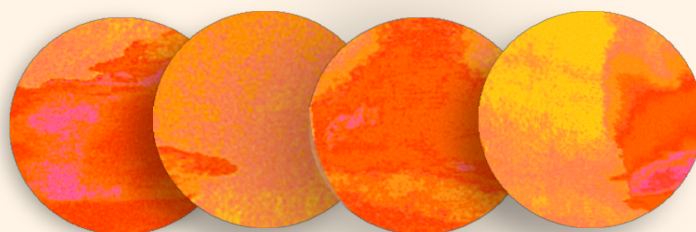


ENGLISH STUDIES TODAY: RESEARCH IN TIMES OF CHANGE

V Seminar in English Studies
(SEING 2024)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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Andrés Buesa
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A Child or a Bear? *Paddington* and the Politics of Mobility

This paper explores the politics of mobility articulated in the animated children's film *Paddington* (Paul King, 2014). *Paddington* narrates the adventures of a (child) bear who migrates from Peru to London in the search for a new home. Met with apathy and unkindness upon his arrival in the city, the film traces his gradual process of adjustment to his new life along with the Browns, a British family who welcome him into their house. Dismissed as a naïve, absurd, and light-hearted comedy by some critics, the film however stands as a powerful meditation on the meanings and politics of migration in contemporary Europe. As part of a larger project on the potential of the cinematic child as a vehicle for mobility concerns, this paper argues for the consideration of *Paddington* as a child figure—shaped according to values of innocence, vulnerability and naïveté often associated to Western constructions of childhood—and it explores how the film mobilises these conventions to negotiate ideas of migration, belonging and assimilation.

Bringing together scholarship from the mobilities turn (Cresswell 2006), childhood studies (Kincaid 1992; Higonnet 2013), and film studies (Lury 2010), this paper contends that the *Paddington*-as-child figure celebrates the positive impact that cross-bordering migration has in the social fabric of a city, as much as it links this process to problematic notions of cultural homogeneity. Through its appeal to elicit sympathy from viewers, *Paddington* is used to advocate for a hospitable treatment of refugees and migrants. Yet, belonging to the nation is seen to be guaranteed only for those who are willing to adjust to a monolithic version of British identity. In this move, the paper suggests, mobility is signified in terms of opportunity and progress, but a sense of place is implicitly—and indeed controversially—tied to the pre-condition of assimilation into the dominant culture.

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Keywords: childhood; mobility; migration; *Paddington*; assimilation

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Cooking up Change: Isabella Oliveira's Journey in *Woman on Top*

Woman on Top (Fina Torres, 2000) is a pivotal film in Penélope Cruz's career because it was both her debut as the lead role in a U.S. film and her first time playing a Latin American main character. Her performance as Isabella Oliveira, a Brazilian chef who moves to San Francisco after being cheated on by her husband Toninho (Murilo Benício), began laying the foundations of her Latin identity in Hollywood.

Before *Woman on Top*, Penélope Cruz had only played supporting roles within the realm of Latina characters. Her portrayal of Isabella Oliveira marked a milestone in her career because it was her first opportunity to embody a Latina character in a leading role. Playing Latino roles significantly impacted Penélope Cruz's star persona because it paved the way for her entry into Hollywood (Davies, 2014). Despite being born and bred in Alcobendas, Madrid, she began being addressed as a Latina in the international press and entertainment industry (Valdivia, 2010), and was offered other roles which conformed to Hollywood's stereotypical view of Latin American women. However, *Woman on Top* was a deliberate effort to challenge these stereotypes since it was directed and written by two Latinas, Venezuelan director Fina Torres and Brazilian scriptwriter Vera Blasi. They created Isabella in an attempt to go beyond former negative stereotypical depictions and help foster a culture of empowerment of Latina voices in the film industry.

This paper will examine how *Woman on Top* simultaneously embraces and deconstructs stereotypes associated with Latinas through Cruz's character. It will also analyse how San Francisco acts as a transnational space. It becomes a symbolic bridge between two different worlds: Isabella's home town Bahía in Brazil and her new home in the U.S. Hence, the city stands as a metaphor for Cruz's own crossing into Hollywood and her ability to navigate and transcend cultural boundaries.

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Keywords: Penélope Cruz; Latin identity; transnational stardom; Latino stereotypes; spaces

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**Unveiling the Intersections: Women’s Agency and Interculturality in
West Side Story (2021)**

West Side Story—both its original film adaptation (1961) and Steven Spielberg’s 2021 film adaptation—transcends temporal and geographical boundaries to captivate global audiences with its exploration of timeless themes such as love, belonging, and societal barriers (Foulkes 2016). Against the backdrop of a vibrant yet tragic urban landscape, the intercultural tapestry of the city serves as a melting pot where narratives intersect (Sommerland 2022), ultimately culminating in a poignant portrayal of the complexities of intercultural encounters. During the era of the original film, New Yorkers were concerned that an entirely “new” community was “taking over their world” (Wells 2010, 102), intensifying the challenges of cultural integration. However, while the original narrative may depict such encounters as paths of despair, the 2021 adaptation offers a fresh perspective on interculturality, influenced by the forces of globalization. This renewed lens highlights evolving societal dynamics and cultural interconnectedness in the modern world while addressing contemporary challenges.

This paper explores the role of women in the 2021 film adaptation of *West Side Story*. More specifically, it focuses on their position as forces of change within a complex cross-cultural reality. In stark contrast to the more distanced stance of men towards change and integration, women emerge as dynamic agents within the narrative whose actions and decisions significantly impact the overall direction of the film. However, nuanced portrayals of women’s roles emerge, depicting varying perspectives and approaches to interculturality depending on the character. As such, the paper has been divided into three sections, which will be devoted to the analysis of the main female characters: María (Rachel Zegler), Anita (Ariana DeBose), and, finally, Valentina (Rita Moreno). Through a careful examination of both visual and narrative elements, the paper analyses the film’s portrayal of women as figures who contribute to the reshaping of cultural and gender dynamics.

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Keywords: interculturality; integration; gender; *West Side Story*; women

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**Reimagining the Anthropocene: More-than-human Relationality in
Disney's *The Owl House***

In 2005 children's animation was forever changed when *Avatar the Last Airbender* introduced a world that suffered an environmental and spiritual crisis in the aftermath of a war fueled by imperial expansion. Using themes such as colonialism, oppression, and genocide, it offered young viewers a window into the dark reality experienced by many in our world. Since then, children's animation has continued to include mature themes and characterizations, narrating more-than-human realms by subverting common narrative tropes and proposing new world configurations. Scholars have noted the increase in representation of gender diversity in these series (Reinhard and Olson 2017), but have ignored the wider implications of those changes, particularly how fluid and queer expressions of gender and sexuality inevitably implies a queering of the environment and our relationship to it.

The present research aims to analyze the representation of the more-than-human relationality in Disney's animated series *The Owl House*. Proposing that the series presents a non-anthropocentric organization of its storyworld, this study will analyze how the more-than-human is incorporated and developed in the series. For this purpose, a critical analysis has been carried out by adopting Braidotti's critical posthumanism (2013) and Alaimo's new materialist approach (2010; 2016). This paper examines the narrative strategies employed in narrating and developing posthuman and more-than-human experiences from a non-anthropocentric perspective, analyzing its degree of separation from anthropocentric forms of storytelling. The provisional findings suggest that children's animation builds storyworlds that narrate the material world as agential and teaming with life, creating a wide-array of non-hierarchical relationships between human and more-than-human characters.

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Keywords: Children's animation; Posthuman; Anthropocene; Storyworlds; More-than-human

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**Monetizing a Haunted House: Space, Abjection and Internet Culture
in *Deadstream***

The term ‘abjection’ describes a bodily rejection to that which is considered disgusting, despicable or wretched. In horror cinema studies, abjection usually describes feelings of repulsion and fear when films show images of blood, putrefied bodies and the transgression of borders between life and death. From the publication of Barbara Creed’s *The Monstrous-Feminine* in 1993, abjection in the genre has been interpreted as a symbol of a primal fear of the archaic mother. In contrast, in the social sciences, abjection refers to an aversion to the oppressed classes, as Bataille already claimed in 1934. The abject are those who are marginalized and excluded from mainstream society (Tyler 2013). Abjection is also essential to understand the organisation of social space, as some groups feel the need to distance themselves from those they consider inferior (Sibley 2002). Yet, abjection in horror movies has never been explored in its sociological or spatial senses.

This paper explores the portrayal of abjection in *Deadstream*. The film tells the story of Shawn Ruddy (Joseph Winter), a controversial content creator who has been recently cancelled by online audiences. In an attempt to bring his fanbase and sponsors back, Shawn decides to livestream one night in a haunted house. The film adapts the conventions of the horror genre to the visual language and techniques of actual online platforms. The result is a cinematic space in which the boundaries between the localized place of the haunted house and the global space of the internet blur, which invites for a reflection on the different roles and meanings of the abject in the digital era. As will be argued, in *Deadstream*, the abject, which is something that is normally marginalized and ignored, is commodified by influencers and transformed into a source of entertainment for online audiences.

