

Reseñas

GIBERT MACEDA, Teresa and ALBA JUEZ, Laura (eds). 2008. *Estudios de Filología Inglesa. Homenaje a la Dra. Asunción Alba Pelayo*. Varia, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia. (615 pp) ISBN: 978-84-362-5553-9.

The book under review is yet another good example of a *festschrift* for an extremely remarkable member of our academic environment, Dr. Asunción Alba Pelayo, professor at the UNED. As shown by the affectionate prologue and the caring biographical sketch written by the late Dr. Enrique Alcaraz Varó, professor Asunción Alba Pelayo is not only an extremely well known academic but also a beloved person, as the high number of contributions make it well patent.

One of the obstacles faced by this kind of publications is that of lacking only one main field under study; this is precisely what also constitutes their main value since any reader interested in English studies, independently of their field of research, will certainly find articles worth reading. The book consists of thirty-nine articles, grouped by the editors into four main areas, all of them closely related to English studies: Linguistics and EFL, English literature, translation and a final section on cultural and historical aspects of English and American society. The most prolific sections are those of Linguistics and Literature, which present a balanced amount of articles: seventeen and sixteen respectively, as opposed to the least represented sections of translation and culture, with only three articles each. Although the division into fields is quite accurate, as a reader one may wonder whether these two final sections could not have been grouped under a more general heading so that the unbalance would have been less obvious.

In any case, these are just questions of form which do not diminish the quality of the different contributions, where we may find a bit of everything for everyone. Let us now proceed to the individual review of the different sections. Given the amount of articles, it is practically impossible to offer a detailed review of the different papers on these pages; this is why we shall mainly focus on the sections themselves.

As already mentioned above, the most prolific section is the one on Linguistics and EFL. A quick look at the index, however, makes it clear that Linguistics is much better represented, since fifteen out of the seventeen papers deal with linguistic questions. The two papers dealing exclusively on methodology, however, present quite an innovative approach to the teaching of English as a foreign language. Thus, one of the authors, Pablo Cancelo, revises the concept of e-learning as well as the different on-line tools we can use as English teachers in his paper *Explorando herramientas para el aprendizaje online*. On the other hand, M^a del Pilar García Mayo provides readers with an enlightening introduction to Focus-on-Form, an influential and widespread approach to second language acquisition in her paper *A Focus-on-Form Approach in Language Pedagogy: Research in an EFL Context*.

One of the main strengths of this prolific section is that it deals with very different areas within the field of Linguistics. Thus, we can find extremely interesting papers where the main focus is discourse studies and the construction of identity and ideology such as *The Construction of Identity through Small Talk in Media Interviews*, by Laura Alba Juez, *Las palabras pequeñas: el lenguaje en la sociedad global*, by Román Álvarez and M^a del Carmen África Vidal or *Language and Ideology in the Knowledge Society: A Corpus-based view of 'person' in business English*, by Pedro Fuertes Olivera, where the author analyses the relationship between language and gender within the register of business English and from the perspective of corpus linguistics.

Quite related to more specific registers of English –as that of business English – are the articles exploring the mass media and aeronautical texts: *Variaciones Grafemáticas de los Anglicismos en los Medios de Comunicación: Tendencias y Factores Condicionantes*, by Félix Rodríguez González and *Discourse Patterns and Progression in Aeronautical Texts*, by Verónica Vivanco Cervero. Finally, Pilar Durán Escribano and Ana M^a Roldán Riejos explore academic and professional communication in their article *The Role of Context in the Interpretation of Academic and Professional Communication*, from a cognitive perspective, in which they delve into the related –and quite elusive– notions of context, background knowledge and shared knowledge.

Another well represented field is that of Historical Linguistics, where Ana Pinto Muñoz offers an interesting and really curious account of the evolution of the word *down* in expressions like *downtown* in her paper *The Paradoxical Nature of the English Word Down. The Case of Downtown*. On the other hand, two of the contributions take us back to even earlier periods such as that by Inmaculada Serna Silva, who explores runic inscriptions in her article *Early and Late Northumbrian: The Case of the Ruthwell Cross Runic Inscription* and M^a del Carmen Guarddon Anelo, who in her paper *Dinámicas Discursivas en la Conceptualización del Tiempo: Efectos de la Perspectivización en Inglés Antiguo* examines the diachronic evolution of the place prepositions *in*, *on* and *at* when used as time prepositions in Old English from a cognitive perspective.

