisão mostram uma flutuação nos níveis de fluência e exatidão dos estudantes

durante a execução das tarefas. Curiosamente, eles também indicam que apenas a fluência aumentou ao longo das semanas, apesar de os níveis de precisão terem permanecido baixos. Estes resultados levantam questões sobre a natureza dinâmica da fluência e sua interação com a precisão, outras dimensões da linguagem, fatores relacionados ao aprendiz e o ambiente virtual.

**Palavras chave:** precisão na língua falada, fluência oral, tarefas narrativas, ensino de línguas baseado em tarefas, WhatsApp, complexidade, precisão e fluência, CAF, aprendizagem de línguas assistida por dispositivos móveis

## Introduction

In language education, the way we teach and learn have recently changed significantly. Teachers worldwide have felt the necessity to adapt their teaching practices to online environments and distance language learning. In response, teachers quickly searched for different ways to communicate with students to continue teaching the target language. However, this abrupt transition has resulted in several important challenges that teachers and students commonly face inside and outside online learning environments. For example, when students are not prepared to learn online and use pedagogical platforms, they tend to face several challenges which might result in low motivation, lack of engagement, and low achievement (Garcia-Ponce & Mora-Pablo, 2020).

In order to respond to the demands of teaching the language online and thus ensure language achievement, teachers have continuously looked for online materials, resources, and platforms which help them continue teaching the language in line with their pedagogical objectives and beliefs. Quite clearly, the convenience and usefulness of emerging technologies, platforms, and apps have been recognised by stakeholders (students, teachers, coordinators, administrators, etc.) as resources to continue teaching and learning English. For example, WhatsApp is an instant messaging platform which allows users to send text and voice messages, make voice or video calls, and share images, documents, locations, and contact information. Thanks to these functions, this platform is now used by teachers and students to maintain synchronous and asynchronous interactions and perform tasks with a view to promoting second language (L2) production.

This exploratory study examines the use of WhatsApp as a platform to promote L2 oral production. To the best of our knowledge, there is limited research on the impact of task repetition conducted on WhatsApp. This is the research gap that the study attempts to fill. Because

of the growing evidence which suggests that task repetition is beneficial for promoting students' oral performance (Bui, 2014; Bygate & Samuda, 2005), this research examines the behaviour of seven students' fluency and accuracy levels during a narrative task which was repeated four times on WhatsApp. Therefore, there are several important areas where this study makes an original contribution to our understanding of how task repetition influences student performance. First, this study offers new information on how a cognitively challenging narrative task repeated four times on WhatsApp shapes students' performance indicated by levels of fluency and accuracy. Second, it provides an examination of the behaviour of these two language areas which are commonly associated with meaning (fluency) and form (accuracy). Finally, it formulates a series of recommendations which teachers should consider if their intention is to use WhatsApp to promote L2 production.

## Theoretical Framework

In the following sections, we discuss the literature relevant for this study. Firstly, we present literature on the concept of task and the complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) framework. We then introduce some ideas related to mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and task repetition.

### Tasks and the Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency Framework

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a communicative approach to teaching languages. In this approach, tasks are used to promote language acquisition (Ellis, 2005). In the literature, several definitions of a *task* have been suggested. According to Nunan (1989), a task is "a piece of classroom work which involves students in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form" (p. 10). Prabhu (1987) defines it as "an activity which requires students to arrive at an outcome



from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process” (p. 24). The significant point that emerges from these two definitions is that a task allows students to arrive at an outcome through the use of the second language. Nunan’s definition suggests that a task is primarily focused on meaning which is associated with fluency. However, in this study, we are interested in exploring how and if a task repetition design has a beneficial impact on both fluency and accuracy.

For decades, tasks have been considered activities which have an impact on students’ oral performance quantitatively and qualitatively (Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018). According to Garcia-Ponce (2017), tasks are believed to have an impact on students’ performance because their design characteristics determine the cognitive processing that students need to perform the task at hand and thus achieve its pedagogic purpose or outcome. Similarly, Ahmadian (2012) claims that:

because of the learning benefits of using tasks in the classroom, researchers, and practitioners in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) have directed their attention towards understanding how task design and implementation procedures (of pre- and post-task activities) can maximize language performance and learning. (p. 47)

For example, tasks promote negotiation, modified output, and experimentation with the language. These learning and production benefits have, in turn, motivated a growing area of research interest in the interplay between tasks and student performance. In the past, much research regarding tasks and their effects on student performance focused on other second language contexts, but this area has recently received increasing attention from several foreign language contexts, like the context of the present study.

The evidence so far has suggested that L2 performance during the execution of tasks is complex in nature (Sadeghi, 2016). According to Larsen-Freeman (2006) and Skehan and Foster (2008), this complexity is effectively captured by the CAF

constructs because they benchmark L2 production. Skehan and Foster (2012) state that “many studies of task-based second language performance use CAF to capture different aspects of second language performance” (p. 199). Initially, research in CAF, specifically the tasks related to it, examined mainly language use in terms of accuracy and fluency; but Skehan (2009) incorporated complexity, and this way, the triad of CAF became the fundamental dimensions to characterize L2 usage (Housen & Kuiken, 2009).

For this triad of CAF, we will use the following definitions. *Complexity* refers to the extent to which individuals use grammatically complex and advanced structures in the target language production while accuracy is viewed as “the ability to produce target language that is free of grammatical and other errors” (Richards, 2015, p. 730). Lastly, *fluency* is “the extent to which target language production is continuous, without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication” (Richards, 2015, p. 738).

In the past three decades, the work on CAF has grown exponentially, and has focused more on a pedagogical perspective and classroom-based research of L2 performance (Bulté & Housen, 2012; Khushik & Huhta, 2019; Kyle & Crossley, 2018; Lambert & Kormos, 2014; Skehan, 2009). It is from this perspective that CAF measures can be used as a framework to better understand L2 performances in speaking and writing which could lead us to understand the pedagogic factors that shape student performance and pedagogical interventions when necessary (Kuiken et al., 2010; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). For example, a prominent study regarding oral tasks was conducted by Foster and Skehan (1996), who utilized three tasks (personal information exchange, narratives, and decision making). Their results indicated that planning had an essential role in all three areas, including accuracy. This prompted more research on task-based instruction mainly focusing on tasks and task conditions and how they can be manipulated to

promote language performance and maximize CAF, even when these elements compete with one another.

Furthermore, Barrot and Agdeppa (2021) point out that recent studies have demonstrated that CAF measures are “influenced by task-related factors, student factors, and context-related factors such as planning time, topic, and instructional setting” (p. 1). The role of task features and task conditions will thus influence the performance in terms of CAF. Specifically, it has been generally found that the design of tasks compels students to focus their attention on certain CAF dimensions but not the three simultaneously (see Foster & Skehan, 1996, and Yuan & Ellis, 2003, to name a few). Particularly, Garcia-Ponce et al. (2018) assert that complexity and accuracy tend to compete during task performance. More frequent are beneficial effects on complexity and fluency or on accuracy and fluency. A possible explanation for these results may be limitations in students’ attentional capacities (Foster & Skehan, 1996; Larsen-Freeman, 2009; Skehan, 2009; Skehan & Foster, 1999). To explain these limitations, two models have been proposed: Robinson’s (2003) Cognition Hypothesis and Skehan’s (2009) Limited Attentional Capacity.

The first model explains that students have opportunities to use multiple sources of attention which are influenced by the complexity of a task, and thus, students can promote both high linguistic complexity and accuracy (Robinson, 2003). The second model proposes that students have limited attentional resources in L2 acquisition which will not allow them to attend to both form and meaning when performing a cognitively demanding and complex L2 task. In line with these models, Skehan and Foster (2012) contend that “different task features, or different task conditions, exert systematic influences on performance, and that if one conceives of performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency, many individual or combined effects are possible” (p. 201). This means that if complexity and accuracy are competing for

attentional resources, then it is likely that only one element will show elevated performance. Thus, students must prioritise one of these language dimensions over the others (Bamanger & Gashan, 2015). According to Skehan and Foster (2008), it is possible that the levels of complexity and accuracy, which often compete during performance, increase by giving students opportunities to plan their oral contributions.

This assertion is relevant for the purpose of this study because task repetition is considered to be a form of planning which helps students get familiar with the task at hand and thus promote the language areas which normally compete during task performance (Garcia-Ponce & Tavakoli, 2022). This is supported by Bui (2014), who maintains that task repetition involves a kind of planning because performing a task at one time requires implicit planning. This idea of planning “will increase the degree of familiarity concerning the content or procedure of future tasks” (Arredondo-Tapia & Garcia-Ponce, 2021, p. 48).

As suggested above, a growing amount of research is conducted to explore the behaviour of the CAF dimension, taking into account several factors, such as task types, planning, contexts, proficiency levels, and MALL, to name a few. In this study, we draw on assertions that a task repetition design and MALL practices can be beneficial for promoting an engaging atmosphere for learning (Krueger, 2014) and thus improving language production (Robertson & The Learning Federation, 2009). Moreover, we focus only on fluency and accuracy in this study, without complexity, because research evidence suggests that during unfamiliar and complex tasks that require high levels of attention, students prioritize either fluency or accuracy (Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018), but not both simultaneously, during task performance. However, we expect that with a task repetition design, the students will be able to promote both language areas as the weeks go by. Therefore, the objective is to examine the behaviour of students’ oral fluency and

accuracy during a narrative task which is considered to be cognitively challenging (see Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018) and which was repeated at weekly intervals on WhatsApp.

### Mobile-Assisted Language Learning and Task Repetition

The use of technology today has recently become natural in our everyday lives as we use it for personal, academic and professional reasons. In pedagogic contexts, some teachers have experienced how

ICT [information and communication technologies] solutions can be used as a support for different classroom activities, group-work, and pair-work assignments; for independent work; for enforcing student-centered learning and the principles of individualization; forming one's personal opinion and being able to express it on topical issues. (Mullamaa, 2010, p. 38)

The use of MALL also has these learning benefits. As stated by Ahmadpour and Hossein Yousefi (2016), MALL is a learning tool highly dependent on technology and provides an intermediary that enables interlocutors to communicate with each other at a distance, that is, language learning that is assisted or enhanced using handheld mobile devices. MALL has significantly transformed language teaching and learning (Kukulka-Hulme, 2009; Ahmadpour & Hossein Yousefi, 2016). This digital mode has evolved to support students' language learning with the increased use of mobile technologies. Through mobile devices, students can benefit from synchronized or real-time communication to convey their meaning and interact to complete their learning tasks (Ahmadpour & Hossein Yousefi, 2016).

So far, much research has demonstrated that the use of MALL not only engages students with their learning but increases their motivation as well as they have more significant improvement in language learning (studies) than those that do not use MALL (GencIlter, 2009; Liu & Chen, 2014; Motallebzadeh et al., 2011). MALL can also promote collaborative learning. This is often carried out

by the use of Web 2.0 or 3.0 technologies such as social media platforms or applications developing language skills collaboratively. In the field of SLA, a growing amount of research shows the impact of mobile technology on language learning. Considering this, we used WhatsApp as a MALL environment, taking advantage of the cross-platform messaging service and allowing us to promote the participant students' oral production and investigate how their fluency and accuracy behave in a task repetition approach in this study. Drawing on the findings of Tavakoli and Foster (2008), which show that task repetition is beneficial for learner performance, we thus expect higher levels of both fluency and accuracy to be found after they repeat the task and get familiar with its design and characteristics. This expectation is supported by literature which is discussed below.

For decades, researchers have attempted to understand how the design and implementation of tasks can be directed towards promoting language performance and learning (Ahmadian, 2012). In this sense, task repetition has been a practice which is believed to promote the link between language production and development (Bygate & Samuda, 2005). Task repetition can be performed by asking students to repeat the same or a slightly modified task (Ahmadian, 2012). It can also be conducted by asking students to repeat tasks with similar content or repeat tasks with the same procedure (procedural repetition) but with different content (Ellis, 2009). When students are asked to repeat a task, they accomplish it in a way that they repeat the task with the same content at weekly intervals (Ahmadian, 2012). This repetition is thus considered as preparation for further performances of the same task or tasks with different content (task procedural repetition; Ellis, 2005). According to Arredondo-Tapia and Garcia-Ponce (2021),

To handle the task at hand, this preparation allows students to simultaneously focus their attention on the message content, scan their memory and seek appropriate language resources for use. This first



encounter enables them to establish familiarity with the task and/or content. (p. 48)

It is this familiarity with the task that enables students to perform other similar tasks more efficiently (Bygate, 1999). This is supported by Ahmadian (2012), who contends that

by repeating the same or similar tasks, therefore, students might be able to build upon what they have already done in order to 'buy time' not only to do mental work on what they are about to communicate but also to access and (re)formulate words and grammatical structures more efficiently, effectively, and accurately. (p. 380)

If we consider the above claims, there may be many benefits in repeating tasks. Specifically, when students repeat a task, they are also provided with planning time because task repetition facilitates implicit planning which will increase the students' familiarity with the content and design of subsequent tasks. Based upon the above, we can thus claim that task repetition is considered planning because performing a task at one time involves implicit planning which will increase the degree of familiarity concerning the content or procedure of future tasks (Bui, 2014).

The relevance of this is that, according to Ahmadian and Tavakoli (2010), fluency and other language areas are significantly developed. These benefits have motivated a high number of experimental studies with the purpose of investigating the relationship between task repetition and L2 production (e.g., Bygate, 1996; Larsen-Freeman, 2006). In general, it has been found in these previous studies that task repetition can have a beneficial impact on different language areas, such as the CAF dimensions. However, some trade-off effects have been reported (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2010), and this has yielded inconsistent findings concerning complexity and accuracy. The reported evidence has thus far shown that there are consistent findings regarding the development of fluency in task repetition.

Arredondo-Tapia and Garcia-Ponce (2021) conducted a study in the same context of the present

study using a task repetition design to promote students' fluency and accuracy. The student participants were asked by the researchers to repeat narrative tasks with similar procedure but different content (procedural task repetition). Specifically, at weekly intervals, the participants had to watch a video, and based upon the audio-visual input, they had to narrate the stories in written form for five minutes without any planning opportunities. Their evidence indicates that the students' fluency and accuracy increased as the sessions progressed when the students claimed that they were familiar with the content. The opposite was observed when the students responded that the content of the videos was unfamiliar to them. Lambert et al. (2017) examine the relationship between task repetition and 32 EFL learners' fluency, indicated by speech rate, frequency of clause-final and mid-clause filled pauses, and overt self-repairs at three proficiency levels. The results indicate that the students' fluency tended to increase as their participants repeated the task.

Finally, Ahmadian and Tavakoli (2010) also explored the relationship between task repetition and 60 students' language performance. In this study, they considered four conditions to investigate this relationship: (1) careful on-line planning without task repetition; (2) pressured on-line planning with task repetition; (3) careful on-line planning with task repetition; and (4) pressured on-line planning without task repetition. Based on silent classic films, the students had to narrate the film under the condition that was assigned to them. Interestingly, the results show important increases regarding fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

If we consider the above research evidence, we can claim that task repetition can have an impact on students' oral and written performance. As shown in this research, there are no consistent findings. The reason for this is that several task types, conditions, and learner-related factors are considered motivating varied results. However, the evidence also suggests that task repetition can be used as a practice to promote students' performance.



Specifically, task repetition is useful for assisting students in focusing their attention on the meaning (fluency) and form of their utterances, although with some trade-off effects as reported in the research literature.

In this study, we thus look at the effect of task repetition on students' fluency and accuracy using a narrative task using WhatsApp as a pedagogical tool to encourage interaction.

## Method

The present study followed a quantitative design using simple calculations to compare the results of the participants across four sessions in which the narrative task was repeated. To ensure comparability of the results among the small number of participants and across the sessions, the measures of fluency and accuracy are reported in percentages and ratios. Specifically, the study was exploratory in nature since it relies on measures to examine the behaviour of student fluency and accuracy during the performance of a narrative task at the four weekly intervals on WhatsApp. The research objective was to investigate the behaviour of students' fluency and accuracy as they performed a narrative task which was repeated four times and weekly intervals on WhatsApp. Drawing on the findings of Tavakoli and Foster (2008), it is thus expected that as the students practice the task and get familiar with its design and characteristics, their fluency and accuracy levels will generally tend to rise as the weeks (one session each) go by.

### Context and participants

The study took place in a language centre at a large Mexican university with approximately 34,000 students at bachelors, masters, and doctorate levels with over 150 programs offered across various disciplines. Although Spanish is the main language of instruction, there is a strong emphasis on enhancing English language skills across different divisions to promote upward mobility and upskilling in the job market. In this context, students

take English classes for different academic and personal reasons. Most participants were studying English in this context because English is a graduation requirement in most BA and BSc programs. The English courses offered at the university cover a range of proficiency levels from Level 100 English (A1 of Common European Framework of References, CEFR) to Level 800 English (approximately B2 of CEFR), eight levels in total. Courses are offered from Monday to Thursday, which is five hours of weekly English instruction (1 hour and 15 minutes every day) and a total of 80 hours of instruction per semester. Recently, the administration of this university decided to offer all language courses online using Teams or Zoom as platforms to teach foreign languages.

To contact the participants, first, we established communication with an EFL teacher for English Level 700. We explained the study to her and obtained her authorization to contact the participants. On Zoom, we presented the project to two English classes at an intermediate level of the same teacher. In total, 21 students accepted to participate in the study and signed a biodata sheet and consent form in which we again explained their participation. To control the variable of proficiency, we administered the grammar section of First Certificate of English from the Cambridge ESOL examinations. Seven students were found to have a similar proficiency level according to the results of the grammar test; thus these seven students were the participants for the study. Table 1 shows the key information of the students.

Table 1 illustrates the participants' biographical information, such as age (a range of 21–28 years old), gender (four males and three females), education (different BA and BSc programs), frequency of their written practice (one writing activity per week), and estimated time studying English. This information was gathered from the biodata sheet. In the study, we used codes to refer to the participants and protect them from identification. During the study, the participants knew their

**Table 1** Participants' Biographical Information

Participant Code	Age	Gender	BA and BSc Areas	Time Studying English
P1	22	M	Economics	3 years
P2	21	M	Industrial Engineering	2.5 years
P3	22	F	Economics	2.1 years
P4	24	M	Physics Engineering	2.5 years
P5	21	F	Economics	2 years
P6	22	M	Physics Engineering	2.5 years
P7	28	F	Economics	3 years

right to withdraw from the study at any time and to ask for any information regarding the study.

**Instrument of narrative task**

For this research, we were interested in a narrative task since narrative tasks are considered to be cognitively demanding but useful in promoting students' language creativity and production (Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018). Given the purpose of the current study, we focus on a monologic narrative task in which speakers can take advantage of the time available to them to produce the language as they process input from a visual source and retrieve language information from the long-term memory to perform the task at hand. For the purpose of students producing language during the task, we considered the use of monologue defined as a production of sequences by one speaker. Therefore, the seven participants were told that during the performance of the task, they had to narrate what they saw on a sequence of images.

Regarding the details of the task, the narrative task used for this study was taken from the study of Garcia-Ponce et al. (2018). The reason for this was because their study and the task were implemented in the same context with intermediate students with similar linguistic and academic characteristics. The narrative task consisted of six drawings which followed a sequential series

of images and can be considered to be somewhat complex due to its possible use of several cognitive resources. The drawings show the story of two boys looking for shelter because it started to rain. Next, the boys found a haunted house. The last drawing displays the two boys finding out that they interacted with a ghost during the night they spent in the house. These drawings were taken from an intermediate level textbook. The participants were asked to narrate the story in their own words without any planning.

Previous research (e.g., Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018; Robinson, 2001) suggests that narrative tasks are difficult to perform because they require processes to interpret visual input, retrieve vocabulary from long-term memory and place it in the working memory for use, and formulate their oral production simultaneously.

**Data collection and analysis procedures**

Following the claim that narrative tasks are complex in nature (Robinson, 2001) and create interaction of language performance areas (Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018), we used the same narrative task following a task repetition design. Since it was not our intention to disrupt the online environment of the English class, we informed the teacher of the purpose of the study and requested her to provide the student participants with the instructions to perform the task, including those who were not selected for the study. The participants were asked to perform the narrative task at weekly intervals as a monologue on WhatsApp. To collect the data, the teacher invited all the participants to record their narratives of approximately two-three minutes using WhatsApp. The recordings were used for analysis purposes of the study, but the teacher also provided feedback to the students as part of her class dynamics.

Only the recordings of the seven students selected for the study were utilized and considered for the analysis. To do this, the teacher sent us the recordings of these students every week. We then

processed the recordings; that is, we transcribed the oral production of the students and segmented the data to AS-units (Foster et al., 2000) and clauses for each of the seven participants. The recorded data sent to us every week were then subject to a coding process for fluency and accuracy measures.

In accordance with Foster (2020), fluency can be measured using different metrics reported in the literature. Because fluency can be measured by means of total number of syllables per minute (Skehan, 1998), we counted the total number of participants' syllables (unit of production) in their narratives and then divided them by the total number of minutes. The rationale behind this choice is that this temporal measure of fluency is considered reliable to reflect performance speed and the degree of automaticity in L2 speakers' speech (Foster, 2020; Kormos & Denes, 2004; Tavakoli, 2019).

To measure accuracy, we considered a global measure of percentage of error-free clauses. Specifically, we segmented all the clauses in each transcription and then identified the clauses that did not contain any errors in syntax, morphology, and lexis (Yuan & Ellis, 2003). After identifying the error-free clauses, we then calculated the percentages by counting the total number of error-free clauses and dividing the resulting number by the total number of clauses and multiplying the result by 100. To ensure comparability of the results among participants and across sessions, the measures of fluency and accuracy are reported in percentages and ratios for each performance per task. The results for the fluency and accuracy measures of the task performance across the four sessions are provided in the following section.

## Results

To answer the research question on what the behaviour of the students' fluency and accuracy levels is during the performance of the narrative task on WhatsApp in four sessions in weekly intervals, the measures of fluency and accuracy are

**Table 2** Participants' fluency levels in the four sessions

Session	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
S1	12.5	14.3	12.1	13.7	11.2	16.1	14.3
S2	13.5	14.5	13.3	14	15.6	18.9	15.2
S3	11.2	10.2	14.8	20.1	22.2	19.1	16.1
S4	15.6	18.8	15.2	22.4	24.3	20.2	18.3

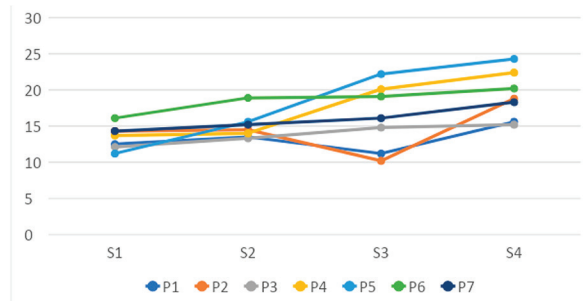
presented in ratios and percentages for each performance per session. The results are summarized in tables, but since the aim of this study is to show the behaviour of the two dimensions during the performance of the narrative task across the sessions, we also include graphs to represent visually how the dimensions behaved and interacted.

Table 2 displays the results obtained from the analysis of the participants' fluency levels across the repeated sessions.

As can be seen from Table 2, the participants' fluency levels tended to fluctuate significantly in the four sessions. If we compare Session 1 with Session 2, we can see that there were some participants' fluency levels which increased slightly. For example, P5 had a fluency level of 11.2 (syllables per minute) and then 15.6 in the second session. This was the case of most participants; however, P3's and P4's fluency levels did not increase significantly in the second session. If we compare the third session with the previous ones, we can see again that most participants' fluency levels showed a steady increase. For example, P3, P6, and P7 showed fluency levels which increased as the three sessions progressed.

Interestingly, P4 and P5 were the participants who showed the highest levels of fluency in this third session. However, in the case of P1 and P2, their fluency levels showed a considerable decline in the third session. This evidence implies that fluency decreased because of other factors despite the fact that the participants had repeated the same narrative task in three occasions. What is interesting from the data in this table is that all participants showed fluency levels that increase steadily if we

Figure 1 Behaviour of fluency



compare the first and the fourth sessions. This trend can be clearly seen in Figure 1.

We can see in Figure 1 that there was significant fluctuation regarding the fluency levels in the sessions. Particularly, it is in the third session where we can observe the highest amount of variability, including some decreases in terms of fluency levels (P1 and P2). However, this figure shows that fluency generally tended to increase as the weeks went by. This then shows that fluency was promoted as the students repeated the narrative task to retell the story that they saw on the images.

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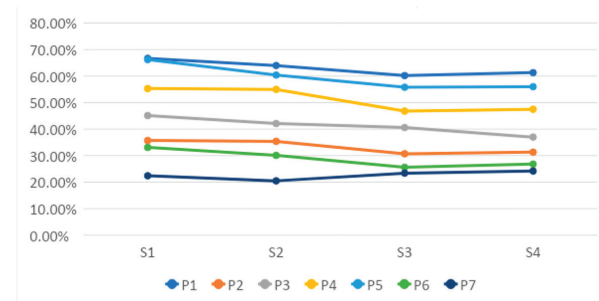
However, the case of accuracy was different in the four sessions. As we might expect, there was significant variability in terms of the accuracy levels in the sessions, but the participants' accuracy did not increase as the session progressed. Table 3 shows the accuracy levels in the four sessions.

From Table 3, there was a significant fluctuation in terms of accuracy levels across the sessions. Also, in comparing Session 1 with Session 2, there was a steep decrease in most of the participants' accuracy levels, but in general, the data in Table 3 shows a general decrease in terms of accuracy in Session 2. If we compare Session 2 with

Table 3 Participants' accuracy levels in the four sessions

Session	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
S1	66.70%	35.70%	45.10%	55.30%	66.20%	33.10%	22.40%
S2	64.00%	35.40%	42.10%	55.00%	60.40%	30.10%	20.50%
S3	60.20%	30.70%	40.60%	46.80%	55.80%	25.60%	23.40%
S4	61.30%	31.30%	37%	47.50%	56.00%	26.80%	24.20%

Figure 2 Behaviour of accuracy



Session 3, it is apparent that the accuracy levels again decreased in the third session. By examining Sessions 3 and 4, there was a slight rise in the accuracy levels in the fourth session, except from P3's accuracy which fell slightly. In general, what stands out from Table 3 is that accuracy decreased as the sessions progressed. Thus, it implied that the participants tended to be oriented towards the fluency of their utterances which in turn also fluctuated during the repetition of the same task in the four sessions. This tendency is shown in Figure 2.

As shown in Figure 2, the participants' accuracy levels decreased considerably as the sessions progressed. Comparing Figures 1 and 2, the participants' fluency was promoted over accuracy. These results bring up intriguing questions regarding the interaction of fluency and accuracy during a task which was not familiar to the students and was then repeated on four occasions on WhatsApp. This surprising result might be a result of the participants' agency and what they consider as priorities to perform the task at hand.

### Discussions

This exploratory study was designed to examine the behaviour of seven students' fluency levels during a narrative task which was repeated four times on WhatsApp. Following Skehan's (2003) contention that students' oral performance can be improved if they are given opportunities to become familiar with the design of tasks, we initially hypothesized that as the participants practice the narrative task and become familiar with its design



and characteristics, their fluency and accuracy levels would rise as the sessions progress.

The study found that the participants' fluency levels behaved dynamically across the four sessions. The highest dynamism tended to occur in the second and third sessions. This shows the dynamic nature of fluency from a longitudinal perspective. As suggested by Arredondo-Tapia and Garcia-Ponce (2021), when students repeat tasks, they are in the process of becoming familiar with the task design, and this has an impact on significant variability in fluency and other dimensions. As expected, it was in the first session in which we observed the lowest levels of fluency. This finding can be explained by the fact that students in this context do not often narrate stories based on sequential images, and this has an impact on the low levels of fluency (Arredondo-Tapia & Garcia-Ponce, 2021). This is also supported by Qiu (2019), who contends that students' fluency (and accuracy) levels decrease when students perform tasks that are not known to them.

The most important result was that fluency steadily increased as the sessions progressed despite the slight decreases that tended to occur in Sessions 2 and 3. The finding which emerged from the analysis is that fluency appeared to increase as the participants repeated the narrative task on WhatsApp. This finding aligns with the studies of Khezrlou (2020), Lambert et al. (2017), and Lynch and Maclean (2000, 2001), which all showed that task repetition increased both fluency and accuracy. For example, Chang (1999) reports findings which indicate that familiarity with a task topic could enhance fluency.

Thus, in this study, we could observe that task repetition conducted on WhatsApp could promote higher levels of fluency but not accuracy (see below). Based upon this evidence, we therefore suggest that task repetition may be beneficial for promoting fluency if students are given opportunities to repeat complex and challenging tasks on WhatsApp which are challenging and complex

in their design. This is supported by Arredondo-Tapia and Garcia-Ponce (2021), who claim that content familiarity may help students produce more fluent and accurate because this information may assist them in reducing the cognitive load, allowing students to perform the task focusing on meaning and form.

Perhaps the most unexpected finding is the behaviour of accuracy across the four sessions, the levels of which varied significantly. However, it was possible to see that the participants' accuracy progressively fell as the four weeks went by. These findings are somewhat surprising given the fact that task repetition is believed to be a useful practice to promote students' performance. This evidence then suggests that fluency was developed as the student repeated the task, but this compromised their accuracy. It is possible that the students prioritized fluency at the expense of accuracy.

Research evidence has suggested that accuracy (and complexity) compete(s) with other language dimensions during performance (Skehan, 2009). In line with this, Ahmadian and Tavakoli (2010) explain that tasks which are always focused on meaning compel students to prioritize meaning (fluency) over form (accuracy and complexity). Thus, the fact that the participants were able to repeat the narrative task at weekly intervals seems to have enabled them to shift their attention to more fluent oral production (Bygate, 1996), but the output had varied and generally lower levels of accuracy.

Taken together, the above results suggest a potential relationship with fluency, accuracy, task repetition, and WhatsApp. That is, task repetition conducted on WhatsApp appears to have been beneficial for raising higher levels of fluency as the session progressed, but this impacted on varied and generally low accuracy levels. The results of this study thus raise important questions about the factors that compel the students to prioritize fluency over accuracy despite the repetition

design of the narrative task on WhatsApp. This evidence suggests that task repetition on WhatsApp can be a practice which could be beneficial for developing fluency. This in turn indicates that there must be other more pressing factors which hinder students from promoting accuracy at the same level that they did with fluency.

## Conclusions

The primary objective of the study was to investigate the behaviour of students' fluency and accuracy as they performed a narrative task which was repeated four times and weekly intervals on WhatsApp. The rationale behind this decision is that task repetition and MALL can be useful for encouraging student oral production. In previous research conducted in the context of the study, it was found that students' fluency and accuracy tended to decrease as complexity was significantly promoted (Garcia-Ponce et al., 2018). We therefore focused on fluency and accuracy, trying to replicate that previous study with the difference of following a task repetition and MALL design. Since the students had the opportunity to repeat the same task four times, we expected their cognitive load to then be reduced and thus their attention would be focused on both fluency and accuracy.

However, despite the fact that we followed a task repetition and MALL design, the students' fluency and accuracy varied significantly in the sessions. Moreover, the students' fluency was the only dimension which tended to increase as the sessions progressed. In the case of accuracy, we found that it tended to decrease. This evidence suggests that the combination of both task repetition and MALL designs helped students to develop greater fluency, but this had an impact on generally low accuracy levels across the sessions.

Because of the exploratory nature of this short study, one of its limitations is that it was unable to determine the extent to which the online environment played a role in the behaviour of the fluency and accuracy dimensions on WhatsApp.

Thus, more research evidence is needed to show whether the combination of both task repetition and MALL designs can be beneficial for developing fluency during tasks which are considered to be demanding cognitively. Also, we need to continue investigating how accuracy can be promoted during tasks in which this language dimension tends to decrease. In the future, more participants could be invited to increase the number and explore if the same or similar results are found. However, this study provides support to previous research which has shown that language dimensions may interact during the performance of tasks even if we provide students with planning opportunities as in the case of task repetition.

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# EL CROATA COMO LENGUA DE HERENCIA EN ARGENTINA: ENTRE LA VULNERABILIDAD Y EL MANTENIMIENTO LINGÜÍSTICO

CROATIAN AS A HERITAGE LANGUAGE IN ARGENTINA: BETWEEN VULNERABILITY AND LINGUISTIC MAINTENANCE

LE CROATE COMME LANGUE DE PATRIMOINE EN ARGENTINE : ENTRE LA VULNÉRABILITÉ ET LE MAINTIEN LINGUISTIQUE

O CROATA COMO LÍNGUA DE HERANÇA NA ARGENTINA: ENTRE A VULNERABILIDADE E A MANUTENÇÃO LINGÜÍSTICA

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## RESUMEN

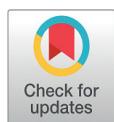
En el contexto sudamericano, la población migrante representa una porción numerosa que, en la mayoría de los casos, deja de usar su lengua de herencia. El propósito de este trabajo es presentar los resultados de un estudio que indagó por la situación de la lengua croata como lengua de herencia en el contexto sudamericano, atendiendo a la tensión entre desplazamiento y mantenimiento lingüístico. El análisis se centra en Argentina, donde se estima que entre 250 000 y 500 000 personas son descendientes de migrantes del pueblo croata. El estudio se sustenta en un corpus de habla croata de migrantes de segunda y tercera generaciones, así como en documentos oficiales y no oficiales, reunidos por los autores. Los resultados sugieren que existen signos de erosión lingüística en los niveles fonológico, morfosintáctico y léxico. A su vez, la identidad y el fortalecimiento de la conciencia lingüística cumplen un rol relevante a favor del mantenimiento de la lengua ancestral en el contexto migratorio. El trabajo aporta al estudio de las lenguas minoritarias y amenazadas, y contribuye a la comprensión de los procesos dinámicos que atraviesa la vitalidad de las lenguas de herencia.

**Palabras clave:** lengua croata, desplazamiento lingüístico, fortalecimiento lingüístico, identidad lingüística, lengua de herencia, lengua y migración

## ABSTRACT

In the South American context, migrant population makes up for a large portion of the population who, in most cases, stop using their heritage language. This work aims to present the results of a study that inquired about the status of the Croatian language as a heritage language in South America, and analyzed the tensions between linguistic displacement and maintenance. The analysis is focused on Argentina, where an estimated 250 000 to 500 000 people are from Croatian descent. The study is based upon a corpus of Croatian speech gathered from

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second- and third-generation migrants and from official and non-official records, gathered by the authors. Findings suggest that there are signs of linguistic attrition at the phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical levels. They also suggest that identity and language awareness strengthening play a significant role in the maintenance of the ancestral language in this migrating context. The study contributes to the field of minority and endangered languages, and helps understand the dynamic processes influencing the vitality of heritage languages.

**Keywords:** Croatian language, linguistic displacement, language strengthening, language identity, heritage language, language and migration

### RÉSUMÉ

Dans le contexte sud-américain, la population migrante représente une grande portion qui, dans la plupart des cas, cesse d'utiliser sa langue de patrimoine. Ce travail présente les résultats d'une étude sur la situation de la langue croate en tant que langue d'héritage dans le contexte sud-américain, en tenant compte de la tension entre déplacement et maintien linguistique. Cette analyse s'est concentrée sur l'Argentine, où l'on estime qu'entre 250 000 et 500 000 personnes sont des descendants de migrants issus du peuple croate. L'étude s'est appuyée sur un corpus croate de migrants de deuxième et troisième générations, ainsi que sur des documents officiels et non officiels, recueillis par les auteurs. Les résultats suggèrent qu'il existe des signes d'attrition linguistique aux niveaux phonologique, morphosyntaxique et lexical. À leur tour, l'identité et le renforcement de la conscience linguistique jouent un rôle pertinent en faveur du maintien de la langue ancestrale dans le contexte migratoire. L'ouvrage contribue à l'étude des langues minoritaires et menacées, et contribue à la compréhension des processus dynamiques que traverse la vitalité des langues patrimoniales.

**Mots-clés :** langue croate, déplacement linguistique, renforcement linguistique, identité linguistique, langue de patrimoine, langue et migration

### RESUMO

No contexto sul-americano, a população migrante representa uma grande parcela que, na maioria das vezes, deixa de usar sua língua de herança. O objetivo deste trabalho é apresentar um estudo da situação da língua croata como língua de herança no contexto sul-americano, levando em consideração a tensão entre deslocamento e manutenção linguística. A análise tem se concentrado na Argentina, onde se estima que entre 250.000 e 500.000 pessoas sejam descendentes de migrantes do povo croata. O estudo tem se baseado em um corpus croata de migrantes de segunda e terceira geração, bem como em documentos oficiais e não oficiais, coletados pelos autores. Os resultados sugerem que há indícios de erosão linguística nos níveis fonológico, morfossintático e lexical. Por sua vez, a identidade e o reforço da consciência linguística desempenham um papel relevante a favor da manutenção da língua ancestral no contexto migratório. A obra contribui para o estudo das línguas minoritárias e ameaçadas, e contribui para a compreensão dos processos dinâmicos pelos quais passa a vitalidade das línguas de herança.

**Palavras chave:** língua croata, deslocamento linguístico, fortalecimento linguístico, identidade linguística, língua de herança, língua e migração

## Introducción

Las *lenguas de herencia* son aquellas habladas por minorías lingüísticas —generalmente, grupos indígenas o población migrante—, que aprenden la lengua de sus ancestros en el contexto íntimo y familiar, pero que crecen en el contexto social más amplio de otra lengua dominante, en la que se vuelven más competentes (Polinsky, 2018; Polinsky y Kagan, 2007). Los y las hablantes de herencia pueden adquirir y usar más de una lengua para satisfacer sus necesidades comunicativas cotidianas (Valdés, 2005), lo que da lugar a diversas situaciones de bilingüismo social. En muchos casos, las lenguas de herencia pierden ámbitos de uso y dejan de hablarse (Valdés, 2005), aunque sus hablantes mantienen un fuerte vínculo con la cultura de origen (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003) y el deseo de transmitirla a las generaciones futuras, aun en contextos de migración (cf. Cvikić *et al.*, 2010, p. 116, para el caso croata).

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La región de la actual Croacia representa una zona de Europa de importantes flujos migratorios durante diversos períodos en los últimos siglos (Radovich, 2016; Solián, 2016). En América del Sur, la comunidad croata es muy antigua y numerosa, y redujo su aporte inmigratorio en períodos recientes.

El propósito de este trabajo fue indagar por la situación de la lengua croata como lengua de herencia en el contexto sudamericano —en particular, en Argentina—, atendiendo a la tensión entre desplazamiento y mantenimiento lingüístico. Para ello, formulamos las siguientes preguntas: ¿qué cambios experimentó el habla croata en sus niveles fonológico, morfosintáctico y léxico, que pueden considerarse signos de erosión lingüística en un contexto migratorio? ¿Cuáles son los factores sociolingüísticos, como la enseñanza de la lengua, las actitudes y valoraciones hacia las lenguas, y los sentidos de pertenencia de los individuos, que influyen en favor del fortalecimiento de la lengua minoritaria?

## Antecedentes: migración croata en Sudamérica

Croacia figura entre los países europeos con mayores flujos migratorios en los últimos siglos (Radovich, 2016, p. 171; Solián, 2016, p. 30). En particular, la migración hacia América Latina se puede dividir en tres períodos históricos: el primero empieza hacia mediados del siglo XVIII y se extiende hasta el comienzo de la Primera Guerra Mundial (1914-1918); el segundo período se expande desde la finalización de dicha contienda hasta inicios de la Segunda Guerra Mundial (1939-1945), y el tercero, desde el final de la última conflagración, hasta la actualidad. El primer y el segundo período representan una migración principalmente económica, mientras que el tercero comprende la inmigración política (para un detalle sobre las olas migratorias de croatas y eslavos del sur, véanse Antić, 1988; Čizmić, 1996; Nejašmić, 1990).

Los primeros migrantes croatas llegaron a Sudamérica desde una tierra natal con sucesivos contextos de desestructuración nacional, como los sufridos por la antigua Yugoslavia, y con distintas denominaciones que adoptó el territorio de origen, lo que generó fuertes conflictos identitarios. De hecho, Croacia formó parte de varias entidades políticas, por lo que su actual territorio y sus fronteras fueron modificándose durante los diferentes períodos históricos: Imperio austrohúngaro (1867), Reino de los Serbios, Croatas y Eslovenos (1918), Reino de Yugoslavia (1929), Estado Independiente Croata (1941), República Federal Socialista de Yugoslavia (1945), República de Croacia (1991). A partir del proceso histórico largo y cambiante desarrollado en el territorio al pie de los Balcanes, inmerso en crisis y guerras, tanto los pobladores como los migrantes fueron configurando su identidad (Solián, 2016, p. 30).

En la actualidad, aproximadamente dos millones y medio de inmigrantes croatas y sus descendientes viven en el extranjero, un millón en Europa, y un millón y medio fuera de Europa (Skelin Horvat y



**Tabla 1** Migrantes croatas en los países de América del Sur (datos aproximativos)

País	Población croata y sus descendientes
Argentina	250 000
Bolivia	5000
Brasil	20 000
Chile	200 000
Ecuador	4000
Paraguay	5000
Perú	6000
Uruguay	5000
Venezuela	5000

Fuente: Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia (2022a).

Musulín, 2015, p. 486). En cuanto a América del Sur, no hay datos exactos (véase Tabla 1).

En Argentina, se estima que viven medio millón de personas de origen croata, que empezaron a llegar a fines del siglo XIX como parte de la inmigración económica (Antić, 2002). No obstante, es muy difícil establecer el número exacto, porque durante los siglos XIX y XX, los inmigrantes fueron apuntados en los censos como austríacos, húngaros, italianos o yugoslavos, según la ciudadanía a la cual pertenecían.

Al llegar a América, las y los croatas hablaban el idioma nativo dentro de sus hogares y en la comunicación con sus compatriotas. Esto ocurría, por ejemplo, en las localidades de Chovet y Villa Mugueta, al sur de la provincia de Santa Fe, en Argentina (Bilić, 2022), así como en las ciudades chilenas de Punta Arenas, Porvenir y Antofagasta (para más detalles, cf. Archivo histórico de la inmigración croata en Chile, 2021; cf. también Martinic Beros, 1992; Radovich, 2016; Solián, 2016; Sprljan, 2011).

En estos contextos, por lo general, la lengua se pierde con la segunda generación de migrantes, quienes gradualmente renuncian a su herencia lingüística

con el fin de intentar integrarse en el nuevo país donde el idioma dominante es el español y, en menor medida, el portugués y el italiano. A menudo, al igual que en el caso de otras lenguas minoritarias de inmigración, estas comunidades de habla están expuestas “al ridículo” de las comunidades dominantes y, debido al estigma de “lenguas extrañas”, las niñas y los niños son alentados a aprender español (véase Hipperdinger, 2017, para el caso de los alemanes del Volga en Argentina).

Es importante señalar que las y los hablantes de la segunda generación y algunas personas de la tercera conservaron el idioma croata en la forma de los dialectos locales de la región de origen desde donde emigraron sus antepasados. Las características de sus dialectos (principalmente, chakaviano y shtokaviano-ikaviano) son reconocibles en cuanto a sus propiedades formales (fonología, morfología y léxico). A pesar de la situación de contacto con el español, muchas de estas características se han conservado durante más de un siglo y son reconocibles en la actualidad (Bilić, 2022), aun cuando ya no existen hoy en los dialectos de los pueblos de origen.

Por otro lado, la lengua croata constituye uno de los componentes más importantes de la identidad étnica en los países de América del Sur. En la investigación de Skelin Horvat y Musulín (2015) sobre los modos de construcción de las identidades de jóvenes argentinos que representan la tercera o cuarta generación de croatas en Argentina y que estudian croata en la Universidad de Zagreb, se muestra que la *identidad*, en tanto concepto dinámico, se manifiesta de manera especial en el contexto multilingüe por medio de la negociación y la construcción constante y activa. Las autoras también mencionan la fragmentación de la identidad, que se produce, entre otras cosas, al ampliarse el repertorio lingüístico (Skelin Horvat y Musulín, 2015, p. 487).

Las investigaciones sobre el croata como lengua de herencia se han enfocado principalmente en la situación en Estados Unidos (Filipović, 1986; Jutronic-Tihomirović, 1985) y en Australia

(Hlavac, 2003, 2006, 2012; Lalich, 2010, entre otros), y han abordado el estudio de algunos fenómenos de contacto lingüístico (léxicos y morfosintácticos) y el cambio de código croata-inglés en hablantes bilingües de segunda generación (Hlavac, 2003, 2006, 2012). En Sudamérica, han recibido atención las comunidades migrantes croatas en Chile (Lasić, 2010; Perić, 2006), con el interés sobre por cómo se lleva a cabo la construcción de identidades.

Por otro lado, en el campo de la adquisición y la enseñanza de lenguas de herencia, otros estudios se han centrado en aspectos de la fonología (Musulin, 2015) y del léxico (Musulin y Skelin Horvat, 2018) de estudiantes hispanohablantes que aprenden croata en Zagreb. Las motivaciones de los hablantes de herencia para el aprendizaje de la lengua es un tema abordado por Cvikić *et al.* (2010). De manera reciente, el volumen editado por Hlavac y Stolac (2021) aborda el contacto lingüístico en comunidades croatas en la diáspora, donde la lengua croata entra en contacto con el inglés, el alemán, el italiano, el noruego y el español.

### Marco teórico

En esta sección presentamos el concepto de *lengua de herencia* y su problemática, y exponemos su relación con las situaciones de desplazamiento y erosión lingüística, siguiendo la tipología de Hagège (2005).

#### Las lenguas de herencia y el desplazamiento lingüístico

Una lengua de herencia puede ser la primera en el orden de adquisición; no obstante, las y los hablantes de herencia poseen diversos grados de competencia. Desde una perspectiva sociopolítica, la lengua de herencia está relacionada con el patrimonio cultural de un individuo (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003), en tanto que las y los hablantes de herencia conocen también, en cierta medida, las prácticas y los significados asociados a

la cultura heredada y poseen un sentido de pertenencia hacia el grupo social o étnico (cf. Jelaska y Hržica, 2005).

Las lenguas de poblaciones migrantes (por ejemplo, mexicanos en Estados Unidos, turcos en Alemania, marroquíes en España, paquistaníes en Inglaterra) se consideran lenguas de herencia (Valdés, 2005, p. 411). Este es el caso de la lengua croata en el contexto sudamericano.

La lengua croata (*hrvatski*, en croata) es un nombre colectivo para el idioma estándar y para el conjunto de dialectos y lenguas que hablan o hablaron alguna vez los miembros del pueblo croata. Es la lengua oficial de la República de Croacia desde 1991 y constituye una de las 24 lenguas oficiales de la Unión Europea. Pertenece al amplio conjunto de lenguas eslavas (familia indoeuropea) y es hablada como lengua materna por más de cinco millones y medio de personas, en su mayoría croatas que viven en Croacia. Es igualmente la lengua nativa en algunas de las zonas de la diáspora en Alemania, Austria, Rumania, Canadá, Eslovaquia, Australia y Estados Unidos, así como también en Sudamérica. Además, es la lengua de minorías autóctonas croatas en Vojvodina (Serbia), Molise (Italia), Burgenland (Austria) y Kaposzvar (Hungría).

En algunas comunidades de habla de migrantes croatas, la situación de herencia conduce a un proceso de *desplazamiento lingüístico* en favor de la lengua mayoritaria, entendido este como la sustitución gradual de una lengua minoritaria por una lengua hegemónica o dominante en un contexto de bilingüismo. Esto es, los descendientes de una comunidad de habla bilingüe dejan de hablar de manera paulatina la lengua primera de sus antepasados, interrumpen la transmisión intergeneracional. A su vez, la retracción en los espacios funcionales de uso es acompañada generalmente por una erosión en los diferentes niveles de la estructura lingüística (cf. Myers-Scotton, 2002; Thomason y Kaufman, 1988). No obstante, dado que este proceso es dinámico y móvil, no

necesariamente deriva en la sustitución de una lengua por otra, sino que puede incluir fuerzas que orientan hacia el mantenimiento y que dan lugar a formas lingüísticas innovadoras (cf. Gal, 1987; Hill y Hill, 1999; en Argentina, véanse Beiras y Cúneo, 2019; Ciccone, 2012; Dreidemie, 2011).

Entre las causas más importantes de desplazamiento lingüístico, los cambios económicos y sociales como la migración, la presión de una economía más poderosa, la desaparición de la vida rural y el abandono de las actividades tradicionales son factores de peso (Hagège, 2005, pp. 108-120). A esto podemos añadir la falta de estandarización de las lenguas minoritarias, las prácticas lingüísticas en contextos de enseñanza, así como la ausencia de políticas lingüísticas.

Otro factor que merece ser discutido es la relación entre las lenguas y las identidades. Mufwene (2017, p. 218) destaca la situación de desplazamiento lingüístico cuando la población es una minoría, dispersa dentro de un grupo mayoritario, especialmente en los centros urbanos, de modo que no puede interactuar regularmente o socializar en la lengua de herencia. La caracterización expuesta en este apartado representa de manera general el caso de la lengua croata en América del Sur.

### La tipología de la erosión lingüística de Hagège

Según Hagège (2005, pp. 85-91), el proceso de erosión lingüística constituye una de las etapas que acompaña al desplazamiento lingüístico y puede incluir diversos fenómenos:

1. Cuando una lengua presenta cambios en su estructura, ya sea fonológicos (como la pérdida de oposiciones o cambios en la sonoridad de ciertos segmentos), morfológicos (por ejemplo, en la marcación de caso o de género gramatical) o sintácticos (por ejemplo, en el orden de las palabras o en los mecanismos de subordinación), se trata de la alteración del núcleo duro o gramatical de la lengua (Hagège, 2005, p. 86).
2. La pérdida de características recesivas representa el desuso o el abandono de ciertas propiedades lingüísticas que son tipológicamente raras en las lenguas humanas y que se encuentran estrechamente vinculadas a una particular organización del mundo; por ejemplo, la pérdida de distinciones específicas de número o la reducción de los tiempos verbales (Hagège, 2005, p. 87). Milewski (2019, p. 181) considera que las características estructurales recesivas son aquellas que son cada vez más inusuales en las lenguas, a diferencia de las características expansivas, que son más comunes y extendidas [*increasingly wide-spread*].
3. Así mismo, es posible que se pierdan ciertas estructuras densas y se reemplacen por otras estructuras diluidas o simplificadas; es lo que Hagège llama “nivelación analógica” (Hagège, 2005, p. 88).
4. La *expolitio* y la reducción de registros estilísticos incluyen la falta de expresividad, que puede codificarse en el uso reiterado de una misma palabra o expresión en ambas lenguas (la lengua minoritaria y la mayoritaria), o bien el uso sucesivo de dos palabras con significado similar dentro de un mismo enunciado (una de ellas en la lengua minoritaria y la otra en la lengua mayoritaria). Según Hagège (2005, p. 89), este tipo de fenómenos constituyen un signo de debilitamiento de la competencia lingüística de las y los hablantes.

La tipología de Hagège representa la base teórica y metodológica de la investigación, dado que nos permite agrupar y analizar algunos fenómenos observados en el habla croata como lengua de herencia en Argentina.

No obstante, más allá de estas señales de pérdida, asumimos que las lenguas no solo constituyen sistemas, sino también prácticas —comunicativas, sociales, culturales— que pueden mantenerse, aun cuando ciertos aspectos de la estructura lingüística se erosionan.

De acuerdo con las reflexiones de Mufwene (2017) sobre vitalidad lingüística, ponemos el foco en las lenguas como símbolos de filiación e identificación sociocultural con funciones ideológicas e identitarias, lo que permite arrojar luz sobre las dinámicas de mantenimiento lingüístico, dado que son varios los factores que pueden funcionar como fuerzas de fortalecimiento lingüístico en el caso de una lengua en retracción. En este marco, los miembros de minorías lingüísticas que se preocupan por el estudio, el mantenimiento y la revitalización de sus lenguas minoritarias se denominan “estudiantes de lenguas de herencia” (Valdés, 2005). Este constituye otro de los aspectos a observar en el contexto de herencia que presentamos.

### Método

El estudio se sustenta en tres fuentes principales, a saber, un corpus de habla obtenido en el trabajo de campo realizado durante 2016 y 2017 en el sur de la provincia Santa Fe, Argentina, en el marco de la investigación doctoral de J. Bilić (2022), donde los inmigrantes formaron una importante comunidad; en su mayoría, eran chacareros, es decir, que poseían y trabajaban en pequeñas parcelas de tierra (o chacras) destinadas a la producción agrícola (Sprljan, 2011). Se realizaron entrevistas etnográficas abiertas y semiestructuradas a cuatro hablantes que pertenecen a la segunda y tercera generaciones de migrantes, cuyos ancestros llegaron en el período comprendido entre 1910 y 1935 desde la región de Dalmacia central (dialectos dominantes chakaviano y shtokaviano-ikaviano). Las personas entrevistadas —de entre 70 y 92 años en el momento de las entrevistas— usaban la lengua croata durante su niñez en el entorno familiar. En la actualidad, hablan mayoritariamente español en la comunicación cotidiana, y relativamente poco el croata, con vecinos y parientes que viven en los pueblos cercanos. Las entrevistas, de aproximadamente 240 oraciones y 8 horas de registro de audio, se llevaron a cabo en croata; fueron grabadas y posteriormente transcritas y segmentadas.

Las observaciones de las producciones escritas de estudiantes de herencia de origen croata de los niveles A2 y B1 en croata que estudiaron entre 2018 y 2020 en la Universidad de Buenos Aires y en la Universidad Nacional de Rosario (Argentina). Se seleccionó un conjunto de 30 escritos de producción libre de estudiantes de herencia, pertenecientes a la primera y a la segunda generaciones de migrantes croatas que aún utilizaban la lengua ancestral adoptada en el círculo familiar. Los informes anuales (entre 2009 y 2021) internos y oficiales de la Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia.

### Resultados

En esta sección se examinan los fenómenos lingüísticos que representan signos de erosión y que caracterizan la situación de desplazamiento de la lengua croata en Argentina. Por otro lado, se individualizan las acciones que tienen peso en el mantenimiento de la lengua ancestral.

#### Desplazamiento de la lengua croata en Argentina

En el contexto que caracteriza la migración croata en Argentina, observamos algunos fenómenos que, de acuerdo con la tipología de Hagège (2005), representan casos de erosión en un escenario de desplazamiento lingüístico.

Analizamos a continuación algunos ejemplos, teniendo en cuenta la perspectiva del contacto con el español, así como la distancia con respecto a la variedad estándar hablada actualmente en Croacia. *Estándar* se refiere a la lengua oficial de la República de Croacia, que se basa en el trasfondo neoshtokaviano de tipo occidental, con la pronunciación jekaviana (jekavski) (Katičić y Novak, 1987). La presentación no es exhaustiva de todos los fenómenos documentados (Bilić, 2022), ya que solo incluye aquellos que son representativos, independientemente de su frecuencia de uso.

1. *La alteración del núcleo duro.* En el plano fonético y fonológico, se observa: la pérdida



de oposiciones fonológicas, tales como /b/ y /v/ en croata, que a menudo se asimilan en el sonido fricativo [β], como en los ejemplos 1 y 2; la realización fricativa [ð] del fonema dental oclusivo sonoro croata /d/ (véase ejemplo 3); la coexistencia de /r/ y /r̄/, que no está condicionada por el contexto fonético-fonológico, como en el ejemplo 4.

- (1) a. *boli* [βõ:li:] ‘duele’ - pronunciación estándar [bõli:]  
 b. *voli* [βõli:] ‘quiere’ - pronunciación estándar [võli:]
- (2) a. *brat* [βrât] ‘hermano’ - pronunciación estándar [brât]  
 b. *vrat* [βrâ:t] ‘cuello’ - pronunciación estándar [vrâ:t]
- (3) a. *dragi* [ðrâ:gi] ‘querido’ - pronunciación estándar [drâ:gi]  
 b. *Dubrovnik* [ðübro:vnik] ‘Dubrovnik’ - pronunciación estándar [Dübro:vnik]
- (4) *rat* [rât] ‘guerra’ - pronunciación estándar [rat]  
*rodica* [rõdica] ‘prima’ - pronunciación estándar [rodisa]  
*sretan* [srëtan] ‘feliz’ - pronunciación estándar [srëtan]  
*more* [mõ:re] ‘mar’ - pronunciación estándar [mõ:re]

Es posible que las realizaciones fricativas se originen por influencia del español, dado que constituyen realizaciones alofónicas en este sistema; no obstante, hacemos notar que la distribución de los alófonos fricativos no coincide en el croata como lengua de herencia y en el español, donde /b/ y /d/ son oclusivas en posición inicial.

Así mismo, se observan cambios en la sonoridad de segmentos individuales; por ejemplo, en el reemplazo o simplificación de consonantes palatales fricativas y africadas, como se muestra en el ejemplo 5.

