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A R T I C L E S

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING AND THE HASTY LIMITS OF ITS BOUNDARIES

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— *Abstract*—

This essay aims to analyze –from the perspective of scientific communication– the distinction between scientific journals and popular science publishing, as well as the way in which these differences are coupled when it comes to public policy strategies that seek to promote the development of certain type of knowledge, by means of a publication ranking. The main question of these reflections is whether, in academic publishing practice, there is a distinction between both types of publications and, if there is actually a difference, in which way and how, said difference manifests itself.

Keywords

Scientific communication, scientific publishing, popular science publishing, good publishing practices, scientific journals, science and technology policies.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DOING SCIENCE AND DISSEMINATE IT¹

Undoubtedly, the seemingly simplest issues are always the most difficult to address. When, for example, there is talk about dissemination of science, experts agree that it is a specific discipline that seeks to "bring scientific knowledge closer to society in general" (see Beyer-Ruiz and Hernández García, 2009). In fact, the etymology of the word refers to the Latin *divulgatio*, which refers to the action and effect of spreading, promoting or publishing something to make it available to the general public.

So far, the difference between "doing science" and "disclosing science" seems relatively simple: those so-called "scientific" activities are conceived as those exercised by "scientists"; therefore, the dissemination of science would be related to making known to a general public the activities developed by these scientists.

And this is where the problems begin, for such an explanation would imply that scientists are autonomous people who act independently and far from society, and that is impossible. Scientists, of course, are part of the social system; it is only that their communication forms, means and strategies between them, differ to some degree of the society's general communication forms, means and strategies; that is, we can affirm that there is a distinction between:

- **Peer-to-peer communication:** a scientist who goes to another scientist -from the same field of studies- to make known his findings or research results and thereby legitimize scientific and technological knowledge, either by establishing consensus or dissents; and,
- **Disseminate science:** action related to "make known to the general public" -whether or not scientific- the findings or research results that were previously discussed and analyzed by experts.

1 The reflections presented here are based on a debate that began as a result of a comment made by me in the Facebook group on "*Disclosure Mexican Magazines*" on October 25 and 26, 2016. I thank Patricia Magaña Rueda, Gerardo Ochoa and Juan Carlos Carmona for their questions and openness to dialogue. Of course, the comments here are my responsibility and do not necessarily reflect the position of the institution in which I work.

This distinction makes no less "science" to one or the other, in both cases we are talking about scientific communication. These are different "communicative approaches" because the audiences to which they are addressed are different and, precisely because of this, the strategies to strengthen such communication tend to be adjusted, otherwise the central objective of "make known"² would be more difficult. We are also talking about two different moments: the first when scientists analyze and discuss among themselves the relevance -or not- of a particular finding, and the second when said finding is made known to the general public through disclosure.

This is referred to in linguistic studies when they point to the existence of two enunciators in two different situations: on the one hand the scientist who communicates his findings to other scientists, with the aim of confronting them and - eventually - legitimizing them; and, on the other hand, the disseminator who recovers those findings and places them in a perspective that allows "to incorporate into the everyday world the world of science, provide meanings referents and signifiers to the reader so that he can understand the scientific news" (Ciapuscio, 1988: 81).

In this sense Ciapuscio (1988: 77) analyzes the relevant pragmatic and semantic aspects in the process of composing texts of scientific dissemination. In this regard, he points out that all text exhibits certain typical global structures; these are formal schemes that are "filled" with particular contents. This is what allows explaining that the same fact can be narrated in different ways, depending on the type of text to which it is alluded. In the case of science, the source texts require a type of formal and syntactic structure, which is usually adjusted to the moment of "translating" these texts for dissemination, which allows the retransmission of information to wider audiences.³

At this point it is important to clarify that in order to participate in scientific communication "between peers" it is absolutely necessary to be part of the scientific and technological community; where it is understood that

2 I take up on the concept of communication by Niklas Luhmann (2007) as a distinction between: information, to make it known and to understand it. From this perspective, a communication takes place only when these three aspects can be synthesized. For the Luhmannian position, this distinction in turn produces distinctions, and this is what keeps the system in operation.

3 The fact that scientific dissemination has its origin in a text previously disseminated among experts of a specific theme, explains the presence of the *source* category, even though the *source text* is not always explicit in discourses of dissemination (in this regard see Ciapuscio, 1988)..

"pair" is equal, symmetrical or similar to another. Every scientist - no matter his area of expertise and his level of knowledge- has "pairs", with them he talks and exposes his ideas, proposals, findings, questions and answers. There is no possibility that a scientist or technologist does not have "peers" otherwise, science would be exercised as if it were religious ideology and that is one of its main risks that must be monitored, as Cereijido (1994) points out.

And although the dissemination of science and technology is also exercised by scientists, who make enormous efforts to explain to the general public certain findings or results found in a scientific field, this work also has specialized disseminators, who know the scientists' communication strategies and are able to "translate" them to languages comprehensible for a general public; in many cases, disseminators make use of didactic resources or concrete examples to facilitate the understanding and implications of the scientific and technological findings.

However, as Ciapuscio (1988: 80) points out, this translation is not limited to the transfer of certain contents from one linguistic system to another, it is about the transition from one level of language to another level of language, and clearly the scientific content, the disseminator faces the enormous challenge of attracting the reader. It is, in short, not only to inform but also to persuade.

An example of these differences could be found in the role played by an astronomical observatory and a planetarium. While the first is a site (institution) where they are scientifically analyzed, evaluate and monitor astronomical and atmospheric phenomena, the second is a place addressed to all public where astronomical shows are presented and you can observe recreations of the night sky from various places on Earth and at different times of the year. In both cases, discoveries are related to astronomy; however, the way of communicating the concrete fact is different, because the publics and the objectives of the communication are also different.

TWO CULTURES AND DISSEMINATION

At this point, the term "science communication to a general public" may be more appropriate, rather than "science dissemination", in the understanding that communicating is putting in common.

This "sharing" requires, on the part of the disseminator, to master strategies that allow him to transmit the scientific information without

losing nuances, but gaining clarity and impact. In this sense, Beyer-Ruiz y Hernández García (2009) affirm that:

The disseminator is responsible for the management of strategies for transmitting scientific information through different means of communication, preferably mass media: radio, the press, television, exhibitions in science museums, publications such as bulletins and magazines. The so-called disseminator of science must, in itself, accumulate a wealth of important scientific knowledge and a set of skills to efficiently nourish the communication processes of that collection (Beyer-Ruiz and Hernández García, 2009: s / p).

Another problem arises when one notices the proximity of the works about diffusion of science with the literary creation. At this point, it is necessary to recognize the "false" distinction between science and the humanities that Charles P. Snow points out in his speech *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* - pronounced in 1959 at the University of Cambridge - where he pointed to the deep detachment between intellectuals literary and scientific, because of their lack of communication and consequent incomprehension, where they could find two cultures that, without common dialogues and tendencies of hyper-specialization, had managed to separate from each other, forgetting one of the few common objectives: society's progress.

This generates one more doubt, although we do not fail to recognize the importance of advocating for the search for points of dialogue between science and the humanities, we must analyze and deepen the work of dissemination and ask ourselves if it is a question to know closer to science or the humanities, or if to publish humanistic texts implies in itself to divulge -without mediating any type of "translation"-, or if the disclosure is the hinge that allows certain degrees of unification of both points and, even, if that dialogue between the two cultures is the objective - or at least one of the objectives- of the disclosure. At this point I limit myself not to affirm, but to ask.

There is, on the one hand, the sensation of speaking of something different when referring to scientific and technological knowledge, arts and humanities and when talking about the *dissemination* of such knowledge. And although it would be desirable to shed more light on the points of convergence between this knowledge, the truth is that these are at least discourses with different textual "textures", different specific objectives and diverse audiences.

Now, if such convergence is possible, how is it concretized? By grouping texts of different nature into the same medium and hoping that it is the

"non-specialized" reader who, from what the disseminator approaches, weaves the bridge between sciences, technologies and humanities? When a science journal publishes a document, the author is required to have a specific textual treatment, where the pragmatic and semantic aspects are coupled with the type of target audience, or the target audience is the one who performs the "translation" with just knowing that you are approaching a magazine with a cutting edge?

And, as regards the area linked to scientific public policy strategies, it would be pertinent to ask how these differences are coupled with specific strategies that seek to "foster" the development of certain type of knowledge, through the recognition of certain publications?

THE DIFFUSE EDGES OF SCIENCE AND ITS DISSEMINATION: THE CASE OF MAGAZINES

Therefore, if the distinction between scientific and humanistic activities is relevant and, on the other hand, to disclose them, it may also be appropriate to distinguish the role of journals aimed at "spreading science", peer communication which is given in scientific, technological and humanistic journals.

In this regard, in an interesting recount of the main characteristics of scientific dissemination journals in Mexico Lujano-Vilchis and Martínez-Domínguez (2016) point out that the evaluation criteria used by the Science and Technology National Council to analyze dissemination magazines are similar to the traditional standards to the evaluation of scientific magazines. Dissemination journals resemble the traditional standards for the evaluation of scientific journals. This situation leads them to ask: what do the science and technology funding agencies mean by science dissemination and how does this conception affect the development of journals in this field?

At this point -and at the risk of being criticized by experts in science dissemination and in the edition of specialized journals in the field- I wonder if all the magazines that are on the so-called *Index of Mexican Journals of Scientific Dissemination and Technological science publish exclusively* "science dissemination", or if they are basically the same as the journals that publish scientific and technological research, but they are named in this way hoping to make a difference at some point

Another problem arises when, in the so-called index of scientific dissemination journals, the presence of publications that -under other parameters- could be considered of literary creation and, if so, the question is why search for

their recognition from the public policies of science and technology, and do not do the same in the case of public policies to promote culture? In other words, why not -in the case of Mexico- instead of requesting support from the National Council of Science and Technology, go to the National Council for Culture and the Arts? Or is it that by including publications of one type or another in scientific policy, it is possible to settle the distance between literary and scientific intellectuals to which P. Snow alludes?

Of course these reflections do not seek to denote any type of publication, they are so important and worthy of being supported both one and the other, the only thing I try is to reflect on the fleeting edges of the limits of communication between peers and the disclosure of science; and, if there is any distinction between the two types of communication, identify what is proper to each of them, as well as think about what would be "good editorial practices" in each case.

The question that motivates the reflection is the lack of *disclosure trade* that is noticed in some authors of texts that approach scientific and humanistic subjects, with a divulging intention. Such is the observation made by Sergio Régules (2016) when he states:

In summary, science, the author and the reader can leave very badly from a written text with excellent spelling and irreproachable knowledge of science, but with deficiencies of general culture and sensitivity and with techniques of writing ignorance and popularization that go much more besides putting the accents where it should be and knowing that the atomic number of the protactinium is 91. The corrector and the editor are to take care of the author's good image, of the science and of the magazine or web page where his text appears (Régules, 2016).

However, the distinction between the two types of communication -and the resulting problems- is not perceived either on the policy management side (since the evaluation criteria of the outreach journals are very similar to those of today extinct Index of Scientific Journals), nor of the magazines; whose contents could not be cataloged in all cases of informative work.

This difficulty is pointed out by Octavio Alonso (2017), general coordinator of the information system Latindex, who highlights the problems that are noticed when diverse databases design lists of criteria based on norms and good editorial practices to be able to "differentiate" the types and quality of academic journals:

[...] challenges are encountered when these lists of norms and practices have to be applied to journals that respond to different profiles and objectives, as is the case of many Latin American academic publications of cultural and popular interest that are widely consulted in academia. Such would be the case of magazines specialized in art, cinema, literature, painting or music, which do not always incorporate the quality criteria that are generally better served by magazines of the so-called hard sciences. Databases face difficulties in measuring all types of publications with the same standards, without having to force their own selection policies and this is mainly evident in databases or systems of multidisciplinary coverage, not only regional ones, but also those of international coverage (Alonso, 2017: 23).

And while the reasons are clear why databases -especially those of a multidisciplinary nature- are prevented to make specific distinctions that allow to account for some difference between scientific journals and those of science dissemination; what I am referring to in these reflections is that public policy makes a mistake in valuing the magazines that have the objective of disclosure, with the same instrument with which it was evaluated (until the year 2015) to the magazines that have as objective "communication between peers". Why? Because their goals, their audiences, their communication strategies are not the same. Because if the journals did not have different objectives, then a different catalog would not be required (I do not speak of an index, because what we have today does not generate indicators of science divulgation magazines performance).

We have, on the one hand, the lack of specific criteria of that "body without organs" that is the bureaucracy (as Deleuze and Guattari call it, 1985), to implement a support policy to the science popularization, but this shortage is also noticed in the academic communities themselves, which we have been (including myself) unable to mark the distinction between communication between experts and dissemination of science. I know that here I run the risk of being strongly denounced and criticized, but I venture to give concrete examples: what would be the informative approach of articles with titles such as the following?

- “Abundance and density of chilla foxes (*Pseudalopex griseus* Gray, 1837) and Culpeo (*Pseudalopez culpaeus* Molina, 1782) in a Xerophyte formation.”.
- “Co-movement, persistence and volatility of Mexican macroeconomic variables in the presence of structural change, 1940-2012”.

- “General theoretical model derived from the review of the Kaizen literature and its sustainability over time”.

Articles selected randomly from three journals that are included in the Mexican catalog of science dissemination publications. In analyzing them, I am surprised to find a great similarity, in terms of its structure, with the so-called "research articles" (introduction, materials and methods, conclusions, etc.) And it is not that this is inadequate, is just that I wonder: what is the distinction that marks the disclosure of science in these cases?

No, I'm not saying they're doing it "right or wrong." I just wonder: what's the difference between these magazines and scientific research journals? Undoubtedly, the bureaucracy is wrong to measure them with the same standard with which scientific journals are measured, but we cannot deny that the contents of some of them do not resemble what Sánchez-Mora y Sánchez-Mora (2003) define as Scientific Disclosure:

It is a multidisciplinary work whose objective is to communicate, through a variety of means, scientific knowledge to different volunteer publics, recreating that knowledge with fidelity and contextualizing it to make it accessible (Sánchez-Mora y Sánchez-Mora, 2003).

At least the examples given are not what is said to be "accessible" to non-specialist audiences. At this point I can only subscribe the words of Sergio Régules (2016):

EIn an ideal future I imagine that science communicators will learn fine techniques of literary writing, as well as the difficult offices of editor and proofreader, or at least they will learn to appreciate their value and will know that nothing should ever be sent to the press without it passing through the hands of these characters before, which can save the author and science from ridicule, and tedium to the suffering reader. Every article that appears in a publication that is respected is, in essence, collaboration, even if it only carries a signature, and it is important for potential authors to know it (Régules, 2016).

It should be noted that, in Mexico's case, there is no guide or canon to edit journals for science dissemination, as there is for scientific research journals. And while such criteria may be debatable -and indeed have been widely commented on by the academic community and have also been adjusted- at least they serve as a guideline that guides the implementation of a public policy.

And while pointing out the specific criteria that define a journal for the dissemination of science should be a fundamental part of the implementation of a public policy that seeks to support such activities, it is also true that this definition can and should be addressed by the own scientists and by experts in science dissemination.

My thing, in any case they are not sentences or affirmations, they are doubts. Doubts that, those who edit magazines in this area, have all the authority to be able to attend if they consider it prudent.

I have doubts; I translate them to a code that serves me to refine my questions. Scientists always start from a question that is not correct; otherwise it would not be fun to do science. The most important thing in science is the questions; Pablo Picasso said that computers are useless because they only give answers.

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PERSONAL SENSE OF ROLE IN MAIN CAREGIVERS OF HEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS IN CUBA

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— *Abstract*—

The research developed offers the characterization of the personal meaning of the role in primary caregivers of patients undergoing hemodialysis treatment at the "Arnaldo Milián Castro" Hospital in the city of Santa Clara, given the importance of knowing the senses that the caregiver attributes to their role and therefore to the activity of care. It presents a characterization of the personal sense from four indicators of analysis (meaning in the patient-caregiver relationship, sense of care, sense formations and sense attribution).

Multiple-case study was used as a research design and a system of qualitative tools was used to drill down from the selected sample. It is evidenced that the personal sense of the role is based on the personal, family and social commitment of the caregivers as well as source of satisfaction and well-being.

Keywords

Personal sense, main caregivers, hemodialysis.

In the last decades it is recognized worldwide the increase of non-transferred pathologies and among them the Chronic Kidney Failure (hereinafter CKF) which is characterized by the kidneys' progressive and global inability to discard the toxins of the organism compromising the renal function in almost 90% of its totality.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2014), a significant increase in non-transferred diseases as a leading cause of death has been reported in the last decade. For a mortality rate of every 100,000 inhabitants, the regions of Africa, South-East Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean have numbers between 652 and 656 people who die due to non-transferred diseases, which differs in the Americas and Europe to 437 and 496 inhabitants respectively (WHO, 2014).

The main risk factors contributing to the increase in this problem are advanced age, family history of the disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, self-medication, exposure to toxic substances, inadequate fluid intake habits, unhealthy diet, smoking and alcohol abuse (WHO, 2014).

In Latin America, countries such as Colombia report a disease prevalence rate of 0.87%, which has centered the attention of the health authorities due to its chronic course and in relation to the high economic and human cost of the care of these patients (Rivas *et al.*, 2013).

In the United States, the disease is an incidence of 4.3% and 7.6% as a prevalence rate, with a higher rate with adults over 65 years of age. These data are closely related to the prevalence of chronic diseases in this type of patients (González, Vargas, Echeverri, Díaz y Mena, 2013).

The number of patients receiving dialysis treatment by the end of 2014 in Cuba reached 2982 people, which by the end of the year was estimated to have been exceeded (Fariñas, 2015). For its part, the Provincial Health Center of Villa Clara province reported in the year 2014 a total of 143 new cases of patients with CRI with an annual prevalence of 1224. Only for the municipality of Santa Clara the incidence reached 104 patients per thousand inhabitants, for a total of 180 patients in renal replacement therapy, 159 of them went to the Hemodialysis service.

Guerra, Díaz and Vidal (2010) report that on receiving hemodialysis treatment the patient experiences changes in diet, fluid consumption, social, labor, family

and personal. The changes made for this new stage are fundamentally associated with lifestyle, medical recommendations and caregiver assistance.

The person in charge of providing these informal supports or care is recognized as the main caregiver, a role that is mostly assumed by a family member on whom rests the greatest responsibility for care. The caregiver is the resource, instrument and means through which specific and specialized care is provided, based on the commitment to preserve the patient's life (Cruz and Ostiguín, 2011).

The assumption of the role carries with it implications in the social, physical and psychological order manifesting itself in the abandonment or restriction of social activities, the lack of self-care skills, the overload and the experience of negative emotional states such as fatigue, depressive symptoms or proper depression (Arechabala, Catoni, Palma and Barrios, 2011).

The actions that derive from the caregiver role acquire meaning for the person who performs the role, however, the exercise of the role is not reduced to it, the complexity is that assuming it, this person restructures his / her life situation according to his family and the needs of the same. Hence, meanings, although frequently representing meanings in themselves, do not express a direct, linear, or intentional relationship with the senses (González, 2010)

The sense constitutes, then, a new type of psychic unit susceptible to the language and consequent to the culture, like organized psychic unit appears in the present moment of relations of the person (González, 2013). According to Vergara (2011) through the social relations established by the subject with the environment, personal sense is constituted as an element that grants internal congruence and a notion of oneness.

The caregiver attributes a personal sense to the activity that he/she performs in function of the multiple conditions that particularize this process. This allows us to understand that the formation of personal senses centered on an activity such as care appears mediated not only by the action itself but by the system of experiences that are derived as executors in the attribution of meanings.

The relevance acquired by the present study is supported by the insufficient approach of research that places the caregiver as the center of attention and the personal sense that acquires the role as a regulatory dimension of the relationship system and its behavioral expression.

Taking into consideration the proposed research objective: To characterize the personal meaning of the caregivers' role in their patients in Hemodialysis of the Hospital "Arnaldo Milian Castro" of the city of Santa Clara.

DEVELOPMENT

1. Equipment and method

A qualitative methodology was used in the research, given the flexibility and openness that it offers for the study of the psychological phenomena. The data were obtained in natural environments of the studied subjects. According to Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) the natural conditions for the investigation allow to evaluate the development of events without manipulation or stimulation with respect to reality, guaranteeing a greater reliability of the results.

The case study is used, specifically the study of multiple cases with the objective of approaching in depth and detailed the identified problem.