This cognitive approach is also well represented by Ricardo Mairal Usón and Francisco José Ruiz de Mendoza, who in their article *Internal and External Constraints in Meaning Construction: The Lexico-Grammar continuum*, provide readers with a description of lexical and constructional templates, the two major representational constructs in their Lexical Constructional Model. Also cognitive is the point of view adopted by Victoria Guillén Nieto in her article *Reconciling Language with Culture and Cognition in Politeness Theory*. Her article is an interdisciplinary approach to the elusive concept of culture and the role it plays in politeness. Her review of the different politeness theories is also quite useful for any researcher on this field.

Last but not least, the section on Linguistics also includes several articles dealing with phonetics and phonology, syntax and semantics. The first field is represented by the paper *Modelling Final Declarative Intonation in English and Spanish*, by Eva Estebas Vilaplana, who attempts to clarify the phonological interpretation of English and Spanish neutral declaratives. Within Semantics, Margarita Goded Rambaud, in her article *La percepción sensorial y el léxico de la comida y la bebida en inglés y español* offers an interesting analysis of the lexical field of the sensorial experience of food and wine in English and Spanish, showing that both lexical fields are constructed in different ways even if the experiences they describe are similar. Finally, English Syntax is well represented by the article *Th-Clefts in English*, written by Elena Martínez Caro, who employs different corpora to explore in detail a particular type of pseudo-cleft, paying attention both to its form and their function(s).

Even if the whole section is correctly arranged according to the alphabetical order of the authors' surname, there is a particular article that, had the papers been arranged topically, would have perfectly acted as the 'hinge' connecting the sections of Linguistics and Translation. We are referring to the article *Hacia una orientación lingüística de la traducción: léxico y aspecto verbal*, by Linda Escobar, where she tackles some of the main problems faced by translators (such as idioms) on the grounds that many of them are purely linguistic.

The second longest section in the book under review deals with English literature and, as its Linguistics counterpart, it also covers quite a wide scope of fields within the area. The sixteen papers deal with different periods of English and American literature, as well as different genres. However, there is a certain predominance of contemporary (or 20th century) literature over other periods, as illustrated by articles such as *¿Autobiografía o puro cuento? (re)construcción de la identidad chicana en Caramelo, de Sandra Cisneros*, by María Antonia Álvarez, *Subverting the Master Narrative of Heroic Conquest: Thomas King's A Coyote Columbus Story*, by Teresa Gibert; *El teatro de Hugh Whitmore: Un naturalismo necesario*, by José Mateo Martínez; *Times of War and Peace: Sequels and Phobias in Rebecca West's The Return of the Soldier*, by Lina Sierra Ayala and *124 is Haunted. The Ghost Story as "Ghost Text" in Toni Morrison's Beloved* by Justine Tally. Manuel Brito's paper, *Aventuras y Respuestas: Las pequeñas revistas americanas de poesía: 1970-2000*, also deals with this period, by focusing on the

role of American little poetry magazines in a new approach to language. Also within this group, contemporary anglo-indian literature is revised by Juan Ignacio Oliva in his article *Vínculos y ausencias del padre en la literatura postcolonial angloindia*, where he pays especial attention to three poems by Sadhu Binning, Rienzi Crusz and S. Padmanab.

Another major subsection within literary studies provides readers with interesting insights into women's writing, with several papers within the field of feminist studies, some of them also focused on 20th century novels such as *From Physical to Personal Frontiers: Catharine Parr Traill's 'Pioneer Woman' Redefined in Margaret Laurence's The Diviners*, by Gretchen Dobrott, who establishes clear comparisons and contrasts between both novelists' version of the pioneer woman. Also within the field of feminist studies but focused on former periods are the papers *The Old Manor House and A Simple Story: A Harsh Lesson on Women's Defencelessness*, by Aída DÍa Bild, where the author focuses on the two novels by female 18th century writers Charlotte Smith and Elizabeth Inchbald, whose importance within English literature has just been very recently vindicated. A similar point of view on 18th century female writers who reacted against the stereotypes posed by male writers in their novels is the interesting paper by Isabel Medrano Vicario, '*Softened by Tenderness?*': *Sentimiento y Ambigüedad en la obra de Frances Sheridan y Mary Wollstonecraft*.