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Keywords: Horror, Film, Space, Internet, Abjection.

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Subordinator language Preference in English and Spanish Code-switching in Canarian Bilingual Students

English and Spanish subordinator preference in intersentential code-switching has not yet been investigated in immigration communities in the Canary Islands. Bilingual English-Spanish adolescents are acquiring language in a more multilingual environment than their older peers due to immigration influxes, a factor that has not been considered in research of this kind.

Investigations in code-switching touch upon all kinds of syntactic issues in a wide range of multilingual communities, often focussed on approximating proposals to integrated models of bilingual grammar (López, 2020). When considering language preference in code-switching constructions, previous research indicate a number of factors to be studied in terms of acceptability and preference in language choice, such as an impossibility of switches between the main and subordinate clause (López et al., 2017: 8-9), or more complex factors such as the role that discourse neutrality might play in language selection (Torres Cacoullós, 2020), generally favouring Spanish constructions over English options (Jiménez Fernández et al., 2023).

This study tested EN-ES intersentential code-switching sentences for subordinator language acceptability and preference in two groups of adolescent EN-ES bilinguals in the Canary Islands. Results were contrasted with an older group both for control purposes and to gain a better understanding of social implications that might affect language dominance such as recent influxes in English immigration and tourism in these areas.

Acceptability toward code-switching constructions was much higher than expected and preference was shown toward examples in which the subordinator and subordinate clause were in the same language. Although predicted, preference toward Spanish dominated constructions could not be confirmed due to high acceptability rates producing inconclusive results. Demographic changes integral to these communities seem to influence bilingual individuals in their linguistic identities and could also dictate bilingual grammar preferences—a factor currently being studied in further investigations stemming from this paper.

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Keywords:

Code-switching; Bilingual grammar; Syntax; Subordinator preference; Canarian varieties

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Methodological Challenges in Compiling a Database of Scientific Dissemination Practices on Social Media: The SoMePhy Database

The reconceptualisation of science as a social endeavour has meant the enhancement of non-expert participation in the processes of knowledge generation (Kupper et al. 2021; Engberg, 2021). In this context, social media platforms have emerged as productive digital environments for scientific dissemination, leveraging their extensive outreach and functionality to promote open scientific dialogue and construct multifaceted expert identities (Lorés & Diani 2021). Despite this disseminating potential, scholars point to the difficulties in compiling social media corpora (Weller et al., 2014), primarily owing to the decentralised and constantly updated condition of social media data.

This paper systematically assesses the methodological challenges arising in the study of widespread social media dissemination practices within the domain of physical health (namely within physiotherapy and nutrition). Derived from the process of compilation of my thesis' corpus and the construction of the SoMePhy database, this study concentrates on issues of representativeness and data manageability in analysing Instagram and X dissemination content, specifically addressing the difficulties pertaining to the selection and downloading of social media data samples. Hence, problematic issues are highlighted concerning the selection of typified disseminating practices from two different, yet disciplinarily related, fields, extracted from two interactive platforms with significant idiosyncratic differences as regards the purpose with which knowledge is disseminated. In this line, it is acknowledged the need to rely on combined manual retrieval methods and platform-specific downloading tools to save social media data while complying with the privacy and user consent policies of each platform, on the one hand, and dealing with the algorithm-determined nature of online data on the other. In my presentation, I will argue how these methodological challenges can be overcome by compiling a closed database of 2400 social media posts (1200 posts per platform) from which smaller data samples might be selected as the object for focalised case studies on specific dialogic phenomena.

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Keywords: Corpus compilation; methodological challenges; science dissemination; social media

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Can audio description enhance linguistic variation awareness? A register and dialect teaching proposal for native speakers

Audio description is an accessible modality of audiovisual translation aimed primarily for blind or visually impaired people. Having moved beyond traditional teaching methods such as grammar-translation, education has tended to dismiss translation as a tool for language learning, probably due to more recent methodologies like the communicative approach. Nevertheless, more and more scholars have started to explore the benefits of audiovisual translation as a learning tool, a concept referred to as "didactic audiovisual translation". This research aims to use audio description as a form of didactic audiovisual translation based on active learning to assess whether it can help the study of linguistic variation (particularly, diaphasic and geographical variation) in Spanish native undergraduate students learning audiovisual Spanish as a form a Spanish for Specific Purposes. In order to learn diaphasic (register) and geographical (dialect) variation, exercises with and without audio description were alternated, followed by an essay about linguistic variation in both groups. The hypothesis was that groups practicing with audio description would obtain higher scores on the exam questions related to the contents covered with audio description. The results indicate that both groups achieved better results in the areas that they had practiced with audio description. Students who studied dialect in audiovisual Spanish by practicing with audio description scored an average of one-tenth more on the question about geographical variation, while those who studied register using audio description scored 1.28 points more. In conclusion, audio description could serve as an example of didactic audiovisual translation for the study of register and dialect, in this case in native Spanish-speaking students, but it could be easily replicated in any study tackling linguistic variation applied to English (native) students.

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Keywords: translation studies; audiovisual translation; didactic audiovisual translation; audio description; linguistic variation.

Blanca Fernández Soriano
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Bursting like a July-the-Fourth firecracker: ANGER and HAPPINESS
in Maya Angelou's *I know why the caged birds sing*

The aim of this study is to analyse and compare the main conceptualizations of ANGER and HAPPINESS in Maya Angelou's *I know why the caged birds sing* (1969). Black female childhood experiences are of particular complexity, for most of them remain in obscurity (Blassingame, 1974), particularly considered as a self-reflection of emotion (Braxton, 1989). Human beings experience emotions directly through their physical body and reactions, but because of their abstract and elusive nature, these are generally articulated and conceptualized through metonymies and metaphors (Ortony et al., 1988). It is here supported that figurative language may reflect the socio-cultural and emotional reality of individuals in a particular context (Kovecses, 2003; Wierzbicka, 1999). Therefore, a bottom-up approach analysis of the most relevant metaphorical and metonymical expressions of ANGER and HAPPINESS in Angelou's first memoir is carried out. Results suggest that these two emotions are expressed in similar cognitive terms, conceptualizing the body as a container where these emotions build up and explode. The notions of intensity and control of the emotions are also regulated by the observed conceptualizations. It is observed through this analysis that members of this specific socio-cultural context, especially children, are expected to suppress these emotions and keep them hidden in society, which greatly impairs their emotional self-comprehension and development. It is evidenced that the focus on understudied areas such as the expression of emotion in Black girlhood may help us deepen our knowledge on the universality and individuality of emotion language, as well as on the life narratives of marginal experiences.

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Keywords: Cognitive linguistics; emotion; Maya Angelou; Black girlhood

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**The use of ChatGPT for enhancing EFL writing through a process-
genre approach**

The complexity of the writing skill has shown to be a recurring issue in the L2 writing teaching-learning process (Hyland, 2019). For teachers, it is a time and effort consuming task, and they might not always have the necessary resources to adequately develop learners' writing skills (Matsuda et al., 2013). For the learners, the complexity of the writing task results sometimes in negative attitudes towards the skill and a rise in writing anxiety (Papi et al., 2020).

The development of technology has provided a novel approach to address the challenges associated with the writing skill (Goestina et al., 2022). A new tool that holds considerable promise in the field of education is the recently developed chatbot *ChatGPT*. This tool is capable not only of simulating a conversation, but also of comprehending, interpreting, anticipating, or producing text and other forms of information in numerous languages.

Considering the scarcity of research on the use of *ChatGPT* to enhance the L2 writing skill and given the demonstrated potential that technology has on this aspect, the present didactic proposal offers some ideas on how to use ChatGPT to improve the writing skills of Spanish EFL learners. More specifically, we provide guidelines on how to select the LOMLOE curricular elements and then work on them using ChatGPT within an adaptation of Huang and Zhang's (2020) process-genre instructional framework. The proposed applications for ChatGPT include creating exercises that focus on the different writing subskills, using the tool as a tutor and source of information, employing it for corrective feedback, and facilitating interactive activities.

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Keywords: *ChatGPT*; L2 writing; process-genre approach; LOMLOE

Ella Fletcher
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The Computational Analysis of Syntax for the Authorship
Attribution of Social Media Texts

Authorship attribution falls within the realm of Forensic Linguistics, a subdiscipline of Applied Linguistics. Based on the linguistic theory of idiolect (Coulthard, 2004), authorship attribution looks at the linguistic features of an author and uses these to predict the authorship of a questioned text.

