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¡Feliz Año!

Ten years ago Spanish politics was the boring bit of the *telediario*: endless manoeuvring between PSOE or PP party barons, *un sinfín de pactos* with regional parties.

Now it's full-on entertainment. Podemos, Ciudadanos and the Catalans shook it up, and Vox is threatening to do so again.



Politics is therefore at the forefront of this edition.

The distinguished constitutional expert Carlos-Nahman Escudé uses our pages to propose a [new form of Spanish state](#) to resolve the Catalan crisis.

In [Dangerous terrain](#) we review flash-points across the Spanish-speaking world, while our Pre-U student journalists analyse [Vox's rise](#) and tell the story of the [Benedictine versus the boneshakers](#) – the latest word from Franco's mausoleum. Fran Compán looks afresh at that perennial British stone in the Spanish shoe, [Gibraltar](#) (in Spanish).



On the cultural side, Robin Wallis discusses the changes to the [Borges and Almodóvar](#) sections of the Pre-U Topics and Texts syllabus, while Stephen Hart looks at how the two mini-masterpieces of Argentine cinema that can now be studied in the [Argentina del siglo 21](#) Topic relate to wider developments in Latin American film. Student Max Glowacki strikes out beyond the syllabus with his recommendation of a good book – [Eva Luna](#).

Belén S. Alonso offers advice on preparation for the fast-approaching [Pre-U speaking exams](#). In our language section [El auge del Spanglish](#) reviews the emergence of hybrid Spanish and English as a serious linguistic phenomenon, while Belén looks at whether Spanish is a [sexist language](#).

This Bulletin is written by and for enthusiasts of all things Spanish/Spanish American. Please share it with fellow enthusiasts who may not be on our circulation list, and dip into our fully indexed [Past editions](#) if you're new to our pages. Contact us if you wish to be added to the circulation.

We anticipate a submissions deadline for the next edition of 31 May. Just one caveat: if you'd like to submit an article, you may wish to check with us before you start writing to ensure that another enthusiast isn't writing on the same subject – it has happened...

Hasta la victoria siempre to our exam-candidate readers.

United Kingdom of Spain and Catalonia (Reino Unido de España y Catalunya)

By Professor Carlos-Nahman Escudé i Carvajal

With suggestions being aired from various sides about rethinking the Spanish Constitution, redefining the state as the United Kingdom of Spain and Catalonia might defuse the current tension.



This would entail reverting the titles of Count of Barcelona and Prince of Girona, which now belong to the Crown, to the Generalitat de Catalunya, on an ex officio basis. Just as Andorra has two co-sovereigns who are, ex officio, the Bishop of Urgell and the President of France, these titles would belong to no one family, but would rather be like a torch that passes from one President to the next.

I think this is symbolically important, because the very idea that the King of Spain should be Count of Barcelona (remember that, by order of his son King Juan Carlos I, Don Juan de Borbón was graced with this title until his death) is an insult to Catalonia that underlines its occupied status.

On the other hand, given the republican mood of the Catalan population, given its eminently bourgeois character, and considering that there are no genealogical grounds for bestowing these titles upon any one Catalanian family, these two titles (and maybe some others) must be symbols of Catalonia that are passed on from one head of government to the other.



The Andorran case is the perfect precedent. With its two ex officio co-sovereigns, it is almost far-fetched. Yet it works, and it has given birth to the only independent state in the world whose one official language is... Catalan.

Buenos Aires, January 2019

Dangerous terrain

Spain

We spoke to soon. Two months after our previous edition alluded to the blessing of there being no significant 'far right' party in Spain, Vox won its first elected representation in the regional election which ended decades of PSOE dominance in Andalusia (see separate [Vox](#) coverage in this edition).

The new PP/Ciudadanos coalition in Andalusia will need Vox's votes to pass legislation, but with regional and European elections in May, the PP in particular is wary of being tainted by association with Vox. The PP's main fear, however, is that its vote will be squeezed between Ciudadanos and Vox, both of which prospered at the PP's expense in Andalusia.

Just as significant as the rise of Vox may be the sudden split in Podemos. Its leader, Pablo Iglesias, interrupted his paternity leave in January to write a mournful letter to party members to mark its 'unhappy' fifth birthday. Podemos had looked like becoming a reliable coalition partner for the PSOE, but a split Podemos will be unable to fulfil that role, making PP/Ciudadanos/Vox alliances potential majority winners in both national and regional parliaments. The coming days will tell whether the Íñigo Errejón faction can be reconciled with the rest of the party.



Prime Minister Sánchez has been tiptoeing through some delicate dealings with Catalonia's regional government (the Generalitat). His goal is to prevent further crisis while avoiding giving ground to unconstitutional *soberanistas*. Torra, president of the Generalitat, calls this 'negotiation' (as though between separate and equal states); Sánchez calls it 'dialogue' (between central and regional government); his PP critics call it 'surrender'. Legal proceedings against the imprisoned *soberanista* politicians overshadow the delicate process.

The Basque *lehendakari* (head of government) Urkullu has meanwhile suggested that a new constitutional dispensation may be needed, redefining Spain as a 'plurinational' state. See our article in this edition on the proposed [Reino Unido de España y Catalunya](#).

Latin America

Prospects for the new administrations in Mexico and Brazil – Latin America's two heavy-hitters – have absorbed the attentions of commentators. Brazil's Bolsonaro worries progressives already bruised by Trump and Brexit.



A new caravan of mainly young Hondurans has set out towards the US border, seeking an escape from violent gang culture and dreaming of completing an education and finding work. The first caravan created controversy and a humanitarian crisis on the border. However, a number of participants received a hearing in the US

or integrated into Mexican society. Mexico's new administration is sympathetic to their plight, while Mr Trump is struggling to build his wall.

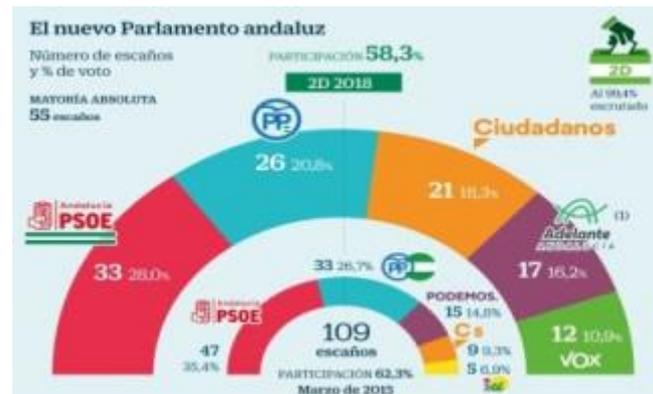
The most ominous development of recent weeks is perhaps the fraying of Colombia's hard-won peace accord. Since it was signed in 2016, Nobel Peace Prize winner Juan Manuel Santos has been replaced as president by Iván Duque, representing those who are sceptical of the peace process; the FARC's lead peace negotiator Iván Márquez has denounced the accord's 'betrayal' by the Colombian government and is in hiding; and the ELN has reversed its slow drift towards a similar peace deal. The ELN was allegedly responsible for the 17 January car bomb attack in Bogotá, the first such atrocity for 9 years – a demonstration of what might await the country if it returns to the dark days.



