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El General Francisco Franco's "The Power of Beliefs"

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Abstract

This study analyzes and shows the elements of Francisco Francos' various speeches and manner in which he targeted people's beliefs and conduct. His prime targets were the higher education organizations, educators and college students. Franco believed they needed to be indoctrinated in order to eradicate the republican beliefs from the previous Spanish administration. Thus he directed his propaganda towards them. His yearning to reach out to teachers and students was evident in *Discurso pronunciado por S.E. El Generalísimo Franco, Jefe del Estado Español con motivo de la inauguración del presente curso escolar y de la Ciudad Universitaria de Madrid*. The totalitarian vocabulary of the text comprises a utopian vision of reality and covert techniques of persuasion as well as control that, when combined, provided a potent weapon of manipulation. Taking into account both the era's historical setting and the current political climate, this critical discourse analysis of the speech selected incorporates Wodak's historical discourse approach with other approaches to analyze topoi in critical discourse. We see in the findings of this article how the combinations of a charismatic leader and power of speech play an important role in obtaining support of the population, even when it is against their own personal interest and well-being.

Keywords: Franquismo, historical discourse approach, indoctrination, political discourse, political propaganda, topoi.

1. Introduction

Francisco Franco employed a considerable measure of smoke and mirrors in their statements to make it appear as though Spain was in pristine condition after the 1939 Civil War. Francisco was a Spanish dictator and militiaman who was born in El Ferrol in 1892 and died in Madrid in 1975. After taking part in an attempted coup *d'état* on 18 July 1936, he eventually led troops that opposed the second Republic and was victorious in the Civil War of 1936 to 1939. He personally held strong conservative beliefs such as the value of order and Authority and distrusting legislative rule, liberals and democracy in general. At the end of the Civil War, he also set up a government in Spain that had ties to Hitler's Nazism and Mussolini's fascist movement, both of which were supporters and sources of inspiration to him. This form of rule was of course a personal dictatorship with a defined doctrine based on his Catholic character, Unitarian, Ultra-right list autonomy and distaste for all liberal and like so parties. He also achieved a concept of a charismatic personality leader known by the title of "Caudillo de España", meaning warlord or the strongman of Spain (*Biografia de Francisco Franco Bahamonde*, n.d.). On 3 April 1939, Franco gave a speech on *Radio Nacional* which was the following message: "*¡Españoles, alerta! España sigue en*

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Guerra contra todo enemigo del interior o del exterior, perpetuamente fiel a sus caídos. España, con el favor de Dios, sigue en marcha, Una, Grande y Libre, hacia su irrenunciable destino" (Spaniards, alert! Spain continues at War against all the enemies inside or outside, perpetually loyal to its fallen. Spain, God be willing, continues in the march, One, Great and Free one, to its inalienable destiny) (González Duro, 1992: 229). *El Generalísimo Franco* established in these brief statements key aspects that would define his political vocabulary throughout the following years of his dictatorship. Therefore, instigating a perpetual battle with Gods' support against the "enemy" (such as communism, anarchy, negative criticism, etc.) is, thus, to bolster his authoritarian rule. The authors Fusi and Palafox (1997) mentioned "the formation of an authoritative discourse (AD) involving authors, journalists, politicians, professors, priests, and religious leaders" (pp. 259-260). Nonetheless, Franco's voice eventually dominated the period's political conversation. Given that a dictatorship has one supreme leader, one authoritative voice, and ultimate repression of alternative views, all political conversation must be attributed to this person. In accordance with Fusi and Palafox (1997) Franco's early propaganda and one of his regime's key goals was to make it look that the dictatorship, which came to power by an undemocratic military coup in a world that revered freedom and democracy, was not actually unconstitutional (pp. 259-260).

In the case of Franquismo, Pinto (2004), stated "the regime's objective was comparable: to overlook the illegalities of their authority and to control the political discourse by promoting the cult of personality surrounding the Caudillo; military strength; Spanish unity; the greatness of the fatherland; and the deeply embedded traditional values of Catholicism, family, and order" (cited in Ferreira et al., 2013: 258). By employing religion, Franco was able to create an alluring picture of a Catholic state. In actuality, his wife claimed he "worshiped patriotism" (Tusell, 1988: 17).

With the conclusion of World War II and a few years previously, "the Spanish government had to alter its image in an effort to gain international recognition and foreign help" (Fusi & Palafox, 1997: 259-260). This is Spanish fascist propaganda. The *Discurso pronunciado por S.E. el Generalísimo Franco, Jefe del Estado Español con motivo de la inauguración del presente curso escolar y de la Ciudad Universitaria de Madrid* (Pronounce discourse by S.E el Generalísimo Franco, Chief of the Spanish State with motive of inauguration of the present scholar course and the University City of Madrid) on October 12th, 1943 is a remnant of this fascist time that preserves the regime's that indoctrinates educators and college students. This research views ideology as being both *topos* of authority and a *topos* of history due to the sociopolitical environment in which education transmits the ideology of those in power. It seeks a unique place in history; promotes a "bridge" between education and nation; and strives for Spain's peaceful and prosperous future (Žagar, 2010: 12).

2. Literature review

This section will provide an overview of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and historical discourse analysis (HDA), *topos* and their function; and the power of influence, which will also serve as a framework used to analyze speaking power. It also invites the reader on a short trip through the history of the era of "Franquisim". Since it is most relevant to the speech being analyzed in this article.

2.1 *Critical discourse analysis*

In conformity with Wodak (2001), and Van Dijk (2001) critical discourse analysis aims to view social problems and particularly the way the discourse contributes to the reproduction of power-play and abuse as well as dominance. Similarly, to Fairclough (1995), a discourse can be

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understood from the linguistic point of view, which is written or spoken and thus it includes other forms of communication such as non-verbal and symbols that also make language a "form of social practice" (p. 7). Fairclough (1995) describes critical discourse analysis as a framework that integrates "(a) analysis of text, (b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption, and distribution, and (c) sociocultural analysis of the discursive event [...] as a whole" (p. 25). It offers a critical point of view on the discourse that is being analyzed, allowing us to understand the ideologies that underlie it. Van Dijk (2008) noticed in CDA the "way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p. 352). Furthermore, attempts to reveal the real meaning and purpose of what has been said and how it is represented towards the society. Van Dijk (2008) indicates four characteristics: The first one to focus on social problems and political issues; second, critical analysis of social problems in a multidisciplinary manner; third, does not only describe the discourse structures but explains them and fourth, the relationship between power and dominance in society. How it is enacted, confirmed, legitimated, reproduced or challenged. In doing so this will help the reader understand what other forces are at play here when we also take into account the energy of the speech and its giver. For, without it the speech and discourse itself lose momentum and it must be noted that any discourse must be given in direct proportion to the energy of whoever gives it. If a good speech would be given in an unemphatic manner, even the most eloquent of words will sound dull.