This investigation applies the theories of authorship attribution to texts from social media site *Reddit*. It has both a linguistic and computational focus, using automatic authorship attribution methods to complement linguistic analysis. Syntax was chosen as the primary idiosyncratic feature due to its limited capacity for conscious control by the author compared to other linguistic levels (Van Halteren, 2022).

Preliminary results provide evidence to support the alternative hypothesis of the investigation: *Machine learning authorship attribution methods focusing on syntactic analysis can be adapted to cope with relatively short samples of texts with limited syntactic richness, such as those from social media sources*. The obtained results in this preliminary stage of analysis followed the methodology of extraction of texts from a Reddit corpus, cleaning of texts according to a set of established parameters, extraction of syntactic dependencies using spaCy-stanza (Qi et al., 2020), and the classification of texts using Stylo's *classify()* function (Eder et al., 2016). A success rate of 75% was achieved.

Further study will increase the scope of this methodology and push to explore the limitations of syntax as a delimiting feature for authorship analysis. A key focus for future lines of investigation is achieving transparency when working with computational methods for authorship attribution. This is essential in a professional forensic context where the expert witness must be able to explain specifically *how* their conclusions were reached in both a qualitative and quantitative manner, rather than simply relying on the output of a machine learning algorithm.

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Keywords: Authorship attribution; computational linguistics; syntax; machine learning; idiolect.

**Elena Serrano Hernández and Alejandro Mena Alba
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New tools for new genres: GRAPE MARS software for the analysis of Instagram reels

The present paper approaches GRAPE-MARS (Ruiz-Madrid et al., 2023), an innovative open-source software designed for multimodal annotation of audiovisual media. Its conceptualisation arises from an in-depth needs examination conducted by a specialised team of multimodality researchers. This team analysed precursory software applications for multilayer annotation including ELAN, Multimodal Analysis – Video, or Atlas.ti, among others, and determined their functionalities. The resultant software design integrates selected features from these platforms, enhancing them to address identified needs and implement upgrades. In addition, the software features pioneering analytical and representational methodologies, providing a comprehensive tool for the thorough exploration of multimodal discourse. This paper aims to elucidate GRAPE MARS's functionalities through the multimodal analysis of 30 Instagram *reels* (short-lengthed vertical videos) related to the topics of travelling and cooking. Results showcase GRAPE-MARS' capacity to analyse spoken digital genres, offering an array of qualitative and quantitative insights, including automated verbal transcriptions, modal density metrics, co-occurrence of modes, and the generation of tables and graphs that may serve as visual support to illustrate data. Researchers can efficiently annotate modes (e.g., gestures, head movements, facial expressions, visual effects, sound effects, etc.) and specify distinct modal typologies (e.g., types of gestures, or different facial expressions). Noteworthy strengths encompass the possibility of using different time-aligned layers and libraries with taxonomies created by the user, a task that is facilitated through its user-friendly interface. The conclusions of this study point towards the significant potential of the software GRAPE MARS as a novel tool for multimodal digital discourse analysis through computer-assisted annotation. This paper aims at paving the way for future investigations to explore emerging digital genres and experiment with new multimodal taxonomies.

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Keywords

multimodality; digital discourse analysis; computer-assisted annotation; software, audiovisual media

Hana Atcheson
(Tomas Bata University)
Lexical Diversity and Formulaic Language in Written Discourse:
Three Disciplines in Visual Arts and Design

Most disciplines in visual arts and design rely heavily on writing, not only to inform or instruct about the art process or the results of art-making, but they also profit from conceptual explanations, broader contextualisation of the artwork, descriptions of material processing, referencing to the author's vision or statements and much more. In response to such mutual connections between visual arts making and writing about visual arts, how can instruction on academic writing assist visual arts and design students in crafting their own practices and identities?

This paper presents a comparative corpus analysis of three corpora composed of published articles in the disciplines of photography, product/industrial design, and audio-visual arts. The use of specialised corpora to inform teaching practices in academic English has a long tradition (Flowerdew, 2004; Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Hyland, 2008). The focus of this research is on lexical diversity and formulaic language, with formal types of lexical bundles according to Biber (2009) and functional types distinguished with the use of Hyland's taxonomy (2008). Rhetoric functions of formulaic language are studied in the pragmatic approach to language. They serve as language means of social interaction between the author of the text and the reader, they contribute to pragmatically effective communication and in academic discourse, they facilitate better understanding of the text (Hyland & Jiang, 2018).

The aim of the research is to contribute to development of communication competence in writing vocational academic texts in the field of visual arts. In the broader context of the study, the goal is to identify subjective and objective language needs in academic writing for learners of English at C1 language level, Czech doctoral students who specialise in the above mentioned disciplines in visual arts and design.

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Keywords: academic writing; discourse markers; formulaic language; corpus analysis

Luis Martínez-Kleiser
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Disseminating Science to Adolescents: Exploring Linguistic,
Discursive and Multimodal Patterns and Classroom Applications in
EFL

The availability of information facilitated by digitalization has granted adolescents access to a plethora of online resources wherein knowledge is disseminated and tailored to their comprehension. Adolescents exhibit a proclivity for seeking information on a variety of topics, including those of great social concern such as global warming, clean energy, and health. Websites serve as dissemination channels for disciplinary knowledge published in scientific papers and subsequently recontextualising it to align with the cognitive capacities of young adults.

This research endeavours to scrutinize the mechanisms by which scientific, specialized knowledge is recast for consumption by adolescents. To this end, the study will utilize a sub-corpus derived from the SciDis corpus, curated by the interGEDI research group at the University of Zaragoza (Spain). This sub-corpus focuses on texts with scientific content aimed at teenage audiences that have been recontextualized from original sources to facilitate comprehension with links to those sources which are made available to the reader.

The investigative scope encompasses an analysis of discursive techniques such as paraphrasing, elaboration, and condensation of information (Calsamiglia and VanDijk, 2004; Luzón, 2013). Given the predominance of multimodal communication in the digital milieu, emphasis will be placed on examining the integration and orchestration of verbal and visual modes. This analysis will extend to layout design considerations and the incorporation of images and graphics. The objective is to discern recurring patterns conducive to the conversion of complex scientific findings into accessible concepts for young audiences.

Furthermore, the research will delve into the discursive and multimodal features employed to bridge technical knowledge with adolescent audiences and evaluate their impact on comprehension among such readers. Subsequently, the utility of these texts within the context of English as a Foreign Language in Secondary Education will be explored, to introduce the dissemination of scientific content into the EFL classroom.

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Keywords: Scientific discourse; cognitive discourse functions; multimodal communication; digitalization; EFL.

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Implementation of MCDA tools in EFL learning in adult education

Given the overexposure to information shaped in a variety of formats (textual, audiovisual, etc.) daily experienced by the average citizen in modern societies, the risk of manipulation of this material and its impact on each of us grow exponentially. The global development and spread of traditional mass media, mainly radio and television, together with the infinite access to knowledge, data, discourse, art, etc. available on the Internet, have raised, if not urged, the need for analysis, reflection and criticism on what we are being fed on, whether for professional, informative, academic or entertaining purposes.

Linguistic research has been directed to the development of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Van Dijk, 1997) and, more recently, Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) (Kress, 2011) to raise awareness on how power relations are established between addresser and addressee. Several studies have tackled the usefulness of CDA in the advance of Critical Thinking (CT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students who have been exposed to it (Hashemi and Ghanizadeh, 2012).

The present study aims at designing a set of multimodal analysis tools accessible for EFL students which the teacher could affordably use while they exploit English texts for their language class. As a starting point, a brief study of a sample of some relevant EF texts present in common high-level (C1/C2) textbooks is done, which leads to applying analysis tools in other multimodal texts with no specific pedagogical purpose (news, social media discourse, etc.) outside class.

Our research questions tackle whether MCDA analysis tools are useful for further exploitation of texts for EFL with adult students to not only foster in-depth study of grammar and vocabulary, but also their CT through MCDA; also, which tools are more efficient, and how to adapt them to make them useful for our objectives.