1.1 Sample

The Hospital "Arnaldo Milián Castro's" Hemodialysis Room of the Villa Clara city is chosen as the unit of study, being the only institution that offers this health service at the provincial level. A total of 5 daily shifts with a duration of 4 hours and in alternate frequencies for Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as well as Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday are identified. The selection of the sample was intentional according to: the operational capacity of collection and analysis; the understanding of the phenomenon and the nature of the same as factors for sampling in qualitative research. The sample of cases-type is used for the richness, depth and quality of the information that allows obtaining and from inclusion, exclusion and exit criteria.

Inclusion criteria

- Main caretakers of patients with CFK in hemodialysis treatment for less than six months.
- Main caretakers of patients with CFK in hemodialysis treatment who wish to participate in the research.

Exclusion criteria

- Main caretakers of patients with CFK in hemodialysis treatment for less than six months.
- Caretakers that are not available to participate in the research.
- Caretakers that only fulfill the function of accompaniment during the treatment schedule.

Departure Criteria

- Caretakers who during the process decide to abandon the research.
- Caretakers that during the investigation his/her relative dies.
- Caretaker that during the investigation his / her relative receives a transplant.

The sample consisted of 8 primary caregivers of hemodialysis patients who met the defined criteria for selection.

1.2 Equipment used

In accordance with the research objective, a system of techniques is used:

- **Semi-structured interview:** it is oriented to the data collection through the verbal interaction and according to the degree of structuring there is a level of premeditation in the questions or the topics to be deepened. (Appendix 1)
- **Interview in Depth:** it is directed to the obtaining of information that is desired to probe in depth with the interviewee establishing core analysis thematic. (Annex 2 and 3)
- **Observation:** allows direct and immediate information on the phenomenon or object of investigation.
- **Technique of the 10 desires:** according to González (2008) studies the diversity and hierarchy of needs in their expression through activity, desires and imagination. It consists on the direct method, indirect method and the activity record. For the purposes of the investigation only the direct method is used which allows the expression of the subject's conscious desires from the actual situation that he experiences. (Annex 4)
- **Phrase Completion Test:** projective technique composed of incomplete phrases that act as inductors on the subject and allow to explore psychological contents such as motives, needs, conflicts, concerns and interests. (Annex 5)

- **Composition:** open non-standardized technique based on the subject's experiences in relation to the content that needs to be known. According to González and Mitjás (1989) the composition is an important way to determine the integration of a psychological content in a psychological formation of the personality. (Annex 6)

1.3 Ethical Considerations

The respect for individuality and the confidentiality of the data obtained were considered as ethical principles of the research. Voluntary participation and informed consent of the participants were established as ethical requirements to proceed in the study. The study objectives were explained and the schedules and conditions of realization were negotiated.

1.4 Procedure for analysis results

For the data qualitative analysis, two phases were integrated. Initially, an individual analysis was carried out per case and then a generalization of results by techniques through content analysis where indicators of analysis were established as: (1) Patient-caregiver relationship meaning; (2) Care meaning, (3) Meaning of formation and (4) Attribution of meaning.

RESULTS

A predominance of the female gender in the role of primary caregiver is identified for the sample studied, being a total of 6 women and 2 men. The ages of the participating caregivers fluctuate in the 41-60 age range, with a period of experience in the role as caregiver between 2 and 6 years. In relation to the employment relationship of the caregivers, it was found that 3 caregivers perform domestic duties as housewives and the rest are active labor.

For those caregivers who are linked to work, it is complex to maintain both tasks due to the systematic treatment, as well as the duration of treatment, which interrupts the traditional working day.

In this regard, they say: *«I have continued to work because at work I am considered enough if not, I'd have to leave it», «my sister and I share the care and accompaniment to the room so that each one can keep working», «my work is a lot of responsibility and because of my situation I have thought about retirement to take care of my wife, but thanks to my boss that has not happened, he considers takes me in consideration».* The work and family adjustments are

the main mechanism that guarantees the employment relationship for these caregivers, as well as the type of activity that they develop.

These data coincide with the studies of Gil *et al.* (2013) and Aguilera *et al.* (2016) by identifying characteristics that coincide with the caregiver's profile around the female gender, age and absence of employment relationship as conditions prone to assuming the role.

Regarding the patient-caregiver relationship degree, three groups are distinguished: friendship, sisters, daughters and spouses, which are recognized as the main support system among caregivers and coinciding with previous studies (Santos Lima *et al.*, 2013).

- Indicator 1: Patient-caregiver relationship meaning

Caregivers recognize that the emotional management of their family member stands out as the most complex function, characterized by affective changes and states such as aggressiveness, irritability, depression, anxiety, sadness and uncertainty. The experience of these emotional states in the patient mediate the relationship with the caregiver which hinders the care process or facilitates care, while some may be undisciplined, irritable and aggressive or otherwise disciplined and docile.

Before the emotional manifestations of their relatives, the caregivers express: «*the has his days and his moments*», «*sometimes I do not know what to say to not bother him*», «*when he is like that, we have to let him be*», «*There are times when he/she doesn't even want to look at me*», this generates sadness and impotence in the caregivers due to the affective relationship they maintain with their family member and the concern that causes them both their physical and psychological health.

On the other hand, the quality of the interpersonal bond and the personality characteristics of the relative act as elements flattering to the relationship. In this respect they express: «*she surprises me with her optimism, the way she faces the disease*», «*she has a desire to live*», «*she has faced very difficult things that I do not think I could have endured*», «*she infects us with her optimism*», «*she prevails over adversities*»; these verbalizations show in the patients psychological formations such as self-esteem and resilience that intervene as factors in the process of therapeutic adherence.

- Indicator 2: Care meaning

It is evident among the study's caregivers signs of physical and emotional exhaustion that are identified by expressions such as: «*there are times when I can't anymore*», «*I feel very stressed*», «*I am tired because of the rhythm of life I lead*», «*we live the same situation day by day*», «*I feel super tired*». These phrases express the overload role experienced by caregivers based on the responsibility involved in the care of a patient with hemodialysis, which in many cases is exacerbated by inefficient support networks that contribute to these tasks.

The family financial aid or the stay of some of its members when the patient is hospitalized are the main types of help that in many cases the caregivers receive from their family. In this respect they refer: «*this is a long illness, of resistance, at the first the all begin, but t some do not make it all the way*»; the caregiver refers to the duration of treatment and the involvement of the rest of the family in the process. Time, family and social networks are elements that modulate not only the patient-caregiver relationship but also the care experience (Chaparro, 2011).

As a result, the caregivers recognize that from the tasks and responsibilities multiplicity associated not only with the care of their relative but with domestic or work activities their own health is affected and they point out: «*I do not sleep as I did before*», «*I neglect myself to attend to him*», «*I always look out for him*», «*there is always concern*», «*one looks after them and forgets oneself*», which denotes for some cases inefficient self-care skills. On the other hand, the concern for "others" appears as a nucleus of meaning when the person is meaningful to the caregiver (Santos Lima *et al.*, 2013).

- Indicator 3: Personal meaning formation

The main needs identified in caregivers relate to the family member's health, the family, adverse effects to treatment, emotional stability, self-care actions, as well as economic and labor problems.

The health status of the relative is recognized as a regulatory motive that is constituted as a mediator of emotional state in caregivers. The patient's hemodynamic stability results in the caregiver's own emotional stability, which is characterized by states of expectation and marked concern. On the other hand, insufficient family support generates overload for the caregiver, which in turn limits the satisfaction of their personal needs, which implies that a restructuring of projects necessarily occurs when caring for others (Santos Lima *et al.*, 2013)

They are evidenced as psychological units that reach meaning in the configuration of sense for the subjects' family illness, psychological content of a personal nature, family support, the experience of negative emotional states, concern about death, needs for affection, acceptance and self-care.

The personal psychological contents are expressed in relation to the personal and professional improvement, the family and work area as spaces of socialization and generators of well-being. It is expressed in some cases the configuration of psychological formations such as self-assessment, future projects and conception of the world.

The concern about death is expressed in only two of the caregivers, this is contradictory in that the characteristics of the treatment to which the patients are exposed are characterized not only by their complexity but also by the commitment that life generates.

The unfavorable clinical condition of the family relative to the rest of the patients in the room constitutes in one of the cases the reason for reflection towards death. On the other hand, the attitude assumed regarding the disease itself, the posthumous legal or familiar dispositions in one of the patients is of concern for its caregiver. This allows us to note that for the rest of the caregivers an uncritical attitude is manifested around the situation, due to conditions such as the systematically, frequency and duration of treatment, hemodynamic stability of the patient or favorable clinical conditions and the patient's attitude towards the illness.

It is evident in the caregivers elaborations with a high emotional bond around the role they play and determined by positive affective expressions such as love, commitment, satisfaction and pride generated by the exercise of the role, which is constituted as a mediator of the personal sense that acquires the same within its motivational hierarchy. On the other hand, affective expressions such as fear, insecurity, and instability are identified; which have a negative evaluation based on personal experiences that also support the role's performance and are consistent with previous research (Santos Lima *et al.*, 2013).

- Indicator 4: Attribution of meaning

The elaborations and reflections as an expression of the role's personal meaning are based on a conceptual domain around the role's definition which have a generalizing level that transcends the common sense and the

social representation attributed to it. This favors that the reflections acquire an individualized and contextual sense starting from the referents of the caregiver.

The personal sense that the caregivers attribute to the role is based on the social, family and personal commitment that it acquires.

For some it is constituted as a constant process of self-improvement and generator of self-development, for others it becomes an opportunity to thank their family member and recognize it as a process of affective retribution. These results are compatible with those offered by Fernández-Lansac and Crespo (2011) when recognizing in the assumption of the role a state of well-being and satisfaction as benefits of care.

Caregiving actions appear as a means to compensate for and meet the needs for recognition, affection, acceptance, and appropriate self-worth. In all the cases studied and despite the individualities described, the role is recognized as an activity that generates satisfaction, pride and complacency. The results reflect coincidences with the statements of Chaparro (2011) when assessing the experience of care according to the meaning that the caregiver gives to their work.

CONCLUSIONS

- The personal meaning that acquires the role is shaped from the personal, family and social commitment to the patient, which is based on the satisfaction and pride that generates its function.
- The role's personal meaning for caretakers is constituted in a process of self-development and self-improvement.
- Indicators such as the employment relationship, degree of relationship with the caregiver, years in the role, social support networks, the interpersonal patient-caregiver relationship and the personality characteristics of the relative are identified as variables that mediate the personal sense that the caregiver attributes to their role.

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ANNEX

Annex #1 Semi-structured interview

Objectives:

1. Obtain informed consent to proceed with the study.
2. Identify the participants' general data.
3. Explore conditions associated with the care process.
4. Analyze the emotional impact of the illness on the caregiver

Indicators

Caretaker general data:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Education level
- Marital status
- Employment relationship
- Kinship with the patient

Relative with hemodialysis general data:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Time of diagnosis of kidney disease
- Relative's time in treatment for hemodialysis
- Years in the role
- Patient's physical and emotional manifestations
- Emotional manifestations in the caregiver
- Overcharge or wear in the care process
- Self-care skills
- Social support perceived by the caregiver

Annex #2 In-depth interview

Objectives

1. Clarify analysis' units particularized for each case study.
2. Triangulate the information obtained from the instruments applied.

Annex #3 In-depth interview

Objectives

1. Explore the personal meaning attributed by caregivers to the role.
2. Identify the characteristics of the meaning that the role acquires for the caregiver.

Annex #4 Ten wishes technique

Objective

Identify the hierarchy of needs in primary caregivers.

Name: _____ Age: _____

Instructions:

We need you to write down 10 wishes, it may be both what you want to happen and what you do not want to happen, you do not need to think hard to write, put whatever you can think of when reading the incomplete sentences that start each wish. It is important that you be sincere and manifest the desires you truly feel.

1. I wish _____
2. I wish _____
3. I wish _____
4. I wish _____
5. I wish _____
6. I wish _____
7. I wish _____
8. I wish _____
9. I wish _____
10. I wish _____

Annex #5 Phrase completion test

Objective

To explore the main motivations, conflicts, worries and frustrations in the main caregivers.

Instructions

Complete or end these sentences that express your true feelings, ideas or opinions.

1. The happiest moment
2. Regret
3. My biggest fear
4. I can't
5. I suffer
6. I failed
7. My future
8. I'm better when
9. Sometimes
10. This place
11. The main worry
12. I wish
13. I
14. My biggest problem is
15. My main problem
16. Happiness
17. I think I can
18. I try hard every day for
19. I struggle
20. My biggest wish
21. I have always wanted
22. I struggle a lot
23. My aspirations are
24. My future life
25. I'll try to accomplish
26. My goal
27. Every time I can
28. I fight
29. The past
30. I feel

31. In the future
32. I need
33. I hate
34. When I'm alone
35. I feel depress when

Annex #6 Composition

Objective

To analyze the personal meaning that acquires the role of caregiver.

Instruction

Write a composition with the title «*Being a caretaker is, for me...*».

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
UNDERSTANDING OF LITERARY
TEXTS IN THE TEACHING
PREUNIVERSITY

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— *Abstract*—

The presented investigation is the result of a study about the development of the understanding of literary texts in the students of the university School of the University of Pedagogic Sciences Félix Beaches her Moral", given the necessity to elevate the quality in the teaching. It exposes a compound system of activities for a subsystem of activities for educational schedule and a subsystem of activities for extended educational schedule. In the system they are related the three phases for which it traffics the development of the understanding of literary texts (knowledge, implication with the literary text and personal elaboration). it is also presented, a new category in the understanding of texts, denominated development of the understanding of literary texts.

For the solution of the scientific problem, in a selected sample, theoretical and empiric methods are used, as well as of the mathematical-statistical level and the valuation for specialists' approach was positive and the validation in the practice corroborates its effectiveness.

Keywords

Understanding, literary text, develop, system.

EIn the world, with the explosive development of the 21st century, "modern information and communication technologies have made millions of millions of human beings reach an important part of the objectified culture" (Fanfani, 2008, p.3). In this context, the relations between school and society become more complex and dialectical, taking into account that social development transits through education.

In Cuba, the Ministry of Education has within its priorities, to attend to the correct use of the mother tongue because "the different problems related to the use of language have a serious impact on the quality of learning" (MINED, 2011, p.3).

To do this, he points out that among the common aspects to reinforce from the classes are: the systematic practice of reading, as a source of pleasure and enjoyment or as a means to obtain information and knowledge; the reading of different types of texts to contribute to the man's spiritual enrichment and the systematic exercise of the understanding of different types of texts: literary, historical, scientific, journalistic, publicity, legal.

In this scenario, attention to the comprehension of literary texts is essential for the student, since it is a way to acquire knowledge, not only in the curricular subjects of the educational level in which they are found, but also in order to "extend their living space, to know other places and historical times, to discover the common thing between cultures of different places and different times" (Abello, *et.al.*, 2014, p.178).

When students enter pre-university education (10th, 11th and 12th grade) they must be knowledgeable and capable of understanding literary texts in order to be able to move around without difficulty in their studies and later in the university.

However, in the author's observations, when analyzing inspections carried out and the checks applied to the students of the University College of the Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales", they show a predominance of deficiencies in the motivation for the reading of literary works; lack of arguments to justify whether it is attractive, amusing, funny or otherwise; insufficient exchange between the students regarding the literary work analyzed and little knowledge in the understanding of works that influence the production of meanings.

Finally, it is noted that the student, when confronted with the literary work, does not know how to comprehend it in a creative way, which does not favor autonomy, nor the flexible elaboration of the meaning of these texts, according to the level of exigency that is required in pre-university education.

On the other hand, it is observed that although different courses have been used for several years to achieve an adequate teaching of reading comprehension in schools such as the "Ignacio Rolando Abreu" Secondary School, the Pre-university Vocational Institute of Sciences Exact "Ernesto Guevara" and in the University of Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales", are not applied in an integrated way by the teachers in the different groups of students, nor in the teaching process is achieved symmetry in the understanding of literary texts with respect to the different levels, in addition to the methodological deficiencies existing in the teachers, which influence the achievement of an adequate motivation when analyzing the literary works.

These regularities, in a way, negatively impact the teaching-learning process in the understanding of literary texts, therefore, the objective pursued by this research is: To propose a system of activities to develop the understanding of literary texts in the students of the 12th grade of the University College of the Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales".

DEVELOPMENT

1. Generalities of literature teaching in the University College

As part of the attempt to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process, in order to ensure the entry into pedagogical careers in Cuba, an experience is carried out that the student, by the end of the 11th grade, has the possibility of opt for college.

The university colleges are schools created within the same pedagogical universities, to provide a better preparation to young people who are in the 12th grade in these universities and who aspire to study in careers in pedagogical Sciences, once the entrance examinations have been approved.

The knowledge, skills and values to be reinforced in the University College correspond to the requirements of the pre-university graduate, including the teaching of Spanish and Literature, through the correct use of the methodological components of the class.

Through universal literature readings written in different time periods, it is pursued like aim the perfection of the four linguistic macro-abilities (hearing, speech, reading and writing); the development of the understanding and construction of texts, as well as the formation of concepts related to language structures and their functioning in discourse (MINED, 2015).

Among the general objectives of the subject for this degree are:

- Critically evaluate, with gradual independence, the beauty of the works studied taking into account the unity of content and form.
- Discuss ideas and feelings present in the works studied, as well as the moral attitudes and qualities of the characters.
- Express creative expression through the construction of different typologies texts.
- To characterize the fundamental works of universal literature based on its integral analysis, taking into account the values that have transcended it in time.

The above allows us to propose that the Literature teaching-learning process in the University College responds to the current approaches of the Language and Literature way of teaching in the pre-university.

1.1 Teaching-learning process of the understanding of literary texts and their development through a system

The teaching-learning process for Zilberstein (as quoted in Roméu, 2013) is "the main pathway that facilitates and leads to the student's cognitive development in practical activity, within and outside the school context" (page 76), therefore, if the teaching-learning process of the comprehension of a text is correctly carried out, it can influence education, culture, creativity, intelligent use of free time and even the identity of a student (Guadamillas, 2015, Larrañaga and Yubero, 2015, Roméu, 2013).

The teacher who teaches the Spanish-Literature subject, when realizing the comprehension of a literary text, must bear in mind the complexity that this presents, because it is loaded with creativity and expressiveness, based on the aesthetic effect that the author manifests who uses resources literary in function of each genre, allowing a number of interpretations, depending on the cultural level of the reader (Báez, 2006; Cantero, 2013; Sales, 2007).

These peculiarities make the comprehension of literary texts originate an unlimited series of arguments, as reading becomes a dynamic, flexible and productive process, therefore, when the reader constructs his ideas and performs a personal rewriting of the text, brings great richness to interpretation.

The understanding of literary texts can be developed, because they do not constitute a dichotomy (teaching - development), but a continuation. Both types of processes can occur simultaneously in the same teaching task, since teaching is necessary for its further development.

The process of development of the understanding of literary texts is not isolated from its teaching, but is raised to a higher level, since, it transits through the prism of the assimilation of the work on the student's part; is developed through the exercise of the different levels of understanding becoming stable if the student develops the methodological procedures that this process demands, in addition, it requires a certain organization, both in the teaching process and in the motivations of the students. According to Roméu (2013), it is a pedagogical activity that is taught through different processes, based on the levels of performance a student travels through (intelligent understanding, critical understanding and creative understanding).

The previous levels can be enhanced and developed, from a system of activities that includes the following phases:

- Knowledge: is the process by which the student decodes, evaluates and applies the literary text, reaching the relative truth of the work and how it assimilates the content on the key elements of the work, such as: what is the subject, the environment, the time, the writer, ideological content, historical moment in which it is developed.
- Implication with the literary text: when in the analysis carried out by the student implies its personality with the content of the literary work and it is evident, if it is able to integrate in his analysis, fundamental aspects such as: in-depth knowledge of the work, affective bonding and personal involvement with the content of the text.
- Personal elaboration: when the knowledge, expressed by the student, about the literary text, contains value wealth, creation, being verified by the emission of judgments and valuations very own, result of an active reflection on the content of the literary work with adjustment to the theme, coherence, sufficiency, clarity of ideas, variety and elegance of language, style and originality.

Considering the above, it is considered that the development of the understanding of literary texts is a process that improves the current performance of the reader, through three key phases: knowledge, involvement and personal development, to reach the essence of a literary text and develop skills needed to interact with it, from a dialectical logic to argue with value judgments a literary work in a given context.