2.2 *Historical discourse approach (HDA)*

Wodak's (2001) historical discourse approach (HDA), which was created as a framework for political discourse research, can analyze a speech or a written text in a specific event. According to Wodak (2006), CDA should make decisions at each stage of the study process, and these judgments should be made public. This suggests that it is possible, on a theoretical level, to explain why some interpretations of discursive events appear more plausible than others. From this perspective, Wodak (2006) acknowledges "speaking is considered a social activity, and the triangulation principle is utilized to decrease the possibility of bias" (p. 65). Rogers (2004) comments that "researchers using the HDA begin with the data's substance, which may be primarily linguistic, and investigate the methods adopted by specific actors across the time" (p. 150). Moreover, Žagar (2010), HDA employs the triangulation concept of argumentation theory, or more precisely, the notion of *topoi*.

2.3 *Topos/topoi*

Topos and *topoi*, according to Wodak (2006), are logical components that pertain to crucial explicit or inferential premises. These are "the conclusion norms, or the grounds about the substance of argument or argument that connect them to conclusion or claim" (p. 74). They serve as a bridge between the argument or reasoning and conclusion. In addition to the definition provided above, Richardson (2004) defines topoi as "reservoirs of generalized core ideas from which particular statements or arguments might be generated" (p. 230). According to Žagar (2010), both *topos* and *topoi* relate to things that are evident, well-known, and commonly utilized, such as tables, chairs, standing up, and many other common occurrences. *Topos* and *topoi* remain one of the most perplexing and contentious concepts in the history of rhetoric and argumentation (p. 5)

Žagar (2010) offers a review of the most frequently used *topoi* compiled by Richardson (2004) and Wodak (2009). The items in their lists include a compiled list with the most frequently used *topoi* in writing and conversation. Although in Wodaks' (2009), were utilized when "negotiating specific agenda in meetings, or attempting to persuade the audience of one's interests, visions or positions" (cited in Žagar, 2010: 6-7). They contain nine *topics* according to Wodak

(2011), the "speaker utilizes these resources to deal with issues during argumentation, referring to the speaker so that he or she can present themselves in a positive way and showcase the opponent negatively" (pp. 42-44). Based on these lists, Hasan, (2020) came up with a list founded on Wodak (2011) and Richardson (2004) work which is the following; the list contains the different types of *topos/topoi* that aid in the analysis of the speech (pp. 136-137):

1) Burdening (the speaker seeks to minimize and diminish the issues that his or her government or institution suffers from);

2) Reality (politicians rarely speak about reality. Even though, the speaker in numerous times talks about reality in the political action);

3) Numbers (are used to justify during an argument the order to support the given evidence);

4) History (teachers that there are specific actions and have specific consequences. Thus, the speaker utilizes this *topos* for self-positive presentation);

5) Authority (legitimizes the action or decision that should be made);

6) Threat (the speaker at times relies on this *topos* to justify those necessary actions should be made to diminish any type of danger);

7) Definition (a person or thing designated X should carry the qualities/traits/attributes consistent with the meaning of X);

8) Justice (if persons/actions/situations are equal in specific respect, they should be treated/dealt with in the same way) and;

9) Urgency (decisions are actions need to be drawn/found/done very quickly because of an external, important and unchangeable event beyond one's reach and responsibility.

As seen in Figure 1 Hasan (2020), gather the information and create the list of *topos*, but also, as for the argumentation theory from Toulmin, as previously mentioned to have a correlation when it comes to identifying *topos/topoi* in an argumentation.
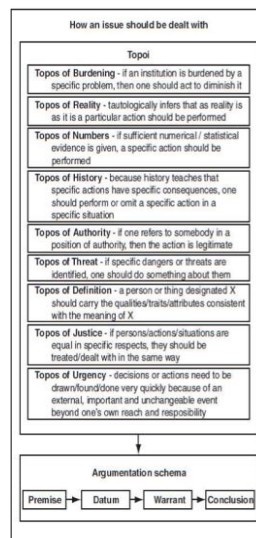
Note: As demonstrated in Figure 1, by describing the categories of each *topos* and contrasting it with the argumentation schema produced by Toulmin's diagram (1995), Toulmin replaced *topoi* with warrants and added qualifiers and reservation strength.

Figure 1

Additionally, Alemi et al. (2018) mention "each time a politician delivers a speech, the audience attempts to discern if the speaker is moderate, modest, authoritarian, or radical" (pp. 3-5). On the other hand, Meyer (2001) suggests "politicians utilize *topoi* to indicate whether they agree or disagree with certain political organizations or points of view" (pp. 14-15). Therefore, a political speech contains an intentionally dynamic argument. In order to interpret Žagar (2010), HDA analysts must address two factors: first, they must identify the arguments and conclusions in a given discourse fragment with clarity and precision; and second, they must illustrate how probable topoi connects to these arguments. Moreover, "the *topoi* are consistent with the *Rhetoric,* which provides guidelines for arguments that do not have a specific predicate, such as that something is wonderful, honorable, good, just, etc." (pp. 18-19).

In the context of HDA analysis, this would include bringing attention to a "well known or discussed" issue of what the author intended or what he or she exactly wanted to say. According to Toulmin, "*topoi* serves as the argumentative premise or foundation of an argument. It must be made clear that HDA is not an argumentation theory per se; rather, it is only the use of argumentation or portions thereof" (cited in Žagar, 2010: 22).

3. Methodology

Following Wodak's (2011) nine topoi were utilized to conduct the analysis of Franco's political speech. This discourse has six sections as a reminder to the reader. What I sought to analyze was the *topos* the author uses to describe power as a man with religious beliefs and nationalism and what the message conveys. The aim of this qualitative technique of analysis employed in this study is to provide a context-dependent approach using HDA as the instrument of analysis. According to Amossy (2018) it integrates in its analysis "all available background information" and examines each utterance in context: its analytical practice is by definition socio historical. Moreover, it combines argumentative and discursive analysis by examining how the context's language is used to convey meaning (cited in Hassan, 2020: 137).

It investigated the topoi El Caudillo had utilized in his discourse in order to persuade the public about his views on regional (at national and religious level) and international issues as well as the political and social issues concerning education.

I selected this text because I considered that the discourse expressed clearly what the intentions were as well as motivations. It reflects his personal ideology and desire for the future of the Spanish population in the twentieth century. Afterwards, I selected the theoretical framework that I considered to be more appropriate for developing the analysis, which I described previously so the reader knows what I was based on to carry out the analysis. Next, I did a literature review on the historical context and on the figure of Franco, in order to provide the reader with a summary of how the situation developed throughout time. This helped me highlight what had been the main goals and conflicts that are the most representative of authoritarianism, religion, and patriotism in their own timeframe. After identifying the t*opoi* suggested by Wodaks' and classifying them within the *nine topoi*, I was able to offer a classification and interpretation of the various *topoi* that compose the discourse. In order to do this, I went over the *topoi* that are in the six sections and identified them as used by Franco. Then I was able to offer an interpretation of the same. To facilitate comprehension, I will present all of this in the next sections. Sometimes more than one *topoi* will be found in the same line of each section. This is not to cut off ideas and thus will allow the analysis to flow.