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Keywords

MCDA; EFL; Adult Education; Critical Thinking

Nuria Escobar Lluch
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Transemiotizing scaffolding as a teaching strategy in EMI

Since the introduction of EMI, there has been an increasing interest in different transemiotizing practices, which involve the use of translanguaging (i.e., the combined use of different languages, including students' L1, for pedagogical purposes) and other semiotic systems in human communication in the classroom (Lin, 2015). This multimodal pedagogical strategy considers that the simultaneous use of language and embodied and disembodied modes is a powerful tool for the effective transmission and understanding of disciplinary content in EMI contexts. Yet, the true nature of this pedagogical practice is still underexplored (Tai, 2023; Liu, Lo and Lin, 2020). This study uses a Multimodal Discourse Analysis perspective to identify and analyse the transemiotizing practices employed by an EMI lecturer when teaching a higher education Business course, as well as their multimodal nature and their pedagogical function in disciplinary knowledge meaning-making. The dataset includes two EMI video-recorded lectures of the aforementioned teacher, which were transcribed and analysed with the software GRAPE-MARS (Ruiz-Madrid et al, 2023). The study includes both quantitative and qualitative analyses of data. Results show that the EMI lecturer attempts to create safe learning spaces with the use of diverse translanguaging and transemiotizing strategies. The different excerpts analysed show how the lecture construct complex multimodal ensembles to make disciplinary content more comprehensible for students. For example, the lecturer connects students' background knowledge to new content to help with disciplinary content comprehension. She also resorts to graphs and gestures to provide examples and facilitate students' comprehension, or employs students' L1 with a pedagogical purpose, and depending on its pedagogical function, she resorts to specific multimodal ensembles. The present study, thus, contributes to illustrate how multimodality and more specifically EMI lecturer's transemiotizing practices become essential teaching strategies to transform disciplinary affordances into pedagogical ones in the EMI context.

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Keywords: EMI; Multimodal Discourse Analysis; transemiotizing practices; Higher Education

Nerea Oto Millera, Juan Carlos Bustamante and Silvia Pellicer Ortín
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Differentiated Instruction in the EFL Lessons: Motivating Gifted Students
through Digital Tools.

In the realm of education, addressing the motivation of high-ability students is a critical concern. The lack of interest and unique challenges faced by these students are recognised impediments to their comprehensive academic and linguistic development. This study specifically targets the needs of sixth-grade students in Primary Education who possess high abilities. Often overlooked due to a lack of identification, these students frequently find themselves grappling with the looming specter of academic failure.

While various strategies have been employed to tackle this issue, such as curriculum adaptations and academic enrichment, substantial challenges persist. One primary challenge is maintaining the sustained attention and interest of these students, a factor directly impacting their performance and satisfaction in learning English as a foreign language. This research delves into the characteristics of high-ability students, revealing profound demotivation, strong verbal aptitude (Acar and Arslan, 2023), and a keen passion for new technologies (Tárraga Mínguez et al., 2014).

To address these challenges, a proposed solution involves the integration of digital tools, particularly augmented reality, into the English as a foreign language teaching process. Augmented reality offers immersive and stimulating experiences, facilitating the personalisation of educational content to align with the individual needs and abilities of high-ability students. The expectation is that this innovative approach will not only motivate and engage students but will also transform their overall learning experience.

Anticipated short-term outcomes include increased student participation and interest, measured through indicators like classroom attention and activity completion. In the medium term, improvements in academic performance and heightened linguistic self-efficacy are expected. In the long term, it is envisioned that this methodology will positively impact the educational and professional trajectories of high-ability students, effectively preparing them for the challenges of a globalised and technological world. This approach aims not only to address current issues but also to establish a foundation for a significant shift in how these students approach the learning of foreign languages, with the hope that the intervention programme proves effective and can be implemented in other specialised high-ability centers or educational settings.

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Keywords: Individualisation; Motivation; English; High abilities; Augmented reality.

Paula Wood Borque
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Using audiovisual materials with EFL lower-level students:
Compilation and multimodal analysis of a corpus of films and series

Nowadays audiovisual materials such as films and series are commonly used in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom due to their benefits as a source of simulated naturalistic speech and the variety of topics, accents, and cultures they can bring to the classroom (Donaghy 2019). Previous research has also proved their positive effects regarding vocabulary acquisition (Puimège & Peters 2020), development of listening skills (Feng & Webb 2020) and overall improvement of second language speech processing skills (Wisniewska & Mora 2020). Nonetheless, it will be argued that one of the main advantages of using these materials lies in their multimodal nature.

In this paper I will present the corpus CAMELLS (Corpus of Audiovisual Materials for English Language Learning in Secondary), which encompasses a selection of films and series and scenes from them for each of the four academic years of the Secondary Education EFL classroom. The main focus will be on a sample of scenes selected for the 1st year of Secondary Education and on their multimodal analysis, which was carried out with the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 12 to determine the scenes' salient features, modes and combinations of modes used to convey meaning. The preliminary analysis results point to a combination of verbal and non-verbal modes particularly suited for early stages of EFL due to the predominance of audio-visual features. These results have informed the development of exploitation suggestions that can contribute to the development of students' multimodal communicative competence (Royce 2006). It will be argued that informed choices need to be made based on analyses of audiovisual materials such as the one presented in this paper to bring them into the EFL classroom and exploit them effectively.

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Keywords: Audiovisual materials; corpus; English as a Foreign Language; multimodal analysis; multimodal communicative competence

Tú Anh Ha
(Universitat Rovira i Virgili)
Undergraduate Views on AI-Assisted Language Learning:
Applications, Challenges, and Skill Requirements

This study explores the perceptions of undergraduate students at a private university in Vietnam regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in second language learning. Engaging 119 voluntary participants, the research primarily focused on students' application of AI tools in language acquisition, their views on the advantages and challenges of AI in this context, and the specific competencies required for effective utilization of AI in language learning. Data collection was conducted via Google Forms and subjected to qualitative content analysis, facilitated by Excel and Atlas.ti (v.23 for Windows). The findings reveal that a significant proportion of students (63%) primarily use AI for instantaneous translation and composition in a second language. This dependency on AI, however, is leading to a diminished capacity for independent thought, memory retention, and active language usage. Additionally, concerns about AI's accuracy, potentially leading to misconceptions in language understanding, were noted. While 23.5% of students expressed uncertainty regarding the competencies needed for effective AI integration in language learning, others highlighted the desire for enhanced reading skills (including scanning, analyzing, and evaluating data) and information searching abilities, such as formulating precise queries for optimal AI assistance. A subset of respondents also emphasized the importance of developing critical thinking, self-regulation, and the ability to customize AI tools to suit individual learning needs.

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Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Second Language Acquisition, Undergraduate Perspectives, Language Learning Competencies, AI Limitations, Educational Technology, Critical Thinking in Language Learning.

Anna Bartnicka
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**The Agency of Nonhuman Actors in Shirley Jackson's semi-
autobiographical family memoirs *Life Among the Savages* (1953) and
Raising Demons (1957)**

Many of the so-called Nonhuman Turn theoreticians (Grusin 2015) emphasize in their works the need for “textual accounts” (Latour 2005) which could help in creating new “regimes of perception” (Bennett 2010) among modern audiences, thus allowing them to notice and better understand the agency and autonomy of “nonhuman beings.” Long neglected in the history of Western thought, “nonhuman beings” are of special importance in the times of the Anthropocene and posthumanism when the dire ecological situation requires humans to rethink their relationship with nature and to question their inherited assumptions about the collective existence of all beings.

The aim of this paper is to foreground the role of material objects in the less studied literary works of the American author Shirley Jackson (1916-1965), namely her two semi-autobiographical family memoirs, from the perspective of the Nonhuman Turn. Conceptions proposed by Bruno Latour, Jane Bennett, Bill Brown, and Ian Bogost are used in order to analyze the two works with respect to their presentation of the material objects and the way in which these memoirs capture and problematize the non-symbolic agency of “material culture” (Olsen 2010) and its impact on human characters. The paper argues the importance of Nonhuman Turn theories in literary studies and the retroactive applicability thereof on the works of Shirley Jackson, an author actively engaged in the discussion of human-nonhuman relations in the period of post World War II consumerist boom. The Hyman family depicted in the memoirs is an active assemblage of heterogeneous members who share a common ability to impact and be impacted. Despite the human characters’ attempts at listing, naming, and organizing, the household items remain uncontrollable, constantly defying the Modern Constitution (Latour 2005). The episodes that form the memoirs hint at a more democratic ontological stance and can be perceived as “onto-stories” (Bennett 2001) of ontological confusion, irruptions of thingness, and intense affective engagement.

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Keywords: family memoirs; material object agency; nonhuman turn; vibrant materialism; thing theory

Aitana Monzón
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
“giving back to earth / metals and lover’s bodies”: Dark Arcadia Aesthetics
in the Poetry of Ralph Salisbury

When literary critic and scholar Kenneth Lincoln published the anthology entitled *Native American Renaissance* in 1983, Ralph Salisbury’s poems had already been printed for over twenty years both in literary journals and by several publishing houses. Lincoln’s anthology was a turning point for American literary criticism, establishing a canon of reference within the literature written by Amerindian authors. However, there is no trace of Salisbury. As Alberts points out (2020: 69), he “has all but been ignored by most literary critics” even if he began advocating for indigenous rights in his prose and poetry, and at the same time he was one of the first Native Post-War poets of relying on Cherokee-English transliteration. For this reason, this paper’s main aim is to analyse Salisbury’s contributions within the Native American Renaissance current. To do so, I will provide an in-depth study of his lyrical work within the context of the Post-War United States mainly focusing on trauma and decolonial studies.