In Caracas Maduro was sworn in again as president, despite no self-respecting state recognising his legitimacy. Brave opposition leaders do what they can to mobilise against him, but the security forces remain a tool of the dictatorship, systematically torturing opponents of the regime. As we close this edition, foreign governments have endorsed opposition leader Juan Guaidó as the country's legitimate president and are increasing pressure on Maduro.

By BAS editor Robin Wallis

Vox: why now?



The recent elections in Andalusia, the most populated region of Spain, caused a shock to the system. The socialists, with only 33 of the 109 seats, were ousted from government, while the far-right party, Vox, received nearly 11% of the vote, winning 12 seats. As a result, the right-wing parties Vox, Ciudadanos (Cs) and El Partido Popular (PP) hold 59 seats, a majority of 9 over other parties. Although the PP and Cs will form the governing coalition, Vox's backing will be crucial to pass legislation – the first time they have been able to influence policy anywhere in Spain.

In a country with such a dark past concerning fascism and extreme right-wing politics, how has this sudden change come about?

Vox was founded in 2014 and is led by Santiago Abascal, who started his political career in the PP. Although leaders and supporters deny the 'far right' tag, their ideology includes antifeminism (with the aim of repealing the gender violence law), a pro-life stance on abortion, and opposition to same-sex marriage and clinics offering gender change for the trans community. Above all, Vox is seen as anti-Islam and anti-immigration, with its leaders wanting to strengthen control over Spain's borders, deport illegal immigrants and shut down fundamentalist mosques.



Until these elections, the party was not considered a serious player in the Spanish political landscape. It now has a foothold, with its vow to 'hacer España grande otra vez'. Vox calls itself an 'extreme necessity' that is growing in support through being 'in step with what Spaniards think'. These familiar-

sounding slogans bear large similarities with those of the radical nationalist Donald Trump.

One of the driving forces for Vox's growing support in Andalusia is the increase in illegal immigration. Over 53,000 African migrants entered Spain last year, with most arriving via Andalusia. Increasing immigration can cause tension and fear: Vox responds to this by vowing to 'look after our own people' and promising greater security at the border.

Many also feel that recent governments have not satisfied hopes for a post-Franco society. Corruption scandals have tarnished the reputation of both main parties and caused many to turn away from them. The high rates of unemployment in the region and uncertain economic prospects also fuel a desire for change among voters.



However, the biggest factor in Vox's increased support is the issue of Catalan independence. Vox fiercely opposed the referendum and has promoted prosecution of politicians and ministers involved in the 2017 push for independence. Vox supports constitutional change to make Spain a unitary state, as it was under Franco. The party portrays the current

Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, leader of the federalist PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español), as someone who governs the country thanks to 'the enemies of Spain', and says that his separatist values are against the interests of the people.

The movement towards right-wing parties is a worldwide trend, Trump in America being the most obvious example. The anti-immigration cause has also grown in, for example, Germany, Sweden, Greece and Italy. That said, the Andalusian election result may not actually be due to Spain turning to the right. Instead, Vox's stand-out position on Catalonia and immigration may have attracted voters who focus most on those issues. The Catalan question may also have deterred left-wing voters from supporting the PSOE. The outrage and protest that occurred in Andalusia after the elections prove that a majority of its people strongly oppose the rise in Vox.



There is definitely cause to be wary about the surprising growth of the party. Their influence in Andalusia will give them national exposure and allow them to promote their extreme positions. However, how much they will really be able to change in Spanish politics remains uncertain: once the most polarising issues are dealt with, perhaps the party will lose its unique foothold of support.

by Naomi Hudis, a y12 student at St Paul's Girls' School

The Benedictine and the boneshakers

The Spanish government has come across another obstacle in its plans to exhume the remains of the former dictator General Franco. The Benedictine prior who oversees the *Valle de los Caídos* site, Santiago Cantera, has denied the request of the Justice Minister for access to the mausoleum. RTVE has quoted government sources saying that Cantera was once a falangist election candidate, and that his opposition is no surprise.

The Benedictine authorities have not objected to the exhumation in principle, but defend the prior's 'autonomy' over the site. Cantera says they support his insistence that the exhumation must be approved by Franco's family. The matter remains before the courts.



The *Valle*, 50 kilometres north of Madrid, is effectively a mass grave of over 35,000 casualties from both sides of the Civil War, about 12,000 of whom are buried anonymously and most without the knowledge or permission of their families.

The only two named graves are those of

Franco himself and Falange founder José Antonio Primo de Rivera. It took almost two decades to build, with around 20,000 prisoners of war being used for its construction.

It's easy to understand why it remains an issue for many Spaniards, for whom the ramifications of the war and Franco's dictatorship are still raw. Many of those buried in the *Valle* were republicans who lost their lives fighting against Franco, but who are buried in a mausoleum created by and dedicated to him. Cantera says that *el Valle* should be a site of prayer and reconciliation: the dead are now brothers in eternity, rather than republican or nationalist. However, the site remains a place of pilgrimage for *franquistas* and neo-fascists. For this reason, the government, led by Pedro Sánchez, remains steadfast in its commitment to the removal of Franco's remains.

Family members of the dictator maintain that, if the exhumation must occur, his remains should be buried in their family vault in the Almudena cathedral, in the centre of Madrid next to the Royal Palace. However, it is likely that this location would become an even bigger attraction and place of homage for the far right.



The government would prefer the reburial to take place in a less contentious location on the outskirts of Madrid, where the grave would be less evident. This would undoubtedly be less grand than the mausoleum in *el Valle de los Caídos*.

However, for many Spaniards the *Valle* is a constant reminder of the oppression and conflict that they experienced during Franco's regime. For the memorial to be a real place of remembrance, Franco's remains must go.

by Otilie Forsyth, St Paul's Girls School

Todos quieren Gibraltar

Hace ya cerca de dos años que visité Gibraltar. En realidad, visité Cádiz pasando por Gibraltar que, por lo menos, en aquel momento ofrecía mejores conexiones de vuelos internacionales. Aunque ya sabía del reducido tamaño del enclave, es necesario verlo para creerlo. El Peñón, como también se denomina a Gibraltar, es en realidad un accidente geográfico y tiene una



extensión de poco más de seis kilómetros cuadrados. Una de las principales vías de comunicación del Peñón es el aeropuerto, cuya pista de aterrizaje es atravesada por la carretera general, donde se circula por la derecha al estilo continental. Un simple semáforo regula el tráfico dando preferencia a aterrizajes y despegues.

En la distancia, es difícil comprender las causas del conflicto gibraltareño que parece una cuestión histórica más que nada, pero como sucede tan frecuentemente con territorios coloniales, la situación se complica debido a intereses fundamentalmente económicos. Desde el punto de vista español, Gibraltar es una herida abierta desde el famoso Tratado de Utrecht en 1713 cuando Felipe V se vio obligado a ceder el Peñón a la Corona Británica. Para los británicos Gibraltar ha sido un enclave militar estratégico debido a su situación a las puertas del Mediterráneo, pero los avances en tecnología militar parecen hacer que el Peñón sea cada vez menos esencial para ellos. En cambio, la importancia económica de Gibraltar es menos desdeñable estos días si tenemos en cuenta su estatus de paraíso fiscal.