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4. Findings and discussion

In this section, I interpret the *topoi* in Francisco Franco's speech to the Spanish people about the opening of a university in Madrid and classify them based on how, according to Wodak (2011) *nine topoi*, "HDA incorporates information about historical sources and the context of political developments" (p. 59). Thus, "*topoi*" refers to the implicit and explicit axioms that speakers use to link their reasoning to their conclusions. I also presented an interpretation to them to understand what the author meant when he said it. I should say that this is a personal interpretation that can be looked into in the future.

5. Discourse analysis – Francisco Franco's nationalist discourse

HDA is seen as an appropriate tool for examining political discourse, primarily because it acts as a link between speech and community in the Spanish context. In accordance with Michels (1968) "leaders have always been labeled as radicals, as belonging to one of the political factions, left or right, depending on their political positions" (cited in Richardson & Wodak, 2009, p. 253). Similarly, Van Djik (2002) mentions "their political rhetoric reflects one's distinct ideological perspectives" (p. 203). Wodak's (2011) HDA could examine whether there are discrepancies in political and ideological identities among both Spaniards and Francos. Therefore, *topoi* assists in clarifying the speaker's position on local concerns and illustrating but also describing the correlation the speaker intended to establish with the power obtained.

5.1 *Topos of history*

In agreement with Forchtner (2014) politicians use it to promote their ideas, demonstrate their authority, and make choices, as well as to showcase themselves favorably and others unfavorably. It also contributes to illuminating historical events and bringing them to life in the present (p. 19).

5.2 *Topos of threat*

As reported by Wodak (2001) there are two requirements that are necessary. The first one, "If a political action or decision has particularly detrimental or threatening consequences, it should not be taken or made." The second tenet is that "one must take action against specific dangers and threats" (p. 75).

5.3 *Topos of definition*

"*Profesores y alumnos universitarios: nuestras batallas y desde que ordenaron sobre nuestros campos y ciudades las banderas victoriosas de la paz, que vivimos día a día una vida penosa y dura, […] reconstruir una Patria en ruinas, restableciendo su estructura nacional, revalorizando sus perfiles históricos, encajando la de la vez, sin reparar en la lejanía de la meta ni en la inquietud de los incesantes obstáculos, la situación material y moral en que estaba sumido nuestro pueblo cuando alboreó el comienzo de nuestra Cruzada. […] nunca se ha visto cercada la actividad gubernamental de dificultades mayores; nunca ha sido preciso laborar desde las alturas del Poder con más intensidad y denuedo y con más firme serenidad y corazón.*" (Discurso, 1-2, pp. 357-358)

"University professors and students: our battles and since they ordered the victorious flags of peace over our fields and cities, that we live a painful and hard life day by day, […] rebuilding a Homeland in ruins, reestablishing its national structure,

revaluing its historical profiles, fitting that of the time, without noticing the distance from the goal or the concern of the incessant obstacles, the material and moral situation in which our people were plunged when the beginning of our Crusade dawned. [...] government activity has never been surrounded by major difficulties; It has never been necessary to work from the heights of Power with more intensity and courage and with more firm serenity and heart." (Speech, 1-2, pp. 357-358)

As you can see, all the topics mentioned above can be classified into two parts: power and nationalism. Franco is narrating to the people how the previous government has implemented policies that led to Spain's demise and causes the audience to reflect on the feelings of loss. The audience begins to feel the power and Euphoria of greatness again and by using three capitalize words "Patria (Fatherland), Cruzada (Crusade) and Poder (Power)" He installs the ideas of nationalism and referencing the crusades of Catholics versus Muslims thus resulting in national power.

5.4 *Topos of authority*

In accord with Forchtner and Wodak (2018) this is a "highly plausible official argument" (p. 139). It bolsters the speaker's confidence and conveys power and responsibility.

> *"Todo este colosal esfuerzo no ha querido mantenerse en el estudio puro de un mejoramiento materialista. Funesto y suicida es levantar el nivel de la vida si esta no se hace cristiana y digna si no se le imprime una huella de reforma interior."* (Discurso, 2-3, pp. 358-359)

> "All this colossal effort has not wanted to remain in the pure study of a materialistic improvement. It is disastrous and suicidal to raise the level of life if it is not made Christian and dignified if a trace of interior reform is not imprinted on it." (Speech, 2-3, pp. 358-359)

And in this second part we see how State and religion are coming together under him and replacing science and scholars. By playing that a devout life is worth seeing, not only does he give power to religion and State but also makes reference to the power of a monarch which in time past was the only person God will speak to as the head of the country and State.

5.5 *Topos of justice and history*

> *"[...]la ardiente inquietud por la creación de una ciencia verdadera, sometida inexorablemente al servicio de los intereses espirituales y materiales de la Patria; de otra preocupación porque es una densa y auténtica cultura cristiana penetrated en todos los ámbitos de la nación y nos de la promesa de una juventud fuerte y unida para cumplir sin vacilación nuestro destino ante la historia."* (Discurso, 3, p. 359)

> "[...] the ardent concern for the creation of a true science, inexorably submitted to the service of the spiritual and material interests of the Homeland; of another concern because it is a dense and authentic Christian culture penetrating in all areas of the nation and gives us the promise of a strong and united youth to fulfill our destiny before history without hesitation." (Speech, 3, p. 359)

In the section, Francisco mentions that students and teachers will be taught to undergo a necklace as a tickle and spiritual way to serve in the benefit of the country. He also lays the foundation for how the university ought to be conducted.

5.6 *Topos of reality, burdening, history and justice*

Aquí sucumbió la flor de la mejor juventud, inmolada en el más puro de los sacrificios. Diríase que ha sido prodigiosa su fecundidad. Ellos quedaron sepultados entre las ruinas, y hoy las ruinas han desaparecido para servir de cimiento a estos colosales edificios, que son ahora como monumentos votivos a la gloria de los muertos. Sobre el solar heroico que fué su tumba España ha reconstruido este vasto recinto, consagrado a las letras, con lo que les tributa el mejor de los homenajes, con lo que sienta la más esencial de sus afirmaciones espirituales. Ninguna Ciudad Universitaria del Viejo Continente puede enorgullecerse de tal ejecutoria, […] es desde ahora para siempre memoria perenne de una juventud que salvó con la muerte a su Patria y obra de un Régimen vindicador del signo espiritual de la civilización y de la vida." (Discurso, 4, p. 360)

Here succumbed to the flower of the best youth, immolated in the purest of sacrifices. It would be said that her fertility has been prodigious. They were buried among the ruins, and today the ruins have disappeared to serve as the foundation for these colossal buildings, which are now like votive monuments to the glory of the dead. On the heroic site that was his tomb, Spain has rebuilt this vast enclosure, consecrated to letters, with which it pays them the best of homage, with which it feels the most essential of its spiritual affirmations. No University City of the Old Continent can be proud of such an achievement, […] it is from now on forever a perennial memory of a youth who saved his country with death and the work of a Regime vindicating the spiritual sign of civilization and life." (Speech, 4, p. 360)

As you can see from the speech above, we can see the changes that will be made into higher university studies as representation of the state power. The idea of nationalism and the Catholic way are to be accepted and promoted throughout the studies at the University.