- (5) reemplazo o simplificación de las siguientes consonantes:  
 a. reemplazo de /ʃ/ por /s/  
*došla* [dõsla] ‘(ha) llegado’ - pronunciación estándar [dõʃla]  
 b. reemplazo de /ʒ/ por /s/  
*život* [ʒivot] ‘vida’ - pronunciación estándar [ʒivot]  
*žena* [ʒëna] ‘mujer’ - pronunciación estándar [ʒëna]  
 c. reemplazo de /ts/ por /s/

- cesta* [sësta] ‘ruta’ - pronunciación estándar [tsësta]  
 d. reemplazo de /z/ por /s/  
*znati* [snâti] ‘saber’ - pronunciación estándar [znâti]

En el nivel morfológico, se observa la reducción de variaciones entre las formas; por ejemplo, la falta de distinción entre los sufijos de caso, como en el ejemplo 6, y la confusión de géneros, ejemplos 7 y 8. La ausencia de casos de declinación puede explicarse por la inclinación del hablante a la simplificación lingüística y por la adopción insuficiente de determinadas categorías morfológicas. Por lo tanto, se utiliza preferentemente la forma básica (canónica), el nominativo. En el ejemplo 6, el topónimo *Hrvatska* ‘Croacia’ se encuentra en nominativo, en lugar del locativo *Hrvatskoj*, que debe acompañar típicamente al verbo *biti* ‘ser’ junto a la preposición *u* ‘en’. Un fenómeno parecido se observa en el ejemplo 7, donde notamos la falta de concordancia en género y en número entre sujeto y predicado, mientras que en el ejemplo 8 el hablante expresa la posesión mediante el femenino *moja* ‘mi’ en el lugar del masculino *moj*.

- (6) *mi smo bili u Hrvatska*  
 mi smo bil-i u Hrvatsk-a  
 1PL AUX ser-PST.PLM PREP Croacia-NOM.SG.F  
 ‘Nosotros estuvimos en Croacia’
- (7) *posli su došli jedan profesoric-a*  
 posli su doš-i jedan profesoric-a  
 después.ADV AUX llegar-pst.PLM un.ART profesora  
 -NOM.SG.F  
 ‘Después ha llegado una maestra.’
- (8) *moja tata*  
 moj-a tat-a  
 mi.PRON.POS.NOM.SG.F papá-NOM.SG.M  
 ‘mi papá’

A nivel de la sintaxis, algunos ejemplos muestran también alteraciones en el orden de las palabras, así como ausencia de concordancia entre sujeto y predicado. En la lengua croata, el orden de las palabras es relativamente libre en comparación con el español. Además, el pretérito es exclusivamente un tiempo compuesto, formado por el verbo auxiliar que precede a la

forma del participio del verbo; no obstante, cuando el argumento nominal sujeto no está explícito en la oración, la frase verbal presenta el orden inverso (participio verbal seguido de auxiliar).

El ejemplo 9 representa el primer caso (con sujeto explícito *mi* —‘nosotros’—), donde se observa una alteración de orden en la frase verbal, dado que el participio ocurre antes que el auxiliar, a diferencia de la secuencia estándar en croata. El orden no esperado podría explicarse tanto a partir del contacto con el español (que presenta siempre un orden fijo; por ejemplo, *hemos sido*), así como en el marco de una adquisición incompleta [*incomplete acquisition*] (Polinsky, 2018) de la lengua de herencia, que promueve la confusión entre el orden canónico con pronombre sujeto (auxiliar en posición preverbal) y sin pronombre sujeto (auxiliar posverbal).

- (9) *mi bili smo sretno*  
 mi bil-i smo sretn-o  
 1PL ser-PST.PL.M AUX feliz-ADJ  
 ‘Nosotros fuimos felices’  
 [Formas estándar: *Mi smo bili sretni. / Bili smo sretni.*]

Nótese, además, el uso de la forma adverbial *sretno* en el ejemplo 9, en vez del adjetivo masculino plural correspondiente, *sretni*.

De manera semejante, en el ejemplo 10 se observa un caso sin pronombre sujeto explícito que también presenta alteración en el orden esperado verbo-auxiliar, que copia la estructura canónica del español *hemos ido*, y a su vez ilustra la ausencia de concordancia de persona gramatical, dado que el auxiliar *san* (forma delabializada de *sam*) corresponde a la primera persona del singular y no concuerda con el participio plural *išli*.

- (10) *san išli jučer*  
 sam išl-i učer  
 AUX ir-PST.PL.M ayer.ADV  
 ‘Fuimos ayer’  
 [Formas estándar: *Išli smo jučer. / Mi smo jučer išli.*]

En la oración compleja, en particular en la subordinación (véase ejemplo 11), se observa la falta del verbo principal *biti* ‘ser’, tanto en la subordinada como en la oración principal, donde el hablante se apoya únicamente en el auxiliar (en futuro). Por otro lado, en el ejemplo 12, la frase subordinada no contiene un predicado expresado como forma verbal, sino que se reduce a la construcción *ja da ti* ‘si yo hubiera sido vos’ (literal: ‘yo si vos’).

- (11) *Polagani, će sve u redu, budi na mir*  
 Polagan-i će sve u red-u  
 despacito.ADV AUX todo.PRON  
 en.PREP orden-LOC.SG.M  
 budi na mir  
 ser.IMP.SG.2 en.PREP paz.NOM.SG.M  
 ‘Despacito, todo va a salir bien, que estés tranquilo.’  
 [Forma estándar: *Polako, sve će biti u redu, budi miran*]

- (12) *Ja da ti, bi rekla*  
 ja da ti bi rekl-a  
 1SG CONJ 2SG AUX decir- PST.SG.F  
 ‘Si yo hubiera sido vos, yo te diría...’  
 [Forma estándar: *Da sam ja ti, rekla bih ti...*]

2. *La pérdida de características recesivas.* Se trata de aquellas que son tipológicamente inusuales en las lenguas humanas, incluye en croata la omisión de verbos auxiliares, como en los ejemplos 13 y 14, algunas diferencias en los tiempos verbales (ejemplo 15) o en el sistema de numerales (ejemplo 16), entre otros.

- (13) *mi ne dobro govorili hervatski*  
 mi ne dobro govori-li hervatsk-i  
 1PL NEG bien.ADV hablar-PST.PL.M croata-ADJ.  
 NOM.SG.M  
 ‘Nosotros no hablamos bien el croata’ (lit. ‘nosotros no bien hablado el croata’).  
 [Forma estándar: *Mi nismo dobro govorili hrvatski*]

- (14) *ona pošla u Hrvatskoj*  
 ona poš-la u Hrvatsk-oj  
 3SG ir-PST.PL.F en.PREP Croacia-LOC.SG.F  
 ‘Ella se fue a Croacia.’  
 [Forma estándar: *Ona je pošla/išla u Hrvatsku*]

(15) *on rodio u Hvar*  
 on rodio-o u Hvar  
 3SG nacer-PST.SG.M en.PREP Hvar.LOC.SG.N  
 ‘Él nació en Hvar’.  
 Forma estándar: *On se rodio u/na Hvaru*]

(16) *moj otac imao dva teta*  
 moj otac ima-o dva tet-a  
 mi.POS padre.NOM.SG.M tener-PST.SG.M dos.NUM.M NOM.SG.F  
 ‘Mi padre tiene dos tías’.  
 [Forma estándar: *Moj otac je imao dvije tete*]

3. *La nivelación analógica.* Se observa, según Hagège (2005, pp. 88-89), en el uso restringido de estructuras densas y su sustitución por formulaciones simplificadas. Un ejemplo de este tipo se observa en el uso indistinto de los pronombres relativos *što* y su variante *šta*, así como la variante del chakaviano *ča*, que corresponden todos al español *que* (que a su vez ocurre como un “disparador” para el cambio de código, que describimos en el siguiente numeral).

Las personas entrevistadas que hablaban croata como lengua de herencia no usan los pronombres relativos complejos que presentan concordancia de caso, género y número, por ejemplo: *koji* ‘cual’ (masculino), *koja* ‘cual’ (femenino), *koje* ‘cual’ (neutro) y *čiji* ‘del cual/cuyo’ (masculino), *čija* ‘de la cual/cuya’ (femenino), *čije* ‘del cual/cuyo’ (neutro).

En el ejemplo 17, la forma esperada *koja* ‘cual’ debería marcar concordancia en caso, género y número con el sustantivo *prijateljica* ‘amiga’ (nominativo femenino singular), mientras que en el ejemplo 18 se esperaría la forma *koje* ‘cuales’ en concordancia con el sustantivo *sestre* ‘hermanas’ (acusativo femenino plural). Lo mismo esperaríamos en el ejemplo 19, donde el pronombre *koji* ‘cual’ debería señalar concordancia con el sustantivo *svita* ‘gente’ (genitivo masculino singular).

(17) *Jedna prijateljica moja, šta voli kuhat.*  
 [forma canónica: *koja*]  
 ‘Una amiga mía, a quien le gusta cocinar’.

(18) *Iman dvi sestre šta nisu bile u Hrvatsku.*  
 [forma canónica: *koje*]  
 ‘Tengo dos hermanas que no estuvieron en Croacia.’

(19) *U Hvaru ima puno svita ča govoriđu talijanski.*  
 [forma canónica: *koji*]  
 ‘En Hvar hay mucha gente que habla italiano.’

4. *La expolitio y la reducción de registros estilísticos.* Se observan en el uso sucesivo de dos palabras con significado similar dentro de un mismo enunciado, una de ellas en la lengua de herencia (croata) y, luego, su versión prestada, proveniente de la lengua mayoritaria (el español). Ejemplos de este tipo son los que se muestran en los ejemplos 20 a 22:

(20) *Ona ima skoro casi devedese’ godina. (skoro ‘casi’)*  
 ‘Ella tiene casi noventa años.’

(21) *Nisan sla zato što porque san bila umorna za ići tamo.*  
 (*zato što* ‘porque’)  
 ‘No fui porque estuve cansada para ir allá.’

(22) *Si liuto enojado? (liuto ‘enojado’)*  
 ‘¿Estás enojado?’

El escenario de vulnerabilidad lingüística presenta también otras características que observamos. Una señal de desestabilización es la situación de *diglosia*, es decir, cuando una lengua está en una posición más fuerte debido a su estatus social o a su prevalencia de uso, y ejerce un fuerte impacto sobre la otra (Hagège, 2005, pp. 76-77). En nuestro caso, es la presión del español como lengua dominante (y oficial) que se utiliza más en la comunicación cotidiana.

Este contexto de dominación del español provoca que las y los hablantes que usan o han usado el idioma croata se vuelvan en cierta medida cada vez más inseguros hacia la lengua que utilizan, profundizando la situación de vulnerabilidad lingüística.

A su vez, los préstamos —elementos de una lengua donante que las y los hablantes incorporan a su propia lengua (Field, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009; Thomason, 2001, pp. 85-91; Thomason y Kaufman, 1988)— pueden constituir también un signo perturbador. Si bien los fenómenos de préstamo no conducen necesariamente al desplazamiento de una lengua, cuando se adoptan palabras que duplican o reemplazan palabras nativas existentes —categorizadas como préstamos básicos (Haspelmath, 2009, pp. 48-49; Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 215)— en algunos casos se pueden relacionar con la falta de vitalidad de la lengua receptora.

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El léxico, como categoría abierta y permeable al cambio, se empobrece por el debilitamiento de recursos propios y se ve afectado por los préstamos (cf. Hagège, 2005, p. 84). En el caso del croata hablado por migrantes en Argentina, el léxico del español permea en varios campos semánticos, incluyendo préstamos básicos del español —como algunos términos de parentesco—, el vocabulario relacionado con el trabajo y los conectores discursivos, así como ciertos préstamos culturales asociados a conceptos nuevos, como, por ejemplo, la cocina local (cf. Bilić, 2022).

También el *cambio de código*, entendido como la alternancia de dos (o más) lenguas en una misma situación comunicativa (Gumperz, 1982; Poplack, 1980, 2015), es un fenómeno extendido en las situaciones de contacto de lenguas, es sistemático, socialmente significativo y forma parte de la competencia bilingüe de las y los hablantes. No obstante, en muchos casos, los significantes discursivos de la lengua dominante constituyen señales que pueden presionar hacia

el desplazamiento lingüístico (cf. Hagège, 2005, p. 82, para el caso del árabe en Francia; Hlavac, 2006, para el contacto croata-inglés).

Si bien la demarcación de los fenómenos del préstamo y el cambio de código se encuentra en debate (Myers-Scotton, 1992; Poplack, 1980; Weinreich, 1968), y excede el alcance de este trabajo, puede ser particularmente interesante cuando el cambio de código consiste en una única palabra y puede analizarse también como un préstamo ocasional o momentáneo (*nonce borrowing*) (Hlavac, 2012; Poplack, 2015; Sankoff *et al.*, 1990; Weinreich, 1968). Los préstamos ocasionales —al igual que el cambio de código— no satisfacen las características sociales de recurrencia individual y difusión social y, por lo tanto, no forman parte de la lengua receptora. No obstante, muchas veces asumen identidad morfológica, sintáctica y a veces fonológica con la lengua receptora —al igual que los préstamos establecidos—. En el contexto de contacto croata-español, los préstamos ocasionales constituyen un fenómeno muy recurrente en el uso cotidiano, como lo ilustran los ejemplos 23 a 28.

- (23) *Ona se ne zna ubicar u Buenos Aires.*  
'Ella no sabe ubicarse en Buenos Aires.'
- (24) *Želin da budeš s puno **trabajo**.*  
'Quiero que tengas mucho trabajo.'
- (25) *Ne znan da li znaš za ona **página** Internet.*  
'No sé si conoces esa página de Internet.'
- (26) *Jedemo i kuhamo chukrut, to je **especialidad croata**.*  
'Cocinamos y comemos chukrut, es una especialidad croata.'
- (27) *Kako si, ja san **mejor**.*  
'Como estas, yo estoy mejor.'
- (28) *To je **odlično** za **cantar** u par **glasa**.*  
'Eso es excelente para cantar a varias voces.'

En el caso de las y los hablantes bilingües inglés-croata en Australia, Hlavac (2006) concluye que los significantes discursivos del inglés



aparecen simultáneamente con las formas croatas, y las reemplazan en los casos en los que las formas del inglés son polifuncionales. De manera semejante, en la situación de contacto croata-español que analizamos, se observa el uso frecuente de conectores gramaticales y discursivos del español insertados en las emisiones en croata, aun cuando estos elementos léxicos prestados duplican el léxico de la lengua receptora; por ejemplo, *pero* (en croata, *ali*); *porque* (*zato što*); *bueno* (*dobro*); *claro* (*jasno, naravno*). Algunas interjecciones con funciones discursivas son también utilizadas en español, como ¡Viste! (*Vidiš / Shvaćas!*), ¡Mirá! (*Pogledaj / Gledaj!*), ¡Para nada! (*Ma ništa / Uopće ne!*), ¡Pero, por favor! (*Ma daj, molim te!*).

Finalmente, observamos que en el contexto sudamericano se interrumpe la transmisión intergeneracional. En línea con las circunstancias que acompañan este contexto, como la desmotivación, las dificultades para dominar el idioma ancestral, los matrimonios mixtos, la integración al entorno hispano, el estigma, etc., la lengua croata se habla cada vez menos —y, en algunos casos, se usa muy raramente— en el ámbito familiar. Se observa, por lo tanto, una disrupción en las prácticas de socialización lingüística en la lengua de herencia.

En este marco, es posible reconocer una etapa que conduce al desplazamiento lingüístico. Además, la falta de hablantes jóvenes y la alta proporción de hablantes mayores podrían considerarse también signos de una grave desestabilización del idioma croata en el contexto expuesto.

De acuerdo con lo presentado hasta aquí, ya sea en la estructura lingüística como en las circunstancias sociolingüísticas, encontramos señales que caracterizan la situación de vulnerabilidad de la lengua croata en el contexto analizado. No obstante, son varios los factores que pueden funcionar como fuerzas de mantenimiento lingüístico en el caso de una lengua minoritaria, como exponemos en el siguiente apartado.

### Fuerzas de mantenimiento del croata como lengua de herencia

Entre las fuerzas de mantenimiento de una lengua amenazada se pueden mencionar la conciencia de identidad de grupo, el apego al territorio de origen, la cohesión familiar, la promoción de la enseñanza de la lengua, la sensibilización de las y los hablantes “de afuera” y la participación de la comunidad en beneficio de la promoción de la lengua minorizada (Hagège, 2005, pp. 181-200).

En el caso de los migrantes croatas en Argentina, es notable el creciente interés entre los jóvenes que quieren aprender el idioma —situación que parece replicarse en otros países sudamericanos— (Antić, 1988; Banjan, 2013; Cvikić *et al.*, 2010; Lasić, 2010; Perić, 2006). Las razones para aprender el idioma ancestral como segunda lengua entre las y los jóvenes de la tercera, cuarta e incluso quinta generación de croatas suelen ser de naturaleza afectiva y económica (Cvikić *et al.*, 2010, pp. 122-123).

El deseo de pertenecer a la comunidad croata o de establecer contacto con familiares en el país de origen constituye un factor de peso. Por un lado, el establecimiento del Estado croata y el reconocimiento internacional alentaron, entre las generaciones más jóvenes, la posibilidad de contactarse con la patria de sus antepasados. Esa es una de las razones económicas en juego, que se relaciona con el ingreso de la República de Croacia a la Unión Europea y la posibilidad de adquirir la ciudadanía croata. Por otro lado, en las y los hablantes de mayor edad, la razón es más bien afectiva: la renovación del vocabulario, la experiencia de la comunicación en el idioma ancestral y la (re)creación de un mosaico de historias personales y familiares (cf. Cvikić *et al.*, 2010; Skelin Horvat y Musulin, 2015). En este sentido, se observa una *conciencia de identidad* (Hagège, 2005) que se traduce en una tendencia positiva y, por lo tanto, en un signo alentador de preservación de la lengua croata.

En este marco, podemos reconocer como *hablantes de herencia* (Polinsky y Kagan, 2007, p. 369) a quienes han adoptado la lengua minoritaria en el círculo familiar y todavía son relativamente activos en su uso (generalmente son “bilingües desequilibrados”, en términos de Polinsky, 2018, p. 4). No obstante, el croata se considera también como una *lengua ancestral* o *lengua de origen*, dado que se relaciona con la herencia cultural de un individuo, aun cuando no la hable, dado que posee un sentido de pertenencia al pueblo.

En cuanto al dominio de la lengua de herencia, distinguimos entre las y los *aprendientes de la lengua de herencia* [*heritage learners*] —aquellos que dominan, hasta un cierto nivel, la lengua de herencia—, y las y los *aprendientes con motivación de herencia* [*learners with heritage motivation*] —quienes fueron educados en el círculo familiar con un fuerte sentimiento de pertenencia cultural, así como lingüística, aunque no desarrollaron su competencia lingüística— (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003, p. 222). Este último grupo, que también recibe la denominación de “aprendientes ancestrales” [*ancestral learners*], conocen y comparten las prácticas culturales que se encuentran en estrecha conexión con la lengua de herencia.

De acuerdo con lo que hemos documentado a partir de los informes internos y oficiales elaborados con periodicidad cuatrimestral por el docente a cargo en ambas universidades para el Ministerio de Ciencia y Educación croata, entre 2009 y 2021 (Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia, 2021), tanto en Buenos Aires como en Rosario (Argentina) asisten a las clases de idioma croata principalmente estudiantes de la segunda, tercera y cuarta generaciones de migrantes croatas. Su nivel de conocimiento no es homogéneo y varía de acuerdo con los siguientes grupos: 1) estudiantes cuya madre y cuyo padre poseen raíces croatas y se comunican sin dificultad en la lengua de origen; en estos estudiantes, se percibe la influencia del español en la fonología, en el vocabulario y, en particular, en la sintaxis;

2) estudiantes que pertenecen a la tercera y la cuarta generaciones, que tienen bisabuelos de raíces croatas; no hablan el idioma, pero quieren aprender la lengua de sus antepasados. En este sentido, podemos reconocer aprendientes de lengua de herencia en el primer caso (1) y aprendientes con motivación de herencia o ancestrales en el segundo caso (2).

Debemos mencionar también a una minoría que, si bien no tiene raíces croatas, tiene interés en aprender una lengua eslava, en un entorno que presenta la oportunidad de estudiar el idioma con un/a profesor/a nativo/a enviado/a por el Ministerio de Educación croata. En este sentido, la *sensibilización de los y las hablantes “de afuera”* (Hagège 2005) constituye otro de los signos de fortalecimiento lingüístico.

En línea con estas observaciones, el estudio de Cvikić *et al.* (2010), realizado para la Fundación para la Emigración Croata [Hrvatska Matica Iseljenika], con el fin de investigar las necesidades de las y los futuras/os usuarias/os de cursos en línea vía Internet para estudiar la lengua croata, llevó a cabo una encuesta sobre las motivaciones para aprender croata entre hablantes de herencia (de un total de 737 personas encuestadas, el 44 % corresponde a América del Sur). El estudio concluye que el 52 % de las personas encuestadas manifiesta su deseo de aprender croata para comunicarse con la familia y las y los amigas/os, mientras el 64 % desea aprender la lengua solo por “ser croatas”.

Dicha investigación mostró que “en el aprendizaje de idiomas, la sensación de plenitud o identificación es el motivo más importante para aprender el idioma croata” (Cvikić *et al.*, 2010, p. 123). Así mismo, Skelin Horvat y Musulin (2015, p. 492) sostienen que el deseo de los hablantes más jóvenes de aprender la lengua de herencia y conocerla se relaciona no solo con la construcción de una nueva identidad, la identidad étnica de la lengua croata, sino también con el hecho de que la lengua otorga nuevas explicaciones a las raíces de una identidad

ya existente. El aumento significativo del interés por el aprendizaje de la lengua croata en el continente sudamericano es un signo alentador, dado que a largo plazo se traducirá en un incremento en la cantidad de hablantes jóvenes.

Hasta acá hemos observado que, de manera general, la situación lingüística actual de la tercera y cuarta generaciones de croatas en Argentina es relativamente favorable, y podemos afirmar que hay un creciente interés por aprender el idioma (cf. Cvikić *et al.*, 2010). De acuerdo con los últimos dos informes dirigidos al Ministerio de Ciencia y Educación croata, en 2019 se inscribieron 4800 estudiantes para el aprendizaje de la lengua croata en la plataforma en línea y se otorgaron 244 becas de idioma (Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia, 2021), mientras que en 2020 lo hicieron más de 8000, con 226 becas para el año académico 2020/2021 (Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia, 2022b). En este marco, son preguntas relevantes en qué medida las políticas lingüísticas y las instituciones reconocen la situación de amenaza de la lengua de herencia y, por ende, la identidad lingüística, y qué otras acciones son necesarias para mantener la lengua croata en el contexto sudamericano.

Desde Croacia, a pesar de las difíciles circunstancias de crecimiento y desarrollo de un Estado joven e independiente, existe la preocupación por el idioma de la emigración (Hlavac, 2006; Jelaska y Hržica, 2005; Skelin Horvat y Musulin, 2015). Hoy recibe especial atención, con plena conciencia de que una política lingüística bien fundada y elaborada es uno de los elementos más importantes de la unidad entre el territorio de Croacia y la Croacia emigrada. La adhesión de la República de Croacia a la Unión Europea, así como el reconocimiento y el establecimiento gradual de la lengua croata como una de las 24 lenguas oficiales de la Unión Europea, también contribuyeron a la formulación de una política lingüística sólida y clara.

En lo que respecta al estatus de la lengua croata a nivel académico, se destaca su presencia en universidades extranjeras, dado que existe una red de un total de 35 cátedras, la mayoría de ellas en universidades europeas. En las Universidad de Buenos Aires y en la Universidad Nacional de Rosario, se dictan clases de lengua croata desde el año 2007 (con convenios renovados en 2017). En 2017 se estableció además una cátedra en la Universidad de Magallanes, en Punta Arenas (Chile). A pesar de ello, la lengua croata aún no se encuentra representada en ninguna universidad de la capital chilena, ni tampoco, por ejemplo, en Brasil, países en los que la presencia croata es destacada, junto con Argentina.

En la Tabla 2 se presentan las instituciones en las que se enseña la lengua croata en los países de América del Sur, distinguiendo entre instituciones académicas o convenios con el Ministerio de Ciencia y Educación croata (como en el caso de Argentina y Chile) y los contextos no formales de enseñanza, tanto laicos como religiosos (en el caso de los contextos formales, se consigna el año de comienzo de actividades).

En cuanto a la existencia de un espacio central de cooperación cultural, lingüística y académica, destacamos que existe una iniciativa muy desarrollada para establecer un Centro de Estudios Croatas en la República Argentina, en la Universidad de Buenos Aires (como existe desde hace 35 años en la Universidad de Macquarie, en Sydney). Esto podría ser un incentivo aún más fuerte para una mayor integración y afirmación de la lengua croata en el ámbito académico, para la visibilidad de la lengua y la cultura croata en la Argentina, iniciativa que podrían seguir otros países en los que la comunidad croata también es numerosa. El poder de cohesión de estas acciones reúne a las y los hablantes y crea conciencia sobre su identidad lingüística, un componente importante en el proceso de mantenimiento lingüístico, dado que, como sostiene Hagège (2005, p. 208), la voluntad de los

**Tabla 2** Instituciones en las que se enseña la lengua croata en los países de América del Sur

País	Instituciones donde se enseña la lengua croata	
	Contextos académicos o mediante convenios con el Ministerio de Ciencia y Educación croata	Contextos no formales (laicos y religiosos)
Argentina	Centro Leopold Mandić (Dock Sud, Buenos Aires, desde 2004)	En las comunidades croatas en las ciudades de: Córdoba, Mar del Plata, Mendoza, Rosario, Venado Tuerto, Comodoro Rivadavia, Ushuaia
	Universidad de Buenos Aires (Ciudad de Buenos Aires, desde 2007)	
	Universidad Nacional de Rosario (Santa Fe, desde 2007)	
Bolivia		En las comunidades croatas de las ciudades de: La Paz, Santa Cruz y Cochabamba (Hrvatski dom / Hogar croata)
Brasil		Asociación Croata Sacra Paulistana (San Pablo)
Chile	Estadio croata (Santiago de Chile, desde 2018)	
	Escuela croata (Punta Arenas, desde 1997)	
	Universidad de Magallanes (Punta Arenas, desde 2018)	
Ecuador		Asociación de Croatas de Ecuador (no hay datos sobre enseñanza del idioma)
Paraguay		Club Asociación de descendientes y residentes croatas en el Paraguay
Perú		Parroquia San Leopoldo Mandić (Lima)
Uruguay		Hogar croata [Hrvatski Dom] (sin datos sobre clases de idioma)
		Comité Croata para Venezuela del Congreso Mundial de Croacia
		Centro croata-venezolano (Sociedad de Croatas de Venezuela)
Venezuela		Sociedad de Mujeres Croatas
		Hogar croata [Hrvatski Dom]

Fuente: Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia (2022a).

y las hablantes es un factor fundamental para dejar o mantener la lengua.

Otras acciones de fortalecimiento hacia la lengua de herencia se relacionan con el rol de los y las lingüistas en el campo de la producción científica y de la difusión, que podrían contribuir a la sensibilización de las y los hablantes y fortalecer el idioma (Hagège, 2005, pp. 201-207). En el caso de la lengua croata en el contexto de los países de América del Sur, no existen aún registros amplios ni descripciones completas del habla de los y las

migrantes croatas, que puedan dar cuenta de sus características desde una perspectiva de investigación dialectológica, sociolingüística o de contacto de lenguas (son excepciones Bilić, 2022; Skelin Horvat *et al.*, 2021).

Se necesitan estudios exhaustivos que describan, por ejemplo, las características conservadas de los dialectos de origen —principalmente, chakaviano y shtokaviano— que las diferentes olas migratorias trajeron consigo, que se usaron y hablaron en la familia durante generaciones, y que desaparecen



lentamente, así como los fenómenos que surgieron a partir de contacto lingüístico croata-español (cf. Bilić, 2022, sobre el croata en Argentina; Pilipenko, 2018, p. 285, sobre el ucraniano en Argentina y Paraguay).

Los proyectos colaborativos y mancomunados entre la comunidad científica croata, en cooperación con académicos en la diáspora, la comunidad migrante y los propios hablantes, así como la elaboración de materiales y manuales (diccionarios, gramáticas, léxicos) especialmente diseñados para la enseñanza de croata a estudiantes hispanohablantes constituyen acciones pendientes. Por ejemplo, para el semestre de invierno del año académico 2020-2021, se presenta una gran cantidad de hablantes de herencia y aprendientes ancestrales en las becas que otorga la Oficina Estatal Central para estudiar el idioma croata. De un total de 120 becas para el aprendizaje de la lengua croata para extranjeros, 110 fueron otorgadas a estudiantes de América del Sur (Oficina Estatal Central para croatas fuera de la República de Croacia, 2022b). No obstante, no existen materiales para la enseñanza de la lengua croata diseñados para hispanohablantes.

## Conclusiones

El trabajo indagó sobre la situación del croata como lengua de herencia en el contexto sudamericano, atendiendo a su grado de vulnerabilidad. Con base en la propuesta de Hagège (2005) para las lenguas amenazadas, mostramos los signos de erosión de la lengua croata en favor del español como lengua dominante. En particular, observamos que, en el nivel de la estructura lingüística, el habla de herencia de la segunda y tercera generaciones de migrantes presenta alteraciones en el núcleo gramatical, en los niveles fonológico (pérdida de oposiciones fonológicas, asimilación a sonidos del español y cambios en la sonoridad de ciertos segmentos sonoros), morfológico (ausencia de distinciones de caso) y sintáctico. Así mismo, se observó la pérdida de características recesivas (como la omisión de auxiliares o la confusión de tiempos verbales) y

la presencia de estructuras simplificadas (como en el caso de los pronombres relativos).

Otros fenómenos de contacto documentados son el cambio de código y la recurrencia de préstamos, en particular los préstamos ocasionales. Además, los factores de vulnerabilidad incluyen la interrupción en la transmisión lingüística regular entre generaciones, la ausencia de hablantes jóvenes y un mayor número de personas hablantes adultas.

No obstante, desde una perspectiva que toma en cuenta no solo la lengua como sistema, sino también a los y las hablantes como agentes en el proceso de cambio lingüístico, relevamos que existe además una tendencia positiva hacia el mantenimiento de la lengua ancestral, con un enorme interés por aprenderla. Si bien las motivaciones son principalmente de naturaleza afectiva y económica, la identidad de las y los estudiantes de herencia y ancestrales cumple un papel relevante en el aprendizaje de la lengua: el sentido de identificación y pertenencia, el deseo de búsqueda de las raíces de la propia identidad. Así mismo, la motivación de los hablantes mayores surge del deseo de establecer y mantener contactos con la familia croata y de establecer la comunicación en la lengua de sus antepasados.

Otro signo de la recuperación de la lengua croata en el contexto sudamericano y la posibilidad de preservarla es la conciencia y la acción de los propios hablantes, así como la sensibilización de los hablantes “de afuera”. Las instituciones y en particular la labor de descripción y documentación lingüística —a la cual el presente estudio se propone contribuir— tienen un papel crucial que desempeñar, ya que sus resultados no solo proporcionan datos empíricos, sino también tienen el potencial de desarrollar la conciencia de las y los hablantes, y proporcionar una imagen más clara de su identidad lingüística. Cuando se trata de la lengua croata como marcador de identidad, sin duda debe ser imperativo que se fortalezca en contextos de migración, tanto a nivel simbólico como funcional.

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## Apéndice: Abreviaturas

ADJ	Adjetivo	NUM	Numeral
ADV	Adverbio	NEG	Negación
ART	Artículo	NOM	Nominativo
AUX	Auxiliar	PL	Plural
CONJ	Conjunción	POS	Poseedor
F	Femenino	PREP	Preposición
PRON	Pronombre	PST	Participio pasado
IMP	Imperativo	SG	Singular
LOC	Locativo	1	Primera persona
M	Masculino	2	Segunda persona
N	Neutro	3	Tercera persona

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# TRADUCCIONES Y TRANSCREACIONES DE MENSAJES PUBLICITARIOS EN TWITTER E INSTAGRAM: NETFLIX EN ESPAÑOL

TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSCREATIONS OF ADVERTISING POSTS ON TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM: NETFLIX IN SPANISH

TRADUCTIONS ET TRANSCRÉATIONS DE MESSAGES PUBLICITAIRES SUR TWITTER ET INSTAGRAM : NETFLIX EN ESPAGNOL

TRADUÇÕES E TRANSCRIÇÕES DE MENSAGENS PUBLICITÁRIAS EM TWITTER E INSTAGRAM: NETFLIX EN ESPANHOL

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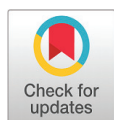
## RESUMEN

La empresa estadounidense Netflix se ha convertido en una de las plataformas de transmisión en directo de contenido multimedia más poderosas del mundo. Actualmente, las redes sociales, en especial Twitter e Instagram, ofrecen a empresas y marcas, como esta, la posibilidad de comunicarse de manera directa con su audiencia. Por esta razón, Netflix acostumbra usar dichas redes como plataforma publicitaria. El objetivo de este artículo es analizar las estrategias de traducción y las transcreaciones empleadas por Netflix en sus cuentas de Twitter e Instagram en español, y comparar las dos versiones para valorar posibles diferencias en las estrategias usadas. Para ello, hemos partido de un corpus de 26 mensajes publicados en las dos redes sociales durante el primer semestre de 2018 y hemos realizado un estudio de tipo descriptivo. Los resultados sugieren que las estrategias de traducción usadas en España son distintas de las de los perfiles latinos, que recurren más habitualmente a la transcreación. Además, observamos que mientras que Twitter se utiliza preferentemente para presentar nuevos productos, Instagram se emplea como medio para afianzarlos en la audiencia.

**Palabras clave:** publicidad; Instagram; Netflix; redes sociales; traducción, transcreación; Twitter.

## ABSTRACT

Us-based Netflix has become one of the most powerful video streaming service around the world. Currently, social media, especially Twitter and Instagram, provide companies and brands like Netflix, a chance to reach their audience directly. This is why the company often uses these media for advertising purposes. This article aims to analyze translation strategies and transcreations used by Netflix in their Twitter and Instagram accounts in Spanish, and to compare both versions to assess some potential differences on the strategies used. To do that, 26 messages posted in both social media throughout the first half of 2018, were taken and



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descriptively analyzed. The results suggest that the translation strategies used in Spain are different from those used in their Latin profile, which resort more often to transcreation. Also, we noticed that while Twitter is preferred to launch new products, Instagram is used as a means to establish them among their audience.

**Keywords:** advertising; Instagram; Netflix; social media; translation, transcreation; Twitter.

### RÉSUMÉ

L'entreprise américaine Netflix est devenue l'une des services de vidéo à la demande par abonnement le plus puissants du monde. Aujourd'hui, les réseaux sociaux, notamment Twitter et Instagram, offrent aux entreprises et aux marques la possibilité de communiquer directement avec leur public et, pour ça faire, elles les utilisent souvent comme plateforme publicitaire. Cet article vise à analyser les stratégies de traduction et transcréation utilisées par Netflix dès leurs profils en espagnol sur Twitter et Instagram. À ce but, nous sommes partis d'un corpus de 26 messages publiés sur les deux réseaux sociaux au cours du premier semestre 2018 et en avons mené une étude descriptive. Les résultats suggèrent que les stratégies de traduction utilisées en Espagne sont différentes de celles des profils latins, qui ont plus souvent recours à la transcréation. En outre, nous avons observé que si Twitter est de préférence utilisé pour présenter les nouveaux produits, Instagram est utilisé comme un moyen de les consolider parmi l'audience.

**Mots clef :** publicité ; Instagram ; Netflix ; réseaux sociaux ; traduction ; transcréation ; Twitter.

### RESUMO

A empresa americana Netflix tem se tornado uma das plataformas de streaming de mídia mais poderosas do mundo. Hoje, as redes sociais, especialmente Twitter e Instagram, oferecem às empresas e marcas, como Netflix, a possibilidade de comunicar-se diretamente com seu público e por isso muitas vezes as utilizam como plataforma publicitária. O objetivo deste artigo é analisar as estratégias de tradução e transcrição utilizadas desde os perfis da Netflix em espanhol no Twitter e Instagram. Para isso, começamos com um corpus de 26 mensagens publicadas nas duas redes sociais durante o primeiro semestre de 2018 e realizamos um estudo descritivo. Os resultados sugerem que as estratégias de tradução utilizadas na Espanha são diferentes daquelas dos perfis latinos, que mais comumente recorrem à transcrição. Além disso, observamos que enquanto o Twitter é utilizado preferencialmente para apresentar novos produtos, o Instagram é utilizado como um meio de ancorá-los no público.

**Palavras chave:** publicidade; Instagram; Netflix; redes sociais; tradução, transcrição; Twitter.

## Introducción

El presente estudio se enmarca en la *traducción ciberpublicitaria*, definida por Bueno (2000) como el conjunto de anuncios publicitarios que se presenta en formato vídeo, imagen, sonido o texto, y se difunde a través de internet. A pesar de que esta submodalidad de traducción sea una realidad desde hace dos décadas, apenas existen trabajos que estudien las redes sociales como medio de difusión ciberpublicitario.

En este trabajo, que supone una ampliación de un estudio anterior (García-Aguilar y García-Jiménez, 2020), analizamos las características propias del discurso publicitario utilizado por la plataforma Netflix en distintas redes sociales. A partir del análisis que efectuamos de las estrategias de traducción de las que se sirve la cuenta en Twitter de Netflix España, en esta ocasión extendemos nuestra investigación también a la red social Instagram, ya que es otro de los canales empleados por la empresa de contenido audiovisual para promocionar sus productos. Además, con objeto de establecer comparaciones, tomamos en consideración no solo las cuentas de la plataforma en Estados Unidos (EE. UU.) y España, sino también los distintos perfiles de Netflix en Hispanoamérica. Asimismo, se valora si existen diferencias en cuanto a las estrategias usadas en Twitter frente a las de Instagram. Para ello, partimos de un corpus conformado por mensajes publicados en las dos redes sociales a lo largo del primer semestre de 2018.

En el mercado mundial, la red de microblogueo con más éxito es Twitter, creada en 2006. Desde su lanzamiento, se ha convertido en una de las principales herramientas de comunicación global (García-Aguilar, 2019), utilizada por más de 322 millones de usuarios (Statista, 2022).

Los mensajes que se publican en esta red, aunque dependen de la configuración particular de la cuenta de cada usuario, se suelen publicar en abierto, lo que supone que se puede acceder a su lectura sin necesidad de ser usuario de la red. Gracias a esta

particular característica, Twitter se ha convertido en poco tiempo en una de las principales vías para mantenerse informado. En este sentido, Mancera y Helfrich (2014, p. 60) califican la red como un “sismógrafo del mundo moderno”. Pero, además, en Twitter se concitan otros intereses por parte de sus usuarios. Así, algunos de ellos comparten en la red sus experiencias, reflexiones y actividades de la vida cotidiana; otros la usan para dar rienda suelta a sus pensamientos, para hacer crítica social, para mostrar al mundo su visión particular sobre distintos aspectos de la vida política y social, etc.

Por su parte, Instagram, creada en 2010, se ha convertido en otra de las redes más empleadas en la actualidad, donde cuenta con más de 900 millones de usuarios activos en 2022. A diferencia de Twitter, su característica principal consiste en que se centra en la difusión de imágenes, y ahora también vídeos, que pueden ser manipulados previamente por sus usuarios mediante la aplicación de efectos fotográficos como filtros, marcos, colores, etc. Sin embargo, comparte con la red de microblogueo sus principales particularidades de uso: su carácter mixto (cada usuario puede configurar su perfil para que sea privado o público) y su empleo como vehículo de expresión personal, medio de información y plataforma publicitaria.

En ambas redes encontramos cuentas, tanto de individuos particulares como representativas de empresas, corporaciones, instituciones, etc., que recurren a la difusión que permite la plataforma para publicitar sus productos o servicios. Así sucede en el caso de la plataforma Netflix, que hasta el momento es la mayor compañía dedicada al negocio del contenido multimedia bajo demanda.

La empresa estadounidense Netflix se sirve, entre otras, de las principales redes sociales, como Twitter e Instagram, para promocionar su contenido audiovisual. Para ello, dispone de distintos perfiles, según el país o la zona a la que está dirigido, mediante los cuales no solo se publicitan los nuevos lanzamientos de sus series, películas y documentales, sino que también se desarrolla una



función de conexión con los seguidores, a quienes se acerca dando respuesta a los mensajes que estos les dejan en las distintas publicaciones.

Sus *community managers* o responsables de comunidades suelen hacer uso del humor y del conocimiento compartido en los mensajes que intercambian con sus seguidores, para crear una ilusión de cercanía entre los contenidos de la plataforma y sus usuarios.

### Marco teórico

Según Reiss y Vermeer (1996, p. 184, citados en Cruz García, 2004, p. 18), el *anuncio publicitario* se sitúa en la categoría multimedial, formada por aquellos textos en los que intervienen, normalmente, el código visual y el verbal, además de otros. Este tipo de textos se caracteriza por el hecho de que, en su creación, de acuerdo con Lefevre y Bassnett (citados en Valdés, 2004, p. 143), intervienen varios factores: los culturales, aunque en la actualidad la tendencia gire en torno a la globalización o internacionalización; los vinculados con el receptor (o cliente), y el escopo, ya que, en estos casos, el objetivo es persuadir al receptor para que adquiera y consuma un producto determinado.

Desde la perspectiva traductológica, la *traducción publicitaria* presenta un carácter multidisciplinar y posee un alto grado de subordinación, ya que el texto suele estar supeditado a una serie de elementos, como la imagen a la que acompaña, el espacio disponible o los posibles referentes culturales, muy presentes en este tipo de traducción.

En lo que respecta a la multidisciplinariedad, Gutiérrez Ordóñez (*apud* Valdés, 2004, p. 109) argumenta que el traductor de textos publicitarios debe tener ciertos conocimientos de disciplinas como la publicidad, la semiótica, la retórica, la pragmática o el márketing. Con respecto a esta última disciplina, autores como Ho (2004, p. 221) sostienen que la traducción de un texto publicitario añade valor económico a la cadena que conforma el proceso de márketing.

En este sentido, conviene recordar que en los ámbitos profesionales se emplea también habitualmente el término “transcreación”, introducido hace ya una década por Rebecca Ray y Nataly Kelly (2010), quienes tenían en cuenta que aquella, debido a su naturaleza comercial, podía considerarse como un fenómeno que transgrede los límites de la traducción en su concepción más tradicional, pues es habitual que el contenido del mensaje original tenga que adaptarse e incluso reescribirse de nuevo para que funcione en el mercado meta. Por tanto, la transcreación sobrepasaría las fronteras lingüísticas, por cuanto en ella se incluye “a hybrid of new content, adapted content and imagery, and straightforward translation” (Ray y Kelly, 2010, p. 2).

Dado que la transcreación tiene su origen en el ámbito profesional del márketing y la publicidad (Pedersen, 2017, 2019; taus, 2019), la teorización sobre esta realidad traductora se ha caracterizado por ir a la zaga de la práctica, lo cual ha propiciado un distanciamiento conceptual entre traducción y transcreación (Fernández Rodríguez, 2019). Al respecto, Pedersen (2014, p. 57) señala que la transcreación es “a concept that is often described both as kind of translation and in opposition to translation, as ‘the more than translation’”.

Fernández Rodríguez (2019, p. 228) afirma, además, que la traducción se relaciona con la traducción lingüística tradicional, en la que términos como “equivalencia” suelen tener gran importancia y donde predominan el formalismo y la rigidez. No obstante, desde la aparición de los nuevos giros en traducción, como los de Bachmann-Medick (2009 y 2016), la postraducción de Gentzler (2016) o el giro *outwards* de Bassnett y Johnston (2019), esta concepción se ha cuestionado desde los pilares de la traductología en varias esferas, desde hace al menos una década.

En contraposición, se encuentra la transcreación, con gran carga comercial, la cual “equivaldría a un plus que movilice no solo la traducción lingüística sino todo lo que pueda sostenerla, incluso sin necesidad de una traducción cercana al original”. Con

relación a ello, Pedersen (2014, p. 62) menciona que mientras que la traducción consiste en transferir palabras de una lengua a otra, la transcreación busca trasladar la “voz de la marca” (brand voice) de una cultura a otra. Benetello (2016) también afirma que mantener la voz de la marca es esencial en la transcreación y, para esto, la creatividad desempeña un rol fundamental.

Sin embargo, en nuestra opinión, y apoyándonos en Pedersen (2014, p. 63), este distanciamiento conceptual entre transcreación y traducción no debería darse, puesto que la transcreación entra en el paradigma de la traducción y guarda similitudes con la localización y, sobre todo, con la traducción publicitaria “tradicional”. En consonancia con esta idea, autores como Gaballo (2012, p. 110) sostienen que la transcreación podría asumirse como una estrategia de traducción más, similar a la adaptación.

Fernández Rodríguez (2019) también argumenta que en la traducción publicitaria debe “traducirse o transcrearse” la estrategia comunicativa que da lugar al texto publicitario, pues en este ámbito se persigue, principalmente, “la ‘intensidad’ discursiva y persuasiva; la colaboración interna de todos los elementos en función de la estrategia buscada en una asimilación consciente del texto retórico y del hecho retórico” (p. 244). En la actualidad, la traducción se entiende, entonces, como una mediación cultural (Cf. Katan, 2015), en la que intervienen cada vez más factores de diversa índole, por lo que es necesario concebirla desde su espectro más amplio.

Por otra parte, autores como Munday (2004, p. 199) se mostraron partidarios de incorporar las nuevas teorías sobre comunicación visual y multimodal a la traducción publicitaria, como se ha venido realizando hasta la actualidad.

Los *textos publicitarios en las redes* se caracterizan por la multisimultaneidad, la multimodalidad, la brevedad y la existencia de características cercanas, desde el punto de vista conceptual, al polo de la inmediatez, dada la dialogicidad propia de las

interacciones entre los usuarios de las redes sociales (García-Aguiar, 2019).

En lo verbal, estos textos se centran en la tipografía, la concisión y la brevedad del mensaje (Valdés, 2004, p. 102), algo que sucede de forma habitual en los mensajes publicados en Twitter. La brevedad es un rasgo definitorio de esta red social, que limita las intervenciones a un número determinado de caracteres. De hecho, es frecuente que los usuarios se sirvan de diferentes elementos multimodales —imágenes insertadas, vídeos, formato de intercambio de gráficos (*Graphics Interchange Format*, GIF), enlaces que redireccionan a otras webs, emoticonos, etc.— para apoyar o completar el contenido de sus mensajes y esquivar así la limitación de caracteres. En función de cuáles sean los elementos multimodales incorporados, el mensaje podrá ser interpretado de manera irónica, enfática, etc. (García-Aguiar, 2019).

Cabe mencionar que esto no sucede en las publicaciones de Instagram, donde no existe un número limitado de caracteres. No obstante, dada la importancia que esta red social concede a la imagen, los mensajes publicados en esta —y, en especial, aquellos que persiguen fines publicitarios— también destacan por su brevedad.

Por su parte, el código no verbal, en el caso de los mensajes publicitarios que encontramos en Twitter y, sobre todo, en Instagram, viene definido por la presencia de imágenes y vídeos. Según Valdés (2004), “las funciones básicas que cumple la imagen son, principalmente, las de identificar y asegurar la memorabilidad del producto y atraer la atención del receptor mediante el impacto” (p. 104). En el caso de la plataforma Netflix, la presencia de imágenes y vídeos es fundamental, debido a que los productos que vende son de carácter audiovisual (series, películas y documentales).

## Método

En este trabajo partimos del análisis de los seis casos que forman nuestro corpus, elaborado con base en

aquellos mensajes que en el perfil de Netflix en EE. UU. (bajo la cuenta @netflix), así como en sus cuentas homónimas en España (a través del perfil @NetflixES) y Latinoamérica (@NetflixLAT), tanto en Twitter como en Instagram, se dedican a publicitar, de manera casi simultánea, el mismo contenido audiovisual. El período analizado se circunscribe al primer semestre del año 2018.

Para analizar el corpus, nos basamos en las estrategias de traducción publicitaria que Valdés propuso en 2004. Estas estrategias se dividen en tres, dependiendo de si giran en torno a los referentes culturales (con estrategias como la no traducción, la traducción literal, la creación de un texto nuevo o la adición de información contextual, entre otras), al receptor (en este caso, destacan la adaptación según el receptor, el cambio de enfoque o la compensación de información, por ejemplo) o a los elementos gráficos (donde se incluyen la transferencia de la imagen o el vídeo, el cambio de imagen o vídeo o la grafía).<sup>1</sup>

Nos proponemos, como se ha señalado, describir tanto las estrategias propias del lenguaje de la publicidad, como las estrategias de traducción o transcreaciones empleadas en las cuentas en español, así como la comparación entre ellas.

## Resultados

¿Cómo se traducen o transcriben los mensajes publicitarios? Para dar respuesta a esta pregunta, a continuación se presentan los casos estudiados.

### Mensaje publicitario sobre *Bright*

La compañía Netflix actúa también de productora de algunos de los contenidos audiovisuales que se

difunden en su plataforma. Es el caso de la película de acción y fantasía urbana *Bright*, lanzada en 2017.

Por medio de un mensaje publicado en el perfil estadounidense de la red Twitter el 3 de enero de 2018 (ejemplo 1), la plataforma Netflix anuncia que dicha película contará con una secuela (*Bright 2*), en la que, de nuevo, sus protagonistas, Will Smith y Joe Edgerton, se ponen en la piel de un policía humano y uno orco, respectivamente.

(1) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, enero 3). *ANNOUNCEMENT: Orc auditions for the @BrightNetflix sequel are now closed. Thank you. Have a nice day* [Vídeo enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/948571927345418242>

Como ya se señaló en García-Aguilar y García-Jiménez (2020, pp. 9-10), la estrategia publicitaria de la que se sirven en la cuenta estadounidense consiste en fingir que se están realizando unas pruebas de audición para el papel de orco en la secuela de *Bright*. Mediante este simple mensaje, se alcanzan varios objetivos: se confirma la producción de la segunda parte de la película y, paralelamente, se asegura a la audiencia, de manera implícita, que en esta ocasión seguirá habiendo orcos, parte del éxito de la película y, por tanto, previsible objeto de interés para sus seguidores.

El texto se acompaña de un vídeo breve, de 44 segundos, en el que se recogen muestras de esas pretendidas audiciones y en el que se menciona lo que se estiman los principales atractivos de la saga: los nombres de los actores protagonistas, los elementos propios del mundo de fantasía o la acción. El vídeo, en este caso, funciona como un complemento al tuit.

El mismo 3 de enero, el perfil de Netflix España publica también un tuit para confirmar la secuela de la película, como se observa en el ejemplo 2.

(2) Netflix España [@NetflixEs]. (2018, enero 3). *Orcos Locos, El Último Inferni, Guerra de Varitas... el título es lo de menos. Confirmada la secuela de #BRIGHT* [Vídeo enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflixes/status/948591395115274242>

1 Teniendo en cuenta las reflexiones teóricas planteadas en el apartado anterior, consideramos que la mayoría de estas estrategias que clasifica Valdés podrían etiquetarse como “transcreaciones”, como sucede cuando se crea un texto nuevo, se añade información contextual para adaptarse al receptor (Gaballo, 2012, p. 110) o cuando se compensa información. Es por ello por lo que, durante el análisis, hemos utilizado indistintamente los dos términos, “traducción” y “transcreación”.

Lo primero que observamos es que no se trata de una traducción literal del texto en inglés. Es posible que, en estos casos, no se cuente con la figura de un traductor profesional, sino que se recurra a perfiles mixtos de profesionales especializados en estrategias comerciales (véase Burgoyne, 2013).

Además, se han adoptado distintas estrategias publicitarias. Aunque, igual que en el caso de EE. UU., se juega con la idea de que la película está todavía en fase de producción, no se alude a las pruebas de audición, sino a la elección del título. Una vez más, las distintas propuestas de título con las que se comienza el tuit no son más que un pretexto para hacer hincapié en los atractivos de la película: los orcos, la fantasía, la acción. También en el mensaje para España se incluye un vídeo — el mismo que en EE. UU., aunque subtítulo— y una carátula que repite casi en su totalidad lo escrito en el tuit.

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Con respecto al perfil de Twitter de Netflix para Hispanoamérica, no hemos podido localizar mensajes similares que se puedan calificar como una traducción o transcreación.

En definitiva, en la versión para España del mensaje de promoción de la secuela de *Bright*, se opta por lo que Valdés (2004, p. 193) establece como la estrategia traductológica de creación de un texto nuevo por motivos de carácter cultural, justificada por la dificultad de trasvasar elementos culturales al contexto meta. Efectivamente, hemos de tener en cuenta que la presencia de la industria cinematográfica en la vida española no tiene el mismo peso que en EE. UU. Quizá por ello el perfil español ha preferido centrar su mensaje en el título de la secuela, más que en las pruebas de audición, a las que el público español estaría menos habituado.

En el caso de la red social Instagram, observamos que se emplean diferentes estrategias de traducción. La cuenta estadounidense no sigue la misma técnica publicitaria que su homóloga en Twitter. No incluye ninguna publicación relacionada con la película en fechas similares, con la salvedad de

una publicación del 25 de enero —más de 20 días más tarde—, en la que se ofrece una imagen alterada del cartel de la película: se cambia la imagen de uno de los protagonistas fantásticos por la de Dwight K. Schrute, uno de los personajes más conocidos de la serie estadounidense *The Office* (NBC), y también se le cambia el título oficial a la película (*Bright*) por el nombre de pila del famoso personaje (*Dwight*), como se aprecia en el ejemplo 3.

(3) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, enero 25). *Bright. Except it's Dwight* [Fotografía] Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BeYkQutl\\_b1/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BeYkQutl_b1/)

Además, en el texto de la publicación “Bright. Except it's Dwight”, se hace referencia a ese cambio, quizá motivado por el juego de palabras, basado en la similitud fónica. La realización del montaje parece obedecer a un guiño humorístico relacionado con los numerosos memes que circulan en internet y en los que se usan imágenes de este excéntrico personaje y se hacen juegos de palabras con su nombre, como en este caso. El montaje se sirve de los memes y los conecta con la película, ya que —suponemos— juegan con la idea de que el dedo del personaje se puede relacionar con la varita mágica que funciona de arma en la película. De esta manera, se vincula la actualidad del mundo viral de internet con los contenidos de la plataforma audiovisual, lo que supone una garantía de conexión con la audiencia más activa en redes sociales.

No se puede hablar tampoco de traducción en su concepción tradicional (aunque sí de transcreación) en el caso de las cuentas españolas y latinas de Instagram. En la cuenta española, en una fecha similar a la de las publicaciones de Twitter, se hace propaganda de la nueva película, pero se sirven de una imagen distinta, extraída de una escena de la película, presumiblemente (ejemplo 4).

(4) Netflix España [@NetflixEs]. (2018, enero 5). *Han traído una varita mágica a este tiroteo. #BRIGHT* [Fotografía]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bdkfz-Nnd0d>



Se hace alusión directa a la varita (“Han traído una *varita mágica* a este tiroteo”) y se pone en relación con la imagen, al vincularla deícticamente (*este* tiroteo). Se muestran a la audiencia los tres elementos que se asumen como los más atractivos: reparto, acción y ciencia ficción (este último no aparece en la imagen; de ahí el apoyo textual). La única conexión con la publicación española es el empleo de la etiqueta BRIGHT, que también encontramos en la publicación para Latinoamérica (ejemplo 5).

(5) Netflix Latinoamérica [@netflixLAT]. (2018, diciembre 23). *Pasa el fin de semana junto a Will Smith y una horda de orcos. #Bright, ya disponible.* [Video] Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/BdBdFHDIELU/>

En este caso, encontramos otra posible transcreación. El perfil latino prefiere hacer referencia al actor y a los orcos, como elementos atractivos de la película, y mostrar un tráiler. Hay que tener en cuenta que la fecha es incluso anterior a las demás publicaciones.

#### Mensaje publicitario sobre *Black Mirror* S4: E5

En otras ocasiones, la estrategia de traducción de la que se sirve el perfil español de Netflix en Twitter consiste en la adición de información contextual (Valdés, 2004, p. 196), de manera que se garantice que el receptor español es capaz de interpretar adecuadamente el mensaje. Así sucede, desde nuestro punto de vista, en el caso de los mensajes que promocionan uno de los episodios de la serie *Black Mirror*.

En la cuenta norteamericana (ejemplo 6), el tuit, muy conciso, ofrece información sobre el número del episodio —el quinto de la cuarta temporada—, así como el título y el director.

(6) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, enero 10). *Black Mirror — S4:E5 “Metalhead” (dir. David Slade)* [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/951242784232456192>

Sin embargo, el texto se complementa con una foto de la conocida serie *Friends*, en la que se puede

ver a uno de sus protagonistas perseguido por un perro de pequeñas dimensiones, lo que sugiere una escena humorística, como es propio de la comedia de situación (*sitcom*) de los años noventa.

Esta vinculación de las dos series es posible, creemos, por el argumento del episodio de *Black Mirror* al que se hace referencia en el texto, en el que unos robots, con una morfología parecida a la de perros, persiguen al protagonista para darle caza. Se establece, así, un paralelismo entre ellas, una intertextualidad publicitaria que relaciona dos series de tonos opuestos —una serie ligera, de humor, como es *Friends*, y otra de carácter dramático, con una fuerte carga de crítica social, en el caso de *Black Mirror*—, con el objetivo de atraer la atención del receptor.