Las casas de apuestas florecen y se lucran pagando una fracción de los impuestos que pagarían si tuviesen su base de operaciones en el Reino Unido.

Los roces entre España y Reino Unido por Gibraltar son relativamente frecuentes y en ocasiones parecen demasiado infantiles para tomarlos en serio. Al parecer, el pasado mes de diciembre la patrullera de la Armada *Infanta Elena* recorrió aguas cercanas a Gibraltar haciendo sonar el himno español a todo volumen por la megafonía del barco, ofensa a la que la embajada británica respondió con una queja diplomática. Según fuentes españolas la patrullera de la Armada se limitó a responder a las autoridades gibraltareñas que, con anterioridad,



hicieron sonar el *God Save the Queen* por un canal de radio supuestamente reservado a emergencias. Será cuestión de ver quien tiene más decibelios. Hasta cierto punto, no es extraño que estos choques sucedan ya que España solamente reconoce una parte del Peñón cedida a Reino Unido: la ciudad, el castillo y los puertos. Ni el istmo ni las aguas costeras son considerados bajo jurisdicción británica por el gobierno español al no haber sido incluidos en el Tratado de Utrecht y los considera territorios ocupados.

En el Referéndum por la permanencia en la Unión Europea el 96% de los gibraltareños votó por quedarse en la unión lo que no supuso sorpresa alguna, ni para españoles ni para británicos. Y es que el aislamiento que supondrá tener un control fronterizo en el Peñón va a traer dificultades impredecibles, no solo para los 32.000 habitantes del enclave sino también para los 13.000 españoles que trabajan allí debido a la crisis del campo andaluz.



Parece que lo que no han conseguido años de convivencia lo ha conseguido el Brexit: el mayor acuerdo bilateral entre España y Reino Unido sobre Gibraltar en más de una década. El acuerdo, que entrará en vigor el 29 de marzo de este año tras la salida del Reino Unido de la UE, pretende lograr una relación más equilibrada entre Gibraltar y el Campo de Gibraltar en España. El pacto afecta principalmente al comercio de tabaco, el medio ambiente, la cooperación aduanera y policial, y los derechos de los trabajadores transfronterizos.

Ambas partes han acordado reducir la diferencia en el precio del tabaco ya que en estos momentos existe una gran brecha entre el precio al que se vende en Gibraltar, donde casi no se pagan impuestos, y en España, lo que históricamente ha favorecido el contrabando desde el Peñón.

El actual período de incertidumbre política respecto a la salida de Reino Unido de la UE hace difícil predecir la futura relación del enclave con España y la Unión. El auge de la derecha en las pasadas elecciones andaluzas podría enrarecer el diálogo con una ideología nacionalista que reclame la soberanía del Peñón, aunque en ningún caso se planteen sugerir la cesión de la soberanía de enclaves similares como Ceuta o Melilla a Marruecos, por supuesto.

By BAS editor Francisco Compán

Pre-U: POT guide

A la hora de preparar a los alumnos para el examen oral de Pre-U no deberíamos volvernos muy locos. De hecho, casi todos los colegios del país lo han hecho bien, como se puede ver en los resultados y en los Examiners' Reports año tras año.

El examen es el perfecto escenario que propone juego y desafío para los chicos. Les hace exprimir al máximo cada artículo y les da la oportunidad de instruir al propio examinador en un tema del que ya son expertos gracias a las largas horas investigando día sí y día también.



Sin embargo, no deja de ser un examen y nunca va a ser algo que agrade a todos. De hecho, el examinador no deja de ser un completo extraño que llega ahí y nunca ha entablado una conversación con ellos y de repente tienen que hablar con él y se sienten juzgados. Es muy fácil decirles “ve allí y coge el toro por los cuernos”, pero con todos esos nervios ni yo, que soy nativa, estaría a salvo de cometer algún fallito.

Entonces, ¿cómo podemos hacer para que este mal trago no lo sea y acaben el examen con una sonrisa de oreja a oreja? Podríamos intentar buscar en Google algo así como: *how to prepare students for oral exams*, *how to succeed in the Pre-U Speaking exam*, o incluso-

para los más soñadores- *how to get my M1 students a D1 in the Pre-U Speaking exam*, pero debo decir que no hay varita mágica ni fórmula matemática (ni siquiera una App para profes en prácticas). Aunque lo que sí que hay son unas ideas que he desarrollado en estos últimos dos años que pueden ayudarles.

¡Sigue leyendo...!

Bueno, empecemos por el Prepared Oral Topic (POT *para los amigos*; el artículo habrá que dejarlo para la siguiente edición):

Muchos alumnos empiezan por escoger un tema que los examinadores se saben de P a PA y que siguen oyendo año tras año en todas las escuelas. De donde no hay no se puede sacar, pero puede que aún así haya un alumno excelente que



sea capaz de encontrar una perspectiva 'original' que capte la atención del examinador. Para mí lo más importante es darle una nueva voz al tema, sea el que sea, hacerlo tuyo.

Entonces, ¿cómo podemos ayudarles a escoger un tema?



1. Primero, como es **su** investigación y **su** tema, es obvio que tiene que ser algo que **les** interese. Con mis alumnos, suelo pedirles que escriban 5 cosas que les interesan en la vida, como *deporte, política, historia, música*, y después simplemente les pregunto cómo podrían aplicarlo a algo que hayamos visto en clase que les haya llamado la atención de la cultura hispánica, historia o de las noticias que leen a diario en español. Al final, tiene que ser **su** elección, pero siempre puedes echarles un cable.
2. Asegúrate de que el alumno se sienta cómodo con el tema que ha escogido. Hay muchas veces que solo han optado por algo porque es más 'difícil' o parece que es un tema más serio y piensan que así agradarán más a los profesores o al examinador, cuando puede que de hecho, sea lo contrario (e incluso les aburran). Por favor: decid adiós a temas descriptivos, no ayudan a la discusión y no se busca una *lecture*.
3. Recuérdales que esto no es un ejercicio de clase, sino uno personal. Tiene principio, pero no fin, todos los días tienen que seguir leyendo, escuchando y, en definitiva, viviendo alrededor del tema que han escogido. Oye, si lo han escogido tienen que, como se dice coloquialmente, 'apechugar' con él.
4. Por último, hay también que tener en cuenta que el alumno no repita como un loro información, sino que transmita opinión. Una buena manera para tratar el tema podría ser preguntarse: *What am I trying to say?* Si el tema es un poco descriptivo, hay que buscar la manera de romper con esto y darle una perspectiva analítica: *What are the different perspectives on this topic? Which stance am I taking?*

Una vez que ya hayan escogido el tema y estén conforme con la perspectiva que le van dando, pueden escoger escribir un ensayo donde guarden toda la información que van encontrando y pongan en práctica las estructuras gramaticales complejas que se esperan de un estudiante de Pre-U. Hay que

tener en cuenta el peso que tiene la gramática en el examen y que no cometer fallos no va a garantizar un 10 sino solamente un 5, si el alumno no ha arriesgado y se ha conformado con algo simple. Otra idea sería hacer una presentación oral delante de los compañeros en clase, donde se puedan ver distintos puntos de vista en relación al tema y se encuentren más en el punto de mira, un escenario más similar al del examen.