5.7 *Topos of threat, urgency and burdening*

"[…] dotado de un sentido cristiano capaz de comportarse como tal entre sus semejantes, sin que la soberbia científica le coloque por encima del bien y del mal y le aparte de sus inexorables deberes para con Dios y para con la Patria. (Discurso, 8, p. 364)

"[…] endowed with a Christian sense capable of behaving as such among his peers, without scientific arrogance placing him above good and evil and separating him from his inexorable duties to God and to the Homeland. (Speech, 8, p. 364)

As you Can see from paragraph above religion would be before and foremost above any form of science and in his personal opinion God and Patriotism are first and above all else in regard to the ideology of the Spanish Society, again these words are capitalized to signify the importance and prominence it should have within the mind of The Listener and or reader.

5.8 *Topos of burdening, reality and history*

"[…] a nuestros hermanos del otro lado del mar. Ellos forman con nosotros la comunidad hispánica, estrechamente unida por los vínculos de la religión y del idioma. Para las juventudes hispanoamericanas que quieran cursar sus estudios en la vieja Europa, madre de la civilización, se ha hecho también esta Ciudad Universitaria, la cual desde el primer día de su feliz iniciativa ya acarició la ilusión de servir de albergue y hogar a cuantos hijos de la América hispana desearan laborar en armonía con nuestros maestros y discípulos en pro de la común cultura que nos ha definido en la historia con caracteres espirituales fraternos." (Discurso, 12, pp. 367-368)

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"[…] to our brothers on the other side of the sea. They form with us the Hispanic community, closely united by the bonds of religion and language. For the Hispanic-American youth who want to pursue their studies in old Europe, the mother of civilization, this University City has also been built, which from the first day of its happy initiative already cherished the illusion of serving as a shelter and home to as many children of Hispanic America that wish to work in harmony with our teachers and disciples in favor of the common culture that has defined us in history with fraternal spiritual characters." (Speech, 12, pp. 367-368)

In this excerpt Francisco mentions the interest of joining forces with Spanish-speaking countries crossing the Atlantic especially Mexico and the rest of Latin America. Once again, he makes allusions to Old Europe, the mother of civilization, thus linking the idea of colonization to that of a time of Glory. As one might notice Franco treated many countries as communist and not worthy to be allied with. Many of his ideologies stemmed from Hitler and Mussolini idiosyncrasy and very well permeated into his personal and political life as well as thoughts and personal beliefs. When reading his discourse and speeches the reader can very well see what influence does mind and what was most important to him in regards as to retaining power and imposing his belief on others for the benefit of the country and its development according to him and his regime. Those who did not share in his vision were permanently exiled and put to death so no sense of questioning could arise.

6. Conclusion

After analyzing the sections of this discourse, we can mention how the population was under the power and influence of Franco on a macro level, and micro level. This could be seen by the population reacting to what he would say in his discourses on radio, television, or public events, to how they spoke and thought of him. Creating terror in the population was not the only goal, but also causing distrust in everyone they knew and in other countries, punishing those who disagreed with them and the regime. This analysis took into account the historical discourse events that occurred, society's situation, and its cultural aspects as well. It must be said that the information cannot be analyzed separately from its background information coming from society at that time, including Franco and the culture. For authors such as Van Dijk, Fairclough, and especially Wodak, who was the author of this analysis, they gave the triangulation necessary to understand these topics within the historical events. For further research, it would be interesting to compare these discourse sections to the population of that time in contrast with the current population and compare viewpoints from how Franco was and is now seen and regarded by the people of Spain.

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C O A S

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Pirandello and Scaribas – The "Paradox" in Their Work

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Abstract

In this particular article, a parallel reading of the heroes in Pirandello and Scaribas is done and then the interest is focused on the presentation of the "paradox" in their writing. Pirandello and Scaribas use "paradox", the contradiction in common sense, as a vehicle to engage and activate those who read their works not only in a simple reading of their literature but also in realizing a psychoanalytic inner journey.

Keywords: Pirandello, Scaribas, Sicily, Chalkida, paradox, psychoanalysis.

1. Psychoanalysis and literature

Psychoanalysis as a field of psychology focuses on the investigation of the unconscious in order to free and discharge the inner world of the individual, who is now able to express what he thinks, in order to discover latent situations and discharge his inner world. Freud[1] discovered that the best way to learn how the human mind works is to study precisely the sequence of its expressions, thoughts, feelings, dreams and fantasies, as they emerge in specific phases and moments.

The basic research tool is the free association method[2] that is often used in the literature. Freud believed that writers are often inspired through a form of self-analysis and insisted that writers are psychoanalysts without method and without patients. Two of the writers who were influenced by his psychoanalytic theories were Pirandello and Skaribas.

1.1 *The characteristics of the writing of Scaribas*

According to Grigoriadis et al. (2014), Skaribas, following the principles of the surrealism movement, created an impressive work in extent and variety. His work was marked by his intense opposition to the established values of life and urban culture. He used language in a non-orthodox, almost anarchic and paradoxical way, breaking up the usual form of narration until his days, breaking the syntax and recording a reality entirely his own as he perceived it. Vitti (2009) characterizes Scaribas' language as paradoxical and anarchic "causing a dissolution of

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[1] Sigmund Freud was a distinguished Austrian physiologist, neurologist and psychiatrist, who was the founder of psychoanalysis.

[2] https://www.ipa.world/IPA/IPA_Docs/Greek_psychoanalysis.pdf.

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narrative institutions". He identified with Chalkida, and he expresses a profound eroticism about the city through his writing, as if he addressing a woman, with a peculiar language in which hyperrealism[3] and criticism of urban society are expressed.

Because of these characteristics, he is considered one of the pioneers of Greek literature. In his works, he expresses his mental mood, through the images he sees, carefully choosing the words, which are reminiscent of song lyrics, and this is because he is interested in relating speech and image in an acoustic melody. Chalkida is not a specific city, after all the landmarks it mentions are few, Chalkida is an idea, they are all cities that speak to people's hearts, the only thing that matters is that they are symbols and dominate the "being" of each. What characterizes the landscape also characterizes the mental state of the author (Manola et al., 2021).