En el caso del perfil de Netflix en España, se recurre a la misma imagen; pero mientras que en el tuit en inglés se dejaba que fuera el receptor quien infiriera el mensaje y buscara el paralelismo entre los dos universos de ficción, en el tuit español se guía al público para que sea capaz de descodificarlo y relacione exitosamente imagen y texto (ejemplo 7).

(7) Netflix ES [@NetflixES]. (2018, enero 25). *Ese momento en que #Friends predijo Metalhead de #BlackMirror* [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflixes/status/956606714903760896>

No encontramos publicaciones similares en la cuenta latina de Netflix en Twitter, ni en los perfiles en español en Instagram, pero sí en el perfil de EE. UU., mostrado en el ejemplo 8.

(8) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, enero 10). *Must Love Dogs is now streaming (via @netflixisajoke).* [Fotografía]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bdv2BA3FuyS/>

El objetivo de esta publicación, del mismo día que el tuit norteamericano, es igualmente promocionar el lanzamiento del nuevo episodio de *Black Mirror*. Sin embargo, en esta ocasión se recurre al mensaje que ha publicado otro usuario de la red

(@netflixisajoke), que ha compartido una imagen del robot protagonista del episodio. De esta manera, se consigue un doble objetivo: publicitar la serie y mostrar a la audiencia el contacto que mantienen con seguidores y otros usuarios de la red, lo que refuerza la sensación de acercamiento, de conexión con la audiencia.

### Mensaje publicitario sobre *Jessica Jones* (marzo de 2018)

Con el propósito de dar a conocer la serie *Jessica Jones*, tanto los perfiles de Twitter de la plataforma en EE. UU. como en España (véanse ejemplos 9 y 10) se sirven de una estrategia similar, que consiste en reforzar la conexión del producto audiovisual con el universo de superhéroes de Marvel —la serie se basa en un cómic homónimo de esta editorial y productora—, por un lado, y con la causa feminista, por otro, ya que se utiliza como reclamo la participación de las mujeres en la producción artística de la serie, ya sea como ilustradoras o como directoras.

(9) Netflix us [@netflix]. (2018, marzo 5). gotta catch 'em all! (and by 'em, i mean all 13 — the right number this time! — of the amazing pulp-novel-style covers. That means one for each #JessicaJones episode, designed by female illustrators around the world). [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/970668225842184193>

(10) Netflix es [@NetflixES]. (2018, marzo 5). No es la única superviviente. #JessicaJonesReturns. Dirigido por Mairzee Almas, este es el episodio 3: “Almas supervivientes”, ilustrado por la española Elizabeth Torque. [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflixes/status/970662929585639425>

En el caso norteamericano (ejemplo 9), el tuit anima al receptor a coleccionar los distintos carteles que se han realizado para promocionar la serie —uno por cada episodio—, que imitan las portadas de cómic. Se pretende captar la atención del receptor y se recurre a elementos propios de la oralidad para ello, como en “gotta catch 'em all! (and by 'em, [...])”. Hemos de recordar al respecto que la intertextualidad se da a más niveles, ya que se trata

también de la expresión que se usa en la conocida franquicia de Pokémon para instar a los espectadores de la serie y usuarios de sus videojuegos a coleccionarlos. Además, se emplea como reclamo la autoría femenina de estos carteles publicitarios, tanto en EE. UU. como en el resto del mundo. El texto se acompaña de la etiqueta #JessicaJones y de una de las portadas.

El tuit publicado en el perfil de España (ejemplo 10) se sirve de las mismas estrategias publicitarias: por un lado, se establece idéntica conexión con el mundo del cómic y, por otro, se da relevancia a las mujeres que han participado en la serie. No obstante, se ha producido una adición de información contextual, ya que se informa al público de que se trata de la segunda temporada de la serie; el texto que comienza el tuit, “No es la única superviviente”, y la etiqueta #JessicaJonesReturns así lo indican. Además, se ofrece información más precisa sobre la participación de mujeres en la serie. Se proporciona el nombre de una de las directoras (Mairzee Almas, del episodio 3) y de una de las ilustradoras (la española Elisabeth Torque). Asimismo, se complementa el contenido del texto con la imagen del cartel dibujado por la española.

Esta estrategia de adición de información contextual que encontramos en el mensaje de España, que no solo afecta al texto, sino que también tiene repercusiones sobre la imagen, obedece a motivos culturales. Así, mientras que en el perfil de EE. UU. se informa de que las ilustradoras son internacionales, el tuit en español resalta la participación de la ilustradora de la misma nacionalidad en la serie. Previsiblemente suceda de igual manera con la directora que se menciona, con apellido de origen español.

Tampoco en esta ocasión el perfil norteamericano de Netflix en Instagram publica un contenido semejante al de su versión en Twitter. En fechas similares, a 7 de marzo, realiza una publicación en la que muestra a los protagonistas de la serie de la ficción y anuncia su regreso a las vidas de los espectadores (ejemplo 11). En la imagen se etiqueta a

dos de los actores y también el perfil oficial de la serie, @marveljessicajones.

(11) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, marzo 7). *One more sleep until these bad ass people are back in our lives.* [Fotografía]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BgCRHrDlCLa/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BgCRHrDlCLa/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

Dos días más tarde, el 9 de marzo, se vuelve a promocionar la serie mediante una imagen en la que se detallan todas las directoras de los episodios, con el texto “Direct #LikeAWoman#FemaleFilmmakerFriday” (ejemplo 12). Vendría a funcionar, casi, como versión resumida del contenido del tuit en EE. UU. Es la imagen la que ocupa el mensaje en esta red social y el texto se reduce al mínimo. Sirviéndose de etiquetas, se hace referencia a la dirección femenina de la serie y se conecta su contenido con el movimiento feminista mediante la etiqueta #LikeAWoman, que se intensifica especialmente el 8 de marzo, Día Internacional de la Mujer Trabajadora.

(12) Netflix US [@Netflix]. (2018, marzo 9). *Direct #LikeAWoman#FemaleFilmmakerFriday.* [Fotografía]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BgHNEXBFjxl/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BgHNEXBFjxl/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

La cuenta de España, sin embargo, sí que parece partir de la publicación promocional en Twitter, ya que se sirve de la misma imagen y el mismo texto (ejemplo 13). La única diferencia la encontramos en la etiqueta empleada, que sustituye #JessicaJonesreturns, más específica, por únicamente #JessicaJones.

(13) Netflix ES [@netflixes]. (2018, marzo 6). *No es la única superviviente. #JessicaJones. Dirigido por Mairzee Almas, este es el episodio 3: “Almas supervivientes”, ilustrado por la española Elizabeth Torque.* [Fotografía]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/Bf\\_h5qCn\\_uu/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bf_h5qCn_uu/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

Finalmente, el perfil para Latinoamérica, aunque realiza una publicación relacionada con el regreso de la serie, opta por anunciar su estreno y apelar al receptor (“¿La extrañabas?”), como se ve en el ejemplo 14. Se sirve, como en el caso de España, de la etiqueta #JessicaJones, aunque también se añade la de la productora #Marvel. No se hace referencia,

sin embargo, a la participación femenina en la serie, principal diferencia con las dos versiones tanto del perfil en EE. UU. como en España.

(14) Netflix Latinoamérica [@netflixlat]. (2018, marzo 9). *¿La extrañabas? #JessicaJones, temporada 2, ya disponible. #Marvel.* [Video]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BgFLrZ7ljbC/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BgFLrZ7ljbC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

### Mensaje publicitario sobre *Sense8* (marzo de 2018)

En esta ocasión, el objetivo del tuit del perfil estadounidense (ejemplo 15) es promocionar el comienzo de la que, en 2018, era la última temporada de la serie *Sense8*.

(15) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, abril 24). *The @sense8 finale arrives June 8! Tell your cluster.* [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/988824964219355136>

A tal fin se anuncia la fecha de estreno —el 8 de junio— y se apela, de forma directa, al receptor mediante un imperativo (“Tell your cluster”).

Llama la atención el empleo del término *cluster*, que, en el mundo ficticio de esta serie, se refiere a un grupo de *sensates*, es decir, personas con vínculos a nivel sensitivo y emocional. Con la utilización de este término, en clara alusión al receptor, se crea una relación entre la realidad y el mundo ficcional de la serie *Sense8*, lo cual influye en la identificación que la audiencia realiza con respecto a los productos audiovisuales que consume, algo fundamental a la hora de asegurar su éxito.

(16) Netflix ES [@NetflixES]. (2018, abril 24). *8 de junio. Avisa a tu cluster.* [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflixes/status/988829381157179392>

En la traducción al español para España (ejemplo 16), se observa que esta estrategia, consistente en establecer una conexión entre el espectador y el mundo de ficción, se conserva y se refuerza, ya que se mantiene el término original en inglés *cluster*. No obstante, desde la perspectiva traductológica, se intuyen algunas divergencias, aunque la

técnica de traducción a la que se haya recurrido sea la traducción literal.

La diferencia entre los dos mensajes radica en que el tuit del perfil español omite información, ya que no menciona el tema fundamental del mensaje: promocionar la serie *Sense8*. La cuenta americana suele dejar claro el objetivo de la campaña publicitaria, mediante la mención a cuentas de usuario creadas únicamente para publicitar el producto audiovisual. Por su parte, la estrategia de la cuenta española, suponemos que para no redireccionar a perfiles que no escriben en español, consiste en insertar etiquetas con el título de la serie o película. Sin embargo, esta vez se ha optado por no incluir ni menciones ni etiquetas, y es solo por medio de la inserción de una imagen como se garantiza la correcta identificación de la serie a la que se hace referencia.

(17) Netflix Latinoamérica [@NetflixLAT]. (2018, abril 24). *Juntos hasta el final: El Final de #Sense8 se lanzará globalmente el 8 de junio*. [Imagen enlazada] [Tuit]. Twitter. [https://twitter.com/NetflixLAT/status/988828312339386373?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw](https://twitter.com/NetflixLAT/status/988828312339386373?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

El perfil latinoamericano (ejemplo 17) publicó el tuit el mismo día y en él se reproducen las mismas palabras del cartel original, es decir, al igual que sucedía con el tuit de España, se trata de una traducción literal. En este caso, sí se ha elegido reforzar la relación entre texto e imagen, puesto que mediante una traducción del tuit inglés se anuncia el final de la serie, incrustando la etiqueta —no el perfil oficial—, que funciona como nombre propio.

Resulta interesante que se haga mención del lanzamiento mundial de la serie (“se lanzará *globalmente*”), algo que no sucede en la versión americana, lo que nos induce a pensar que se trata de una información importante para el público latino, que refleja posibles tensiones culturales relacionadas con un rechazo al imperialismo estadounidense.

La imagen es la misma en los tres tuits (véanse ejemplos 18 a 20), aunque mientras que, en el caso

americano y latino, se usa como un apoyo visual a la información que ofrece el texto, en el caso español, la imagen resulta fundamental para poder inferir el mensaje.

(18) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, abril 24). *Tellyourcluster*. [Fotografía] Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/Bh9jA0Elwum/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bh9jA0Elwum/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

(19) Netflix ES [@netflixes]. (2018, junio 4). *De camino al destino final: el último episodio de #Sense8 llega el 8 de junio*. [Fotografía]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BjmgcxeHM7N/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BjmgcxeHM7N/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

(20) Netflix Latinoamérica [@netflixlat]. (2018, abril 24). *Comunicate con tu cluster y déjale saber que el 8 de Junio está reservado #Sense8*. [Fotografía]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/BjmgcxeHM7N>

Este caso es el único del corpus en el que se observa la repetición, en todas las cuentas analizadas, de una misma estrategia a la hora de promocionar un producto. De hecho, las tres cuentas lanzaron sus respectivas publicaciones el mismo día. El perfil estadounidense (ejemplo 18) promociona la serie mediante la reducción del mensaje lingüístico que había empleado en Twitter, donde se podía leer: “The @sense8 finale arrives June 8! Tell your cluster”. En el caso de Instagram, el mensaje queda reducido a la última parte (“Tell your cluster”) y viene acompañado también por la misma imagen que se utilizó en Twitter, aunque adaptada al formato, más cuadrado, que se usa en esta plataforma. Mientras que los detalles promocionales del lanzamiento se aprecian solo en la imagen, el texto queda reservado para lo primordial: conectar con la audiencia.

Por su parte, el perfil de España (ejemplo 19) difiere ligeramente de la estrategia común, al no utilizar el término *cluster*. Aquí, los detalles del lanzamiento los ofrece el texto (“De camino al destino final: el último episodio de #Sense8 llega el 8 de junio”), donde, además, se refuerza la promoción al aludir, mediante una etiqueta, al título de la serie. La imagen se limita a mostrar a los personajes protagonistas en el mismo vehículo. La relación entre texto e imagen la encontramos en



el encabezado (“De camino al destino final”), donde se menciona el viaje en coche ilustrado en la foto. El resto del mensaje (“el último episodio de #Sense8 llega el 8 de junio”) supone una traducción literal del tuit en inglés, con la salvedad de que, como hemos señalado, se sustituye la mención de la cuenta oficial (en inglés), por una etiqueta con el título de la serie.

Por último, el perfil en Instagram para Latinoamérica (ejemplo 20) parte de la versión en inglés para Twitter —de hecho, la traduce—, en vez de replicar la publicación en Twitter de @NetflixLAT. Este perfil apela de manera más directa al receptor, pues no solo lo informa del estreno (“The @sense8 finale arrives June 8”), sino que también lo hace partícipe mediante el uso de un imperativo (“*déjale saber* que el 8 de Junio está reservado”), que alude a la complicidad de los *cluster* del mundo real, que reservan su tiempo para ver series juntos.

He aquí otro ejemplo en el que se trata, con fines publicitarios, de conectar con la audiencia y sus vivencias. Nótese, además, el uso de mayúscula en el mes de “Junio”, por influencia del inglés.

#### Mensaje publicitario sobre *A todos los chicos de los que me enamoré* (junio de 2018)

Algo habitual en la plataforma Netflix es la promoción de películas de producción propia, como sucede con *A todos los chicos de los que me enamoré* (2018). Para tal fin, Netflix publica un tuit (ejemplo 21), en el que se ofrecen datos técnicos relacionados con la película, como son el reparto, el guion y la dirección, el género (*romantic comedy*) o la fecha de estreno. La imagen que acompaña al texto en este caso es el tráiler promocional del filme.

(21) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, junio 21). *Get ready for the next truly great romantic comedy. “To All The Boys I’ve Loved Before.” Starring Lana Condor. Written by Sofia Alvarez. Directed by Susan Johnson. August 17.* [Video enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/1009860289251049472>

El perfil de España (ejemplo 22), aunque ha mantenido las fechas de publicación americanas, ha seguido un camino distinto para la promoción de la película. Como se ha mencionado, en la cuenta española no es frecuente proporcionar información de carácter técnico para las producciones extranjeras (se suele dar el título de la película y su fecha de estreno), por lo que no es de extrañar que, en esta ocasión, se haya optado por la estrategia de traducción conocida como “cambio de enfoque”.

(22) Netflix ES [@NetflixES]. (2018, junio 28). *Tener una carta de amor para cada uno de tus crush y que alguien “accidentalmente” las envíe es muy #AscoDeVida. A todos los chicos de los que me enamoré llega el 17 de agosto.* [Video enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/NetflixES/status/101229884755588096>

De acuerdo con Valdés (2004), el objetivo de esta estrategia es mostrar “cómo es necesario cambiar el enfoque de algunos anuncios de acuerdo con la identidad del receptor, su conocimiento sobre el producto o la relevancia de la información” (p. 231). Así, el cambio de enfoque en la traducción al español consiste en adelantar parte del argumento de la comedia y en limitar el grupo potencial de espectadores, cuya franja etaria se reduce, probablemente, a la de los adolescentes y jóvenes. Como consecuencia, en el texto español se emplea el anglicismo *crush*, término que, como señala la Fundéu (FundéuRAE, 2018), está muy extendido entre la generación milenial, o la popular etiqueta #AscoDeVida, que los usuarios de Twitter utilizan con el fin de expresar, a modo de desahogo y en clave humorística, situaciones frustrantes de su vida cotidiana.

Como en otras ocasiones, la actividad en Instagram de los respectivos perfiles promociona la película (trans)creando un nuevo texto. Desde el punto de vista intralingüístico, el texto del mensaje para EE. UU. (ejemplo 23) difiere del de Twitter, ya que en este no se encuentra referencia alguna al reparto, la dirección o la fecha de estreno, y en él se incluye una mención a la cuenta oficial de la película en la plataforma.

(23) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, junio 21). *Wow, so glad no one leaked my love letters to @colesprouse. #ToAllTheBoys @toalltheboysnetflix.* [Video]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BkS132mFyJu/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BkS132mFyJu/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

Por otra parte, el vídeo promocional presenta una duración de un minuto.

### Mensaje publicitario sobre *Ibiza* (mayo de 2018)

Desde un punto de vista traductológico, este último ejemplo también hace uso de la estrategia del cambio de enfoque adaptado al receptor meta. No obstante, en el caso de esta película, observamos una segunda estrategia, que supone un cambio de imagen por adaptación a estereotipos (Valdés, 2004, p. 346).

El tuit estadounidense (ejemplo 24), a raíz de la promoción de la película *Ibiza* (2018), se vale del tópico, empleando un tono claramente humorístico, de que España —concretamente Barcelona y en especial Ibiza— es, a ojos de los turistas que la visitan, sinónimo de fiesta y desenfreno.

(24) Netflix US [@netflix]. (2018, mayo 1). *“I had a quiet, totally calm time in Ibiza” said no one ever.* [Video enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/netflix/status/991316318086451200>

El texto en inglés se acompaña de un vídeo de 2’25”, en el que se puede descubrir parte del argumento de la película y en el que se presenta a la protagonista, una joven estadounidense que viaja a España por motivos laborales junto con dos amigos y cuyo objetivo es experimentar la cultura de la fiesta nocturna: discotecas, alcohol, sexo, DJ, etc.

La traducción del tuit español (ejemplo 25), por el contrario, realiza un cambio de enfoque. En lugar de perpetuar la idea de que España (Ibiza) equivale a fiesta, opta por una adaptación al receptor español y a su realidad, adelantándose, de este modo, a un posible rechazo por parte de los espectadores españoles que pudieran sentirse no identificados

e, incluso, ofendidos ante los tópicos sobre los que se construye la película. Por consiguiente, el texto español hace hincapié en el género de la película, una comedia romántica, género en el que suelen predominar los “topicazos” (nótese el empleo del sufijo de manera peyorativa).

(25) Netflix ES [@netflixES]. (2018, mayo 25). *¿Qué sería de las comedias románticas sin su buena dosis de topicazos? La película #Ibiza ya disponible.* [Video enlazado] [Tuit]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/NetflixES/status/999954160069070848>

Con esta táctica, la cuenta de Netflix pretende ponerse del lado de la audiencia española, su audiencia, y quiere demostrar que también pueden enjuiciar críticamente la película. Argumentan que a pesar de que todas las comedias románticas están repletas de tópicos, gracias a su capacidad para entretener, las consumimos de igual manera.

Por último, el texto del tuit español presenta amplificaciones que no se dan en el texto original, como sucede al añadir el título de la película, mediante la etiqueta “#Ibiza”, o hablar de su disponibilidad en la plataforma.

Sin embargo, lo más llamativo tiene que ver, en este caso, con la imagen, es decir, con los vídeos que se incluyen como apoyo visual de los dos tuits. En la cuenta estadounidense hay, como ya mencionamos, un tráiler que adelanta el argumento de la comedia; en la española, el vídeo —más breve (42”)— recalca los tópicos que aparecen en la película y que, normalmente, la comunidad internacional alberga sobre España.

Cabe señalar que los tópicos no coinciden, necesariamente, con los del vídeo de la plataforma en EE. UU. Además, el vídeo español se inicia con una carátula en la que se puede leer: “¿Cuántos tópicos sobre España puedes encontrar en esta peli?”. De este modo, se invita al espectador a que lleve a cabo al visionado de la película con una mirada crítica y en clave de humor, y a que, consecuentemente, no la rechace por considerarla ofensiva. Así, los tópicos seleccionados están más en consonancia con la idea que los

mismos receptores tienen de su país o de Ibiza, como la fiesta, alegría, sol y la figura del galán español.

Al respecto, resulta curioso que el vídeo español se detenga en mostrar hasta tres actores —todos ellos de los que habitualmente clasifican como “galanes”— españoles que aparecen en el filme y que no se incluyeron en el tráiler americano. Esto también puede deberse, como hemos destacado en otras ocasiones, a que se trata de una información importante para la cultura receptora, dado que se trata de actores conocidos en el panorama cinéfilo de España.

Como sucedía en el ejemplo anterior, tampoco esta vez las publicaciones en Instagram se corresponden con las de Twitter y se han (trans) creado desde cero. En el caso estadounidense, de transcreación intralingüística (ejemplo 26), la promoción se realiza mediante cuatro imágenes que reproducen una escena humorística de la película donde se muestra a las protagonistas. Dichas imágenes se acompañan de un texto breve (“Thursdays. #Ibiza”). La referencia a la película viene dada a través del *hashtag*.

(26) Netflix us [@netflix]. (2018, mayo 31). *Thursdays. #Ibiza.* [Fotografías]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/BjdJRfun9le/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BjdJRfun9le/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

En las cuentas en español no se ha encontrado ninguna alusión a la película.

## Discusión y conclusiones

Una vez analizados los mensajes publicados por la plataforma Netflix en Twitter e Instagram que conforman nuestro corpus, y teniendo en consideración que se trata de una muestra reducida que conviene ampliar en estudios futuros, con objeto de poder consolidar las conclusiones preliminares a las que llegamos, observamos que se repiten algunos patrones con respecto a las estrategias de traducción y transcreaciones empleadas por los perfiles de la empresa estadounidense en español.

Así, como se puso de manifiesto en García-Aguilar y García-Jiménez (2020), en el caso de Twitter, el perfil de Netflix España tiende a *traducir* los mensajes que publica la misma plataforma en EE. UU., persiguiendo los mismos fines de promoción y publicidad. Para ello, es frecuente que se adapte el mensaje a la cultura y receptor meta, como sucede en casi la totalidad de las ocasiones analizadas. A tal fin, se usan simultáneamente distintas estrategias de traducción o transcreaciones en el mismo tuit, como es propio de la naturaleza multimodal del lenguaje ciberpublicitario.

Las estrategias adoptadas por el perfil de Netflix en Hispanoamérica, sin embargo, parecen no recurrir con más frecuencia a la traducción tradicional, sino que muestran una mayor tendencia hacia la transcreación. Estas transcreaciones indican un mayor acercamiento al polo o mercado meta —y, por tanto, una menor globalización— por parte de la cuenta hispanoamericana, la cual se centra más en interactuar con sus usuarios. Cabe destacar que dicha interacción también es una manera de promocionar y dar a conocer los productos audiovisuales que, en este caso, ofrece la plataforma en Latinoamérica y que puede conectarse con la resistencia al imperialismo cultural procedente de EE. UU.

Por otra parte, hemos observado diferencias en cuanto al empleo de la red social Instagram con fines promocionales, con respecto a Twitter. Esto se debe a las características comunicativas que definen cada red social: mientras que en Twitter predomina el código verbal —la información se transmite mediante mensajes cortos—, la imagen en Instagram presenta un peso mayor, esto es, la información se transmite, en gran medida, a través de imágenes. Si bien es cierto que en Twitter también se utilizan imágenes (o, en general, material audiovisual) como apoyo del mensaje verbal, y aunque en Instagram el texto igual desempeña un papel importante, consideramos que el peso que se le otorga a cada uno de los códigos —verbal y no verbal— en cada red social es diferente.

Esta diferencia en la manera de comunicar hace que, en nuestro corpus, Twitter se utilice preferentemente para presentar los nuevos productos, e Instagram se emplee como medio para afianzarlos en la audiencia. Así, solo en una ocasión, el perfil de Instagram se sirve de la misma imagen promocional que en Twitter: el cartel promocional oficial del producto publicitado.

Por lo general, se opta por imágenes procedentes de algún momento concreto de la serie o película publicitada, dando por hecho que sus receptores no solo conocen el producto, sino también que están familiarizados con él. Por consiguiente, mientras que Twitter introduce el producto al espectador potencial, Instagram mantiene al espectador captado ligado con el producto. Esto explica, a su vez, que no haya apenas —salvo en el caso del estreno mundial de una película— traducciones o transcreaciones al español de España o de Latinoamérica de las publicaciones estadounidenses de Instagram, ya que en las cuentas española y latinoamericanas, o bien abundan las referencias a los productos nacionales o bien se hace especial hincapié en las perspectivas locales que se tienen de un producto audiovisual internacional, es decir, fotogramas, personajes o momentos concretos de la trama, por ejemplo.

En todo caso, se trata de un corpus muy limitado, en cuanto al número de mensajes analizados y al período temporal elegido. En sucesivos trabajos resultaría interesante ampliar y actualizar el corpus de estudio, con objeto de comprobar posibles variaciones en las estrategias de traducción empleadas en las distintas redes sociales.

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# THE LANGUAGE OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES: FREQUENT WORDS, NEOLOGISMS, ACRONYMS, AND METAPHORS

EL LENGUAJE DE LAS CRIPTOMONEDAS: PALABRAS FRECUENTES, NEOLOGISMOS,  
ACRÓNIMOS Y METÁFORAS

LE LANGAGE DES CRIPTOMONNAIES : MOTS FRÉQUENTS, NÉOLOGISMES, ACRONYMES  
ET MÉTAPHORES

A LÍNGUA DAS CRIPTOMONEDAS: PALAVRAS FREQUENTES, NEOLOGISMOS, ACRÔNIMOS  
E METÁFORAS

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## ABSTRACT

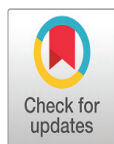
Cryptocurrencies have been the latest technological revolution in the world of finances. Although this revolution has not been completed yet, and as a payment method is still limited, their popularity has vastly increased since 2020 due to speculation about their value. As in any other field, any revolution in economics, technology, education, or society implies another parallel language revolution. This is how the introduction of cryptocurrencies has led to the emergence of some new forms of language. This quantitative case study aims to analyze the characteristics of that crypto language and identify some of the most usual words, acronyms, metaphors, and other popular expressions within this field. To achieve this purpose, a glossary published by the company Bit2Me was used along with the Google search bar, which provided the number of appearances on the net. Results showed that some neologisms had been created, acronyms prevailed over some words and expressions, and the use of animal metaphors was a usual practice. These results contribute to the field of electronic finances by showing that the community of cryptocurrency users have created their own linguistic rules to communicate among them with the use of specific words as detailed in this paper.

**Keywords:** cryptocurrency; crypto language; financial language; language analysis; Bit2Me.

## RESUMEN

Las criptomonedas han sido la última revolución tecnológica en el mundo de las finanzas. Aunque esta revolución aún no se ha completado, y su uso para pagar cosas aún es muy limitado, su popularidad ha aumentado enormemente desde 2020 debido a la especulación sobre su valor. Como en cualquier otro campo, cualquier revolución económica, tecnológica, educativa o social implica otra revolución lingüística paralela. La comunicación y el lenguaje han evolucionado

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con la invención de nuevas cosas e ideas. Es así como la introducción de las criptomonedas ha conllevado la creación de algunas nuevas formas de lenguaje. El objetivo de este estudio de caso cuantitativo es analizar las características de ese lenguaje criptográfico e identificar algunas de las palabras, siglas, metáforas y otras expresiones populares más habituales dentro de este campo. Para cumplir con este propósito, en esta investigación se utilizaron las palabras incluidas en un glosario creado por Bit2Me. Su uso se calculó después de buscar esas palabras con la barra de búsqueda de Google e identificar el número de apariciones en la red. Los resultados mostraron que se habían creado algunos neologismos, las siglas prevalecían sobre las palabras que representaban su significado y el uso de metáforas de animales era una práctica habitual. Estos resultados son una contribución en el campo de las finanzas electrónicas ya que demuestra que la comunidad de usuarios de criptomonedas ha creado sus propias reglas lingüísticas para comunicarse entre ellas usando términos específicos, como se detalla en este artículo.

**Palabras clave:** criptomoneda; criptolenguaje; lenguaje financiero; análisis del lenguaje; Bit2Me.

### RÉSUMÉ

Les crypto-monnaies ont été la dernière révolution technologique dans le monde de la finance. Bien que cette révolution ne soit pas encore achevée et que son utilisation pour payer des choses soit encore très limitée, sa popularité a énormément augmenté depuis 2020 en raison des spéculations sur sa valeur. Comme dans tout autre domaine, toute révolution économique, technologique, éducative ou sociale implique une autre révolution linguistique parallèle. La communication et le langage ont évolué avec l'invention de nouvelles choses et idées. Ainsi, l'introduction des crypto-monnaies a également entraîné la création de nouvelles formes de langage. L'objectif de cette recherche qualitative est d'analyser les caractéristiques de ce langage cryptographique et d'identifier certains des mots, acronymes, métaphores et autres expressions populaires les plus courants dans ce domaine. Pour remplir cet objectif, dans cette enquête, les mots inclus dans un glossaire créé par Bit2Me ont été utilisés. Son utilisation a été calculée après avoir recherché ces mots avec la barre de recherche Google et identifié le nombre d'occurrences sur le net. Les résultats ont montré que certains néologismes avaient été créés, les acronymes l'emportaient sur les mots qui représentaient leur sens et l'utilisation de métaphores animales était une pratique courante. Ces résultats sont une contribution dans le domaine de la finance électronique qui montrent que la communauté des utilisateurs de crypto-monnaie ont créé leurs propres règles linguistiques pour se communiquer entre eux utilisant termes spécifiques, comme est détaillé à cet article.

**Mots-clés :** crypto-monnaie ; crypto-langage ; langage financier ; analyse du langage ; Bit2Me.

### RESUMO

As moedas criptográficas têm sido a última revolução tecnológica no mundo das finanças. Embora esta revolução ainda não esteja completa e seu uso para pagar as coisas ainda seja muito limitado, sua popularidade aumentou enormemente desde 2020 devido à especulação sobre seu valor. Como em qualquer outro campo, qualquer revolução econômica, tecnológica, educacional ou social implica uma revolução linguística paralela. A comunicação e a linguagem evoluíram com a invenção de coisas e idéias novas. É assim como a introdução

de moedas criptográficas também levou à criação de algumas novas formas de linguagem. O objetivo deste estudo de caso é analisar as características dessa linguagem criptográfica e identificar algumas das palavras, acrônimos, metáforas e outras expressões populares mais comuns dentro deste campo. A fim de cumprir este propósito, as palavras incluídas em um glossário criado pela Bit2Me foram utilizadas nesta pesquisa. Seu uso foi calculado após a busca por essas palavras com a barra de busca do Google e a identificação do número de ocorrências na web. Os resultados mostraram que alguns neologismos tinham sido criados, os acrônimos prevaleceram sobre as palavras que representam seu significado, e o uso de metáforas animais era prática comum. Estes resultados são uma contribuição para o campo das finanças eletrônicas, demonstrando que a comunidade de usuários de moedas criptográficas criou suas próprias regras linguísticas para se comunicarem uns com os outros usando termos específicos, conforme detalhado neste artigo.

**Palavras chave:** moedas criptográficas; cripto-linguagem; linguagem financeiro; análise de linguagem; Bit2Me.



## Introduction

Andrew Jackson, president of the USA from 1829 to 1837, once said “money is power” (cited in Somit, 1948). The same quote was later used by other politicians, philosophers, or academics to show the connection between wealth and hegemony (Furnham, 1984; Klebanow, 1991; Worster, 1993). In this sense, money is used as a medium of exchange for assets, properties, and resources (Dyer, 1989; Lipton, 2019; Wallace, 2010). As a result, owning “something” implies having certain strengths or advantages for the owner’s benefit.

Historically, there is no solid evidence about when exactly humanity began to use money. For a long time, bartering was how trade was made. People exchanged goods and services for other goods or services; however, stipulating an equal value for each part of the exchange was difficult. For example, acquiring a house was probably unfeasible if the buyer wanted to pay with eggs or milk. Similarly, if two products could not be exchanged simultaneously because they were seasonal or perishable, this situation required trust among the two parties. However, history has shown several episodes in which some individuals were not good enough at being trustworthy. As a result, in an attempt at avoiding fraud, a new system based on giving value to precious metals such as gold or silver to be exchanged with other goods or services was invented. The buyer would pay with precious metals for merchandise to a seller, and then they could later recover the precious metals by selling other goods or services.

This system gave rise approximately in 600 B. C. to present-day coins. Based on the definition provided by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a coin is a piece of metal issued by a governmental authority as money. Later, these coins were transformed into paper notes. The problem of this financial system was the storage of wealth and the risk of robbery. As a measure to avoid this problem, the first banks appeared to store coins and notes. These coins and notes represented gold, and central banks were responsible for

storing the amount of gold corresponding to the coins and notes in transit. In addition, other payment methods, such as cheques and credit cards, were also invented.

However, this financial system has evolved over time, and the transit money is no longer supported by any storage of the equivalent gold or silver. This new functioning is based on pure accountability instead; numbers enter or leave from people’s bank accounts, but no real value supports them except for the promise of central banks that their money has value.

The banking industry has been severely criticized for different reasons over the course of history, and the fact that money is the value given by the authorities does not seem to be a reliable system for a part of the population. As it happened with the barter system, individuals must trust the promise of their authorities again. Due to this criticism, alternatives to banking have been created to substitute the traditional banking industry and decentralize the financial system. However, none of them seem to have been able to succeed yet.

One of the latest alternatives created to change the financial system is the introduction of cryptocurrencies. A cryptocurrency can be defined as a digital asset the aim of which is to be used as a medium of exchange. An important feature of cryptocurrencies is that their control is decentralized instead of being distributed among traditional banking systems. Decentralized control uses ledger technology, usually blockchains. This system works as a database with the information from any financial transactions made with a cryptocurrency. The technology avoids the participation of third parties in the transactions and eludes unnecessary fees since it is based on a peer-to-peer system with one-to-one transactions on a secure network between the sender and receiver. Cryptocurrencies also claim to be secure as there is a transaction record available for everyone, and it uses a reliable encryption technique to protect them from hackers.

In addition to these characteristics of the cryptocurrencies, their recent popularity is also related to their use as an investment or speculation fund with high volatility in their price. Investors in cryptocurrency who bought them in the first half of 2020 could have obtained a benefit higher than 1000% in a single year. It has also been popularly compared with gold. Consequently, some investors have recently become rich with their speculations, be the expert or inexpert; and they still expect to increase their benefits in the following years. The truth is that the number of investors has also increased, and some of them communicate with other investors via social networks or other online services.

As a result of the rise of cryptocurrencies, together with the widespread of its popularity, a new language community has been created. Like any community, they have specific language forms and rules (Bhatia, 1997, 2004; VanPatten, 2011). Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze some of the characteristics of the language related to cryptocurrencies. In this sense, this paper focuses on the analysis of some of the most usual words, the relevance of acronyms over their meaning, metaphors, and other typical picturesque expressions within this field. Our hypothesis in this paper is that new forms of language have been created which also combine these new forms with the usual financial language related to investment and trade.

### Theoretical Framework

This section introduces some relevant bibliography to help the reader understand how the language of cryptocurrencies has previously been described. It starts with some principles of word formation, and it moves towards the language of finances, which is the origin of the new form of language described in this paper.

#### Word Formation and Metaphors in the Language of Cryptocurrencies

The creation of new words per se is a social communication need. People constantly generate and

coin new words as society evolves and the world changes. Every new situation requires that new forms of language be created to represent the new reality. Janssen (2005) stated that languages are dynamic rather than static; they continuously evolve. New words are also known as neologisms, and they are coined to explain or describe things or ideas which cannot be represented accurately with the current existing words.

According to Crystal (2001), neologisms are defined as the foundation of new lexical items acceptable within a community at a specific time. This idea is also supported by Trask (1999), who added that new words are created from new materials, and by Ten Hacken and Thomas (2013), who suggested that new words are based on some existing rules. In this sense, some forms of neologism can be loan words, acronyms, or abbreviations (Khan, 2013); or they can be created from or after other existing words (Plag, 2003). However, it shall be acknowledged that some of these new words do not need to be accepted by linguistics authorities or be considered formal language (Peprnik & Univerzita Palackého, 2006).

There are different strategies to create new words. Aronoff (1976) based his model of creating new words on three main blocks: suffixation, prefixation, and compounding. Harley (2006) explained the word-formation processes, including derivation compounding, blending, acronym, borrowing, and neologisms. Algeo (1977) divided word-formation into lexical blends, which included three groups: phonemic overlap, clipping, and the combination of both. More recently, Ratih and Gusdian (2018) suggested a taxonomy that included nine categories: affixation, folk etymology, compounding, abbreviation, acronyms, borrowing, blending, clipping, and back-formation. They also suggested that the double word-formation process was possible, as in the following cases: folk etymology and compounding, compounding, and affixation, blending and affixation, or clipping and blending.

In addition to these strategies, communicating with metaphors is also possible. In semantics, metaphors are defined as an expression to understand one concept by referring to another concept, in which there is a similarity or specific correlation between the two (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Similarly, Gibbs (1994) explained that a metaphor compares two terms that are different but share some characteristics. Related to our research, the study of Silaški (2011) shows some animal metaphors in Business English. Some examples are sharks referring to greedy people, bull and bears alluding to markets when they are moving upwards and downwards, respectively, or cow and goose to describe some products which produce a lot of sales revenue.

### Some Characteristics of the Language of Finances

The language of finances is also involved in this process of change and evolution. New ideas, products, or technology continuously alter it, and the way it evolves follows the same linguistic parameters as other fields. Therefore, financial language should have some characteristics which could have been altered with the introduction and rising popularity of cryptocurrencies. On the one hand, few academic texts talk about or describe the language of cryptocurrencies. Some examples are the master's dissertation of Ciganović (2019), which focuses on translating some relevant terms from English into Croatian, or the work of Nădrag (2020), who explains how to teach Cryptocurrency and Bitcoin English vocabulary in the field of Economics. In parallel to these academic works, some glossaries have already been created in non-academic contexts; and some examples are the ones provided by some crypto exchange companies such as Bit2Me, Coinmarketcap, or Binance, among others.

However, it must be acknowledged that the language of cryptocurrencies is part of the language of finances; and a wide range of similarities should

be considered. Some of these characteristics have been enlisted by previous authors. The work of Mateo-Martinez (2010) describes some of the general characteristics of the language of finances. This author explains that "Financial language should be understood in an ample sense as the variety of Business language that describes the use of money in all its possible forms" such as currency, securities, loans, insurance, or credits, among others (Mateo-Martinez, 2010, p. 31). Therefore, financial language and the language of economics are different. He suggests that financial language uses acronyms and abbreviations often, metaphors and expressions referring to animals, Anglo-Saxon words to avoid confusion with false friends, and plays on words. Besides, it includes popular and colloquial language, and the communication and expressivity tend to be clear and accessible to a broad public. In contrast, the language of economics is highly academic, includes Latinisms, and relies on the use of acronyms and abbreviations, and metaphors. Other authors have also suggested that the language of finances contains metaphors (Cheng & Ho, 2017; Sánchez-Pérez & Cortés-de-los-Ríos, 2015), acronyms and abbreviations (Laursen & Moustén, 2015; Rao, 2008), anglicisms (Laursen & Moustén, 2015; Gaudio, 2012), and the language is generally clear (Krimpas, 2017).

### Method

The popularity of cryptocurrencies has quickly increased since the creation of Bitcoin in 2009 until the present. However, coinciding with the COVID-19 crisis, the fever of cryptocurrencies exploded in 2020, and several new investors joined the market. In an attempt at showing their popularity, some popular cryptocurrencies were searched in the Google toolbar, and these results were compared with other popular multinational non-financial brands.

This research aimed to describe some characteristics of the language of cryptocurrencies, or

crypto language. Based on previous research, an experiment with the search tool of Google was completed. To this purpose, this experiment analyzes the most usual words related to cryptocurrencies, the relevance of acronyms over their meaning, metaphors, and other picturesque expressions within this field. To determine our corpus, a glossary published by the company Bit2Me was used. This glossary included what this company seems to consider the most relevant financial and trading words related to the world of cryptocurrencies. In total, our corpus was formed by 255 words. Initially, the glossary included 385 words, we decided to exclude the words that referred to the name of cryptocurrencies, companies, and relevant people related to this field.

These words were searched in Google with the word *crypto* to distinguish it from other uses. The formula introduced in the search bar was “*crypto\**” + “*word\**”. The asterisk character was placed next to the word to include words derived from the original root, for example, singular and plural. The quotation marks are used to determine that both words must appear in the search in the same text. All the words were searched in Google between the 14 and 15 of May 2021.

Our analysis focused on different features of cryptocurrencies. We first analyzed the most frequent words from the dossier published by the company Bit2Me. In addition, special attention was paid to the use of acronyms, the dossier frequently included both acronyms and the words represented, but in some cases, it was necessary to find the words represented with external resources. In the same way, this glossary included three animals as metaphors; therefore, the names of another twenty-three animals were also included in the list to determine their relevance within this type of language (Silaški, 2011).

**Results**

The results have been divided into three sections. The first section analyzes the frequency of the words introduced in the Bit2Me glossary. The second section focuses on the use of acronyms. And the

third section studies the use of animal metaphors in the industry of cryptocurrencies.

**Popular Crypto-Words**

As shown in Table 1, the number of occurrences of Bitcoin appeared in Google was superior to the brands Adidas or Nintendo, a little inferior to Microsoft, but still far from the giants Google and Amazon. The other cryptocurrencies were not as popular as Bitcoin in our Google search, being Ethereum its main competitor. These results could represent the rise of their popularity since their creation during the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; the first one was Bitcoin in 2009.

**Table 1** Comparison Between Some Popular Cryptocurrencies and Other Non-Financial Brands

Currency	Tokens	Other Brands	Tokens
Bitcoin	1,070,000,000	Google	10,080,000,000
Ethereum	346,000,000	Amazon	5,000,000,000
Dogecoin	170,000,000	Microsoft	1,440,000,000
Binance	118,000,000	Adidas	868,000,000
Cardano	56,500,000	Nintendo	599,000,000

Note: Search term was *NAME*

On the most frequent words, our research found which words from the glossary were the ones that appeared more often in Google. These results are shown in Table 2, and as it can be observed, general financial words can be found and other neologisms. For example, the most usual word that accompanies the word *crypto* is *the exchange*. Other usual general financial words on the top of the list are *trading, asset, fee, input, spread, or inflation*. Other words are more technical, like *halving* and some of them are metaphors of animals like *bull* or *bear*. These words have previously been used in the fields of finances and economics, and they do not represent a novelty within this field; however, the fact that some of them appear on the



Table 2 100 Most Frequent Words in Bit2Me’s Dossier

#	Word	Tokens	#	Word	Tokens
1	Exchange	281,000,000	51	CheckSequenceVerify (CSV)	9,040,000
2	Crypto	242,000,000	52	Timestamp	8,930,000
3	Trading	150,000,000	53	Private key	8,810,000
4	Blockchain	148,000,000	54	Stablecoin	7,920,000
5	Asset	135,000,000	55	Hybrid crypto exchange (HEX)	7,910,000
6	Cryptocurrency	132,000,000	56	Bull market	7,820,000
7	Token	87,900,000	57	Flipping	7,560,000
8	Portfolio	85,200,000	58	Curve (CRV)	7,520,000
9	Block	65,900,000	59	DD (due diligence)	7,510,000
10	Wallet	62,800,000	60	MetaMask	7,330,000
11	Mining	59,600,000	61	Smart contract	7,210,000
12	Fee	58,900,000	62	Mainnet	6,870,000
13	Input	47,500,000	63	Testnet	6,010,000
14	Spread	44,300,000	64	Proof of stake (PoS)	5,940,000
15	Inflation	44,100,000	65	Proof of work (PoW)	5,560,000
16	Succinct atomic swap (SWAP)	41,800,000	66	PoW (proof of work)	5,520,000
17	DER (Signature)	38,000,000	67	HashGraph	5,500,000
18	Bull	38,200,000	68	Fork	5,490,000
19	Bear	24,200,000	69	Mempool	5,360,000
20	P2P (peer to peer)	22,300,000	70	Liquidity	5,190,000
21	Output	21,000,000	71	Discrete log contracts (DLC)	4,680,000
22	Dump	20,800,000	72	RenBTC	4,430,000
23	Node	19,300,000	73	Arbitrage	4,390,000
24	Satoshi	19,300,000	74	Mixer	4,290,000
25	Cryptography	17,200,000	75	Deflation	4,140,000
26	Fiat (fiduciary money)	16,900,000	76	Proof of authority (PoA)	4,040,000
27	Decentralized exchange (DEX)	16,600,000	77	Airdrop	3,940,000
28	CPU	16,400,000	78	Halving	3,660,000
29	Skynet (Sia)	15,700,000	79	Maker (MKR)	3,640,000
30	Hash	15,400,000	80	Evangelist	3,620,000
31	Compound (COMP)	15,200,000	81	Centralized exchange (CEX)	3,450,000
32	To the moon	14,500,000	82	Proof of elapsed time (PoET)	3,450,000
33	ChainLink	14,100,000	83	Bear market	3,430,000
34	Emission	14,100,000	84	Public key	3,400,000
35	Whitepaper	14,000,000	85	Tokenization	3,350,000
36	Altcoin	13,900,000	86	PoS (proof of stake)	3,310,000
37	OTC (over-the-counter)	12,600,000	87	Cloud mining	3,270,000
38	Nonce	12,500,000	88	Margin Trading	3,180,000
39	Staking	12,500,000	89	Unit of account	2,830,000
40	Algorithm	12,400,000	90	Utility token	2,730,000

Table 2 100 Most Frequent Words in Bit2Me’s Dossier (Cont.)

#	Word	Tokens	#	Word	Tokens
41	Pump	12,400,000	91	AML (anti-money laundering)	2,620,000
42	Escrow	12,300,000	92	Solidity	2,570,000
43	Script	11,900,000	93	P2PKH (pay to public key hash)	2,540,000
44	Balancer (BAL)	11,100,000	94	Yield farming	2,420,000
45	Graphic processor unit (GPU)	10,900,000	95	Blockchain explorer	2,310,000
46	Whale	10,600,000	96	Taker	2,280,000
47	Oracle	10,300,000	97	Block height	2,260,000
48	ATH (all-time high)	10,100,000	98	Faucet	2,130,000
49	Miner	9,510,000	99	DeFi (decentralized finance)	2,110,000
50	Rig	9,500,000	100	Checksum	2,100,000

Search: “crypto\*” + “word\*”

top of the list suggests how the market of cryptocurrencies operates.

For example, the most common action seems to be *to exchange* from fiduciary money to crypto, or vice versa. The words *trading* and *asset*, ranked 3 and 5, respectively, also suggest that cryptocurrencies should be understood as a speculative business in which several users participate. The words *inflation* and *deflation* are ranked in positions 20 and 111, which is also a sign to describe the market’s volatility. The word *fee* is also very frequent, and it reveals that exchanging money to cryptocurrencies is part of the business that the users must pay, usually around 2 % (see Binance and Coinmarket). The word *halving* is another word that explains how the market works, in this case, Bitcoin. In this case, Bitcoin counts with 21 million tokens; these are gradually released to the market, and this amount is always half of the previous year until the total amount is released.

Other common words in the field of cryptocurrencies are *token*, *portfolio*, or *wallet*. These words already exist in other daily operations, but they need to be understood within this field. In this sense, a *token* is a digital representation of the value of an asset; and a *portfolio* is a set of financial tools that an investor has and uses to increase their financial assets, whereas a *wallet* is a software program that allows the users to store and transact

cryptocurrencies without the permission or mediation of anyone else.

In addition to these words, other ones are exclusively related to the world of cryptos, such as *crypto*, *blockchain*, *cryptocurrency*, *mining*, *node*, or *altcoin*. To start with, *crypto* refers to *cryptocurrency*, but it is also a prefix that has been commonly used to create new words such as *cryptography*, *cryptojacking*, *cryptonight*, *cryptowars*, or *cryptolanguage*, among others. The meaning of *crypto* is hidden, and as it can be observed, it seems to be one of the most popular prefixes within this field. Another important term on cryptocurrencies is *blockchain*; it is a chain of *blocks*, and it refers to a type of distributed network that allows the development of the technology for cryptocurrencies. *Blockchain* is carried out by *miners*, who create and allow the transactions carried out in a network to be linked. *Blocks* are created in time intervals and link new transactions with existing ones on the *blockchain*.

The word *mine* is fundamental within this model of finances. It can be used as a noun, verb, or adjective as in *miner*, *to mine*, or *mining* (*pool* or *farm*). *Mining* is the process by which *blocks* are added to a blockchain, and miners verify the transactions. These transactions are recorded on the global ledger or blockchain, and the *miners* are economically incentivized. Another word related to this process

is the *nodes*, which are computers that connect to the network, support the validation of transactions, and have an updated copy of the *blockchain*. It is also interesting to see the creation of the word *altcoin* or alternative coin; it refers to the cryptocurrencies that are not Bitcoin, such as Ethereum, Cardano, or Ripple, among others. Parallel to this word, *shitcoin* is a pejorative term that refers to those cryptocurrencies which seem to lack value, or the community predicts that their existence will be short due to the inconsistency of its code, team, or project; and most of them are completely speculative. Finally, in Table 2, the word *Satoshi*, ranked 24, should also be commented on. Satoshi Nakamoto was the inventor of Bitcoin, and after his name, a *Satoshi* refers to the minimum unit that a bitcoin can be divided into (0.00000001 BTC).

Other words that were not ranked in the top 100 should also be commented on. One of the most popular was the expression *To the Moon*. This sentence means that Bitcoin and Altcoin users expect the value of their cryptocurrencies to rise considerably, and they will multiply the value of their assets. The term *Lambo* refers to making big profits with a cryptocurrency. *Lambo* comes from *Lamborghini*, and it refers to having the possibility to buy something expensive with the benefits obtained. Also related to the acquisition of goods, the first purchase made with a cryptocurrency (Bitcoin) was two pizzas on 22 May 2010. To commemorate that date, it is remembered as *Pizza Day*. Some companies and traders in the field of cryptocurrencies celebrate it every Friday with their employees with pizza for lunch.

### Use of Crypto-Acronyms

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the use of acronyms for the words represented. Among the words included in the glossary, 65 acronyms were identified. Table 3 shows the times and percentages that these words appeared as an acronym as well as a word. The mean percentage on the use of acronyms was 87.57 %, which was superior to the use of the words represented (12.43 %). In

addition, the use of the acronym was superior in 60 out of the 65 cases, and the use of the acronym occurred over 90 % of the time in 45 of them. The use of the words represented by the acronym was only more frequent on 5 occasions.

Some of the most popular acronyms within Table 3 are general words, words related to finances, and words that originated with the rise of cryptocurrencies. Some words from this list can help us better understand the meaning of the cryptocurrency market. To start with, the most usual acronym from this glossary is *ICO*, which stands for *initial currency offering*. An *ICO* is a type of funding using cryptocurrencies, usually by crowdfunding. In this case, a quantity of cryptocurrency is sold in tokens to potential investors in exchange for legal tender and financing a project based on a blockchain network in its development phase.

The second one is *DeFi*, which means *decentralized finance*, one of the main features of cryptocurrencies. This implies that there is no governmental bank behind the operations made with cryptocurrencies. This is a system of smart contracts aimed at building a series of financial services supported by blockchain technology. The third on the list is *NFT* (*non-fungible token*). They are units of data stored in a blockchain that certifies the ownership of a digital asset such as photos, videos, audio, and other types of digital files. Fourth is *P2P*, or *peer-to-peer*, the system of how cryptocurrencies operate. It refers to decentralized networks in which transaction information is shared between two users through connection to the network with no intermediaries. Finally, the acronym *Fiat* refers to fiduciary money in current use.

In other words, coins and paper money are issued by different governments such as euro, dollar, yuan, ruble, or pound, among others. As a result, these usual words tell how cryptocurrencies work: created by individuals (not necessarily institutions or governments), a decentralized system of finance (no governmental banks involved), transactions

are peer-to-peer (no intermediaries), and there is a register of contracts made to prove the originality of them as *non-fungible tokens*.

In addition, the role of miners is considered fundamental in the process of blockchain. Miners are individuals who work for a reward paid with cryptocurrencies. In order to show that miners have completed their tasks, some vocabulary has been

created. Some examples are *PoA (proof of authority)*, *PoB (proof of burn)*, *PoET (proof of elapsed time)*, *PoS (proof of stake)*, *PoW (proof of work)*, and *DPoS (delegated proof of stake)*. This work of miners characterizes the blockchain or the decentralized system; to this purpose, some words from the glossary refer to it. Some examples are *CEX (centralized exchange)* and *DEX (decentralized exchange)*, *DAICO (decentralized autonomous*

**Table 3** List of Acronyms for the Words Represented

Word	Total	Acronym	Word	% Acr.	% W.
ICO (initial currency offering)	52,934,400	52,900,000	34,400	99.94	0.06
DeFi (decentralized finance)	50,910,000	48,800,000	2,110,000	95.86	4.14
NFT (non-fungible token)	49,970,000	48,900,000	1,070,000	97.86	2.14
API (application programming interface)	48,163,000	47,800,000	363,000	99.25	0.75
P2P (peer to peer)	43,200,000	20,900,000	22,300,000	48.38	51.62
CRV (curve)	42,420,000	34,900,000	7,520,000	82.27	17.73
SWAP (succinct atomic swap)	41,800,979	41,800,000	979	100.00	0.00
DAG (directed acyclic graph)	33,136,000	32,700,000	436,000	98.68	1.32
COMP (compound)	31,700,000	15,200,000	16,500,000	47.95	52.05
MKR (maker)	28,540,000	24,900,000	3,640,000	87.25	12.75
OTC (over-the-counter)	25,000,000	12,400,000	12,600,000	49.60	50.40
CFD (contracts for difference)	22,952,000	22,500,000	452,000	98.03	1.97
ROI (return of investment)	19,525,000	18,800,000	725,000	96.29	3.71
BAL (balancer)	18,220,000	11,100,000	7,120,000	60.92	39.08
DEX (decentralized exchange)	18,010,000	16,600,000	1,410,000	92.17	7.83
FIAT (fiduciary money)	16,920,000	16,900,000	20,000	99.88	0.12
DD (due diligence)	16,720,000	9,210,000	7,510,000	55.08	44.92
SIA (Skynet)	16,369,000	15,700,000	669,000	95.91	4.09
ATH (all-time high)	15,710,000	5,610,000	10,100,000	35.71	64.29
DNS (domain name system)	15,709,000	15,100,000	609,000	96.12	3.88
DAO (decentralized autonomous organization)	14,826,000	14,700,000	126,000	99.15	0.85
PoW (proof of work)	12,240,000	5,560,000	6,680,000	45.42	54.58
GPU (graphic processor unit)	10,901,130	10,900,000	1,130	99.99	0.01
IPFS (inter planetary file system)	10,300,000	8,540,000	1,760,000	82.91	17.09
AML (anti-money laundering)	10,030,000	7,410,000	2,620,000	73.88	26.12
PoS (proof of stake)	9,390,000	5,940,000	3,450,000	63.26	36.74
CSV (check sequence verify)	9,089,400	9,040,000	49,400	99.46	0.54
KYC (know your customer)	9,057,000	8,540,000	517,000	94.29	5.71
ASIC (application specific integrated circuits)	8,968,000	8,520,000	448,000	95.00	5.00



**Table 3** List of Acronyms for the Words Represented (Cont.)

Word	Total	Acronym	Word	% Acr.	% W.
BIP (bitcoin improvement proposal)	8,145,600	8,090,000	55,600	99.32	0.68
HEX (hybrid crypto exchange)	7,921,200	7,910,000	11,200	99.86	0.14
DAPP (decentralized application)	6,550,000	6,300,000	250,000	96.18	3.82
DLT (distributed ledger technology)	5,770,000	4,630,000	1,140,000	80.24	19.76
ZRX (zoox)	5,325,290	5,320,000	5,290	99.90	0.10
HODL (hold on for dear life)	5,274,000	4,920,000	354,000	93.29	6.71
ATL (all-time low)	5,120,000	3,260,000	1,860,000	63.67	36.33
DLC (discrete log contracts)	4,687,360	4,680,000	7,360	99.84	0.16
PoA (proof of authority)	4,253,000	4,040,000	213,000	94.99	5.01
CEX (centralized exchange)	3,727,000	3,450,000	277,000	92.57	7.43
PoET (proof of elapsed time)	3,556,000	3,450,000	106,000	97.02	2.98
CBDC (central bank digital currency)	3,542,000	2,810,000	732,000	79.33	20.67
FOMO (fear of missing out)	3,525,000	3,080,000	445,000	87.38	12.62
IEO (initial exchange offering)	2,713,000	2,600,000	113,000	95.83	4.17
P2PKH (pay to public key hash)	2,559,500	2,540,000	19,500	99.24	0.76
FPGA (field programmable gate array)	2,456,000	2,040,000	416,000	83.06	16.94
P2SH (pay-to-script hash)	2,365,000	2,150,000	215,000	90.91	9.09
FUD (fear, uncertainty, and doubt)	2,264,600	2,200,000	64,600	97.15	2.85
MAST (Merkelized Abstract Syntax Trees)	2,077,400	2,060,000	17,400	99.16	0.84
NBP (Nonce Blinding Protocol)	1,840,010	1,840,000	10	100.00	0.00
RBF (Replace by Fee)	1,099,100	1,030,000	69,100	93.71	6.29
SAFU (Secure Asset Fund for Users)	826,000	799,000	27,000	96.73	3.27
ECDSA (Elliptic Curve Digital Secure Algorithm)	561,053	561,000	53	99.99	0.01
PoB (Proof of Burn)	520,400	473,000	47,400	90.89	9.11
UTXO (Unspent transaction output)	491,000	450,000	41,000	91.65	8.35
DPoS (Delegated Proof of Stake)	416,000	279,000	137,000	67.07	32.93
kWU (thousands wight units)	415,004	415,000	4	100.00	0.00
CLTV (checklocktimeverify)	398,000	266,000	132,000	66.83	33.17
UASF (user activated soft fork)	374,000	351,000	23,000	93.85	6.15
ZKP (zero-knowledge protocol)	358,300	340,000	18,300	94.89	5.11
CPFP (child pays for parents)	301,610	300,000	1,610	99.47	0.53
UAHF (user activated hard fork)	163,210	156,000	7,210	95.58	4.42
DAICO (decentralized autonomous initial coin offer)	141,004	141,000	4	100.00	0.00
P2PK (pay to public key)	99,700	66,100	33,600	66.30	33.70
EDDSA (Edwards-curve digital signature algorithm)	45,980	39,000	6,980	84.82	15.18
MASF (miner active soft fork)	44,105	44,100	5	99.99	0.01
<b>Mean Percentage</b>				<b>87,57</b>	<b>12,43</b>

Note: Search: "crypto\*" + "word\*"

initial coin offer), DAO (decentralized autonomous organization), and DAPP (decentralized application). The methods of payment have also been coined after P2P; some derivate methods of payment are P2PKH (pay to public key hash), P2SH (pay-to-script hash), and P2PK (pay to public key). Another key of this decentralized money is security and legality, and there are some words to refer to it. Within the acronyms in Table 3, some of them represent these values: AML (anti-money laundering), CFD (contracts for difference), CPFP (child pays for parents), CSV (check sequence verify), D.D. (due diligence), DLC (discrete log contracts), and KYC (know your customer).