Given the relevance of landscape in Salisbury’s works, especially when it comes to the wasted vision of Depression-Era Iowa and the battlefield of World War II, I will focus my research on a poetics of space that could well be considered both within and outside the boundaries of so-called nature poetry, bordering on what McSweeney has coined as the “necropastoral”. In doing so, I draw on studies such as Judy (2022), Miller (2013) and Naffis-Sahely (2010). Moreover, to determine how natural space operates in Salisbury’s lyrical work, an overview of MacSweeney’s concept of the “necropastoral” (2018: 7) is offered, establishing its main characteristics, and observing how these are developed in the selected texts from Salisbury’s books *Ghost Grapefruit* (1972) and *Blind Pumper at the Well* (2008).

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Keywords: Ralph Salisbury; Native American Renaissance; American Post War Poetry; Necropastoral

Ana Tejero Marín
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Reflections of the Earth: Narrating the environmental crises in
science fiction and fantasy literature

The Anthropocene —a word coined by Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer to designate our current geological epoch, characterised by human modification of the environment— has become a useful paradigm through which to study the connection between the various environmental crises that plague our planet nowadays and their causes. The Anthropocene bridges multiple temporalities: past actions, the ecological catastrophes of our present and how this will leave a trace in geological strata for the future. For this reason, Ursula K. Heise has linked the Anthropocene to science fiction, a genre based on projections towards the future which comment on the present. It comes as no surprise, then, that a great amount of climate fiction —literary works that deal with environmental concerns— can also be categorised as science fiction (Goodbody and Johns-Putra).

Despite the strong similarity between the genres, fantasy fiction has not been subject to the same amount of scholarly attention pertaining its relationship to the Anthropocene. In fact, it has sometimes been dismissed as useless for engaging with environmental issues as, by definition, it implies a departure from reality. Nevertheless, the construction of fantastical worlds and the consequent defamiliarisation of what is taken for granted in reality can become a productive site for both critique of unsustainable practices and imagining alternative green societies (Oziewicz).

This presentation will deal with how the literary techniques used in science fiction and fantasy can be appropriate for dealing with environmental issues and representing the Anthropocene. Moreover, it will discern how contemporary trends, such as the blending of science-fictional and fantastical elements, can be related to Anthropocene thought. Drawing from theories of both genres and ecocriticism, this paper aims to highlight the potential of popular speculative fiction to be disruptive, thought-provoking and relevant to contemporary concerns.

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Keywords: Anthropocene; science fiction; fantasy; ecocriticism; alternative worlds

Cristina de los Ríos Martín
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Exploring (Food) Memoirs through Food Studies and
Transmodernity: Olympia Panagiotopoulos' *Beneath the Fig Leaves*
and Spiri Tsintziras' *Afternoons in Ithaka*

Food has historically been regarded as an inherent object of interest due to several reasons such as its direct relationship with cultural identity, gender, or, more recently, climate- change, to name but a few. The critical study of food, thus, goes back a long time, even though it is not until recently that Food Studies has been developed as a consolidating academic field (Albala, 2013, XV). This growing interest in Food Studies can be better understood in the context of Transmodernity, defined by Rodríguez-Magda as a paradigm shift that synthesises and transcends Modernism and Postmodernism (2011, 7).

As of recently, in certain contemporary fiction and non-fiction narratives, food and eating are recurrent themes that imply a myriad of relevant topics. Non-fiction texts, precisely the (food) memoir, will be the focus of this research, as the autobiographical approach provides a unique and essential understanding of the use of food and culinary practices, articulating the main tenets of Transmodernity.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to examine *Beneath the Fig Leaves* (2020) and *Afternoons in Ithaka* (2014) through the lens of Food Studies and Transmodernity. In *Beneath the Fig Leaves*, Olympia Panagiotopoulos tells the story of her mother and her own through a series of entries marked by the seasons during the first part and by the recipes they hold dear during the second. *Afternoons in Ithaka* tells the lifeline of Spiri Tsintziras, including her upbringing, coming of age and the quest of finding herself. The memoir is divided into three parts and recipes mark the end of most chapters. Both texts, written by Greek-Australian authors, can be considered as food memoirs in which food and eating reconcile and unite the authors' cultural identities.

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Keywords: Transmodernity; Food Studies; Australian Literature; Food Memoir

Elena Cortés Farrujia
(Universidad de Barcelona)
Food for Thought: Queer Indigenous home/world-making

In their insightful volume *Queering the Interior* (2020), Matt Cook and Andrew Gorman-Murray introduce the kitchen space as a site of subversive potentialities within the reworkings of the queer interior. Historically presented and envisioned as a gendered space, the kitchen is unequivocally defined by its purpose, cooking, and all the activities encompassing it (eating, sharing recipes and food, hosting events, cleaning...). Plus, even from its epithet, “the heart of the home,” the kitchen stands as one of the few spaces intrinsically connected to the ground of the affects, to the economies of care, generally attributed to the feminine and the female inhabitants of the household, situating this place as a locus of vulnerability. However, Meredith E. Abarca in *Voices in the Kitchen* (2006) contends that such a room of multiple memories, active storytelling, and self-community agency transforms it into a space of Becoming (20).

This paper aims to “knead” Indigenous representations of the kitchen, cooking, and eating with the ongoing queer homemaking “mise-en-place.” By examining diverse representations involving this particular room in several Indigenous and Queer, and Two-Spirit Indigenous authors, like Joshua Whitehead, Beth Brant, Dian Million and Tommy Pico, this paper will reflect on the strategies of belonging and becoming situated in the kitchen while dwelling in the spatiotemporal poetics and politics of the kitchen table, the cookbook, and the food pantry. Therefore, this paper will be broadening the current conversation on Indigenous food sovereignty (e.g., Charlotte Côté) by engaging with the objects, either material, like the kitchen table, or incorporeal, such as recipes, encountered within the context of the kitchens described. Furthermore, by examining and thinking through and with these authors’ works, I aim to “unsettle” notions around food; for instance, what is considered food and waste in this space, or the rhythms/ways of consumption in the West, based on extractivist logics (of resources, of water, and of bodies); but also around home and world making that, intimately connected to the “sovereign erotic” (Driskill), question and decolonize, overall, the settler heteronormative ideal of the American home all at once.

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Keywords: Queer Indigeneity; Home; Food Sovereignty; Kitchen; Spaces of Becoming

Elena García Barca
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Empowering Indigenous Youth: Exploring Resilience and Decolonial TEFL
in *Reservation Dogs*

Acknowledging the central role Indigenous youth narratives as both representation and mirrors of realities that transcend fiction, it becomes apparent that the limited incorporation of Indigenous youth narratives into contemporary literary studies is a significant gap to be amended. Within the rich tapestry of contemporary Indigenous artistic expression, *Reservation Dogs* emerges as a significant cultural contribution, interlacing glocal viewpoints through the lives of an empowered Indigenous youth.

Aiming to contribute to bridging the aforementioned non-inclusion, this paper sets out with two objectives. First, to explore the diverse strategies of resilience of Indigenous teenagers in *Reservation Dogs*, Season One, as they encounter a variety of challenges. Second, to focus on *Reservation Dogs* as a representative narrative for decolonial TEFL, emphasizing its role in counter-storytelling, healing, and reclaiming Indigenous identities (Zavala). In order to do so, I will examine resilience, first, focusing on specific situations where resilience can be viewed as a burden imposed by colonial and neoliberal ideologies that prioritize individual responsibility over systemic issues, and, second, positing resilience as a strategic form of empowerment within Indigenous communities. My approach to resilience draws on Fraile-Marcos' groundbreaking work on glocal narratives and decolonial resilience (2020, 2023), to argue that the concept of resilience is a critical lens to examine the multifaceted lives and adaptive strategies of Indigenous teenage characters.

The analysis of resilience is intrinsically tied to the principles of decolonial TEFL, offering insights into challenging colonial and neoliberal ideologies. Introducing *Reservation Dogs* to adolescents through teen characters places them at the heart of learning about Indigenous culture. This pedagogical strategy aligns with Fraile-Marcos' perspective on the transformative potential of resilience narratives within various cultural settings, emphasizing the need to address and dismantle systemic imbalances as part of a comprehensive TEFL curriculum.

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Keywords: Indigenous resilience, Indigenous teenagers; glocal; decolonial TEFL.

Iago Rodríguez Diéguez
(Universidade de Vigo)
Approaching Black African Diasporic Masculinities
in *Behold the Dreamers* and *Americanah*

African diasporic fiction in English has been on the rise for years. Its power to represent migration and mobility, to speak about politics and to discuss identity issues has caught the attention of readers and academics from all over the world. Novels such as *Americanah* (2014) by well-known Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and *Behold the Dreamers* (2017) by Cameroonian writer Imbolo Mbue explore the hardships of Black African immigrants in both the United States of America and the United Kingdom contributing to a debate that goes beyond literature. Not only do they present race and class issues, they are also concerned with gender; addressing, among other things, the vulnerabilities surrounding Black diasporic masculinity.