The absurdity is evident in the work of the Chalkidian writer. According to Tsouprou (2008), in the novel "Holy Tragi", Skaribas realized his intentions by creating a hero who combined through contrasts "*the logical with the improbable, the crude with the beautiful, the exotic with the human*", its protagonist reached the surreal point of the spirit where contradictions are abolished. In Ulalum's prose fiction, the imaginary world is redefined under the gaze of the otherworldly one overwhelmed by a sadness, which is a consequence of the interwar era. In the "Mariamba" the personal style is developed and completed in the "Solo of Figaro" space and time are indeterminate and through irony and parody and the multitude of parallel narratives, they unite imagination and reality, limiting the power of the visible empirical world. According to Nikolopoulou (2014), everything is undefined and unstable, everything is in constant change and redefinition.

Kostiou (1992) characterizes "Mariamba" as the most innovative and daring work of the generation of the '30s with characteristic features "the coupling of poetic and prose language, the dissolution of the unity and successive logical sequences of language, the feeling of openness in space of empirical things, the extension of the imagination, which manages to exceed the limits of reality and raise questions and doubts". All these are the characteristic features of the way of writing of Scaribas, which now in "Mariamba", reach the peak of their power. Characteristic elements of his work are the complex narrative technique, his personal language, the constant undermining of the temporal sequence, the mixing of narrative levels, satire and irony. "Mariabas" is still today a pioneering novel, either in combination with or independently of the historical context of its creation. The concept of the absurd is also expressed in the work "The Three Empty Chairs" which was published in 1976 and is a collection of novels possessed by the spirit of farce, with inverted and mutually negating terms of reality and fantasy. According to Kostiou (1998), in this work we have the machines as a central part of Scaribas' creativity, but here they acquire a human nature and through the contrasts and contradictions a society is presented that is regressing at full speed after it has reduced the "appearance" to its supreme value.

1.2 *Psychoanalysis in the work of Scaribas*

In many of his works, Skaribas describes a schizophrenic symptom, the Capgras[4] Syndrome. According to this, a malevolent stranger has taken the place of a relative or friend, and the sufferer is unable to interpret the situation. So, he cannot draw a conclusion and is forced to watch as a spectator. Something similar happens to Pirandello's heroes who, according to Asimakopoulos (1988), are "*trapped in a life that was determined for them by others, by their*

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[3] It began as a literary movement and developed into a broader artistic and political current in France between the wars. Based on Freud's theories and the ideals of Marxism, he sought the revision of values as a counterweight to the crisis of the Western world.

[4] In the typical Capgras syndrome – named after the French psychiatrist Joseph Capgras, who first diagnosed it in 1923.

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ancestors" by any external agent or by fate itself. They realize it and feel it, that's why they are always troubled, because they are in a dilemma of what to do. To be left to their own devices or they will rebel even if it means crushing the outer life in order to be free inwardly. The faces of Pirandello, as well as Scaribas', also include those who are absurd because the madness they exude is from the truth of life, since indeed the Sicilian had the sad privilege of living with a paranoid companion and thus capture the other aspect and dimension that the irrational gives to human existence. As if "*Fate had placed her next to him as a laboratory preparation in his experiments*" (Oikonomidis, 1986).

Many pages of the Scaribas' book can be read in two ways, either as a real presentation or as a hallucination of a mentally unstable person. In the "Solo of Figaro" the truth dissolves as humans and animals have two forms one mechanical and one animate. According to Papadopoulou (2021), the author follows "*a grotesque technique, seen internally. With the grotesque, he can and does create people-violas and people-robots and people-voices. This is how Skaribas imagines his reality. And the grotesque has a wounded heart as a background*." In the background there is man, who resists everything, who overturns everything and distorts it. Something similar happens in Pirandello, who has the dramatic peculiarity of showing his heroes in a distorting mirror, who mirror and reflect their inner world. When writing theater, he "*continually digs and searches his own inner world*" (Varvaressou, 1990). Pirandello also in his most dramatic works remains a genuine representative of the "grottesco" under which he "*hides his pessimism about human misery*" (Lygizos, 1980) and through which he laughs, feels sorry for man, makes humor, he mocks and mocks his descent.

According to Asimakopoulos (1988), Pirandello's work is mainly existential. The battle fought by the faces on the stage is the effort of the people, who are anxiously searching to find the causes and the meaning of their pain. In Scariba the reader is given permission to have his own opinion of what is going on as the plot is removed and there is only the central axis around which the case is woven. The protagonists are simply instruments of a fictional reality in a vague time full of inconsistencies and in an undefined place that only formally has the name Chalkida because in essence it is a universal place or rather "the place". Especially in Figaro as mentioned by Papadopoulou (2021), Scaribas "*uses irony, parody and satire*" and continues "*the hero does not succeed in writing a novel and is driven to madness, unlike the writer who completes his novel. As if he is his inverted image*." In Pirandello's work, the characters are willfully incomplete and in order to be complete they require the actor to fill them in with his views, subjecting him to an improvisation as for example in the play "Six Characters in Search of an author," "*Theater Troup (Thiasarchis): Where is your text? / Father: It is within us sir. The drama is within us. We are the drama and we can't wait to present it as our unbridled passion drives us*."

2. Psychoanalysis as the axis of Pirandello's work

According to Dromazos (1966), Pirandello's work "*is continuous acrobatics between the logical and the irrational […] a multiple system of illusions, maintained in an uncertain oscillation*" While according to Kalo (2019) he is considered the author of the psychological theater which seeks a purification for the family secrets that plague the individual giving us a starting point for the struggle of identification.

More generally, Pirandello pairs the tragic with the comic. According to Manola (2020), the main axes of Pirandello's theater can be determined in the agony of self-knowledge and in the troubled consciousness that tries to distinguish its true face. The Pirandello's temperament can also be seen in the very titles of his works, "As first is better than first", "No one knows how", etc. Also, characteristic is the alternation in the flow of events with twists and turns, which is continuous because something always happens and all they are reversed, challenged and started on a new basis which will shortly be discarded to be looked at from another angle and so

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on. The faces – husbands, wives, lovers – are confused, in the most unpredictable "situations". The moral consideration of social roles, the paradox of people, the questioning of reality are features that characterize the great Sicilian. The main characteristic of Pirandello and his literary temperament, is his great ability to present everything with their "*double aspect at the same time. Life appears as the human personality divided and torn in two from its root*" (Barlas, 1934). The author's entire work is a toss-up between truth and dream, the plausible and the real. Grammatas (2020) argues that Luigi Pirandello in his works "Six Characters in Search of an author" and "Tonight we improvise" questions objective reality as not given and creates the appropriate conditions for the appearance of situations that due to the subjectivity in their interpretation can be characterized as absurd.