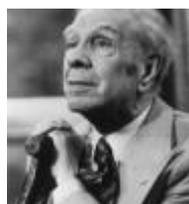
Personalmente, lo que se me gusta es ir preguntándoles de vez en cuando qué han descubierto sobre el tema en los últimos días, así no se sienten amenazados y es simplemente una manera de reflexionar sobre su aprendizaje.

Y tú, ¿qué método sigues?

By BAS editor Belén S. Alonso

Of Borges and Almodóvar...

Two popular stalwarts of the Pre-U Paper 4 syllabus have been revamped for the 2019 exams, with Julieta replacing *Hable con ella* in the Almodóvar section and two new stories replacing *La casa de Asterión* and *Emma Zunz* in the Borges collection. Syllabus designer Robin Wallis discusses the changes with former Pre-U candidate Holly Rose.



HR Starting with Borges... How did the current half-dozen stories end up as the Pre-U Paper 4 selection?

RW I remembered as a student finding a number of Borges stories gripping, but others unfathomable. For Pre-U I went back to the former... My goal was to identify ones that had a strong action and adventure element and a sting in the tail. Those were the ones that I thought Pre-U students would enjoy and find accessible.

HR Any particular favourites?

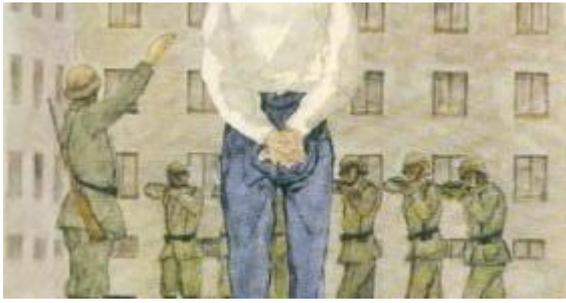
RW When I first read *El encuentro* and *La casa de Asterión* I thought the endings really sent a shudder down the spine. Ultimately, though, I think of *La muerte y la brújula* as the classic Borges short story: the dystopian version of Buenos Aires makes for a great setting, and the resignation and almost ennui that besets the 'symmetrical' antagonists at the end is Borges at his most haunting. *El jardín...* and *El sur* are, to my mind, the other classics.



HR Why the two new stories?

RW To broaden the range of questions that can be asked, and to introduce fresh material so the selection doesn't go stale for the teachers. And, of course, to prevent the 'context' passages becoming too predictable. *(winks)*

HR Tell us about the two new stories.



RW The settings of *La forma de la espada* – first Brazil, then civil war Ireland – are particularly atmospheric. It deals with powerful themes: bravery, cowardice and treachery. The final ‘reveal’ is one of Borges’ best. *El milagro secreto* offers a good dose of humour and heroism. I

enjoy the contrast between the humble protagonist and the immense challenge that he wills upon himself – a great response to a no-hope scenario.

HR What do you most enjoy about Borges?

RW In most of the stories he takes the protagonist out of his familiar landscape and leaves him high and dry, facing immense odds in a forlorn reality, as though suddenly transported to a Salvador Dalí landscape. The way Borges achieves that transition is remarkable, as is the characters’ response to it. I think that’s why the stories are so memorable.

HR Looking now at Almodóvar....

RW He’s good, too... though perhaps a little inconsistent? He’s written and directed three sublime works (*Todo sobre mi madre*, *Hable con ella* and *Volver*), but, I think most viewers would agree, he’s also made some less memorable films. Post-*Volver*, we were all waiting for another masterpiece as though we could expect that as the norm. By 2016 we could wait no longer and were glad to embrace *Julieta*, which came as a relief.... As with all artists who hit the heights, it’s unreasonable to complain just because they don’t achieve stellar results every time.

HR And *Julieta* is now on the Pre-U syllabus.

RW Yes: it’s a natural fit alongside *TSMM* and *Volver*. It also meets the key criterion for academic study, which is that it’s worth watching more than once.

HR Any spoiler-free pointers for those who don’t know the work?

RW I'd call it a relationships drama. You can imagine Almodóvar starting by writing 'Julieta' in the middle of a sheet of paper and then drawing spokes out connecting her (as protagonist) to the other characters in her life – mother, father, child, spouse, rival, etc. The film then explores those connections. The *truc de théâtre* is the use of two actresses to play the lead role at different stages of her life, and how that transition is accomplished.

BAS You imply that you don't rate it a masterpiece...



RW That's a tough criterion to use. In my opinion it's a very good film. If the gears grind a bit, it may reflect the challenge of adapting it from three short stories [by Canadian author Alice Munro]. Is that why we get shots that look as though they should be meaningful, such as the stag seen from the train window, but that don't seem to connect to the rest of the work?

BAS You referred to inconsistency in Almodóvar's work: how do you explain that?

RW His early work was designed to shock, which was a successful strategy in that post-Transition era. I think it was deliberately rough-edged, low-budget, cult cinema, rather than an attempt to make work of lasting value. It's crucial to his career because it built his audience, enabling him to raise financial backing and improve his production values, in movie jargon. As to his more recent films, I think that people working alongside a proven genius are understandably reluctant to query that person's judgement. Making films about *deseo* is what drives him: if he chooses to focus on the types of *deseo* portrayed in *La mala educación* or *Los abrazos rotos*, that's a valid new direction for him to take, even if the eventual outcome lacks the sublime quality and balance of the three masterpieces. And let's not forget that *Mujeres al borde...* was Oscar-nominated, and that *Carne trémula* is also outstanding work, to mention but two. So it's not just a matter of excellent or 'inconsistent'.

BAS His new film *Dolor y gloria* is scheduled to open in 2019. Might we see that on the syllabus soon?

RW Almodóvar turns 70 this year so it's great that he's still making films – even if the theme of the new film (the impossibility of continued film-making for an ageing director) may be a hint that the well is running dry. If it lends itself to analysis at Pre-U level then *Dolor y gloria* could be on the 2022 syllabus. That said, *El cine de Pedro Almodóvar*, alone among the Paper 4

Topics, has been on the syllabus since Pre-U began. That's a tribute to the amazing depth of his work, but can it possibly run on beyond 2021? We shall see.

HISTORIAS MINIMAS, FAMILIA RODANTE AND 21ST CENTURY LATIN AMERICAN FILM

Stephen M. Hart, University College London

In this essay I will be referring to a number of characteristics of *Historias mínimas* (2002) and *Familia rodante* (2004) but in order to produce my analysis I need to flesh out the broader frame in which these two films emerged. Not all of the characteristics I mention fit these two films, but the filmic language they pursue and express resonates with the broader picture, as we shall see. I will be talking about the birth of a new filmic language in Latin America, which I have called “slick grit” -- and I list the characteristics -- and then I turn to just some of those characteristics and look at ways in which they speak to *Historias mínimas* and *Familia rodante*. The themes I will be looking at in the two Argentine films are non-employment, continuum, digitality, everydayness and minimalism.