The individual lives constantly understanding the objects and phenomena that happen around him; but this process is not spontaneous, it requires a teaching-learning process that takes into account the character of the system because it allows conceiving the development of the understanding of literary texts through interrelated processes.

According to Bertalanfly (as cited in Machado, 1990), the General Systems Theory specifies three important categories for the study and design of a system. These categories are: System: Set of elements, properties, attributes or relationships that belong to objective reality; Elements: Unlimited parts in the variety that make up the system; and Relationships: Links that are established between the elements. These elements must be held together to form part of the system.

The teaching-learning process can be analyzed from the point of view of the Systems' General Theory, as it aims at the formulation of valid principles for the systems in general and offers a conceptual scheme that allows at the same time the analysis and the synthesis of this process and focuses, from a broader perspective, its complexity and direction.

The systemic approach, applied to the teaching-learning process of the comprehension of literary texts can allow a totalizing orientation when integrating a set of elements required for the achievement of a global objective.

2. DIAGNOSIS OF THE PROBLEM'S CURRENT STATE

2.1 Study unit

The University of Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales" is located in the Santa Clara municipality, with a matriculation of 861 students in the regular daytime course and 497 in the course per meeting; distributed in 13 pedagogical profile degrees. Included in this general enrollment is the University College, with a population of 42 students in the 12th grade.

It is selected as a sample group 1.2.1, belonging to the University College, with a total of 20 students, which come from 5 municipalities in the province of Villa Clara. The criteria of intentionality that are taken into account for this selection is that it is precisely the group that presents the greatest difficulties in understanding literary texts and are students that the researcher could accompany them in a systematic way during the investigative process.

2.2 Tools used in the initial diagnosis and its results

To diagnose the current state of development of literary text comprehension, the following instruments are applied:

Teachers' survey: to determine the main external and internal factors which influence the insufficient development of the understanding of literary texts in pre-university. (Annex 1)

Group interview to students: to identify the difficulties that present in the phases that determines the development of the understanding of literary texts. (Annex 2)

Pedagogical test (instrument of entrance): to verify the difficulties that the students present in the phases which determine the development of the understanding of literary texts. (Annex 3)

When analyzing the results of the survey applied to 12 teachers of the Department of Spanish-Literature of the University of Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales" (Annex 1), it is determined that among the external factors that have the most influence in the insufficient development of the understanding of literary texts are: the socioeconomic situation across the country that prevents, on many occasions, deliver the literary text to each student; the lack of Spanish-Literature specialists in pre-university and the poor reading habits that students present.

Regarding internal factors, 8 teachers (66.6%) consider cultural influences of students to be influenced, of which 5 (41, 6%) state that they have a short-term impact and all (100%) coincide in which affects with a high intensity; for 8 teachers (66.6%), vocabulary ignorance found in literary texts is another factor, affecting in the short term according to 7 teachers (58.3%) and with a high intensity.

Another factor to emphasize are the few reading abilities that students have, according to 7 teachers (58.3%), being for all, a factor that affects, in the short term and with a high intensity; the little mastery of the textual typologies and the strategies of reading comprehension are, for the consideration of 4 teachers, who represent 33.3%, other factors that affect, all agree that influence with a high intensity and in the short term.

For 3 of the respondents (25%), poor teacher preparation is a key factor that influences, according to 2 (16.7%), in the short term and 3 in the high incidence of this factor.

In the group interview (Annex 2), 7 students (35%) agree to correctly assimilate the content when reading the narrative literary text, 11 (55%) say no and 2 (10%) respond affirmatively. In the second question, 9 students (45%) apply and value in their answers the implicit, explicit and complementary meanings of the decoded literary work, the same percentage responds that no and 2 (10%) are affirmative.

When inquiring if they reflect on the content of a narrative literary work after reading it, 6 students (30%), reveal that sometimes; 10 of the respondents (50%), indicate that never; 4 (20%) respond that, when reflecting on whether the student is capable of involving his or her personality in analyzing a narrative literary work, 30% of the students (6) recognize that they only do so and 70% (14 students) declare that never.

Regarding the pedagogical test results (Annex 3), it is observed that in the dimension Knowledge, 12 students (60%), get a low level, while 6 students (30%) reach an average level and only 2 students (10%) achieve the category of high. In the dimension Implication with the literary text, 65% (13 students), get the low level, 25% (5 students) reach the middle level and 10% (2 students) achieve high status and dimension Personal development, 10 students (50%) get the low level, 8 students (40%) acquire the average level and 2 students (10%) achieve high status.

2.3 Foundations of the activities system proposed

Considering the difficulties detected, an activities system is proposed to develop the understanding of literary texts, which is based on the general postulates of the Systems General Theory (Bertalanffy, 1954). From the philosophical point of view, it is based on the method of Materialism-Dialectic,

since it allows explaining the phenomena of nature, society and thought, and considers the man's education as creator of culture.

From the psychological point of view, the cultural-historical Theory of Vigotsky (Bermudez, 2015) is assumed, since the essence of this psychological theory is the man appropriation of the cultural and historical heritage of humanity.

According to this theory, subjects make their knowledge, abilities and attitudes with the help of "others", which presupposes considering activity and communication as ways to develop the personality of man, through the integrated functioning of cognitive processes, affective-motivational and behavioral.

Pedagogically, the system of activities is built on the basis of the laws of Pedagogy, since it takes as an action guide, the unity between problem-objective-process, in such a way that the objective of this system of activities is to contribute to respond to the social order that Education has in the development of the understanding of literary texts in the formation of the new generations.

Also, from the pedagogical point of view, it is based on principles of the pedagogical process proposed by Addine (2004), such as: Principle of the unity between the instructive, the educational and the developer; Principle of linking theory with practice; The unity of the affective and the cognitive, in the process of education of the personality of the student and Principle of the collective and individual character of the education of the personality and respect for it.

As a benchmark, the requirements for the comprehension of literary texts in pre-university education are taken into account, and as a starting point the analysis of the main limitations and deficiencies present in the development of the understanding of literary texts and in the educational needs bank of Cuban students belonging to the municipality of Santa Clara in the province of Villa Clara.

STRUCTURE OF THE ACTIVITIES SYSTEM

The activities system proposed is composed of a general objective aimed at developing the understanding of literary texts.

It is further integrated by two subsystems: Subsystem I composed of activities that are developed in teaching time as an integral part of the teaching-learning process of literary text comprehension and subsystem II composed of activities that are developed in extended teaching time, so

called, because the students after completing the curricular activities of the teaching schedule, according to what is planned, develop other activities that complement their comprehensive preparation, in the so-called extended teaching time, evidencing a greater flexibility in the organization and planning of the academic activities, as a support to the teaching-learning process of understanding literary texts.

Each subsystem is composed of different processes, which makes it possible to materialize it in practice. These are:

1- Diagnostic process. This process is present throughout the development of the activities system. Students are diagnosed before applying the activities system to recognize the potentialities and needs they present in terms of understanding literary texts. It is also diagnosed to the extent that the student performs the activities, as the teacher assesses, if there is or is not, a progress in the phases that develop the understanding of literary texts and is diagnosed when performing the activities system to check if the students, reach or not, a development in the understanding of literary texts to reach later conclusions.

2- Planning process. It is a process in which, based on the diagnosis, activities are planned and rectified in order to develop the understanding of literary texts, taking into account the particularities of the student and the group in general. For the activities that are conceived, we take into account the phases through which the student travels to develop the understanding of literary texts and attention to diversity in the group.

3- Execution process. It is done with the aim that the students acquire new knowledge or systematize those they already present, that there is a greater and better implication with the literary text and develop the personal elaboration in the answers given in the activities. The student, in this process, already has to act and operate, getting to develop skills with the literary text because, as the system advances, with the proposed activities, allows the teacher to clarify the doubts that arise, to evaluate the performance of the students to carry out the activities of the system and to support the individual work with sufficient flexibility so that each one of them impresses his own style of work.

4- Evaluation process of the activities system effectiveness. This process is aimed at the control, rectification and verification of the results obtained in the application of the activities system. It allows modifying and reorienting

the proposed activities, taking the appropriate decisions for the correct fulfillment of the proposed objectives.

These processes are linked through activities, which have the following structure (Title, Objective, Method, Methodology, Activities, Conclusions, Evaluation, and Independent Study). The activities of the system are arranged as follows:

Subsystem I	Subsystem II
Activity# 1: A real and wonderful novel	Activity # 1: Unraveling the story
Activity# 2: Understanding through reading	Activity # 2: Literary cards
Activity# 3: A Senator in love	Activity # 3: Gathering knowledge
Activity# 4: The other Self	Activity # 4: A tale to reflect
Activity #5: In search for the American dream	Activity # 5: A sad reality

These activities are applied in the 12th grade in the Unit entitled: *Current Latin American and Caribbean narrative. The novel. Alejo Carpentier. The kingdom of this world. The story. Selection of authors and works.* In this unit universal works written by Alejo Carpentier, Juan Rulfo, Jan Carew, Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Benedetti, among others are the main topic.

The system also has a resulting integrating quality, since none of the parties can offer it in isolation, besides, it is not reduced to the sum of the properties of all its components and the result is the development of the understanding of literary texts.

First Subsystem I activity example

Actividad #1

Title: A real and wonderful novel

Objective: Analyze the novel *The kingdom of this world's* prologue to develop its comprehension

Method: Independent heuristic work

Methodology:

- Conversation with students to make them interested in the activity's topic.
- Guide activities.

- Review them inside the classroom.
- Answer possible questions that may exist.
- Draw the activity's conclusions by one previously selected student.

Activities:

1-Student, you have read a literary work belonging to a great writer, Alejo Carpentier. We invite you to answer the following questions to facilitate your understanding.

- a) The work begins with a prologue. Do you know what it is? If not, investigate why it is called a prologue in a dictionary or any digital encyclopedia and share it with your classmates.
- b) To which work belongs the exergue with which this novel begins? Inquire about who is its author. You will be astonished to know that you have already studied it. Give the rest of your colleagues interesting information about the work.
- c) Copy in your notebook the words of dubious significance that appear in this text. If possible, clarify them by context, otherwise, use a dictionary.
- d) Which country does Alejo Carpentier visit? Make a list about the places frequented by him during the visit.
- e) What does the author discover in those places that he examines? Extract excerpts from the prologue that proves it.
- f) Express through a sentence, what is particularly evident to Carpentier during his stay in that country.
- g) Interpret through a text, the following phrases expressed by Carpentier. Reed them to your classmates.
 "But it is that many forget, disguising themselves as magicians at little cost, that the wonderful thing begins to be unequivocally when it arises from an unexpected alteration of reality (the miracle) ..."
 Those who do not believe in saints, cannot be healed by miracles of saints, nor those who are not Quixotes can enter, in body, soul and property, in the world of Amadis de Gaula or Tirante el Blanco."
- h) From what is read in the prologue, comment with your classmate, what is for you the real-wonderful thing that Carpentier poses.
- i) According to the author, the "real-maravilloso" (real-wondrous) is not only the unique privilege of Haiti, but the patrimony of the whole of America. Do you agree with him? Express your opinion through a text.

- j) Value through a text, which can be written or oral, what has served you reading the prologue of this novel?

Evaluation: (oral) From what was read in the prologue of *The Kingdom of This World*, give possible reasons as to why, for Alejo Carpentier, it was impossible for him to locate the story he was about to tell in Europe.

Independent study: Guide the next activity titled Unraveling the story.

2.4 Assessment of the activities system by the specialists' criteria

For the assessment of the activities system (Annex 4), a total of 10 specialists are selected, of whom 5 are in the teaching category of Auxiliary, 3 in the category of Assistant, one with the category of Instructor and one specialist without categorizing, in pre-university education. Of these 10 specialists, they hold the academic category of Master 9, and a specialist. The average number of years of experience is 28 years.

The application of this method makes it possible to evaluate different aspects of the research that need to be submitted to the specialists for consideration, based on their experiences. This allows restructuring certain ideas that lead to the improvement of the activities system developed, before implementing it.

The evaluation given in each of the items is set out in Table 1:

Table 1. Assessment by specialists

Currency level	Social relevance	Scientific novelty	Applicability
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3 7	1 4 5	2 5 3	2 4 4

Among the main suggestions that are made, they consider attending to the dosage of the program and the didactics of some components; the need to structure some activities according to the system proposed and the didactics of the component that is prioritized from the phases of the subsystems. The above issues are analyzed and solved in the proposal taking into account the statements made. The proposal is given back to the specialists for evaluation and the result is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Assessment by specialists bases on corrected marks

Currency level	Social relevance	Scientific novelty	Applicability
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0

2.5 Practical validation of the activities system

With the objective of verifying the validity of the theoretical modeling, in the practical conditions of the preparation of students of the University College of the Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales" for the development of the understanding of literary texts, a pre-pedagogical experiment is carried out, where its results guide the system of demands and methodological actions that are exposed in this research report.

A control group is not determined, but the stimulus, its measurement and control take place in the same sample, before and after the application of the activities system. The pre-experiment allows performing a comparative study between the transformations operated during the assembly of the activities system (before) and those produced during its implementation (after) in the same group.

The system of activities for the development of the comprehension of literary texts is inserted in Unit 1 of 12th grade, which is composed of a total of 40 hours - classes, taking into account the dosage of contents. The activities of Subsystem I were applied in the teaching time, with duration of 45 minutes each.

Subsystem II is applied in extended teaching hours, it is not done in the classroom, but is supported by other scenarios such as the university library, conference rooms or theater; scenarios that favor the learning of the contents because they are equipped with computers, televisions, geographical maps; means that allows a better representation of the literary work in students.

These activities do not have a specific time, but depend on the richness of the debate and the integration of fundamental aspects such as in-depth knowledge of the work, the affective bond and personal involvement with the content of the literary text.

In relation to the activities of these two subsystems, it is important to note that in doing so, students acquire and expand knowledge related to literary

works, as they decode, evaluate and apply the key elements of their content. The activities are considered as motivating and lead to express ideas that demonstrate the knowledge gained from the works, in addition discussions made help to reach conclusions with depth.

It is pertinent to point out that the signals made by a group of specialists, the students and the pedagogical practice, allow to perfect the system of activities and confirm the adaptation of the same to the research objective, on the other hand, the results of the validation in practice ratify the activities system contribution to the development of the understanding of literary texts.

2.6 Obtained results on the applied output tools

To verify the advances and the difficulties that the students present in the development of the understanding of literary texts, the Student Survey I is applied (Annex 5); the Student Survey II (Annex 6) with the objective of confirming the advances and the difficulties that the students present in the dimensions that develop the understanding of literary texts after applying the activities system and the Exit Pedagogical Test (Annex 7), to verify the advances and difficulties that the students present in the dimensions that develop the understanding of literary texts after applying the activities system, where the following results are obtained:

Regarding Annex 5, 95% of the students (19) express that they do know what it means to develop understanding of a literary text and 1 student (5%), more or less responds. 100% affirm that they have been guided the steps that must follow to understand a literary text.

100% of the students are able to recognize the phases for the development of the understanding of texts and explain them adequately, which demonstrates the assimilation of the work done with the activities system in theory and practice. They do not present difficulties in the comprehension of literary texts 12 students, and 8 consider that, sometimes, when these are presented is, mainly, because of the ignorance of the words' meaning located in the text object of analysis, but they have advanced in the understanding of this type of texts, which demonstrates the influence of the proposed activities system.

After applying the activities system, the taste between Grammar, Reading and Understanding has been shared among the students, where 40% of them choose Reading and Understanding as the preferred component.

When analyzing the results of Annex 6, it is considered that 11 students (55%) correctly assimilate the content of the literary work and 9 (45%) allege that sometimes. Regarding the second question, 13 students (65%) apply and value the implicit, explicit and complementary meanings of a literary work when decoding them and 7 (35%) respond that sometimes, showing in this way, significant advances. They always imply their personality when analyzing a literary work 60% (12 students), and they do it only sometimes 40% (8 students). When inquiring if they reflect on the content of a literary work after reading it, 4 students (20%) reveal that they sometimes do so and 16 of the students surveyed respond as always.

When analyzing Annex 7's results, regarding the Knowledge dimension, 10 students (50%) obtain the middle category, and the same number of students achieve the category of high. Regarding the dimension Implication with the literary text, 55% of the students (11), get the category of medium, and 45% (9 students) achieve the category of high and relative to the dimension Personal elaboration, 8 students, for 40%, earn the middle category, while 12 students, for a 60%, acquire the category of high.

In the three dimensions, after applying the activities system, significant advances are evidenced by students in the development of literary text comprehension, especially the Personal elaboration dimension, according to the results obtained.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of understanding literary texts has current studies that emphasize its complexity and the need to use an effective diagnosis whenever one works with an individualized mental process that depends on the special attention to the students' volitional-motivational sphere regarding to the act of reading. Through the application of different instruments, it can be observed that the students of the University College present difficulties in the development of the comprehension of literary texts, not to integrate in the understanding of a work: deep knowledge, involvement with the content of the literary text and personal development; there are no responses corresponding to the upper middle level.

The activities system for the development of the understanding of literary texts that is proposed has as a referential standard the requirements demanded by the objectives of the comprehension of literary texts in pre-university. In the proposed activities the four communicative skills are developed (listening,

speaking, reading and writing) and it has contents available to pre-university students and with a level of depth that corresponds to the objectives set.

The application of the activities system in practice evidences the development of the understanding of literary texts, the positive advance in the oral expression of the students, the motivation for reading and the transition by the levels of understanding. It also allows a trustworthy climate for the development of a collective process based on mutual aid.

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ANNEX

Annex 1 - Teachers' survey

Objective: To determine the main external and internal factors that influences the insufficient development of the understanding of literary texts in pre-university.

Partner: At the moment, as a teacher at the University of Pedagogical Sciences "Félix Varela Morales", I am conducting a research on the development of the understanding of literary texts. Your opinion is of great value and helps our research.

- 1 Name the factors that according to you come to play in the wrong comprehension of literary text.
- 2 2- Sign with an X the intensity and duration, according to you may affect the reading comprehension in the presented factors.

Impact factors	Duration			Intensity		
	Short	Medium	Large	Low	Medium	High

Annex 2 - Group interview to students

Objective: To identify the difficulties that the students present in the phases that determine the development of the understanding of literary texts.

Student: At the moment a research is being carried out related to the development of the comprehension of literary texts. We appreciate your sincerity in your answers.

Questionnaire

1. While comprehending a literary text, do you consider you correctly understand the text's content?
 yes no sometimes
2. When you decode the implicit, explicit and complementary meanings of a literary text, do you apply and value them in your answers?
 yes no sometimes
3. While reading a literary work, do you ponder about its content?
 never sometimes always
4. Do you think you apply your personality while analyzing a literary text?
 never sometimes always

Annex 3 - Pedagogical test (Entry tool)

Objective: To verify the difficulties that the students present in the dimensions that determine the development of the understanding of literary texts.

1. Read carefully the next fragment from the literary work Tartufo.

"... treat people as you deserve to be treated. You can come: I will help you. You are going to measure the depth of female corruption and the breadth of the miserable vanity of men. (...) The cooler you think, the further it will come. Punish yourself without mercy and be feared. (...) But you will be nothing if you do not have a woman to help you. You need one that is young, rich, elegant. But if you fall in love, hide your love as a treasure: do not let them guess, for then you will be lost: you will no longer be the executioner, but the victim".

- 1.1 According to the previous fragment, write a composition related to the work.

Annex 5 - Students survey (I)

Objective: To verify the advances and the difficulties that the students present in the development of the understanding of literary texts.

Student:

An activities system for the development of the understanding of literary texts has been applied. From the knowledge acquired, answer the following questions with sincerity. Your opinion is of great value for this work.

Questionnaire

- 1.- Do you know what it means to develop the comprehension of a literary text?
 yes no kind of
- 2.- Have you been orientated which steps to follow in order to comprehend a literary text?
 yes no sometimes
- 3.- Explain the key phases for the development of the understanding of literary text.
- 4.- Do you have any difficulties in understanding literary texts?
 yes no sometimes
- 5.- Which difficulties?
- 6.- Sort out according to your preferences the components of the Spanish-Literature course that you prefer doing.

Writing Reading and comprehension Grammar

Annex 6 - Students survey (II)

Objective: To verify the advances and the difficulties that the students present in the dimensions that determine the development of the comprehension of literary texts after the activities system has been applied.

Student:

You have been involved in research related to the development of literary text comprehension. We thank you for your cooperation and ask you to answer the following questions with complete sincerity.