According to Manola (2020), Pirandello investigates conjugal faith, madness, the subjectivity that exists in the "truth" of each person, the pressure that man suffers from the conditions of a daily life, which he did not choose himself, the alteration of human relations. The results of his analytical writing are multidimensional as he tries to make sense of human behavior. For Luigi Pirandello everything that surrounds man is relevant. He rejects and denies everything about human suffering, human delusions and doubts as he mentions the causes, from which the dramatic plots of his works spring, constantly slicing the "I", the human essence that can at the same time become' one' as well as "none" or even "a hundred thousand" and to take as many forms as exactly are the positions of the person facing it. That is why Pirandello in "Uno, nessuno e cento mila" emphasizes the individual's tendency to be at the same time "many people" in the different contexts of everyday life: one, as this is how everyone perceives their uniqueness, no one, because in the world he is only one among six billion people and a hundred thousand because at different moments in contexts the individual takes on many roles. The heroes of the Pirandello's theatre are led to a moment of explosion, during which they bring to the surface all their thoughts and expectations. In his works there is always something heavy from the past, a trauma, a guilt that runs through the whole work and that makes the heroes suffer. The father-daughter incest in the play "'Six Characters in Search of an author", the expected death of the protagonist in the play "The Man with the Flower in His Mouth", are characteristic examples of this guilt. "*If you knew what regrets I have for what at first was nothing but a weakness on my part*" Pirandello's work is problematic because it deals with issues such as similarity and difference, identity, specificity and the multidimensional forms that a single person can take, something that is particularly evident in the work of *Henry IV* where the protagonist's confusion between into the subjective and the objective while the difference between madness and reason is completely unclear. This confusion, as stated by Zeffirelli (2003) between fantasy and reality derived from his personal experiences and the cultural elements that influenced him, possesses the entire Pirandelian work. The constant violation of the dividing line between reality and fantasy, the annulment of the rules instead of being a brake, in essence liberates the writer. We also find influences of Pirandello's work in modern Greek drama (Manola, 2020a) and the Sicilian author is a point of reference in modern Greek theatrical reproduction and creation (Manola, 2020b).

3. Conclusion

The success and appeal of the works of Pirandello and Scaribas indicates that the readers are looking to express, through the texts of the two authors, the desires not only of the creators but also their own, as there is a "give and take" between the work and for them it is continuous and invites to inner psychoanalytic searches.

The complexity of emotions, expressed through the absurd, was for the two writers a necessary condition to inspire their creations. They are connected by elements such as the choice of a favorite place, the fragmentation of the identity of the protagonists, everyday language and caustic satire, elements that make their work innovative for their time.

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The Impact of the Native Speaker Ideal on Learners' Motivation in an EFL Context

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Abstract

In the present time, English is widely used as the common language for global interaction. In other words, English is used by both native and non-native speakers of the language to communicate with a variety of individuals with different backgrounds, cultures, and first languages. Nevertheless, in language education, the native speaker ideal is still the model of reference for performance. This case study was concerned with examining the effects and influence of the native speaker ideal on students' motivation in Central Mexico. The participants for this study consisted of 6 female college students. They were enrolled in English classes at the University of Guanajuato as part of their undergraduate program at the time of the study. An interview of 10 base questions was designed to gather data. The results conclude that the native speaker ideal usually has a negative influence on students' motivation. For this reason, it would be valuable to approach English as an international language instead.

Keywords: native-speaker, motivation, English as an international language.

1. Introduction

English is, in the present time, the language used by individuals to communicate with people from different countries with varied cultural backgrounds, cultural practices, and languages. This widespread use of English increases the possibility of the development of more English varieties that differ, to varying degrees, from standard or native speaker norms. For this reason, certain researchers have categorized it as an international language (McKay, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Smith, 1976). However, in most EFL contexts, such as Mexico, the native speaker ideal is still predominant in language teaching. According to Leung (2005), "the 'idealized curriculum for L2 learning' was often built on the perspective of an imagined or idealized native speaker of English" (p. 127). Teachers and students thus have adopted it as a model of reference for learning and competence in the language.

This phenomenon in ELT is extremely contradictory considering that it is estimated that there are approximately 500-1000 million people who use English for a variety of reasons and for whom English is neither their native language (Crystal, 2003). The native speaker ideal, according to some L2 motivation models, pose significant implications on students' motivation. The following paper aims to explore the influence of the native speaker ideal on learners' motivation in an EFL context. Therefore, I will first define the concepts of native speaker and its prevalence in language teaching, L2 motivation, and English as an International Language.

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Second, I will present the data and results of the present study to finally provide a conclusion on the topic.

2. Literature review

In this following section, I provide definitions and explain in detail concepts such as the native speaker, motivation, and English as an international language.

2.1 *Native speaker*

The notion of the "*native speaker*" has been widely researched as well as questioned for its implications on language education (Andreou & Galantomos, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Lowe, 2020). Andreou and Galantomos (2009) point out that a native speaker is someone born in a country in which the target language is spoken; thus, it becomes their first language. Additionally, Stern (1983) claims that a native speaker is a person that possesses a subconscious knowledge of linguistic rules (i.e., grammatical, phonological, among others), an innate grasp of meaning, the ability to communicate in various social settings using a wide range of language skills and creativity.

The native-speaker is thus commonly considered the ideal or the point of reference for models of acquisition and competence in linguistics. For instance, Davies (2003) explains that, in Chomsky's works, the native speaker tends to be regarded as "the arbiter of a grammar, and (when idealized) as somehow being the model for the grammar" (p. 5). This native speaker ideal thus maintains its prevalence as a marker of proficiency in language education and SLA research in several EFL contexts. Because of this, individuals subject and compare themselves and their linguistic competence to one of a native speaker.

Indeed, students and teachers are constantly bombarded with and encouraged to accept the "language competence, learning styles, communication patterns, conversational maxims, cultural beliefs, and even accent as the norm" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012: 18) of native speakers. Kumaravadivelu refers to this as the 'native speaker episteme.' It is an episteme because the native speaker ideology has shaped the way we teach, assess, understand, learn, and represent English in a global scale.

This assumption of teaching and learning English just to achieve "native speaker competence" is a problematic one. English learners should not be simply encouraged to speak and behave in the same way native speakers do to use the language. Otherwise, this constant comparison can have major implications on their motivation for the learning process and perceptions of the language. For instance, Kramsch (1998) states that "methodologies based on the native speaker usually define language learners in terms of what they are not, or at least not yet" (p. 28). This fails to consider students' own goals regarding the language and their own preferences.