While in Mbue's novel, Jende represents the working class immigrant father figure, with pressures and challenges of his own as well as those marked by societal norms and expectations; Adichie offers the example of a highly-educated young man from Nigeria who suffers the consequences of racism and precarity for the first time through the character of Obinze. Although interesting in itself, their experience needs to be examined taking into account their relation to their female counterparts in the texts as well, due to the fact that, as Harry Brod argues, "it is a theoretical mistake to think that one can analyze women's lives and men's lives separately", for such an approach "misses precisely the core of the reality of gender, that gender is a socially constructed category formed precisely in and through the interplay of the genders" (165).

Thus, the aim of this paper is to analyse these novels as expressions of the new Afropolitan identities and to examine their focus on the experience of masculinity without overlooking the implications that masculinities may have for female characters.

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Keywords: Masculinity Studies, Black Masculinities, African Diasporic Fiction, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Imbolo Mbue.

Iria Seijas-Pérez
(Universidade de Vigo)
Representations of Queer Female Protagonists in Contemporary
Irish Young Adult Literature in English

Irish Young Adult literature – henceforth YA literature – has seen a notable increase in popularity and number of publications in recent years (see Cahill 2020). Though this literary category was initially marked by the reluctance to approach any themes that could be considered controversial or inappropriate for a young audience (see Kennon 2020), current Irish YA literature addresses a broad variety of topics, including the topic of sexuality (see Whyte 2011). My thesis project aims to analyse YA fiction novels with lesbian, bisexual, and otherwise queer female protagonists written in English by Irish women. The main objective is to provide a critical assessment of the literary representation of queer teenage girls in contemporary Ireland, and to explore how sapphic sexualities have been introduced into Irish YA fiction and the different strategies through which these can be approached, among other goals. In order to select the YA novels that would comprise the corpus of study, a set of criteria were followed taking into consideration various aspects that were of interest to this research. Once the corpus of novels was established, a methodology based on critical and comparative readings of critical analyses and studies on LGBTQ+ narratives and on YA literature was followed, building on feminist and queer theories, for these provided the necessary perspective to examine the main theme of this dissertation. The main challenge throughout the process has been the scarcity of academic studies that focus on Irish YA literature, and more specifically on the representation of queer sexualities within this literary category. Nevertheless, results have shown that LGBTQ+ Irish YA literature has experienced a remarkable increase in recent years, and that the lives and experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in contemporary Ireland are now approached in myriad forms, as my research intends to demonstrate.

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Keywords: Irish literature; YA literature; lesbianism; bisexuality; girlhood

Iván de la Torre Franco
(Universidad de Huelva)
“God Help the Mama: An Exploration of African-American
Motherhood in Terry McMillan’s *Mama*”

Since the rise of postcolonial criticism, numerous studies have been conducted on the issue of African-American motherhood, portraying the negative life-long impact of some black mothers’ distinctive practices on black children. By means of illustration, Manuela López (2016) builds a connection in Toni Morrison’s *God Help the Child* (2015) between the protagonist’s lack of confidence and self-destructive behavior, and her internalization of discriminatory values on account of her upbringing as well as “her disconnection from her black “motherline”” (110). While López’s essay argues that the mother’s erratic attitude can be traced back to the origins of the institution of slavery in America, it is the adversities the main character in Morrison’s novel, Sweetness, encounters when navigating the American society that are at the forefront of the novel. In this paper, I contend that the focus must be shifted to the hardships endured by African-American mothers, without aiming to either justify or excuse practices that can oftentimes be toxic. My analysis will concentrate on Terry McMillan’s *Mama* (1987), which raises awareness about mothers’ position to foster an empathetic response and prevent the blame being placed on them. To do so, I will underscore the backgrounds that hamper a mother of color’s mothering practices in light of maternity studies by Elizabeth Spelman (1988), Alice Walker (1988), Sara Ruddick (1989), and Hill Collins (1990), while trying to demonstrate that attention must be given to the colored approaches to motherhood that stray from the norm imposed by Western feminism.

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Karolina Posyniak
(University of Wrocław)
A Cross-cultural Perspective On Affective Self-Disclosure In Autie-Biography

The cognitively “other” and unavailable autistic mind has been routinely misconstrued in the past, the early written accounts of autistic experience coming from medical specialists. However, the prevailing model of autism as a deficit is now being disfavored in scholarly discourse, mostly due to the autistic own voices becoming public. Today terms such as “neurodiversity”, “neuroqueerness”, or “different bodymind” (Yergeau 2018) are preferred over the stigmatizing diagnostic label – autism spectrum disorder.

Autie-biography (autistic autobiography) as a genre was born with the publication of Temple Grandin’s *Emergence* (1986; co-authored with Margaret Scariano), and a proliferation of such texts in the US has been observed since. Many of them largely relied on the early role models (Grandin, Donna Williams, Dawn Prince-Hughes). The most contemporary autie-biographies take various forms: self-help books, guidebooks for people unfamiliar with autism, or semi-fictional texts of high aesthetic value.

In comparison, only in the last two decades can we observe the birth of this genre among Polish publications. The specificity of the American and Polish cultures (and markets) caused dissimilarities in its development in both countries. As to parallels, both American and Polish autie-biographies abound in instances of affective self-disclosure (revealing one’s affects in writing), which facilitates understanding between autistic authors and neuronormative readers despite common stereotypes about autistic lack of emotion or empathy.

Drawing on literary criticism on life writing (Eakin 1999) and the scholarship on affect (Tomkins 1962; 1963), this paper aims to examine the role of affective self-disclosure in different types of autie-biographies published throughout the years in the US, and to contrast them with the few Polish autie-biographies published up until 2023 (Krystian Głuszko, Ewa Furgał, Dorota Kotas, and Joanna Jurewicz).

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Key words:autism; autie-biography; affective self-disclosure; affect theory

Laura García
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Earth as Home: *Terraforming Earth* and the crisis of human identity

My paper proposes a close reading of Jack Williamson's 2001 novel *Terraforming Earth* through the methodologies of ecocriticism and posthumanism, in order to analyse the way in which these fields have intersected in the 21st century and have contributed to changing the understanding of the human identity in recent times. Therefore, the aim of my intervention is to study the sense of identity in *Terraforming Earth*, a science fiction book where the remnants of humanity, stranded on the Moon, have to reckon with both the loss of the Earth as a home planet and the loss of humanity as a kin, as well as the challenges derived from their existence, only possible thanks to transhumanism. The objective of the analysis of this novel is twofold: firstly, to shine a light on the Anthropocentric discourses that reoccur through the length of the narration, that create in these humans a sense of identity so tied to planet Earth that, in their eyes, they have ownership over it; secondly, to explore the challenges that the traumatic loss of the Earth causes in said sense of identity, exploring what it means to be human through the changes this causes to the humanist idea of the self.

This presentation will explore, through means of a narratological analysis of *Terraforming Earth*, the ways in which ecocriticism and posthumanism can conflate to create a joint literary analysis, following theorists such as Rosi Braidotti and Bruno Latour. The union of these two methodologies results in a more accurate understanding of the state of modern society up to the present, the impact that Anthropocentric thought has in both the creation and the questioning of man's identity, from the Enlightenment through several crises of thought in the 20th century until now, and finally, as it will be explored in this paper, its manifestation in modern science fiction as a place to narrativise these challenges and question anthropocentric discourses.

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Keywords

Ecocriticism; Posthumanism; Trauma Studies; Planetaryity; Science Fiction

Laura Larrodera Arcega
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
Narrating the Inhuman: Robot Agency in Annalee Newitz's
Autonomous* and in Amal El Mohtar and Max Gladstone's *This Is
***How You Lose the Time War*.**

The boundaries between the natural and the technological are becoming less defined as the technological advances fostered by the Fourth Industrial Revolution alter our understanding of our embodied existence (Braidotti, 2019). The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in everyday life, and the ground-breaking advances in robotics, together with the important advances in biotechnology and genetics, and in regenerative surgery and tissue engineering are closing the gap between Science Fiction and reality. The Bio-bot, a posthuman figure which is a robot with organic parts and that often appears in SF, is becoming less fictional as these technologies develop, blurring traditional ideas of personhood, heirs of Humanist premises. This has been reflected in SF, as in recent years there has been a trend that explores what robot agency could be like, giving them some control of their own narratives.