In chapter 4 of my recent book -- *Latin American Cinema* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015) -- I suggest that something new occurred in 21st century Latin America, something that completely changed the paradigm of film. Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Amores perros* (*Life's a Bitch*, 2000) came out in the first year of the 21st century, and it kick-started that paradigm-shift.



I propose that the paradigm-shift changed as a result of SLICK grit. And I argue that there were seven basic features of SLICK grit.

Slick Grit 1: Slick editing

the high-octane car-chase
the experimental use of three
interlocking narrative sequences
focussed around a car crash
the use of skip bleach on the film
all this resulted in a quick-moving, lithe,
“breathing” camera, to portray the gritty
nature of life in Mexico City



Slick Grit 2: The use of unknown or virtually unknown actors

Gael García Bernal was unknown when he appeared in *Amores perros*. Though there was the loss of star quality, he came over as “real”

It was an extension of Italian neo-Realism (if you want to portray a postman, get a real postman). It was also used in Fernando Meirelles's *Cidade de Deus* (2002). The actors were real gangsters rather than film gangsters...



And this definitely applies to *Familia rodante*. The director's actual grandmother appears in the film!

Slick Grit 3: Rejection of synecdoche syntax

Earlier Latin American films used the main character as the national synecdoche. His destiny is synonymous with national destiny: Ricardo Larraín's *La frontera* (1991) and Fernando Solanas's *El viaje* (1991).

But in *Amores perros* and *Cidade de Deus*, we have no national landmarks, just an urban jungle, a generic, non-national site akin to what Gilles Deleuze called "any-space-whatever"; *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Continuum, 1989), p. 5.

Slick Grit 4: Rejection of "middle-speech"

Latin American films of the 1990s portrayed middle-aged characters who used a neutral "middle-speech", that is the Spanish you hear on CNN en español, the Portuguese you hear on the Globo networks

But in *Amores perros* and *Cidade de Deus*, the characters are young, and they use swear-words. This innovation initially spooked the distributors. But they were proved wrong...

Slick Grit 5: Rejection of state finance

Latin American films traditionally relied on state funding to finance a film. This led to a disinterest in audience reaction since the film was already paid for.

Amores perros changed this. González Iñárritu: "we loath the government-financed movie-making that seems to operate by the maxim: 'If nobody understands and nobody goes to see a movie, then it must mean it's a masterpiece.'" *Amores perros* was funded by two private companies, Altavista (86%) and Zeta films (14%).

Slick Grit 6: The “English” Latin American Film

There are those who have seen this creation of a new genre – the “English” Latin American film within the cinematic canon – as symptomatic of a generation who have “sold their soul” to Hollywood by turning their backs on Spanish and Portuguese.

Others have interpreted this linguistic decision as simply a stage of the new journey that successful Latin American film directors have been keen to embark on. Clearly, though, this gesture has endeared a number of Latin American film directors to audiences across the globe...

Slick Grit 7: The Digital Turn

One striking trend within Latin American cinema of the twenty-first century has been the increasing use of digital film. The pioneers were *Amores perros* (2000) which used digital-inspired techniques in editing the sequences, as well as *Cidade de Deus* (2002). Meirelles’s film was first filmed in analogue, the footage was then digitized by the editor, César Charlone, and then transformed back again into 35mm... In this sense both were hybrid films since they combined the use of analogue with the use of digital film. They were the trailblazers...

Though the technology allowing the creation of digital images had been available since 1975, it was only at the end of the last millennium that the potential of digital film surfaced publicly. It was in 1998 that the first feature film was recorded in its entirety on a digital camera, the Danish film *Idioterne/The Idiots* (1998), directed by Dogme 95 film director Lars von Trier, was filmed on a Sony DCR-VX1000, making history by so doing.

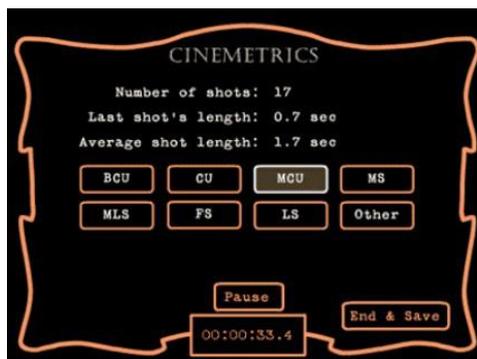
One of the most important differences between analogue and digital is that while digital allows you to see what you are filming simultaneously, in “real-time” as it were, analogue film is, ipso facto, always a “deferred” medium since you normally only see what you have filmed a day or – at the very least – a few hours later.

Some theorists have argued that the quantum leap produced by the digital medium is not confined to its technology. Instead they see digital film – in its emphasis upon continuity – as departing from the cut-and-splice paradigm which underwrites analogue film, producing a new vision of the world around us. A good exemplar of this new approach to digital film is William Brown who, in his study, *Film-Philosophy for the Digital Age: Supercinema* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), has argued that “digital cinema is defined by spatial and temporal continuity and by a rejection of the cut” (p. 9). He also argues: “Digital cinema tells us that all points in space, be they coordinates in thin air, within a wall, miles under the Earth’s crust, on Mars, or in a wholly different galaxy, coexist simultaneously, even if we humans cannot normally see them.

Furthermore, access to these points in space is made easy in digital cinema: it can be achieved in single, continuous, and fluid shots” (p. 51).

One obvious question emerges: What impact, if any, has the digital turn had on film in general and filmmaking in particular? Based on William Brown’s theory, we would expect its “anti-cut bias” to lead to a filmic environment in which there are longer shots, and less emphasis on quick cuts from one scene to another. Is this what we find?

Curiously enough we are able to test this theory because there is a lot of evidence out there about trends in 20th-century filmmaking, based on the meticulous and scientific measurement of the length of every shot in a given film. Although this does not seem to be a particularly exciting way of studying film, there are quite a few film buffs out there who – inspired by a film scholar called Barry Salt – have sat down, watched a complete film, listed all the shots in the film, decided what type of shot it was in each case – i.e. anything from a long shot to a close up – and then timed the length of each shot. And then uploaded the results to a website; Barry Salt, *Film Style and Technology: History and Analysis* (London: Starword, 1983). We asked the It’s called cinematics. Here’s what the results look like:



At this point in time, the results for 19,361 have been uploaded to the cinematics website. Barry Salt has used the data first of all to calculate the Average Shot Length of any given film (i.e. based on dividing the length of the film by the number of shots), and then (ii) comparing how those figures vary over time. Salt demonstrates that, from the 1920s until the late 1990s, the Average Shot Length

decreased consistently when looked at from a year-on-year basis in terms of its overall trend. One of my graduate students, Owen Williams, and I used Barry Salt’s data base, Cinematics, containing information on 16,000 or so films and calculated the ASL of Hollywood films in the 1980s, 1990s, up until 2005. We found that the ASL of Hollywood reduced year on year during this period, appearing to confirm Salt’s hypothesis about diminishing Average Shot Lengths. Common ASLs in the 1980s were around 6 seconds, in the 1990s the Average Shot Length hovered around 5 seconds, and in the first half of the first decade of the 21st century got down as low as 4 seconds. We asked the same question about Latin American film, and the data for Latin American cinema pointed to evidence of greater openness to more extended Average Shot Lengths in Latin American film of the same period. We decided to concentrate on contemporary examples, especially during the post-1998 period. We found that five of the post-1998 films demonstrate ASLs which are much higher than the Hollywood norm for the same period:

Y tu mamá también (2001): 18.75 seconds;
As tres Marias (2002): 15.60 seconds;
El bonaerense (2002): 15.10 seconds;
Temporada de patos (2004): 15.94 seconds
and Hamaca Paraguaya (2006): 123.04

These figures appear to point, as far as a number of Latin American film directors working with digital are concerned, to a greater willingness to experiment with shot length... One film in particular, released in 2006, with a spectacularly high ASL of 123.04 seconds (Paz Encina's Hamaca Paraguaya), mentioned above, suggests that something very different and very new has been occurring in twenty-first century Latin American film...



This something new in Latin American film is what I will be calling "slow film", yet is not simply that the camera "slows down". The camera also focusses on the everyday as the theatre where "real" life takes place.... Whereas in Hamaca paraguaya it's daily life around the hammock, in Historias mínimas and Familia rodante, it's daily life based on journeys around Argentina.

I want now to touch briefly on those main characteristics of these two films, as mentioned above, that is: (i) non-employment, (ii) continuum, (iii) digitality, (iv) everydayness and (v) minimalism. Before moving to a discussion of the two films, I need to refer to the implications of this paradigm-shift in 21st-century film, by focussing on what is meant by the first term, non-employment. And I want to do this via the theory of plot in the novel as analysed by E.M. Foster in his study, Aspects of the Novel (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976). In his study, E.M. Foster defines plot as follows:

**"THE KING DIED AND THEN
THE QUEEN DIED IS A STORY.
THE KING DIED, AND THEN
QUEEN DIED OF GRIEF
IS A PLOT."**

-E. M. FORSTER



The most important aspect of plot, in E.M. Forster's view, is causality. Conversely, we can argue that non-employment will be defined by a series of events following one after the other, without a clear sense of causality or connections between them. Some see this type of fiction as emblemized by the picaresque novel, i.e. the style of *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Here we find a series of events with little connection, except that the same character is experiencing them.

What implications does E.M. Forster's theory of the novel have for characters in fiction or film? Interestingly enough, Forster argues that the world of fiction is very different from the world of everyday life. The worlds of "homo sapiens" and of "homo fictus" are radically opposed. "Homo fictus is more elusive than his cousin (...). He is generally born off. He is capable of dying on, he wants little food or sleep, he is tirelessly occupied with human relationships" (*Aspects of the Novel*, p. 63). As Forster points out "homo fictus" is obsessed with love, for example, and he spends 90% of his life thinking and talking about it! Very different, we might think, from "homo sapiens"!

We could extend the list of bodily functions that are not included in a novel or a conventional film. But I want to mention just one, and this is breathing. Traditional Hollywood films focus on love but they don't focus on breathing. 21st century film, however, bucks this trend because it focuses on a new way of looking at life, one which includes something we all do but take for granted – breathing. Not for nothing does *Familia rodante* begin with the sound of breathing -- we see a black screen and hear the grandmother breathing, and then sighing, and then talking. And then we see her. Breathing is made invisible by Hollywood film, as well as the kind of traditional novel E.M. Forster referred to (see above). But the two films we are analysing show us people breathing, eating, living their everyday lives. And this is the distinctiveness of them.

Historias mínimas (*Intimate Stories*), directed by Carlos Soria, was released in 2002. It was one of four exceptional films released in that year – the others were Carlos Carrera's *El crimen del padre Amaro*, Carlos Reygadas's *Japón* and Adrián Caetano's *Un oso rojo*. The title of *Historias mínimas* in a sense gives it away; it will be a minimal story, the story of the everyday, not the massive story of, say, war between nations, or a war between mankind and aliens. This comedy-drama thus traces a deliberate departure from the nation-image dramas of the 1990s (such as *El viaje* and *La frontera*) in which the protagonists represent a national consciousness. Here it is the small story that counts – there is no mention of politics or work or ambition; the film focusses on the everyday narrative of their lives – at home, as it were.

But, despite this, the film is surprisingly strong and profound. As Peter Bradshaw suggests: "Maria (Javiera Bravo) is a young woman travelling to take

part in a game show in which she has a chance of winning a food processor; Roberto (Javier Lombardo) is taking a birthday cake to the child of the woman he is not so secretly in love with; Don Justo (Antonio Benedicetti) has just been told that his dog Badface, who left him three years ago, has been seen in a nearby town - so he's going to track him down, and it is in Don Justo's story that the emotional heart of the movie resides"; Film review, *The Guardian*, 25 July 2003. *Historias mínimas* focuses on three stories – and this feature was in all likelihood drawn from *Amores perros* which was released two years earlier and which also had a tripartite structure – but it deliberately re-focused those stories within the realm of the everyday.

And two years later, in 2004, *Familia rodante* (Rolling Family), directed by the Argentine Pablo Trapero, was released. It was itself influenced by *Historias mínimas*; it drew upon the quotidian set idea but decided not to use the



tripartite structure, no doubt because of its complexity. *Familia rodante* tells the story of a large Argentine family who take a very long trip northwards in their camper van from Buenos Aires to Misiones in order to attend a wedding. Like *Historias mínimas*, it traces a deliberate departure from the nation-image dramas of the 1990s, for here it is the small

story that counts – there is no mention of politics or work or ambition; the film focusses on the everyday narrative of their lives – at home, as it were. Even when the family visit the town where José de San Martín was born, and visit the Libertador's house, the mise-en-scène is overwhelmed by the reality of everyday life, the horses, the two primos getting annoyed with each other because they are sexually attracted, and the micro-narrative of the tooth extraction. The narrative of independence is a narrative in voice-over which hardly touches the characters' lives.

We see the characters breathing, eating, drinking, talking, smoking, looking at the countryside, brushing their teeth, going to the swimming in a river when the camper van down, laughing, gossiping, arguing, fighting, flirting, seducing, and falling in love. They up their new narratives as they go along – Yanina (Marienela Pedano) tries to seduce her cousin, Gustavo (Raúl Viñona), Ernesto (Carlos Resta) tries to seduce Marta (Liliana Capurro), and is thrown off the camper van when her



toilet,
breaks
crying,
make

husband, the driver, Oscar (Bernardo Forteza) finds out. These are all examples of what I call non-employment.

The documentary feel of the film is underlined not only by the hand-held camera – which imbues the film with the spontaneous-cum-casual look of a home movie – and the non-professional actors who were employed in the film by the director when he arrived in different towns, but by the fact that star of the film, the grandmother and matriarch of the family, Emilia (Graciana Chironi), is played by Pablo Trapero's actual grandmother, as mentioned above.