According to research conducted on learner preferences, the number of students that support native speaker's norms in countries belonging to outer and expanding circles (Kachru, 1985) has decreased notoriously (Subtirelu, 2013). He and Zhang (2010) found that native speaker's norms received less support from Chinese university students than intelligibility-based standards. Therefore, the native speaker ideal does not align with learners' preferences and beliefs most of the time. However, most native speaker's norms remain and prevail on an institutionalized level and Mexico is not the exception (Moore, 2017). Despite what learners prefer, the native speaker ideal has been deeply ingrained into the minds of these learners in EFL contexts. For this reason, it is valuable to explore what impact this notion can have on their L2 learning motivation.

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2.2 *Motivation*

In general terms, motivation refers to the direction and magnitude of human behavior, including the choice of a specific action, the persistence of the individual in regards of such action and the effort invested on it (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003). Motivation is then responsible for the reason behind the start of a specific activity and the time and energy expended on it to achieve a particular goal. Students' objectives for learning a language can be different from those devised by institutions or teachers. However, an institution's objective can still have an impact on the students and their motivation.

L2 motivation research has progressed through many stages over the years, with scholars conceptualizing numerous L2 motivation models in the area, beginning with Gardner's socio-educational model (Lai, 2013). This model assumes that motivation is inherently related to integrative and instrumental orientation. According to Gardner (2001), motivation involves three different components: effort, positive affect, and desire. These three components embody the learner's amount of effort dedicated to a task, the desire to achieve certain goals and the enjoyment of the learning process itself.

However, this model has received several critiques from other researchers due to its ambiguity and confusing definitions of the dimensions found in it, namely, the integrative aspect of motivation (Lai, 2013). On one hand, integrativeness refers to the ability and interest an individual has to learn the target language to get closer to the community. On the other hand, it includes the "complete identification with the community (and possibly even withdrawal from one's original group)" (Gardner, 2001: 1). Although Gardner later attempted to clarify and redefine the aspect of integrative motivation, other researchers developed new models of L2 motivation to address this and other issues.

Drawing on existing L2 motivation models, Dörnyei (2009) proposed the L2 Motivational Self System. In it, Dörnyei redefined L2 learning motivation as an L2 learner's desire to lessen the perceived disparity between their real self and their prospective L2-using selves: the Ideal L2 Self and the Ought-to L2 Self (Zheng, 2013). This author explains that the Ideal L2 Self refers to the individual's self-image that expresses their desire to become a competent L2 speaker and their vison for the future. Thus, it is intrinsic to the individual. The Ought-to L2 Self, on the other hand, refers to the characteristics that the person believes one should possess to meet expectations while avoiding potentially undesirable results. It symbolizes someone else's vision for the individual and can thus be considered as an external force (Dörnyei, 2009).

Additionally, this model has a third component known as L2 learning experience, "which concerns situated and executive motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience" (Zheng, 2013: 346). Dörnyei's L2 Self System has provided L2 motivation researchers with a new and comprehensive perspective from which to approach or reconceptualize L2 motivation (Lai, 2013) to take into account other sociocultural and educational contexts.

2.3 *English as an international language*

As it was mentioned before, English has become the language in common for international communication. In other words, English will be used to communicate both locally and globally and to interact with a wide range of individuals. This extensive use of English has cataloged it as an international language.

For a language to be categorized as an international language, "it cannot be linked to any one country or culture; rather it must belong to those who use it" (McKay, 2002: 1). Therefore, if English is deemed an international language, then it is void of a particular culture or country that is normally associated with the language (e.g., The United States, the United Kingdom,

Australia, and other countries belonging to the Inner Circle). That is to say that English does not belong only to a native speaking community, but it belongs to those who use the language regardless of it.

Within an EIL framework, two fundamental shifts have occurred that are worth considering. The first one establishes that the purpose for learning the language has changed (Moore, 2017). Decades ago, it was believed that the main purpose for learning English was to participate and interact merely with native speaking communities, as Gardner proposed on his socio-educational model. Currently, however, learners expect to interact and participate in different communities by using English as the common language. The second shift concerns the understanding of "appropriate language forms" (Moore, 2017). This implies that multiple varieties of English are now validated in most contexts.

English as an International Language also recognizes that considering language as a "stand-alone product" (Canagarajah, 2013: 7) alters the way meaning is co-created in conversation (Moore, 2017). As a result, the idea that we can identify and characterize a single "standard" version of English is regarded as questionable. It is preferable to think of language as an organic and dynamic system capable of changing and adapting to its surroundings (Galloway & Rose, 2015). However, adapting an EIL framework represents numerous challenges, especially in EFL contexts. These include a preference for 'standard' English and other native speakers' norms. In this regard, Mexico is no exception (Moore, 2017).

3. Methodology

This section will introduce the research design of the study, including the research questions, participants, method, and data collection techniques.

3.1 *Research questions*

The present study aimed to inquire on the effect of the native-speaker ideal on the motivation of English students. Therefore, the following research question was developed:

- How does the native-speaker ideal impact learners' motivation in an EFL context in Central Mexico?

3.2 *Participants*

Participants in this research included six female college students. Of these participants, three were seniors while the other three were sophomores from different degrees. Their ages ranged from 19 to 27 years old and were from similar family and educational backgrounds. At the time of the study, participants were enrolled in English classes in the University of Guanajuato as part of their undergraduate program. They all possess an upper-intermediate level of English. They were recruited through personal connections.

3.3 *Qualitative approach*

Qualitative research is considerable suitable for providing insights into social, cultural, and situational factors that influence practically every element of language acquisition and use (Dörnyei, 2007). Since this study is concerned with the impact and influence of the native-speaker ideal on EFL students' motivation, the qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate paradigm to use as a point of reference to develop the research.

The qualitative approach, also known as qualitative paradigm, refers to "research that is based on descriptive data that does not make (regular) use of statistical procedures" (Mckay & Gass, 2005: 162). According to Riazi (2016), the underlying paradigms for qualitative research are *interpretivism* and *social constructivism*. In other words, it aims to gather and collect ample and substantial data. This is possible by collecting data that demonstrates the diverse ways the participants and the researcher can interpret the same event or phenomenon.

3.4 *Case study*

This study implemented a single-case study methodology to generate and gather context-sensitive data to address and answer the research question mentioned before (Duff, 2008; Zheng, 2013). A case study is "the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon" (Gall et al., 2003: 436). In applied linguistics, as Duff (2008) affirms, "the study of individuals and their attributes, knowledge, development, and performance has always been a very important component of applied linguistics research, particularly in SLA" (p. 35). The case of this study, therefore, is the language learners and their motivation as influenced by native-speaker standards.

3.5 *Data collection techniques: Interview*

Qualitative interviews are a common data collection technique in applied linguistics. They allow researchers to "probe participant responses by offering alternative question forms, asking for clarifications, and, depending on the interview, co-constructing knowledge produced in the interaction" (Rose at al., 2020: 114). Because of this, interviews are suitable for inquiring into experiences, beliefs, perceptions, identities, and attitudes, which can be considered difficult to obtain by using other types of methods.