Questionnaire

- 1- While comprehending a literary text, do you consider you correctly understand the text's content?
 yes no sometimes

- 2- When you decode the implicit, explicit and complementary meanings of a literary text, do you apply and value them in your answers?
 yes no sometimes

- 3- While reading a literary work, do you ponder about its content?
 never sometimes always

- 4- Do you think you apply your personality while analyzing a literary text?
 never sometimes always

Annex 7 - Pedagogic test (Output tool)

Objectives: To verify the advances and difficulties that the students present in the dimensions that determine the development of the understanding of narrative literary texts.

1. 1- Read carefully the next fragment from the tale “Constant death beyond love”.

"Then she laid him on her shoulder with her eyes fixed on the rose. The senator embraced her by the waist, hid her face in her mountain animal armpit and succumbed to terror. Six months and eleven days later she had to die in that same position, perverted and repudiated by Laura Farina's public scandal, and crying with the rage of dying without her".

- 1.1 According to the previous fragment, write a composition related to the tale.

READING PROMOTION WITH
ELDER PEOPLE, EXPERIENCES IN
A NURSING HOME IN TUXTLA
GUTIERREZ

—

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Specialty in Reading and Writing Cultural Process
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— *Abstract*—

In the following pages it is described a reading promotion experience with elder people. Based on the importance of knowing the needs of the group that worked with us, interests and daily life, it was discovered as the main problem, the loneliness. From there, it was prepared with the group a workshop to reflect, review and debate in relation to the shared reading, and thinking how to improve their living situation in a realizable way.

Gradually there were favorable changes that helped to reduce the loneliness feeling, besides the reading appropriation and positive attitudes to improve their relationships. This experience wants to be an example for other projects to promote reading, where the main stare is directed to the participant in the meeting with the text.

Keywords

Reading promotion, elder people, reading

Technological, scientific and social innovations, among other factors, have allowed people's life expectancy to increase, to such an extent that the estimate that has been made as a result of the research on old age, refers that by the year 2050 the elderly population will reach 21% of the total world population. With this growth, diverse needs arise that must be solved by each society, depending on how the elderly are perceived and treated.

An element that has been studied as an ally to improve the quality of people's life, as a recreational activity and even as treatment for some diseases, is reading, which in every age, social group or subject takes different meanings.

Much of what has to do with reading and society is related to the promotion, which for several years has taken a fundamental part in literacy processes, approaching the book to people, and in projects of reading development with different objectives. This promotion usually responds to institutional reasons that sometimes start from generalized diagnoses, and others from objectives and goals that often do not correspond to the group's needs with which they work.

On the other hand, it is clear that encouraging the appropriation of reading as a daily life activity is not easy, but it is considered necessary to begin to take the first steps to develop an activity more consistent with what the groups require, for this it is necessary to know the life situation of the people and their own interests, so that the intervention is efficient and effective.

The experience narrated here was aimed at strengthening the group cohesion of elders through reading and to alleviate their loneliness. The reading then has to do with the way in which it was appropriated by the older adults who reside in a gerontology center in Tuxtla Gutiérrez to diminish their feeling of solitude and how to be able to replicate it in other opportunities. It is about sharing everything that can contribute to the experts in these issues so they can acquire new tools and techniques to address this problem.

ELDERS IN CHIAPAS

In order to define who and what it is to be an elder, it is necessary to mention that "age is an arbitrary criterion for reducing aging, since the threshold of self-perceived or socially assigned old age shows differences" (INEGI, 2005, p.7). It is clear that the conception of being part of this group has references rather cultural than natural, however in this case was taken into account

the official information of the State, which is from which emanate all public policies concerning the population.

Mexicans considered as part of this population sector are "those who are sixty years of age or older and are domiciled or in transit in the national territory" (Ley de los Derechos de las Personas Adultas Mayores, 2012, p.2), that is to say, that they are based or that they are situated within the country, and they are perceived and treated depending on the contexts in which they live: "In many traditional societies, the old people are respected as 'our greater'. But in others, older women and men may be less respected" (WHO, 2014, Put down Stereotypes). Thus, this stage can also be understood as full of experience, maturity, and knowledge about themselves and about society from their generational conformation.

There is a tendency to live longer, due to "the decrease in mortality in all ages, especially the infant, the control or eradication of some communicable diseases, as well as the improvement in social conditions" (Vega, González, Arias, Cabrera, Vega, 2011, p.13); however, with respect to the latter, it is important to emphasize that it is the context that will determine the role of the elderly in society and how it will respond to their needs.

According to Article 9 of the Law on the Rights of Older Persons (2012, p.6):

The Family of the elderly must fulfill his social function; therefore, in a constant and permanent manner, it must ensure the wellbeing of each of the older adults that are part of the family, being responsible for providing the satisfactory needs for their care and integral development and will have the following obligations to them:

- I. Granting food in accordance with the provisions of the civil code;
- II. Encourage daily family life, where the older adult participates actively, and at the same time promote the values that concern their affective needs, protection and support, and
- III. To prevent any of its members from committing any act of discrimination, abuse, exploitation, isolation, violence and legal acts that endanger their person, property and rights.

It is important to mention that in our country this population sector is considered as a vulnerable group. According to INEGI (2005, p.32):

Elderly are considered as part of these groups, since many of them are dependent, do not have a definition of roles and are often excluded from

decisions. All of them share the basic attribute of age, which is supposed to generate similar problems and make them the target of sector programs or specific public policies in the country.

Since older adults are a vulnerable population sector and recognizing that there is diversity as to how they are conceived and treated, it is necessary to generate different proposals that respond to the particular needs, without thereby not taking into account the official statutes of this country.

According to the latest census of INEGI (2010) in the case of Chiapas, the elderly population represents 7.3%, which compared to the 2000 census had an increase of 1.7% as shown in the following figure, as well as the municipalities of Chiapas that have the highest percentages of this population sector.

Image 1. Elderly in Chiapas.



Source: Own elaboration based on INEGI 2010

The percentages above not only show the demographic growth of older adults, but raise different questions as to whether the world, the country and the State are prepared with services, public policies, among other items, to cover the needs that will also increase. It should be mentioned that the complexity of this phenomenon increases if it is thought that each cultural group, depending on its concept of an older adult, will require satisfiers that, from their perception and treatment, will suit the subject.

In the specific case in question, the regime on which all actions related to this population sector must be based and regulated by the Law for the

Protection of the Rights of Older Persons in the State of Chiapas (2004 , p.5), where article 10 presents the rights that should be enjoyed by the elderly:

This law recognizes the following rights for the elderly:

i.- integrity and dignity:

a).- to a quality life, being the obligation of the family, the government bodies: state and municipal, as well as society, guarantee the older adults, access to programs that have the purpose of enabling the exercise of this right [...]

f).- to receive protection from their family, government bodies: state and municipal, as well as society [...]

i).- to be respected and recognized as human beings, men and women, as dignified older adults, regardless of their ethnic or racial origin, impediments or situations of any kind; and

j).- to live with honor in their homes and near their relatives until the last moment of their existence; unless it is the cause of serious, contagious or mental illness that requires their internment in specialized institutions; or that their descendants or collateral relatives up to the fourth grade are unable to offer them the necessary care and attention older adults require.

ii.-legal certainty and family:

a).- to live in a family, or to maintain personal relations and direct contact with them even in the case of being separated, unless this is contrary to their interests [...]

d).- to receive the support of the state and municipal institutions in the exercise and respect of their rights [...]

f).- enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, when they live in homes or institutions where they are cared for or treated with full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy, as well as their right to make decisions about their care and quality of life [...]

iv.- education, recreation, information and participation:

a).- to associate, meet and be part of organizations of older adults to promote their development and influence in the actions directed to this sector; [...]

c).- to have access to the creation, production and dissemination of books, publications, artistic works, and audiovisual, radio and multimedia productions, in which their rights and duties are promoted;

d).- to establish policies and actions relevant to facilitate the elderly, the appropriate spaces that allow them to exercise recreational and cultural rights. Sports fields, gymnasiums and official infrastructure suitable for the practice of sports or recreational activities shall be available to that group on an equal basis, and in accordance with the regulations issued [...]

vi.- legal and social assistance:

a).- to be subjects of social assistance programs by the state and municipal institutions, with preference being given to those who are at risk or helplessness [...]

vii.- the popular complaint:

Any person, social group, non-governmental organizations, associations or societies, may denounce before the competent bodies, any act, or omission that causes or may cause harm or damage to the rights and guarantees established by this law, or that contravenes any another of its provisions or other regulations that regulate matters related to older adults.

Part of the observation and the approach to work with older adults in the public sector through the System for Integral Family Development (DIF, Spanish acronym) State and Municipal, reflected that in the agenda of care in shelters and day stays that the DIF's systems has for people who do not have a family that supports them, or that their children work all day, are not considered the diverse needs of a subject, that is to say, what these institutions are interested in as part of their work is to see for the food, hygiene, health and housing of the elderly, without regard to affective needs, recreation, belonging to a group, etc. Proof of this is that when this project was presented to both systems, it was submitted to the managers because it did not come from the health area, as one worker commented: "if your

project was about food, hygiene or health, it would be approved without revision, but as it is about reading and that is not a priority, we will review it and call you". Obviously they did not.

A point of reflection on the experience narrated previously in relation to the figures on increase of older adults, notes that there is no analysis by those who coordinate the public attention with respect to what implies the demographic growth of this population sector and the different needs arising from the demographic increase and its relation with the multiple spheres of social life as the economy, politics, ecology, education, etc., even having a legal framework that should guide the actions so that the older adult has a dignified life until the last of his days.

READING AND THE ELDERLY

The benefits of reading are diverse and particular for each social group and each subject, specifically for the elderly. It has been studied and applied especially in relation to how it influences to improve the quality of life of the subjects, and decrease or delay diseases such as depression, Alzheimer's, among others that have to do with memory. In the case of this experience, we worked to reduce the feeling of loneliness and that is why it is proposed as that reading allowed older adults to meet with themselves, identify with their colleagues in the gerontology center and thus may decrease that feeling.

Valera-Villegas defines reading as:

A way of acting and not resting, involves affective, ethical and intellectual commitments, because there are present actions, to a lesser or greater extent, such as: the recognition of the other, empathy and welcoming. This would result in the recognition of their difference, some measure of mental and affective identification, and the opening or exiting of themselves to meet the other. (2009, p.64).

It is sought that the older adult, through the text and the strengthening of the cohesion with his companions can diminish his feeling of solitude; that reading is the space "where the subject finds himself again in his own individual structure" (Barthes, 1970, p. 49), and is also recognized through experiences shared with the other members of the group.

From the stories that were used in this work, the older adult was creating a sense of his own with the theme that was proposed from the text. It is not a question of finding what the author means, but rather of recognizing

that "every individual reader has the possibility and the right to construct a meaning, his meaning" (Poulain, 2011, p.203).

In this look, it is said that the reader is a producer, who builds from reading. Barthes states that "the product consumed becomes production" (1970, p.47), so reading leads to create or recreate something. In this case the production will be directed to write while reading, raising the head, that is to say, from sharing lived experiences in the group dialogue that the text invites to emerge from the memory, and to the strengthening of the cohesion between the older adults.

The meaning of reading is shaped by the experiences lived by the reader, is a coming and going between reading the text and the context, between the look of their own reality, their history, experiences, ideology, among others, and what the writing provides, confronts, reinforces or changes, that is to say, as Freire (1991) mentions, the reading of the world always precedes the reading of the word and the reading of the word implies the continuity of the reading of the world. The proposal is that in reading "it is based on the historicity of the reader, in the condition of a human being subject to experiences" (Valera-Villegas, 2009, p.66). That is why the subject will read from his position of the world.

As a cultural process reading must be understood as a way to go, because "despite being a tool and solving practical things every day, it is also an instrument without an immediate what for" (Argüelles, 2012, p. 29) so that the influence of the text in the life of the reader is often not observed instantaneously, but with the passage of time can find the transcendence of that text, even when it is believed that it has already been erased from memory.

The proposed reading not only has to do with what the older adult knows, but with what he is:

When one reads, one puts all his senses in the pages, but also the accumulated experience of the reader. One does not only read the book he has at that moment in his hands and before his eyes, but also reads the previous pages of other books and, of course, those of the book of life (Argüelles, 2012, p. 30).

From the lived experiences and the points in common that each one can find with the other members of the group, the reading becomes a mechanism to contribute to diminish the solitude felt.

As a meeting point, we encourage sharing not only the moment of reading, but also what the text evoked in them: their feelings, thoughts, experiences, among other things, because "when we share what we read, we transmit a passionate joy and something is left in the soul, in the spirit, in the intelligence of whoever accompanies us in our reading" (Argüelles, 2012, p.43), that is to say, that sharing foments empathy and sympathy among the group members so that they can cope better with the situation they live.

READING PROMOTION WITH ELDER PEOPLE

In order to define what reading promotion is about, we have to start by taking into account two factors that are an important part of this process: motivation and interest. According to Bamberger (1975, p. 37):

When we speak of motivation, we think more about the logically determined guidelines and intentions that guide behavior, while the determining factor of interests are rather emotional attitudes and experiences. The interests and motivations of an individual are broadly reflected in the way they live. What the child learns or stops learning in school depends more on their interests than their intelligence. Make it so that he can learn more in his favorite subjects and the type of activities he chooses in his leisure or recreation.

As mentioned by this author, the first factor to take into account to be able to influence a reality with a reading project are the interests of the people, because it has a starting point to create a reading-reader relationship. According to Del Ángel and Rodríguez (2007, p.11):

The promotion of reading comprises the set of activities as well as systematic and continuous actions aimed at motivating, arousing or strengthening the taste and interest in reading and its active use; is a sociocultural practice not limited to the librarian and school environment, which contributes to the transformation of the individual and the community, facilitating social development (Naranjo, 2003).

The promotion of reading as a cultural process has to do with recognizing the particularities of the other, their interests, needs, among other things, to create conditions in which this activity is aimed at "transforming the way of conceiving, valuing, imagining and using the reading. It seeks to make reading an activity potentially liberating and edifying the condition of the citizen". (Morales, Rincón, Romero, 2005, p. 201)

Reading promotion has been carried out in our country in multiple ways, responding to diverse needs and interests, mainly of those who carry out the projects, and not so much of the users. Initially this activity was carried out as an effort to eradicate illiteracy, in another stage to create and strengthen the access of books for all; however "little has been done to train citizens with the ability, capacity and commitment to make those books a part of their lives". (Del Ángel, Rodríguez, 2007, p. 12)

Based on the experience described here, reading promotion with the group of older adults was based on a diagnosis of needs and interests that guided not only the way of carrying out the intervention, but also the texts that were used.

EXPERIENCES ABOUT READING PROMOTION IN A GERONTOLOGY CENTER IN TUXTLA GUTIÉRREZ

One of the changes emerging from the demographic growth of older adults is the displacement of living with their families, or in their own homes, to share spaces for geriatric care, whether public or private.

The gerontology center where we worked is a private company that for 17 years has been dedicated to providing specialized gerontology intervention and nursing services 24 hours a day to elderly people whose mission (information provided by the center) is to provide care and health services to the elderly. Currently it serves approximately 50 people who are residents of the place, and all having different health problems such as: diabetes, depression, renal failure, Alzheimer, among others.

So for anyone who wants to enter, they must have an interview with the director, who talks to the family about the health status of the elderly and does a brief socio-economic study.

According to its website, the services offered are: accommodation, food, laundry and ironing, auxiliary care for mobility, daily personal hygiene, care for the conservation and maintenance of health conditions and emergency primary care medical conditions. Also complementary programs, among which stand out: physiotherapy, cognitive stimulation, and recreational activities.

The nurse in charge of the residents mentioned that: "Some students from the health area attended to practice their professional and social service,

and a group of medical students tried to form a reading club, but it was not possible because older adults are lazy to read".

She also commented that when they, the caretakers, have wanted to put them to draw or to write, these activities are rejected under arguments that they do not know how to do it, they are tired or they do not like it. She categorized these attitudes as laziness of the residents and even exhorted not to mention that the sessions were to read, but rather that it was a visit to talk to them.

The families of the residents can visit them any day, at specific times, being the main ones for this activity on Saturdays and Sundays. Based on the planning of its activities, the authorities of the institution designated that the reading work would be on Tuesdays from 11am to 12pm, after their walk, for those who can do it, and before the snack.

Also, the director decided that the coordinating nurse would designate the people who would participate in the workshop. The only conditions they put were that the elderly participating would not have Alzheimer's, some other memory problem or some intellectual deficiency, because we mentioned having no experience doing reading workshops with people who had some suffering of those already described.

In total, the reading group consisted of 27 people, 22 women and 5 men, ranging in age from 57 to 88 years old. They attended the sessions depending on their health and emotional state, or if their families visited or left them, and their stay in the group also depended on their residence in the center.

Through a group interview it was possible to know that none of them made the decision to be there, and it was their relatives who decided that they should be, although in some cases they did not live with them. On the other hand, when the elderly were moved to the gerontology center they were not informed that they would go to that place. In addition it was observed that they do not like to carry out activities of writing or drawing, but in each session we had very good participation through opinions, anecdotes, questions, etc.

In the first sessions to get to know the group, the main strategy was to tell them stories, due to the staff saying that "they did not like to read"; however, when we took copies of a story for everyone, the enjoyment of having the reading in their hands even modified their participation, since the reading became shared, but appropriate for each one. It is important to mention that in the group there are 2 people who cannot read or write, and 2 others who

have vision problems, but they paid attention to what others read and in the end they commented on the reading or the subject matter.

Some of them said that they had made friends and there are more people with them, but that was not enough, because they had lost (among other things) their autonomy. When they talked about this issue, they mentioned that not having their belongings, not being at home and not having personally decided to move to the stay were some factors that made them feel constantly alone.

During the sessions it was also observed that despite being together in the same space, the gerontology center, not all of them knew each other. In the group talks they could find similarities in their names, some experiences, music or food tastes and even the loss of a child. These relationships through the reading group, which were believed to be strengthened, are a key point to alleviate the loneliness they feel, since the strength of relationships with others can positively affect the emotional state of subjects.

After having made a diagnosis with the group, it was proposed to hold a reading workshop with 14 work sessions, 11 planned by the researcher along with them and 3 free sessions, with the objective that they would be the ones guiding the theme and the activities of the day. The duration of each workshop was 1 hour. The general objective of the workshop was to form a reading group with the elderly of the gerontology center to strengthen the cohesion between them and thus help to reduce their loneliness.

In order to be able to work the sessions of the workshop it was necessary to have the appropriate strategies, on the one hand it was necessary to find a way to select the texts that were used so that they were the suitable ones according to the subjects, and also to select the way to work with the group to take advantage of the time agreed with the institution and thus achieve what was originally thought.

In this case and according to the characteristics found in the context described above, it was decided to work with the group discussion technique, because it allowed to gather and motivate the opinions of each one, as well as the collective debate that generated proposals to improve the elderly's life situation.

On the other hand it is worth mentioning that for the selection of the texts a documentary revision (or bibliographical as some authors call it) was done, to determine which texts would be the most adequate to achieve the

objective of the workshop and, of course, that of the research. In the end the following were chosen:

- Legend: "The tree that did not know who it was"
- African Tale: "How Wisdom Spread Through the World"
- Carpentry, in Tales that my boss never told me. Juan Mateo
- The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
- The selfish giant, Oscar Wilde
- Ears in the corner, M.B. Brozon
- The paw, José Emilio Pacheco
- The truce, Mario Benedetti

Generally the agenda was that the topic of the previous session was first taken up, the text was read in a shared form and from their own opinions questions were raised to debate. Each reading generated different reflections that linked the reading with some situation of life, as described below:

The group did not know each other very well even though they lived together all day. Older adults did not know about their places of origin or how they had reached the geriatric stay, nor about their tastes respecting music, food, daily life, skills, defects, among other things; by putting them together in a new activity, was a radical change because the head nurse selected a group of people with a health condition not so complicated and that they could carry a coherent talk between them. At first they did not speak with confidence, perhaps because they did not know the researcher, so the first sessions were dedicated to getting to know each other, namely if for the group was important friendship, and above all to share some aspects that motivated the attraction between the members.

Little by little each one found similarities with others and above all sharing their experiences, fears, anger, and also recognizing that having interaction with others is necessary to be able to cope with their life and the loneliness they feel in that place.

Some talks that developed after some readings led to reflection on happiness and freedom, which reflected the importance of the autonomy of people even in this, the last stage of their lives, and especially when they have not develop an illness that makes it impossible to have judgment about themselves; it was also observed that some consequences of feeling that loss can affect not only their state of health, but their mood, sympathy for others, tolerance, among others.