There are many examples of the documentary feel of the film early on in the film when, for example, during the scene when the grandmother feels ill, she is surrounded by people all talking at once. This happens in documentary but not in feature films. Trapero is therefore giving his film a lived feel to it. A picaresque film, *Familia rodante* deliberately eschews any broader significance, either of a political or a philosophical nature, focusing on the drama of the everyday. Or does it? The important point is that it deliberately focusses on the micro-narratives of life, leaving the grand narratives for others.

As we can see, there is a strain within Latin American film interested in the small micro-narratives of everyday life. These films rely on the continuum of the digital take – there is no sense of the Hollywood cut here. The world moves seamlessly on. In this way we can point to the birth of a new experimentalism in Latin American film in the 21st century, one which combines the spacefulness of the Long Shot and the Very Long Shot with the timefulness of the Long Digital Take to construct a new world-vision in which space and time are not seen as separate but as a living, “breathing” continuum.... It is a cinema that breathes, filmed by the “breathing everyday camera”.

Eva Luna: character over plot in a South American setting

by Max Glowacki, Canford School Year 13 student

Eva Luna (1988) is one of Isabel Allende's earliest works, and perfectly shows off her abilities as a writer. It's not only enthralling for its characters but also as a showcase of the cultures Allende had experienced. It uses the magical realism techniques she picked up from García Márquez, as well as picaresque characterisation, to make a captivating novel and a fantastic window into South American life.

This novel demonstrates clearly the importance of people in a story and wastes no time by launching straight into the titular character's origins, beginning with her mother, Consuelo. Unlike works by García Márquez such as *Crónica de una Muerte Anunciada* or *Del Amor y Otros Demonios*, the novel does not start by grounding itself in reality, either with a prologue or simple narration. Instead, in *Eva Luna* we are treated to a precursory journey through Consuelo's life with the aim of acquainting us with the characters' stories, not the world they inhabit.



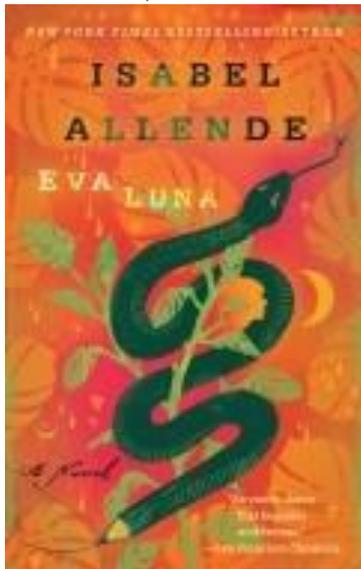
The character of Eva is deeply explored, and develops as the book progresses. The novel is a bildungsroman, not only for Eva, but also, as will be discussed later, for Rolf Carlé. It is through witnessing this character development that we side with these people throughout the novel. We understand Eva's motivations for freeing the inmates from the prison near Agua Santa, we appreciate her love for Riad Halabí, we sympathise with her during her mistreatment by her various *patrones*, and we can celebrate with her when she finally falls in love with Rolf and begins a new life. Most of all, we can learn to understand her actions even if they break the law or may hurt others. This is the picaresque characterisation of Eva that allows us to sympathise with her when she acts in a childish or mischievous manner. An example is when she attacks her *patrona* and (in her mind at least) scalps her. Although the action itself may seem wrong, we understand that the *patrona* 'deserved it'. While this way of thinking may seem childish, we can support the action because Eva herself is a child. We therefore experience the world through her eyes, and we learn to think in the same way she does.

The importance of character becomes more apparent with each passing chapter, as Allende takes time out from the story to describe the personalities of each individual in the novel. Whereas the professor could easily be the cold,

distant master in other novels, here we are treated to an exploration of his personality: we understand that he does have a tenderness to him, a soft spot that is simply masked by his constant and unquenchable thirst for knowledge. It allows us to, if not like the character, then at least sympathise with him because he has his priorities and will not deviate from them, even in the face of charging *guardias*.

A character like Riad Halabí is a perfect example of character development. We not only get to know him through his interaction with Eva, but we also get to explore his backstory. He's developed from an outsider in Agua Santa to a complex character with a personality and motivations directly influenced by his history. Even Zulema, his unlikeable wife, gets the same treatment by Allende, and by understanding her story we are allowed to empathise with a typically antagonistic character.

Finally, the most important character in the story, apart from Eva herself, is the man she ends up with: Rolf Carlé. Allende tells his story throughout the novel in parallel with Eva's. We never spend too much time reading about one before the other one's life comes back into play. Their lives develop in tandem and it's evident, as the story unfolds, that these two will eventually end up together. However, Allende's aim isn't to surprise us at the end with this. Instead, she



uses Rolf's story in the novel principally to show that everyone is important somehow, whether they be a young boy from war-torn Europe or a near-feral girl from the unknown South America. These two people could be anyone, and the focus on them in the novel once again reinforces the importance of character over plot. This is demonstrated by Rolf enjoying WWII despite all the bloodshed because he could finally lead a good life with his family. He is also shown to be kind and gentle by his effort to care for his mentally challenged sister. When Rolf leaves Europe because of the guilt he feels over his father's death (a murder he didn't even commit), he has been developed into a protagonist that, like Eva, we

understand and support.

The only character in the book that isn't fleshed out is Eva's own father. We only really know that Consuelo gave Eva the name of his tribe, Children of the Moon, or Luna. This demonstrates how Eva's father is not important to her character (as directly stated by the mother when she gives birth). The natives, such as Eva's father, form an integral part of the nature of this vague country, as their reclusive nature means that they embody the unexplored and wild nature of it. The Summer Palace of El Benefactor is the best example of them in the novel,

where the natives slowly creep in and take it over. When the palace becomes overgrown and overrun, what was a foreign and out of place edifice invading the private space of the natives in their jungle becomes a part of the landscape. The people and plants further symbolise the wild nature of the continent and demonstrate how, given time and left to themselves, the man-made structures of the colonisers will return to an untameable, uncivilised state.

Eva Luna is a unique novel with unique characters. It takes some of the most famous and effective literary techniques to create a memorable story and provides us with a grounded perspective of South American culture and history while simultaneously presenting a whole new world for us to explore through the characters. It is a fantastic way to understand better Hispanic culture and explore the aspects of life so important to Allende. Above all, it's a very entertaining read.

El auge del Spanglish

What do a drive around the suburbs of Miami, a Spanish Department meeting at school and Central American migration to the United States have in common?

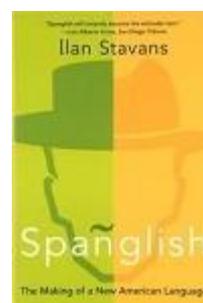
Answer: they all remind us of the evolution of Spanglish as a practical, working fusion of English and Spanish, and a cultural phenomenon of our times.