Albeit there has been research that has explored narratology beyond the human such as Bernaerts's et al. (2014) analysis of non-human narrators, Herman's (2018) book on animal narratology, and, more recently, Caracciolo's (2022) research on posthuman narratology, there has been a research gap on AI narrators. Do these types of narratives follow the same patterns as animal or object narrators? Which are the main strategies used to convey AIs' point of view? Based on these questions, this paper intends to explore how this type of narrator works, the techniques employed to depict AI's own particular perspective and its effect on the narrative. Focusing on *Autonomous* and *This Is How You Lose the Time War*, I contrast both works, which are part of my corpus, as case examples on how these narratives can enrich the posthuman discourse from a narratological perspective. The theoretical framework used is Critical Posthumanism, Queer and Trans Theory and the concept of the Inhuman delineated by Luciano and Chen (2015)

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Keywords (maximum 5; separated with semi-colons)

posthuman; AI; Science Fiction; inhuman; robot narrators

María Abizanda Cardona
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
The Posthuman in American Crime Fiction: A Case Study
of Mur Lafferty's *Six Wakes* (2017).

The assemblages between human and machine prompted by the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction and challenging Humanist understandings of Man as the measure of all things, ushering in a post-human paradigm. In this context of unprecedented social, epistemological and ontological change, science-fictionality grows into the dominant mode of social imagination (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008), and the technoscientific icons and extrapolative mood that were once the hallmark of the science fiction genre “evaporate” into other literary forms (Wolfe, 2011). One illustrative instance of this generic crossbreeding is the burgeoning body of contemporary American novels that integrate the icons and concerns of posthumanity within the stock plots and conventions of crime fiction.

In this paper, I will explore the possibilities offered by this cluster of works to grapple with current debates on the risks and rewards of posthumanity. Drawing together insights from crime fiction studies and different approaches to the posthuman, such as transhumanism and critical posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013; More, 2013), I will contend that the constituent elements of the genre – its symbiotic relationship with technology, its ambivalent engagement with the legacy of Humanism, and its sociopolitical and ethical orientation – can make of crime fiction “a posthumanist practice” (Vint, 2020), capable of denouncing the shortcomings of current technoscientific development and articulating alternative visions of the future indexed to critical posthumanist thought. This argument will be illustrated through the analysis of Mur Lafferty’s 2017 novel *Six Wakes*, one of the case studies of my doctoral dissertation.

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Keywords

Science fictionality; crime fiction; critical posthumanism; transhumanism; Mur Lafferty

Marta Bagüés Bautista
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
“This isn’t a ghost story”: Unleashing the Spectres in Ali Smith’s
***Winter* (2017)**

Winter (2017), the second installment of Ali Smith’s Seasonal Quartet, recovers Charles Dickens’s depiction of ghostly figures as positive catalysts of change in *A Christmas Carol* (1843) and it explores the prosperity that posthuman subjects may beget through the story of Sophie and a floating head. As MacCormack claims, “it is time for humans to stop being human” (qtd. in Schmitt 13), and this relationship reflects Rosi Braidotti’s belief that “the posthuman predicament requires even more diversified relational skills” (46).

Within the diversity of the posthuman paradigm, *Winter* explores how “ghosts arrive precisely when we, as individuals or communities, oppress or deny a happening, which forces us to experience a moment” (Vinci 139). Thus, the disembodied head becomes an ever-changing physical figure that allows Sophia to experience the emotions and events she had been trying to suppress. The ghost represents the “Levinasian Other: a wholly irrecuperable intrusion in our world, which is not comprehensible within our available intellectual frameworks, but whose otherness we are responsible for preserving” (Davis, qtd. in Vinci 20). The Other is a modification of one’s ego that mirrors one’s own self (Husserl, qtd. in Bernasconi 69), thus the ghostly head represents “the other-than-human [that] resides at the very core of the human itself” (Wolfe, qtd. in Vinci 18), a posthuman mirror that will allow Sophia to work through her grief.

This paper will aim to demonstrate that, as the narrator of the novel suggests, *Winter* “isn’t a ghost story [...], it’s about real things really happening in the real world involving real people in real time on the real earth” (Smith 5) through the analysis of the relationship between Sophia and the mysterious spectre, a doorway to the posthuman, the Other that lives within her and a physical representation of her emotional trauma that will provide her with the guidance and growth that the traditional Humanist paradigm had failed to deliver.

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Keywords: posthuman; hauntology; ghosts; the Other; Ali Smith

**Noelia Carmona-Rivero
(Universidad de Granada)**

**The construction of gender in Irish literature: Exploring the
representation of male characters in Donal Ryan's fiction**

In the fictional communities created by Irish writer Donal Ryan, significantly marked by a realism that closely imitates and resembles Irish society, men play different roles that both challenge and perpetuate hegemonic forms of masculinity. Through a critical analysis of his works of fiction, certain archetypes and different ways of being a man come to the forefront and can be analysed through the lenses of Gender Studies and, most specifically, Studies of Masculinities. The conflicts that arise in male identities and relationships due to the ever-changing hegemonic patterns that construct the performance of masculinities have been widely explored in academia (Kimmel, 1994) from a variety of perspectives that comprehend several fields of study. In recent decades, studies of such kinds have been conducted in the Irish context as well, following the increasing interest in the field but also on Irish Studies. Drawing from historical research on masculinities in Ireland (Barr, 2019), as well as sociological investigations (Garcia, 2016), and from previous existing analysis of the representation of men in culture and literature (Ging, 2013; Magennis, 2010), the general aim of my thesis project is to explore the representations of gender and, specifically, masculinities, in Donal Ryan's bibliography. Consequently, the proposed paper will summarise the main findings of my research, showing context-specific extracts that will highlight the importance of applying such theory to fictional literary works. This will open the path to discussing the influence that hegemonic models have on culture and how literary representations can relate – or not – to the reality of Ireland and shape the way in which gender roles are perceived.

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Keywords: Irish studies; Gender; Irish literature; Masculinities; Donal Ryan

Natalia Jiménez Pérez
(Universidad de Zaragoza)
The Ethics of Vulnerability and Intimacy in a World Crumbling in
on itself in Sally Rooney's *Beautiful World, Where Are You* (2021)

In her three novels—*Conversations With Friends* (2017), *Normal People* (2018) and *Beautiful World, Where Are You* (2021)—, Sally Rooney exposes the turbulent psyche of a generation condemned to survive in a world defined by uncertainty and radical loneliness, and by a crisis both global—climate change, COVID-19, global pandemic, war...—and local—Post-*Celtic Tiger* Ireland and the socioeconomic precarity and extreme individualism it brought—. Rooney presents characters deeply aware of this situation of universal crisis, being both philosophically concerned by it and existentially and emotionally pierced by its prism of precarity.

Indeed, the physical and psychological consequences of this *glocal* crisis, with the help of an increasingly technology-focused society, condition these characters to ontological alienation and isolation. Whereas her first two novels suggested codependency and relationality as the only valid antidote, her last novel interrogates this notion by wondering whether paying so much attention to the sexaffective affairs of middle class Irish millennials is actually relevant—or even ethical—in a world crumbling in on itself, as one of the protagonist puts it: “[w]ho can care [...] what happens to the novel’s protagonists, when it’s happening in the context of the increasingly fast, increasingly brutal exploitation of a majority of the human species?” (96). Her criticism cuts to the bone when she concludes that contemporary novels only work “by suppressing the truth of the world—packing it tightly down underneath the glittering surface of the text [...] [so that] we can care once again, as we do in real life, whether people break up or stay together” (ibid).

Drawing on authors such as Ahmed (2014) and Butler (2004, 2016), this paper aims at analysing how Rooney’s last novel explores the ethics of focalising on relationality and vulnerability—both in literature and in real life—as the only antidote to universal—and national—precarity.

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Keywords: Vulnerability-Precarity-Irish Literature-Post Celtic Tiger Literature-Sally Rooney

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“The world has changed. I see it in the water. I feel it in the earth. I smell it in the air”: The Celtic Otherworld in *The Lord of the Rings*

The world of Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* has been a matter of study of numerous comparisons that have contributed to establish a relationship with all those mythological and cultural aspects that may have influenced in its creation. While Norse mythology has been accepted even by Tolkien himself as one of the main references in the creation of his world, the functionality and symbology of those cultural and mythological aspects that embrace Celtic culture have been disdained and even created controversy. The aim of this study is to analyse those elements in *The Lord of the Rings* that are closely related to the Celtic Irish and Welsh otherworld and their connection to the elvish lands of Rivendell and Lothlórien. Among these supernatural phenomena are the temporal perception within elven territories, the efficacy and symbolic significance of water as a ward against malevolent forces and as a medium for channeling, and the intricacies associated with navigating narrow passages, rivers, and bridges.