As we progressed in the work weeks, they had more interaction between each other; they even kept talking when the researcher finished the session. Little by little, they came closer to each other from meetings inside and outside the reading group, and it was noticed that in the first sessions when they went out to walk, each one did it separately, and now they helped each other to have better support and avoid falls.

After putting things in common to create empathy and sympathy, people were taking the initiative to read aloud and give opinions about reading, and no longer had to ask what did you think?, they knew that by the ending of the story everyone could say what they thought and how they faced it from what they lived at that time, so they were also taking courage to debate with respect to the perspective of others if they did not agree, or if they felt differently.

As time passed, they took into account who was missing and asked to wait for everyone to start, or those who already knew that they were leaving warned the companions not to worry about their absence. On the other hand, through the progress of the sessions and the interaction between the members, the group was providing support to cope with their days in the center, recognizing the positive attitudes of others to take them as an example.

Further deepening the attitudes of the group, these were changing as they were having confidence between them, in the beginning the person moderating had to intervene over the voices that murmured while reading or giving an opinion at the time, and after they controlled the situation by themselves, when they saw that somebody was distracted they called them out so that they would quiet or requested shift to speak.

On several occasions there was music and noises that did not contribute to the sessions passing in calm and with the appropriate silence so that everyone listened to the text and opinions, this also changed, although not outside the group, between them they were muted to be able to listen the story or the opinions better. This, in addition to helping the communication between members of the group, also showed interest in having better spaces and moments of encounter between them and reading.

Finally, it is also noteworthy that the elderly were asked to read different titles or authors that they had heard or read at one time: Eraclio Zepeda, Jaime Sabines, Octavio Paz, Pablo Neruda among others, although these were not considered as part of the project, are rather a result of the

motivation and encounter to read and could contribute to future projects with the same group.

CONCLUSIONS

To carry out reading promotion without recognizing the needs, interests and life situations of the group with which it is intended to work is like walking with a blindfold in the eyes, without direction, sense of orientation and not knowing if it will reach the destination. Prior to any project it is necessary to carry out a diagnosis that allows to know to be able to influence and transform.

This project did not have as main objective that the old adults became a group of friends, but rather that there they could find support to diminish their feeling of solitude; so it must be recognized that not all of them ended up together. The attraction between the members of the group is similarly due to affinities of character and we did not tried to force ties that in the end would result in breaking what was achieved. While they now know more about each other and there is more interaction, the encounter led to different kinds of friendship within the group.

On the other hand, it was also sought that the group not only be one that works as such in the workshop sessions, but that cohesion persists and takes an important part in their daily life; of course not the 27 managed to be attracted to the group in the same way, but now everyone has in mind that there are 26 other people willing to talk, to advise and also to support them.

The most important aspect to consider regarding the motivation of older adults to work in groups is that they should not be forced, because instead of helping cohesion it may end up breaking the attraction between the members and the collective. Again, it is important to reiterate that not all people have the same character and the same disposition to tolerate the other, but the role of the researcher was to be mediator and inclusive to motivate the opening towards the diversity of perspectives, to strengthen the confidence in the group, and thus encourage participation.

Both old age and solitude have been studied from different perspectives that allow us to observe that both are constituted by diverse socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and other elements. Thus, through this experience and the literature consulted, it can be concluded that solitude is not something that can be eliminated through reading-writing in the life of the elderly, because it is a multifactorial and complex situation; however it is possible

that reading is part of the solution to an emotional health problem. It is also considered necessary to encourage people working in geriatric institutions to collaborate with projects that improve the elderly's life quality.

The reading group made it possible to realize that all people are vulnerable and marginalized in different life situations, and that is why through this experience we had the opportunity to recognize that this kind of projects, often closed to certain selections, must be open up to know different realities, diverse cultures, where you can find an invaluable wealth of knowledge and experiences that contribute to transforming societies favorably.

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THE FLOWER MOUNTAIN
(*NAMANDÍ*)
IN THE FLOREROS RITUAL
LANDSCAPE

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— *Abstract* —

During the Winter Solstice, the *floreros* travel from Chiapa de Corzo to highland Chiapas in order to collect *niluyarilo* flowers, a kind of bromeliads, for the building of a nativity scene for *Niño Florero*, a Baby Jesus representation. In *Navenchauc*, Zinacantan, the Flower Mountain is used as a meeting point for the initiated floreros. It is a study about the relevance of memorial and ritual landscape for the understanding of one of the sacred places of this ritual, as it is mountain, with prominent anthropological, historical and social implications.

Keywords

ritual landscape, memorial, floreros, mountain.

Altepetl comes from the Nahuatl language and referred to a community organized and settled in a territory. The Spaniards translated it as 'pueblo' (town), because the term indigenous denoted the set of their houses and buildings as well as the population. But these translations reduced their meaning, for although it is a term that describes a political, socioeconomic and family organization, it is also a term that speaks of a ritual landscape, of very important symbolic aspects. The *atl-tepetl* roots come from this same term, they made up this word and its meaning: water-mountain. In fact, the glyph that represents it is precisely a stylized hill which at its base opens a cave through which gives access directly to the water..

The representations of Mesoamerican spaces in times before the arrival of the Spanish are very dynamic narratives in which you can read the origin of the inhabitants, the foundation date of the *altepetl* ritual, the name and lineage of its leaders. It can also be read features of the environment, such as its important hills, caves, underground streams and other sites that were considered sacred and, consequently, many of these elements refer to myths and not necessarily topographical points. To the Spaniards, these types of graphic and oral narratives were not intelligible to them and, considering them to be contrary to their faith, demonized and destroyed them.

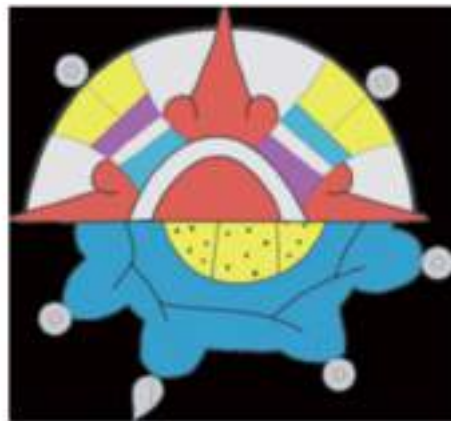
In this sense, they had to trust those who knew the history, the environment, the toponymy and the signs to represent the landscape. It was these painters who often received the instruction to represent the territory as it was, but in reality what they did was to represent the *altepetl* as they understood it after the Spanish conquest. In a synthesized production, they created certain maps on European paper, with the skill of an indigenous artist. We are talking about a sacred geography that reminds us that every hill, in the pre-Hispanic vision, is a water container. Following this idea, we know that the Christian churches in the colonial era came to be considered the new centers of sacredness and in representations are the new glyphs of their places of power. Let us not forget that many times the Christian buildings were installed by the evangelizers on their ritual spaces, only super imposed culturally. It was an arena where the mixture of definitions was carried out and where the European concept of landscape and the indigenous one of *altepetl* began to negotiate. In the eighteenth century there was practically no one able to represent them. Thus, knowledge was extinguished that we can now only study by tying strands from various disciplines of thought.

In this way the establishment of towns was the result of a careful selection of the site, after a deep observation of environmental behavior, which implied ensuring the stability of slopes and water sources. Mesoamerican

physiography consisted of a kind of horseshoe formed by hills, on whose skirts the settlements were located, giving the idea of a protective pot, which recalled Mother Earth's uterus (Urquijo, 2014: 91). In this sense, we are interested in understanding the different ways, forms or modes in which individuals in their cultural and historical diversity have interacted with their immediate nature. In the present case, ideas about the cult of mountains or hills, is a current practice.

In the selection of the foundation site, the indigenous groups were environmental scholars, so the name of each locality often described some feature of the landscape, be it flora, fauna, hydrography or orography. In this way, the assigned aesthetic and functional values were recorded largely in the toponymy. In other regions we find terms equivalent to that of *altepetl*, which indicates a conception of the environment of aesthetic, geographical, historical and symbolic similarity, such as the *yucundu mixteco*, the *chuchutsipi totonaco* or the an *dehe nttoehe otomí*, whose literal translation in the three cases is 'water-hill'.

Image 1. Glyph representing *Teochiapan*.



In the study region, there is a glyph representing the way Chiapa was recognized by the Aztecs in ancient times, who called it Teochiapan¹, and shows the image of the *apantli* apantli or river, the land on which the *chia* is sown, and on these symbols a solar representation. This element seems to indicate the

1 It is infer that *Teo* alludes to a sacred place, and *chiapan* to red macaws.

most relevant of a cultural group like the chiapanecas, with images of the water, the earth and the sun, as vital sources and, therefore, present in their rituals.

As far as toponymy is concerned, we will see that the names of the places involved in this trip over a ritual territory are going to be fundamental for the definition of some categories of understanding about the reasons why the Flower men of Chiapa de Corzo (Image 5) perform a pilgrimage to the mountain (*Namandí*) and the way a flower becomes a motive that encourages them. The toponymy allude to "cosmological conceptions, to the characteristics of the environment or to remarkable events occurring in the place" (Barabas, 2003: 23), despite everything, is a subject that we would have much to say. So it seems that the sacred and the "demonized" seem to tread the same ground. In the town of Chiapa, the imposition of La Pila over an "eye of water" or natural water slope is still explained, to avoid the rituals that its settlers carried out on the site.

On December 21 the sun is projected in the parapet of La Pila. It is a building aligned with the winter solstice. The people of Chiapa used to say that earlier, when the flower men returned with the niluyarilo flowers on December 21, after having washed them with devotion in the Flower River, they would then come to take water from La Pila which was illuminated by the sun. The legends told by the late Domitila Mendoza, said that the sun entered La Pila water, on this date so important for the Chiapanecas.

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The ritual place is inhabited by forces, spiritual and otherness beings (García Zambrano, 2009). For this reason, directional manifestations of religions lead to a conformation of the humans visions of the world and their interrelations: between men themselves, between men and heaven, between men and spiritual forces. The spaces created in this way allow those who share an image of the world, a language, to recognize each other. According to García Zambrano, the ethno-historical sources of the sixteenth century show that these "sites of superstition" and settlement sites had an underlying background and a diversity of cognotivities. In this way of seeing it was preferred to occupy rocky places where springs gushed in the middle of green forest foliage. He maintains these declarations in documents such as the Geographical Relations of the 16th Century and the Geographical Relation of Motines, where it is expressed that although the friars tried to resettle the Indians in an *ad hoc*, way, they persevered in their old habit of remaining extended and in the neighborhood of the birth of rivers. This "*aquerenciamiento*" to the site, as this author refers, responded to the portentous periodic appearance of a serpent that they thought came out

literally from the water eyes of the spring. In turn, it makes a suggestive observation that the reason for the preference exceeded the mere requirement of water supply, as some currents of contemporary anthropology and archeology might well argue.

These categories of understanding must have been as important as they are today to represent ritual spaces. However, the discrediting and demonization of the sacred places or sanctuaries is a process that began from the Colony, in the framework of evangelization, as we have already mentioned. The Christianized peoples continually emphasized the negative character of the Hispanic previous thought and placed it in a substrate no longer dangerous and ambivalent, but malignant, while the Catholic was experienced as the "good." In this same idea, Roger Bastide (2005) makes a detailed analysis of Maurice Halbwachs' work about collective memory. According to Bastide, Halbwachs fails to disengage from the idea of a collective consciousness outside and superior to individuals. What counts is not the group itself, he says, but the organization of the group, because it is only a system of inter-individual relationships. Memories are so caught up in the web of human groupings that they can only be rebuilt or restored to their old bases. We have been struck by Bastide's reflection after questioning a group of black Brazilians who participated in an indigenous popular religion about the reasons that had led them to abandon their own ritual systems to adopt others. The answer to this was unanimous: the spirits of nature they worshiped in Africa were bound up with a certain environment which they had not been able to transport with them in the black ships. It was the spirits of such a mountain, such a river arm or such a sacred forest (its *altepetl*?). They had lost sight of the opening to the transcendental, they were far from it, Eliade would say.

This way, the importance of the place was emphasized, according to Bastide, as the space where the memories are hooked to be able to be kept, but are they simple memories? This is to pass from material space to spiritual space. Collective memory can only exist by recreating in a material way the centers of continuity and social and energy conservation. To understand religious existences it is necessary to move from the topical space to the motor space: sacred geography. Let's touch, then, the skin that surrounds the memory of the ritual landscape of the Flower men. Let us walk on the landscape and dwelling of the spirit. We feel its connection with the sacred places, mainly the Mountain of the Flower, where the ritual is staged, where the myth is recreated.

THE FLOWER MOUNTAIN DURING THE RITUAL PASSAGE

This ritual in search of a mountain flower, locally identified as Flower of *Niluyarilo*,² (Fig 5) sextends in a geographical zone located in the chiapaneca cultural region,³ (Fig. 2) literally in Chiapa de Corzo⁴, Acala, Chiapilla, Totolapa, Saint lucas; besides Guerrero and Flores Magón, both populations of Venustiano Carranza. The trip begins on December 14 and culminates on the 21st of the same month, in an event called *Topada de la Flor*, next to the *nandayasemí* (Flower River). After the return, other activities continue until January 6, when we can say that the ceremony ends.

It is the walk of a little more than five hundred men, mostly young (Image 3) who acquire the recognition of *Flower men*, in allegory to the objective of this ritual that is the search and transfer of flowers of *Niluyarilo*, and the venerated image that is that of the *Niluyarilo*, and the venerated image that is that of the *Flower Child*. It is a festivity that favors the meeting with

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- 2 The flowers used are bromeliads, mostly epiphytic plants, although there are some terrestrial or rock species. Due to the arched configuration of its leaves, they become real ecosystems, since among its leaves accumulate water and debris that are used by various organisms to live and interact with each other. Especially prodigal in bromeliads epiphytes, are the oaks and pines forests with high humidity and where the wind blows frequently, as it happens in the Altos de Chiapas region. In this case, the "thirds" collected by the Flower Children, are composed of four species of bromeliads, three of them with colorful inflorescences: *Tillandsia imperialis* Morren or "cob", "niluyarilo", "flower of the child"; *Tillandsia guatemalensis* L. B. Smith, "feather", "indiluyarilo", and *Tillandsia eizii* L.B. Smith, or "nulirrosa" (images 8, 9, 10), and finally the fourth species is the well-known "hay" or "pashte", *Tillandsia usneoides* Linneo, with little conspicuous greenish flowers, widely used in Catholic births. The thirds, in addition to tying with ropes, are adorned in the upper part with "garters" or garlands of tejocotes called locally chamomile, of showy red color and that corresponds to the species *Crataegus nelsonii* Eggl. (Rosacea). Others are also made with small crimson yellowish apples (Beutelspacher y Farrera, 2007: 111-112).
 - 3 In the central depression of the state of Chiapas, is located the area that occupied the chiapanecan culture, which included the villages mentioned above, as well as Ostuta and Pochutla, already missing. At the time of the Spanish invasion, there were also settlements of the Chiapanecas in the valleys of the Frailesca, corresponding to the present municipalities of Villacorzo and Villaflores. In addition to Chiapa de Corzo, it is probable that only Suchiapa and Acala were pre-Hispanic settlements; the rest were founded by the Dominican friars, after the conquest (De Vos, 1985: 26). The state of Chiapas derives its name from the two cities that during colonial times were the headwaters of the most prominent ethnic groups that lived then in their territory: the Chiapas and the Spaniards.
 - 4 Chiapa de Corzo, the place where the research is done, is located between the parallels 16 ° 17 'and 16 ° 55' north latitude; meridians 92 ° 48 'and 93 ° 06' west longitude; altitude between 200 and 1 800 m. It borders to the north with the municipalities of Osumacinta, Soyalo and Ixtapa; to the east with the municipalities of Ixtapa, Zinacantán, Acala, and Venustiano Carranza; to the south with the municipalities of Venustiano Carranza and Villa Corzo; to the west with the municipalities of Villa Corzo, Villaflores, Suchiapa, Tuxtla Gutiérrez and Osumacinta. It occupies 11.86% of the state's surface. It has 263 localities and a total population of around 100 thousand inhabitants.

several communities of Tsotsil origin, in the Chiapas Highlands, such a *Multajó* or *Mortajoc*, *Sequentic*, of the municipality of Ixtapa, *Navenchauc*, in Zinacantán, and *Mitzitón*, municipality of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, located in mountainous area at a height of more than 2 thousand meters above sea level. It is important to say that *Navenchauc* is the central point of the encounter between chiapanecas and tsotsiles, in the Santa Cecilia Mountain, recognized by Chiapanecas as *Flower Mountain* (Fig. 4). This route is made by recognized routes of old, intricate roads and sidewalks, sometimes dangerous, when some stretches are currently connected with the modern Tuxtla-San Cristobal de Las Casas highway. The Flower Mountain is the most important place within this scene of rituals. *Namandí* or mountain is the center of the ceremonies and is the house of lightning. It is the origin of *Navenchauc*,⁵ as the following story tells us.

We were told by the elders of the town that when they named Navenchauc three men came to the hill that was known as Black Land. They were three families who arrived first, but as they wanted a bigger place for more families to live, they went down here to the lords. Here before there were pure ocote trees and oaks, and there was the river where the trees were. But there are no more of these trees, because they were of the very thick trunk, which perhaps were very old. And these gentlemen began to cut them, they said: -we are going to cut the trees because here we are going to live-, but when they were cutting them there was a thunder, like lightning. The hill has something like that, and the owner told them he did not want them to touch their trees, and then he decided to scare them and thundered like a rocket to defend their trees. It happened three times, but the lords did not stop cutting them and that's why they named it Navenchauc, which means House of the Wise Lightning. Then the gentlemen worried and talked and said, "Let's do something, let's dance or bring some candles to talk to

5 According to Becerra (1985), *Nabenchauc* would be the correct spelling for this locality and comes from the roots: *Naj-Been-Chauk*, from *Been*, the wise and divine; of *sotsil najel*, wise; *been*, titular deity of one day of the ancient indigenous month; *chauk*, ray, divinity. It is very interesting the following paragraph of the same author: "In 1926 I visited the hill of *Nabenchauc*, in whose skirt the picturesque rancharía of the same name can be found. It is a familiar height, on whose cusp we find, whoever writes this and my good companion of the expedition Don Ignacio Pérez Angulo, to be certain that *Been* was worshiped there: three Christian crosses that, by what could be noticed were cult subjects assiduous, for there were remnants of candles wax and the foliage of the flowers there carried in an offering; on the ground, with no vegetation; but digging we find tepalcates of ancient pottery, fragments of obsidian, and an idol, which I keep as symbolic figure, which I find to be allusive to *Been*. In the ranch we were informed, by the only family of ladinos that there was, that when the Indians have some seriously ill, they take him to ask for health at the top of the hill " (Beutelspacher y Farrera, 2007: 110).

the owner lightning to let us live on the hill, to give us permission. Then the lords arrived there, on the hill, and they went to put their candles and prayed their prayer and it was that way they did and that was the custom. The three crosses stayed there since that time, but we do not know when exactly when that was. PEDRO PÉREZ SÁNTIZ. INTERVIEW 18/DEC/2013

The lake located within the village, is a reference to locate the stories narrated around this tradition centered on the Flower Child. Pedro says, "We put crosses in the hills and in the caves. One of the hills of the village, say the older ones, also has an owner and that the water from the lagoon came in, but some sticks were locked and the water no longer enters, that's why it becomes a lagoon". The springs are the baths of the elementals of the nearby mountains (Vogt, 1993: 101) such as *Wo Ch'Oh Wo* (five wells), female spring, white water, active and average, where the "goddess of *Sisil Witz*" showers (Santa Cecilia or *Flower Mountain*) (Fig. 4).

The lagoon is enchanted. Long ago the women had to dress in men's clothes, which had to be put upside down, because there came from the big trees some dark shadows that grabbed them and took them. That is why the mothers told their daughters to be careful and when they were there, to put over their clothes the ones of a man. PEDRO PÉREZ SÁNTIZ. INTERVIEW 18/DEC/2013

It is the mountain of healing, where *yahwal balamil*, is called, "lord of the earth", who has a human figure. Only "doctors" or *shamans* make pilgrimages to the mountains. This establishes an interesting relationship with the Voyage of the Flower men, inasmuch as it could be a pilgrimage guided by one of these men and the fact that we still have memories of very few Flower men, it establishes the possibility that they were initiated in this knowledge.