The data in the present study was collected through the use of qualitative interviews with the participants. Each interview was done individually, in English, with each of the participants though the online conferencing platform known as Zoom. The interviews were recorded to be later transcribed for analysis. Because qualitative interviews enable researchers to gain a more in-depth knowledge of the participants' experiences, beliefs, and perceptions, I conducted semi-structured interviews to explore the impact and prevalence of the native-speaker ideal in ELT in Central Mexico.

Semi-structured interviews, as stated by Rose et al. (2020), allow "for new ideas to form within a predetermined framework of themes" (p. 116). They provide more opportunities for interpretation and reflection from the researcher and the participants. This type of interviews are commonly designed by carefully identifying the main themes that the researcher wishes to explore to then ask follow-up questions to elaborate on interesting and relevant aspects of the participants' responses.

4. Analysis and discussion of results

4.1 *Students' perceptions of native speakers' norms*

The interview data shows that the participants hold contrasting opinions on native speakers and the norms based on them. While some of them harbor what could be described as positive or favorable perceptions, the contrary occurs for the rest of them. For instance, intermediate student Lucía believes that:

> They speak so beautiful, and their accent is too beautiful too. I would like to speak
> like them and I think that they have the privilege that they don't have to learn another
> language because all is translated in their language. (Lucía)

Other participants in the study share the same opinions and sentiments as Lucía. According to Llurda (2009), attitudes toward a language are influenced by a variety of factors, including the learner's native language and attendance to language lessons. It can then be argued that students with more sympathetic opinions and attitudes toward native speakers may be due to their positive experiences involving them. However, this implies that students could develop the oppositive viewpoints. As the student Alexa mentions:

> As with any other person, I don't really feel any admiration towards them just
> because they are native speakers of English. They don't know it all just by being
> native speakers. They can make the same number of mistakes as we do but they still
> expect us to use the language like they do and I think we already do. (Alexa)

This participant suggests that being a native speaker does not exclude an individual from making errors or mistakes. It demonstrates that students are aware of the discrepancies between the native speaker as an ideal, an idealized notion, and the reality. Similarly, the participant Lydia states that:

> From time to time, they don't follow the grammar rules, the also are more confident
> when talking in English. (Lydia)

For this reason, it is important to remark that individuals are flawed and prone to make mistakes while using the language, even native speakers. The difference, however, is that by idealizing native speakers, certain western cultures, models, and speakers of English tend to be privileged over others (Lowe, 2020). It is because of this that the native speaker ideal remains prevalent in numerous EFL contexts, which can affect students' motivation in different ways.

For instance, taking into account Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational L2 System, the Ought-to L2 Self is shaped by other's expectations towards the individual. Therefore, if the expectations are mainly based on the native speaker ideal, students can internalize these norms even if they do not completely align with their initial Ideal L2 Self vision as language learners.

4.2 *Effects on students' motivation and language use*

As mentioned before, the pervasiveness of the native speaker ideal in non-native ELT contexts influence students' motivation levels differently. On one hand, as shown in the data of the interviews, this influence is rather positive. Students suggest that having a specific model of reference allow them to establish clearer objectives. As exemplified by Lucía:

> They made me want to keep learning and be better in the language. So, I think they
> are good ones, because they improve my motivation to keep a conversation with
> others in this language too. (Lucía)

During the interview with this same participant, Lucía mentioned that she was often complimented by native and non-native speakers for her accent whenever she spoke English. Therefore, the influence on her motivation was positive instead of negative. Zheng (2013) points out that "if the learner failed to conform to NS norms ingrained in examination requirements and teacher preferences, they might face the negative outcomes that they needed to avoid" (p. 350) which decreased their motivation. It can be assumed that the opposite can occur as well, as demonstrated by the previous excerpt. An example of negative influence was provided by the following participants:

> It had a direct impact in my speaking skills mostly. Because my accent is influenced
> by Americans. (Natalia)

> Sometimes I would prefer to learn another language before learn English for bad experiences, and because I really hate the USA culture, a lot of their people, and a lot of discrimination in general, but I really know that English is an important language in the world and sooner or later I will have to learn it. (Vero)

> They expect each of us speak like a native and expect that we adopt the accents of Americans or British speakers and it makes me feel pressured. (Nadia)

> It made me insecure about the way I speak and because of this I didn't practice it. (Lydia)

It is interesting but not surprising to note the emphasis placed on accent and speaking abilities by these students. As Timmis (2002) states, "accent, in many ways, seems to go to the heart of the native-speaker issue" (p. 241). It is often that teachers, schools, and administrators promote the native speaker ideal when it comes to pronunciation. Because of this, it is comprehensible that language learners perceive native speaker's pronunciation and accent as a benchmark of appropriate use of the language.

4.3 *Implications on English language teaching*

The last questions of the interview were devoted to the discussion of possible and implications and suggestions to ameliorate the influence of the native speaker ideal in language teaching. Participants provided numerous and valuable ideas such as:

> Teachers must consider that we're learning a different language from our own. And both languages are totally different with different phonetics and vocabulary. They must consider that because we live in Mexico we don't use the language frequently, 'cause not many people speak it. (Alexa)

> Make students aware of the different accents that exist and that is not that important to speak like a native, what is important is that they are able to communicate with other people. (Nadia)

> By helping the students realize there is more than one accent and different ways in which the language is spoken and used within a region, I think that can help to open their eyes and make them more critical. (Natalia)

These excerpts suggest that students are aware of the different varieties of English around the world and the importance of acknowledging in the language classroom. This is important because, if we want to move away from focusing on teaching 'native-speaker competence' we require "an epistemic break from its dependency on Western-oriented or, more specifically, Center-based (aka Inner Circle-based) knowledge systems" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012: 9). An epistemic break "represents a thorough re-conceptualization and a thorough re-organization of knowledge systems" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012: 14). As participants suggested, the first step to accomplish this is to recognize the limitations and implications of perpetuating native speaker norms and ideals in the language learning process. Therefore, as McKay (2003) observes, there are sound pedagogical and practical reasons to pay attention to the existence of different varieties of English as a key curriculum and classroom teaching.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study conclude that the native speaker ideal has several imposing implications in students' motivation. Most of the participants suggested that the pervasiveness of native speaker models negatively influences their motivation and even their own perceptions and attitudes toward the language and its users. Consequently, students were able to provide solutions

to this issue that educators may benefit from taking into account. Furthermore, these results are consistent with the findings of other studies mentioned beforehand throughout this paper.

In conclusion, English as an international language can be incredibly valuable for language teaching and learning, because it is not tied to any particular culture or social context. Therefore, we should abandon the native speaker ideology because it does not reflect how English is used and by whom it is used today. The reality is that there are more non-native speakers of English than native speakers. However, this standard remains and continues to actively influence both teaching and learning, and this should change.

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