The community popularly uses other common acronyms that should be commented on. Some of them could be FOMO, HODL, or FUD. They are related to how to operate in the investment market. FOMO means *fear of missing out*, whereas FUD stands for *fear, uncertainty, and doubt*. In the same way, the word HODL means *hold on to dear life*, and it was originated by a user of the Bitcointalk Forum in 2013 who committed a typographical error. The speaker intended to say “Hold”; however, this mistake was popularized, and the crypto community began to use it regularly.

### Animals as Crypto-Metaphors

The following part of our research includes the use of animals as metaphors in the field of crypto finances. In addition to the three animals in the glossary, other animals were also used in metaphors. These results can give us a clue on the popularity of using certain animals to describe or represent specific characteristics or peculiarities of cryptocurrencies. In this sense, the interpretation of these results can be twofold. On one hand, these animals represent some characteristics of the cryptocurrencies, as explained in our theoretical framework. On the other hand, some cryptocurrencies are named after animals. Therefore, the popularity of these animals can be derived from the cryptocurrencies that they represent. An example of this is Dogecoin, a very popular cryptocurrency

**Table 4** List of Animals as Metaphors in the Field of Crypto Finances

R.	Word	Tokens	R.	Word	Tokens
1	Bull	38.200.000	14	Goose	7.610.000
2	Dog	28.900.000	15	Elephant	6.480.000
3	Shark	26.700.000	16	Rabbit	5.530.000
4	Bear	24.200.000	17	Sheep	4.580.000
5	Fish	24,100,000	18	Dolphin	3.060.000
6	Tiger	17.400.000	19	Gorilla	3.060.000
7	Unicorn	13.800.000	20	Turtle	2.670.000
8	Chicken	13.700.000	21	Pig	2.510.000
9	Wolf	11.800.000	22	Stag	1.930.000
10	Cow	11.600.000	23	Hawk	1.290.000
11	Whale	10.600.000	24	Deer	1.020.000
12	Bird	9.920.000	25	Gazelle	707.000
13	Monkey	8.130.000	26	Ostrich	425.000

Note: Search: “crypto\*” + “word\*”. The cells in grey appeared originally in the Bit2Me glossary.

supported by Tesla’s CEO, Elon Musk, and represented by a dog.

Table 4 shows the animals that were used in this research. The grey ones are included in the glossary provided by Bit2Me, whereas the others were complemented with other studies, mainly from Silaški (2011). The originals from the glossary were *bull*, *bear*, and *whale*. *Bull* and *bear* are counterparts; they refer to the market moving upwards or downwards, respectively. Regarding the *whale*, its use refers to people or groups of people with large amounts of a cryptocurrency whose movements can raise or lower prices. It should be noticed that the price of some cryptocurrencies whose price is over thousands of dollars were once only cents. People who bought at the early stages would have an important role in the future when the price of cryptocurrencies multiplied exponentially.

Other popular animals that should be commented on, as shown in Table 4, were *shark*, *fish*, *unicorn*, *chicken*, *wolf*, and *cow*. *Sharks* might refer to greedy and aggressive investors who aim at their goals over the means. A similar meaning has the

*wolf*, an animal that usually attacks with a pack in an organized way. The *fish* concern those investors who are diversifying their investments into different cryptocurrencies. The *unicorn* is a mystical and legendary animal that everyone aims to catch; thus it refers to new cryptocurrencies that, for some reason, sound attractive to investors, who believe they have found *gold* and could multiply their initial investment. Then, the chicken concerns the lack of *courage* and *bravery* to take risky decisions —for example, over-conservative individuals with their assets. Finally, a *cow* is an animal that connotes nourishment; it also refers to a product that requires little or no expense but continues to generate benefits.

## Discussion

As hypothesized, any new product, idea, or concept would bring new forms of languages. In this case, cryptocurrencies have made language evolve, and more concretely so within the language of finances. Our objective was to analyze some characteristics of the language of cryptocurrencies. Following the work of Mateo-Martinez (2010), who had previously focused on the language of finances, our research analyzed some of the features described in his work: Metaphors, acronyms, and usual words from this field. Some previous literature has also been exposed within this paper to support our findings for each of these elements.

In the case of the most frequent words, a glossary published by the company *Bit2Me* was used. From this list of words, we selected 255 and rejected those related to the proper names of people, companies, or cryptocurrencies. Table 2 shows the 100 most usual words from this glossary according to the search toolbar of Google. In addition to these 100 words, other picturesque expressions within the glossary that we considered interesting were also commented (see *to the Moon*, *Pizza Day*, *Shitcoin*, *Satoshi*). As expected, the language of cryptocurrencies is an extension or subcategory of the language of finances. Mateo-Martinez (2010) had previously distinguished between

the language of finances and the language of economics. Whereas our target, a subcategory of the language of finances, was characterized for the use of Anglo-Saxon words, plays on words (see *pump and dump* or *Mimble Wimble*), or clear and accessible language for the non-expert public, in addition to the use of acronyms and metaphors. In contrast, the language of economics is more academic, and it relies more on Latinisms. In this sense, the glossary did not include Latin words, and the language did not seem to be highly academic, but rather user-friendly and accessible to a broad audience, even though it contained several technical words, as shown in this paper.

Regarding the creation of new words or neologisms, the prefix “crypto-” was commonly used to form new words such as *cryptocurrency*, *cryptography*, or *cryptojacking*, among others. We could say that this prefix will preferably remain in use to create new terms that combine cryptocurrencies with other concepts or things. Other words that have been introduced to describe the functioning of and actions related to cryptocurrencies are *blockchain*, *blocks*, *miners* or *mining*, *wallet*, and *portfolio*. These words are essential for anyone who wants to understand or use cryptocurrencies.

On the use of acronyms, some authors such as Laursen and Moustén (2015), Mateo-Martinez (2010), and Rao (2008), among others, had advanced that financial language relied on the use of acronyms over the words represented. In this regard, the acronyms from the glossary were more popular than the words represented (87.57 % vs. 12.43 %). As we can observe, understanding the meaning of some acronyms is essential to understanding cryptolanguage. This seems to be especially important to people who work in this sector, either investing or mining.

Regarding the use of metaphors, the work of Silaški (2011) suggested that animals were commonly used within the field of finances. Within the glossary provided by *Bit2Me*, three animals were suggested (*bull*, *bear*, and *whale*); however,

following this author's work, we decided to extend this list to 26 animals. We found that determining their frequency as a metaphor was not possible since many cryptocurrencies are called after the name of an animal. Therefore, several references to these animals represent a type of cryptocurrency. All in all, consistent the meaning of these animal-based metaphors, our finding showed that the users of cryptocurrencies tend to use these terms in their written language regularly.

On a final note, this paper has shown that financial language is the origin of cryptolanguage. This fact coincides with the works of Laursen and Moustén (2015), among others, on the use of acronyms or that of Silaški (2011) on metaphors. On neologisms, this paper has found that the language of cryptocurrencies follows the pattern of the language of finances, being less academic and more accessible, using Anglo-Saxon words and plays on words, acronyms, and metaphors. In addition, as suggested by Aronoff (1976) and other authors, the creation of new words is usually carried out by suffixation, prefixation, and compounding. In sum, the aim of this study is to help the readers understand some features of the crypto language, or the language of cryptocurrencies, a relatively novel field in which few studies have been carried out from a linguistic view. As this field is relatively new, the evolution of cryptocurrencies and their language is still ongoing, and the decisions of some governments on accepting or refusing their use will determine their path and impact in our lives.

## Conclusion

It seems that cryptocurrencies have an immeasurable potential that has attracted the attention of many investors worldwide, both professional and novice. Although it should be acknowledged that this revolution does not seem to be completed yet as very few goods or services accept cryptocurrencies as a valid payment method, their value during the years 2020 and 2021 has increased exponentially. However, their value is characterized by its

volatility; therefore, even though it can quickly increase to a great extent, it could also fall again in a few days or weeks. At any rate, the name *Bitcoin* appears more frequently in Google than other popular multinational companies with more years of service and experience, which can be interpreted as a sign that cryptocurrencies are indeed being used in the real world.

As it happens with any new product, new forms of language are created by the community that uses them. This research has described some characteristics of its language considering the most usual words, neologisms, acronyms, and metaphors, all of them extracted from a glossary published by the company Bit2Me. Few studies have explored the phenomenon of cryptocurrencies from a linguistic perspective; therefore, in further research, the study of the language of cryptocurrencies could focus on a different context like communication in social networks such as *Twitter*, which seems to be one of the main channels by which *crypto-people* communicate with other members. Another topic that may be worth exploring in further research is the study of the language used for the technical analysis of the cryptocurrency market, which focuses on predicting the value of assets in the future. In addition, the industry of cryptocurrencies will probably change in the following months or years; therefore, new horizons in linguistic research will likely appear soon.

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# INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE MARKERS IN ENGLISH RESEARCH ARTICLE ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY NON-NATIVE AUTHORS: A CORPUS-BASED CONTRASTIVE STUDY

MARCADORES METADISCURSIVOS INTERACCIONALES EN RESÚMENES DE ARTÍCULOS  
DE INVESTIGACIÓN ESCRITOS EN INGLÉS POR AUTORES NO NATIVOS: UN ESTUDIO  
CONTRASTIVO BASADO EN CORPUS

MARQUEURS MÉTADISOURSIFS INTERACTIONNELS DANS DES RÉSUMÉS DES ARTICLES  
DE RECHERCHE RÉDIGÉS EN ANGLAIS PAR DES AUTEURS ALLOGÈNES : UNE ÉTUDE  
CONTRASTIVE FONDÉE SUR CORPUS

MARCADORES METADISCURSIVOS INTERACIONAIS NOS RESUMOS DOS ARTIGOS DE  
PESQUISA ESCRITOS EM INGLÊS POR AUTORES NÃO NATIVOS: UM ESTUDO CONTRASTIVO  
BASEADO EM CORPUS

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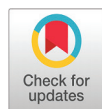
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## ABSTRACT

Abstracts in research articles play a crucial role in settling the impact of academic articles. However, despite the abundance of research on academic discourse, variation in its linguistic features among scholars from different academic cultures seems to have remained untouched. This corpus linguistics study presents a comparative analysis of interactional metadiscourse markers in 96 research article abstracts written in English by both Russian and Spanish scholars in the field of linguistics. The study is based on the assumption that the distribution of interactional metadiscourse devices is different in the abstracts produced by each group of scholars. This is because Spanish academic discourse has been influenced by the growing expansion of Anglophone academic conventions to a larger extent. The theoretical basis of the study is Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of interactional metadiscourse markers, which offers a pragmatically-grounded method for studying different types of such markers in academic discourse. Findings revealed that Spanish scholars leave more traces of themselves in their writing and take far more explicitly involved positions than Russian scholars. These findings carry pedagogical implications for academic writing course designers and instructors and can enhance non-native English writers' knowledge of culture-specific and international academic writing conventions in the discipline.

**Keywords:** research articles, abstracts, academic discourse, interactional metadiscourse, non-native speakers



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## RESUMEN

Los resúmenes de los artículos de investigación son determinantes en el impacto de los artículos científicos. Sin embargo, pese al rico acervo de investigación sobre el discurso académico, la variación en sus características lingüísticas entre académicos de diferentes culturas parece haberse mantenido intacta. Este estudio de corpus presenta un análisis comparativo de los marcadores metadiscursivos interaccionales en resúmenes de artículos de investigación en lengua inglesa, escritos por académicos rusos y españoles en el campo de la lingüística. El estudio se basa en el supuesto de que la distribución de los dispositivos metadiscursos interaccionales varía en los resúmenes producidos por cada grupo de investigadores. Esto se debe a que el discurso académico español ha recibido en mayor medida la influencia de la expansión creciente de las convenciones académicas anglófonas. La base teórica del estudio es la taxonomía de los marcadores metadiscursivos interaccionales de Hyland (2005), la cual ofrece un método de base pragmática para el estudio de diferentes tipos de marcadores en el discurso académico. Los hallazgos revelaron que los académicos españoles dejan en su escritura más rastros de sí mismos y adoptan posturas mucho más explícitas que los académicos rusos. Estos hallazgos tienen implicaciones pedagógicas para el diseño y la realización de cursos de escritura académica y pueden mejorar el conocimiento de los escritores no nativos del inglés sobre las convenciones de escritura académica internacionales y las específicas de cada cultura en la disciplina.

**Palabras clave:** resúmenes, artículos de investigación, discurso académico, metadiscursos interaccionales, hablantes no nativos

## RÉSUMÉ

Les résumés des articles de recherche sont déterminants pour l'impact des articles scientifiques. Cependant, malgré le riche corpus de recherches sur le discours universitaire, la variation de ses caractéristiques linguistiques entre universitaires de cultures différentes semble être restée intacte. Cette étude de corpus présente une analyse comparative des marqueurs du métadiscours interactionnel dans les résumés d'articles de recherche en langue anglaise écrits par des chercheurs russes et espagnols dans le domaine de la linguistique. L'étude est basée sur l'hypothèse que la distribution des dispositifs de métadiscours interactionnel est différente dans les résumés produits par chaque groupe de chercheurs. Cela est dû au fait que le discours académique espagnol a été influencé dans une plus large mesure par l'expansion croissante des conventions académiques anglophones. La base théorique de l'étude est la taxonomie des marqueurs du métadiscours interactionnel de Hyland (2005), qui offre une méthode basée sur la pragmatique pour l'étude des différents types de marqueurs du métadiscours interactionnel dans le discours universitaire. Les résultats ont révélé que les universitaires espagnols laissent davantage de traces d'eux-mêmes dans leurs écrits et adoptent des positions beaucoup plus explicites que les universitaires russes. Ces résultats ont donc des implications pédagogiques pour la conception et la mise en œuvre de cours de rédaction universitaire et peuvent améliorer la connaissance qu'ont les rédacteurs non natifs des conventions de rédaction universitaire internationales et spécifiques à chaque culture dans la discipline.

**Mots-clé :** résumés, articles de recherche, discours académique, métadiscours interactionnel, locuteurs allogènes



## RESUMO

Os resumos de artigos de pesquisa são decisivos para o impacto dos artigos científicos. Entretanto, apesar do rico corpo de pesquisas sobre o discurso acadêmico, a variação em suas características linguísticas entre acadêmicos de diferentes culturas parece ter permanecido intacta. Este estudo apresenta uma análise comparativa de marcadores de metadiscurso interacional em resumos de artigos de pesquisa em língua inglesa escritos por estudiosos russos e espanhóis na área de linguística. O estudo se baseia na suposição de que a distribuição dos dispositivos de metadiscurso interacional é diferente nos resumos produzidos por cada grupo de pesquisadores. Isto se deve ao fato de que o discurso acadêmico espanhol tem sido influenciado em maior medida pela crescente expansão das convenções acadêmicas anglófonas. A base teórica do estudo é a taxonomia de Hyland (2005) de marcadores de metadiscursos interacionais, que oferece um método pragmático para o estudo de diferentes tipos de marcadores de metadiscursos interacionais no discurso acadêmico. As descobertas revelaram que os acadêmicos espanhóis deixam mais traços de si mesmos em sua escrita e adotam posições muito mais explícitas do que os acadêmicos russos. Estas descobertas têm, portanto, implicações pedagógicas para a concepção e realização de cursos de redação acadêmica e podem melhorar o conhecimento de escritores não nativos sobre convenções de redação acadêmica internacionais e específicas da cultura na mesma disciplina.

**Palavras chave:** resumos de artigos de pesquisa; discurso acadêmico; metadiscurso interacional; falantes não nativos.

## Introduction

To meet the requirements of the academic discourse community, researchers need to gain a high command of academic English for performing various academic tasks. They are asked to publish their research products in English-medium academic journals in the field to secure academic promotion in their institutions. In this vein, knowledge of genre conventions and mastery of the English language contribute to building up their confidence to report research results effectively.

Research articles' (hereinafter RA) abstracts serve as screening devices (Huckin, 2001) that affect the editor and reviewer's decisions. As Bondi (2014) puts it, "abstracts have become essential elements of research communication by guiding readers in the difficult process of identifying the texts they are interested in" (p. 243). Being "significant carriers of a discipline's epistemological and social assumptions, and therefore, a rich source of interactional features", they are organized in a way that allows for "[encouraging] further examination and [drawing] the reader into the more detailed exposition" (Hyland, 2005, pp. 63–64). In the same vein, Kozubíková Šandová (2021) argues that "a correctly written abstract may convince a reviewer of the relevance of the research and the competence of the author and in this way, it may increase the publication likelihood of a paper in an acclaimed journal" (p. 79). Lorés Sanz (2004) also claims that RA abstracts "constitute the gateway that leads readers to take up an article, journals to select contributions, or organizers of conferences to accept or reject papers" (p. 281).

Previous studies on this academic genre have attempted to reveal its rhetorical organization (e.g., Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Gessesse, 2016; Ji, 2015; Saidi & Talebi, 2021), linguistic features (e.g., Kozubíková Šandová, 2021; Kuhl & Mousavi, 2015), cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural variations (e.g., Alonso Almeida, 2014; Belyakova, 2017; Hu & Cao 2011; Martín, 2003; Perales-Escudero & Swales, 2011; Sanz, 2006; Van

Bonn & Swales 2007; Yang 2013), interpersonal features (e.g. Lorés Sanz et al., 2010), subjectivity, evaluation and engagement (e.g. Biber, 2006; Lyda & Warchal 2014; Stotesbury, 2003).

Taking prior research altogether, it seems that contrastive metadiscourse features of English-language RA abstracts written by non-native English authors have not received deserved attention. English-language academic texts produced by non-native English writers have been analyzed only in terms of their distinction from academic discourse produced by native English scholars.

The need for metadiscourse studies from different perspectives, including the cross-cultural one, has been caused by changes in the understanding of academic writing as an objective and impersonal form of discourse. Academic writers are considered "as not simply producing texts that plausibly represent an external reality, but also as using language to acknowledge, construct and negotiate social relations." (Hyland, 2005, p. 173). Metadiscourse assists writers in creating an authorial stance, claiming solidarity with readers, evaluating and acknowledging alternative views, thus producing persuasive texts.

To fill the void in the cross-cultural metadiscourse studies, the current work focused on variation in the use of interactional metadiscourse markers in Spanish- and Russian-authored RA abstracts, seeking answers to the following questions:

1. What linguistic devices are employed to express the metadiscourse component in the two subcorpora?
2. What is the frequency of occurrence of interactional metadiscourse markers in Russian- and Spanish-authored RA abstracts?
3. Are there any differences in the overall distribution of interactional metadiscourse devices in RA abstracts written by scholars from two cultural contexts?

4. What are the potential reasons for the uneven distribution of interactional metadiscourse in two subcorpora?

It is possible that such an analysis can reveal metadiscourse features in Spanish- and Russian-authored academic prose which has never been explored to date in terms of differences. I assume that despite a relative uniformity of academic papers imposed by generic requirements, there is significant intercultural variation in the metadiscourse preferences of writers influenced by the national academic writing conventions or having adopted the Anglophone academic writing style.

The present study will focus on interactional metadiscourse markers following Hyland's (2005) taxonomy. The following section will introduce the theoretical framework of the present study and previous research on RA abstracts conducted from different perspectives.

### Theoretical Framework

Until recently, academic discourse has been regarded as impersonal. However, more research into academic discourse has changed this approach. Academic texts have started to be considered products of social interaction between the writer and the reader. These texts express the writer's attitudes towards the propositional content and the audience. In this vein, such texts contain various metadiscourse markers which are self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings (Hyland, 2005). These linguistic devices "relate a text to its context by assisting readers to connect, organize, and interpret material in a way preferred by the writer and with regard to the understandings and values of a particular discourse community" (Hyland & Tse, 2004, p. 157).

Over the last decades, there have been several taxonomies developed regarding metadiscourse elements (Crismore, 1984; Vande Kopple, 1985; Beauvais, 1989; Crismore et al., 1993; Hyland, 2005). Vande

Kopple's (1985) taxonomy is one of these models. Textual markers, according to Vande Kopple (1985), include illocution markers, attitude markers, and commentaries, while interpersonal ones include text connectives, code glosses, validity markers, and narrators. They help us express our personalities and reactions to the propositional content and characterize (Vande Kopple, 1985). Textual metadiscourse markers show how we link individual propositions so that they form a cohesive and coherent text. Crismore et al. (1993) have refined Vande Kopple's (1985) taxonomy and divided textual metadiscourse markers into interpretive (i.e., code glosses illocution markers, and announcements) and textual (i.e., logical connectives, sequencers reminders, and *topicalizers*).

Later, the group of interpersonal metadiscourse markers has been expanded by other researchers (e.g., Thomson, 2001; Hyland, 2005) who added hedges, certainty markers, and attributors. Thomson (2001) has classified them into interactional and interactive. The former ones are used to comment on and evaluate material and the latter manage the information flow to guide readers through the text. In line with Thompson (2001), Hyland (2005) developed a model of metadiscourse that involves the interactive and interactional aspects of discourse. Interactional metadiscourse markers are used to interact with the reader, explicitly convey views and attitudes, and involve the audience "by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text", "anticipating objections and responding to an imagined dialogue with others" (Hyland, 2005, pp. 49–50). Table 1 summarizes interactional metadiscourse markers identified by Hyland.

*Hedges and boosters* are "communicative strategies for recognizing contingency and indicating the room the writer is willing to offer for negotiation" (Hyland, 2005, p. 144). Hedges are used to acknowledge alternative viewpoints, withhold commitment to the presented proposition, and steer the reader to the conclusion or reasoning of the writer's

**Table 1** Hyland’s Model of Metadiscourse

Types	Key Function	Example
Hedges	acknowledge alternative viewpoints	<i>apparently</i>
Boosters	suppress alternative views	<i>I believe, actually</i>
Attitude markers	show the writer’s evaluation	<i>crucial, important</i>
Self-mention markers	signal authorial presence	<i>I, we, my</i>
Engagement markers	address readers	<i>Note, you</i>

Source: Hyland (2005).

choice. Boosters are used to “suppress alternatives, presenting the proposition with conviction while marking involvement, solidarity and engagement with readers” (Hyland, 2005, p. 145). According to Hyland (2005), “the balance of hedges and boosters in a text thus indicates to what extent the writer is willing to entertain alternatives and so plays an important role in conveying commitment to text content and respect for readers” (p. 53).

*Attitude markers* show the writer’s evaluation of given parameters and express the influence on the information and demonstrate importance, surprise, agreement, frustration, obligation, etc. In turn, *self-mention markers* send “a clear indication to the reader of the perspective from which their statements should be interpreted, distinguishing their own work from that of others” (Hyland, 2005, p. 148). The degree of authorial presence in the text is signaled explicitly by the first-person singular or plural pronouns and corresponding possessive adjectives. Lastly, *engagement markers* “explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants” (Hyland, 2005, p. 53). They can also involve the rhetorical positioning of readers guiding them to interpretations. This group includes reader pronouns (*you* and *your*), questions, and directives. It should be noted that these metadiscourse markers are not employed in RA abstracts due to the specificity of the genre.

For responding to the research questions, Hyland’s (2005) taxonomy of metadiscourse devices was selected as a point of departure as being based on the pragmatically-oriented assumption that metadiscourse is always interpersonal. Therefore, metadiscourse markers serve the purpose of providing a way for writers to express themselves and involving readers in a dialogue.

### Previous Studies on RA Abstracts

RA abstracts are explored from a cross-disciplinary or cross-cultural perspective or in a single discipline and cultural context. One group of studies focuses on the use of metadiscourse in English-language research articles investigating it from a synchronic or diachronic perspective (Abarghooeinezhad & Simin, 2015; Farjami, 2013; Hu & Cao, 2011; Gillaerts, 2014; Kozubíková Šandová, 2021; Kuhi & Mousavi, 2015; Nurhayati, 2017). For example, Farjami (2013) explored metadiscourse markers in applied linguistics articles. Abarghooeinezhad and Simin (2015) studied the metadiscourse features typical of engineering-related RA abstracts; Nurhayati (2017) examined those associated with EFL RA. Hu and Cao (2011), Gillaerts (2014), and Kuhi and Mousavi (2015) compared the use of hedges and boosters in applied linguistics RA abstracts. Kozubíková Šandová (2021) explored metadiscourse in linguistics RA abstracts from a diachronic perspective.

Unlike undisciplinary research, some studies have investigated linguistic features of RA abstracts across disciplines (e.g., Babaii & Ansary, 2005; Graetz, 1985; Muñoz, 2013; Stotesbury, 2003). Thus, Graetz (1985) found that RA abstracts “give the reader an exact and concise knowledge of the total content of the very much lengthy original, a factual summary which is both an elaboration of the title and a condensation of the report” (p. 23). In contrast, Stotesbury (2003) revealed that humanities RA abstracts contain more citations as compared with those in the social and natural sciences. He also found that the writer’s voice is most often heard in natural science abstracts while in



humanities abstracts the passive voice is typically employed. Bondi (2014) explored self-mention and authorial voice in history, economics, and linguistics abstracts in order to identify changes occurring over some time.

Another body of research includes those dealing with the cultural features of this genre (e.g., Alonso-Almeida, 2014; Belyakova, 2017; Cmejrkova, 1996; Duszak, 1994; Hryniuk, 2018; Peterlin, 2005; Pyankova, 1994; Vassileva, 2001; Walková, 2018). Belyakova (2017) carried out a cross-linguistic comparison between abstracts written in English by Russian novice researchers and native English-speaking experts in geoscience. The author sought to explore their rhetorical structure and linguistic features such as the use of personal pronouns, tense, articles, and sentence length. The cross-linguistic approach was adopted in Alonso-Almeida's (2014) study to compare linguistic features of English and Spanish RA abstracts related to medicine, computing, and legal science. He has revealed that the use of evidential and epistemic devices is more prominent in the English RA abstracts.

The review of previous studies has shown that the abstracts in question have been investigated from the intra-disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, cross-linguistic, and diachronic perspectives. These studies have adopted a cross-linguistic approach, focusing on the comparison of RA abstracts written by native and non-native English writers. To illustrate this, Pyankova (1994) has studied differences between English and Russian abstracts and found that Russian writers tend to avoid self-mentions markers and employ passive and impersonal structures instead.

In her research on similarities and differences in the degree of commitment and detachment in English, Bulgarian, and Bulgarian English research articles, Vassileva (2001) revealed differences regarding the use of hedges and boosters in the three sub-corpora, which are, according to her, due to the different rhetorical and educational traditions. Likewise, Duszak's (1994) article reported the results of the contrastive study on linguistic and

rhetorical differences found in the academic discourses produced by Anglophone and Polish writers. The author has revealed that in contrast to Polish academic prose, the English texts feature direct, assertive and positive rather than indirect, affective, and tentative expressions.

Another study on Anglo-American and Polish metadiscourse in research articles was conducted by Hryniuk (2018). It explored how writers from two cultural backgrounds construct a credible representation of themselves in writing and investigated differences and similarities in the frequency of use and the role of first-person pronouns and determiners in applied linguistics research articles. Results showed that English-language texts written by Polish writers contain fewer first-person pronouns than the texts written by native English whose writers tend to assume responsibility for their claims.

By the same token, Cmejrkova (1996, p. 148) investigated academic writing in Czech and English, revealing that Czech linguists writing in English are reluctant to commit themselves early to announcing the research purpose and prefer indirect declarations or rhetorical questions. Pisanski Peterlin (2005) conducted a contrastive analysis stressing the differences in the use of two metatext categories in English and Slovene research articles and found that the use of these categories is more restricted in Slovene academic writing. Finally, Walková (2018) explored how Anglophone writers and Slovak authors writing in Slovak and English position themselves in research papers. The author suggested that Anglophone academic culture features the reader-inclusive perspective, the predominant use of the first person singular by single authors, and the third person by multiple authors (p. 101).

## Method

In order to investigate interactional metadiscourse markers in the RA abstracts selected for the analysis, this study adopted corpus-based and computational techniques together with multidimensional quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Since the interactional metadiscourse markers are diverse and the context of their occurrence is crucial for their classification, the corpus was labelled manually.

Similarly, Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of metadiscourse markers was utilized to analyze the abstracts. According to this classification, the markers were divided into five groups: boosters, hedges, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers. The frequency of occurrence of each group of these markers in each journal was identified and calculated. The frequency was calculated per 1,000 words because these sub-corpora had different lengths.

The analysis of results followed two stages: first, the abstracts were read and scanned in search of potential metadiscourse markers. Once a given feature qualified as a metadiscourse device, it was assigned to one of the categories (hedges, boosters, self-mention markers, or attitude markers). Then, this feature was traced in the whole corpus using Wordsmith Tools (5.0). The quantitative analysis was combined with a manual qualitative analysis of the examples, which was conducted to interpret the findings of the quantitative analysis and go beyond a mere list of interactional metadiscourse markers typically employed in RA abstracts. Reasons for preference of one or another metadiscourse device were suggested at this stage of the study.

In short, the combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods contributed to more explanatory findings. The quantitative analysis identified the frequency of occurrence of interactional metadiscourse markers in two sub-corpora. The frequency of occurrence of these markers in the corpus was summarized in a table format. Descriptive statistics were used and frequency and percentage values were presented for each marker in two sub-corpora.

### Corpus Design

A corpus was designed following the principles of corpus linguistics. Since the RA abstracts

collected were used as a repository of data, the approach employed in the present research was corpus-based. This study was carried out based on a corpus of abstracts taken from six high-impact journals in the field of linguistics (see Table 2). Impact factor data was obtained from the Scopus database. Only Q1-Q2 journals were selected.

**Table 2** Corpus of the Study

Category	Sub-Corpus 1	Sub-Corpus 2
N.° of RA abstracts	48	48
N.° of journals from which RA abstracts were taken	3	3
N.° of RA abstracts taken from each journal	16	16
Total number of tokens analyzed	18,213	21,245

Sub-corpus 1 (SC1) included RA abstracts derived from three Russian language journals: *Russian Journal of Linguistics*<sup>1</sup>, *Quaestio Rossica*<sup>2</sup>, and *Journal of Language and Education*<sup>3</sup>. Sub-corpus 2 (SC2) included abstracts taken from three Spanish language journals: *Porta Linguarum*<sup>4</sup>, *International Journal of English Studies*<sup>5</sup>, and *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*<sup>6</sup>. 96 abstracts were selected from the issues of these journals. To prevent the corpus to be biased by the influence of the time of publication, only the abstracts published between 2016 and 2021 were selected for analysis. The origin of authors was determined by their family names and affiliation. The journals selected to build the corpus impose strict requirements on the quality of English used in research articles. As for the articles, they were written by Russian and Spanish experts in English who, presumably, have a high level of command of English. For comparability criteria, the writers had a university affiliation, which guaranteed that they were acquainted with

1 <https://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics>

2 <https://qr.urfu.ru/ojs/index.php/qr/>

3 <https://jle.hse.ru/index>

4 <https://www.ugr.es/~portalin/>

5 <https://revistas.um.es/ijes>

6 <https://revistes.uab.cat/catJL>

research article writing conventions. All in all, the key criteria followed allowed for a unified account of the findings. Such criteria were: (1) a high impact factor of journals; (2) time of publication; (3) sociological characteristics of authors (nationality and affiliation); and (4). high command of English.

## Results and Discussion

The quantitative analysis of the corpus showed that metadiscourse markers appeared more frequently in RA abstracts written by Spanish scholars. Table 3 summarizes the results of the contrastive analysis of interactional metadiscourse markers occurring in the two sub-corpora.

**Table 3** Interactional Metadiscourse in the Corpus per 1,000 Words (% of Total)

Interactional Metadiscourse Markers	SC 1	SC 2
Hedges	25 (48.5 %)	32.1 (38 %)
Boosters	7.2 (14 %)	21.9 (25.9 %)
Attitude markers	11.3 (21.9 %)	27 (31.9 %)
Self-mentions	8 (1.6 %)	3.6 (4.3 %)
Total	51.5 (100 %)	84.6 (100)

As can be seen in Table 3, the overall frequency of metadiscourse is different in the two sub-corpora. The Russian sub-corpus and the Spanish one form two distinct groups concerning the use of metadiscourse. The degree of detachment is higher in the Spanish sub-corpus. It appears that the Spanish authors are much more tentative in putting forward claims, anticipating, acknowledging, challenging, and suppressing alternatives. Additionally, in the Spanish sub-corpus, the most frequent interactional devices are hedges and attitudes markers, comprising 38 % and 31.9 %, respectively. Russian authors use hedges (48.5 %) and attitude markers (21.9 %) more frequently than other devices, but their number per 1,000 words (per sub-corpus) is smaller. Plus, no engagement markers are found in both sub-corpora. Moreover, the share of self-mentions is higher in the Russian sub-corpus. Lastly, interestingly, the number of

boosters in the Russian sub-corpus is small (7.2 per 1,000 words). Thus, in English-language RA abstracts, writers from the two academic communities represent themselves, their work, and their readers in different ways. Below the four categories of interactional metadiscourse markers used in the corpus are examined more closely, accounting for the potential reasons for their uneven distribution.

### Hedges

As can be seen in Table 3, this is the most heavily used category of metadiscourse markers in both sub-corpora. However, their share in the total number of occurrences in each of the sub-corpora is different: 48.5 % in SC1 and 38 % in SC2. The difference in the number of occurrences per 1,000 words is insignificant: 25 per 1,000 words in the Russian sub-corpus and 32 per 1,000 words in the Spanish one. Here are some examples of hedges used in the corpus.

Example 1: Thus, their lives *may* be called “lives by inertia” (SC1, own emphasis).

Example 2: This change *seems* to highlight the overly instrumental nature of the instruction students received during their schooling in EFL (SC2, own emphasis).

The hedges in Examples 1 and 2 cast the propositions as contingent by highlighting their subjectivity and expressing the authors’ willingness to negotiate a claim thereby, conveying respect for alternative views, because “it is generally accepted that members of academia cannot make categorical statements about their own hypotheses or findings” (Lafuente Millán, 2008, p. 68). Hedging devices are used to express some reservations or doubts about the truth of the assertion (Aijmer, 2009) and play a significant role in persuading readers of the validity of research, modulating the degree of certainty attached to the information conveyed.

In Example 3, the hedge can have several pragmatic effects, including authorial modesty and a way of anticipating criticism (Krapivkina, 2014):

Example 3: In my research on the Trobriand Islanders' language, culture, and cognition, *I have been trying* to fill this ethnolinguistic niche (SC1).

Example 4: Additionally, results from discriminant analyses *seem* to provide evidence that factors such as motivation, verbal intelligence, extramural exposure to English and socioeconomic status cannot account for differences between CLIL and non-CLIL groups (SC2, own emphasis).

The hedges expressed by the verbs *try* and *seem* strongly reinforce the idea of lack of certainty. In addition, using hedging markers, the writer distinguishes between information as a fact and information as an opinion:

Example 5: However, it *can* be complex for the teacher to decide which fact statement to work at each level of teaching / learning, having traditionally used frequency as a criterion for levelling (SC2, own emphasis).

Avoiding absolute statements, the hedge in Example 5 shows that the statements are open to alternative interpretations, which helps to protect the academic reputation of the author. In Example 6, the authors indicate that the views which will be used in the article may be inaccurate and speculative:

Example 6: The starting point for such an analysis is the *assumption* that one may regard translation equivalents and paraphrases of a linguistic unit extracted from real translated texts as a source of information about its semantics (S1, own emphasis)

The lower use of hedges by Russian scholars indicates that they do not seem to acknowledge the provisional nature of their results to the same degree as their Spanish peers. Within the Anglo-Saxon academic writing tradition, which has been adopted by Spanish authors, much attention is given to communication with a reader, making this an explicit feature of the academic writing style. Frequent signaling of the author's presence "conveys the impression that the reader is invited to take a tour of the text together with the author, who acts as a guide" (Mauranen, 1993, p. 16). Within the

Russian academic writing tradition, the use of hedges is not advisable since these metadiscourse devices may weaken the propositional content of knowledge claims and reduce the degree of reliability for authorial statements. One more reason for the lower number of hedges is presumably poor knowledge of the interactional metadiscourse markers in English. Russian writers are often unaware of the need to use hedges, thus failing to meet the expectations of the English-language academic community. In contrast, Spanish scholars, who seem to be acquainted with Anglophone academic writing conventions, hedge their discourse more heavily. Different cultures show different degrees of hedging depending on the impact of academic writing traditions.

Hedging markers in the corpus of RA abstracts are expressed by the modal verbs *can*, *could*, *may*, and *might*, the adjectives *possible* and *apparent*, the verbs *seem*, *appear*, and *try*, the adverbs and adverbial expressions *possibly*, *probably*, *largely*, *rather*, *supposedly*, *somewhat*, *apparently*, and *in many respects*. In both sub-corpora, the most frequent forms of hedging are the modal verbs often followed by the link verbs other than *be* (*seem*, *appear*). As regards the types of modal verbs used in the two sub-corpora, certain differences have to be mentioned here (see Table 4).

The smaller number of modal verbs as hedging devices in the Russian sub-corpus is likely due to the linguistic characteristics of the Russian language in which modality meanings are more frequently expressed with lexical modals. One may therefore say that while Spanish writers employ

**Table 4** Distribution of Modal Verbs in the Corpus per 1,000 Words

Modal Verbs	SC1	SC2
Can	5	6
May	3	4
Might	2	5
Could	0	5
Total	10	20



modal verbs, Russian authors are inclined to stick to lexical modals (*possible, probably, probably, etc.*). What is also interesting here is the predominance of the primary modal auxiliaries (*can, may*) in the Russian sub-corpus whereas in the Spanish one, the primary and secondary modals (*might, could*) are equally used. Another interesting finding is the overuse of *can* by both Russian and Spanish scholars, which is perhaps because this modal is the first one learned in EFL classrooms.

**Boosters**

As for boosters, results indicate that Spanish scholars use a wider range of boosters and include some more boosters per 1,000 words than their Russian peers (see Table 3). This reveals that Spanish authors make their claims in a slightly more assertive tone. A similar conclusion has been reached by Mur-Dueñas (2011) in her intercultural analysis of metadiscourse features in research articles written in English and Spanish. Here are some examples from both sub-corpora.

Example 7: First, the approach *has revealed* that the image schema CONTAINER guides semantics of an array of various adjectives independent of their morphemic structure or date of origin (SC1, own emphasis).

Example 8: The quantitative data *shows* that stakeholders believe that language, methodological and classroom management competences are equally necessary for a CLIL teacher (SC2, own emphasis).

Unlike hedges, boosters are employed in Examples 7 and 8 to suppress alternatives, allowing authors to express their certainty in what they say. In the above instances, the authors anticipate possible responses from the reader but choose to prevent them.

Example 9: This *finding* and the practical application of examples to video games *show* that it is a medium that *can* be interpreted with the resources of literary studies (SC1, own emphasis).

The boosting devices *show* and *finding* in Example 9 are used to express conviction with which the author communicates his/her research

**Table 5** Distribution of the Most Frequent Boosting Devices in the Corpus per 1,000 Words

Boosters	SC1	SC2
Show/demonstrate/reveal/determine	4.2	8.1
Evident/evidently, obvious/obviously, apparent/apparently, clear/clearly	2.9	7.7
Must	0.1	2.4

results and constructs “rapport by marking involvement with the topic and solidarity with an audience, taking a joint position against their voices” (Hyland, 2005, p. 53). Along with the boosters, the writer uses the hedge *can*, which implies that the statement is based on the writer’s plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge.

Analysis showed that, unlike hedging, boosting is mainly expressed by semantic verbs such as *show, demonstrate, reveal, and determine* (see Table 5). Adjectives and adverbs of evidentiality such as *evident/evidently, clear/clearly, obvious/obviously, and apparent/apparently* rank second among the hedging markers employed in the corpus. This preference seems to be a universal feature of RA abstracts included in both sub-corpora. The modal verb *must*, which fulfills the function of boosting, is rarely used in both sub-corpora.

The less frequent use of boosters by Russian authors may also be explained regarding Russian academic traditions according to which it is not advisable to strengthen own arguments which are not common knowledge or evidence-based facts. These differences may be accounted for in connection with the view that Russian authors tend to produce more neutral utterances. Another inference can be drawn: while in Spanish academic discourse, the writer is responsible for effective communication, in the Russian one the reader has to make efforts to understand the texts (Clyne, 1987; Hyland, 2005). Russian authors seem to be less dialogic and often ignore readers who accept new knowledge. As regards the use of individual boosting devices, more similarities than differences in both sub-corpora were found. The difference was

in the frequency of occurrence of boosters compared to other interactional metadiscourse markers.

### Attitude Markers

The attitude markers rank second in both sub-corpora. These metadiscourse devices convey explicit opinions of writers and “create a research space and bring into being a linkage with the disciplinary community” (Khedri et al., 2015, p. 311). They indicate authorial judgments and convey either positive or negative evaluations. Here are some samples from the corpus.

Example 10: Though, the peer review process serves as a filtering and assessment system, it is believed to *greatly* contribute to *better* quality of scholarly journals (SC1, own emphasis).

Example 11: These skills are *essential* for EFL students who express themselves in oral presentations or written assignments (SC2, own emphasis).

These statements foreground the author, contribute to an author’s persona, and establish a link with the academic community. Analysis evidenced that Russian writers use these markers less frequently than their Spanish peers, who explicitly establish their claims through the use of attitude markers. This finding suggests that Russian authors consider academic style more impersonal, and communicating factual information rather than taking overt personal responsibility for their claims is favored. On the contrary, Spanish writers try not to hide their identities and authority behind the *shield of objectivity*. Assessing the importance or disputability of research problems are key features of RA abstracts written by Spanish authors, who take a more active position on these issues. In Example 12, the significance attitude marker is used to show the role of the research object.

Example 12: This article deals with a *crucial* variable in CLIL settings: socioeconomic status, which was measured via parents’ educational level (high, medium or low) (SC2, own emphasis).

In the corpus, attitude markers are expressed by verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns showing the

**Table 6** Distribution of the Most Frequent Attitude Markers in the Corpus per 1,000 Words

SC1	SC2
Important (4.1)	Important (8.8)
Efficient (2.3)	Useful (3.4)
Useful (1.4)	Considerably (3.3)
Significance (1.2)	Essential (2.9)
Problematically (1.1)	Underdeveloped (1.4)

author’s attitudes and encode positive or negative values: *agree, prefer, important, interesting, useful, fruitful, effective, correctly, persuasively, problematically, hopefully, importance, and significance*. The most frequent attitude markers in the two sub-corpora are presented in Table 6.

As can be seen in Table 6, the most frequent attitude marker in the Russian and Spanish sub-corpora is the adjective *important*. In general, there are no striking differences in the types of attitude markers. However, the total frequency of these devices differs significantly: The Spanish writers use attitudinal metadiscourse almost three times more frequently than the Russian ones. The reason for this might be that the academic discourse of Spanish authors is not so impersonal and detached due to the influence of the Anglophone style, which is stronger in the Spanish academic community. In Russia, this tendency is less pronounced since the Russian academic community is more reserved and follows own academic writing traditions.

### Self-Mention Markers

The frequency of self-mention markers found in the corpus is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that the distribution of this group of interactional markers across the academic cultures under study is also uneven. The largest number of all cases of self-mention are in the Russian sub-corpus with an average of 8 per 1,000 words, compared with only 3.6 per 1,000 words in the Spanish sub-corpus. Here are two examples from the corpus.

**Table 7** Distribution of Self-Mentions in the Corpus per 1,000 Words

Self -mention	SC1	SC2
First-person plural pronouns in single-authored RA abstracts	2.6	0
First-person plural pronouns in RA abstracts written by multiple authors	1.9	1.1
First-person singular pronouns in single-authored RA abstracts	1.1	1.2
First-person plural possessive in single-authored RA abstracts	1.9	0
First-person plural possessive in RA abstracts written by multiple authors	0.5	1
First-person singular possessive in single-authored RA abstracts	0	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Example 13: *Our* findings showed that quantitatively the most common semantic pattern used by Higher School of Economics students is actor + (augmentor) evaluator + physical/mental action performed by the actor + (augmentor) evaluator (SC1, own emphasis).

Example 14: In order to address this issue, *I* will analyse two 21<sup>st</sup>-century Latinx texts that delve into the intricate ways in which transnational forces collide with economic, cultural and political processes that persistently revolve around the framework of the nation-state (SC2, own emphasis).

It is interesting that in the Spanish sub-corpus, first-person plural pronouns are used only in RA abstracts written by two or more authors (Example 15). In single-authored articles, no occurrence of these pronouns is found. In the Russian sub-corpus, the first-person plural pronouns are more frequent (i. e. 72 %) and often used in RA abstracts written by one author (see Example 16).

Example 15: On this basis, *we* propose guidelines for the levelling of these expressions in order to guide the Spanish teacher in their selection, thus contributing to the improvement of their teaching in the SFL / 2L [Spanish as a Foreign/Second Language] classroom (SC2, own emphasis).

Example 16: It reaffirms *our* belief that *we* have identified, in full, the shared “alphabet of human thoughts” (SC1, own emphasis).

In Example 14, the first-person plural pronoun refers exclusively to the multiple authors, as they are followed by actions that they took in their research process. In Example 15, the Russian author employs *our* and *we* to refer to himself.

The overuse of first-person plural pronouns in RA abstracts written by Russian authors might reflect cultural preferences or inexperience with Saxonian academic conventions (Hyland, 2005). Spanish authors adhere to the Anglophone academic writing tradition where the employment of first-person plural pronouns in single-authored articles is less common. Russian writers, in turn, adopt well-established writing standards of their national academic community which are difficult to overcome. The heavy use of these pronouns is seen as inappropriately informal for English academic argumentation, while in the Russian academic community *we* signals the author’s desire to enhance the significance of the work presenting his/her claims as the opinion of a scientific school (Krapivkina, 2014).

Findings on the differences in metadiscourse are in line with previous intercultural studies (e.g., Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Belyakova, 2017; Crismore et al., 1993; Mur-Dueñas, 2011; Mauranen, 1993; Hyland, 2005), which indicate that the extent of employment of metadiscourse markers is determined by the cultural context in which the academic texts are produced. In Russia, the native academic writing culture is more influential and has stronger power in establishing the authorial identity. Russian authors produce their academic texts relying on previously written texts, thus following some well-established standards, which are difficult to overcome irrespective of the degree of command of English. In addition, due to the reserved nature of the Russian academic community, scholars seem to be unaware of the need to use metadiscourse devices. Hence, they fall short when meeting the expectations of the international academic community. In contrast, the academic discourse of Spanish writers has been influenced by the growing expansion of Anglophone

academic conventions. It is not so impersonal and detached but more interpretative due to the influence of the Anglophone style. Having mastered the English standards of academic writing, Spanish scholars have incorporated themselves into the international academic discourse community while Russian ones show deficient handling of metadiscourse resources and need more instructions in writing academic English. This is especially important because of the pressure on Russian scholars to publish in English. Like many other countries, Russia has imposed policies to promote publications in international academic journals to increase the country's share of global research output. As far as the Anglophone writing culture dominates in the academic world, awareness of its rhetorical strategies is useful for L2 writers if they want to meet the expectations of the international academic community and find a space in the Anglophone international publication context. This means that Russian writers should adjust their discursive practices when addressing an international audience to meet readers' expectations in the global cultural context.

### Conclusion

This paper explored interactional metadiscourse markers in English-language RA abstracts written by Russian and Spanish authors from a contrastive perspective. At the beginning of this research, the distribution of interactional metadiscourse devices was thought to be different in the two sub-corpora. This is because Spanish academic discourse has been influenced by the growing expansion of Anglophone academic conventions to a larger extent. This hypothesis was confirmed by the research results obtained. A comparison of the RA abstracts extracted from Russian and Spanish journals showed that both academic communities manifest different metadiscourse preferences. Academic writers from the Spanish academia leave more traces of themselves in their writing, claim personal responsibility for the information, avoid generalization, and take far more explicitly involved positions.

In terms of a greater understanding of meta-discourse, findings may contribute to language teaching for students of English for Academic Purposes in non-Anglophone countries. Measures should be taken to develop academic writing skills in L2 writers. Although there are some textbooks, which offer guidelines on the use of metadiscourse devices, they are rather general and do not focus on RA abstracts. It seems that explicit teaching of metadiscourse in RA abstracts can help raise awareness of the interactional aspect of this genre among L2 writers and increase their ability to interact with readers and make their claims more persuasive. Results can assist curriculum designers to create materials for L2 writers.

The research results presented here are limited due to the small extent of the corpus and should be understood as trends in the two academic cultures which can be confirmed or disproved by large-scale comparative research. Further research might deal with interactional devices investigated from other perspectives. It would be interesting to compare the distribution of metadiscourse markers in other disciplines. Diachronic variation in the use of the interactional metadiscourse markers in RA abstracts could be also of interest. Despite the above-mentioned limitations, this study could be taken as a starting point for future studies of the academic metadiscourse from cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural, or diachronic perspectives. The results can be considered in teaching English for academic purposes.

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# VARIATION AND USE OF RELATIVIZERS IN THE SPANISH OF MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

VARIACIÓN Y USO DE LOS RELATIVIZADORES EN EL ESPAÑOL DE MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA:  
UN ESTUDIO DE CORPUS

VARIATION ET UTILISATION DES RELATIFS SUR L'ESPAGNOL DE MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIE :  
UNE ÉTUDE DE CORPUS

VARIAÇÃO E USO DE RELATIVOS EM ESPANHOL MEDELLÍN, COLÔMBIA: UM ESTUDO  
DE CORPUS

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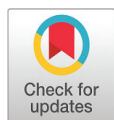
## ABSTRACT

The study of relativizers in the Spanish language has not been quite explored from a sociolinguistic point of view. A few research papers have analyzed varieties found in Santiago de Chile, Mexico City, Sevilla, and Madrid. Nevertheless, none of them has addressed a Colombian variety in depth. This variationist study aims to fill the gap by reporting the results of a correlational study focused on the use and variation of relativizers in the PRESEEA-Medellín corpus. An ANOVA test, a Games-Howell test, multiple Tukey's tests, and pairwise comparisons t-tests with Bonferroni correction were run to identify the variables with significant effects (e.g., geographical position, gender, level of education, and social class). Results suggest that, while there is significant diatopic variation in the selection of relativizers, diatopic variables have a minor role in their frequency of use. It was also noted that while the use of the pronoun *que* tends to spread in all varieties of Spanish, the relative adjectives *cuyo* and *cuanto* continue their trend towards disuse. Further studies are necessary to determine if this tendency to simplification is related to psycholinguistic constraints (i.e. mental load) or functional aspects of Spanish. Finally, this study opens the doors to the analysis of relativizers in other varieties of Colombian Spanish from a sociolinguistic perspective.

**Keywords:** Colombian Spanish, linguistic variation, relative pronouns, relativizers, Spanish varieties, Spanish of Medellín

## RESUMEN

El estudio de los relativizadores en español no ha sido muy estudiado desde una perspectiva sociolingüística. Algunos artículos de investigación han analizado las variedades observadas en Santiago de Chile, Ciudad de México, Sevilla y Madrid, pero ninguno ha estudiado en profundidad la variedad colombiana. El presente



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estudio variacionista busca llenar ese vacío con un reporte de los resultados de un estudio correlacional centrado en el uso y la distribución de las cláusulas relativas en el corpus PRESEEA-Medellín. Se realizó una prueba ANOVA, una prueba de Games-Howell, múltiples ensayos de Tukey y ensayos t con comparaciones por pares con corrección Bonferroni con el fin de identificar las variables con efectos significativos (léase ubicación geográfica, género, nivel educativo y clase social). Los resultados indican que, aun cuando hay una variación diatópica importante en la selección de los relativizadores, las variables diastráticas tienen un rol menor en su frecuencia de uso. También se observó que mientras el uso del pronombre *que* tiende a difundirse en todas las variedades del español, los adjetivos relativos *cuyo* y *cuanto* siguen una tendencia decreciente que parece llevar al desuso. Se requieren nuevos estudios para establecer si esta tendencia a la simplificación tiene relación con limitaciones psicolingüísticas (es decir, recarga mental) o en aspectos funcionales del español. Finalmente, el presente estudio abre la puerta del análisis de los relativizadores en otras variedades del español colombiano desde una perspectiva sociolingüística.

**Palabras clave:** español colombiano, variación lingüística, pronombres relativos, variedades del español, español de Medellín

### RÉSUMÉ

L'étude des relatifs sur l'espagnol n'a pas été très étudiée d'un point de vue sociolinguistique. Certains articles de recherche ont analysé les variétés observées à Santiago du Chili, Mexico, Séville et Madrid, mais aucun n'a étudié en profondeur la variété colombienne. La présente étude variationniste cherche à combler cette lacune en rapportant les résultats d'une étude corrélacionnelle portant sur l'utilisation et la distribution des clauses relatives dans le corpus PRESEEA-Medellín. Un test ANOVA, un test de Games-Howell, des tests multiples de Tukey et des tests t avec des comparaisons par paires et correction de Bonferroni ont été réalisés afin d'identifier les variables ayant des effets significatifs (c'est-à-dire la localisation géographique, le sexe, le niveau d'éducation et la classe sociale). Les résultats indiquent que, bien qu'il existe une variation diatopique significative dans le choix des relatifs, les variables diastratiques jouent un rôle mineur dans leur fréquence d'utilisation. Il a également été observé que si l'utilisation du pronom *que* tend à être répandue dans toutes les variétés d'espagnol, les adjectifs relatifs *cuyo* et *cuanto* suivent une tendance décroissante qui semble mener à la désuétude. Des nouvelles études doivent être conduites pour établir si cette tendance à la simplification est liée à des contraintes psycholinguistiques (voir, une surcharge mentale) ou à des aspects fonctionnels de l'espagnol. Enfin, cette étude ouvre la porte à l'analyse des relatifs dans des autres variétés de l'espagnol colombien depuis une perspective sociolinguistique.

**Mots-cléf:** espagnol colombien, variation linguistique, pronoms relatifs, variétés de l'espagnol, espagnol de Medellín

### RESUMO

O estudo dos pronomes relativos em espanhol não tem sido muito estudado de uma perspectiva sociolingüística. Alguns artigos de pesquisa analisaram as variedades observadas em Santiago do Chile, Cidade do México, Sevilha e Madrid, mas nenhum deles estudou a variedade colombiana em profundidade. O presente estudo variacionista procura preencher esta lacuna relatando os resultados de um estudo correlacional com foco no uso e distribuição de cláusulas relativas no



corpus PRESEEA -Medellín. Um teste PRESEEA, um teste Games-Howell, múltiplos testes Tukey e testes t com comparações em pares com a correção Bonferroni foram realizados a fim de identificar variáveis com efeitos significativos (isto é, localização geográfica, gênero, nível educacional e classe social). Os resultados indicam que, embora haja variação diatópica significativa na escolha dos relativos, as variáveis diastráticas desempenham um papel menor na sua frequência de uso. Também foi observado que enquanto o uso do pronome *que* tende a ser difundido em todas as variedades de espanhol, os adjetivos relativos *cuyo* (cujo) e *cuanto* (quanto) seguem uma tendência decrescente que parece levar ao desuso. Estudos adicionais são necessários para estabelecer se esta tendência de simplificação está relacionada a restrições psicolinguísticas (ou seja, sobrecarga mental) ou a aspectos funcionais do espanhol. Finalmente, o presente estudo abre a porta para a análise de relativizadores em outras variedades de espanhol colombiano a partir de uma perspectiva sociolinguística.