We still get to pray to those mountains, we go all the time, as in the month of May we almost go daily, as we do the feast of Santa Cruz, everything may be a feast. We are going to carry the candles to ask for the rain, so that nothing happens to the people. When we are ill or we have other problems we seek who knows how to cure, but he presses us to know what we have and tells us to go to the hill to leave our candles and pray. But when the disease is serious he climbs to the hill to meditate and takes a dead chicken and puts it in the crosses to know what to do with the sick. This is the custom here, left by the gentlemen, who were the first to arrive, when there was nothing but there were very large trees. There began Navenchauc, on the mountain, and then the town was made here below. Even though we are good, we are always going to pray, to thank and not to get the disease. When

there was anger, the elders gathered people together and put their candles around the mountain to stop the disease and could not enter the village.

People who know how to see, says that inside the mountain is pure hot water because there is a volcano of hot water. That's why those who are Catholics cooperate three times a year to offer: in January we climb with everything we gather and carry candles, we are accompanied by healers to pray and light the candles and we ask that nothing bad happens, that there would be no disease. But non-Catholics do not. In January we go where the crosses are, because where there are crosses we can pray, we can talk to them for help.

*We put crosses in the mountains and in the caves. They all have names. We go again in the middle of the year, in the month of July, the oldest doctor joins the people and goes to all the mountains again to leave the candles and the copal; and in the month of December, we do the same, because that is the custom and we cannot forget it. PEDRO PÉREZ SÁNTIZ.
INTERVIEW 20/JUL/2014*

The tops of the hills are liminal spaces; in them are the representations and perceptions that on the territory have those who perform the rites. Rites fill the landscape of life and define the limits of cultural spaces. They are places of refuge where the fundamental role of worship is vindicated. The Mountain of the Flower is where the novices gather (the Flower men that go to the trip for the first time) and dance to the rhythm of the music of drums and reed. It is the place where the child is placed in front of the three crosses while the Flower men light their candles to fulfill their orders or to request their benefits. It is the place where the patron "whips" them as they request and the body is cleaned with sedge or basil. It is the place where the vases and deceased patrons who have gathered their souls in this "force" space are invoked. The eternal present as an infinite circle, has the center in each place. It is "the sacred place". That is what Don Esteban's experience teaches:

Look, little son, my grandfather would tell me, if you're curious, get up at midnight at your inn there in Navenchauc, and you go out and listen and you'll hear the bustle of how the departed Flower men are dismissed. I checked it many years, and some friends also, it was a murmur that made me cry, a song, and they are praying, oh my God, forgiveness and indulgence, forgiveness and mercy, forgiveness and pity! But of course you can hear it! And when you have just prayed you will hear the patron who says, "Long live the Little Flower Boy, boys!" Long live the Flower men, boys! You can hear the hurrahs and everything.

You see, in my devotion, in my faith, I believe that the spirit continues ascending to the mountain when dying. I say this because he prays for six years, now that those who climb are my grandchildren, I went to bump them down to the Cross of the Rabbit, on that road that goes down to Joijel, there is a sidewalk, and that is where I arrived because I heard that the first Flower men were coming, I waited and I saw that my grandson was also coming. When I arrived in Multajó, a boy named Chonito Nunez was crying, and he said to me, "Brother, I'm going to tell you something: I looked at my uncle Betío." "Yes, my brother", I looked at him. "It is that I took two orange sacks and I placed myself in the way where the Flower men passed, I left them giving their orange so that they cool their throats. When I saw the two Flower men that came and turned to look at me, and I saw that it was my Uncle Beto, but they continued without taking the oranges, they went in the row of the Flower men but crouched. Only when passing near me they turned to look and I saw that it was my Uncle Beto, I could not continue to distribute the orange because it gave me a feeling and desire to cry of pure sadness." Chonito kept crying as he told me what he saw.

And I tell you that all this is true, because when you look for the flower on the mountain, you hear the Flower men screaming, Eje, eeeje! Come here, there is enough flower! And if you answer it, they can call you and you can lose it. They are not current Flower men; they are gone Flower men, already dead, that return with their soul to the mountain. ESTEBAN HERNÁNDEZ. INTERVIEW 15/MARCH/2014

According to Johanna Broda (1991) among the people who have shaped the Mesoamerican cultural region, of which the Chiapas culture is part of, the link between man and his natural environment has manifested itself in: 1) his relation to astronomy (observation of the course of the sun, the moon, certain stars and constellations); 2) his relation to climatic phenomena (the rainy season and the dry season), and 3) his relation to agricultural and plant cycles (ecology, agriculture), and I would incorporate one more aspect 4) its meanings derived from his relation with territoriality and its places, inscribed in religious rituals.

In this way, natural phenomena were personified and in their offerings were designed figures or sculptures demonstrating the forces that represented them. In the symbolism of water, these figures are identified with the *tlaloques*, owners, or *charms*, as they are called in this region studied. They are small beings that produce the storm and the rain and, therefore, the mountains and the hills are respected and worthy of cult because in them the clouds are generated and from these comes the rain, so necessary for life.

This would explain, in part, expressed by Becerra in relation to the meaning of the name *Navenchauc* with the presence of *Been*, deity holder of a day on the indigenous calendar, which expresses the wise and divine, in turn linked with *chauk*, lightning; that is, the house of the wise ray. In Suchiapa, a town that is part of this region, I have been described the ray charm as a "little man of short stature, but great in power, very white and without a single hair on his head, which provides rain" (Palacios, 2010). But, in addition, we still find abundant stories, incorporated into their oral tradition, that narrate a world of charms explaining itself in the diversity of its rituals, masked with the images of Catholic saints. *Been*, then, not only seems to be the force of rain and storms, but also of the earth, considering the mountains and caves, on whose summits clouds are generated.

Becerra also comments on having found an "*idolillo*", of symbolic figure, allusive to *Been*, with the characteristics of figures found in the excavations of the Templo Mayor in central Mexico, according to Broda (1991), inside boxes of offerings of the cult to *Tláloc*, in the *Been* hierarchy. "Small and oval figures, from 10 to 23 centimeters long; whose face and body features are outlined in a highly stylized manner" (466). These figures and what they represent, are invoked in rites that take place on the summits of the most important hills, in request of rain and of fertility for the community (Schultze-Jena *apud* Broda: 468) and that formerly considered themselves protectors of the corn grains, house protectors, lords or beings of the clouds. In ethnographic material collected between the *nahuas* of Huatusco, Cordoba and Zongolica, Veracruz, inside the hills (*tépetl*) live blue color beings called *tipeyolohtli*, "heart of the hill"; which are also called *tlatsinihkeh*, "thrusters", i.e. "rays". Among the *Tlapanecos*, from Guerrero, *aku* is the old lord of the earth, and is one at the same time as many. In his role as the owner of the game animals, he is specifically named *Viejo del Cerro* (Old men from the Hills), related to *Wuigo*, divinity of the thunderbolt, whose voice is thunder and sends rain. The latter is also one and a multiplicity at the same time.

Those who climb the hill to heal are sometimes rays and therefore can heal. To be lightning is the highest level to be a doctor, is the one who sends to others, is an iloletik. They also know how to make storms to annoy people.

PEDRO PÉREZ SÁNTIZ. INTERVIEW 20/JUL/2014

The ancient divinities of the tsotsiles land from Larrainzar in Chiapas are now identified with the Catholic saints (San Miguel, San Antonio, San Juan, among others), as well as Chiapa. These rites are practiced in the mountains, caves and fountains, along with other kinds of beings called "angels", who control the wind and rain. The latter are called *chauk*, a word that probably derives

from *Chac*, the Yucatecan divinity of rain (Holland *apud* Broda: 470). To the tsotsiles of San Pedro Chenalhó (Guiteras *apud* Broda: 470), "*Chauac*" or *Anhel*, is the divinity of rain and water, owner of the ray, lord and owner of the hills, protector of *milpas*..., the one that gives the maize and is intimately related to our sustenance (Thompson *apud* Broda: 471). Let us not forget that the Flower Child is accompanied by the Angel Child, it is possible a connection with such meanings and knowledge of the mountain's elemental forces.

On the other hand, the idea of gender in relation to mountains has also been the subject of anthropology. There are wet nurses in the mountains that look after small children, but what children are they? Of the little ray beings represented in the *tlaloques*, masters, and yearnings figures? Is it the feminine that the Flower Child who travels to the mountain as a novice seeks to be initiated? There is a Zinacanteco tale of six *Xohobetik*, "rays of the Sun", who were able to "see" within the mountains and perceive the Lord of the Earth (here we equate "vision" with knowledge) and those with their specialized powers could defeat the enemies who threatened the people. One could make fog, the second lightning, the third a wind whirl; the fourth could fly like a hawk, the fifth like a butterfly and the sixth like a fly. Fearing reprisals from the defeated enemies, instead of returning to their houses, they asked permission to the Lord of the Earth to inhabit inside the mountains. The "oldest" was to live in *Ox Yoket* (*Bankilal Muk Ta Witz*), while the other five to *Kalvario*, *Zan Kixtowal*, *Lach Chikin*, *Nakleb Ox e Izak Tik*. At the same time their wives settled in six "female" mountains: *Muxul Witz*, *Sisil Witz*, *Ninab Chilo*, *Nio*, *Ya Ahwil* and *Lanza Witz*... Today they live within those mountains, from where they supervise the affairs of their living descendants (Vogt, 1993: 269).

Sisil Witz is the Flower Mountain or of Santa Cecilia (Image 4), and his feminine condition, as this account refers, also goes back to the narrative of Pedro, when he says that it was a woman who descended from the mountain and gave the boy to a man from Chiapas, where this devotion arose. Following this biological distinction it would place the elementals pluvial in the masculine, and the elementals of the different forms of maize or flowers, in the feminine, that in general, the latter are associated with the currents of the water (rivers, springs) or with stagnant waters (lakes, ponds). The feminine is also associated with earth, water, moon, growth, fructification, cold diseases, among others. On the basis of these characteristics, a simplified dualistic system can be established: while male elemental rainfall sponsors the flows (of water or fire) falling from the sky, the female elementals control the flows that go (or stop) on the earth (Iwaniszewski *apud* Broda, 2009: 115-116).

To the Flower Mountain we arrived to pray and many agreements are established in that place. Punishments are given there to all that behaved badly, and I inform them where it will be the Evening of the Flower. There we pray and pray for dead or sick Flower men.

What we know of the ancients is that they went to the mountain to be strengthened, because the place where we go says it is a volcano. They went from here to thank God from the volcano, to thank him for his crops, for all the goods he gave them, for the strength to live. That is the relationship that we consider most. Then the flower has a form of fire, and that fire we bring it until the birth of our Flower Child and for the altars of the houses, maybe as a way to bring the strength from there to our people, our altars. This became Catholic by the arrival of the friars, and then we began to have the child, and had to bring a memory. That was how the flower was brought.

TOMÁS NIGENDA SÁNCHEZ. INTERVIEW 10/OCTOBER/2013

Of particular interest in comparative terms are the *tzultacah* of the *kekchí* and other groups of the Guatemalan highlands. *Tzultacah* means Flat-Hill or Valley-Hill and is a poetic term to make a reference to the surface of the earth. Barbara Tedlock (Broda, 1991: 471) reports that at the time of harvest in December, the Quiché of Momostenango, do rites of thanks to *Juyubtak'aj*, "Valley-Hill", also called Mundo. Thus, these deified hills paid tribute to the beginning and end of the rainy season, and were also considered "maintenance hills", not only because they are food suppliers, but also of spiritual strength, finally another kind of sustenance for the humans.

All of the above suggests that mountains are vital places that have a privileged role in the ceremonial calendar, establishing a deliberate link between the geography of the high mountain and the climatic, agricultural and ritual cycles. *Idolillos* were sometimes taken when they were carried in procession "to the mountain, or to the mountain range, or to the cave, where they had their denomination, and there, in that cave or hill, they... offered their... sacrifices, invoking that hill..., or lack of water... or hunger... (Durán *apud* Broda, 1991: 475).

In relation to the offerings, there has been much discussion of the subject of ritual sacrifices. It is, however, an idea that remains in the interstices of doubt and bewilderment, when what is discussed is done from a language that does not correspond to the worldview of those who are supposed to have practiced it. There is an argument that children were sacrificed in the mountains, and that they were chosen because they were special humans

for this purpose. Abundant data of this nature is located, mainly, in the archaeological investigations to the ancient sites, based on what is written by the conquering chroniclers. However, few are the reliable resources that are freed of doubt regarding the problematic, when they have not located bones rest in the mountain places, at least not of children. An interesting example is the case of Pachita, a Mexican healer who gained remarkable fame for her love of neighbor and the help she offered by solving physiological and soul problems through "invisible" operations advised by "spiritual doctors." This is not a new topic in Mexican culture; it is known to continue to be one of the forms of knowledge in the traditional medicine field. Grinberg met this woman and became his collaborator. We bring it as an example because Pachita's surgeries were remarkable portents, in which, with a mountain knife extracted hearts to be cleaned and cured, or other affected organs, without the use of anesthesia or an operating room.⁶

We think, considering this author's proposal, that the "sacred places" or "places with memory" described by Eliade are spaces within an energetic network of total coherence and symmetry that can motivate in some human beings the unity of their consciousness. This would imply the fact that what we see is not necessarily what it is for others.

Of course, these are possible explanations that will remain in the creative capacity of readers to establish more than one relationship with this ritual. However, this is so interesting that it could be a topic for more detailed research, considering them very advanced starting points that would be worth exploring more closely. Continuing in the sense of the

6 From this experience Grinberg wrote, based on his theory, the possible explanation that could provide: The *lattice* concept considers that the fundamental structure of space is an energetic network or matrix of absolute coherence and total symmetry. This net is called *lattice* and it is considered that in its ground state contributes to the same all-embracing space and penetrated everything known. The set of modifications of its structure that result from all brain activity creates a complex alteration of the same. This alteration occurs in all dimensions of space and is called the neural field. The neuronal field of a living brain continually interacts with the *lattice* producing in it energetic confirmations which we call visual images.

The world we know results from the interaction between the neuronal field and the *lattice*. We all see a similar world because the structure of our brains is very similar and therefore, the neural fields that we produce are similar but unrepeatable and unique in each moment. According to the studies of the consciousness that indicate that it has discrete values, giving rise to qualitatively different levels of experience, it is possible to suppose that the interaction between the neuronal field and the *lattice* has a congruence only with certain bands or levels, while that others do not. Thus there are auditory worlds different from the visual or olfactory and particular levels that the Eastern mystical consciousness knows so well (Grinberg, 1982).

mountains, they can also be centers of the world for some people. In a trip shared between Evon Vogt, "Vogtie", as they also recognized him, and David Freidel, Vogtie explained:

Here, on this cross, —he said, pointing to the sanctuary in front of us—, we enter the Zinacantan world. This is the foot of the sacred mountain muxul vitz, in whose top —he pointed upwards, towards a promontory located on the road, where the pines meet with the pale blue sky— is another cross sanctuary. There, —he said, pointing to the east and south—, there is bankilal mukta' witz, the Great Mountain.

As I gazed upon the imposing volcano rising more than 3,000 meters above sea level, Vogtie explained that the Zinacantecos believe that this volcano houses the corrals in which the fathers-mothers, ancestral spirits who watch over the people, keep more than 11 thousand spirits of wild animal companions of the settlers. Turning his arm south, he pointed to the other mountains and shrines that surround the valley: the sisil witz [Flower Hill], the pyramidal mountain with steep slopes; the kalvario, that great sanctuary located on the road to the peripheral settlement of Nakih; and so on, all around the valley. "Each mountain has its ancestral gods and its cross sanctuaries of entrances where 'seers' or shamans speak to the people".

Vogtie then pointed to the valley beneath us. "There," he said, "is mixik' balamil, the navel of the world" ⁷

— Where? —I asked.

— There, in that hill —he replied (Freidel, 1993: 120-121).

There is no community without a center. A place to recognize themselves. That is why the ancient *nahuas* called *Tlalocan* to the primeval mountain. In their concave part were the germinating deities, represented as serpents; the spirits or hearts of plants and the water from which everything is born. Man directed his prayers to that feminine sphere while depositing the seeds in the womb of the earth; in that inner world that makes possible the growth of all nature. Later, the sun matured the terrestrial gifts, while the fire emanated

⁷ In the neighborhood *Napiniaca* (big town), there is a place recognized by the chiapanecas as *changuti*, which translate as navel. This neighborhood represents the first settlement of Chiapa, as the Spaniards found it upon arrival in this town.

from the stubble burning renewed the clouds, which eventually restored the wet to its place of origin. Deep in caves and caves were the signs of life and death. Just as the sun disappeared every sunset in the jaguar's jaws, along these liminal spaces both the ancient guides and the present guides deciphered and decipher the signs of health and disease and made time and power sacred through rituals (Gorz *apud* Ruz, 2006: 92).

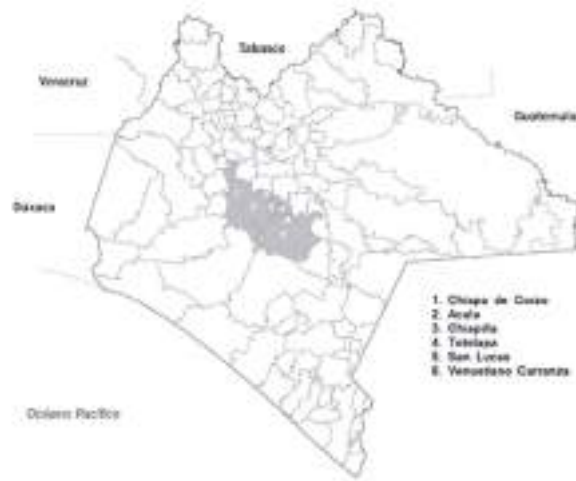
FINAL REFLECTIONS

This comparative material is extremely useful for a more complete and nuanced understanding of this way of seeing the natural world and beyond the natural, whose basic elements constitute a valuable heritage. However, the current man-land relationship is unstable and precarious, and must be reconfirmed over and over again through rituals and practices that ensure balance.

Let's think about Pedro's tale of the origin of *Navenchauc* in the Flower Mountain where the great, enormous oaks existed, in coexistence with the mythological *niluyaril*. The oak to be useful, had to die. They killed him so much that he was exterminated. In some places there is only the name, and the name, as we know, is the last thing that dies. But where there are no oaks, there are no flowers. We then understand that the past of these lands is broader than the way to them. What we have exposed in this document are just the different perspectives from which we analyze the importance of mountains or hills, inscribed in the ritual landscape of a ceremonial such as that of the Flower men of Chiapa de Corzo. This is only a glimpse of the complexity involved in the rite.

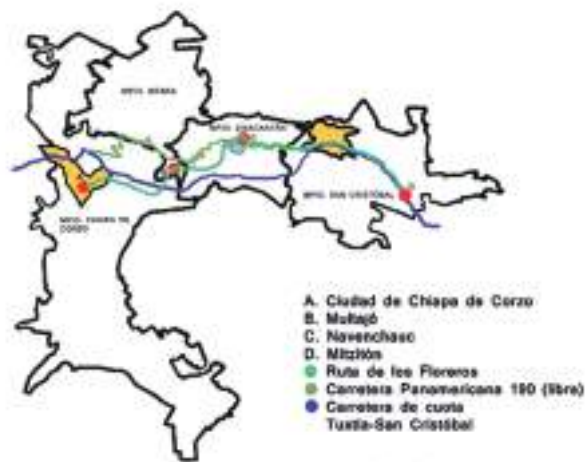
FIGURES

Image 2. Region of worship. Localities of the Chiapas' cultural region involved in the ritual of The Flower men.



Source: Personal file.

Image 3. Flower men route.



Source: Personal file.

Image 4. Flower men in *Navenchauc*.
The Mountain Flower can be seen at the back.



Source: Personal file.

Image 5. The Flower men carrying the *Niluyarilo*,
returning from the ritual trip.



Source: Personal File.

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THE ROLE OF WAGES IN THE
MEXICAN ECONOMY
AN APPLICATION OF THE
RICARDIAN MODEL

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— *Abstract* —

David Ricardo, in his model of economic development, adopts the assumption of constant real wages, along with other premises such as declining soil fertility and zero technical progress in agriculture, to show that in the long run the product is divided between capitalists and landlords so that the latter are favored. In this paper the model of Ricardo is reviewed from its pre-analytical view, before the *Essay*, until more complete version provided in the *Principles of Political Economy*. Research suggests that the preeminence of declining soil fertility eventually leads to a decline in real wages, not only of the rate of profit. The paper proposes a model application for a specific economy, such as Mexico. We show that the principles of Ricardo, related to capital accumulation and population growth, are satisfied empirically.