Papers on English poetry are unfortunately quite absent from this volume, except for the paper *Elegías y anti-elegías: el caso de Death de John Clare, o una expectativa frustrada*, by Fernando Galván, who in a detailed study of Clare's poems *To the Memory of John Keats* and *Death*, proves the poet's artistic achievements and vindicates his poetry as opposed to his traditional image as a "minor" poet. A similar absence is noticeable when considering the Elizabethan period, so prolific in English literature, and here represented by the papers *Roman Shakespeare and the Elizabethan View of the Roman Empire*, by Marta Cerezo Moreno and the interesting and quite curious article '*The Castalian Liquor*': *Goce y mitificación del vino canario en la literatura inglesa*, by Tomás Monterrey, who focuses on the popularity of Canarian wine among many Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, who considered it as the wine of the Muses and inspiration.

The nineteenth century is approached from two different perspectives; while José Antonio Álvarez Amorós focuses on Henry James' love-and-hate relationship with theatre in his article *A Reappraisal of Henry James's Ideas on Theatre and Drama*, Catalina Montes, in her article *La España decimonónica vista por un inglés*, explores George Borrow's impressions on 19th century Spain as reflected in his work *The Bible in Spain*. Albeit not the English version of Spain, Santiago J. Henríquez Jiménez offers an insightful comparison between Unamuno's and Greene's view of religious faith in his article *Miguel de Unamuno y Graham Greene: Coincidencia en torno a los cuidados de la fe*. A similar comparison between both authors is carried out by Rafael Páez Valgañón in his *Carta a una amiga: una impresión personal de Unamuno y Green*, where he revises Dr. Asunción Alba's work *Unamuno y Green (Un estudio comparativo)*.

After these two extensive sections on Linguistics and English literature, the book under review focuses on two much smaller sections on Translation and History and Culture in English-speaking countries. Even if it is clear that the three papers on translation share this common topic, the reader may still wonder why they were not included within any of the first two sections, although this is obviously a minor consideration which does in no way damage the whole collection of papers here published. The first of the papers within this section, *Protocolos de pensamiento en voz alta y traducción: La elección adecuada del léxico*, by Francisco Fernández y Ana B. Fernández Guerra, deals with translation from an innovative cognitive approach, paying special attention to the role that mental processes play during translation. The second section and its articles focus on particular texts; thus, Juan J. Lanero studies Miles Coverdale's edition of the *Bible*, the first complete Bible printed in English in his paper *Las traducciones bíblicas de Coverdale: Finalidad religiosa y proceso editor*. Finally, the last article, *English the Spanish, or Fleeing the Mother tongue*, by Isabel Soto, represents an extremely useful exercise for all those readers interested in translation, since it offers a dual version (in Spanish and English) of two brief narratives by Vicente Soto, "La silueta en el suelo" and "La final de Wimbledon".

The final section of the book under review includes a miscellaneous group of articles that focus upon different aspects related to the culture and history of English speaking countries. This is precisely what María Luz Arroyo Vázquez does in her paper *Frances Perkins y Hillary Rodham Clinton: Su contribución a la mejora de la legislación social estadounidense*. A similar approach is that adopted by Antonia Sagredo Santos, whose article *An exceptional first lady and her role in politics in the 20th century: Eleanor Roosevelt* examines the figure of yet another outstanding woman: Eleanor Roosevelt. The volume closes with the article *The Land of Saints and Scholars*, by Patricia Trainor de la Cruz, where the author focuses on the historical importance of Ireland as a cultural centre and on its role as a preserver of Christianity after the fall of the Roman Empire.

As has been shown, the papers make up a miscellaneous collection of interest to anybody who works on English studies, since it offers a bit of everything to everybody. This volume will therefore be of interest to researchers and teachers of both English linguistics and literature, translation and EFL, and especially to doctoral students, whatever their field of research might be.

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