The process is centred on the United States, home to 60 million *latinos* for whom Spanish is their first language – a higher native-speaker population than any other country except Mexico. They have at their

disposal not just an *abundancia* of Spanish-language television and radio stations, but also a number of specifically Spanglish broadcasters. Telemundo, one of the US's fastest growing TV networks, now runs soap operas in Spanglish (eg *Celia Cruz*, about the Cuban-American salsa star). And it's over 10 years since Toyota ran a TV advert whose alternation between English and Spanish reinforced the sales pitch about a hybrid car switching between petrol and electric power.

According to Professor Ilan Stavans of Amherst University (author of *Spanglish – the making of a new American language*), Spanglish represents a 'marriage of two languages brought about through necessity'. Variants of Spanglish involve:

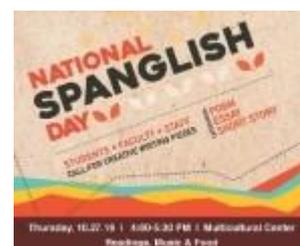


- using Spanish words to fit English idioms, eg *te llamo pa' atrás*.
- 'code switching': going back and forth between English and Spanish during a conversation.

- generating a new lexicon, eg *el rufo está liqueando*

The latter two formats are commonplace among Spanish teachers (*¿has terminado tus reports?*) and indeed examiners (*hay que evitar lifting*).

Just as there are different varieties of Spanish and English in different regions of the world, so Spanglish also varies by location. Nor is there a common standard for spelling or usage (should our example above be spelt *el roofo está leekeando?*).



Spanglish is controversial. According to Prof Stavans, in the USA it can be seen as a statement of arrival (or non-arrival), while in Spain the Real Academia was aghast at a rendering into Spanglish of *Don Quijote*. Ultimately, he says, Spanglish marks 'the emergence of a new Hispanic civilisation from neither north nor south of the US/Mexico border that will redefine both the USA and Latin America'.

BAS editor Robin Wallis

¿Es el español sexista?

El sexismo es un tema que está a la orden del día en nuestra sociedad. Como hispanistas, una de nuestras labores consiste en determinar qué es realmente el sexismo lingüístico, cuándo está presente y qué actitudes se deben adoptar frente a él. En los últimos años me he cuestionado muchas veces: ¿es sexista la lengua española?

¿Qué es sexismo lingüístico?

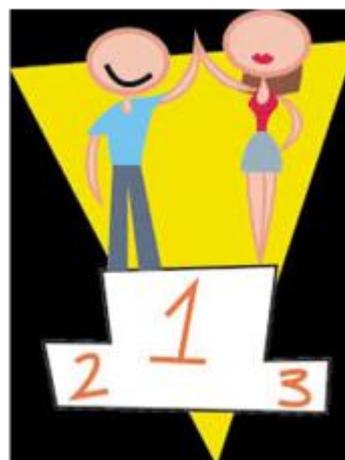


Se incurre en el sexismo lingüístico cuando se emplean vocablos o se construyen oraciones que, debido a la forma de expresión escogida por parte del hablante y no a otra razón, resultan discriminatorias por razón de sexo. Una determinada situación de la realidad, sexista o no, puede describirse lingüísticamente de un modo sexista o no, todo depende del uso que los hablantes hagan de

ella.

Entonces sea la situación socialmente sexista o no, es posible que el uso de la lengua que estemos utilizando sea sexista. Por ejemplo, si decimos algo así como “había muchos intelectuales y también algunas mujeres”, sería raro no pensar que el uso del hablante no fuera sexista, pues parece estar dando a entender que las mujeres no formaban parte de ese grupo de intelectuales. La situación, por tanto, no es sexista, pero sí el uso del español en ese contexto. ¿A quién no le sentaría mal que le dijeran “cocinas bien- para ser un hombre; conduces bien- para ser mujer”?

A lo mejor la sociedad lo ha asumido y no llama la atención, pero ¿y si fuera al revés? “cocinas bien- para ser mujer”; suena raro, porque claro si eres mujer se asume que deberías hacerlo, ¿no? Por lo tanto, este es un ejemplo de un sexismo principalmente social, pues las palabras no están denigrando a ninguno de los dos sexos aunque el emisor sí esté transmitiendo algo más. Teniendo en cuenta estos ejemplos, es imprescindible que no nos olvidemos de que fue el sexismo social el que creó expresiones, sobre todo, bastante machistas, pero tampoco podemos exculparnos cuando aún las utilizamos y culpar a la lengua. Hay que controlar las palabras que estamos utilizando y cómo las utilizamos, solo así el sexismo lingüístico podrá



llegar a desaparecer y eso podrá (o no) resultar en la supresión del sexismo social.

Podría dejar esto aquí, pero me siento obligada a explicar algunos casos de sexismo lingüístico que seguimos usando en español. Por ejemplo, que en los tratamientos de cortesía se haya utilizado *Señor* para los varones, independientemente de su estado civil, pero *Señora* para la mujer casada y *Señorita* para la soltera, demuestra cómo ha habido sexismo social y lingüístico. Es cierto que esto ha desaparecido en su mayoría, pero todavía, en situaciones de respeto, se sigue asumiendo la diferenciación. Yo en mi clase soy (y quiero ser) Señora Alonso, sin distinción por mi estado civil, igual que

firmaré siempre con *Ms* en inglés.



En español, si eres un niño fuerte “eres todo un hombretón ya”, pero si no, “corres como una niña”. ¿Y qué quiere decir eso? ¿que las niñas corren peor? (El otro mirando Twitter encontré uno que me agradó bastante, lo dejo aquí en la imagen.) Porque claro, además de tener que lucir bonita

siempre, de ser la princesita de papá, también debes “comportarte como una señorita” y las “señoritas” no dicen palabrotas. Si queremos que este uso no sea sexista, solamente tenemos que empezar a



cambiar el tono, que sea algo positivo pelear o correr como una niña, porque las niñas son tan fuertes y buenas corredoras como cualquier otro niño puede serlo. Que comportarse como una señorita tenga su equivalente de como un señorito y los dos deban evitar decir malas palabras. Y que deje de haber cosas que se califiquen como “cosas de chicos” y se vean “poco femeninas” para una chica y otras “un poco femeninas” si eres un chico, porque todos podemos optar por un sinfín de posibilidades.

Gracias a los avances en la sociedad, hoy en día la *alcaldesa* ya no es la mujer del alcalde, ni la *médica* la del médico, así que empezamos a llamar a las cosas por su nombre y que todas las personas, tanto hombres como mujeres, se puedan sentir orgullosas de sus profesiones. Esto desde luego nos da (o al

menos a mí me da) esperanzas hacia una lengua que ya no recoge términos sexistas.

Desgraciadamente, en el español más coloquial, tenemos algunos conceptos demasiado arraigados y que, personalmente, creo que costará que desaparezcan: algo aburrido es *un coñazo* mientras que algo genial es *la polla* o *cojonudo*. Otros, quizás más esperanzadores, puede que necesiten que un gran grupo de mujeres *pongan sus ovarios sobre la mesa* y lleguen a conseguir que tanto un *zorro* como una *zorra* lo sean gracias a su astucia. El tiempo lo dirá (pero ojalá que sea pronto).

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