**Palavras chave:** espanhol colombiano, variação linguística, pronomes relativos, variedades do espanhol, espanhol do Medellín

## Introduction

The distribution of relative particles' use in Spanish has not received sufficient attention considering the large number of linguistic varieties existing in America and Spain. Indeed, research on the subject has only been devoted to those varieties from Santiago de Chile (Olguín, 1981), Mexico City (Palacios, 1983; Mendoza, 1984), Sevilla (Carbonero, 1985), Madrid (Gutiérrez, 1985), Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Herrera, 1995) and a few other Ibero-American cities (DeMello, 1993), but none of the studies has addressed Colombian Spanish varieties in depth.

The present manuscript reports a study that aimed to fill this variationist void through the examination of relative clauses retrieve from the corpus PRESEEA-Medellín (*Project for the sociolinguistic study of Spanish from Spain and America*). It seeks to answer two questions: firstly, to what extent do social predictors condition relativizers selection in Medellín? And secondly, how do the outcomes of this speech community compare to those of other communities? The main purpose of the study was, therefore, to quantify the degree to which demographic and social predictors such as gender, age, social class, and level of education affect the frequency and distribution of relative pronouns, relative adjectives, and relative adverbs in such a variety. The investigation also intended to replicate and re-examine some of the previous works related to the topic and provide valuable empirical baseline data to help produce subsequent research on Colombian Spanish.

The analysis departed from the hypothesis that extra-linguistic variables can explain a percentage of the variation in the choice of the complementizers *que*, *quien*, *como*, *donde*, *cuando*, *cuyo*, *cuanto*, and the complex relativizer composed by an *article* and *que* or *cual*, despite the fact that grammatical restrictions are thought to have a major role.

This kind of language studies from a social perspective acquires relevance when it is understood that language has a social function

both as a means of communication and also as a way of identifying social groups, and to study speech without reference to the society which uses it to exclude the possibility of finding social explanations for the structures that are used. (Hudson, 2001, p. 3)

In this vein, Berruto (2010) recalls that the frequency of cases in which the social aspect determines the internal form of grammar is very low; nonetheless, diastratic variation is expected when the focus of analysis is the distribution in the uses of the structures generated by the grammar. From this perspective, the study sheds light on the variables conditioning relativizers distribution and may be useful to unify dissimilar outcomes found in previous analyses. Additionally, this research fits into the sociolinguistic intention of expanding the knowledge of language variation, seeking to understand the social usage of the linguistic faculty. It cooccurs with other variationist studies carried out in Colombia such as the analysis of subject pronoun expression in Medellín (Orozco & Hurtado, 2021) and the Caribbean (De la Rosa, 2020; Pérez & Camacho, 2021); the research about T-V distinction and nominal address forms in the speech communities of Bogotá (Mahecha, 2021), Cali (Grajales & Marmolejo, 2021) and Medellín (Arias, et al., 2016); and the examination of some sociophonetic phenomena, for instance, the diastratic variation of intonation found in women from Medellín (Muñoz, 2021).

## Theoretical Framework

In this section the grammatical rules that condition relative selection and the main problems of their classification will be examined. Furthermore, some studies that have approached the topic from a variationist point of view will also be mentioned to make clear the starting point of this research.

### Relativizers

The *Nueva gramática de la lengua española* (NGLE, 2009) characterizes relative pronouns based on three dimensions: a syntactic one, a semantic one, and a morphological one. From the syntactic

**Table 1** Syntactic Classification of the Relativizers

Syntactic Class	Relativizer	Examples
Pronouns	<i>quien, que, cuanto, article cual, article que</i>	<i>Quien termine el examen debe salir.</i> Whoever finishes the exam must leave. <i>Cuanto diga será usado en su contra.</i> What you say will be used against you.
Adverbs modifying a verbal phrase	<i>cuando, como, donde, adonde, cuanto</i>	<i>Avísame cuando llegues.</i> Let me know when you arrive.
Possessive determiners	<i>article cual, cuyo</i>	<i>Esa es la niña cuyo padre es piloto.</i> That's the girl whose father is a pilot.
Quantifiers of a nominal phrase	<i>cuanto</i>	<i>Le compraban cuanto cosa se le antojaba.</i> They bought him whatever thing he wanted.
Quantifiers of an adjectival phrase or an adverbial phrase	<i>cuan, cuanto</i>	<i>Cuanto más trabajes, mejor.</i> The more you work, the better.

Source: Real Academia de la Lengua Española (2009).

**Table 2** Semantic Traits and Relativizers

Feature	[+Person]	[+Object]	[+Place]	[+Time]	[+Manner]	[+Quantity]
Relativizer (Spanish)	Que, quien, cual	Que, cual	Donde	Cuando	Como	Cuan, cuanto

point of view, Porto Dapena (2003) believes that relativizers have a double function: They anaphorically reproduce the lexical content of an antecedent, and, at the same time, they serve as a conjunction between a main and a subordinate clause. Spanish relativizers can be part of three paradigms depending on whether they take the place of an argument, adjunct, or attribute (See Table 1, sections a and b), or whether they modify another expression as definite adjectives or quantifiers (See Table 1, sections c, d, and e).

From a morphological perspective, the NGLÉ (2009) divides relativizers into those that possess pronominal or adjectival inflection (number: *quien / quienes, cual / cuales*; gender and number: *cuanto[s], cuanta[s], cuyo[s], cuya[s]*) and those that behave as adverbs and, hence, do not show any kind of morphological variation (*cuando, donde, como*). Relativizers can be further split into simple (*que, quien, cuando, donde, como*) and complex (definite article and *cual* or *que*). The forms *el cual / la cual / lo cual / las cuales / los cuales*

are always complex. *El que / la que / las que / los que* can be considered complex pronouns just when they are not the head of a *semi-free relative clause*, that is to say, when the grammatical values of the elided antecedent are not retrieved by a definite article (Bello, 2021). As a general rule, “the antecedent of the complex relativizers appears expressly and is always external to them” (NGLÉ, 2009, p. 44, own translation). This is not the case of example (1), where the relativizer *que* refers to a determiner phrase that contains an implicit nominal phrase. In example (2), on the other hand, the determiner and the relativizer formed an indivisible syntactic segment (complex relativizer).

(1) ¡El Ø que hizo eso me las va a pagar!  
Whoever did it will pay for it!

(2) Las mujeres con las que salgo son siempre malvadas.  
The women I date are always mean.

From the semantic parameter, relativizers encompass different semantic features (See Table 2) that

are checked in the uttered or tacit antecedent. The NGLÉ (2009) and Gili (1980) suggest that in *free relative clauses* the antecedent is contained within the relativizer. Consequently, the adverbs *cuando*, *donde*, *como* and the pronoun *quien* would comprise in their meaning the constructions *el momento en que*, *el lugar en que*, *el modo en que* and *la persona que* respectively.

Regarding the functions that relative pronouns could perform, complex pronouns have in common the fact that they are limited to prepositional clauses while the main differences in their use are caused by prosodic requirements. *Que*, definite article and *que* or *cual* have a complementary distribution: whereas the first is used in clauses without a preposition, complex relativizers are — almost — exclusively used as part of a prepositional phrase. Secondly, the pronoun *quien* can appear in all syntactic contexts as long as the antecedent has the trait [+ human]. Nonetheless, it cannot be the subject of a restrictive clause unless there is no explicit antecedent (*free-relative clause*). Thirdly, the adjective *cuyo* does not perform any argument or adjunct function since it never directly modifies the verb of the subordinate clause. *Cuanto*, on the other hand, has greater syntactic freedom because, in addition to being an adjective, it is also an adverb and a pronoun. Its use is limited to restrictive clauses without prepositions. When *cuanto* introduces free relative clauses, it might perform the functions of indirect object, subject, or direct object of appositive relative sentences. Finally, the classification of adverbial relativizers is less sharp: they play for certain the role of adjuncts. Their usage as subjects, direct objects, *complementos de régimen preposicional* (prepositional complement), and genitive complements are infrequent or very close to the characteristics of indirect interrogatives. Although for traditional grammarians these argument functions are introduced by means of adverbial conjunctions (without antecedent) instead of relative adverbs (with explicit antecedent), this work will adopt the theoretical framework proposed by the Real Academia de la Lengua Española (NGLÉ, 2009), and therefore, it

will accept the notion of implicit antecedent (free relative clauses).

### Studies on Relativizers

The study of relativizers usage in Spanish has had rather limited coverage in comparison with other linguistic phenomena. In the 1980s, for example, Olgún (1981) attempted to identify the frequency of relative particles in Santiago de Chile to determine the most usual syntactic functions of the clause and describe the influence of gender and age on those frequency. Considering a corpus of 3,408 tokens, the author found that the average usage of relativizers was higher in the most mature generation than in the other two age groups and that gender did not create any kind of variation in the results. Furthermore, the research revealed that the pronoun *que* was the most frequent (94.57 %), followed by *cual* (3.25 %), *quien* (0.96 %), the adverb *donde* (0.79 %), and the determiners *cuyo* (0.35 %), and *cuanto* (0.08 %).

In another research, Mendoza (1984) described the use of relativizers in the low-prestige norm of Mexico City. He identified 1,495 relative forms belonging to 46 interviewees. In an analogous manner to Olgún (1981), the author found the dominant presence of pronoun *que* (90.2 %), but in the rest of the cases, the distributions were quite divergent: *donde* (1.2 %), *cuando* (0.9 %), *quien* (0.9 %), *cual* (0.3 %), *cuyo* (0 %), and *cuanto* (0 %). This may indicate a diatopic distinction and a diastratic one, since, as confirmed by subsequent research (Álvarez, 1987; Suñer, 2001), the determiners *cuyo* and *cuanto* have almost disappeared from the low-prestige norms and have a very limited scope in the high ones.

In the 1990s, George DeMello (1993) selected eleven corpora belonging to the *Proyecto de estudio coordinado de la norma lingüística culta de las principales ciudades de Iberoamérica y de la Península Ibérica* (Coordinated study project of the high-prestige norm of the main cities of Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula) to compare the use of



the relative pronouns with a human antecedent (*article cual*, *article que*, *que* and *quien*) in the standard linguistic norm of eleven Ibero-American cities (e.g., Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas, La Habana, among others). The results showed that *que* lost its primacy in restrictive relative clauses with a preposition and a human antecedent. A case in point is Excerpt 3:

- (3) La última es la de un contador al cual entrevisté.  
The last one is from an accountant whom I interviewed (DeMello, 1993, own translation)

In this construction, the eleven cities were divided into those that preferred *quien* (Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas, La Habana, La Paz, and San Juan), those that favored the complex relativizers *article cual* or *article que* (Santiago, Madrid, Lima) and those that had no predilection at all (Sevilla and Mexico City).

Two years later, Herrera (1995) examined the use of relativizers in the Spanish variety spoken in Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Canary Islands). The variables of his doctoral thesis included extralinguistic predictors such as age, level of instruction, gender, and sociocultural background. The scholar performed a multiple regression test to infer the theoretical probability of the appearance of relativizers in the speech of 37 participants. Some of the most relevant conclusions concerned the fact that gender had no real effect on the number of pronouns used by the participants. Similarly, the researcher found a negative correlation between age, social level and the number of pronouns produced. Additionally, Herrera (1995) reported greater pronominal variation among women. She also identified a major use of *que* and a higher volume of prepositional deletion among individuals over 55 and from lower social classes. Example 4 illustrates this:

- (4) Un hermano de Andrés {que ~ al que} llaman Benito  
A brother of Andrés that they call Benito (Herrera, 1995, p. 174, own translation).

Afterward, González Díaz (2001) published a variationist study of *que galicado*<sup>1</sup>: a structure in which ‘*que*’ takes the place of a canonical relativizers in *cláusulas hendidas* (cleft sentences with the copulative verb before the emphasized phrase and the relative clause, as in Excerpt 5) and *cláusulas pseudohendidas inversas* (cleft sentences with the emphasized phrase before the copulative verb and the relative clause, as in Excerpt 6): “if the antecedent is a noun phrase (NP), the canonical form must be *el/la/lo/los/las que, quien/quienes*; if the antecedent is locative, the canonical form is *donde*; if it is a modal, *como*; if it is an adverb of time, *donde*” (Bentivoglio & Sedano, 2017, p. 113, own translation).

- (5) Fue entonces {cuando ~ que} habló con mi mamá  
It was then {when ~ that} he spoke with my mother (González-Díaz, 2001, p. 3, own translation)

- (6) María fue {quien ~ la que} habló con mi mamá  
María was the one who spoke with my mother (González-Díaz, 2001, p. 3, own translation)

The researcher examined a spoken corpus of 36 participants from Caracas and identified 152 occurrences of cleft sentences. González Díaz (2001) defined three social variables (i.e., gender, age, and socioeconomic level) and two linguistic variables (i.e., syntactic function and number of syllables) based on previous studies by Sedano (1998), Alario, and Navarro (1997). Findings showed an almost identical percentage of canonical forms use (49.5 %) and *que galicado* (51.5 %). Also, they revealed that, while age and gender do not have a significant impact on the choice of the canonical pronoun, the socio-cultural level has a substantial effect on it (52 % upper class; 62.7 % middle class; 38 % lower class).

In addition to the description of *que galicado* in the speech of Valencia (Venezuela), Navarro (2006) also examined the correlation between social

1 A relative clause from French origin that was previously considered incorrect in the Spanish language, adding *que* as a relative adverb after the verb to be.

predictors and relativizer selection in a corpus of 484 interviews. As in all previous research on the subject, the author recognized a preeminent use of *que* (65.65 %); however, the percentages were not as extreme as those in Olguín's (1981) (i.e., 94.57 %), Mendoza's (1984) (i.e., 90.2 %), DeMello's (1993) (i.e., 96 %), or Herrera's (1995) (i.e., 88 %). The next most frequent relative words in Navarro's (2006) study were *article que* (19.49 %), *donde* (10.37 %), *article cual* (2.35 %), and *quien* (1.83 %). There was a very limited production of *como* (0.29 %), *cuando* (0.22 %), *cuyo* (0.04 %) and *cuanto* (0.02 %). Regarding social variables, the researcher observed that the level of education and income class were the only extralinguistic variables having a real effect on the variation. Conversely, Sedano (1998) discarded these predictors and reported gender as the sole significant variable (women used *que* more often than men). Alario (1991), in turn, indicated that neither the gender nor the socioeconomic level of young speakers explained the alternation.

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Between 2006 and 2018, there were numerous studies on relative pronouns carried out on corpora that, however, aimed at non-sociolinguistic purposes. van der Houwen (2007) for example, studied the use of relative pronouns in Spanish essays written between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries; Balbachan (2011) focused on asymmetries in the use of the definite article and the prepositions in restrictive relative clauses from a semantic-pragmatic perspective; Corredoira (2015) examined relative clauses without an explicit antecedent; López (2016) conducted a functional grammar study on the relativizers in the novel *Don Quijote de la Mancha*; Álvarez (2018) analyzed the simplification of the relative system from 1950 to 2009 starting from the corpora CORDE, CREA, and CORPES XXI; Vellón (2019) described the evolution and conditions of use of the demonstrative pronoun *aquel/aquella* as an antecedent for prepositional relative clauses in the corpus CORDE (Diachronic Corpus of Spanish); Lopes (2019) took advantage of the discursive-functional grammar to trace the pragmatic (topic,

contrast, focus), semantic ([± definite]), and syntactic constraints that allowed the appearance of the resumptive pronouns in the relative clauses of the corpus PRESEEA.

In conclusion, it is evident from this brief overview that relativizers have been studied assiduously in some varieties of Venezuelan, Mexican and Iberian Spanish, but that in others the research has been very general (e.g., in Lima, Bogota or Buenos Aires) or even absent (i.e., in Medellín). Thereby, it was necessary to carry out an updated study on the subject considering three facts: (1) the little sociolinguistic research on the subject since 2000; (2) the existence of this conceptual gap in some linguistic communities; (3) and the lack of agreement among linguists on the conditioning variables of relativizer selection.

## Method

This corpus-based study is inserted in the sociolinguistic scope. It has an exploratory design since it does not consider all the explanatory variables that could account for the variation of relativizers. It uses quantitative tools for the description of the phenomenon such as an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and some post-hoc tests. Two versions of the collected data were proposed: on one hand, the distributions were indicated by taking into consideration the most modern theoretical foundations of Real Academia de la Lengua Española (NGLE, 2009), and in which the notion of relative adverb with implicit antecedent is accepted. This model, especially useful for the analysis of diastatic variation, was named "Medellín – Version 1". On the other hand, since other studies observed have maintained the traditional differentiation between adverbial conjunction and relative adverb (Herrera, 1995; Mendoza, 1984; Navarro, 2006; Olguín, 1981; Palacios, 1983), this paper offers a version of the results omitting the instances of *como*, *cuando*, and *donde* when they have an implicit antecedent. This version of data is called "Medellín – Version 2". A further methodological difference is linked

to the treatment of the complementizers *que* and *article que*, which are distinct relativizers in the NGLÉ, but are grouped in the same variable in the other studies. Consequently, these relativizers are considered separated variables in “Medellín – Version 1”, whereas “Medellín – Version 2” shows both tokens as part of the same variable.

### Corpus and Speech Community

PRESEEA is a project for the creation of a socio-linguistic corpus of Spanish spoken in the most populated urban areas of America and Spain. The corpus of Medellín was collected between 2006 and 2010 by *Grupo de Estudios Sociolingüísticos* [Sociolinguistic Studies] from Universidad de Antioquia by following a uniform stratified sampling scheme and a system of semi-structured interviews (González-Díaz, 2008). The questions revolved around different familiar topics such as weather, problems of the city, and personal queries about the interviewee’s employment, family,

and daily routines, among others. The compendium of audios and transcriptions was made up of 119 interviews of about forty-five minutes each. It included four age groups: young (ages 15-19), first-generation (ages 20-34), second-generation (ages 35-55), and third-generation (ages 56+). The first level was omitted to guarantee comparability with other studies. Consequently, 89 interviews were used. Informants were grouped according to their level of education: primary level (ages 7-13), secondary level (ages 13-19), and higher education level (From second university year on). In the corpus, there were more men (56) than women (33), especially in the third generation and the first level of education (see Table 3).

### Hypothesis

Based on the findings from previous studies cited in the preceding section, this research assumed that an amount of the variation in the use of

Table 3 Proportions of the Corpus PRESEEA-Medellín

Level of education	Social class	Generation I		Generation II		Generation III		Total
		M	W	M	W	M	W	
I	I	4	4	6	4	6	5	29
II	I	3	5	3	2	5	3	21
	II	2		3	2		1	8
III	II	5	4	5	4	2	4	24
	III	1	1	1	2	2		7
		15	14	18	14	15	13	89
		29		32		28		

relativizers can be explained by the diatopic parameter (Medellín, Santa Cruz, Valencia, Mexico, and Santiago de Chile) and by diastratic predictors such as age (20-34, 35-54, 55+), gender, level of education (primary, secondary, or university) and social class (upper-middle-class, lower-middle-class, and lower class). They constitute the underpinnings of variationist sociolinguistics and have proved to

play a determinant role in language variation (e.g., Bayley, 2013; Berruto, 2010; Chambers, 2009; Silva & Enrique, 2017; Tagliamonte, 2006).

The dependent variables coincide with the relativizers *quien*, *donde*, *cuando*, *como*, *cuanto*, and the complex complementizers *article cual* and *article que*, while the independent variables are the social

predictors. The null hypothesis (H0) assumes a lack of correlation between the predictive variables and the response variables. The alternative hypothesis (H1) implies the existence of diastatic and dialectal influence on the anaphoric choice. This assumption is informed by the different outcomes found in the literature review, which suggest a lack of conclusive information as to the effects of social predictors on relativizers selection (Bentivoglio & Sedano, 2017; Corredoira, 2015; Lopes, 2019; Navarro, 2006; Verrón, 2017, among others).

### Data Extraction and Statistical Model

The corpus analysis toolkit *AntConc 3.5.8<sup>2</sup>* was used to identify 26,835 occurrences of *que*, *como*, *donde*, *quien*, *cuando*, *cuanto*, *article cual*, *article que*, *cuyo* and their morphological variants. Since the software detected not only the relative particles but also conjunctive, prepositional, and interrogative variants of the words (the corpus is not annotated), it was necessary to proceed to a classification phase of the propositions. Tabulation and data analysis were carried out using the statistical processing software R. The assumptions of normal distribution, independence of data points, homoskedasticity, and rational scale were checked. It was found that the *level of education* violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. This asymmetry was solved in the *post-hoc* analysis phase by performing a post hoc Games-Howell test instead of a Tukey multiple-comparisons test.

The diastatic variation was examined with a two-way ANOVA and some *post-hoc* tests: *pairwise comparisons t-tests* with the Bonferroni correction, Tukey's tests, and a Games-Howell test. It was decided to indicate the results of the first two tests because, although "Bonferroni has more power when the number of comparisons is small" (Field, 2012, p. 431), Tukey is more reliable with dissimilar

sample sizes. The third test was only applied to the variable with heteroskedasticity since it does not assume homogeneity of variance. According to Cohen (1988), for an ANOVA test, 0.1 is considered a small effect, 0.3 assumes a medium effect, and 0.5 indicates a large effect. A value smaller than 0.1 is considered a marginal effect. The significance threshold of 0.05 was maintained. Outliers were removed from the model, but they were included in the description of the frequency.

### Results

This segment shows the absolute and relative frequency obtained from the analysis of the corpus PRESEEA-Medellín. The results were compared with the effects documented by Herrera (1995), Olgúin (1981), Mendoza (1984), Palacios (1983), and Navarro (2006) to give an idea of the variation in the diatopic parameter. The incidence of social variables on response variables is illustrated in the second part of this section.

#### Diatopic Variation

The relativizers identified in the sociolinguistic corpus of Medellín significantly exceeded the totals presented by the authors for the other Spanish varieties. However, this is a divergence derived from the collection method and the size of the corpora used, as can be seen in the relative frequency of each token (See Table 4).

First of all, from the information contained in Table 4, it is evident that the adoption of the theoretical perspective of the NGLÉ (2009) created a significant discrepancy with the data of the other authors. The unification of *que* and *article que* and the elimination of adverbs without antecedents resulted in an increase in the use of relativizer *que* (46.65 %) and a reduction of *cuando* and *como* from 14.03 % and 7.23 % to 0.34 % and 0.83 % respectively. Although the realizations of *donde* were halved, the relative frequency of this adverb of place was not affected as strongly as that of the other adverbial words. *Quien*, *cuyo* and *article cual*

2 Free software created by Laurence Anthony and downloadable from the dedicated website: <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/>



**Table 4** Relativizers in the Spanish of Medellín, Valencia, Santa Cruz, Mexico, and Santiago de Chile

Relativizer	Medellín version 1		Valencia (Venezuela) (Navarro, 2006)		Medellín Version 2		Santa cruz (Herrera, 1995)		Mexico (low prestige norm) (Mendoza, 1984)		Mexico (high prestige norm) (Palacios, 1983)		Santiago de Chile (high prestige norm) (Olgún, 1981)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Que	3681	44.80	2682	65.6	5593	90.17	1434	88	1349	90.2	1565	86.5	3223	94.6
Quien	25	0.30	75	1.83	25	0.40	24	1.4	14	0.9	28	1.6	33	0.9
Article cual	35	0.43	96	2.35	35	0.56	33	2.0	4	0.3	43	2.4	111	3.2
Article que	1912	23.27	784	19.2										
Cuyo	1	0.01	2	0.04	1	0.02	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1	12	0.3
Donde	805	9.80	424	10.3	477	7.69	84	5.1	110	7.4	133	7.4	27	0.8
Cuando	1151	14.01	9	0.22	21	0.34	26	1.6	18	1.2	19	1.0	-	-
Como	607	7.39	12	0.29	51	0.82	28	1.7	0	0.0	16	0.8	-	-
Cuanto	0	0.00	1	0.02	0	0.00	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.2	2	0.1
Total	8217		4085		6203		1630		1495		1810		3408	
Sample size	89		89		89		37		46		-		89	

have not perceived important changes. Navarro (2006) also separated *que* from the compound form *el que*. If we compare the oral production of Medellín (Version 1) and Valencia, it is observed that Colombian Spanish has a higher use of the complementizer article *que* than the Venezuelan variety. On the contrary, Valencians prefer the relative pronoun *que* without any article more regularly.

Some tokens have a similar behavior along the diatopic axis. The selection of *que* in Medellín (Version 2), for example, fell between the percentage of utterances from Valencia (84.8 %) and the maximum threshold of 94.6 % identified in Santiago. Besides, the values were very close to those of the low prestige norm of Mexico (Mendoza, 1984). These findings are in line with the assiduous tendency of speakers to replace the canonical relativizers with variants containing *que*. The relative adjective *cuyo* appeared only once

in the Colombian variety consistently with the magnitudes of the other linguistic communities. Its propensity to disappear from the informal and formal registers was already perceived by Alcina and Blecua (1975) more than forty years ago. The relative determiner *cuanto* is absent from the informal registers in the three communities that have studied the nonstandard norm for Spanish except for Valencia where it is introduced once. It appears a few times (> 0.2 %) in the standard variety of Mexico and Santiago de Chile.

Additional relativizers had rather dissimilar proportions. Medellín exhibits the smallest productivity of pronoun *quien* and the second most restricted use for relative adverb *cuando* with values very close to those of the Valencian community. For the first relativizer, Santiago de Chile and Mexico (low prestige norm) double the percentage of occurrences of

the Andean city, while Santa Cruz, Mexico (high prestige norm), and Valencia triple or quadruple the Colombian values. Nevertheless, the number of instances is very limited in all varieties (> 1.83 %). Regarding the temporal adverb, the linguistic communities of Mexico (<1.0 %) and Santa Cruz (1.6 %) exceed considerably the oral production of the adverb in Medellín (0.34 %) and Valencia (0.22 %).

Furthermore, the complex relativizer composed by the *definite article* and *cual* is underrepresented in the non-standard varieties of Medellín and Mexico. It is slightly more numerous in the standard norm of Santiago and Mexico, in the Spanish community of the Canary Islands (Santa Cruz), and Venezuela (Valencia). Thus, an effect of the diastratic and diatopic parameters cannot be discarded in the production of this relative pronoun. Despite this, more exhaustive and methodologically homogeneous contrastive studies are needed to verify a real correlation between the variables. The adverb *donde* is the second most frequently repeated relativizer in all the varieties analyzed except for Santiago de Chile. The values are quite uniform even though Medellín has the highest production, only surpassed by Valencia's. The use of adverb *como* in the Andean community reveals important diatopic differences only in comparison with the Canary Island, where the modal relativizer is used twice as often, and in parallel with the low prestige norm of Mexico, which has no occurrences.

In summary, it seems evident that the tendency toward the reduction in the use of relative adjectives (*cuyo* and *cuanto*) and the increase in the frequency of the unmarked form (*que*) has been maintained from the 1980s to the present day. Some anaphoric items such as *que*, *cuyo*, and *cuanto* do not exhibit variation due to the diatopic parameter. In contrast, relative adverbs and the relative pronoun *quien* present some differentiation derived from geographical variation. A more in-depth study is required to accurately delimit the percentage corresponding to the random error and the effect of

the explanatory variable. Subsequent section will focus on the diastratic axis of the study; it will show the most relevant data related to the correlation between age, gender, educational level, sex and the frequency of relatives.

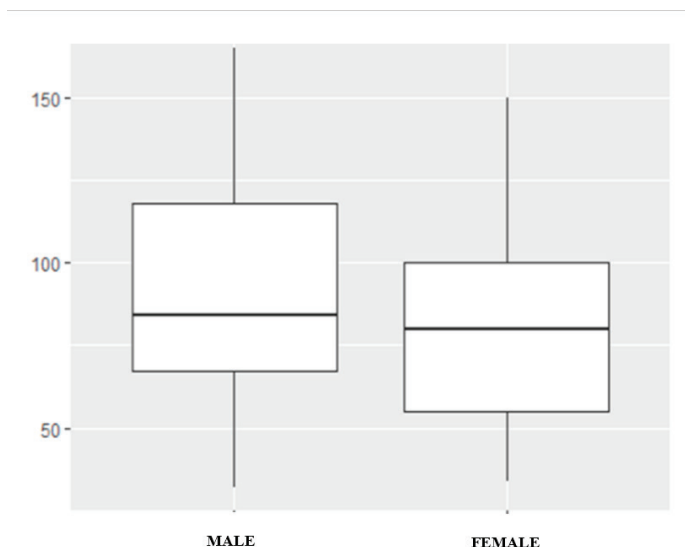
### Diastratic Variation

Three outliers identified with the Grubbs test were eliminated. The assumptions of independence of observations, normal distribution (central limit theorem), at least interval scale (mean between groups), and homoskedasticity were also verified. The result of the Levene test reported that the error variance for gender ( $F(1,84) = 0.09, p = .76$ ), generation ( $F(2,83) = 0.86, p = .42$ ), and social class ( $F(2,83) = 2.48, p = .089$ ) is constant since the results were not significant. The level of education instead presented heteroskedasticity ( $F(2,83) = 4.55, p = .01$ ) and, consequently, a post hoc Games-Howell test was applied instead of a Tukey multiple comparisons test to account for this variance asymmetry (Howell, 2013). The ANOVA revealed a significant effect of the education level ( $F(2, 76) = 3.37, p < .05, \eta^2 = 0.08$ ), social class ( $F(2, 76) = 3.56, p < .05, \eta^2 = 0.08$ ), and the interaction between gender and generation ( $F(2, 76) = 3.26, p < .05, \eta^2 = 0.079$ ) on the production of relativizers. The Adjusted R-squared showed that the model can explain 17 % of the variation in the response variable. Gender and generation alone did not exceed the designated significance threshold (0.05).

### The Effect of Gender

The difference in frequency perceived in men (59.48 % [4888/8217]) and women (40.51 % [3329/8217]) was partly dictated by the lack of symmetry of the corpus (48 men and 41 women). Although, in practice, male participants produced a higher number of relativizers ( $\bar{X} = 92.42, SD = 35.12$ ) than women ( $\bar{X} = 81.19, SD = 34.0$ ), the ANOVA, the Games-Howell test, and the post-hoc t-tests indicated an absence of significance

Figure 1 Boxplot of Frequency by Gender



$t(83.67) = 1.5055, p = 0.136$ . Figure 1 illustrates the overlapping between the data points of both groups. Consequently, it was not possible to reject the null hypothesis according to which both averages are equal. The small effect  $r = 0.16$  also allowed for concluding that gender does not play a predominant role in the number of relativizers.

Additionally, the distribution of the complementizers helps to understand the lack of a statistically significant difference found in the tests. Table 5 shows that *que*, *cuando* and *article que* have very close percentages between the two genders, but the average usage is slightly higher in men for pronouns and in women for the adverb of time.

The forms *donde* and *como* have a medium rate: there is little difference between the proportions of use of the spatial adverb (higher average for men) and a notable discrepancy regarding the modal relativizer (ratio 2:1) in favor of males. The complementizer constituted by *article* and *cual* is preferred by men while *quien* is chosen more often by women.

*The Effect of Age*

Regarding the relationship between age and frequency of use, Tukey’s multiple comparisons test showed a significant difference between Generation 1 and Generation 2,  $t = 2.772, p .05$  but none

Table 5 Gender and Proportion of Relativizers (with Outliers)

Gender	que	el que	cuando	Donde	como	el cual	quien	cuyo	TOT
Freq.	2229	1121	577	479	438	32	11	1	4888
M %	45.60%	22.93%	11.80%	9.80%	8.96%	0.65%	0.23%	0.02%	100%
$\bar{X}$	46.44	23.35	12.02	9.98	9.13	0.67	0.23	0.02	101.83
Freq.	1452	791	574	326	169	3	14		3329
F %	43.62%	23.76%	17.24%	9.79%	5.08%	0.09%	0.42%		100%
$\bar{X}$	35.41	19.29	14.00	7.95	4.12	0.07	0.34		81.20
TOT.	3681	1912	1151	805	607	35	25	1	8217

Note: Red indicates the lowest production, yellow the medium one, and green the highest one.

**Table 6** Generation and Proportion of Relativizers (with Outliers)

Generation		que	el que	cuando	donde	como	el cual	quien	cuyo	Total
<b>G1</b> (29)	Freq.	1042	545	321	242	119	3	5		2277
	%	45.76%	23.94%	14.10%	10.63%	5.23%	0.13%	0.22%		100%
	$\bar{X}$	35.93	18.79	11.07	8.34	4.10	0.10	0.17		78.52
<b>G2</b> (32)	Freq.	1454	789	425	294	321	24	10	1	3318
	R.F	43.82%	23.78%	12.81%	8.86%	9.67%	0.72%	0.30%	0.03%	100%
	$\bar{X}$	45.44	24.66	13.28	9.19	10.03	0.75	0.31	0.03	103.69
<b>G3</b> (28)	Freq.	1185	578	405	269	167	8	10		2622
	%	45.19%	22.04%	15.45%	10.26%	6.37%	0.31%	0.38%		100%
	$\bar{X}$	42.32	20.64	14.46	9.61	5.96	0.29	0.36		93.64

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between G1 and G3,  $t = 1.033$ ,  $p > .05$  or G2 and G3,  $t = -1.611$ ,  $p > .05$ . (R2). The Pairwise comparisons using t-tests and the Games-Howell test, on the other hand, did not reveal any significant pairs. The confidence intervals crossed zero in the last two comparisons, implying that the true difference between their means could be zero (no difference). All comparisons produced insubstantial effects (G1-G2: -0.09; G1-G3: -0.06; G2-G3: 0.03), suggesting that generation change does not have a main role in the production of relativizers.

The ratios of relativizers along the generational axis are maintained for the majority of the variants (see Table 6).

Table 6 evidences that *que* and *article que* retain primacy in all age groups with a percentage of around 45 %. G1's mean is the lowest for all

complementizers. The second generation, on the contrary, exhibits the highest averages of the sample for the two particles and also for *como* and *article cual*. This is probably the cause of the significance found by the Tukey's test. The low frequency of *donde* reflects a lower use of relative clauses with a spatial function introduced by the adverb. The divergence mentioned is not semantic but lexical: when the percentages of the meanings of the relative segments were analyzed, it was noted that the trait [+ place] had the highest frequency in the second generation. From this information, it can be deduced that G2 tends to choose more often variants of the adverb *donde* (*que* or *article que*) to denote space.

Regarding the interaction between the two predictors described, Figure 2 shows a distinction between males and females in how age affects the frequency of relativizers as the lines are not parallel.

**Figure 2** Interactions Between Gender and Generation

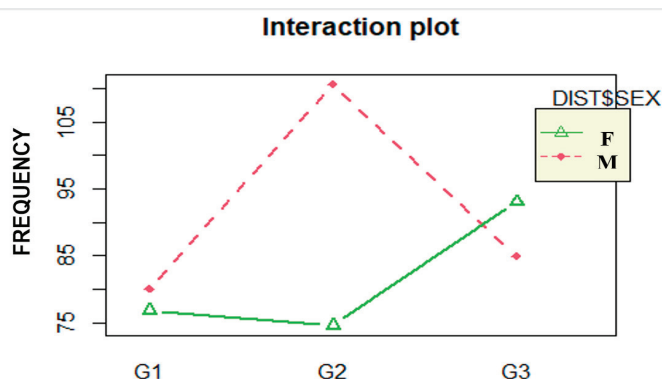
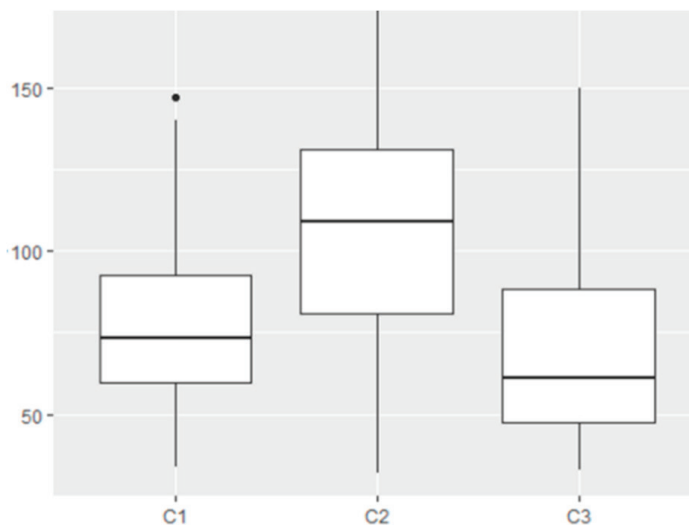




Figure 3 Boxplot of Frequency by Social Class



There were fifteen combinations derived from the two social variables. Tukey’s test revealed that the variations between the words produced by the speakers are much greater for men of the second generation ( $\bar{X} = 110.56$ ,  $DS = 27.78$ ) than for women of the same age group ( $\bar{X} = 74.57$ ,  $DS = 31.37$ ). This difference was significant at an alpha level of 0.037. Nonetheless, the size of the effect is insubstantial. Social class, on the contrary, exhibits some levels with a more prominent effect, as is presented in the next segment.

### The Effect of Social Class

Social class is one of the significant variables identified by R through ANOVA. Figure 3 shows a notable difference between the average of the second class ( $\bar{X} = 103.22$ ,  $SD = 39.18$ ) and that of the first ( $\bar{X} = 78.58$ ,  $SD = 27.01$ ) and the third class ( $\bar{X} = 73.71$ ,  $SD = 40.95$ ).

The Pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni’s correction and Games-Howell’s test found a significant difference only for C1-C2 ( $p = .0052$  and  $p = .010$  respectively). In turn, Tukey’s test did not determine any type of significant divergence: C1 and C2,  $t = 1.24$ ,  $p > .05$ ; C1 and C3,  $t = -0.56$ ,  $p > .05$ ; and C2 and C3,  $t = -2.007$ ,  $p > .05$ . The

effect was small for combinations that include C2, but it was insubstantial for the one in which that level is absent: C1-C2 = -0.14; C1-C3 = 0.02; C2-C3 = 0.12.

Regarding the types of relativizers collected in Medellín, the forms *que* and *article que* did not propose remarkable differentiation between the three social groups, except that C3 choose them slightly more often than the other complementizers. The average use coincided between C1 and C3 for both constructions while C2 had higher values as seen in Table 7.

The adverbs *cuando* 10.47 % and *como* 3.49 % appeared less repeatedly in the discourse of the upper-middle class than in that of the other two social groups: C1 15.06 %, C2 13.27 %. The mean of the last class turned out to be much lower in comparison with the values of the other two levels: it maintained a ratio of 1: 1.64 with C1 and 1: 1.87 with C2 for the time relativizer and a ratio of 1:2.87 with C1 and 1: 2.67 with C2 for the adverb of manner. The relativizer *donde* was the third most repeated element in the second class with a rate of 11.05 %, but it was the fourth in the other two levels: 9.78 % (C1) and 9.63 % (C3). The highest average was observed in the lower-middle

Table 7 Social Class and Proportion of Relativizers (with Outliers)

S. Class		que	el que	cuando	Donde	como	el cual	quien	cuyo	TOT
C1 (50)	Freq.	1796	984	634	412	369	6	9	1	4211
	%	42.65%	23.37%	15.06%	9.78%	8.76%	0.14%	0.21%	0.02%	100%
	X̄	35.92	19.68	12.68	8.24	7.38	0.12	0.18	0.02	84.22
C2 (32)	Freq.	1635	795	463	336	220	25	16		3490
	%	46.85%	22.78%	13.27%	9.63%	6.30%	0.72%	0.46%		100%
	X̄	51.09	24.84	14.47	10.5	6.88	0.78	0.5		109.06
C3 (7)	Freq.	250	133	54	57	18	4			516
	%	48.45%	25.78%	10.47%	11.05%	3.49%	0.78%			100%
	X̄	35.71	19	7.71	8.14	2.57	0.57			73.71

social class [10.5] while those of C1 [8.24] and C3 [8.14] were close together (See Table 7). The complex relativizer *article cual* was selected much more rarely in the first class (0.14 %) than in the second (0.72 %) and third ones (0.75 %). On average, C2 uttered more instances of this word. Finally, there were no occurrences of *quien* in the upper-middle class while the lower-middle class exhibited t-values higher than those of the lower class.

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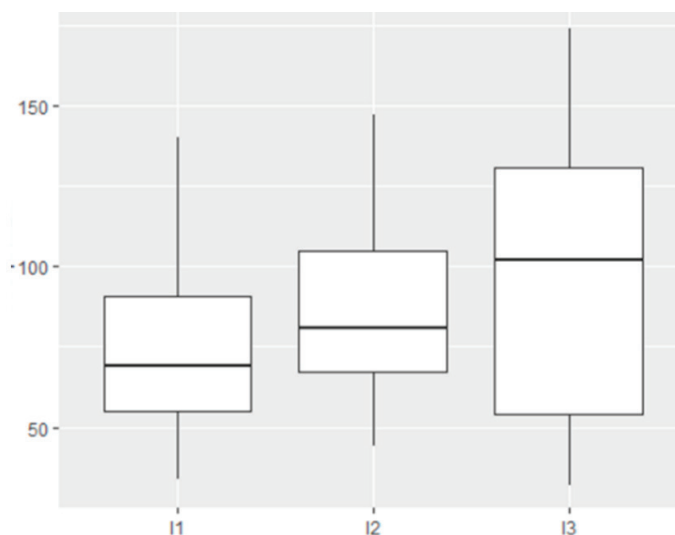
*The Effect of Educational Level*

With regard to the relationship between the level of study reached by the participant and its use of relativizers, the post hoc Games-Howell test did not identify any significant correlation for the education

variable: I1-I2 (p = 0.215); I1-I3 (p = 0.08) and I2 - I3 (p = 0.67). Similar results were obtained from pairwise comparisons using t-tests. All parallels produced insubstantial effects except for the comparison between the first and third educational levels (I1-I2: -0.08; I1-I3: -0.12; I2-I3: -0.04) (See Figure 4).

A look at the distribution of the data (See Figure 4) shows a positive relationship between the number of relativizers produced by individuals and their level of education: as one goes up the scale, the total of anaphoric clauses increases. Table 8 shows that people at the first level of education produced the lowest means, with the exception of the adverb *como*, which had the highest number. The second

Figure 4 Boxplot of Frequency by Educational Level



**Table 8** Level of Education and Proportion of Relativizers (with Outliers)

Instruction		Que	Art + que	cuando	Donde	como	Art + cual	quien	cuyo	TOT.
<b>I1</b> (29)	Freq.	1036	603	360	236	236	1	3	1	2476
	%	41.84%	24.35%	14.54%	9.53%	9.53%	0.04%	0.12%	0.04%	100.00%
	$\bar{X}$	35.72	20.79	12.41	8.14	8.14	0.03	0.10	0.03	85.38
<b>I2</b> (29)	Freq.	1141	580	384	250	182	17	6		2560
	%	44.57%	22.66%	15.00%	9.77%	7.11%	0.66%	0.23%		100.00%
	$\bar{X}$	39.34	20.00	13.24	8.62	6.28	0.59	0.21		88.28
<b>I3</b> (31)	Freq.	1504	729	407	319	189	17	16		3181
	%	47.28%	22.92%	12.79%	10.03%	5.94%	0.53%	0.50%		100.00%
	$\bar{X}$	48.52	23.52	13.13	10.29	6.10	0.55	0.52		102.61
<b>TOT.</b>		<b>3681</b>	<b>1912</b>	<b>1151</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8217</b>

level, in turn, presented intermediate values, excluding *cuando* and the complex relativizer *article cual*. The most informed group made extensive use of the relative pronoun *que*, the complex *que* with definite article, *donde* and *quien*; moderate use of *cuando* and *cual*; and low use of *como*. The same distribution was maintained throughout the corpus: *que* was the most frequent relativizer and *quien/cuyo*, the least recurrent ones (see Table 8).

**Discussion**

This variationist study of relativizers in Medellín’s Spanish focused on two main research questions, namely, to what extent do social predictors condition relativizers selection in Medellín? and how do the outcomes of this speech community compare to those of other varieties? Findings reveal that social variables have a minor impact on the frequency of relativizers as the only predictors eliciting a significant effect on the probed linguistic phenomenon are social class and the interaction between gender and age. The significant role of the first variable concurs with findings in Santa Cruz (Herrera, 1995), Valencia (Navarro, 2006), and Caracas (González-Díaz, 2001) although with dissimilar outcomes. The positive linear relationship found by Navarro (2006), González-Díaz (2001), and Herrera (1995) does not apply to Medellín’s context: while in the former cities the sociocultural level (instruction, access to cultural capital) can

explain the increase in the number of relativizers (Herrera, 1995) and also the preference of upper-class speakers for canonical pronouns over *que galicado* (González-Díaz, 2001; Navarro, 2006), in the latter speech community the justification for the lack of positive linearity may be related to the concepts of class aspiration and cross-over pattern.

Some lower-middle-class speakers “in the process of wishing to be associated with a certain class (usually the upper class and upper-middle class) [...] will adjust their speech patterns to sound like them” (Patterson & West, 2018, p. 94), but through this attempt, they end up surpassing the normal values of the target class (Labov, 1966, 1972; Trudgill, 1974). It is interesting to note that, effectively, in the corpus PRESEEA-Medellín the upper-middle-class exhibits the minor mean of relativizers (73.71), a piece of evidence that contrast with the linguistic imaginary pursued by the lower-middle class (109.06) and with the results of Santa Cruz de Tenerife (52.83). In addition to these differences, Table 9 shows that the mean in all social classes from Medellín is higher than in Santa Cruz, which might be read as a possible interaction between the diatopic and diastratic variable.

With respect to changes in linguistic use according to age, the absence of a significant effect is consistent with findings in Caracas (Sedano, 1998; González-Díaz, 2001), Valencia (Navarro, 2006),

**Table 9** Divergence on the Diatopic and Diastratic Axis (Social Class)

Social Class	Medellín				Santa Cruz			
	Freq.	Sample size	%	$\bar{X}$	Freq.	Sample size	%	$\bar{X}$
Lower	4211	50	51,2%	84.22	853	20	52,3%	42.65
Lower-middle	3490	32	42,4%	109.06	460	10	28,2%	46
Upper-middle	516	7	6,2%	73.71	317	6	19,4%	52.83

**Table 10** Divergences on the Diatopic and Diastratic Axis (Generation)

Gen	Age	Medellín			Age	Santa Cruz			Age	Santiago de Chile		
		Freq.	Sample size	$\bar{X}$		Freq.	Sample size	$\bar{X}$		Freq.	Sample size	$\bar{X}$
I	20-34	2277	29	78.52	20-34	707	14	50.50	25-35	1168	26	44.92
II	35-55	3318	32	103.7	35-54	577	13	44.38	36-55	1489	42	35.45
III	56+	2622	28	93.64	55+	346	9	38.44	55+	751	21	35.76

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and Santiago de Chile (Olguín, 1981), which implies that the individual’s grammar system remains relatively stable throughout life as far as relativizers are concerned. However, it contrasts with the significant negative correlation identified by Herrera (1995) for Santa Cruz de Tenerife as seen in Table 10.

Despite the lack of significant results, the second generation of the Colombian dialect seems to make wider use of relative anaphora while the younger generation of the Venezuelan and Chilean varieties shows the greatest numerical representativeness. The lowest values were found within the first generation for Medellín, in the third age group for the Canary Islands and in the second one for Santiago de Chile. It is possible to maintain an interaction between the diastratic and diatopic variables even if it is necessary to test this hypothesis. A methodological weakness in the present study and the research conducted before must be acknowledged: the exclusion of the youngest speakers (below 20 years old) from the investigation may veil the existence of a change in progress in the use of relativizers. This is because, according to sociolinguistic theoretical underpinnings

(cf. Labov, 1972; Chambers, 2009; Tagliamonte, 2012; among others), early generations are usually the ones that push the envelope of variation.

In terms of variation due to gender, the lack of statistical significance  $t(83.67) = 1.5055, p = 0.136$  for the Andean speech community is consonant with the findings in Tenerife (Herrera, 1995: men 49.1 %, women 50.9 %) and Santiago de Chile (Olguín, 1981: men 50.9 %, women 49.1 %). These results coincide with the outcomes for Medellín in other linguistic domains (Orozco & Hurtado 2021), suggesting that both women and men have similar sociolinguistic behaviors with regard to more than one linguistic phenomenon. Yet, the ANOVA test determined a significant interaction between gender and age for the second generation. This implies that men ranging from 35 to 55 years old produce more relativizers than women from the same age group. A qualitative analysis of the correctness of the statements could reveal if gender paradox plays a major role in this differentiation.

Finally, the non-existent correlation between the level of education and relativizers proportions



found in Medellín cannot be associated with similar studies from other speech communities since Herrera's (1995) and Olguin's (1981) did not analyze this predictor. Nevertheless, the evaluation of some related topics (relativizers selection) reveals that Medellín results differ from the conclusions for Valencia (Navarro, 2006) and México City (Powers, 1984). On one hand, Navarro (2006) affirms that education conditions the distribution of the variants *article que* and *article cual* and also the presence of resumptive pronouns (negative correlation): "the subjects of the second level of education and especially those of the high socio-economic stratum restrict the appearance of the duplicated variant" (p. 96, own translation). On the other hand, Powers (1984) demonstrates that the academic background explains considerably the variation in relativizers selection. For example, the preference for the relative pronoun *quien* at the expense of the complex relativizer *article que* have a significant positive correlation with the level of education ( $p = 0.004$ ): level I (17.15 %); level II (38.46 %), and level III (38.89 %). The fact that other research proposals about relativizers selection have found significant effects suggests that the relationship between this linguistic item and the educational predictor is more qualitative than quantitative: the level of instruction influences the preference for one variant over another one, but it does not seem to affect the total production of relativizers.

## Conclusions

The objectives of the research were to discuss the distribution of use of the relativizers in the linguistic community of Medellín, compare the results with those obtained from other studies, and identify the predictors that affect those proportions. As regards the first purpose, the extension of *que* to the detriment of the other relativizers is evident. It is worth noting the disappearance of the relative adjectives *cuyo* and *cuanto* and the pre-eminence

of the complementizer *article que* in contrast to the more elaborate variant *article cual*.

Regarding the second objective, the distributions partially resemble those of other varieties of Spanish such as those of Valencia, Santa Cruz, Mexico, and Santiago de Chile. Broadly speaking, *que*, *cuyo*, and *cuanto* show the same behaviors mentioned in the previous paragraph, which is a fact that reveals an overall inclination of Spanish to the extension of the first relative pronoun and the reduction of the other two. All communities have a uniform production of the adverb *donde* and a slight numerical variation for *como*, *quien*, *cuando*, and *article cual*: Medellín reports the lowest frequency for the pronoun [+ human] and the complex relativizer. The existence of an effect of the diatopic axis on the selection of complementizers cannot be denied, but it will be necessary to create a statistical model with all the data to ascertain the significance of that variation.

Concerning the third objective, social variables have a minor impact on the frequency of relativizers. The statistical model has distinguished significant relationships between social class and gender-age interaction, which is a fact that would allow for rejecting the null hypothesis. The effects, however, were all small. This means that, although the differences found in the corpus for these variables were not obtained by chance, their ability to explain the variation is not remarkable. In practice, men of the second generation (aged 35-55) produce a greater quantity of relative clauses than women of that age group. Speakers of the lower-middle class and higher education level also have the most representative numbers of the corpus.

Finally, it must be said that the subject of the behaviors of relativizers in Medellín has not been exhausted in this exploratory research. It is required to analyze and compare the usage of relativizers on the basis of their interchangeability in different contexts. In doing so, it is important to consider other relevant predictors such as its

syntactic function, the phenomenon of resumption, displacement, emphasis, and the context of production (diaphasic and diamesic variation) of the relative clauses. Comparison with other Colombian varieties and with younger generations would also be relevant to contribute to a deeper understanding of this country's Spanish. Furthermore, a future study should reckon annotating the corpus PRESEEA-Medellín to increase the level of data reliability.

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# LINGUISTIC PREJUDICES IN INTERVIEWS: AN ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN A UNIVERSITY IN MEXICO

PREJUICIOS LINGÜÍSTICOS EN ENTREVISTAS: ANÁLISIS DE PROYECTOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN  
EN UNA UNIVERSIDAD MEXICANA

DES PRÉJUDICES LINGUISTIQUES DANS DES ENTRETIENS : UNE ANALYSE DES PROJETS  
DE RECHERCHE À UNE UNIVERSITÉ MEXICAINE

PREJUÍZOS LINGÜÍSTICOS EM ENTREVISTAS: ANÁLISE DE PROJETOS DE PESQUISA  
EM UMA UNIVERSIDADE MEXICANA

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## ABSTRACT

Traditionally, social research in Mexico has not adjusted so much to a multilingual phenomenal reality as to a monolingualistic social imaginary representation. This means that when researchers analyze their reality, they do so under personal biases; thus, ignoring and hiding the daily multilingual reality. To find out how these linguistic prejudices and biases affect the methods applied, the authors of the present case study analyzed 77 postgraduate theses carried out in 2002-2019 at Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico. These theses applied interview techniques to speakers of national indigenous languages. The results show their study designs tend to linguistically homogenize populations based on a monolingual nationalist imagined community. A prevalence of more than 90 % in the application of linguistically minoritizing interviews evidences the pervasiveness of monolingual attitudes in the academy that limit methodological results and discriminate against studied populations. This means that the detection of linguistically minoritizing interview can serve as another indicator to assess the university as an entity that exercises linguistic pressure on the communities being studied.

**Keywords:** social science interviews, minoritized languages, graduate theses, linguistic discrimination, research methods, linguistic minoritizing interview, monolingualism

## RESUMEN

Muchas veces la investigación social en México no se ajusta tanto a una realidad fenoménica multilingüe como a una representación de un imaginario social monolingüístico. Esto quiere decir que cuando los investigadores analizan su realidad, lo hacen bajo sesgos personales, que por ende ignoran y ocultan la

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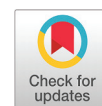
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realidad multilingüe cotidiana. Para descubrir cómo estos prejuicios y sesgos lingüísticos afectan los métodos aplicados, el presente estudio de caso analizó 77 tesis de posgrado 77 realizadas entre 2002 y 2019 en la Universidad Veracruzana de México. Esas tesis aplicaron técnicas de entrevistas a hablantes nacionales de lenguas indígenas. Los resultados muestran que los diseños de sus estudios tienden a la homogeneización lingüística de las poblaciones con base en una comunidad imaginada monolingüística nacionalista. Una prevalencia de más del 90 % en la aplicación de entrevistas lingüísticamente minorizadoras pone en evidencia lo extendido de las actitudes monolingüísticas en la academia, las cuales limitan los resultados metodológicos y discriminan a la población de estudio. De este modo, la detección de entrevistas lingüísticamente minorizadoras puede servir como un indicador más para evaluar la universidad como un ente que ejerce presión lingüística.

**Palabras clave:** entrevistas en ciencias sociales, lenguas minorizadas, tesis de posgrado, discriminación lingüística, métodos de investigación, entrevistas lingüísticamente minorizadora, monolingualismo

### RÉSUMÉ

La recherche sociale au Mexique est souvent moins ajustée à une réalité phénoménale multilingue qu'à une représentation d'un imaginaire social monolingue. Cela signifie que lorsque les chercheurs analysent leur réalité, ils le font sous des préjugés personnels, ignorant et cachant ainsi la réalité multilingue quotidienne. Pour découvrir comment ces biais et préjugés linguistiques affectent les méthodes appliquées, cette étude de cas a analysé 77 thèses de troisième cycle réalisées entre 2002 et 2019 à l'Universidad Veracruzana au Mexique. Ces thèses ont appliqué les techniques d'entretien aux locuteurs nationaux de langues indigènes. Les résultats montrent que leurs plans d'étude tendent à l'homogénéisation linguistique des populations sur la base d'une communauté nationaliste monolingue imaginée. Une prévalence de plus de 90 % dans l'application d'entretiens linguistiquement minorants met en évidence la prévalence d'attitudes monolingues dans le milieu universitaire, qui limitent les résultats méthodologiques et discriminent la population étudiée. Ainsi, la détection d'entretiens de minorisation linguistique peut servir d'indicateur supplémentaire pour évaluer l'université en tant que'un organisme exerçant de la pression linguistique.