Keywords

economic development, real wages, income distribution, capital accumulation, population.

JEL: B12, E30, J30, N36, O11

This paper deals with David Ricardo's economic development model. In particular, it is important to emphasize the role of wages as an essential component of income distribution. For this purpose, the research goes through several phases, namely the pre-analytical phase of the *Ricardian* conception of development contained in Ricardo's correspondence prior to the publication of the *Essay*; the most elaborate notion of the latter, and the recovery of the theme that the author makes in the *Principles*. The analysis of the different stages allows to suggest that, given the premises of the model, the product's distribution does not only occur between the landlord class and the capitalist class, to the detriment of the second, but also in the long term the workers are also affected through a decrease in their real salary. This is a result that is reached from Ricardo's own premises in contrast to his belief that the decline in the profit rate depends essentially on the assumptions of the land's decreasing fertility, zero technical progress in agriculture and constant real wages. In an attempt to make an application of the model, the Mexican economy is chosen as the object of study with the purpose of verifying some of Ricardo's conclusions, in particular, the role of wages in Mexico's economic development in a long-term, 1940-2014

THE ESSAY'S PRE-ANALYTICAL VISION

Since Ricardo became interested in the subject of economics, one of the topics that caught his attention was the issue of wages. In general, he was concerned about identifying the component elements of the economic structure and the mechanism of its operation in the long term. His main theoretical reference was Adam Smith, but there were authors who he professed great respect, such as Malthus, Say and Sismondi, as well as other contemporary writer, such as Torrens.¹ His main contender was Malthus, not only because his ideas contrasted in several ways with his own, but because he somehow upheld Smith's point of view, author whose work Ricardo was interested in undergoing a critical review.² Say was also a supporter of Smith, but he had a more static approach than Malthus.³

1 See Ricardo's preamble in: Sraffa, Piero (1959). *Obras y correspondencia de David Ricardo*, Vol. 1, Principios de Economía Política y Tributación. Mexico, FCE.

2 Smith's defense of Malthus is evident in his *Principles of Political Economy* (1964), but is explicitly noted in his correspondence with Ricardo. See *Ibid.*, Sraffa, Piero (1959). Vol. VI, Letters, 1810-1815.

3 Malthus' dynamic vision can be seen in his discussion with Ricardo. Sraffa, Piero. *Ibid.* Vol. VI. For the static view of Say see his *Traité d'économie politique* (1841).

Ricardo had a pre-analytical view about the economy's course in the long term, based on his knowledge of the food production conditions and England's trade policy regarding grains' foreign trade. He intuited (and this was the heat of his discussion with Malthus, prior to the publication of his *Essay*,⁴) a downward trend in the rate of profit.⁵ As far as food production conditions were concerned, private land ownership prevailed at the end of the eighteenth century, which allowed landowners to maintain a monopoly position as well as influence in the English Parliament; in terms of trade policy, the landlord class favored maintaining restrictions on grain imports, as this meant significant income in terms of land rent. Such restrictions, by limiting food supply in the domestic market, raised its price. This was the ultimate result of the underlying economic mechanism the one Ricardo was interested in understanding.

The limitation of supply forced capitalists operating in the agricultural sector to use land less fertile or more distant from the market. The obtained profit in these lands was lower, either because to obtain the same quantity of product required greater capital advance, or because using a same amount of capital would obtain a diminished product.

Under free competition conditions among the capitalists operating in this sector, the rate of profit was determined by the capital employed in the last land put into cultivation. Competition implied that a capitalist who wished to use a more fertile land had to pay an income for his use, the amount of which was the difference between the net product obtained on that land and that resulting from applying to the advanced capital therein, the determined rate of profit in the less fertile plot, which did not pay rent. This way, it was indifferent to the capitalist farmer to use his capital in the less fertile land or in any other land, if the profit rate obtained in any case was the same. Whenever in the course of society it was necessary to supply food to the population, this implied incorporating less fertile land, with the same consequences on the rate of profit.

4 Ricardo, David. *An Essay on the influence of a low price of corn on the profits of stock*, in: Sraffa, Piero (1959), *Op. cit.* Vol. IV.

5 The pre-analytic view can be found in Sraffa, Piero (1959), *Ibid.*, Vol. VI.

Such was Ricardo's pre-analytic vision. His formal approach, however, required some assumptions.⁶ For example, the author was interested in demonstrating that in the long run the rate of profit presented a downward trend. To prove this, it was necessary to resort to the assumption of restrictions on the import of grain, a methodological resource that assumed that grain was the essential consumer good in the workers' basket. To simplify his argument, Ricardo reduces to grain the foods consumed by the workers, becoming therefore the model's basic product not only in the sense of the consumption, but also of the production. For the model to work, it was necessary to assume certain conditions of production in agriculture. The fact that the land was not equally fertile or had a different location from the centers of consumption meant that the agricultural performance had to be directly related to the land's fertility degree or to its proximity to markets. This circumstance in the land's fertility implied that in the long term the agricultural yield would decrease and with it the rate of profit, but this would only be so long as there was no natural or artificial force that would counteract the decreasing fertility. Indeed, in order to obtain more pure results on what he intended to demonstrate, Ricardo eliminated any possibility of technical progress in agriculture and proceeded to freeze any variation in wages. It required that the real wage kept itself constant, so that the agricultural benefit rate would not be affected by this cause, allowing then that the whole weight in the determination of said variable would fall under the conditions of agricultural production, that is, in the fertility from the earth.

But freezing the wages implied another assumption. On one hand, the level of wages or the price of labor was determined by market forces, as was the case with any other commodity. Depending on the relationship between labor supply and demand, wages could rise, fall or remain constant. Ricardo assumed, for the long term, a uniform movement in the ratio between labor supply and demand in order to keep the labor market price constant.

On the other hand, it reduced the capital employed to only working capital (capital invested in labor). Thus, the increase in the capital advanced meant, in fact, the use of a greater quantity of labor, at a constant rate of salary. In other words, the capital invested did not increase because the labor price increased, but because a greater proportion of it was needed to produce the

6 The explicit approach is developed by Ricardo in the *Essay*.

grain. Thus, the decline in the rate of profit could not be attributed to an increase in wages, but to the land's lower productivity per unit of labor employed. The remainder of the product, after deducting the cultivation costs on the last land, was to constitute the benefit of capital in that land, which was, in magnitude, less than the profit obtained in the land previously cultivated.

The situation in the long term for the three social classes was as follows: for the landowning class (landlord class) income would increase as society turned to less and less fertile lands. In the most productive, from the largest to the previous to the marginal, income would increase each time the rate of profit in the marginal land decrease, because this rate would be applied to those by virtue of competition; this income was therefore the difference between the net product obtained in each land and the net product that resulted from applying the rate of profit determined in the last cultivated land. For the capitalist class, the income obtained by way of profit would be reduced each time the rate of profit in the marginal land fell, since this rate would be generalized to the rest of the agriculture, occurring therefore that each capitalist would see reduced its profit, regardless of the land he cultivated. In the long run the rate of profit would decrease to a minimum, and profits would be canceled and consequently all the remaining product, deducting the cultivation costs in each land, the income of the landowners, who would appropriate it in the form of income. Ricardo believed that long before this state of affairs was achieved profits would be so low that there would be no incentive for capitalists to continue to invest their capital, in which case accumulation would be halted.⁷

For its part, the working class would not be affected, under the assumption of constant real wages. Each worker would maintain his or her income level, but, as a whole, the working class would have a greater participation in the product, since in each period the amount of work employed increased while the product showed a downward trend.

The vision of development that Ricardo shows us in the *Essay* is evident. The struggle is between two specific social classes: landowners and capitalists. The former constitutes a parasitic class, which absorbs much of the product obtained by virtue of its legal status as owner of the land. A class which by

7 See *Essay, Op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 7-8.

virtue of its status as landowner, benefits from the land's decreasing fertility, a fact which only occurs if restrictions are maintained on the grain's import. Hence the importance for this class of maintaining a restrictive trade policy in the field of foreign trade in the food sector. The capitalist class, for its part, is a thriving class, a class that risks its capital and whose profitability purposes are counteracted by the land's declining fertility. For this class, the cause of the decline in the rate of profit could be countered, provided that a free trade policy was adopted, since this would mean that the grain could be obtained from other countries where the conditions of production were more benign and, therefore, at a lower cost, thus meeting the food needs of a growing population. This means that by a freer trade it would not be necessary for England to resort to less fertile land, in which case it would not be necessary to invest additional capital and, consequently, the rate of profit would not fall.

To Ricardo, the landowning class constitutes an obstacle for the accumulation of capital, since in attempting to preserve its class conditions, that is to say, the conditions under which they can earn increasing incomes in the context of a restrictive trade policy, it forces the capitalists to use less and less fertile land, which ends up depressing the rate of profit. It is evident; therefore, that the obstacle does not come directly from the conditions of the fertility of the land, but from the political power that the landowners exert to influence the application of a protectionist commercial policy favorable to their interests.

Theoretically, Ricardo was interested in demonstrating the disadvantages of maintaining this restrictive policy. These disadvantages had to be reflected in the welfare of society, and by the time of the author, the contending classes were landowners and the bourgeoisie, both agricultural and industrial. The model showed that restrictive politics tended to improve the welfare of the landlord class by increasing their incomes while damaging the capitalist class by reducing their rate of profit and thereby curbing accumulation.⁸

8 *Ibid.*, p. 8. Footnote. . Footnote. "This would be the effect of a capital accumulating constantly in a country that refused to import foreign and cheaper wheat."

THE ESSAY'S METHOD: REACH AND LIMITATIONS

From the previous section it is clear what the prediction is in rewards of the capital accumulation in the long run, the fundamentals of this prediction and the social class that benefits and which is harmed. As an explanatory model of English economic reality at the time of cereal restrictions, it is quite coherent. It emphasizes above all its abstraction level and the concatenation of its elements to identify causes and effects.

It is important to emphasize that Ricardo is very clear in the *Essay* its purpose is to underline the consequences of the capital accumulation (and for economic development) derived from the fact that, under conditions of the land's declining fertility, restrictions on grain imports and zero technical progress in agriculture would be implemented. In general terms, the model succeeds only if this objective is taken into account in the analysis.

A first step in Ricardo's method, which is very meritorious from the point of view of scientific abstraction, is to reduce the whole economy to one sector: agriculture. This is an important step in terms of simplification, which, on the other hand, forces it to incorporate even more abstract assumptions. For example, the agricultural sector must be self-sufficient. This means that agricultural capital is composed of wheat and that the product of the sector is only wheat.⁹ It can already be seen that this assumption implies another, namely, the reduction of all capital to only working capital (invested in labor), which, in turn, presupposes that workers consume only wheat.

Together, Ricardo has eliminated the money from the scene and this is noticed from the moment that capital and product are measured in wheat.¹⁰ Suppose the money had not been eliminated. Since what Ricardo intends is to demonstrate the downward trend of the rate of profit in the long term, one of the purposes of the investigation is to proceed to determinate said rate, in the first term. Ricardo does not care here to explain the nature of the

9 This interpretation has been suggested by Sraffa. See Introduction to the *Principios de Economía Política y Tributación*. *Op. cit.* A discussion of this proposal can be found in Hollander, S. (1973, 1983), Garegnani, P. (1983), Arjón, P. (2006).

10 On this topic Malthus says to Ricardo: "You say correctly that sometimes it helps a lot to leave the money out of these subjects." Letter from Malthus to Ricardo of February 12, 1815. Saffa, Piero. *Obras*, *Op. Cit.* Vol. VI.

benefit, he takes it for granted, especially at a stage of the investigation in which he considers that this notion is not very different from the one that Smith has, and that authors like Malthus, Say and Sismondi, know well. Once the rate is determined, the next step is to explain the conditions for its generalization.

Suppose then that Ricardo proceeds to estimate the rate of profit using the money. In this case all the elements of fixed and circulating capital are estimated in money that is, taking into account the quantities of the various elements of capital and their corresponding prices. It also estimates the monetary amount of production from the quantity produced and its market price. The profit would then be determined by the difference between the value of the product and the value of the capital necessary for its production in monetary terms, whereas the rate of profit would be determined by the ratio of this difference to the value of the advanced capital, expressed in percentage terms.

The problem of following this procedure is that the profit rate thus calculated would have depended on the prices, which in turn depend on the rate of profit, thus incurring a circular reasoning. The second problem, but not least, is that Ricardo is interested in demonstrating the preeminence of the agricultural sector in determining the overall rate of profit.¹¹ The use of money for the calculation of the rate would have blurred that relevance, since any other sector could have same the prerogative or, in other words, no particular sector would determine the rate of profit by itself.

This is why Ricardo did not have the money to determine the rate of profit. The notion of money that the author has at the moment is unthinking; it is the fetishistic notion of which Marx talked about.¹² But dispensing the money does not mean giving up using a unit of measure, but replacing it with a unit more suited to its purposes. He chooses a particular good, namely, the same good that serves as a product in agriculture, the one used as a measure of capital: wheat. Ricardo does not adopt this procedure categorically, but tentatively, thinking mainly of the criticisms that could come from Malthus when using a procedure that he would describe as unusual or strange to political economy.¹³

11 This is a point that Ricardo had been holding since his correspondence with Malthus, prior to the *Essay*. See Richard's letter to Malthus of December 8, 1814. *Ibid*.

12 See Marx, C. (1975). *El Capital*, T. I, Vol. 1, Chap. 1.4, Mexico, Siglo XXI.

13 Ricardo thus synthesizes Malthus' attitude before his opinions. For example, in relation to a decrease in real wages caused by a greater facility in the production of goods that are indispensable for the

By reducing output and capital to different quantities of wheat, the author can proceed directly to the calculation of the rate of profit. The advantage of using this procedure is that the rate is determined in agriculture regardless of the prices, which allows the competition to generalize it to the rest of the economy, thus achieving the purpose of Ricardo.

THE ASSUMPTION OF HOMOGENEITY BETWEEN PRODUCT AND CAPITAL OR THE THEORY OF VALUE

From the reading of the *Essay*, an interesting and suggestive hypothesis follows: either we are facing two models, each with its own premises, or it is a model developed at two levels of analysis. The first model, or level of analysis, is the one we have already presented, consisting of an agricultural sector with peculiar characteristics and in which the rate of profit is determined from the Ricardo's assumption, according to which capital and product are quantities different from the same good (wheat). We have seen that this rate of profit is determined by marginal land and through competition is generalized to the rest of agriculture. In the process, and by virtue of the declining fertility of the earth, producing the same amount of good requires an increase in the advanced capital (measured in wheat), which translates into a diminished profit, on the one hand, and an increase in income, on the other.

In the second model Ricardo leaves aside the notion of homogeneous product and capital (homothetic model) and proceeds to introduce an incipient theory of value with still *smithianos* tones. Thus, the value of commodities is determined by the amount of labor invested in their production under the most difficult conditions. In the case of wheat, its value is determined by marginal land, since in the land the conditions of production, in terms of invested labor, are more difficult than in the intra-marginal lands.¹⁴ In this perspective, Ricardo again proceeds to review the distribution of the product between landowners and capitalists. It states that the income or rent of the former is increased for two reasons: first, because the difference

worker, he says: "If I call this reduction of the real value of wages, I am told - alluding Adam Smith and Malthus - that I adopted a new and unusual language, irreconcilable with the true principles of science." See Sraffa, P. *Obras*, Vol. I, p.15.

14 See the *Essay*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 10 y ss.

between the product obtained in the intra-marginal lands and the marginal land increases, that is, the amount of wheat that the landowners appropriate in the form of income grows as less fertile land is used; secondly, it also increases because the value of wheat is determined by the amount of labor invested in marginal land, and this quantity is increased period after period. The situation of the landowners thus improves whenever less fertile land is used, while the situation of the agricultural capitalists is worsened by reducing the amount of wheat they obtain as a surplus by lowering the rate of profit on marginal land. If, as has been said, the value of wheat in this land increases, the capitalists may find themselves in an equal situation, relatively better, or worse, at time t compared to moment $t-1$, depending on whether the value of wheat would have increased in an equal, greater, or lesser proportion to the decrease in the quantity of grain received. This would be the situation assuming that the value of money remained constant.

THE QUESTION OF WAGES

In the pre-analytic view we have seen that for Ricardo the real wage remains constant. This is a strong assumption. It is noticed that in the *Essay* the author still does not dimension the importance of the subject. Let us assume that the ratio of capital to population in the long run remains unchanged. This would only keep the monetary wage constant, but for the real wage to remain unchanged it would also be necessary for the good price to be consumed by the worker to remain unchanged.

We have already seen that, according to the model of value theory, this is not possible, but rather increases in proportion to the difficulties of its production. Thus, an increase in the price of wheat, with constant market wage, would necessarily mean a real downward wage. It is evident then that the workers' situation would get worse.

Thus, on the one hand, in the homothetic model the real wage remains constant under the assumption of a proportional increase between the growth of capital and population. That is, the price of labor implicit in this assumption is determined solely by the relationship between supply and demand for labor. Thus, when Ricardo assumes that the real wage remains constant in the long run, it also means that the price of the goods that compose the worker's basket remains unchanged.

But this is inconsistent with the key assumption from which the main conclusions of the Ricardian model emerge, namely, the declining fertility of the earth. Indeed, under this assumption, the conditions of production in

agriculture are becoming increasingly difficult as land is added to the crop. This implies an increase in the amount of work invested and according to the author's theory of value (at this stage of his analysis), an increase in the value of wheat. Thus, the assumption of a constant real wage is inconsistent with the assumption of the declining fertility of the land. On the other hand, since the model is based on both assumptions crucially, the conclusions are not supported.

Hence, Ricardo's purpose of investigating the consequences of capital accumulation based on the assumptions of constant real wages and declining fertility of the earth is not attained, since what he hopes to demonstrate is that the distribution of the product, once paid the labor at a constant real wage, is done only between the landlord class and the capitalist farmers, but when due to the same assumption of decreasing fertility the price of the product increases, this necessarily has consequences on the distribution of the product between the three classes.

Under free market conditions, an increase in the price of wheat will imply a decrease in the real wage. If this should remain constant the monetary wage would have to increase proportionally. But the monetary wage will rise as long as the labor demand moves faster than supply. This contrasts with Ricardo's hypothesis that capital and population increase proportionally. Thus, the monetary wage cannot be increased and the real wage will have to decrease every time the price of wheat increases.

Thus, the constant real wage assumption is inconsistent with declining fertility. This assumption is only maintained if the product's price also remains constant, but this is impossible with decreasing fertility. Ricardo claims that the validity of the constant real wage assumption depends only on the constant proportionality between capital accumulation and population growth. He does not notice that it is the monetary wage and not the real wage that depends on this proportionality.

It is apparent that Ricardo is clear about what he means by constant real wages. It is the monetary wage that allows the worker to maintain the same standard of living in the long run. His notion of real wages is noted in the fact that he explicitly states that the remnant of the product once discounted from payment to labor is distributed only between landowners and capitalists. Ricardo, then, starts from a constant real salary, but his own premises lead him to a real descending salary, a result that ends up affecting the conclusions to which he is above. Ultimately, the product is not distributed in an inverse relationship between capitalists and landlords, where the former get less

and less participation and the latter more, but workers also see their participation in the long term diminished.

We must point out yet another observation that has to do with the dynamic process and, therefore, with the long-term development of this Ricardian model. If, as we have seen, the real wage decreases, this decrease will be reflected later in a decrease in the labor supply. If accumulation continues to advance, this decline will be offset by an increase in the monetary wage, which can again bring labor supply back to its former position of proportionality with capital accumulation, in which case wage money will remain constant, and the real wage will decrease as a result of decreasing fertility.

On the other hand, if the rate of profit falls as a result of the same cause, the rate of accumulation will also fall, and if the labor supply decreases as the real wage decreases, the monetary wage will remain relatively constant. In any case, declining fertility will continue to prevail, raising the price of wheat and lowering real wages. This reinforces the result to which we had previously arrived.

Ricardo's conclusion is inconsistent. The distribution of income occurs not only between landowners and capitalists, but also workers involved. On the other hand, the decreasing fertility of the soil conditions the whole process. Not only are the capitalists affected in the long run, but also the workers.