The methodology used is the traditional scientific empirical method through the study of the books written by J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* (1981) and the film directed by Peter Jackson, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001). The work of Thomas Lyman, "Celtic: Celtic Things and Things Celtic," has been used as a source to discuss whether Celtic elements appear in Tolkien's writing. Lyman pointed out several aspects of Tolkien's work that seem similar to Celtic themes, with the afterlife being one of the most noticeable.

It is evident, therefore, that despite Tolkien’s ‘distaste’ for Celtic things, and the uncertainty about the concept of “afterlives” in his work there are several aspects that, unconsciously or unintentionally, have been created and modelled as a possible explanation to the beyond.

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Keywords Celtic culture; Celtic Otherworld; Celticness; J.R.R. Tolkien; The Lord of the Rings.

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Maternity Literature Boom: Exploring Psychic Suffering
in Contemporary US Narratives

Although reflection on the issue of motherhood has not stopped since the second feminist wave, it has not received either the theoretical consideration or the political, social, and cultural value that such a significant issue for defining gender roles would require. In this sense, motherhood is considered the pending subject of feminism in the 21st century. One of the intellectuals who most fervently subscribes to this statement is professor and essayist Andrea O'Reilly. She denounces that as women's studies have grown and developed as an academic field incorporating various theoretical models to represent the specific perspectives and concerns of particular groups of women, "they have not similarly recognized and embraced a feminism developed from the specific needs/concerns of mothers" (Matricentric Feminism 8). Moreover, the manifest need for a feminism specific to the issue of motherhood increases when we place the focus on the situation of precariousness and poverty in which the mental health of women mothers finds itself. It is therefore vital to examine, strategically and specifically for their 21st-century context, the causes, and agents most detrimental to the experience of motherhood. In light of this, my doctoral thesis focuses on the representation of mothers' psychic suffering in the post-pandemic US narrative. More specifically, I intend to conduct a comparative study between American post-pandemic works-*Nightbitch* (2021) by Rachel Yoder, *The School for Good Mothers* (2022) by Jessamine Chan, and *The Upstairs House* (2021) by Julia Fine- to demonstrate that these authors are part of a new trend, not only literary but cultural, that aims to show a defiant discourse on the experience of motherhood through which to expose the interrelation between the experience of motherhood, as demanded in the s. XXI, and psychological suffering or even its aggravation leading to mental illness.

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Keywords: Feminism; Motherhood; Psychic Suffering; Postpandemic;

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Ecocritical and Ecofeminist Approximations towards poetry: the
Eco-Transcendentalism of the Great North American Female Poets

The aim of this paper is to propose approximations to literature based on one of the most fruitful fields of study and criticism, namely Ecocriticism, and its branches and interconnected disciplines, such as Ecofeminism, Posthumanism or Gender Studies. These are particularly relevant today due to their attention to many of the challenges and issues faced by the culture and society of the 21st century, with the centrality of the protection of the natural world, an increasing interest in mental health problems or the relevance of the ethics of caring and interspecies justice. Then, those theoretical ideas are applied to the analysis of poetry written by female authors from the North American context. North American literature is mainly defined by Transcendentalism and its heritage, with the primacy of Nature and the concept of the Sublime as main pillars; that is why many theoreticians claim that it is intrinsically ecological, and consequently, ecocritically productive. The corpus of poetry is conformed by female authors from the 19th and 20th centuries as well as contemporary poets, with Sylvia Plath as a central figure along with others such as Mary Oliver or Emily Dickinson, among others. The literary corpus is selected by incorporating those themes and topics present in their literature which are connected with the concerns and central ideas presented in the theoretical framework. So, the main aim is the establishment of Ecocritical and Ecofeminist critical approaches towards the poetry of female authors in the North American context in order to prove whether it is convenient and productive or not to propose this ecologically aware approximations as a tool to raise awareness and educate citizens about the concerns of the present world.

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Keywords: Ecocriticism; ecofeminism; female poets; North American poetry; posthumanism.

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Reclaiming the presence of indigenous girlhoods in *The Testaments***

Margaret Atwood expanded the scope of the *The Handmaid's Tale* universe with the *The Testaments*. In this sequel, Atwood gives prominence to the perspective of girls, recounting the prescription of the gender and class role they must interiorize and perform. However, no attention is paid to the girls' ethnicity and how this may affect their experiences.

Depictions of race in *The Handmaid's Tale* franchise have been surrounded with controversy. The original text creates a white supremacist society while the series adopts a "post-racial aesthetic" (Crawley), including a racially diverse cast but leaving out conversations on race. Although gender and class take prominence as an axis of oppression, race is simply ignored. *The Testaments* follows the same strategy as the first novel, thus leaving out the experiences of racialized and indigenous peoples.

The construction of girlhood produced in *The Testaments*, by forcing the girls into strict gender roles and absorbing the violence of the patriarchal nation, can be easily connected to the workings of the Canadian Residential School System. This total institution forced the assimilation of indigenous children who were separated from their families to enter a system where they were tortured, abused and killed. By erasing the ethnicity of the girls depicted in *The Testaments*, the history of violence and colonization of North American territories is ignored, as well as its impact on the present.

In this paper, I will explore the connections between *The Testaments* and the Canadian Residential School System. I argue that it is a key ethical position to acknowledge which communities have suffered the violence presented in the fiction. In addition, I will also engage with the works of decolonial and girlhood scholars who provide strategies to move beyond "damage-centered research" (Tuck), such as "presencing" (de Finney). These acts of presence contribute to reclaim the myriad of identities indigenous girls may adopt while living in complex neocoloniality.

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Keywords: *The Handmaid's Tale*; *The Testaments*; Margaret Atwood; Indigenous girlhoods; Canadian Residential School System

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Rediscovering 1930s Middlebrow Magazines: The Short Fiction of
Katharine Brush, Zelda Fitzgerald, and Dawn Powell

The present paper argues that the contribution of women modernists to the movement through the short fiction published in mass-market magazines is essential for a wider understanding of both the periodical culture of modernism. Not only did their contribution entail the breaking of long-established formal conventions but also incorporated thematic innovation in the representation of women in literature. Although modernist studies have traditionally focused on little magazines as the quintessential medium of the movement, big magazines—which had gained prominence during the 1920s—played a key role in expanding the representation of modern womanhood at the same time as they became platforms for women modernists to establish their careers as writers.

Following the recent trend in modernist and periodical studies that revalues the significance of big magazines as primary objects of study, this paper revises how modernist middlebrow periodicals have been studied from a gender perspective. More specifically, I focus on the case of three understudied women authors—namely, Katharine Brush, Zelda Fitzgerald, and Dawn Powell—during the Great Depression and the short fiction they published in said magazines. How has the academic reception of modernist middlebrow magazines and the texts written by the aforementioned authors evolved in the first decades of the 21st century? Was the initial critical neglect of big magazines as proper literary sources, and particularly of these three authors caused by textual misogyny? What are the main discussion topics associated with Brush's, Fitzgerald's, and Powell's short fiction production?

To answer these questions, this paper performs a systematic literature review by revising the reception of the short fiction written by Brush, Fitzgerald, and Powell during the Great Depression by their contemporaries and contrasting it with how their work has been received over the 20th and 21st centuries.

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Keywords: Popular Modernism; periodical studies; middlebrow magazines; Great Depression, gender studies

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John Okada's Mr. Yamada: From Emasculation and Paralysis
Toward a Timid Attempt at a New Masculinity

The Second World War and its aftermath were intense periods for the Japanese American community in the United States. During the conflict, the U.S. government implemented racist policies that forced more than one hundred thousand Japanese and Japanese Americans into detention camps. With the end of the war, these families were compelled to leave such grievances in the past, starting from scratch in a country that had flagrantly labeled them as enemies. A decade after the internment years, John Okada, a Nisei veteran, described in *No-No Boy* (1957) the traumatic experience of the camps and the stress of adjusting to American society in the following years.

This paper aims at examining Okada's description of the internalization of racist policies by members of the Japanese American community, and the effects of emasculation by male racialized migrants. The analysis will examine the novel's depiction of the reinforcement and contesting of male nationalistic attempts at remasculinization and its consequences on different generations of the same family. Thus, this paper delves into the timid attempt, in the figure of Mr. Yamada, to create a new masculinity that breaks with the masculine and patriarch dyad. In the context of the heteronormative conservative society of the 1950s, the Issei father in Okada's novel appears to find a way out of emasculation through care and communication.

Theory on the ethics of care developed by Carol Gilligan is used in conjunction with Asian American criticism –Daniel Y. Kim, Rachel Endo, and Viet Thanh Nguyen, among others– to appreciate a progressive way out of paralysis that does not reinforce patriarchal dogmas of privilege and authority. In all, this study seeks to relate racism to its effects on the construction of male identities in the novel's early attempt at describing the possibility of escaping emasculation through care and responsibility.

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Keywords: John Okada, Asian American literature, racism, emasculation, care.