**Mots-cléf:** entretiens en sciences sociales, langues minorisées, thèses de troisième cycle, discrimination linguistique, méthodes de recherche, entretiens linguistiquement minorisées, monolingualisme

### RESUMO

A pesquisa social no México muitas vezes não está tão ajustada a uma realidade fenomenal multilingüe quanto a uma representação de um imaginário social monolingüe. Isto significa que quando os pesquisadores analisam sua realidade, eles o fazem sob preconceitos pessoais, ignorando e escondendo assim a realidade multilingüe cotidiana. Para descobrir como estes preconceitos e preconceitos lingüísticos afetam os métodos aplicados, este estudo de caso analisou 77 teses de pós-graduação realizadas entre 2002 e 2019 na Universidad Veracruzana, no México. Estas teses aplicavam técnicas de entrevista a falantes nacionais de línguas indígenas. Os resultados mostram que seus desenhos de estudo tendem à homogeneização lingüística das populações com base em uma comunidade nacionalista monolingüe imaginada. Uma prevalência de mais de 90 % na

aplicação de entrevistas de minoritarismo lingüístico destaca a prevalência de atitudes monolingüísticas no meio acadêmico, que limitam os resultados metodológicos e discriminam a população estudada. Assim, a detecção de entrevistas lingüisticamente minoritárias pode servir como um indicador adicional para a avaliação da universidade como um agente de pressão lingüística.

**Palavras chave:** entrevistas em ciências sociais; línguas minorizadas, tesis de posgraduação, discriminação lingüística, métodos de pesquisa, entrevistas lingüisticamente minorizadoras, monolingualismo

## Introduction

In oral, written, or signed communication form, the interview technique has a negative or positive impact on certain social and linguistic situations. This impact is due to sociolinguistic implications of its application in a multilingual context depending on (a) sociolinguistic traits of the interlocutors—who may belong to one or more speaking communities, language attitudes, and ideologies; (b) interview context—space, format, and situation; and (c) sociolinguistic communities and their relationships in terms of language contact, sociological distance, language ideologies and policies, and linguistic conflict.

In this sense, the ecology of pressures allows the displacement of minority languages to be analyzed, (Terborg, 2006; Terborg & García, 2011). This model gives key factors to understand this process as a dialectical pulse between different communities' understandings of what the language management and sustainability should be. Thus, if the relationship of power between two linguistic communities becomes asymmetric and troubled, then every attitude, behavior, and speech act are transformed into a pressure that tries to impose the exclusive use of one language in communication (Terborg & García, 2011). Indeed, some interlocutors will try to configure the state of the world as a monolingual ideal where their language abolishes the use, presence, and existence of any other language. Thus, the other language is minoritized, undervalued, and denied any function and justification of use. Therefore, an ideological interest prevails over a communicative intention, and this interest intends that the interlocutor—member of the other group—assumes the ideological logic to control and transform “the other” by the exercise of power (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 162).

Thus, a speech act such as an interview can be transformed into a little communicative pressure through which one of the interlocutors consciously or unconsciously, persuasively or

forcefully, imposes on the other her/his own language as the exclusive one (Calvet, 2005, p. 82). Therefore, this choice by researchers does not result from negotiation nor communicative facility (Terborg & García, 2011, pp. 46–47). These implications would concern communicative effectiveness, generation of rapport, access to the primary and deep dimension of meaning and symbolism, the fluency and flow, spontaneity, and breadth of responses; in short, the quality of information in exchange for a false sense of security, control, and conduction of the interview. Thus, linguistic choices ignore that the multilingual background of a text or discourse is a form of reinforcing social inequalities through interview and translation (Welch & Piekkari, 2006; Steyaert & Janssens, 2013). Hence, where the conditions for an equitable and symmetrical use and valuation between speakers' communities is non-existent, the interview carried out through a language that represents cultural, social, and political hegemony ends by serving to reproduce an unequal, asymmetric, and hierarchical epistemic relationship.

Therefore, the apparent comfort, facility, and methodological control through and by the interviewer could generate discomfort, difficulty, and insecurity in the interviewee when the interview language is a dominant language in a monolingualistic context. Even in the case of shared linguistic ability, language switching, or the use of a minority language, this linguistically minoritizing interview —LMI— (Figuroa Saavedra, 2021) occurs when the researcher-interviewer, intentionally or not, chooses the dominant language as interview language with a researched-interviewee speaker of minorized language. This happens by lack of mediation and translation resources, linguistic and communicative competence, or professional negligence, and by relationships of power against those who do not belong to the same sociocultural researcher's status. This also occurs with students as researchers in formation into postgraduate programs. There, both teacher-researchers and student-researcher reproduce an academic linguistic ideology and unquestioned practices that

refuse the use of minoritized languages as part of methodological inertia.

In an ethic-political and epistemological sense, these presuppositions need to be clarified. Some scholars, that previously reviewed this work, understood that this problematization departs from an attribution of intentions to eminently monolingual subjects. Thus, there is no reason in the language choice that they are considering minoritizing or dominating others because of their speaker condition in other language. In this way, the agency of these subjects here is not always setting out a responsibility in the design and application of monolingualistic or linguistic policies, only in the sense that their own actions take part in and belong to a minoritizing sociolinguistic context. Therefore, as a result of pressures, the intentions and actions shape a certain conception, relation, and attitude towards the everyday linguistic diversity that respond to interests of a certain ideology and policy, represented, promoted, and approved by institutions. Whether or not this ideology is internalized or conscient among people or whether these people are affected by the activity of institutions for wanting to be members of these institutions, these institutional minoritizing behaviors act in accordance and convenience with this directionality and positionality that these pressures establish (Terborg & García, 2011, pp. 36–37).

Therefore, regardless of whether the researcher affects others, the result will be the same; that is, the creation of favorable conditions for the languages of others has no place. This reproduces the interests that originally motivate the pressures to establish the desire to do or not to do something (Terborg & García, 2011, p. 27). Thus, what language must or must not be used is insinuated in any way. Although one thinks that does not act against the other, one would be acting in favor of oneself. Thus, there is no counterpressure on the hegemonic language policy. Even, when we adduce or recognize ignorance, we should ask ourselves what creates ignorance about something daily present. That occurs because this state of

ignorance is also the result of other pressures that establish what can be recognized or imagined and what cannot. These pressures are not evident precisely when the “state of the world” coincides with one intends to shape from the interest. Only when this state runs the risk of being modified does this pressure emerge (p. 38).

In our case, when now national indigenous language (NIL) speakers, students, and teachers are starting to know the General Law of Linguistic Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (GLLRIP), the NIL-communities present themselves using their language more. In addition, even the inclusive and multilingual intercultural approach is more transverse; thus, comments are more evident for perpetuating the hegemonic state of the world. These comments persuade or devalue any reflection or decision in favor of more equitable multilingual perspectives defining the research activity. Therefore, one wants to see the use of a NIL as unnecessary in the community and in texts. If students suggest they want to use their language to formalize or diffuse their work, they are dissuaded from doing so because that is unnecessary effort that complicates the mentor’s supervision or that is detrimental to the use of other languages such as Spanish and English, which are more convenient in the university contexts. This advice may be well-intended because it tries to give opportunities to succeed in society and academy, but it also closes the door on any opportunities that the research will be shared with the community in a sustainable sociolinguistic way.

Whether or not it is an openly linguistic attitude, the context generated is linguistic because it does not take part in efforts and commitment that the Mexican university must assume in favor of epistemic and ethnolinguistic equity. This concern motivates the start of some kind of research that requires deeper approaches to the phenomenon and the opening of a debate on connotations and collateral effects of our work of which we are not fully aware.



This aspect is crucial to highlight in the current debate on both biocultural and linguistic sustainability and on inquiry and interview techniques (cf. Terborg & García, 2011; Bastardas, 2014). It also deserves to be dimensioned through the determination of its prevalence in local contexts and in the multilingual constellations that are drawn in the exploratory transit of current research projects (House & Rehbein, 2004).

The aim of this project is to verify how the LMI is present in beginner research within populations with minorized language speakers of Mexico. Thus, an attempt will be made to understand what prejudices, beliefs, and behaviors justify not using these languages, even in those cases where the language choice affects the methodological rigor and the social and professional responsibility of researchers towards collaborators. Specifically, the analysis will focus on how the researcher's attitude as a speaker and bearer of monolingualistic thinking promotes speech acts that make invisible, discriminate, marginalize, or exclude the languages spoken by the interviewed communities.

### Theoretical Framework

This section first reviews what the Mexican linguistic ideological context is like and then analyzes to what extent an LMI is a manifestation of a language policy even in the generation of knowledge.

#### Mexican Linguistic Nationalism as an Ideological Context

The political language ideologies of a linguistic community influence its members to favor some languages or variants over others (Silverstein, 1979; Fishman, 1989). Thus, they minimize or maximize their value through prejudices and attitudes. The hegemonic groups will tend to promote their own language by endowing it with all kinds of positive values to show it as a superior and prestigious language (Calvet, 2005, pp. 90–91, 141; Moreno, 2008: pp. 76, 96–103; 2016, pp. 105–111), which in turn, will be a functional

argument to legitimize its officialization. This process has historically shaped diglossic societies (Fishman, 1989; Calvet, 2005) and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it turned into an absolute monolingualism in the form of linguistic nationalism with the concept of nation-state. This linguistic ideal showed a state of the world that would ensure an efficient social unity, identity, and equality (Heath, 1992; Bartolomé, 2006; Zimmermann, 2010).

The purpose of the linguistic nationalism is to generate a principle of identity unification based on a language or linguistic variety. Consequently, those who do not speak this language or variety would be excluded from a national or a civilizing model (Moreno, 2008, p. 112). This is more evident in the Mexican case, where the so-called *tránsito étnico* (ethnic transit) implies giving up on a linguistic identity for getting a national identity as a subject of law (Bartolomé, 2006, pp. 24–29) that supposes the indigenous language is a stigma or impediment and considers the Spanish language a privilege or advantage. Although there are laws and rights as the GLLRIP that protect Mexican languages as national languages, to Mexicanize the *indio* is an imaginary that has not yet reversed a monolingualistic and racist ideology (Montemayor, 2000; Muñoz, 2009; Horbath 2022).

This approach leads to one language being considered the “official language” in detriment of other languages in the national territory because they are not hegemonic. The other languages are relegated from the public sphere and social communication, from mass-media, educational system, publishing industry, etc. Whether in a coercive or persuasive way, the state apparatus and social structure creates pressures to force those who do not belong to the national linguistic community to assimilate the language of the country and to assume in a pragmatic way the need to substitute their local language for the national or international language most socially valued (Spolsky, 2010, pp. 64–67; Muñoz, 2010, pp. 1244–1245). This monolingualism by norm is an officialism and an image of the power associated to a

national and global society where the Western societies show themselves as monolingual although they have the presence of multiple languages and varieties (Rothman, 2008). This idealization has other effect more than a hierarchical supremacy, it represents an “obliteration of an alternative way of construing knowledge” (Bennett, 2013, p. 171) when linguistic inter/nationalization of research implies a translation into hegemonic languages that sometimes creates a different kind of knowledge away from the original knowledge of a subaltern culture (Bennett, 2007; 2013). Even this epistemicidal translation could be shown (or be seen) as a non-translation, an original text, or a possible source of unknowledge (Monzó-Nebot & Wallace, 2020, p. 8). Thus, Linda Tuhiwai Smith warned us about how the scientific production does not allow the “other” to recognize itself in our research because its significance is in its own language and textuality and in the translation’s limits (Smith, 2008, pp. 82–85, 43–47). Therefore, it is important to listen and to show the original voices, even more in an academic textual world that invisibilizes subaltern people.

In Mexico, this thinking has been relevant since the 1870s, when the Academy of the Mexican Language started a linguistic intervention aimed at creating a standard Mexican Spanish (Heath, 1992, pp. 259–260). This standard language gave unified linguistic identity to an ethnolinguistically diverse society. The intellectuals of fin-de-siècle claimed this goal to guarantee both a solid national identity and the modernization of the country (cf. Altamirano, 2011, p. 209). Likewise, the politician Justo Sierra, for example, advocated raising “a national language over the dust of all languages of indigenous roots, to create the primordial element of the nation’s soul”<sup>1</sup> (Sierra, 2004, p. 37). Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the presence of indigenous languages was considered a problem, a trait of ignorance. Castilianization was employed as an indicator of literacy and modernization.

1 All excerpts included are translated from Spanish.

Anything that was contrary to this project was an obstacle to progress and a threat to the homeland (Heath, 1992, pp. 123–131, Montemayor, 2000; Morris, 2007).

After the Mexican Revolution, the Criollism and Indianism gave way to one Indigenism that did not eradicate this thinking although it defended a more conciliatory and planned position where bilingualism was an expression of integration. An educational subsystem aimed at facilitating the literacy and professionalization of indigenous people arose in the 1930s–1940s. Paradoxically, this persuasive method did not allow the dissemination of a national multilingual image beyond the “indigenous communities” and made the institutional, media, editorial, and professional visibility of languages difficult for the public. Henceforth, the access to primary education and Spanish-centered book culture—despite giving it a bilingual and bicultural character—was seen as the best means of achieving an only Spanish-speaking nation. Thus, the NIL monolingualism is a disadvantageous condition and an educational problem, but Spanish monolingualism is an advantageous condition and the solution (Montemayor, 2000, p. 72). There is a linguistic penalty and an ethnic penalty since if it is not possible, a fast (whitening) biological miscegenation at least linguistic homogenization could establish a monocultural society according to a kind of linguistic racism and cultural ethnocide (Bartolomé, 2006, pp. 72–73).

### The LMI as a Manifestation of a Language Policy

The linguistic policy towards the indigenous languages of Mexico created conditions for using Castilian-centric and Castilianizing interviews in social research. A first example is the survey of the General Census of the Mexican Republic of 1895, in which a precise instruction to the interviewer about the item *Idiomas* (“languages”) said that he should

[...] write the native language name that is commonly spoken, such as Spanish, French, English, etc. or the indigenous language name, such as Mexican or Nahuatl, Zapotec, Otomi, Tarasco, Mayan, Huastec, Totonac, etc.; for the person who speaks Spanish and an indigenous language such as Otomi or Mexican, Spanish will preferably be recorded. (INEGI, 1895)

Thus, declaring to speak Spanish made anyone, *ipso facto*, a member of the Spanish-speaking community. This ideological bias, that is printed through the registration of response, was intended to show a modernized Castilianized country. The consequence is an underreporting of bilingualism, later incorporated. In 1921, the General Census would ask for the first time, “Do you speak Castilian (Spanish)?” and later “What other language or dialect do you speak?” With these questions the bilingual population is recognized. Here the bias has more to do with the possible analyses from what is categorized as “bilingual.” It was not a question of making up the numbers but of precisely evaluating the effect of Castilianization on linguistic displacement and correlating degree of literacy with bilingualism.

As early as 1895, the question was if one could write and/or read, but until today, the question implied that there are only literate persons in the Spanish (or foreign) language, not indigenous languages. Even the *Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010* (Population and Household Census, 2010, INEGI, 2010) determined if a person was an indigenous speaker through the following question, “What dialect or indigenous language do you speak?” Moreover, this census identified the illiterate population by asking, “Can you read and write a message?” Neither the language nor the reading and writing abilities is distinguished here. This constitutes an invisible, unthinkable, or irrelevant datum.

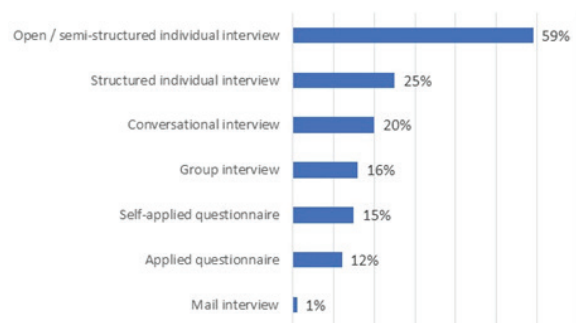
These censuses are an early example of how the Mexican researcher approaches linguistic reality through an interview. These questionnaires were not intended to confront the national multilingualism, but to see if the imagined community of

a Spanish-speaking Mexico took on a gradual and unstoppable shape. Given the evident multitude of non-Spanish-speakers, the presence of pollsters speaking native languages or interpreters was never mentioned. Similarly, an indigenous interviewee had to be bilingual, but a non-indigenous interviewee did not have to be, to the point that a member of an indigenous culture who only spoke Spanish should no longer be considered *indigenous*. Neither the creation of the National Institute of Indigenous Languages, the promulgation of the GLLRIP in 2003—which recognizes NILs in equal rights with Spanish—nor the General Law of People with Disabilities in 2005—where the Mexican Sign Language (MSL) was established too as national language—has removed this imagined community at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This means that the right of every Mexican citizen to write, speak, or sign in a national language of their choice has not affected how researchers pose questions.

## Method

This case study aimed to (a) corroborate whether in postgraduate theses prejudices were manifested through no pertinent linguistic designs, and (b) establish prevalence of the LMI. To achieve this goal, a documentary, descriptive explanatory review, and an analysis of items such as type of interview, interview language, linguistic condition of the target people and the researcher, linguistic resources and support received, and the textual presence of NILs were made of 77 postgraduate theses written by students from Universidad Veracruzana (UV). This university was selected for three reasons: (1) Veracruz is the third state with the highest presence of NIL speakers in Mexico, representing 9 % of inhabitants (8 % of whom were not Spanish-speakers) who speak Nahuatl, Mixtec, Totonac, Chinantec, Teenek, Zoque, Popoluca, Tepehua, Zapotec, Mazatec, Otomi, and Mixe (INEGI, 2010; 2015); (2) the UV encourages research-intervention projects in regions and groups where NIL speakers live; and (3) the UV has an open access repository of postgraduate theses

**Figure 1** Interview Types Applied in the Sample of Theses



(<https://cdigital.uv.mx/>) that allows to build a corpus of research dissertations.

The selected theses (88% master, 17% doctorate, and 3% specialty) met the following inclusion criteria: (1) It applied the interview as data collection technique, (2) it was done in spaces or groups with presence of NIL speakers, and (3) it was written in 2002-2019, considering that the GLLRIP supposes de jure recognition of a preexisting situation in Veracruz. The majority belonged to the Humanities area (71%), and to other areas: Biological-Agricultural-Ranching (14%), Health Sciences (6%), Technical (5%), and Economic-Administrative (3%). They represented a wide variety of application of quantitative and qualitative interview types (Figure 1). The interlocution with NIL speakers was in each format, which means that in any case, the possibility should be foreseen that some interviewees might want to carry out the interview in their NIL for which purpose protocols and guides should be adjusted and should still be planned beforehand.

### Findings

The review and textual analysis allowed the LMI and its forms of manifestation to be identified. It showed how certain ideological assumptions promote ways of representing the populations studied depending on monolingualistic imagined communities. However, it was also possible to find representations reflecting the multilingual

reality according to the characteristics of the populations interviewed. The LMI is not expected to be developed thanks to the neutralization of linguistic biases in the communication and inquiry processes.

### Presence and Prevalence of the LMI

Spanish, as a vehicular language in the academy, implied that any work implicitly must be done in Spanish to facilitate review, discussion, and evaluation, regardless of its recipient. Thus, 83% of the theses designed interview protocols, firstly in Spanish, and presumably another 8% did the same because the writers did not make a clear or explicit methodologically framework. Only 6% prepared bilingual questionnaires, and another 3% did them only in NILs. This means that either the researcher assumed the NIL-population is bilingual and can communicate in Spanish or that the pollster or interviewer would not ask the questions to a monolingual NIL speaker. This condition was not even estimated as a variable or filter question.

Regarding the application of questions, 91% of the samples made it clear that they were made in Spanish, 2% did not declare it, and 7% had to apply it in NILs with the help of interpreters by sight translation or applicators who improvised questions in the interviewee’s language. This urgent translation-interpretation should guarantee accuracy and, in the case of questionnaires and guides, a measurement and cultural equivalence (Behr, 2018). Usually, it did not happen due to haste or lack of preparation.

The inertia to use the dominant language was too evident in the case of interpreters, translators, or transliterators in the d/Deaf community, as a problem of monolingual Oralism or oralizing monolingualism (Hernández-Barrientos, 2022, pp. 49–50). Thus, the interpreters/translitterators linked a spoken language or an official sign language from a social and cultural positionality. This makes us wonder if they “would accept the Community by embracing its language or would



they inadvertently further oppress the Community by rejecting its language” (Cokely, 2005, p. 13).

This positionality, also associated with centers of thinking where power and knowledge are ideologically connected, requires a community point of view and participatory research if one wants to reveal the inequalities and asymmetries that are not present in the public policies and academic debate nor in the agenda for knowledge production. Thus, all procedures and methods that involved an interpreter-researcher (or practisearcher) mediating and collecting data in real-life context must be reexamined to understand how they/we are involved in powerful ideologies and in the negotiation of meanings (cf. Pöchhacker, 2006; Turner & Harrington, 2014; Wurm & Napier, 2017, Bendazzoli, 2016).

Although there was consciousness of how this biases the tool, it was not a general reason to rethink the questionnaire or guide, nor the need to have them initially done in the local language. This was not due to ignorance of the reality or of the method. In fact, one researcher pointed out the importance of linguistic adequacy as a previous step to an interview application. She stressed the following: “During the interview, we tried to use a simple and informal vocabulary to generate a cordial and respectful atmosphere, in accordance with what was proposed by Exposito (2003) and FAO et al. (2008)” (De los Santos, 2019, p. 35). There was always a methodological need of every interviewer to adapt to the linguistic interviewees’ characteristics and allowed them to choose the interview language (Giles & Powesland, 1975; Rubin & Rubin 1995, p. 173, Valles 2007, p. 108).

Another thesis affirmed the following: “The loss of the mother tongue is another factor that favors the disappearance of traditional knowledge, since this knowledge is transmitted orally and very few are documented. It is thus recommended to include mother tongues in ethnobotanical work” (Rodríguez, 2019, p. 35). However, although this remark intended to correspond to a dissemination

of research findings in NILs, the unstructured interview was performed, and the brochures were written in Spanish. Thus, 38 % of researchers were unconscious of this problem, or else did not identify NIL speakers in their target populations. This means they either denied or hid this data in the contextual framework and the description of the sample. The remaining 61 % did not react in an inclusive way although they did manifest a knowledge and awareness of this fact. They did not even know how to face the methodological challenge when they realized their language choice causes biases:

If we consider Nahuatl as the first language of coffee growers, the interviews, which were carried out in their entirety in Spanish, face the limitation of not being able to capture in their majority the processes of understanding and perception of reality, since, depending on the culture, words may have a more expressive but less practical function to reflect these actions. (Elizondo, 2015, p. 78)

In some cases, the researcher realized the study group was using an NIL because the interviewee gave “very brief and even vague” answers in Spanish. But instead of encouraging them to respond in their language, their Spanish was used to highlight and to justify the “apparent shyness and passivity” of young NIL speakers as an explanatory datum (Espinoza, 2012, p. 39). Hence, the determining factor that a person supposes in one or another language was obviated, since it alters both their manifestation and participation as social actor, as well as the character, depth, and clarity of the elicited information (cf. Sakamoto, 1996).

In other cases, although the use of Spanish was fluent and satisfactory, “when the topic was exhausted, or the topic gave rise to a passionate discussion between them, the Purhé would appear, leaving me completely out of the conversation” (Ayora, 2012, p. 121). Interviews in Spanish were still applied in these cases, but when the interviewees were aware of the use of an NIL, the researchers requested the mediation of an interpreter to understand local terms:

In a planning session between members of the MIMOSZ group, which was carried out in Spanish because most of members of the planning groups were unfamiliar with the Nahuatl, a Nahuatl-speaking facilitator sometimes participated in sessions doing translations of certain cultural aspects that some participants did not know. (De la Hidalga, 2019, p. 216)

In other situations, the researcher highlighted her/his inability to collect or assess all the available information. Other researchers sought the help of translators to reduce the risk of underreporting, information omission or inappropriateness of tools:

A pilot test was carried out to verify that the questions were simple and understandable for the community artisans, taking 10 informants as a representative sample. This procedure was performed at two different moments with the support of translators. This was important since, as mentioned [...] in the community of San Pablito, there is a considerable monolingual population, particularly among women. [...] It was applied with the support of local translators. (Rebolledo, 2012, p. 49)

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They showed aspects that may lose or hinder the retrieval of relevant information in cross-cultural translation (Behr, 2018, pp. 9–17) by the lack of translator competences and by the lack of control. Regarding the language used, only 7 % was interviewed in NILs either directly or through translations based on a Spanish guide. Could it be assumed that this was because the researcher spoke one of these languages? This assumption is plausible. Of the thesis's authors, all those who speak an NIL knew the linguistic reality, while 55 % who did not speak an NIL at least recognized it. But this was not a determining condition to choose NIL as the interview language. Both NIL speakers and non-NIL speakers conducted interviews in Spanish. Furthermore, 75 % of NIL speakers did not interview in that language for some reason. Perhaps they felt the academic milieu or *mestizo* society is refractory to the use of an NIL in their documents, although at UV there are schools (Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural, Instituto de Investigaciones en Educación) whose internal regulations promote and guarantee the NIL's use by students in examination and qualification processes. However, this means that only the degrees

taught by 2 % of schools allowed this possibility and tried not to breach current legislation.

In some degree and postgraduate programs (*Licenciatura en Gestión Intercultural para el Desarrollo, Maestría en Educación Intercultural*), NIL speakers students used their mother tongue in dissertations and presentations with the help of interpreters (Figueroa-Saavedra et al., 2014; Escobar, 2019). However, that is still unusual outside these schools, and it depends a lot on a favorable and inclusive teachers' attitude (Pharao, 2016, p. 374). Thus, it is habitual for the student that wants to use their NIL orally or in written form to find opposition from teachers. They tell the student not to do it or they request a translation, which is a work overload. The teachers promote more Spanish and English in dissertations according to oligolingualistic ideologies (Hamel, 2013; Bennett, 2013; Despaigne & Sánchez, 2021). Thus, no native Spanish-speaking students feel that it is not necessary, convenient, or relevant to indicate whether they used their mother tongue.

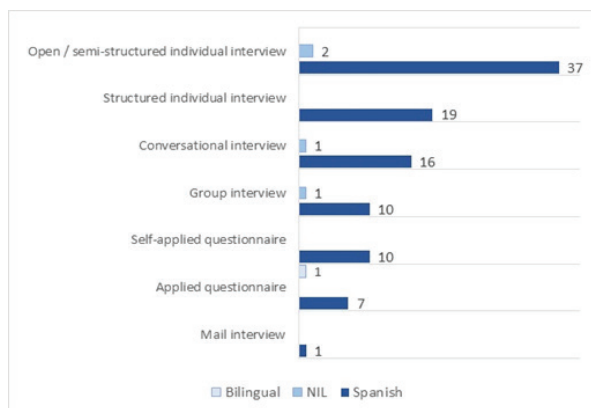
One case showed an interview guide in Spanish, but both the record of responses and the presentation were in Nahuatl. Thus, the methodological design and the instruments were adapted more to an academic audience and supervisors than to community (Sánchez, 2018). He said he translated the guide into Spanish and did not include the original. In other cases, the NIL speaker researcher did not use an NIL because the mother tongue was not required or should not be used in certain situations (Hernández-Luis, 2012; Cruz, 2018). Even if the answers were stated in an NIL, they were finally registered/translated into Spanish although many emic terminologies were included (Cruz, 2018). Then the intention of showing the epistemic value of original forms can be identified, but in the academic discourse, the construction of an epistemological infrastructure in the NIL as it happens in the translation (Bennett, 2013, p. 171) is lost. Whatever happens these processes were not shown well, and the source questionnaires and the original answers were missing.

It is true that it is not possible or advisable to use the local language in certain speaking situations. For reasons of respect or formality, the use of Spanish has become so prestigious that not using it can be interpreted as an insult. Sometimes, this “naturalization of difference” (Hill, 2007, pp. 147–148) implies negotiating which language is conditioned by assessment of the hierarchical use and prestige of a variety or language, and by a certain linguistic insecurity associated with the interlocutors’ status. Beyond a shared facility, the use of Spanish does not guarantee it is being used in an effective way, that is, it eliminates the linguistic insecurity in an effective communicative sense. This does not explain the systematic use of Spanish but acknowledges the logic that authorizes it in certain contexts as an approved use and acknowledges the ways of subverting discriminatory use and logic. This could be taken as an indicator or pressure of the same minoritizing process.

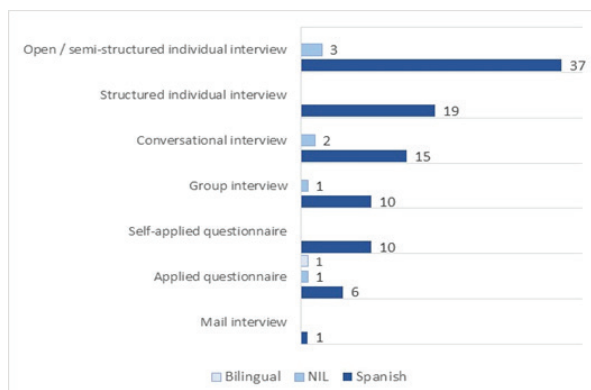
In contrast, 10% of non-NIL speakers recognized that the populations use their own language in interviews. They thus mentioned it in their work because they consider it a key factor to obtain valid and quality information. Some of them selected the most suitable interview model for a method: “First of all, we proceeded to define the kind of questionnaire, determining that the most appropriate was the semi-structured questionnaire since it is used in exploratory research” (De la Cruz, 2015, p. 33). In the interview language choice, they choose the one that suits the target population and ensures the information collection: “it was also decided that they would be applied directly by interviewers who were fluent in the Nahuatl language, due to the large presence of indigenous people that speak this indigenous language” (2015, pp. 33–34). However, the theses showed that the works embrace a variety of methodologies (Figure 2).

The interview type varied depending on its objectives and discipline. The adjustments in some cases evidently were necessary (Figures 2 and 3)—more

**Figure 2** Language that Initially Was Designed for Each Interview Type



**Figure 3** Language that Finally Was Applied in Each Interview Type



noticeable in face-to-face interviews with a sample group—and with a greater anticipation of the NIL’s use. On the contrary, in applied questionnaires, only two cases were tools developed in several languages from the beginning. In the case of mail interview were made as an individual structured interview by questionnaire. Their monolingual designs in Spanish were not subject to any readjustment.

In applied questionnaires, it was necessary to translate or to use bilingual applicators, and to seek the support of interpreters. In other cases, the monolingual interview was not modified because of linguistic diversity. This could be justified pragmatically because the interviewer only identified non-NIL speakers, but this fact or initial approach excludes the chance of finding NIL speakers.

Mail interviews or self-administered questionnaires were done in Spanish because the researchers would think the NIL speaker is literate in Spanish alone. The absence of choices made the NIL speaker (and NIL-reader-writer) invisible to the researcher and did not permit the NIL speakers interviewed the possibility of recognizing themselves as NIL-literate when seeing a questionnaire written in their language. This is so much so that if research does not need to mention that a person or a community has literacy practices in its mother tongue, this datum is not used. As Welch and Piekkari (p. 425) mentioned, the need to reduce the translators' payment may weigh in although it is necessary in those studies that paradoxically try to study reading practices.

In structured interviews, it is the other way around. There was a certain ease to write in Spanish. This ease was due to lack of skills in the mother tongue or also the already mentioned irrelevance (that is, exclusion) in the academic environment. Thus, the mention of the interview language used is not expressed although some interviews in the field were performed in a local language without the documents leaving record. This omission showed the research process as monolingual, or the researcher as monolingual Spanish-speaker.

This minimal inclusion of quotation verbatim in NILs is striking. Only 5 % of theses included it, and 9 % included terminology from NILs. This implies use of the language of the researched community, which may reveal pressures and prejudices that Castilianize an investigation, affecting validity, accuracy, and representativity of findings. This attitude that makes the NILs textually visible is not common. Then it is deduced that there should be compelling reasons contrary to the mainstream of methodological designs in Mexico to counteract this Castilianizing inertia. Indeed, there are academic entities or programs that state that the theses must have congruence between the interview language and the interviewees' language, both in tool's design and in conversational

performance. For instance, in the master's degrees in Anthropology, Education for Interculturality and Sustainability, and Public Health some research achieves linguistically advantageous interviews for both sides (Welch & Piekkari, 2006, p. 422) by opting for the mother tongue.

### Non-Minoritizing Linguistic Use of Interviews

Two master's theses performed responsible interviews before linguistically minoritized communities. The first case is from the Institute of Public Health that sought to find out the level of knowledge and opinions about HIV-AIDS among Nahuatl people in Zongolica region. This research was supervised by me as mentor, and I observed how the researcher was refocusing the problematization, given that initially she (and the health services) saw the condition of NIL speaker as a risk factor in high morbidity in indigenous communities. During the research she realized the risk factor that the public health promotion campaigns was always made in Spanish.

Thus, a Spanish-Nahuatl questionnaire was designed to be applied in two Nahuatl speaking municipalities. She reached this conclusion after noting that the results of previous consultations to indigenous communities lacked reliability, as they were only undertaken in Spanish (Suárez, 2009, p. 16). The purpose was to achieve a more precise diagnosis that would facilitate decision-making processes in health services, by allowing the interviewee to choose the interview language and to use a colloquial language.

The researcher made one version in Spanish and two translated versions (Figure 4) using two varieties of Nahuatl (p. 41). This work took more than two months, as it was necessary to review the intracultural significance. "We were looking for words that had a similar meaning in Spanish as in Nahuatl and not just a 'mere translation' that led to the misunderstanding of what they wanted



Figure 4 Page from One of the Questionnaires in Nahuatl (Suárez, 2009)

<p><b>P31. ¿Tehwatzin mitzmaxtikeh ken kondon o kueltax motlalia?</b>                  -Kema                  -Amo                  -Amo nechankilia</p>	<p><b>P34. ¿Kenin inkinotzan inin kokolistle itoka sida nikan moaltepe?</b>                  _____                  -Amo kimati                  -Amo nechankilia</p>
<p><b>P32. ¿Tehwatzin otikkak tlapowa itich kokolistle itoka SIDA?</b>                  -Kema                  -Amo                  -Amo nechankilia</p>	<p><b>P35. ¿Tikneltoka tlen kokolistle sida ikan waltis yetos kuatotonilistle nikan moaltepe?</b>                  -Kema                  -Amo                  -Amo kimati                  -Amo nechankilia</p>
<p><b>P33. ¿Tehwatzin tlen tiniltokan tlen kihtosneki in tlahtole "sida"?</b>                  _____                  -Amo kimati                  -Amo nechankilia</p>	

Ken mochiwa. Ma xikmachioti tlen yehwa kinankilia ika X.

¿Tehwatzin, kualtzin tikitta in tlahtolmeh?	Kema	Amo	Amo kimati	Amo n.
P36. Se tlatatl o se siwatl kipakas itzalan satepan iwak omosepano iwan kinpolewin amo kinahsen itich kokolistle				
P37. Ihkuak motekin tonakayo waltis kiasis kokolistle SIDA				
P38. Tehwatzin waltis tikitta motlaka o mosiwa kipian itich kokolistle				
P39. Tlakamen iwan siwamen kinahse kokolistle sida, nimantzin pewa momachilia mokokosken				
P40. Ihkuak motlanetis baso, xikal iwan sidakokoxki, waltis kahses kokolistle sida.				
P41. Ihkuak motlanetis tлакemittl, tlapichtlen o kantiawiakala iwan sidakokoxki waltis kahses kokolistle sida.				
P42. Ihkuak techace kokolistle totich iwan amo semopatis, waltis amo mokokoneasis				
P43. Ihkuak tлакamen amo motlaliah in kondon o kueltax, siwamen waltis kinpanoltilisken in itich kokolistle tлакameh				
P44. Ihkuak se siwatl pahtolowa pampa amo koneua yetos, amo waltis kahses kokolistle sida				
P45. Intich kokoxkeh, ik ochi amowi wualtiskan kahsesken kokolistle sida				
P46. Ihkuak tikpipitsos se tlatatl iwan se siwatl sidakokoxken ken mokni kipipitzos, amo waltis mitzahses kokolistle sida.				
P47. Pampa amo techahses sidakokolistle kualtia ma amo ximosepanos iwan miyaken masewalmeh				
P48. Se siwatl konewa sidakokoski, waltis kaxiltis kokolistle sida in ikonon ihtik.				
P49. Ihkuak moyomen techkuah, yehwan wualtiskan kaxiltisken kokolistle sida.				
P50. In VIH/SIDA inkokolis pinomeh.				
P51. In VIH/SIDA kokolistle in kokolistle san kipiah karayomen				
P52. In VIH/SIDA kokolistle in kokolistle san kipiah maxochimen				
P53. Sidakokoxkeh moneki ma yahkan oksekan.				
P54. Tochanekawan moneki ma kinmalwikan iwan kintlazohtlakan tochanekawan sidakokoxkeh.				

to ask” because “on many occasions the translations produce alterations that put texts written in Spanish as the source language in Nahuatl and that do not make sense for the Nahuatl speaker because they do not have a logical and correct grammatical construction” (p. 42). She piloted the versions, taking care of the unity of concept in wording of questions, to avoid biases. Specialized Spanish

terms were also simplified and adapted to plain language even though explanations were included by the pollster. They identified difficult concepts to operationalize in emic categories, for which there were lexical gaps, absence of formalized terms, conceptual differences, or taboos. The researcher was impelled to assess the original response, as verbatim, its own meaning and semantic validity (p. 42).

Figure 5 Bilingual Open Interview Guide (Hernández-Osorio, 2015, p. 68)

En cuanto a las entrevistas, se trabajó directamente con el Consejo de Ancianos, autoridades comunitarias y municipales, con la finalidad de conocer las funciones que desempeñan los actores sociales y las preguntas fueron las siguientes: Tlachketl kiihtosneki ni tekítl tlen wewetlakameh? ¿Para usted que significa el Consejo de Ancianos?; Tlachke tekichihkayotl moneki kichiwas se masewalli tlah kineki kalakis iwaya ni wewetlakameh? ¿Qué cargos se necesita para pertenecer al Consejo de Ancianos?; Kemanihki pehki ni tekítl tle wewetlakameh? ¿Desde cuándo inicia el Consejo de Ancianos?; Tlachketl kualantli kisekawa ni wewetlakameh? ¿Qué problemas resuelve el Consejo de Ancianos?; Ipan ni tekiwahkayotl tlachketl kualantli inkisenkahtokeh? ¿Qué problemas han resuelto durante el cargo?; Kemah inkisenkawah se kualantli, ipan tlachketl inmotlakxitia? ¿En qué se basan para resolver un problema y conflicto?; Kemah inkisenkawah se kualantli itztok se tlayekanketl ipan ni wewetlakameh? ¿En la impartición de justicia, existe un líder que guíe dentro del Consejo de Ancianos?; Tlachketl tlatzakuiltilli kiselia se tlahlakolchihketl? ¿Qué sanción recibe el indiciado?; Kemah inkisenkawah se kualantli motlalana se amatl? ¿Al resolver algún asunto se redacta algún documento (acta)?; Kenihkatzah inkiita ni tekítl tlen wewetlakameh? ¿Qué opinión tienen acerca del Consejo de Ancianos?

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The interviewers were trained (because of the privacy of some questions) and grouped in mixed pairs, male, and female, one of which was a Nahuatl speaker. Thus, the possibilities and eventualities that the interview could face were foreseen. It was guaranteed that the interviewees would receive the interviews in their homes, increasing confidence levels, and ensuring that questions were understood in the text. This structured personal interview was able to respect the random sample design and did not involve an invasive, inefficient, or irresponsible method on behalf of health services.

With respect to the ethnographic interview, one might think that all ethnographic interviews tend to choose the interviewee's language, although there are cases where not even the condition of NIL speaker ensures the interview is going to be conducted in NILs. However, in this thesis from the Faculty of Anthropology, the researcher, a native Nahuatl speaker, undertook the interview

in their own language to carry out a study on the system of charges in Hueycuatitla, Huastecan region. To this aim, he proposed a bilingual interview guide (Figure 5).

His initial approach was a bilingual interview. The interviewer evidenced her/his condition as an NIL speaker and wanted to make the optionality of the interview language clear:

Most of these interviews were conducted in Nahuatl, except for the mayor and the legal advisor. Even though both are fluent in Nahuatl they chose to respond in Spanish. I would like to highlight those collaborators were always given the freedom to choose the language they wanted to speak, either Spanish or Nahuatl. All interviews conducted in the community were audio-recorded and transcribed. (Hernández-Osorio, 2015, p. 66)

This description is unusual. Normally, when the NIL-speaking researcher is a graduate, she/he is

expected to speak only in Spanish, since the status and prestige of the academic degree must also be reflected in the language. Thus, in the communities, the graduates must speak and be spoken to in Spanish (F. Antonio Jauregui, pers. com., 3–5–2010). However, in the context he points out that precisely the *wewetlakameh* “only speak the Nahuatl language” (Hernández-Osorio, 2015, p. 117), so interviewing them in Spanish would have been limiting and inappropriate. In this regard, he insists on the lack of interpreters but shows it as a common occurrence despite the Castilianizing displacement in the community. Therefore, his condition as an NIL speaker is not hidden but rather shown as an advantage in addition to giving priority to the speech in local language. Thus, he includes verbatim in that language as a direct testimony. As an act of reevaluation, in the case of Nahua graduates, interviews in Nahuatl evidence the knowledge obtained from its statement in Nahuatl reinforcing the status and prestige of that language as a means of knowledge.

### Discussion and Conclusions

As is clear from this study, the LMI predominates, in the current context, in research works with NIL speakers, although now a new proposal of multicultural and multilingual national construction begins to be promoted (Morris, 2007; Lara, 2010; Valadés, 2014). This leads to the fact that this study recurring linguistic prejudices in the interview are identified but also an acknowledgement of the multilingual reality of Mexico as a new imagined community to which one must adapt, respond, and understand from the community’s own terms and needs is emerging. This is obvious in two theses whose methodology implies recognizing our responsibility to create a monolingual country that does not yet exist (Smith, 2008; Bennett, 2013; Rothman, 2008; Steyaert & Janssens, 2013). On the contrary, this study found other theses that even recognize a bilingualism but still do not contradict that monolingual imagined community. Those theses act in accordance

with linguistic attitudes and prejudices that weigh on the decision of which language to use towards the Mexican NIL-speaking population.

The reason of the trend of interviewing only in Spanish probably is based on the belief that the process of Castilianization has been “complete” in Mexico, but above all that Spanish is the common language of all Mexicans, whereas the second language may be English—Spanish is not considered *de facto* a second language. Although standard linguistic procedures can occur based on a conception of Spanish as a *lingua franca* or common language, the use of only Spanish in a community that does not have the chance of using its language publicly is often seen as an act of imposition and suppression (Montemayor, 2000, p. 103). This linguistic monolingual interaction is by default an unquestionable and unnegotiable fact as the “default position” that occurs in the case of English monolingualism (Rothman, 2008, p. 442). This supposes a methodological inertia in the selection of methods that the beginner researcher applies.

Thus, applying known methods without reflection nor coherence in an interview, it is evident that postgraduate students probably were prone to perpetuate damaging forms of ignorance what cause a lack of internal and external validity and consistency (cf. Steyaert & Janssens, 2013, p. 136; Monzó-Nebot & Wallace, 2020, p. 20). The interviewer believed the interviewee was bilingual, which means the interviewee should (always) answer in Spanish. With this assumption, the tendency will be to use Spanish to facilitate design and reduce our effort, not to learn the language or pay for an interpreter or translator, which shortens deadlines. It is thus thought that the information had the same validity, precision, and significance in Spanish.

Another presupposition was if the interviewer found someone who does not speak Spanish, they would look for someone else (relative, neighbor, or official) to mediate or translate, interviewing them as if they were the selected person, that is,



displacing the interviewee. The interviewers may ignore the sample element and look for someone else, as if the quality of information does not depend on the selection criteria, interviewee's expertise nor suitability to the sampling method.

One more prejudice that is inferred on all conditions in written interviews (by mail, self-administered questionnaire, etc.) is that the questions were always formulated in Spanish because, if they are not illiterate, they are only Spanish literate since NILs "are not written," "cannot be written," or "it is not possible to teach how to write them" (cf. Rockwell, 2000, 2010; Hernández-Zamora, 2019; Figueroa-Saavedra, 2018, p. 105).

Thus, the theses authors, as an agent and administrator of language, unconsciously created linguistic pressure when they choose a hegemonic language as the unique option—even if there is an academic discourse or normative that proclaims the recognition of linguistic diversity—because there were not opportunities or interest in showing multilingualism. Thus, the marginalization and invisibility of minoritized languages—linked linguicide and epistemicide (Smith, 2008; Bennett, 2013) was naturalized, as one does not reflect on whether this signifies still another action that reduces the use value and status of minority languages. This explains the very high prevalence of the LMI in postgraduate research at UV.

Not even the GLLRIP managed to generate a sense of obligation between both researchers in training and those already trained—perhaps due to ignorance, lack of dissemination, complaints, and actions to enforce it. Thus, these academic uses and regulations continue to privilege languages of international knowledge. This preference even puts pressure on the researchers who speak an NIL to describe their reality through these languages, and, in the long run, to know it and make it known in the same way, assuming their inferiority and subalternity, and the non-validity in some research findings.

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# ESTÉTICA CINEMATográfica EN *LA CASA GRANDE*, DE ÁLVARO CEPEDA SAMUDIO

FILM AESTHETICS IN ÁLVARO CEPEDA SAMUDIO'S *LA CASA GRANDE*

ESTHÉTIQUE CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUE DANS *LA CASA GRANDE*, D'ÁLVARO CEPEDA SAMUDIO

A ESTÉTICA CINEMATográfica EM *LA CASA GRANDE*, DE ÁLVARO CEPEDA SAMUDIO

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## RESUMEN

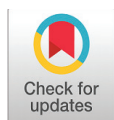
A partir de un enfoque interdisciplinario, este artículo analiza la estética cinematográfica persistente en *La casa grande*, de Cepeda Samudio, mediante un abordaje inédito de la obra literaria en términos técnicos del cine, como lo son los planos, la espacialidad, los efectos sonoros, la escritura tipo guion y las imágenes. Se amplía, de este modo, la tendencia netamente indicativa con que previamente se abordó esta materia en la novela. El análisis se realiza a partir de antecedentes biográficos del autor, sus influjos artísticos, y su particular manera de tomar el suceso histórico y llevarlo a la literatura. El propósito es producir una interpretación de *La casa grande* como si fuese una realización filmica a partir de ejemplos concretos. Se concluye que la presencia de estas características filmicas es generalizada y original en su naturaleza, con lo que se establecen puntos de partida para posteriores discusiones orientadas a la presencia de momentos sensitivos e imágenes fetiche en la obra.

**Palabras clave:** Álvaro Cepeda Samudio; cine; literatura; cinematografía; *La casa grande*; literatura colombiana.

## ABSTRACT

Drawing on an interdisciplinary approach, this article analyzes the prevailing cinematographic aesthetics in Cepeda Samudio's *La casa grande* by means of an unprecedented approach to the literary work in technical terms of cinema, such as shooting plans, spatiality, sound effects, script-type writing, and images. Thus, the purely indicative tendency which was previously used to approach the novel is expanded. The analysis is made on the basis of the author's biographical background, his artistic influences, and his particular way of approaching a historical event and conveying it through literature. The purpose is to produce an interpretation of *La casa grande* as if it were a filmic realization based on concrete examples. It is concluded that these filmic characteristics are widespread and original; thus, they establish starting points for further discussions oriented to the presence of sensitive moments and fetish images in Cepeda Samudio's work.

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**Keywords:** Álvaro Cepeda Samudio; film; literature; cinematography; *La casa grande*; Colombian literature.

### RÉSUMÉ

Sur la base d'une approche interdisciplinaire, cet article analyse l'esthétique cinématographique persistante dans *La casa grande* de Cepeda Samudio par le biais d'une approche inédite de l'œuvre littéraire en termes techniques cinématographiques, tels que les plans, la spatialité, les effets sonores, la scripte et les images. De cette manière, la tendance purement indicative avec laquelle ce sujet était précédemment abordé dans le roman est étendue. L'analyse se fonde sur le parcours biographique de l'auteur, ses influences artistiques et sa manière particulière de reprendre l'événement historique et de le rendre littéraire. Le propos est de parvenir à une interprétation de *La casa grande* comme s'il s'agissait d'une production cinématographique à partir d'exemples concrets. Il est conclu que la présence de ces caractéristiques filmiques est généralisée et originale, établissant ainsi des points de départ pour une discussion plus approfondie sur la présence de moments sensibles et d'images fétiches dans l'œuvre.

**Mots clés :** Álvaro Cepeda Samudio ; cinéma ; littérature ; cinématographie ; *La casa grande* ; littérature colombienne.

### RESUMO

Partindo de uma abordagem interdisciplinar, este artigo analisa a persistente estética cinematográfica em *La casa grande* de Cepeda Samudio por meio de uma abordagem sem precedentes da obra literária em termos técnicos cinematográficos, tais como planos, espacialidade, efeitos sonoros, escrita de roteiro e imagens. Desta forma, amplia-se a tendência puramente indicativa com a qual este assunto foi abordado anteriormente no romance. A análise é baseada no background biográfico do autor, suas influências artísticas e sua forma particular de tomar o evento histórico e traduzi-lo em literatura. O objetivo é chegar a uma interpretação de *La casa grande* como se fosse uma produção cinematográfica baseada em exemplos concretos. Conclui-se que a presença dessas características cinematográficas é generalizada e original por natureza, estabelecendo assim pontos de partida para posterior discussão sobre a presença de momentos sensíveis e imagens fetiche na obra.

**Palavras chave:** Álvaro Cepeda Samudio; cinema; literatura; cinematografia; *La casa grande*; literatura colombiana.

## Introducción: Cepeda Samudio, una vida cargada de cine

Álvaro Cepeda Samudio, escritor y periodista colombiano, se inmiscuyó plenamente y a lo largo de su vida en los asuntos del séptimo arte. Muchas de sus concepciones cinematográficas están dadas por su viaje a Nueva York en 1949, en donde, además de estudiar periodismo, aprehendió múltiples perspectivas de las ideas en boga de los grandes narradores estadounidenses, y recibió un fuerte influjo del cine de ese país. Sin embargo, su peregrinaje en el cine data de su misma infancia.

Samper Pizano (1998) comienza su agradable homenaje del amor de Cepeda Samudio hacia el cine y la literatura comentando que el barranquillero poseía en su casa, como un lujo inédito para regocijo propio y de sus amistades cercanas, una copia de *Casablanca*, la joya clásica de Michael Curtiz, en formato 16 mm y a su entera disposición, acompañada de telón, máquina de proyección, cables y rollos de cintas, una exquisitez que permitió que sus allegados y él mismo disfrutaran múltiples veces de este filme. De hecho, Samper Pizano dilucida acertadamente que

Es imposible entender la vocación literaria y periodística de Cepeda sin darse cuenta de la influencia que tuvo en ella la mentalidad cinematográfica que llevaba atornillada Álvaro en los ojos y en la cabeza. [...] En 1936, [cuando] trabajaba como acomodador del Teatro Roxy [...], vio cuanto podía verse en cine en Colombia hace 60 años (1998, p. 120).

Una formación cinematográfica de este talante no deja de ser llamativa, además, porque, según Samper Pizano, para Cepeda Samudio el cine era “el gran arte de nuestro tiempo” (1998, p. 120), al que, por supuesto, le habrá de dedicar múltiples cavilaciones y un ejercicio parcial, pues, siguiendo las líneas del escritor bogotano:

El problema de tener vocación de cineasta en un país sin industria cinematográfica es que quien siente el llamado de las cámaras termina por dedicar su vida a disertar sobre cine, a escribir sobre cine o, cuando más, a hacer cine escrito, pero le resulta muy difícil producir cine de verdad (1998, p. 120).

Según varios registros, entre 1954 y 1955 se filmó el cortometraje *La langosta azul* (Cepeda Samudio *et al.*, 1954), una producción de carácter experimental y surrealista que contó con la dirección compartida de Cepeda Samudio, Grau Araújo, Luis Vicens y García Márquez. Para Tamayo, el cortometraje es un “ejemplo del distanciamiento de los intelectuales con la realidad cinematográfica nacional, y [un] suceso evidente de esa *nostalgia* por los pasados culturales europeos que invaden a los representantes culturales del país” (2006, p. 52), en donde se construye el argumento —que sí tiene un cargado acento americanista— a partir de una presentación poética y surrealista al mejor estilo de Dalí o Buñuel.

De hecho, y en contrapunto, para Martínez Pardo (1978), los mejores momentos del cortometraje no son los que están cargados de simbolismo, sino aquellos en que parece un reportaje filmico, es decir, cuando el extranjero sale por las calles del pueblo y la cámara, aparentemente olvidada de la langosta, y en el decir de Martínez, se dedica a hacer un reportaje visual del entorno. Si bien varios artistas participaron en su elaboración, a Cepeda Samudio corresponde la idea original.

Por su parte, el accionar de Cepeda Samudio a favor de la masificación y la culturización del cine en el espectro nacional fue considerable. En 1956, en medio de un panorama escritural en que consagraba tiempo y energía a la realización de reflexiones y reseñas cinematográficas en los apartados culturales de diversos periódicos locales y nacionales, funda, como lo menciona Restrepo Sánchez (2003, p. 82), el primer cineclub de Barranquilla, bajo la notable influencia de Vicens, proyecto del cual se desprendió la publicación de la revista *Cine-Club* entre los años 1957 y 1958, cuyas líneas constituyeron un hito en el ejercicio de este tipo de dinámicas a favor del séptimo arte en el país.

Asimismo, otros trabajos cinematográficos de Cepeda Samudio involucran, según Samper Pizano, varios documentales, “entre ellos otros tres sobre el carnaval barranquillero, uno sobre

una competencia de regatas en el caribe [sic], algunos noticieros, *Un carnaval para toda la vida* (edición póstuma) y *La subienda*” (1998, p. 122). Además, se menciona que antes de enfermar mortalmente, el barranquillero estaba prácticamente dedicado a la escritura literaria y cinematográfica. De hecho, se supone que habría pensado, en su momento, realizar una adaptación fílmica de su única novela, a partir de una redacción propia del guion, empresa que no llegó a consolidarse.

Es importante señalar adicionalmente que si bien la inclinación de Cepeda Samudio hacia lo cinematográfico está ligada a su biografía, estos intereses obedecen, de igual forma, a las concepciones del Grupo de Barranquilla, del que hizo parte. Para Vélez Upegui, la visión de mundo del Grupo —el cual contó, entre sus integrantes, con personajes del talante de Ramón Vinyes, José Félix Fuenmayor, Gabriel García Márquez, Alejandro Obregón, entre otros— estaba dada, entre múltiples factores, por

La incorporación, en sus propios universos ficticios, de nuevas formas y técnicas compositivas, idóneas para comunicar sus particulares preocupaciones referenciales; [así como por] la búsqueda incesante de modos de apareamiento fértil entre dominios artísticos aparentemente irreconciliables: ensayo y novela, cine y poesía, mito y testimonio, drama e historia, etc. (1999, p. 245).

Además de ello, Vélez Upegui (1999, p. 245) añade que gracias a la guía del catalán Vinyes, quien era un erudito de inclinaciones universales en el arte, los que integraban la tertulia de La Cueva en las noches de la arenosa optaron por asociarse con nuevas técnicas de composición propias de la vanguardia literaria, en las que, entre otras cosas, se dejaba de considerar al cine y a los medios de comunicación como rivales de la literatura y se favorecían los dialogismos productivos entre las distintas posibilidades de expresión. Finalmente, como lo asegura Gilard (2009, p. 37), el Grupo cuestionó la instancia narrativa única, apelando a narraciones múltiples de tipo *collage*, de modo que se propició la vuelta a realidades conocidas

solo si estas eran presentadas de manera diferente, con una lucidez nueva y con dignidad estética y humana, por lo que “en Cepeda la experimentación formal tuvo más importancia, a primera vista, que cualquier otro aspecto” (2009, p. 37).

Así, más allá de una somera inclinación por el séptimo arte, la vida de Cepeda Samudio estuvo plagada de intereses cinematográficos —desde su infancia hasta su vinculación con sociedades como la del Grupo de Barranquilla—, aspecto que dotó su obra de un cúmulo de influencias fílmicas, en las cuales se ahondará en el apartado “*La casa grande*, consideraciones a propósito del inicio y del final” y, especialmente, en “Espacio, sonido y planos cinematográficos”.

### Marco teórico

Posterior a una revisión del momento enunciativo de *La casa grande*, así como de la importancia de la obra y su contexto, se realizará un reconocimiento bibliográfico para determinar cómo se han tratado los planos cinematográficos en la novela y cómo estos contribuyen a su crítica y a la constitución de su abordaje fílmico.

#### Contexto y relevancia de *La casa grande*

*La casa grande*, única producción novelística de Cepeda Samudio, fue publicada de manera integral en 1962. Su escritura denota un constante influjo de los intereses vanguardistas surgidos en la literatura continental de la época, de la amplitud en las concepciones artísticas propias del Grupo de Barranquilla y de los grandes narradores norteamericanos del siglo XX. Esta se enmarca, según Vergara Aguirre (2001, p. 72), dentro de la nueva novela latinoamericana, cuya subclasificación ha de ser la *novela abierta*, siguiendo la teoría de Pollmann (1971, pp. 100-101), característico de obras cuya estructuración da la impresión de ser un ensamblaje de partes autónomas en mayor o menor medida, a modo de una unidad abierta.

Su argumento se configura a partir de dos polos de articulación, el mundo familiar y el conjunto social —en el decir de Vélez Upegui (1999, p. 229)— o,

lo que es igual, en dos planos dominantes, el privado y el público, según Rodríguez Amaya (2015, p. 218). Así, la obra está compuesta por el entramado de sucesos que, por un lado, acontecen en el interior de una familia de ricos plantadores de banano; y, por el otro, engloba las vicisitudes entre campesinos, jornaleros, el Gobierno central y la multinacional United Fruit Company, en el marco de la fiebre del banano surgida en la costa Atlántica colombiana durante el primer tercio del siglo xx; fiebre que daría lugar, en 1928, a la huelga de la zona bananera y a la consabida respuesta militar por parte de la administración de Abadía Méndez (Murillo Posada, 2006, p. 278-279).

La importancia de *La casa grande* dentro del canon del autor responde a que es la obra que mayor trascendencia ha tenido en términos editoriales y académicos. Igualmente, la crítica le concede valores considerables en distintos aspectos. Es el caso, por ejemplo, de Vergara Aguirre, para quien la novela “se volvió protagonista de la evolución que tuvo el teatro colombiano en la década del sesenta” (2001, p. 91), ya que, debido a sus características propias del modo dramático, como lo son la disposición poderosa y relevante de los diálogos, varios dramaturgos se dieron a la tarea de componer adaptaciones, entre las que destaca *Soldados*, de Carlos José Reyes (1966), pieza que ocupa un emplazamiento significativo en la consolidación del teatro nacional.

Asimismo, la obra se distingue por el apropiado tratamiento, en términos ideológicos, del evento histórico coyuntural aprehendido en su contenido. De hecho, García Márquez habrá de comentar, en la contraportada de la edición argentina de la novela de 1967, que todo en la obra ejemplifica, de manera apropiada, “cómo un escritor puede sortear honradamente la inmensa cantidad de basura retórica y demagógica que se interpone entre la indignación y la nostalgia” (1967, contraportada).

Para Mier (2006, p. 30), esta distancia ideológica se explica debido a que Cepeda Samudio escoge un episodio lejano en su reminiscencia, pues la

masacre de las bananeras ocurriría cuando él apenas transitaba alrededor de los dos años de edad, permitiéndole así un tratamiento más literario que maniqueo de lo acontecido. De este modo, aunado al hecho de que la novela se compone de elementos formales ciertamente interesantes —apelando, por ejemplo, a recursos del séptimo arte, del teatro e incluso del periodismo—, se reafirma el sólido estatuto de consolidación de *La casa grande* como novela de estimación en las letras y el canon literario nacionales.

### La crítica y sus consideraciones previas de lo cinematográfico en la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio

Respecto al tema que atañe directamente al enfoque propositivo de estas líneas, es decir, los aspectos cinematográficos como elemento con presencia significativa dentro de la obra, la revisión bibliográfica ha sido considerada en su abordaje. Si bien la mayoría de estudios críticos sobre *La casa grande* apela a un análisis de tipo inmanente o sociohistórico a propósito del acontecimiento de la masacre, decantando en tópicos capitales como la violencia, la mujer, el poder o el odio, algunos teóricos, como Andrés Vergara Aguirre y Fabio Rodríguez Amaya, han dilucidado amplia y críticamente la cuestión.

En el denso estudio de Vergara Aguirre (2001), se dedica un buen número de páginas a subrayar el carácter heterogéneo del discurso de *La casa grande*. Dentro de esta heterogeneidad, resalta la presencia de la técnica del guion cinematográfico en capítulos como “El padre” y “Jueves”, a partir del manejo eficaz de “un narrador objetivo que, como una cámara, va presentando los espacios, los personajes y los sucesos en una combinación eficiente de planos abiertos y cerrados” (2001, p. 80). Vergara Aguirre explica que, en “El padre”, de manera particular, este narrador-cámara objetivo va exhibiendo los diferentes planos a partir de aperturas u obnubilaciones del mismo, haciendo que la historia esté contada, en su decir, mediante imágenes. La división del capítulo en secuencias



fraccionadas en escenas tampoco escapa a su consideración. Añade, además, que este tipo de discurso solo pudo haber sido construido por un gran conocedor del cine.

Algo similar comenta a propósito del capítulo “Jueves”, donde, según él, priman las imágenes, gracias, nuevamente, a la objetividad y al carácter externo del narrador. Sin embargo, Vergara Aguirre también recurre al ritmo acelerado y vertiginoso de toda la obra, según sus mismos términos, para caracterizar la mencionada polifonía de la novela como si fuese una película con excelente montaje, pues los constantes cambios de voces —de lentes, dirá Vergara Aguirre—, permiten que el lector —espectador— pueda apreciar todo prontamente desde múltiples ángulos, añadiendo que “incluso por su brevedad, CG [*La casa grande*] puede ser vista en el tiempo que vemos una película” (2001, p. 85; énfasis agregado).

Finalmente, Vergara Aguirre habrá de señalar que, en el capítulo “El Decreto”, el punto de vista es el de la cámara, pues se presenta un documento que se erige como una “tajada” —en sus propios términos— de la realidad de una época concreta, asunto analítico que se antoja ligeramente forzado y sin una alusión directa al trasfondo cinematográfico en términos teóricos apropiados.

Hay que anotar también que, en el estudio en cuestión, pese a su reiterativa sentencia de que hay aspectos que convierten partes de la obra en un guion cinematográfico completo o la alusión de voces que asumen el rol de una cámara, Vergara Aguirre no proporciona ejemplos manifiestos de ello.

Por su parte, Rodríguez Amaya (2015), en su estudio de *La casa grande*, realiza un análisis en términos de planos cinematográficos de la primera parte del capítulo “El pueblo”. Para él, la novela de Cepeda Samudio es un trabajo imaginativo hecho palabra, en el que se restituye una imago dinámica, como si se escribiera con los movimientos, tanto apacibles como nerviosos, de “una filmadora

capaz de desplazarse a voluntad y a 360 grados, como en la esfera de Pascal y el Aleph de Borges” (2015, p. 238). Asimismo, señala el concepto de *narración visual* como un elemento importante de la novela.

Si bien es un aporte sumamente valioso a los estudios de la obra, la teoría cinematográfica es aprehendida y utilizada por Rodríguez Amaya en términos principalmente narrativos, estableciendo, por ejemplo, planos detalle cuando se expresan detalles narrativos del capítulo, pero sin analizar abiertamente los planos relacionados con el encuadre y la espacialidad, como sucede en el séptimo arte.

Para Rodríguez Amaya, tanto el primer como el segundo párrafo del capítulo empiezan con planos generales —como es de esperarse—, lo cual es pertinente. No obstante, la nominación de los planos posteriores parece ser poco acertada. De hecho, considera planos americanos los siguientes sintagmas: “son casas de madera con techos oxidados y rotos por donde se mete la lluvia y una que otra luz cuando hay luna” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 77, tercera oración del primer párrafo del capítulo “El pueblo”) y “aquí terminan los playones” (2017, p. 77, segunda oración del segundo párrafo).

Es curioso que se señalen de este modo, especialmente porque da la impresión de querer referir la naturaleza del “plano” según su carácter vernáculo. En realidad, la teoría cinematográfica plantea que los planos han de nominarse teniendo como referente principal la figura humana (Sellés y Racionero, 2008, pp. 23-24). Por esta razón, es poco acertado, igualmente, señalar que la oración posterior al primer plano americano del capítulo sea, según Rodríguez Amaya (2015), un primerísimo primer plano, a menos que se entienda como una especie de primer plano narrativo, como se mencionó previamente: “Aunque están llenas de mujeres no son casas alegres” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 77).

Tampoco se considera conveniente que los planos consiguientes sean planos detalle en sentido estricto. Aunado a ello, hay un punto en específico

que se examina ligeramente especulativo. Los planos finales del análisis propuesto por Rodríguez Amaya —es preciso aclarar que su categorización en planos no llega sino hasta el segundo párrafo del capítulo— son descritos como plano secuencia y plano general panorámico, así: “regresar a un plano secuencia: *y el tren sigue hacia* y concluir con un plano general que concluye [sic] con el plano panorámico de: *el puerto*” (2015, p. 240).

Si bien esta nominación sí tiene mucho sentido en términos espaciales y de encuadre, a continuación se presenta la siguiente acotación, sin clarificación alguna: “(cámara en grúa o helicóptero que planea, picado, contra picado y cierre)” (Rodríguez Amaya, 2015, p. 240). Se podría llegar a pensar que esta mención responde a un carácter poco objetivo, pues en el enunciado analizado no hay ninguna señal explícita que denote la voluntad del escritor-guionista de que el lector-espectador contemple el final de la escena a partir de un cambio de angulación —del picado al contrapicado— ni mucho menos a partir de una disposición técnica que apele al recurso de movimiento de cámara tipo grúa o recurriendo a una aeronave. Lo único que podría encajar, relativo a dicha acotación, sería la interrelación de los párrafos posteriores del capítulo respecto al enfoque de cámara, pues primero se presenta un ángulo picado, asociado con la debilidad de los jornaleros, para posteriormente denotar un ángulo contrapicado, relacionado con el poderío de los dueños de las fincas, previo al *cierre*. Pero esto es solo una hipótesis que intenta justificar algo que no está explícito en el análisis en cuestión.

Por último, parece totalmente idónea la manera en que Rodríguez Amaya describe el cambio de secuencia y escena a partir del punto y aparte entre el primer y el segundo párrafo del capítulo, pues la sintaxis en la escritura cinematográfica posee un papel elemental. Además, hay acertadas contribuciones descriptivas, por parte del teórico, a propósito de la implementación de la técnica cinematográfica en la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio, la cual consiste en el hecho de que, cuando se

lee la obra, existe la impresión de la voluntad del autor con respecto a que se vea cierta escena cual proyección fílmica, “gracias a la alternancia de la voz del narrador objetivo, de los planos fílmicos y de la disposición del diálogo” (2015, p. 257). Como acotación, sin embargo, Rodríguez Amaya insistirá en que la escritura cinematográfica característica de la novela deberá estudiarse a profundidad, punto que se estableció como inicial para el presente trabajo.

La narrativa corta de Cepeda Samudio, por su parte, tampoco escatima en recursos del séptimo arte, pues tanto las referencias como la misma técnica cinematográfica son llevadas al centro de la narración. Para ello, basta pensar en cuentos como “Barranquilla en Domingo”, “Las muñecas que hace Juana no tienen ojos”, “Por debajo de este ahogado ha corrido mucha agua” o “Todos estábamos a la espera” (Cepeda Samudio, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009b). Actores, directores, películas, instrucciones de cámara, disposiciones de montaje y orientaciones de sonido colman los cuentos del barranquillero, quien, en la especie de manifiesto que corona su publicación póstuma, *Los cuentos de Juana* (Cepeda Samudio, 2008), advierte al lector del carácter parasitario del artista, el cual, según su decir, solo se da en las sociedades afluentes, por lo que es menester un cúmulo considerable de influjos entre las artes y los artistas.

De este modo, ha quedado plasmado el espectro teórico que va de la mano con el eje analítico y propositivo de esta empresa. Es importante dejar en claro que, si bien existen numerosos artículos sobre la incursión cinematográfica en la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio, la mayoría, como se comentó, se centra en sus cuentos, y los estudiosos que han abordado este tópico en *La casa grande* lo han hecho sucintamente y no de manera exclusiva.

### Análisis de la obra

Teniendo en cuenta la caracterización que se presentó previamente, es preciso abordar *La casa grande* a partir de una indagación cinematográfica,

a modo de contrapunto, apelando a su terminología concreta y su justa y singular aplicación en la novela de Cepeda Samudio.

Los asuntos estilísticos del guion en términos de contenido y forma, así como los aspectos técnicos de planos, espacialidad, efectos sonoros e imágenes, brindaron un sólido punto de partida para establecer un dialogismo crítico con el objeto de análisis. Los ejemplos concretos se plantearon como uno de los fines de esta propuesta, los cuales van de la mano con los vínculos y las predisposiciones biográficas del autor respecto al cine, mencionados previamente.

Por último, los momentos narrativos específicos de la novela, que se equipararon cual virtual realización en la pantalla grande, fueron seleccionados por conveniencia y por iconicidad, dada su particular capacidad de aplicarse a otras partes de la obra. Posterior a la selección, los fragmentos fueron clasificados según su factibilidad para interpretarse de manera cinematográfica, asumiendo con criticidad los límites interpretativos y respetando las marcas de operación del objeto analítico. Así, este es un análisis de corte cualitativo e interdisciplinar, con un potencial de comparación explícito y un foco de investigación debidamente limitado.

## Resultados

Los efectos del análisis son presentados de la siguiente manera: en primer lugar, se enuncia el valor formal del inicio y del final de la novela, para establecer una consideración ligada a su naturaleza fílmica tanto en la forma como en el contenido. Luego, se procede al análisis denso de la investigación, argumentando la construcción de *La casa grande* en términos de planos cinematográficos, espacialidad y efectos sonoros, para presentar los momentos narrativos de forma descriptiva y gráfica, como sucedería en el séptimo arte. Por último, se establece un breve estudio de naturaleza estrictamente lingüística, mediante el cual se evalúan elementos sintagmáticos que, si bien hacen parte

del orden textual, también son asimilables, según la teoría apprehendida, a la lógica audiovisual.

### *La casa grande, consideraciones a propósito del inicio y del final*

Cepeda Samudio maneja un estilo, en la escritura de su novela, que se acerca en varios puntos a lo propio de la escritura del guion cinematográfico. Como se apreció, motivos e influencias no le faltaban.

Dentro de las normas del guion, Sellés y Racionero comentan que “la escritura tiene que ser suficientemente visual para que el lector pueda visualizar el filme en su cabeza” (2008, p. 49), de tal modo que se pueda establecer una austeridad característica en la redacción, con la tendencia hacia la inclusión de frases cortas y en tiempo presente. Además, los mismos autores añaden que “en un guion los diálogos llenan la página, mientras que la prosa descriptiva queda reducida a la categoría de una acotación” (2008, p. 49).

Si bien, por supuesto, en una novela no falta la descripción (y en la novela objeto de estudio, de hecho, se asiste continuamente a este medio), es evidente que Cepeda Samudio prioriza el recurso de los diálogos, propio de la escritura cinematográfica en, por ejemplo, la plenitud del capítulo final de la obra —“Los hijos”—, pero también en el inicio de *La casa grande*, pues el capítulo “Los soldados” da la impresión de manejarse cual guion.

La novela se abre con un primer segmento dialógico que ocupa tres páginas y media —en la edición considerada (Cepeda Samudio, 2017)—, momento en el cual, a partir de un marcador tipográfico, se cambia del diálogo a la narración, para luego intercalarse por momentos e, incluso, hacia la mitad del capítulo, primar los segmentos de diálogo, hasta decantar en un bloque seguido de narraciones, previo al diálogo final del capítulo.

Además, a la manera del guion cinematográfico, la novela empieza con una conversación entre dos

soldados que, desde el primer momento, da la sensación de realizarse en tiempo presente:

—¿Estás despierto?

—Sí.

—Yo tampoco he podido dormir: la lluvia me empapó la manta (2017, p. 13).

Este comienzo, dialógico y en presente, se caracteriza, siguiendo a Carrière y Bonitzer, por ser un enganche desde el primer momento para el espectador, con esa nota perfecta de intriga: “basta con ser un poco misterioso. Unos personajes actúan, pero al público no se le informa enseguida sobre el sentido de sus acciones” (1991, p. 133).

Tal como lo expresa Albert Laffay, citado por Gaudreault y Jost (1995, pp. 109-110), el relato cinematográfico se opone al mundo real en, entre otras cosas, su riguroso determinismo temporal, su trama lógico-discursiva y su narración-representación.

Respecto a la característica temporal del cine y “contrariamente al verbo que nos sitúa inmediatamente en el plano temporal”, la imagen cinematográfica “sólo conoce un único tiempo”, por lo cual Laffay sentencia con empeño que “en el cine todo está siempre en presente” (citado en Gaudreault y Jost, 1995, pp. 109, 110).<sup>1</sup>

Ese gancho, ese anzuelo que, según el decir de los cineastas, atrapa al público y para el cual se requiere una exquisita capacidad de observación, está efectivamente lanzado en la apertura de *La casa grande*, con la presentación de expresiones difusas por parte de los soldados. Por ejemplo,

cuando uno de ellos sentencia que ha estado pensando “en mañana” (2017, p. 13), de inmediato el lector-espectador recae en auténtico *suspense*, al cuestionarse qué pasará mañana, qué es aquello que mantiene en vilo la mente del soldado, por qué —como se evidencia líneas más adelante— uno de ellos tiene miedo, a qué se debe aquella “huelga”, entre otros recursos de anzuelo, magistrales en su finalidad de intrigar desde el primer momento.

Vale añadir, igualmente, que el primer capítulo de la novela empieza y termina con diálogo; pero, además, la obra, contemplándola en su generalidad, también empieza y termina con diálogos, pues en su parte postrimera se leen, como un magnífico gesto de placer estético, las líneas concluyentes que rezan:

—Es que si no hablamos ahora nos va a llenar el odio y entonces también estaremos derrotados.

—De todas maneras estamos derrotados.

—Sí: de todas maneras (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 123).

De este modo, se aprecia una estructura cíclica que, desde el primer momento, brinda las características de un guion cinematográfico, evidenciado en *La casa grande* a partir de la manera en que comienza y termina la novela.

Ahondando en el final de la obra, para Carrière y Bonitzer “en toda película el fin tiene el valor de una palabra, [...] en la cual parece resumirse [...] la historia” (1991, p. 150). Según los citados maestros, la grandeza del desenlace reside en que esa “palabra” aparece como exigida, reclamada, a partir de todo un desarrollo en que es necesario, de alguna manera, decantar en algo. Y ese algo, se diría, es el diálogo en la escena final; escena que, algunas veces, es de naturaleza enigmática, “sugerida por una imagen insólita, como en un jeroglífico” (1991, p. 150). Así, aseguran Carrière y Bonitzer (1991), se puede identificar un final bien logrado, es decir, que convenza lo suficiente, cerrando la obra, pero con un tinte de acertijo, cual

1 Estos conceptos se pueden ampliar según los aportes de Christian Metz (“La gran sintagmática del film narrativo”) y Gérard Genette (“Fronteras del relato”), quienes dilucidan amplia y asertivamente lo que ha de ser la narratología y la semiología del cine. La traducción española de dichos aportes, hecha por Beatriz Dorriots, se encuentra en *Análisis estructural del relato* (Barthès et al., 1970).



buena quisicosa, tal y como se plantea el final de *La casa grande*, porque el lector —espectador— se pregunta, entonces, si la tercera generación, los hijos que dialogan en todo el postrimero capítulo, habrá de significar un cambio o una continuidad en la naturaleza de las vicisitudes familiares de los dueños de las plantaciones, aspecto que se ha venido desarrollando previamente y determina este interrogante.

Así las cosas, se puede afirmar que este es un final bien logrado, en el decir de los expertos cineastas. Y es importante este logro en *La casa grande*, ya que el final

Es el fragmento de la película que los espectadores arrancan y se llevan consigo cuando salen del cine: lo que habrán “comprendido” de la película, y que, con una o dos escenas más, creará el boca-a-oído que, según parece, decide sobre el fracaso o el éxito (1991, pp. 150-151).

De esta manera, un final irrefutable, un final que, en el decir de Carrière y Bonitzer, no se da todos los días, es al que se asiste en la consumación de la novela en cuestión, con un cierre pertinente y magistral, cual producción cinematográfica excepcional.

### Cepeda Samudio, *La casa grande* y el amor por la imagen

Como se mencionó, Sellés y Racionero estiman que la escritura, en un buen guion, debe ser lo suficientemente visual. De esta forma, en la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio, dentro de *La casa grande*, parece encontrarse aquella afección por las imágenes que comentan Carrière y Bonitzer, al afirmar que, a un guionista cinematográfico, no debe gustarle solo contar, narrar, sino que “debe gustarle también la imagen, amar las imágenes” (1991, p. 106). Y es que para los maestros cineastas franceses, la imagen, de naturaleza compleja y ladina, igualmente narra, pero de modo divergente a las palabras. Además, añaden:

Sería un error creer que lo que se llama “la imagen” es independiente de las palabras. Son, por el contrario,

las palabras las que la habitan, la soportan, le dan su poder y su impacto originales. Por eso esta amalgama de imágenes y de sonidos que es una película necesita un guion, amalgama de palabras (1991, p. 110).

De esta manera, asumiendo la perspectiva de considerar algunos momentos de *La casa grande* como un guion, en términos formales y estilísticos, es posible determinar, en varias ocasiones, auténticas imágenes cinematográficas.

Es preciso aclarar que, en la historia literaria, la primera vez que una obra recibió un fuerte influjo del montaje cinematográfico sobre la narrativa fue con *Manhattan Transfer*, la novela de 1925 escrita por John Dos Passos en que, de manera convulsa e imitando una especie de cámara en *travelling* que se desplaza a lo largo de la Nueva York de los años veinte, se relata una galería de personajes y episodios que confluyen, desaparecen y reaparecen conforme el foco se va distribuyendo por la narración (Dos Passos, 1925).

Sin embargo, como se verá a continuación, la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio trasciende la sola influencia del montaje, para abarcar asuntos espaciales, sonoros, estilísticos, conceptuales, escriturales y de realización del ejercicio del séptimo arte. Por otro lado, la superposición esquizofrénica de voces, propia de la obra de Dos Passos, es equivalente a la confluencia de voces que se evidencia en el capítulo “La hermana”, de *La casa grande*, en donde además es palpable el vanguardismo de la narrativa, aspecto equiparable a lo propio del cuento “Tap Room”, concebido, igualmente, por Cepeda Samudio (2009a).

### Espacio, sonido y planos cinematográficos

El *espacio*, según Sellés y Racionero, “es uno de los elementos más importantes que tiene el cine para involucrarnos en la historia que está contando o con los personajes que la viven” (2008, p. 80). Este espacio está dado, en una escritura tipo guion, a partir de la elaboración del guionista-escritor de imágenes adecuadas, descritas con contundencia.

Además, Sellés y Racionero (2008) añaden que, gracias a este espacio, se condicionan los ánimos del espectador y se brinda, de igual manera, múltiple información. Para ello, según los expertos citados, ha de considerarse la tipología y la medida del espacio. Así, en el cine, el espacio está compuesto por lo que se ve en el plano —es decir, el encuadre—, pero también por lo que está más allá de este, el fuera de campo.

En términos de planos, la composición cinematográfica se suele erigir a partir de la figura del cuerpo humano como ente determinante, de tal modo que los planos pueden ir desde el general o conjunto, hasta el primerísimo primer plano para personas, o el plano detalle para los objetos. El capítulo “El padre”, de *La casa grande*, brinda ejemplos específicos en torno a la escritura en planos cinematográficos.

Este capítulo comienza con una detallada descripción del espacio en que se encuentra el Padre, como también propicia tomas directas respecto a su humanidad. De hecho, la primera oración y las imágenes descritas posteriormente, en conjunto, pueden asimilarse como *plano entero*. Este plano, también nominado “plano figura”, se caracteriza, según Sellés y Racionero, por enmarcar a un solo personaje de arriba abajo. Con este plano, añadirán los teóricos del cine, se enfatiza en lo que hace el personaje.

Así las cosas, el plano entero, en el capítulo en cuestión, está dado por los siguientes sintagmas:

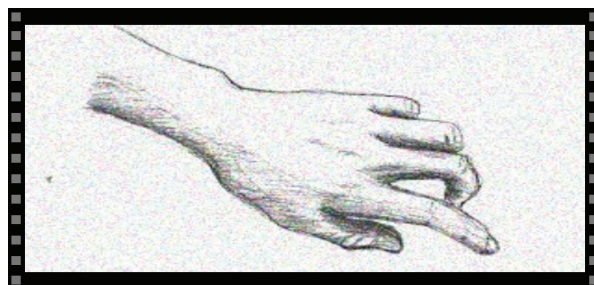
El Padre está sentado en una silla rústica hecha de madera y de cuero templado sin curtir. [...] Cuando se ponga de pies el Padre será de baja estatura, las espaldas serán anchas, la nuca abultada, el pecho poderoso, la cintura delgada y las piernas ligeramente corvas de haber pasado gran parte de sus sesenta años sobre un caballo (2017, p. 59).

Además, a partir del momento en que se empiezan a mencionar las características físicas del Padre, existe la impresión de que la narración adquiere un tinte más de acotación, de modo que se especifican

las cualidades pertinentes que debe tener el actor para ejecutar, de manera adecuada, la escena.

Más adelante se presenta un *plano detalle*, a partir del cual se ponen las manos del Padre en un encuadre agigantado, hiperbólico, siguiendo las nociones de Russo, y en que, además, se “[lleva] hasta el límite el hecho de que el lenguaje cinematográfico es un arte de la fragmentación del espacio y de la manipulación del punto de vista del espectador” (1998, p. 43). Dice en la obra de Cepeda Samudio: “Las manos del padre son delgadas y tal vez finas” (2017, p. 59) (véase Figura 1).

Figura 1 Plano detalle de las manos del padre



Fuente: Dibujo del autor

Sin embargo, si bien las manos del Padre son enjutas, “sus caricias deben ser dolorosas y deben asombrar” (2017, p. 59). De este modo, estas imágenes narran, como sucede en el cine, de manera consecuente, y brindan al lector-espectador información sobre la historia que se está relatando.

Posterior a un par de caracterizaciones detalladas del espacio en que se encuentra el Padre —como el hecho de ser “un cuarto deshabitado pero atendido y cuidadoso y aseado diariamente” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 60)—, se presenta una auténtica acotación, a la mejor manera del guion cinematográfico, en donde se brindan instrucciones precisas para la virtual construcción fílmica del guion, y a la que procederá la continuación del diálogo entre Padre y Muchacha: “Todos los movimientos de la muchacha son mecánicos, como aprendidos hace mucho tiempo y practicados muy frecuentemente. La muchacha comienza a destrenzar los cordones de

las botas sin levantar la cabeza” (2017, p. 60). Esta acotación hace recordar el tipo de escritura en que incurre Cepeda Samudio en su cuento “Las muñecas que hace Juana no tienen ojos”. Considérese el siguiente fragmento de este cuento:

Al comenzar el diálogo, Juana, que tiene el pelo rubio y largo, amarrado en un grueso moño sobre la nuca, está de espaldas a la cámara, sentada en el extremo inmediato de la mesa y trabaja atentamente formando una cabeza de muñeca. [...] A Juana no se le ve nunca de frente, siempre de espaldas: no tiene ojos. (2008b, p. 53).

Asimismo, líneas más adelante, en la novela, se evidencia un fidedigno plano americano:

La Muchacha [...] se levanta y queda frente al Padre [...] esperando el próximo movimiento conocido. El Padre se suelta la correa delgada que sostiene la cartuchera con el revólver, un poco más debajo de la correa ancha de doble hilera de huecos para la hebilla de dos ganchos que sostiene los pantalones [énfasis agregado], y se la entrega a la muchacha (2017, pp. 60-61).

Si bien el plano no se presenta de manera descriptiva explícita, se deduce por la virtual posición del cuerpo del Padre, así como por el elemento que manipula (véase Figura 2).

El *plano americano*, según Sellés y Racionero, nace “a partir de las necesidades del *western*, que en el plano medio tenía que incluir la pistola

**Figura 2** Plano americano del padre con la cartuchera y el revólver



Fuente: dibujo del autor

del *cowboy*” (2008, p. 25). Para Gamarra, este plano, entonces, “abarca generalmente el cuerpo humano desde el muslo para arriba” (2016, p. 50), añadiendo, igualmente, que este tipo de encuadre fue impuesto por el cine del Oeste.

Respecto a esto último, Russo (1998, p. 42) habrá de determinar, en su *Diccionario de cine*, que la relación de este plano con el *western*, por el asunto de las cartucheras, no pasa de ser una vertiente anecdótica de la historia del séptimo arte, aclarando, además, que el plano americano se denomina de este modo gracias a Victorin Jasset —director pionero del cine francés—, quien desde 1911 descubrió la insistencia de exhibición de las cartucheras en los largometrajes de la extinta compañía estadounidense Vitagraph Studios. Así, una virtual realización del rodaje de esta escena debe concebir, de manera estricta, este tipo de encuadre, dados los elementos que componen el plano y la humanidad del personaje.

Igualmente, siguiendo con la dinámica de distinción de planos cinematográficos en el capítulo “El padre”, sus líneas apelan al majestuoso recurso del *primerísimo primer plano*, en este caso, posterior a otro plano detalle:

El Padre saca la mano de debajo del peso de la espalda de la muchacha y la pone sobre el pecho de ella.

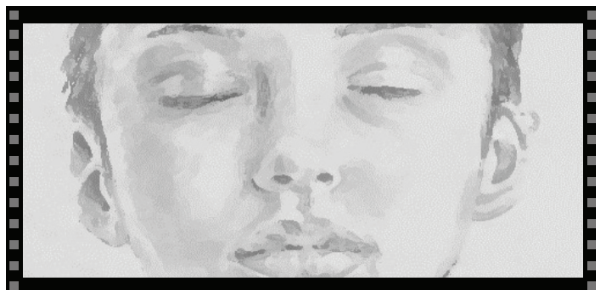
*La muchacha cierra los ojos* (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 63; énfasis agregado).

Este plano, según Sellés y Racionero, “va de debajo de los labios del personaje hasta las cejas (véase Figura 3). Es un plano que no se utiliza a menudo, ya que supone un acercamiento muy acentuado al rostro del personaje, para leer los pensamientos gracias a su mirada” (2008, p. 26).

Además, en este punto Cepeda Samudio utiliza a la perfección el recurso de lo que Carrière y Bonitzer (1991) llaman el “arte del primer plano”,



**Figura 3** Primerísimo primer plano de la muchacha con los ojos cerrados



Fuente: dibujo del autor

esencia del ingenio cinematográfico. Al respecto, añaden:

Siempre hemos de conservar en el espíritu, cuando tenemos que escribir una escena, el convencimiento de que los personajes en acción, o en pasión, no se expresan sólo, ni quizá principalmente, por la palabras [sic], sino por signos del cuerpo: una vena que late en el cuello, unas gotas de sudor por la frente, un puño que se aprieta “a su pesar” (1991, p. 144).

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Así, existe la impresión de que Cepeda Samudio sí que sabe utilizar este recurso, al que los maestros franceses llaman el “plano del sentimiento encarnado”. Este primerísimo primer plano se emplaza en un punto estratégico dentro de la escena, posterior a la sentencia trágica de la Muchacha hacia el Padre, cuando le comenta los rumores de su asesinato. Entonces, los planos se van acercando, desde que el Padre pone la mano en el hombro de la Muchacha, hasta que la saca de debajo de su espalda, la pone en su pecho —como reflejo directo de la intensidad del momento— y se enfocan los ojos de ella en el señalado primerísimo primer plano. Inmediatamente después, entonces, ella le dice que los que lo van a matar son “Todos: el pueblo” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 63). Sus ojos se cierran como signo de afectación, evidenciando un majestuoso uso de este plano, sumamente pertinente en un hipotético rodaje de la escena descrita en conjunto.

Después de esto, en el capítulo “El padre” siguen diez escenas de diálogo continuas, separadas por

el elemento tipográfico de la numeración. En estas escenas, nuevamente, se identifica a plenitud el diálogo entre diversos personajes —no conocidos, pero deducidos— y el carácter lacónico que inunda las conversaciones.

Posterior a ello, se asiste a lo que se podría denominar la “parte sonora” de la escena número diez, la cual coincide con el final del capítulo. Esta escena, en que se narra el deceso del Padre a partir de sonidos —curioso recurso—, está plagada de ruidos, de tañidos. Y es que el guion cinematográfico contempla, asimismo, instrucciones de sonido, pues, como recuerda Gamarra, “el cine invita fundamentalmente a percibir y sentir” (2016, p. 13). De hecho, Sellés y Racionero (2008, p. 39), dentro del papel del sonido en el universo del lenguaje cinematográfico, destacan las posibilidades dramáticas de este.

Dicha escena se erige en un párrafo continuo, denso, de veintitrés líneas en la edición consultada, cuya primera oración es “La muchacha oyó el golpear amortiguado y redondo de los cascos del caballo en el patio” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 75; énfasis agregado). A esta imagen le sigue *el ruido* de las varas, de la talanquera, de un par de pasos; después de que la Muchacha oye al Padre vistiéndose, el *ruido* metálico de su correa y las botas, enseguida “[oye] destrancar la puerta y girar los goznes ruidosamente. Y entonces todos los sonidos secos de la muerte y del apresuramiento se metieron atropelladamente por el hueco desamparado de la puerta” (2017, p. 75; énfasis agregado).

Finalmente, la Muchacha oye el forcejeo, el rodeo jadeante alrededor del Padre, los cavadores que lo golpean, la caída del cuerpo y el relincho del caballo del difunto, que sale despavorido, “como una herida ancha e inacabable” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 75), metáfora, por lo demás, de la mayor exquisitez.

Otro ejemplo de escena sonora se encuentra al final de los fragmentos décimo y undécimo del primer capítulo de *La casa grande*, es decir, “Los soldados”. En aquellos, se evidencia el ruido de botas, de fusiles y de morrales, así como se oye un pitazo.



Además, el comienzo del fragmento undécimo está dado por el corneta de la guardia, con una constante mención de este instrumento y la caracterización de su sonido, así como el crujir de las camas, el ruido de las botas, entre otros momentos sonoros. Asimismo, se puede confrontar también con el segundo fragmento del capítulo “Jueves”, en donde el ruido de la campanita cumple un papel fundamental. Finalmente, el inicio del capítulo “Viernes” es también una escena sonora.

Valga señalar además que, constantemente, la narración de *La casa grande* apela a otros sentidos, como el del olfato. Esto podría ameritar una revisión pormenorizada, en especial si se amplía la concepción de lo cinematográfico a cuatro o cinco dimensiones; o simplemente si se pretende enunciar el juego de los sentidos en la obra. Baste con referenciar los momentos cruciales en que el sentido del olfato adquiere protagonismo en la novela. Un primer momento es cuando los soldados sienten ese olor a mierda al consumir la masacre. También, en el capítulo “El hermano”, se retoza, artísticamente, con el olor que sienten los dos hermanos, olor que remite a las hojas de tabaco y, por ende, al Padre. A partir de estos episodios, los momentos olfativos de *La casa grande* brindan, de igual modo, un eje de análisis de sumo interés, teniendo en cuenta el papel que desempeñan el lenguaje visual y el lenguaje verbal para determinar estos momentos en tanto sistemas semisimbólicos.

Por otro lado, al comienzo del capítulo “El pueblo” se evidencia un ejemplo pertinente de lo que es el *plano de situación y de resituación*. Esto va de la mano con el concepto de *realización simétrica*, un recurso que asegura la correcta ubicación del espectador en el espacio. A su vez, según Sellés y Racionero, este consiste en

Iniciar toda acción en un espacio nuevo con un plano general, abierto, en el cual podamos ver y conocer todo el espacio. Por eso también se llama “plano de situación”. Una vez ya conocemos el espacio y la ubicación de los personajes, podemos cerrar el plano de forma simétrica hasta llegar al primer plano, pero una vez hemos visto toda una serie de primeros planos es

fácil que volvamos a estar desubicados; entonces, lo más frecuente es volver a insertar una imagen en plano general que llamamos plano de resituación (2008, p. 78).

De esta manera, el capítulo en cuestión arranca con un plano de situación (véase Figura 4), esbozado a partir de la oración inicial: “El pueblo es ancho, escueto y caluroso” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 77). Este plano es, a su vez, de naturaleza general, el cual se caracteriza, según Russo (1998, p. 43), por privilegiar como protagonista al entorno, añadiendo que es el plano favorito indiscutido de los Lumière.

**Figura 4** Plano general del pueblo con intención de situación y resituación



Fuente: dibujo del autor

A partir de esta presentación, la virtual realización fílmica del capítulo se adentra en pormenores, como el hecho de caracterizar los techos de las casas y el interior de las mismas, para después, previo a un ferviente momento narrativo y coincidiendo con el inicio del segundo párrafo, retornar al plano general, el cual posee la intención de resituación: “El pueblo comienza aquí, aquí terminan los playones y aquí está la Estación” (2017, p. 77).

A partir de este plano, nuevamente, la virtual cámara se adentra en la presentación de los jornaleros, de los dueños de las fincas y, para cerrar el capítulo —y, con él, la escena—, se evoca una imagen final del mar.

De este modo, se ha presentado un panorama general de la utilización de planos y espacios

cinematográficos en *La casa grande*. Por supuesto que si se siguiera con este análisis en torno a la novela, posiblemente la empresa se extendería de manera inusitada. Lo importante, entonces, es señalar que aunque en *La casa grande* hay episodios en que se apela de manera directa al recurso de narrar con imágenes, cual guion cinematográfico, la naturaleza de estos es abundante. Por lo demás, es preciso tratar, igualmente, aspectos lingüísticos concretos que atañen a este tipo de escritura.

### Elementos literarios y sintaxis del guion cinematográfico

Si bien, desde la especie de manifiesto que corona *Los cuentos de Juana*, Cepeda Samudio (2008) advierte que su literatura apela por el primitivismo vanguardista,<sup>2</sup> en contraposición con el retoricismo propio de la literatura del interior colombiano, *La casa grande* posee un par de elementos literarios que son sumamente resaltables, lo cual no va en detrimento del carácter escritural tipo guion. De hecho, Carrière y Bonitzer determinan que

La escritura guionística, si bien debe ser en efecto tan concisa, tan concentrada, tan densa como sea posible, y no soporta los meandros estilísticos de la literatura, debe, sin embargo, ser evocadora, cargada de afecto y de emoción cuando sea necesario (1991, p. 111).

Previamente, se señaló la bella incursión metafórica presente en la narración de la muerte sonora

2 Baste con leer *The Road of Excess Leads to the Palace of Wisdom* (el citado manifiesto) para comprender cómo la idea de un arte de vanguardia construido con elementos básicos se convierte en *sui generis* del autor. Allí se lee:

Estamos cansados del arte que se hace hoy y que se ha hecho en toda la historia. Y esto hay que decirlo con letras, creo yo, porque Obregón ha estado siempre diciéndolo a gritos, a tremendos o románticos tramojazos de color.

Y continúa:

Vamos a ver si ahora, usando otros símbolos, más elementales y aparentemente más manoseados, van a oír la gran verdad de Obregón que vamos a gritar a coro, coro ensordecedor, coro costeño, coro de hombres y no de mariconcitos con pantaloncitos ajustados a entecas nalguitas bogotanas (Cepeda Samudio, 2008, pp. 13, 15).

del Padre. Asimismo, es preciso considerar el sutil —y macabro— episodio de *La casa grande* en que el soldado que había denotado cierta consciencia social a lo largo del capítulo inaugural de la novela, le cuenta a su par cómo mató a un huelguista, evocando esta singular imagen: “quedó colgando en el aire como una cometa. Enganchado en la punta de mi fusil” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 35). Ante este recurso, vale señalar lo que Carrière y Bonitzer comentan a propósito de lo literario en un guion cinematográfico; a saber, que “a veces una disposición puramente literaria de las palabras en un guion nos dice mucho más que el informe más escrupuloso de un observador” (1991, p. 110). Y esta noción, esta imagen dada a partir de un objeto insólito, cumple con evocar y cargar de afectación la escena.

Respecto al trasunto sintáctico, los cineastas franceses dilucidan de manera ejemplar cómo, en la escritura propia del séptimo arte, es preciso marcar la temporalidad y la sutileza de los actos a partir de la sintaxis. Su análisis se basa en la utilización del marcador discursivo “Y entonces”, conjunción más adverbio, que define cierta temporalidad y que, en su decir, “supone ese acto de franquear un límite, una *no-man’s-land* invisible, una fracción de tiempo que va a cambiar el destino de los personajes” (1991, p. 112).

Para los teóricos, no es casual la utilización de dicho marcador. Antes bien, a partir de él, se precisa un cambio natural que debe plasmarse en el rodaje de la escena. En *La casa grande* abundan las colocaciones de este tipo; no obstante, baste con resaltar algunas que determinan, de manera crucial, la tensión y el tiempo en la novela, elementales en una virtual realización cinematográfica de la misma.

En el capítulo “Los soldados” se lee, posterior a que estos se ubican en el caño antes de llegar al cuartel, lo siguiente: “*De pronto*, inesperadamente, principió a llover” (Cepeda Samudio, 2017, p. 17; énfasis agregado). En “El padre” se evoca la siguiente narración, haciendo un uso particular —y casi excesivo— de la conjunción:

La muchacha está sentada en el borde de la cama y con la punta de un zapato se quita el zapato del otro pie y luego con los dedos del pie descalzo se quita el otro zapato empujándolo fuera del talón (2017, p. 62; énfasis agregado).

Además de ello, es particular el uso, no solo de la puntuación —o su abstención—, propia del estilo de la obra, sino el empleo de los dos puntos en *La casa grande*, hiperbólico en varios momentos. De este modo, la temporalidad está dada por estas marcas en la lectura que, al momento de llevarse a una virtual realización cinemática, debe contemplar los cambios tal y como se precisan con la sintaxis escritural.

Estos elementos sintácticos mencionados previamente, así como las imágenes literarias evocadas en la obra, no van en detrimento del carácter cinematográfico de la misma. Antes bien, y en contrapunto con los expertos, hacen de la escritura del guionista una empresa de naturaleza excepcional y magistral en su estética misma.

### Conclusiones y sumario

Este estudio ha abierto cabos que, en este punto, es menester atar. A partir de los vínculos establecidos con episodios de la vida de Cepeda Samudio, se propició un análisis de naturaleza biográfica, que vertió elementos de total pertinencia a propósito de los evidentes influjos del séptimo arte en el autor, omnipresentes en su recorrido vital. Además, la teoría cinematográfica fue aprehendida en términos no solo estilísticos, sino también haciendo eco de la narración en imágenes, del espacio, del sonido y de los planos de rodaje. Esto, por supuesto, añadiendo la posibilidad que ofrece esta misma teoría para equiparar el inicio y el final de la novela.

La estética de la obra, que contempla los recursos extraídos del séptimo arte, se fundamenta en la concepción que tuvo el autor como si escribiese pensando en una virtual realización llevada a la pantalla grande, aspecto que también se relacionó con la escritura de su narrativa corta, impregnada de estas características. Se considera que la mención de fragmentos de la novela llevados al

afianzamiento en auténticos planos cinematográficos —en términos de encuadre y como sucede en el cine— es uno de los mayores alcances de este trabajo, establecidos a partir de ejemplos específicos de plano americano, planos de situación y resituación, primerísimo primer plano, entre otros.

Asimismo, el apartado final, en que se analiza la sintaxis y los elementos literarios propios del carácter escritural del guion presentes en la novela, brindan una perspectiva lingüística que denota un profundo conocimiento del autor sobre particularidades de la forma, así como la utilización peculiar de algunos sintagmas y signos de puntuación.

Además, el presente estudio brinda, igualmente, un apropiado punto de partida para analizar otras cuestiones en la novela de Cepeda Samudio, como lo son, por ejemplo, el juego de los sentidos presente en la obra —lo olfativo y lo sonoro—, así como la recurrencia de ciertas imágenes que resisten análisis más detallados. Sin embargo, como se determinó, dichos sentidos están dados por los lenguajes verbal e, hipotéticamente, visual. Respecto a las imágenes, este análisis partiría, en un primer momento, de lo literario, con una sugerente expansión hacia el fetichismo.

Finalmente, es preciso dejar en claro que las posibilidades crítico-teóricas de abordaje de la narrativa de Cepeda Samudio son múltiples y de creciente interés. De este modo, se espera que los análisis relacionados con la estética cinematográfica puedan acrecentarse y nutrirse, especialmente haciendo lo propio en *La casa grande* y siendo este trabajo un punto de partida para tal fin.

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# LA COMUNIDAD EMBERA CHAMÍ EN LA CIUDAD DE BOGOTÁ: UNA REVISIÓN DE LITERATURA DESDE LA SOCIOLINGÜÍSTICA

THE EMBERA CHAMI COMMUNITY IN THE CITY OF BOGOTA: A LITERATURE REVISION FOLLOWING A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

LA COMMUNAUTÉ EMBERA CHAMI À LA CITÉ DE BOGOTÁ : UNE RÉVISION DE LA LITTÉRATURE SOUS UNE PERSPECTIVE SOCIOLINGUISTIQUE

A COMUNIDADE EMBERA CHAMI NA CIDADE DE BOGOTÁ: UMA REVISÃO DA LITERATURA DE UMA PERSPECTIVA SOCIOLINGÜÍSTICA

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## RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta una revisión documental que permite elaborar un marco teórico y seleccionar una metodología para el estudio de la realidad sociolingüística de la comunidad embera chamí desplazada al contexto urbano de Bogotá, Colombia. Para llevarla a cabo, se acudió a la selección y síntesis de 68 documentos impresos y electrónicos publicados desde el año 2000 en bases de datos, bibliotecas digitales y sitios web de diversas organizaciones. El análisis temático y de contenido, realizado a partir de una categorización y codificación, giró en torno a tres ejes temáticos: el primero nos ofrece una mirada histórica de la comunidad embera chamí, tanto a nivel nacional como local, los lugares de procedencia y las diversas causas y efectos del fenómeno de desplazamiento. El segundo describe sucintamente la lengua embera chamí fonética, fonológica y gramaticalmente. El último presenta conceptos como la *superdiversidad*, las *comunidades de práctica* y las *redes de contacto* de diversa naturaleza, así como algunas iniciativas de promoción de la lengua y cultura embera chamí. La revisión sugiere la necesidad de establecer un diálogo entre los conceptos surgidos de la teoría sociolingüística, el contexto particular y la cosmovisión de los miembros de la comunidad, por medio de estudios etnográficos que incorporen varios mecanismos de recolección de datos.

**Palabras clave:** comunidad embera chamí, cultura indígena, indígenas en Bogotá, sociolingüística

## ABSTRACT

This article presents a literature review to provide inputs to build a theoretical framework and select a methodology to study the sociolinguistic reality of the Embera Chamí community displaced to the urban context of Bogotá, Colombia.

Este artículo se deriva de la investigación "Elementos para un diagnóstico sociolingüístico de los indígenas desplazados embera chamí en Bogotá. Una aproximación documental", con código de inscripción: WDA 2020-01. Fecha de inicio: 20 de agosto de 2020, fecha de finalización: 15 de septiembre 2021.

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In order to carry it out, a selection and synthesis of 68 printed and electronic documents published since 2000 in databases, digital libraries and websites of various organizations were used. The thematic and content analysis, based on categorization and coding, dealt with three thematic axes: the first axis offers a historical overview of the Embera Chamí community, both nationally and locally, the places of origin and the various causes and effects of the phenomenon of displacement. The second axis succinctly describes the Embera Chamí language phonetically, phonologically and grammatically. The last axis presents concepts such as superdiversity, communities of practice and contact networks of diverse nature, as well as some initiatives for the promotion of the Embera Chamí language and culture. The review suggests the need to establish a dialogue between the concepts arising from sociolinguistic theory, the particular context and the worldview of community members, through empirical ethnographic work that incorporates various data collection mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Embera Chamí community; Indigenous culture; Indigenous people in Bogotá; sociolinguistics.

### RÉSUMÉ

Cet article présente une revue de la littérature qui fournit des éléments pour un cadre théorique et le choix d'une méthodologie visant à étudier la réalité sociolinguistique de la communauté Embera Chamí déplacée dans le contexte urbain de Bogotá, Colombie. Pour ce faire, 68 documents imprimés et électroniques publiés depuis 2000 dans des bases de données, des bibliothèques numériques et des sites web de diverses organisations ont été sélectionnés et résumés. L'analyse thématique et de contenu, basée sur la catégorisation et le codage, a traité trois axes thématiques : le premier axe donne un aperçu historique de la communauté Embera Chamí, tant au niveau national que local, les lieux d'origine et les différentes causes et effets du phénomène de déplacement. Le deuxième axe décrit brièvement la langue chamí embera sur le plan phonétique, phonologique et grammatical. Le dernier axe présente des concepts tels que la superdiversité, les communautés de pratique et les réseaux de contact de différents types, ainsi que certaines initiatives visant à promouvoir la langue et la culture embera chamí. L'examen suggère la nécessité d'établir un dialogue entre les concepts émergents de la théorie sociolinguistique, le contexte particulier et la vision du monde des membres de la communauté, par le biais d'un travail ethnographique empirique incorporant divers mécanismes de collecte de données.

**Mots-cléf :** communauté Embera Chamí, culture indigène, des indigènes à la ville de Bogotá, sociolinguistique

### RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta uma revisão de literatura que fornece elementos para a elaboração de um marco teórico e a seleção de uma metodologia para o estudo da realidade sociolinguística da comunidade Embera Chamí deslocada para o contexto urbano da cidade de Bogotá (Colômbia). Para isso, 68 documentos impressos e eletrônicos publicados desde 2000 em bancos de dados, bibliotecas digitais e websites de várias organizações foram selecionados e resumidos. A análise temática e de conteúdo, baseada na categorização e codificação, tem abordado três eixos temáticos: a) uma visão histórica da comunidade Embera Chamí, tanto nacional como localmente, os lugares de origem e as várias causas e efeitos do fenômeno do deslocamento; b) uma breve descrição fonética,

fonológica e gramatical da língua Embera Chamí, e c) a definição de conceitos como superdiversidade, comunidades de prática e redes de contato de vários tipos, bem como algumas iniciativas para promover a língua e a cultura Embera Chamí. A revisão sugere a necessidade de estabelecer um diálogo entre os conceitos emergentes da teoria sociolinguística, o contexto particular e a visão de mundo dos membros da comunidade, através de um trabalho etnográfico empírico que incorpore vários mecanismos de coleta de dados.

**Palavras chave:** comunidade embera chamí, cultura indígena, indígenas em Bogotá, sociolinguística



## Introducción

En América Latina, la llegada a las urbes de diferentes comunidades indígenas es un fenómeno que les supone nuevos y variados desafíos, como el empobrecimiento, los obstáculos de acceso a los servicios públicos o la pérdida de identidad, los cuales amenazan el ejercicio de sus derechos y se convierten en necesidades de atención urgentes dentro de las políticas y acciones de los Estados.

Según la Comisión Económica para América Latina (Popolo, 2018), la población indígena en zonas urbanas en Colombia alcanza las 300 000 personas, y aunque es uno de los países de la región que mantiene altos porcentajes de población indígena en áreas rurales, los desafíos para garantizar los derechos y la supervivencia de una y otra no son menores.

Esta garantía de derechos comienza por el conocimiento y el reconocimiento de la situación de las poblaciones indígenas en contextos de ciudad; sin embargo, no parece existir tanta información reciente al respecto. En este sentido, esta investigación busca aportar elementos teóricos que faciliten futuros acercamiento a la situación sociolingüística de una de las comunidades indígenas más vulnerables en el contexto urbano como es la embera chamí en Bogotá.

Los emberas son considerados por Barreña y Pérez-Caurel (2017) como la comunidad indígena más importante en el área del pacífico en Colombia. El proceso de colonización ha causado la huida de la comunidad durante mucho tiempo y, más recientemente, sus miembros han sufrido por el conflicto armado, la explotación minera, los monocultivos y el narcotráfico (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, Fondo de Poblaciones de las Naciones Unidas —United Nations Fund for Population Activities— y Programa Integral Contra Violencias de Género MDG/F, 2011).

Uno de los grupos embera con gran presencia en la ciudad de Bogotá es el chamí, proveniente

en su mayoría del departamento de Risaralda (Pulido, 2015). La situación social de la comunidad en la ciudad es precaria. El Distrito los ha dotado de lugares de vivienda temporales que, por su tamaño y ubicación en zonas de tolerancia e inseguras, no les permiten una vida digna de acuerdo con sus hábitos ancestrales (Colombia, Ministerio de Cultura, s. f. 2). Los hombres trabajan, en su mayoría, en sitios donde se lavan carros, y las mujeres, en la venta de chaquiras. Desafortunadamente, otra actividad común entre la población es la mendicidad (Pulido, 2015).

Este artículo es una profundización de lo planteado en Alarcón y Rojas (2020), ya que, al realizar una consulta diagnóstica sobre el tema de investigación, los autores encontraron que si bien existe información sociolingüística sobre las prácticas lingüísticas indígenas (Pardo, 1997) o la comunidad embera chamí (Domicó, 2013; Sabogal, 2014), no hay documentos que den cuenta de aspectos sociolingüísticos de esta comunidad en el espacio específico de Bogotá.

El problema planteado por esta revisión documental está asociado, entonces, a la necesidad de brindar insumos para comprender la situación sociolingüística de la comunidad embera chamí en la ciudad de Bogotá.

Como resultado del análisis de los textos seleccionados, este artículo caracteriza la comunidad de manera histórica y social, menciona algunas características fonéticas, fonológicas y gramaticales de la lengua embera chamí, e indaga por elementos conceptuales que den cuenta de la heterogeneidad de las prácticas lingüísticas que caracterizan a esta población en la capital.

## Método

Esta investigación es una aproximación documental (Bowen, 2009) que acudió a la lectura y análisis de 68 documentos impresos y digitales publicados desde el año 2000 hasta el año 2020. Sin embargo, se vio la necesidad de acudir a algunas publicaciones

anteriores al año 2000, debido a la validez de los datos suministrados y a la escasez de bibliografía más reciente. Entre los documentos consultados se cuenta con artículos indexados, tesis y monografías, ubicados en bases de datos como Dialnet, DOAJ, ERIC, Ingenta, JSTOR, Latindex, Redalyc, Scielo, entre otras. Otros documentos se revisaron en las bibliotecas digitales de entidades gubernamentales y no gubernamentales, tales como el Instituto Caro y Cuervo, el Instituto Nacional de Antropología, el Ministerio de Educación, Cultura e Interior y sus secretarías en Bogotá. Finalmente, se obtuvo también información audiovisual valiosa de la red de YouTube.

Así mismo, la validez de los datos en esta investigación se garantizó bajo parámetros ya descritos en Alarcón y Rojas (2020), y acudiendo a Scott (2006), que se resumen en los criterios de autenticidad, credibilidad, representatividad y significado, con el objetivo de garantizar el rigor de la selección.

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Además de dicha selección y síntesis, la comprensión y la valoración de la información en los documentos se logró mediante la categorización de contenido (Labuschagne, 2003) y la revisión de temas recurrentes, con una lectura más focalizada (Bowen, 2009).

## Resultados

Esta revisión permitió la identificación de tres temas emergentes e importantes para la comprensión sociolingüística de la comunidad: el contexto histórico y geográfico de la comunidad embera en Colombia y Bogotá, la caracterización básica de la lengua embera chamí y algunos conceptos sociolingüísticos relevantes, además de la promoción de la lengua y la cultura embera chamí y el futuro metodológico de su estudio.

## Contexto histórico y geográfico de los embera en Colombia

El *Atlas sociolingüístico de pueblos indígenas en América Latina* (Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia —Unicef— y Fundación para

la Educación en Contextos de Multilingüismo y Pluriculturalidad Andes, 2009) plantea que es difícil precisar el número y el nombre de los pueblos indígenas que al momento de la conquista habitaban el área comprendida entre Panamá y Colombia, donde, al parecer, y siguiendo a Sabogal (2014) y Vasco (2002), citados en Alarcón y Rojas (2020, p. 11), vivían los grupos que dieron origen a los actuales emberas. Además, se afirma que los emberas, junto con los waunanes, pertenecen a la familia lingüística chocó (Aguirre y Pardo, 1993, y Pardo, 1997), apelativo que los indígenas cunas, habitantes de la zona colombiana fronteriza con Panamá, habrían dado a los emberas y waunanes (Pardo, 1997). A partir de exploraciones realizadas por Jorge Robledo al Alto San Juan hacia 1540, la región sería conocida en los documentos coloniales como “Provincia de los Chocós” o del “Indio Chocó” (Pardo, 1997, p. 324). En la actualidad, se utiliza dicho nombre para la familia lingüística y, además, para uno de los departamentos de Colombia con presencia de los emberas.

Los textos consultados coinciden en afirmar que el grupo embera chamí es uno de los más numerosos de Colombia. El *Atlas* citado (2009), por ejemplo, presenta una población total de 88 631, incluidos emberas, emberas káticos, emberas chamies y epedara-siapidasaras. Por su parte, el Plan de salvaguarda embera (Colombia, Ministerio del Interior y Asociación de Cabildos Embera, Wounan, Katío, Chamí y Tule del Chocó, 2013) muestra un número de personas amplio y reitera que es una comunidad indígena de las más grandes del país. Finalmente, los dos últimos censos (Colombia, Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, 2005, 2019) evidencian un aumento de la población embera en general. Cabe anotar, sin embargo, que los documentos consultados no son claros con respecto al número de emberas chamies en particular, ya que se suele unificar a la comunidad embera sin considerar los subgrupos en que esta se divide.

Con respecto a los subgrupos emberas, autores como Caicedo (2013), Pulido (2015) y Sabogal (2014) precisan el nombre del subgrupo, su

**Tabla 1** Algunos nombres de los subgrupos embera y su ubicación geográfica

Nombre del subgrupo	Significado del nombre en español	Ubicación geográfica
Chamí	Gente de la cordillera La Organización Indígena Nacional de Colombia (ONIC) denomina a este grupo “gente de la montaña”	Departamentos de Caldas, Caquetá, Risaralda, Quindío Antioquia y Valle del Cauca
Dobida Eperara (Epedara Siapidara)	Gente (u hombres) de río (No se encontraron registros que aclaren el significado del nombre del subgrupo)	Norte del departamento de Chocó y Panamá Nariño, Cauca y Valle del Cauca. El río Saija, en el departamento de Cauca, y los ríos Satinga y Saquianga, en el departamento de Nariño
Katio Eyabida	Gente de la montaña	Departamentos de Chocó, Antioquia, Córdoba, Risaralda y Quindío
Oibida	Gente (u hombres) de selva o gente del bosque	Selva de la llanura del Pacífico
Pusabida	Habitantes de las desembocaduras de los ríos	Departamento de Chocó

significado en español y su ubicación en la geografía nacional, como se muestra en la Tabla 1.

Sobre los emberas se han realizado estudios etnohistóricos y etnográficos, como los de Wassen (1988) y Pardo (1997). En el primero, se comparan datos de cronistas como Pedro Simón, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Lucas Fernández de Piedrahita; y en el segundo, se hace un seguimiento muy completo de autores que han realizado vocabularios o han estudiado parte de la lengua de los indígenas choques (embera y waunan). Sin embargo, no se han registrado estudios posteriores de la misma naturaleza sobre la comunidad embera chamí y en contextos urbanos.

Los emberas han sido afectados y desplazados por defender su territorio de otros grupos indígenas, por la penetración española, por las diferentes actividades evangelizadoras, por distintas olas de colonos, por las actividades extractivas y mineras de empresas multinacionales o particulares, y por los múltiples grupos que participan en el conflicto armado en disputa territorial (Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas de Risaralda y Ministerio del Interior, 2012; Colombia, Ministerio del Interior y Asociación de Cabildos Embera, Wounan, Katio, Chamí y Tule del Chocó, 2013). De esta

manera, los emberas, que originariamente se ubicaban principalmente en el departamento de Chocó, en la actualidad se localizan en diferentes departamentos de Colombia, como Antioquia, Bolívar, Boyacá, Caldas, Cauca, Córdoba, Caquetá, Risaralda, Meta, Nariño, Putumayo, Quindío, Santander, Tolima, Valle del Cauca, y en ciudades como Armenia, Bogotá Cali, Medellín y Pereira.

### Los embera chamí y su llegada a Bogotá

Los emberas chamies que se encuentran en la ciudad de Bogotá hacen parte de la población que habitó el Alto San Juan, se desplazó hacia Risaralda, se ubicó en los resguardos de Mistrató y Pueblo Rico, y en el corregimiento de Santa Cecilia, y de allí algunos se han desplazado hacia ciudades como Bogotá, Medellín y Pereira (Colombia, Ministerio del Interior y Asociación de Cabildos Embera, Wounan, Katio, Chamí y Tule del Chocó, 2013; Consejo Regional Indígena de Risaralda y Corporación Autónoma Regional de Risaralda, 2012; Pardo, 1997). Cabe resaltar a Domicó (2013), hablante del embera chamí, que hace un análisis de la situación social, cultural y lingüística de su territorio en el departamento de Antioquia y brinda datos importantes en primera persona para caracterizar a los embera.

Con respecto al grupo indígena en la capital, la información es escasa y se encuentra publicada especialmente por la Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá (2014, 2017). Los datos demográficos sobre la población también son escasos. En 2018, un informe de la Alta Consejería de Paz, Víctimas y Reconciliación de la Alcaldía de Bogotá relaciona a 121 familias, pero no discrimina por comunidad; luego el número de miembros del grupo embera chamí no es claro. El último informe del 11 de octubre de 2021 presenta un número de 29 emberas chamies, quienes con su consentimiento han sido trasladados a la Unidad de Protección Integral de la Florida, “adecuada para que puedan tener un lugar digno y transitorio previo al proceso de retorno a sus territorios” (Infobae, 2021); sin embargo, no se brinda información sobre la cantidad total de indígenas emberas chamies en la ciudad.

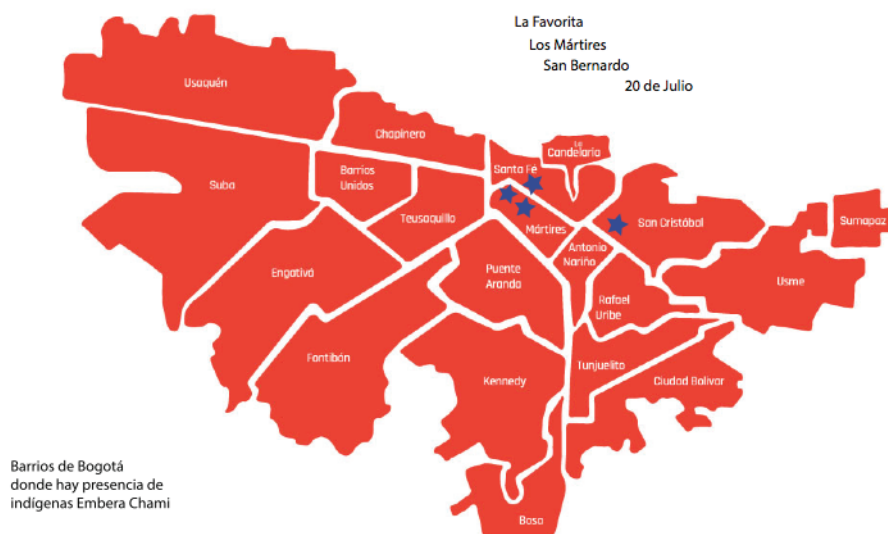
Ahora bien, a pesar de la escasa información, existen algunos estudios (Caicedo, 2013; Pardo, 1997; Pulido, 2015) que dan cuenta de los orígenes y la situación actual de la comunidad. Pardo (1997) afirma que la fundación de poblados como Mistrató y Pueblo Rico produjo la apertura de carreteras y atrajo a colonos blancos que se apoderaron de tierras indígenas, y que, a pesar de la creación

del resguardo, dichas tierras disminuyeron e incluso algunos emberas estarían sin tierra. Por su parte, Caicedo (2013) y Pulido (2015) sostienen que los emberas llegaron a Bogotá hacia 2002, desplazados por el conflicto armado y agrupados por familias extensas como mecanismo de apoyo y protección en su travesía y permanencia en la ciudad.

Caicedo enfoca la problemática hacia la violencia que sufren las mujeres, y afirma que ellas son las más afectadas tanto por las situaciones que tienen que enfrentar en cuanto al choque cultural en la ciudad como por la manera como son excluidas políticamente al interior del mismo grupo embera (2013). Pulido (2015) también hace referencia a la mendicidad como la primera actividad a la que se dedican algunos miembros de la comunidad al llegar a Bogotá; a la vida en los albergues que administran organizaciones de carácter religioso, que muchas veces coaccionan a la comunidad indígena; y, finalmente, a la vida en los llamados “pagadarios” o habitaciones que se pagan por día, contextos en donde se ejerce la prostitución, el consumo de estupefacientes y el robo.

Además de ubicar estas problemáticas en algunos barrios de la ciudad (véase Figura 1), Pulido

**Figura 1** Ubicación de los emberas chamies en barrios de Bogotá (señalados con una estrella)



Fuente: Tomado de Alarcón y Rojas (2020, p. 14).



(2015) afirma que la Corte Constitucional expidió la Sentencia T025 y el Auto 004 de 2004 para reconocer la situación y llamar la atención de las autoridades distritales para la toma de decisiones y el desarrollo de acciones. Esto, a su vez, generó otro tipo de problemática, ya que las instituciones que intervinieron lo hicieron desde un punto de vista etnocéntrico y la finalidad de regresarlos a sus territorios no fue efectiva, pues la problemática requería conocer mejor los aspectos culturales y sociales tanto de los desplazados como de los resguardos de origen (Pulido, 2015).

### La lengua embera y sus variedades

Uno de los temas emergentes en la investigación es la importancia de la lengua como principio identitario de las comunidades indígenas en general y de la embera chamí en particular, así como el reconocimiento de la misma por parte de la población no indígena, para garantizar escenarios y prácticas cotidianas no discriminatorias. Por esta razón y por la ausencia de trabajos recientes sobre lingüística embera, se hace referencia a publicaciones

anteriores al 2010, ya que estas se convierten en insumos para contrastar con un trabajo empírico posterior y permitir una descripción más completa de la situación sociolingüística de la comunidad.

La primera propuesta dialectológica de la lengua embera fue realizada por Aguirre y Pardo (1993), quienes presentan estudios anteriores e intentos de clasificación a partir de datos fonológicos. Posteriormente, Pardo (1997) hace una clasificación de dialectización y regionalización de la familia lingüística chocó, con base en estudios propios y en trabajos de Aguirre (1987), Harms y Prado (1982) y Mejía (1987). Allí se muestra que a la familia lingüística chocó la componen la lengua embera y la lengua waunan, esta última ubicada en el delta del San Juan, Alta Quebrada, Serranía y en el Medio San Juan, y es ininteligible con los cinco dialectos que constituyen la lengua embera (Costa Sur, Alto San Juan, Bajo Baudó, Atrato-Córdoba y Antioquia) y cuyos nombres permiten precisar las ubicaciones geográficas (véase Tabla 2). Pardo (1997) sugiere la posibilidad de encontrar más variedades y la necesidad de

**Tabla 2** Dialectización y regionalización del grupo lingüístico Chocó

Idioma	Divisiones dialectales	Subzonas sociogeográficas	
Idioma waunan	(No se evidencian variedades dialectales en este idioma)	Delta del San Juan	
		Alta quebrada, Serranía Medio San Juan	
Idioma embera	Costa sur	Río Saija y aledaños Costa Nariño	
		Bajo Baudó	Cuenca Baudó Vertiente Pacífico Atrato
	Atrato Córdoba		Juradó Panamá
			Antioquia
	Alto San Juan	Tadó Alto Andágueda Chamí	

Fuente: Adaptado de Pardo (1997).

hacer estudios de las diferentes relaciones interdialectales y situaciones de polilingüismo.

Son de resaltar los estudios de Aguirre (1995, 1998), quien presenta una descripción morfológica y morfosintáctica de la variedad embera chamí de la comunidad de Cristianía, al sur del departamento de Antioquia. Este documento explica, de manera detallada, la predicación, el sintagma nominal, el sintagma verbal y la sintaxis oracional de esta variedad, aspectos que se consideran importantes para la profundización en el conocimiento de esta y para la elaboración de currículos educativos bilingües interculturales o procesos de fortalecimiento lingüístico intercultural.

Llama la atención el poco interés que ha despertado en épocas recientes la caracterización de la lengua embera chamí dentro de la investigación lingüística. Sin embargo, y afortunadamente, se cuenta con los trabajos de Aguirre y Pardo, los cuales se convierten en insumos indispensables para iniciar nuevas indagaciones a la luz del contacto de lenguas en un contexto urbano como lo es el bogotano.

### Aspectos sociolingüísticos relevantes

La indagación para esta revisión documental no arrojó trabajos dedicados a la sociolingüística embera o embera chamí durante el período propuesto. Sin embargo, se logró recopilar información importante para un trabajo empírico posterior, como: trabajos de sociolingüística en general y de sociolingüística en otras comunidades indígenas; trabajos de otras áreas del conocimiento, entre ellas la salud, el trabajo social, la antropología y las políticas públicas en relación con comunidades emberas chamies en otros territorios distintos al bogotano; y, finalmente, documentos institucionales de algunos ministerios y de la Alcaldía de Bogotá sobre la situación de los emberas chamies en la capital.

Pachón y Correa (1997) incluyen trabajos de diferentes investigadores sobre fenómenos sociolingüísticos en grupos indígenas de Colombia,

entre ellos el grupo embera. Por otro lado, el *Atlas* referido (2009), permite conocer las condiciones sociales y lingüísticas de las comunidades en esta área, y en cuanto a la llanura costera del Pacífico colombiano, brinda datos relevantes sobre los emberas, su ubicación, historia, variedades dialectales y costumbres como comunidad (Rojas, 2009). Estos dos trabajos, si bien están dedicados a indagar aspectos sociolingüísticos de las comunidades y hacen mención de la problemática de vulneración de sus derechos, no exploran los fenómenos surgidos a partir de su desplazamiento a las ciudades.

Ahora bien, los textos consultados dejan ver que la presencia de la comunidad en la capital se comprende no solo al hacer visibles sus aspectos históricos, geográficos y lingüísticos, sino, además, al explorar elementos conceptuales y teóricos, como *superdiversidad*, *comunidades de práctica*, *prácticas lingüísticas heterogéneas*, *mercado lingüístico* y *des-ciudadanía* que, desde el campo de la sociolingüística posestructuralista (Sánchez, 2020), se convierten en el último eje emergente. Dichos conceptos permiten establecer relaciones con las dinámicas sociales, educativas, económicas y culturales del contexto de estudio, y discutir interrogantes sociolingüísticos, a los que se les propondría dar respuesta en un estudio futuro de naturaleza empírica.

Los movimientos humanos hacia las grandes ciudades configuran realidades complejas que diversifican las prácticas comunicativas (Sánchez, 2020). Debido a la alteración de la vida social, cultural y lingüística en un mundo globalizado y a la difusa naturaleza del fenómeno de migración desde los años noventa, el multiculturalismo se ha transformado en lo que Vertovec (2007) llama “superdiversidad”. Esta se entiende como

[...] un incremento exponencial en la categoría de los migrantes no solo en términos de nacionalidad, etnicidad, lengua o religión, sino también en términos de las razones, los patrones y los itinerarios de migración, así como de los procesos de inserción en el mercado

laboral y de vivienda en las poblaciones receptoras (p. 86; traducción de los autores).

Estas dinámicas socioculturales cambiantes del fenómeno de la migración configuran también una variedad y complejidad de los fenómenos comunicativos. La situación del grupo indígena en la ciudad se asume, entonces, como compleja y matizada, debido a las diferentes dinámicas de llegada, de establecimiento de sus miembros en el espacio urbano y de los diversos intercambios comunicativos de los que son partícipes. Por lo mismo, la comprensión sociolingüística de la comunidad debería pensarse menos dentro de un contexto homogéneo, estable o delimitado, y más bien bajo la premisa de que, como lo afirman Blommaert y Rampton (2011), es “analíticamente más productivo focalizarse en las diversas formas en las cuales las características lingüísticas que poseen ya asociaciones culturales y sociales identificables se agrupan en los diferentes momentos comunicativos” (p. 4; traducción de los autores).

Las representaciones e identidades que emergen y circulan en los grupos humanos se entienden, además, a partir de conceptos como *comunidades de práctica* (Holmes y Meyerhoff, 2011, p. 1) y *prácticas lingüísticas heterogéneas* (Léglise, 2017, en Sánchez, 2020, p. 185).

La *comunidad de práctica* la define Vásquez (2011) como “un grupo de personas ligadas por una práctica común, recurrente y estable en el tiempo, y por lo que aprenden en esta práctica común” (p. 53). En el ámbito lingüístico, estas prácticas abarcan muchos aspectos de la estructura de la lengua, del discurso y de los modelos de interacción.

Wenger (1998) identifica tres dimensiones de las comunidades de práctica: el compromiso mutuo, que involucra la interacción regular entre sus miembros; la existencia de relaciones complejas de responsabilidad compartida bajo una meta establecida, y el repertorio compartido de recursos y fuentes conjuntas para negociar significados, como terminologías especializadas, rutinas lingüísticas, imágenes, comidas regulares, gestos, etc.

Mooney y Evans (2015) afirman que

[...] debido a la naturaleza de la interacción en las comunidades de práctica, estas desarrollan sus propias normas lingüísticas. Dichas normas no son pre-determinadas, sino que evolucionan y se desarrollan de manera cooperativa por parte de los miembros de la comunidad (p. 191; traducción de los autores).

Las *prácticas lingüísticas heterogéneas*, por su parte, se convierten en interacciones contextuales y dinámicas originadas por “el contacto étnico y racial, las relaciones de poder, las ideologías lingüísticas, los aspectos socioeconómicos de las sociedades, etc.” (Sánchez, 2020, p. 185). Así, entonces, los miembros de la comunidad poseen un repertorio lingüístico que da cuenta de su historia, crianza, origen; de sus razones e itinerario de llegada a la ciudad, y de las relaciones con su familia, con otras comunidades indígenas de la ciudad, con los propietarios de los pagadarios donde viven o de los lavacarros o motos donde laboran, con el comprador de chaquiras, con el ciudadano desprevenido y desconocedor, con las instituciones gubernamentales y no gubernamentales a las que acuden para solicitar servicios de salud, educación, vivienda y recreación, y cuyos orígenes y repertorios lingüísticos son también muy diversos y se enmarcan en cosmovisiones diferentes.

En la actualidad, se deben también considerar las relaciones comunicativas que la comunidad en Bogotá establece con sus familias y amigos en los territorios originales, gracias a las tecnologías digitales como celulares e internet.

En suma, los miembros de la comunidad tienen una pluralidad de competencias, estilos, registros y géneros que se ponen al servicio del acto comunicativo. Deja entonces de ser importante para el análisis el hablante con una lengua limitada a ciertas características homogéneas e inmodificables, y toma protagonismo una investigación que apunte a descubrir las formas en que los hablantes se alinean o se desafilian de diferentes grupos en distintos momentos y etapas por medio de sus usos lingüísticos.

Con respecto a los conceptos de *des-ciudadanía* y *mercado lingüístico*, y teniendo en cuenta la reproducción del poder del español sobre las lenguas indígenas, Heller (2013) plantea que la construcción de los Estados nación ha requerido históricamente una definición territorial determinada y que dichos procesos han involucrado la construcción de lenguas estandarizadas y políticas lingüísticas que han privilegiado el orden y la uniformidad más que la diversidad y la movilidad. Para la autora, estos privilegios han supuesto una “buena ciudadanía”, definida también por el conocimiento y el uso de dichas lenguas estandarizadas y, por tanto, la situación contraria de desconocimiento de estas lenguas llevaría a lo que ella denomina “des-ciudadanía”, la cual implica limitaciones en el acceso equitativo a los recursos distribuidos por el Estado.

Bourdieu (2008), por su parte, afirma que existe un orden social, político y económico que no es neutral ni democrático, al cual denomina “mercado lingüístico”. En dicho mercado, los hablantes desempeñan diferentes funciones sociales, mediadas por relaciones de poder, y adaptan, en consecuencia, sus formas de hablar (Areiza *et al.*, 2011, en Alarcón y Rojas, 2020, p. 28).

Así, entonces, explorar y comprender los mercados lingüísticos de los cuales hace parte este grupo, así como los potenciales estados de des-ciudadanía debido a su nivel de competencia en español, se convierte en otro factor importante para el análisis de su situación sociolingüística. El texto de Heller (2013) supone que si bien las políticas lingüísticas en el papel se pueden leer pluralistas e inclusivas, la des-ciudadanía está implícita en procesos de la cotidianidad, como en el acceso o no a puestos de trabajo, dependiendo de la lengua que se hable o de la participación en la construcción de políticas públicas, que se hacen primero en la lengua que ciertas comunidades no conocen; en suma, situaciones cotidianas que reproducen el privilegio de unos sobre otros.

Una mirada posestructuralista desde la sociolingüística a la comunidad embera chamí en Bogotá

involucra, entonces, preguntarse por las características de su población como miembros de una comunidad de práctica en un contexto de superdiversidad, protagonista de un mercado lingüístico donde se tejen necesariamente redes de contacto que establecen prácticas lingüísticas heterogéneas, así como su rol como ciudadanos, o “des-ciudadanos” en el territorio que habitan.

Hay que aclarar que esta mirada posestructuralista no desestima la exploración de fenómenos más tradicionales en el campo del contacto de lenguas, como la sustitución lingüística, el desplazamiento lingüístico, la vitalidad etnolingüística, el fortalecimiento lingüístico y las actitudes lingüísticas (Areiza *et al.*, 2011; Bejarano, 2017; Bourhis *et al.*, 1981; Carranza, 1982; Corvalán y Arias, 2017; Kats y Khan, 1995; López Morales, 2004). La vitalidad y el fortalecimiento lingüístico, por ejemplo, tienen estrecha relación con las iniciativas de promoción de las lenguas, y ya que este ha sido un tema recurrente en la revisión documental, se dedican unas líneas al respecto.

### **Promoción de la lengua y la cultura embera chamí**

Instituciones del Estado, como el Ministerio de Cultura, el Ministerio de Educación y el Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, han liderado iniciativas para promocionar y preservar la lengua embera chamí. El Ministerio de Cultura de Colombia resguarda documentos en lenguas nativas, entre ellos uno de 10 páginas, donde se traduce a la lengua embera el acuerdo de paz firmado con las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia en 2016 (Colombia, Ministerio de Cultura, s. f. 1). Por su parte, el Ministerio de Educación publicó *El jaibaná y el mohán* (2015), narración ilustrada producida por autoridades indígenas y docentes de una institución etnoeducativa rural embera chamí, y *Cuentos y arrullos del folclor indígena y campesino colombiano* (Colombia, Ministerio de Cultura, 2020), que incluye dos canciones en embera chamí y en español. Finalmente, la audioteca digital del



Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (s. f.) presenta los paisajes sonoros y las voces de niños y niñas emberas chamies interpretando canciones propias en su lengua.

El material audiovisual existente en la red YouTube enriqueció significativamente la comprensión de algunos de los fenómenos sociolingüísticos de manera mucho más real e informal que lo que la escritura y los estudios presentan de manera más académica. Los temas emergentes en los videos son: el desplazamiento por la violencia, la vida en Bogotá y la falta de recursos; la importancia de la lengua, y la cultura embera chamí en su relación con la música, los bailes y las artesanías.

Gómez y Yáñez (2011) resaltan la manera como los emberas chamies han tenido que buscar las ciudades como lugares de refugio de la violencia en el país y la falta de recursos para vivir. En el caso de Bogotá, se evidencia cómo la comunidad vive hacinada y los lugares de habitación son sucios, sin camas suficientes y, algunas veces, carentes de servicios públicos. En suma, lugares que no evidencian respeto por la dignidad del ser humano ni por el valor que tiene la cultura indígena.

Otro material audiovisual evidencia fenómenos de alternancia y préstamos del español utilizados en lengua embera chamí, así como la intención de algunas personas u organizaciones por fortalecer el uso de la lengua, como el de una joven embera que quiere enseñar su lengua por medio de videos (Nieto, 2016) o las reflexiones de adultos sobre la importancia de hablar en su propia lengua (Henao, 2013). Si bien estas iniciativas merecen reconocimiento, son todavía muy débiles para que signifiquen un verdadero desarrollo en política lingüística, porque, entre otras razones, no incluyen a toda la población desplazada, por lo menos de Bogotá.

Por otro lado, el material audiovisual documenta todo un movimiento cultural que ha desarrollado la sociedad embera chamí en Quibdó, Pereira, en los mismos resguardos indígenas y particularmente en

Bogotá, donde se usan espacios públicos, escuelas o casas comunales para reproducir bailes tradicionales con el objetivo de recaudar dinero (Buitrago, 2014).

Son también interesantes las experiencias musicales, como el proyecto *embera colectivo Bacata* (Buitrago, 2014), iniciativa de un grupo de jóvenes estudiantes universitarios bogotanos que buscan respetar y rescatar la cultura embera en la ciudad, a través de la capacitación musical y la danza. En la actualidad, del colectivo ya hacen parte miembros de la comunidad embera chamí, quienes se han dado cuenta de que la música “puede convertirse en un proyecto productivo sostenible mejor que lavar motos o vender manillas en las calles” (Colectivo Embera Bacatá, 2016, 5 min 08 s). Con la colaboración del colectivo se han lanzado cuatro bandas, dos emberas katíos y dos emberas chamies llamadas “Donausa”, “Oibidara”, “Ibaca” y “Requinto Chamí”, que cantan en sus lenguas y comparten incluso con músicos de la ciudad para mejorar sus espectáculos, grabar y realizar videos que se despliegan en las redes.

Los miembros fundadores del colectivo, músicos bogotanos con trayectoria, reconocen y valoran la riqueza musical y cultural del pueblo embera en Bogotá y le apuestan a su documentación: “esta música embera es como el eslabón perdido en toda la música de América” (Buitrago, 2014, 17 min 25 s).

Por su parte, las mujeres embera también trabajan con docentes artistas, quienes comparten y guían un proceso organizado para poner la danza al servicio de la integración de la comunidad y la potencialización de sus maneras propias de armonizarse en la capital.

Por último, Samper (2020) muestra el modo como las artesanías emberas chamies, en especial los trabajos realizados con chaquiras, son parte de su cultura y su economía, lo que constituye una forma de sobrevivir en la ciudad. Esta actividad comercial supone comunidades de práctica lingüística diversas que sería importante explorar.

En cuanto a las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC), si bien no se encontraron experiencias específicas en Bogotá, se evidencian algunas en Risaralda, de donde provienen los emberas chamies que llegan a la capital. Por un lado, Hincapié (2018) reporta cómo los docentes emberas chamies hacen uso de los recursos de las TIC en sus cursos de español como segunda lengua en quinto de primaria en el Centro Educativo Río Mistrató y concluye que los docentes no han tenido capacitación suficiente en el uso de estas herramientas. Dentro de su proceso de investigación, la autora desarrolla una propuesta de fortalecimiento, empleando imágenes fijas, animaciones, videos,

portales de producción de materiales educativos, mapas conceptuales y lógicos, con el objetivo de promover su uso como herramientas pedagógicas, más que como simples objetos.

Por otro lado, Ceballos *et al.* (2013) hacen uso de un aplicativo para la enseñanza del español, con el objetivo de materializar la inclusión digital de los miembros de la comunidad sin vulnerar su cultura. Finalmente, el estudio de Bonilla y Medina (2018) aplica una secuencia didáctica mediada por las TIC, para la enseñanza del género y el artículo en español, elementos gramaticales que los hablantes embera producen con dificultad.

**Tabla 3** Resumen de aspectos a considerar en el trabajo sociolingüístico y propuesta metodológica

Aspectos desde la sociolingüística	Autores consultados
Superdiversidad	Blommaert y Rampton (2011) Vertovec (2007)
Comunidad de práctica	Heller (2013)
Práctica lingüística heterogénea	Holmes y Meyerhoff (2011)
Redes de contacto	Mooney y Evans (2015)
Des-ciudadanía (traducción de los autores)	Sánchez (2020) Vásquez (2011) Wenger (1998)
Fenómenos propios de contacto de lenguas	Areiza <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Asimilación cultural	Arias y Corvalán (2017)
Sustitución y desplazamiento lingüístico	Bejarano (2017)
Vitalidad etnolingüística	González (2008)
Actitudes lingüísticas	Kats y Khan (1995)
Lealtad lingüística	López Morales (2004)
Fortalecimiento lingüístico	Bonilla y Medina (2018) Buitrago (2014) Ceballos <i>et al.</i> (2013) Gómez y Yañez (2011) Heno (2013) Nieto (2016) Samper (2020)
Algunas iniciativas de promoción de la lengua y cultura embera chamí	
Propuesta metodológica para tener en cuenta en futuros trabajos sociolingüísticos	Areiza <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Encuesta sociolingüística: variables edad, género, procedencia, nivel educativo, permanencia en Bogotá, ocupación, competencia lingüística, competencia comunicativa, actuación comunicativa	Bejarano (2017) Blommaert y Rampton (2011) Fagua y Padilla (2019)
Trabajo etnográfico: muestras de habla espontánea, observación y diario de campo, narraciones personales o historias de vida	Godenzzi (2017)

En síntesis, la vida cotidiana de la comunidad tiene alguna representación en los medios de comunicación; sin embargo, se puede cuestionar si dicha visibilización es suficiente, si la sociedad bogotana se aproxima a este material, si la misma comunidad puede acceder a él y si este material ha sido utilizado con fines pedagógicos.

Finalmente, la revisión documental también brindó insumos para considerar opciones metodológicas en posibles investigaciones de corte empírico.

### Futuro metodológico

La comprensión de la comunidad de práctica junto con las prácticas lingüísticas heterogéneas se logra mediante una mirada etnográfica, en donde el contexto de comunicación se investigue y no se asuma (Blommaert y Rampton, 2011). Se hace necesario el análisis de muestras de habla, testimonios, narrativas personales e historias de vida socialmente situadas, que evidencien la producción y la reproducción de significados en lugares específicos, y a través de actividades, relaciones sociales, historias, trayectorias textuales e ideologías culturales determinadas.

A propósito de los testimonios como herramientas de recolección de datos, Godenzzi (2017) recuerda que por medio de estos, la población desplazada logra reconocer maneras de entender la ciudad y de configurar identidades culturales y lingüísticas en el nuevo territorio que se habita.

Finalmente, Fagua y Padilla (2019) apuntan la pertinencia de usar herramientas e instrumentos como “la observación participante, desarrollo de cuestionarios y guías para encuestas y entrevistas semiestructuradas, representaciones gráficas y discursivas de experiencia lingüística, toma de notas, diarios de campo y grabaciones de intercambios comunicativos en los diferentes espacios de interacción” (p. 72). Se considera importante que, para este tipo de trabajos, los investigadores conozcan la lengua o cuenten con intérpretes adecuados.

Con respecto a las encuestas y entrevistas sociolingüísticas, Areiza *et al.* (2011) recuerdan la necesidad de indagar por variables como la edad, el género, el nivel educativo, la permanencia, la ocupación actual y la competencia comunicativa como instrumentos que aportan a la comprensión sociolingüística de la comunidad.

Con el objetivo de sintetizar la información recopilada en esta revisión documental en relación con los conceptos, los fenómenos y la propuesta metodológica, la Tabla 3 presenta los temas y autores consultados.

### Conclusiones

El problema planteado en esta investigación ha sido la falta de información sistematizada que permita comprender la situación sociolingüística de la comunidad embera chamí en la ciudad de Bogotá, Colombia. Esta revisión documental apuntó a sistematizar la información explorada y así ayudar a resolver dicho problema.

Los autores estamos convencidos de que la comprensión sociolingüística no es completa sin las voces de los y las protagonistas; sin embargo, y debido a las circunstancias de pandemia que acompañaron esta revisión, se ha pretendido sistematizar insumos importantes que alimenten un trabajo empírico posterior.

Los aspectos comentados en este trabajo, junto con los ya expuestos en una publicación anterior (Alarcón y Rojas, 2020), se convierten en fundamentos para acercarse de manera más informada a la comunidad, y lograr, mediante el diálogo y el acompañamiento de su cotidianidad, una mirada más actual a su situación sociolingüística.

Se espera que estos documentos y futuros trabajos empíricos den cuenta de los pensamientos, los sentimientos y las vivencias de la comunidad en la ciudad, y se logre una caracterización sociolingüística más completa, la cual eventualmente se convierta en un aporte al conocimiento de

comunidades indígenas en contextos urbanos y en herramienta para la toma de decisiones con respecto a la garantía de sus derechos.

Este trabajo destaca la información encontrada desde diferentes disciplinas, la cual permite una mirada más amplia y necesaria para el conocimiento y la comprensión de los emberas chamies en Bogotá. Sin embargo, los datos de carácter puramente sociolingüístico en esta comunidad son escasos y se evidencia la necesidad apremiante de enriquecer esta aproximación teórica con el trabajo de campo en el ámbito urbano.

Una mirada histórica a la comunidad en el contexto estudiado ha permitido comprender los lugares de procedencia, las causas diversas de su desplazamiento, sus asentamientos en barrios de la ciudad y las acciones de resistencia y acomodamiento frente a políticas públicas nacionales y locales, en muchos casos inconsistentes y poco efectivas a largo plazo. Se han encontrado, así mismo, inconsistencias o inexistencia de los datos relacionados con el número de emberas chamies a nivel nacional y local, así como de las denominaciones de los subgrupos emberas, lo cual supone la necesidad de actualizar y precisar dichos datos.

De igual manera, se ha podido indagar sobre los procesos y las razones de desplazamiento a la ciudad, como el reclutamiento por parte de grupos al margen de la ley, las decisiones institucionales que afectan su forma de vida, como es el caso de las licencias mineras, el arrasamiento de bosques y la economía ilegal. Al momento de concluir este trabajo, la comunidad se encontraba ocupando parques de la ciudad como forma de resistencia frente a la carencia de políticas estatales y distritales de largo aliento que garanticen sus derechos. Las respuestas efectivas y definitivas no parecen llegar y, por el contrario, son cambiantes y coyunturales, dependiendo también de los múltiples movimientos que caracterizan la permanencia de este grupo en la ciudad.

La breve caracterización de la lengua embera chamí ha permitido su ubicación dentro de las familias lingüísticas en el país, así como la exploración de las diferentes variedades. Con respecto a estas últimas, y aunque el trabajo de Pardo (1997) presenta una caracterización muy completa, sería pertinente actualizar dicha clasificación y relacionarla con los nuevos lugares de asentamiento de los emberas. Un trabajo empírico posterior también se nutriría de la exploración de la estructura de esta lengua indígena en su relación con la lengua mayoritaria de la capital y del análisis de cómo dichas estructuras se han modificado en el uso comunicativo.

De igual manera, en futuros estudios se propone tener en cuenta la *superdiversidad* como un concepto amplio que involucra una mirada a las múltiples maneras de movilización territorial que caracteriza a los seres humanos en la actualidad y, con ellas, la formación de comunidades de práctica social y lingüísticamente situadas. Los miembros de la comunidad embera chamí, al llegar a Bogotá, se convierten en parte de redes de contacto de diverso tipo (otras comunidades indígenas, dueños de pagadarios, jefes en sitios de trabajo, miembros de las instituciones gubernamentales y no gubernamentales, etc.), las cuales también suponen un uso particular de las lenguas que conocen o necesitan para lograr sus propósitos comunicativos. Y es en este uso de las lenguas que es conveniente explorar empíricamente algunos fenómenos de contacto, como lo son la sustitución y el desplazamiento lingüísticos, la lealtad lingüística, la asimilación cultural, la vitalidad etnolingüística, las actitudes de los hablantes y habitantes de Bogotá frente a las variedades lingüísticas en uso, y las posibilidades de fortalecimiento de un fenómeno de contacto más equitativo y pacífico.

Este documento asimismo ha propuesto algunas iniciativas de promoción de la lengua y cultura embera chamí. Gracias a videos en la plataforma de YouTube, se ha tenido acceso a producciones



audiovisuales que evidencian las actitudes positivas de jóvenes emberas chamies frente a su lengua y su cultura, a través de su profesionalización como músicos, o mediante la reivindicación de los bailes propios por parte de las mujeres, en algunos escenarios públicos y privados de la ciudad. Estas son maneras rescatables de visibilizar la cultura, las que, sin embargo, contrastan con la poca o nula difusión que se hace de la comunidad y su lengua en los grandes medios de comunicación privados, los cuales no generan contenidos que permitan a la audiencia tener una visión amplia y menos estereotipada de la situación de las comunidades indígenas en la ciudad.

Esta revisión documental ha insistido en la necesidad de llevar a cabo un trabajo etnográfico posterior que se nutra de los asuntos en este discutidos y que permita escuchar a los emberas que hoy habitan la ciudad de Bogotá en sus diferentes barrios. Para esta mirada etnográfica, se propone aventurarse en la búsqueda de datos a partir de los instrumentos tradicionales de la sociolingüística, como la encuesta, la entrevista, la observación, el diario de campo, el análisis de muestras de habla situadas, los testimonios y las narraciones personales o historias de vida. Estamos convencidos de que las voces de abuelos y abuelas, hombres, mujeres, niños y niñas emberas chamies, habitantes de la ciudad de Bogotá, enriquecerán de manera trascendental la comprensión sociolingüística de la comunidad.

Una sociedad pacífica valora la diversidad y busca mecanismos para reconocer y visibilizar a aquellos que suelen permanecer ocultos. Este trabajo documental desde la sociolingüística aporta a la visibilización de la comunidad embera chamí en la ciudad de Bogotá y se une a las iniciativas que pretenden reconocer un mundo amplio y plural. Junto con una exploración empírica futura, se logrará dar cuenta, de modo más completo, de la diversidad de interacciones, las relaciones asimétricas entre miembros, las dinámicas de comprensión e incomprensión, las formas de inequidad, de inclusión, de acceso a servicios y derechos, la situación de

vulnerabilidad y fortalecimiento de las lenguas y las culturas, información que más que quedarse entre especialistas, a la postre debería beneficiar la toma de decisiones locales o nacionales, y un trasegar más justo para la comunidad embera en la ciudad.

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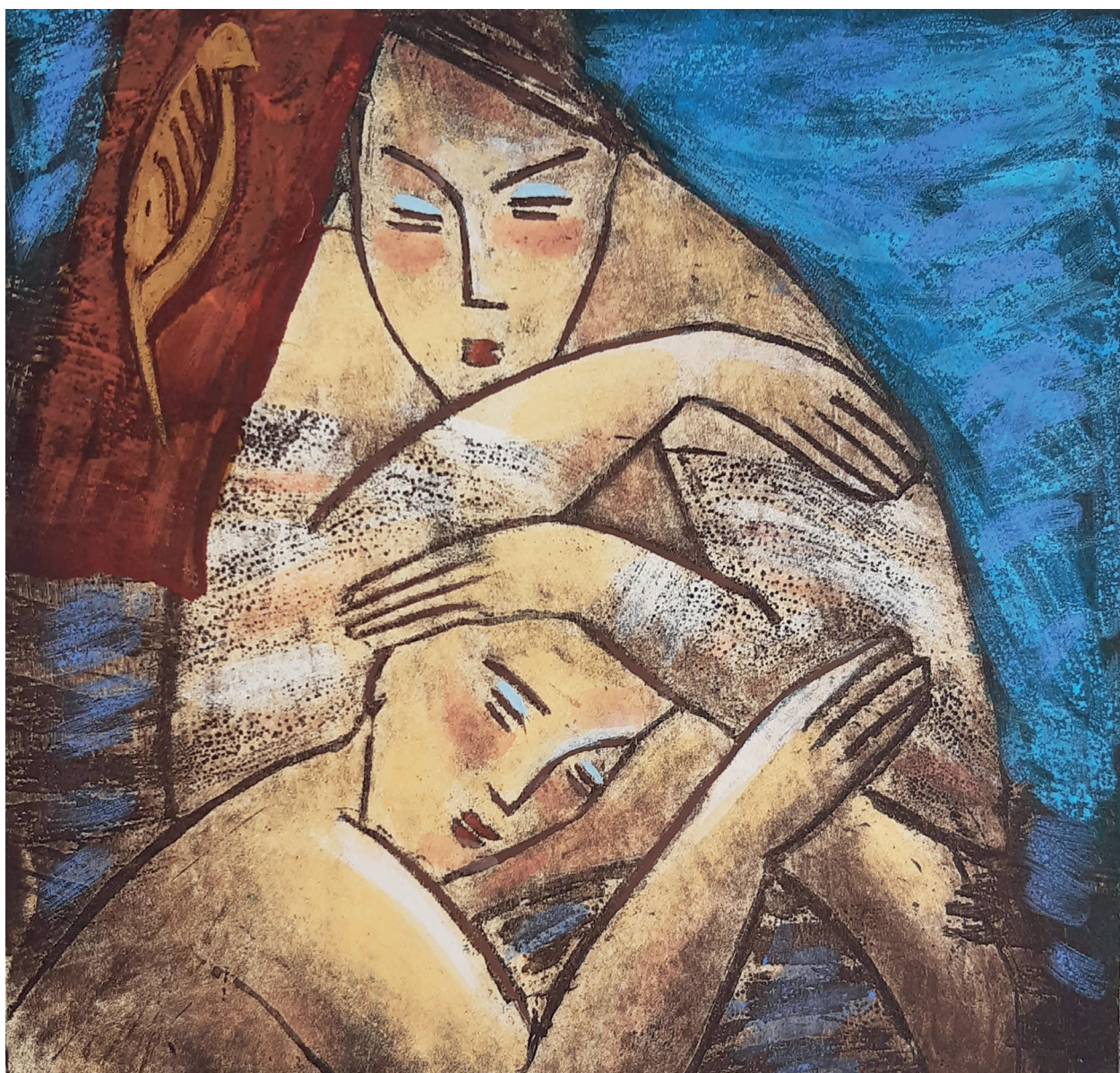
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## AUTHOR GUIDELINES

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With the aim of making room for diverse voices and languages, and looking to maintain conformity with international standards in scientific journals, *Íkala* advises authors to follow the guidelines below, which are designed to make file uploading easier, and get a prompt review of your manuscript.

### General Guidelines

To guarantee a transparent editorial process for authors, editors, reviewers, readers and indexing systems, *Íkala* uses the online Open Journal System (OJS) publishing platform, which follows international standards for scientific journals. Before uploading your manuscript to this platform, please note the following:

1. *Íkala* publishes original and unpublished material related to research, practice, and reflection in the areas of language and culture, linguistics, literature, translation, and language teaching and learning. Manuscripts that do not fall within this scope or those that have been previously published in other journals, in part or in full, or are in the process of being published elsewhere, will be rejected regardless of the channel used for publication.
2. Manuscripts submitted for consideration to a regular or special issue must meet the highest standards of academic excellence, advance theoretical knowledge, address current and cutting-edge topics in applied linguistics, and contribute to or stimulate current discussions in the field, while offering new and original interpretations on issues within the focus and scope of *Íkala*.
3. Regardless of the type of manuscript, authors are expected to demonstrate rigor in the collection and analysis of data; present interesting results, discussions and conclusions; display a great depth of analysis; and write with sophistication, precision and conciseness, avoiding biased or prejudicial language.
4. *Íkala* publishes articles in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. Authors

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of manuscripts written in other languages or those with sections using non-Romance languages will not be accepted, as the journal does not have the human and technological resources to evaluate and publish content in those languages.

5. *Íkala* only accepts empirical studies, literature reviews, theoretical articles, methodological articles, case studies and book reviews. Manuscripts that do not fall within these categories (e.g., reflections, pedagogical experiences, and translations), will not be accepted.
6. Manuscript reception does not imply its acceptance or publication. Following the criteria of the refereed scientific publications, journal editors will be in charge of judging the relevance of the submitted manuscripts according to their field of knowledge. After a preliminary editorial review, the manuscripts that they consider not publishable (outside the scope of the journal, with serious methodological flaws, etc.) will be rejected and returned to the authors. Only those manuscripts that conform to the characteristics described in this section will be submitted to a double-blind peer review process.
7. Accepted manuscripts may not be published in the following issue, since *Íkala* publishes the articles in order of acceptance, with the exception of those that have been selected for publication in a special issue.
8. The journal's editor-in-chief is responsible for the final decision regarding the acceptance or rejection of a manuscripts. This decision is final.
9. Once accepted by the reviewers for publication, the manuscripts will undergo an additional review by the editors. Once this is done, the manuscripts will be sent to the copy editors so they can adapt them in structure and form to the journal guidelines, make them more visible in the indexing systems, and make sure that their strengths are highlighted, and they meet the highest standards of the wider linguistic and academic community. In this

process, copy editors will be able to make changes that refine the clarity and conciseness of ideas, unify terms and formats, and improve style.

10. After authors receive their manuscripts with the suggested changes, they are expected to accept the recommendations and expand or clarify the information requested in the clearest and most expeditious manner. Authors who do not agree with the changes will have the opportunity to discuss these with the journal Editor. In any case, they are expected to return the manuscript within a maximum period of two weeks. However, any modifications will be subject to a new revision by the copy editors so that an acceptable version of the manuscript is achieved. If the corrections are not received in the indicated time, the manuscript may be published in a later issue, other than the one previously agreed upon.
11. Changes in the number or order of the authors will only be accepted in the first phase of the submission and review process, and must be duly justified and supported. The Assignment of Rights and Declaration of Authorship form that all authors must sign is a binding document or agreement in this regard.
12. When the peer review process is completed, but before copy editing, the accepted manuscripts will be checked with a similarity detection software called Crosscheck (based on iThenticate). Manuscripts with a similarity percentage greater than 25% will be rejected and this decision will be final. In the case of suspicion of redundant or duplicate publication, *Íkala's* team will also carry out a survey in other languages.

### Style Guidelines

The writing style of manuscripts submitted to *Íkala* is reviewed several times in the publication process: when initially received, during peer review, and during copy editing and layout. To ensure that your manuscript passes the first review, consider the following:

1. The manuscript must be in an editable file, such as OpenOffice, Microsoft Word or in rich text format (.rtf).
2. Manuscripts should fall within one of the following categories: empirical study, case study, literature review, methodological article, theoretical articles, and book reviews. For more information on the structure of each of these articles, please refer to the *APA Publication Manual* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.), numeral 3.3.
3. All manuscripts, with the exception of literature reviews and book reviews, should be between 8,000 and 8,500 words, including the abstracts in three languages and the references. Literature reviews should be no longer than 11,000 words long, with no less than 50 bibliographic references. Book reviews should be in the range of 2,500 to 3,000 words and must be about recent scientific publications (publications made within the last two years) related to the profile of the journal.
4. Abstracts must appear both in the manuscript and in the manuscript's metadata on the platform and have a maximum of 200 words. It must be written in the language of the manuscript and in two other languages of the four declared by the journal as Working languages (French, Spanish, English and Portuguese), and must be adequately structured. To know how to structure the abstracts properly, depending on the type of manuscript (literature review, empirical study, case study, etc.), please refer to the Writing the Title, Abstract and Keywords section.
5. Keywords must be a minimum of five words or phrases and follow the guidelines provided in the section *Writing the Title, Abstract, and Keywords*.
6. The line spacing must be 1.5. The font size must be 12 points.
7. The italic font attribute should be used instead of underlining (except in URLs) and only to denote terms written in languages other than the main text, or terms on which you want to draw attention.
8. All manuscripts must include a title, an abstract, five keywords and a list of references. In addition, empirical or case studies must include clearly defined introduction, theoretical framework, method, results, discussion and conclusions sections.
9. The references must be sufficient, relevant, current, and reliable, and follow the norms proposed by *APA Publication Manual* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed., chapter 9).
10. All illustrations, figures, and tables must be inserted in the text (body of the manuscript), not at the end of it or separately, and follow APA guidelines for presentation.
11. Footnotes should be used instead of endnotes. However, as suggested by the *APA Publication Manual* (chapter 2, 2.13), these should not include complicated, irrelevant, or nonessential information, or be used to provide bibliographic references because all these can be distracting to readers. Also, they should convey just one idea and be less than a paragraph.
12. The headings must present a clear hierarchy that accounts for the structure of the manuscript according to its type and the required sections. They should not be numbered. Due to the length and type of texts published in *Íkala*, three levels of subordination for headings should be sufficient to develop the authors' ideas. However, there may be exceptions.
13. Paragraphs should be well structured (develop an idea, have a logical connection with the previous paragraph and the one that follows, use logical connectors to show the relationship between sentences, etc.) and keep the format as simple as possible. This means without indentation, unless there are direct quotations with more than 40 words; and without bullets, page breaks, justification, or enumerations, since the journal has its own style sheet.



## Guidelines for Writing Specific Sections of the Manuscript

### *Writing the Title, Abstract, and Keywords*

The title, abstract and key words are the most visible parts of an article. They are used by abstracting and indexing services to cross reference. As such, they must be written carefully and strategically.

**The Title:** The title is perhaps the most important part of an article, as it acts as an advertisement for the article, can lead readers interested in the topic to your article, and can help them predict its content. (*How to get your Research Published... ..and then Noticed*, Elsevier). Therefore, when writing their manuscript's title, please to take into account the following:

1. Ensure that it accurately reflects the content of the manuscript so that readers can easily identify if it is of relevance to them or not.
2. Make sure that it is clear, specific, brief, and where possible, complete.
3. Avoid unusual abbreviations or jargon.
4. Refrain from using phrases such as: "a study of", "investigations of", "observations on".
5. If it is becoming difficult to write it, identify the research problem and start from there.
6. Try to make it interesting, attractive and ingenious so that people are motivated to read the article (*How to Get your Research Published.....and then Noticed- Elsevier, and APA Publication Manual-American Psychological Association*).

**The Abstract:** The abstract plays a vital role in effectively cataloging research in many online databases accessible to scholars around the world such as *Google, PubMed, Academic Search Premier, Thomson Reuters (now Web of Science), EBSCO Host*, and many others. These databases allow work to be more easily discovered, read, used, and cited by scholars who might not otherwise be able to reach it. Therefore, it is very important to be strategic when writing this section. When doing it, please remember to:

1. Include many, if not all, of the keywords associated with the manuscript;
2. Use accessible language that is easily understood by a wide audience and avoid both non-standard abbreviations and citations;
3. Highlight the most interesting elements of your work;
4. Use numbers, not their names, except for numbers at the beginning of a sentence;
5. Use double parentheses and the letter (a), if they include lists in English; and a single parenthesis and number, if they include lists in Spanish, French or Portuguese;
6. Faithfully represent the article, so that it can be used by indexing and documentation services, and other stakeholders in the field of scientific publication;
7. Summarize the problem, state the purpose of the research, clearly define where and with whom it was done, the methods of data collection and analysis employed, the main results and implications of the study, if it is part of a research article;
8. Be accurate and detailed (i.e., express, where, how, with whom, when, for what purpose) so that readers can easily decide whether or not to read the entire article.
9. make sure it is written in a single paragraph and is self-explanatory since abstracts are often separated from the article (*APA Publication Manual, Chapter 3, 3.3*).

To learn more about how abstracts are written, depending on the type of article, you can consult the *APA Publication Manual, Chapter 3, 3.3*.

**The Keywords:** They are important words that, along with those in the title, capture the essence of the article effectively and are used by abstracting and indexing services to make cross references. Therefore, choosing the correct key words can increase the chances that other researchers will find your article. In general, when writing your keywords, please remember that these should:

1. Be specific and avoid general terms such as "philosophy" or "philology," plural terms, and multiple concepts (for example, "and", "of").

2. Include only abbreviations that are firmly established in the field (e.g., EFL, ESL, SFL).
3. Number at least five, be written in small caps, in any order, and separated by semi-colon.

For more information about how to define the keywords of a manuscript, authors can consult the following sites which provide lists of terms used for retrieving documents and publications in different academic field: *Unesco Thesaurus* and *ERIC online* (<http://vocabularies.unesco.org/browser/thesaurus/en/> and <https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=all>)

### *Writing the Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Results and Discussion, and Conclusion Sections*

**The Introduction:** In research articles, in general, the introduction begins with a broad topic that narrows as the reader progresses. Then, it presents the following aspects in a clear and concise manner: (a) the research problem, (b) the importance of the research for the field (c) the research or theoretical gap), (d) the research purpose and question, (e) the context, the type of study and the participants, and (f) a preview of the following sections.

**The Theoretical Framework:** In research articles, this section clearly outlines the perspective(s) from which the research is being done, and the specific theories and key concepts on which it is based. In addition, it includes a synthesis of similar studies conducted on the subject in the context of the study and around the world, and a summary of the main issues surrounding the topic under discussion.

**The Method:** In Íkala, all research articles must include a Method section. In general, this Method section includes a brief description of the following: (a) the research tradition or type of study that was conducted, (b) the participants of the study, if any, and (c) the data collection and analysis procedures used (e.g., what, when, how, how often, how many, from whom and for what purpose).

Besides, following guidelines from APA, which state that “Authors [should] be required to state in writing that they have complied with APA ethical standards in the treatment of their sample, human or animal, or to describe the details of treatment.” (*APA Certification of Compliance with APA Ethical Principles*); the section should also include this note.

**The Discussion and Conclusion:** In Íkala, these two sections can be presented together. Whether they are presented together or separately, they should contain: a summary of (a) the results obtained and the main arguments and a statements made, (b) the inconsistencies between the results presented and those of other studies, and (c) possible causes for this. Besides, this section should contain an explanation of the following: (a) how the study clarifies, expands or contradicts what others have done; (b) the meaning of the results or the “so what?”; (c) the value or contribution of the results for the field; (d) the theoretical or practical consequences or implications for professional development, research, or language policies, etc.; (e) the limitations of the study, if any; and (f) the questions for further research stemming from the findings.

### *Writing the Acknowledgements Section*

This is an optional part of the article which is not added until the manuscript has been accepted for publication, and is already in copy editing. This way, anonymity is maintained during the review process. In writing it, please take into account the following:

1. It should not contain more than 100 words.
2. In it, contributors, including funding sources or editing services should be clearly identified.
3. The role of the sponsor in the following aspects should be briefly described, where appropriate: research design; data collection, data analysis and interpretation; preparation of the manuscript.

### **The Editorial Process**

Once your manuscript is received, *Íkala* will follow several steps which can be divided into five key stages: reception, peer review, editorial preparation, publication, and post-publication. It is important that you are familiar with these stages and follow them on the platform OJS, as this will indicate if the article has passed through any of them.

### Reception

This stage includes the following steps:

1. The journal editor does a preliminary reading of the manuscript to verify that it meets the minimum requirements in terms of content, format, number of words, etc.
2. If the manuscript does not meet the minimum requirements, it will be rejected and the author(s) will be notified via email.
3. If the manuscript meets the minimum requirements, the editor will do an initial review to decide if it meets the journal's criteria for selection. The editor can take up to two weeks to do this review, depending on the number of new submissions.
4. If after the initial review, the editor considers the manuscript not worthy of a peer review, it will be rejected and the author(s) will be notified by email.

### Peer review

If the manuscript is deemed worthy of a peer review, the following steps will be taken:

1. The editorial team will search for scholars who are considered experts in the topic to do the review and notify the author(s) that the process has begun. This process may take up to four weeks. If peer reviewers are not ensured within this time, the author(s) will be notified to decide whether to continue waiting or to withdraw the manuscript.
2. Peer reviewers who receive an invitation will be given three weeks to complete the review.
3. If one of the peer reviewers does not complete the peer review within this time, the

manuscript will be sent to a third peer reviewer.

4. If, when both peer reviews have been submitted, a contradictory recommendation is noticed, the editorial team will search for a third reviewer. However, the final decision could be made by the editor based on the available reviews and the editor's academic judgement.
5. If the manuscript is accepted by the two reviewers, and at least one of them suggests modifications, the manuscript will be returned to the authors for correction. They should follow the suggestions and send a revised version of their manuscript along with a letter to each reviewer explaining the modifications made. A period of three weeks is usually provided for this.
6. If the revisions are accepted by the two peer reviewers, the manuscript will be sent for copyediting.
7. If the manuscript is accepted without modifications, it will be sent straight to copy editing.

### Editorial Preparation

The duration of this stage depends on the number of manuscripts accepted for publication. As *Íkala* publishes issues four times a year (quarterly), it must prioritize the manuscripts that will be published first. In general, this stage includes the following steps:

1. Before sending the manuscript to copy editing, the editor will do a second review of the manuscript, and then, she will send it to copy editing.
2. The copy editor will ensure that the manuscript conforms to APA publication standards and may ask that the authors to make some corrections related to the following aspects: content (to complete or clarify a passage); grammar (punctuation, use of passive and active voice, verb tenses, syntactic organization of sentences); lexical (use of some words or expressions, referents); textual (cohesion,

coherence, flow of ideas, construction of paragraphs, etc.); para- and extra-linguistic features (italics, bold, exclamation marks, citations, footnotes, titles, subtitles, citations, references, acknowledgements, figures, tables, etc.). These corrections will follow the norms of the language in which the manuscript was written. At this stage, authors will only be allowed to correct aspects suggested by the editor or by the copy editors.

3. After all the suggested corrections have been made, the manuscript will be sent for layout design.
4. Once the layout is done, the editor will make a final review of the manuscript and send it to the authors for their approval, along with the Assignment of Rights and Declaration of Authorship form, which must be signed by all authors.

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### Publication

Once all the authors have signed the Assignment of Rights and Declaration of Authorship, the manuscript will be ready for publication in the corresponding issue.

### Post-Publication

After the article is published, it is necessary that the authors take several steps to guarantee its diffusion through media and that their work reach a wide audience.

Some of these steps are the following:

1. Upload your article to ResearchGate.net and Academia.edu. These two networks are designed to help researchers increase their

readership and citations which are two key aspects of measuring the impact of their work. Having the information and articles on these websites is very easy and it takes only a few minutes. Also they are free. If you already have an account, you just have to upload the article. If you don't have one, click on the links below to register and share your work.

<https://www.researchgate.net/signup.SignUp.html>

<https://www.academia.edu>

2. Obtain an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID ID) if you don't have one. ORCID is an open and independent registry that helps identify and connect researchers around the world. It provides researchers with an ID number so they are clearly identifiable by others. Sharing this ID number with colleagues around the world will enable them to track your work. Also, journals can connect your publication DOI to your ORCID account, omitting the need to upload anything. To create an account in this registry, go to the following link: <https://orcid.org/login>
3. Share your article in the following spaces and media:
  - At conferences
  - In a classroom for teaching purposes;
  - With your colleagues
  - On your personal blog or website
  - In the institutional repository
  - In a subject repository (or another non commercial repository)
  - In academic collaboration networks such as Mendeley o Scholar Universe
  - On social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.