It should also be added that this result is reached by virtue of the fact that Ricardo introduces in his second part of the *essay* his incipient theory of labor value, because it was derived from this theory that the price of the product increases, causing, through the mechanism described above, the decline of real wages.

THE *PRINCIPLES* APPROACH

This is the theory of economic development of Ricardo that comes from the *Essay* in relation to the salary. We may ask whether this theory remains in the *Principles*,¹⁵ a work that the author wrote to expose the ideas of the *Essay* in a more finished way and to clear with it the criticisms that

15 *Political and Taxation Economy principles, Op, cit.*

he had received, in the sense that this work was obscure and abstract.¹⁶ In *Principles*, Ricardo leaves aside the first approach that he presented in the *Essay* that is, the homogeneity between capital and product, and concentrates on the second one, which incorporates the theory of labor value, explicitly, dedicating the first chapter of the work.

In addition, the author no longer insists on his claim that the agricultural benefit rate determines the overall benefit rate. This time adopts a different approach. He drops the *Essay's* unisectorial model (agricultural model) to propose a two sectors model: agriculture and manufactures. On this occasion the theory of value has a predominant place; although the principle of diminishing returns continues to prevail in agriculture.

Something particular about this model is that Ricardo shifts his attention from agriculture to manufacturing, which is evidenced by the application of the theory of value to manufacturing production under conditions of different ratio between fixed and circulating capital, where the latter is fundamentally represented by disbursements in labor. Thus, after affirming that the relative value of a commodity is determined by the relative quantity of labor necessary to produce it, Ricardo proceeds to verify this assertion, using three branches of manufacturing production with different composition of capital. In the first case, the capital-labor ratio is greater than the average, represented by the second branch, while in the third, the ratio is lower. To verify the validity of the theory of value, Ricardo relies on a structure of the commodity such that, given a rate of profit, the value of a commodity would be given by:

$$Kf + Kc + g = V$$

Where Kf represents fixed capital, which according to the theory of value constitutes the quantity of indirect labor contained in the means of production, Kc represents the working capital or capital invested in labor and, therefore, constitutes direct labor (for the case in hand represents wages paid), g is the capitalist's profit calculated according to the usual rate, in Ricardo's words¹⁷.

16 As for the exhortation to write the work see Ricardo's letter to Say of August 18, 1815, in Sraffa, Piero (1959). *Obras, Op, cit*, Vol. VI; in regard to the *Essay's* obscure character, see Malthus's letter to Richard of March 10, 1815. *Ibid*.

17 This is another curiosity about Ricardo. On the one hand, he refers to a long-term benefit rate that is declining because of declining fertility. This rate can move in a range of 50 to 11%. See the *Essay*

Presumably it is the part of value that the capitalist appropriates in the form of profit by risking his capital in a productive activity.¹⁸

Given this structure, Ricardo's hypothesis is that changes in wages result in changes in the relative value of goods produced under different conditions, as regards the ratio of fixed to working capital (capital and labor). In the case of the three productive branches, an increase in the wage will imply a reduction in the relative value of the product of the branch with a higher proportion of fixed capital, and an increase in the relative value of the product of the branch with a smaller proportion. Ricardo recognizes that under a different proportion of capital between branches, the relative value of goods is altered when the wage is modified, this being an additional cause for the determination of the value of the commodity. However, in their view, the relative amount of work remains the determining cause.¹⁹

The point in question for our purpose is the fact that in manufacturing the rate of profit falls when the monetary wage increases. This is important, the rate of profit does not fall because it increases the amount of labor employed, as in agriculture, since in Ricardo manufactures assume constant conditions of production, but given an initial rate of profit, an increase in wages monetary policy will bring with it a decrease in profit and, consequently, a lower proportion of the same in relation to the capital employed (including K_c), i.e. a fall in the rate of profit.

But, What is the reason for the increase in the monetary wage and, therefore, the decline in the rate of profit in manufactures? This reason must be sought in the conditions of agriculture production where it deprives the declining fertility of the land. According to the theory of value, as accumulation proceeds and the population grows, it becomes necessary to resort to land of inferior quality or less fertile. Under such circumstances, producing the same amount of product will require a greater amount of work invested (both direct

chart. In his analysis about the rise of the wage effect on the profit rate, according to the composition of the capital, it uses a range of 10 to 3%. The latter is the lowest level the rate can reach before the accumulation stops. See chapter one of Principles, section IV. In the short term and in equilibrium, the rate of profit oscillates around 10%. *Ibid.* Also, ch. XXIX.

18 Principles, Op cit., Cap.. VI, p. 94.

19 *Ibid.*, Cap. I, secc. IV, p. 27.

and indirect). As the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labor invested under the most difficult conditions; in agriculture the value of cereals will be determined by the last land put into cultivation or marginal land. And if the difficulty of production increases when less and less fertile land is used, then the quantity of labor necessary for its production will increase, and so the value of the cereals will increase.

Since workers consume cereals only, an increase in their value as a result of production difficulties in agriculture will entail an increase in the monetary wage. However, such a rise is necessary if the real wage is to remain constant, but under competitive conditions, the monetary wage will be a function of the conditions prevailing in the labor market. In the *Principles*, unlike the *Essay*, Ricardo makes no proposition regarding the conditions of proportionality between the accumulation of capital and population growth; but introduces a concept of salary that constitutes an important reference in its model of development. It is the natural wage²⁰ whose notion is already found in *Smith's Wealth of Nations*²¹ and according to which all merchandise, including labor, has its natural price and its market price. The natural price is the price that corresponds to the quantity of labor necessary for its production, while the market price is the price determined according to the supply and demand conditions in the corresponding market.

Since labor is a commodity that is bought and sold, like any other, it will also have, then, its natural price and its market price. The natural price in this particular case comes to be the price that allows the working class to remain without increase or decrease. In other words, a wage level that in the long run keeps the working population at a constant level.

Earlier we pointed out that Ricardo made no statement on the proportionality between capital accumulation and population in relation to real wages. Now, however, we must realize that this assumption is contained in the notion of natural wages. Indeed, the fact that this wage keeps the population without increase or decrease, is the same as saying that the worker receives a salary such that allows him to maintain the same level of consumption (the

20 *Ibid.*, Cap. V, p. 71.

21 Smith, Adam (1987). *Investigación sobre la Naturaleza y Causas de la Riqueza de las Naciones*. Mexico, FCE., cap. VIII, pp. 63 y ss.

same basket) regardless of the components price of that basket, and this is nothing other than a constant real wage. Then, when Ricardo speaks of an increase or decrease in the natural wage, depending on whether the price of food increases or decreases, it refers to a natural wage that corresponds to a certain real wage.

When analyzing the situation of the manufacturing sector, it was emphasized that the fall in the rate of profit was caused by an increase in the monetary wage. It should be clarified now that this wage is none other than the natural wage, since an increase in the price of food demands an increase in the natural wage, such that the population remains constant.

Let's see how the process unfolds. The population increase and the greater need of food consequent, obliges that in the agriculture recourse to lands of lesser fertility. This circumstance will require a greater capital advance in terms of embedded labor. According to the theory of value this will imply an increase in the value of the cereal and, therefore, of its price (assuming that the value of money remains constant). The greater capital investment with decreasing returns will, in turn, translate into a decrease in the rate of profit in agriculture, a decline that curiously Ricardo does not emphasize in the *Principles*, as he did in the *Essay*.²² As can be seen, this rate is not determined independently of prices, which on the other hand speaks of the underlying implicit circular reasoning in the determination of the rate of profit and that the level of abstraction of the *Principles* is inferior to that of the *Essay*.

In manufacturing, the rise in the price of food impacts the rate of profit through the inverse relationship wages-benefits, a result that is achieved by virtue of the fact that production conditions remain constant in that sector. Accordingly, the rise in food prices translates into an increase in the monetary wage, an increase that is necessary to maintain the real wage at the subsistence level, or what is the same, to raise the natural wage.

22 *Principios, Op. cit.* See ch. II on Income. Ricardo is careful not to mention explicitly the decline in profit as a result of declining fertility. The subject will deal with it in ch. VI on Utilities, where it will link declining fertility with the decline in the rate of profit in manufactures, through the rise of the monetary wage derived from the greater amount of work necessary to produce cereals, an important component of the basket. This rise in wages will also be the cause of the decline in the rate of profit in agriculture. See also, chap. VI., P. 88. Thus Ricardo detaches himself in the *Principles* from any allusion to a rate of physical profit in agriculture (and hence a homothetic model), from which, and through competition, the rate is determined of general benefit. *Ibid.*, P. 92.

If, as Ricardo himself admits, there is a natural wage and a monetary or market wage, the wage that prevails in the long run will depend on the underlying forces under free market conditions. In fact, to say that when the value of food increases as a result of decreasing fertility must also raise monetary wages, is to make prevail in the long term the natural wage compatible with a constant real wage. But this must be an outcome that is reached through the play of market forces.

The fact that Ricardo insists on constant real wages in the long term (in the present case, through the notion of natural wages), suggests that the working class retains its share of the product, while the remainder carried out between landowners and capitalists, exactly as their initial proposition in the *Essay*.

APPLYING THE RICARDIAN MODEL IN MEXICO

Applying Ricardo's model in Mexico's case implies recognizing the existence of a labor market where the supply and demand interaction determine the labor price. The supply depends on the population growth rate, and the demand for the growth rate of the economy. Following Ricardo (and consequently Malthus as well, at this point²³), population growth depends on the level of the real wage, and this on the prices of the basket and the monetary wage. The economic growth rate, on the other hand, depends on multiple factors. First, the growing demand, both internal and external. That is, the demand for consumer goods, investment, and exports. We could go a little further analyzing the determinants of consumption and investment, but this would lead us to incorporate other theoretical aspects. In order to remain within a Ricardian framework, we will limit ourselves to taking the economically active population (EAP), the wage (based on Mexico's minimum wage), the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), cgrowth rate, as a proxy for accumulation of capital, and the level of prices as measured by the national consumer price index (INPC, spanish acronym).

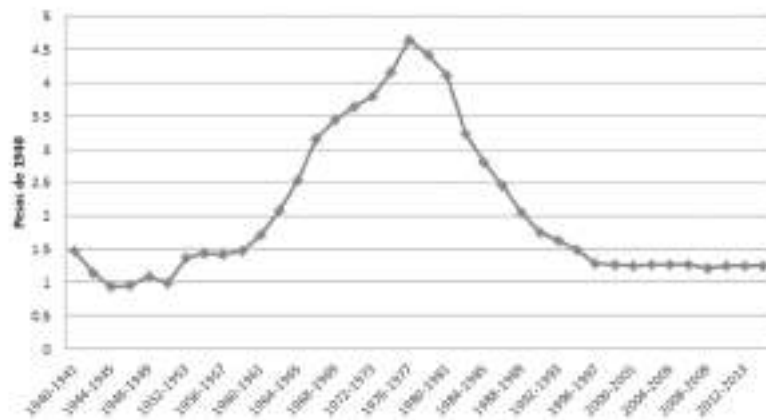
While in his model Ricardo claimed that wages maintained a passive role (constant real wages) and where the cause of the decline in the rate of profit and income growth was due to the decreasing fertility condition, in Mexico real wages have not been constant, nor the rate of profit has been downward;

23 Malthus, T. R. (1985). *Primer Ensayo sobre la Población*. Barcelona, Ediciones Orbis, S. A. Caps. 2 y 16.

while today a landowner class does not exist properly in the manner of Ricardo, although under the tenure of Mexican land leases occur. But the conditions of production are essentially capitalist, while the ownership of the land is borne by the same enterprises that exploit them on the basis of profit maximization.²⁴

The real wage, based on the minimum wage, has had the behavior shown in Chart 1.²⁵ The rise wage period corresponds to the Mexican economic boom period, period in which the GDP growth rate was on average 6.3 percent during the years 1940-1981.²⁶

Chart 1. Real wage in Mexico. 1940-2014.



Source: Own elaboration based on Nacional Financiera, CONSAMI and Banco de México's INPC and INEGI data for different periods

-
- 24 In such conditions income is confused with profit. "For income I always understand the remuneration given to the landowner by the use of the inherent productive force of the land. Whether the capitalist landowner invests in his own land, whether the capital is in it by an earlier lease, at the expiration of his lease, he can obtain what is rightly called a major rent; but a part of it is obviously paid for the use of capital. The other part is paid only for the use of the land-producing force." Ricardo, D. *Essay, Op. Cit.* Footnote, p. 10..
- 25 Compare the section of this graph for the period 1940-1965, with the graph presented by Saul Trejo in his calculation of the share of wages in income for a similar period, in Trejo, R. Saul. (1973). *Industrialización y Empleo en México*. México, FCE. p. 26.
- 26 In contrast, real wages grew at a rate of 4.2% in that period (if the 1950-1981 period is taken, wage growth is 5.0% yearly). The growth rates of wages and GDP over the entire reporting period (1940-2014) are those that result from the adoption of a semi logarithmic model at a 95% confidence level. (See Gujarati, Damodar N. (2003), *Econometría, Mexico*, Mc Graw-Hill.). The historical series on real wages and real GDP is self-made, adjusting the data to a single base year (1940). With information from Nacional Financiera, CONSAMI and INEGI for several years. See Annex, Table 1 and charts A.1 and A.2.

Both variables maintained a positive relation in the period.²⁷ The increase in real wages is explained by the fact that in the boom period, monetary wages grew faster than the prices of the workers' consumption basket.²⁸ But the same increase in money wages reveals a great dynamism in investment, as a result of real profits obtained by companies and higher expectations of growth, in conjunction with a slower growth of the EAP.²⁹

The fact that the rate of profit was increasing at this stage reveals that there were no decreasing yield constraints, neither in agriculture nor in the industrial (and services) sector, which would have implied a greater use of labor. On the contrary, yields were increasing in both sectors, and this was a factor that increased the labor demand, with the consequent increase in the monetary salaries, and therefore, in the real ones.³⁰

As favorable conditions for growth were easing, the Mexican economic process was reversed in such a way that investment and consumption declined, as did exports. The salary begins to fall when the development model followed up to that date is exhausted. Indeed, 1982 is the turning point of Mexican economic growth; from that year until 2014 economic activity measured by GDP maintained a growth rate of 2.9 percent, half the dynamism recorded in the previous period.³¹

For a time economic policy cushioned the impact of the negative effects of such factors. This was possible thanks to a policy of increasing public

27 The correlation coefficient between these variables for the mentioned period was 0.94. See Annex, Table 2.

28 While the former grew at an annual rate of 11.1 percent, the latter rose at a rate of 6.9 percent. See Annex, Table 1 and Charts A.2 and A.4.

29 Such expectations were supported both by the economic situation around the Second World War, and by the economic policy implemented by the State in the context of such a conjuncture. This policy fostered an industrializing process. See for example, Solís M. Leopoldo (1999). *The evolution of the Mexican economy*. Mexico, El Colegio Nacional. Chap. VII, pp. 251-256; Vernon, Raymond (1965). *The Dilemma of Mexico's development*. Cambridge, Massachusetts. Harvard University Press. Chap. 4. It should be noted that in the period 1940-1981, while economic activity grew at an annual rate of 6.3 per cent, the EAP did so at a rate of 2.9 per cent. This restriction of labor supply partly explains the increase in the monetary wage in this period. See Annex, Table 1 and Charts A.1 and A.3

30 Saúl Trejo reports an elasticity of annual growth of industrial production in relation to the GDP of 1.24, for the period 1950-1967. Trejo, R. Saul (1973), *Op cit.*, pp. 26-28.

31 The real wage in this period decreased at a rate of 2.8%. See Annex, Table 1 and Chart A.2.

spending and the favorable conjuncture that meant the discovery of important oil fields.³² But the public finance crisis, which stemmed from an expansionary fiscal policy on the expenditure side and a contraction one on the side of non-oil revenues, was compounded by the energy crisis in the international market, which caused a severe fall in the price of raw.³³ In fact, such circumstances meant that the State was not in a position to counteract the effect of a slower pace of growth stemming from weakened effective demand. The consequence of this incapacity was a fall in the labor demand that had repercussions on lower monetary salaries, which in conjunction with the increase in basket prices in the period of higher inflation (140% in 1987³⁴) meant a fall in real wages. This situation was further aggravated by the fact that labor supply continued to grow (as a result of the increase in real wages in the previous stage), albeit at a slower rate.³⁵ Thus, real wages fell continuously over twenty years (1980 to 2000). Its level from this last year and until 2014 is practically the same as that prevailing in 1950. Mexican economic history reveals that the *principles* of wage regulation are met, according to Ricardo, for a long period.

FINAL COMMENTS

Under Ricardo's premises, in the long run the income distribution is unfavorable, both for the capitalist class and for the working class, with the landowning class being the only beneficiary as a result of restrictions on the food importation. What ultimately decreases the real wage is the slower rate of accumulation (which depresses the monetary wage) and the rise in the food price.³⁶

32 Public spending increased significantly in the administrations of Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo. In the case of the latter, the expenditure policy was backed by significant discoveries of oil deposits in the Mexican subsoil: proven reserves rose from 16 billion barrels in 1977 to 72 billion in 1982. See Annual Report of Banco de Mexico, 1982.

33 El precio medio del barril en el mercado internacional pasó de 33.19 dólares en 1981, a 28.69 en 1982. The average price of the barrel in the international market went from 33.19 dollars in 1981, to 28.69 in 1982, reporting a fall of 4.5 dollars from one year to another. Likewise, exports of other petroleum products, such as natural gas and petrochemicals, also declined in value over the previous year. Pemex. *Anuario Estadístico* 1990.

34 Arjón, L. Pedro (2012). *La inflación y el comercio exterior en México*. Mexico, Editorial Itaca., p. 20.

35 During the 1982-2014 period, the EAP grew at an annual average rate of 2.5 percent (barely four tenths below the rate recorded in the 1940-1981 period). See Annex, Table 1 and chart A.3.

36 With regard to the assumption of a constant real wage Ricardo circumstantially diverts from his scientific approach to admit that real wages can descend. See for example *Principios*, *Op. cit.*, cap. 6, p. 96.

As regards the application of the Ricardian model to an economy such as that of Mexico, it is observed that for a long period there is an interaction between the accumulation of capital and the labor force movement represented by the economically active population. The interaction between the two variables determines the level of the monetary wage. In turn, the relationship between this wage and the general price level determines the real wage. In Mexico from 1940 two well-defined periods have been distinguished. In the first of these (1940-1981), with a monetary wage growing at an annual rate higher than that of prices, real wages increased sharply; in the second (1982-2014), particularly in the sub-period 1982-2000, the slower economic growth pace combined with a slightly higher growth rate of the EAP implied that the monetary wage increased lagging behind in conjunction with a significant growth in consumer prices was reflected in a real wage return at its 1940 level. It is interesting to note that given the differences in the growth dynamics of the variables in the first period, a positive correlation between real wages and economic activity, and that the former has observed a significant increase, it is evident that workers did not share the benefits of development equally. This is even more serious for the second period, where, even as economic activity grew at a slower pace (an obvious sign of a long-term recessive phase), the fact that real wages have shown a negative growth rate of 2.8 percent, reveals that the business class continued to reap profits, some of which constituted a significant transfer of income from the working class. Thus, in the case of Mexico and within the framework of an essentially capitalist production system, the distribution of income takes place particularly between two broadly defined social classes: the business class which holds capital (and organizer of production) and working class, distributed in the different branches of the production in different categories and with different degree of qualification. The distribution takes place in response to the dynamics between the accumulation of capital and the labor force, on the one hand, and the incidence of prices on money wages, on the other, all of which reveals that the *Principles* of classical economics having relevance as an explanatory framework of economic development in the long term.

—ANNEX—

Table 1. Mexico. Dynamics of fundamental economic variables 1940-2014

VARIABLE	PERIOD	GR ¹	INFERIOR LIMIT ²	SUPERIOR LIMIT ²	F ³ CRITICAL VALUE
Real minimum wage	1940-1981	4.18	3.69	4.67	3.8615 E-20
	1982-2014	-2.77	-3.36	-2.17	9.2444 E-11
Nominal minimum wage	1940-1981	11.1	10.5	11.6	6.4047 E-35
	1982-2014	14.3	11.8	16.9	1.4196 E-12
GDP (1940=100)	1940-1981	6.29	6.17	6.4	9.8174 E-51
	1982-2014	2.92	2.75	3.09	9.4002 E-27
EAP ⁴	1940-1981	2.86	2.77	2.95	1.2656 E-41
	1982-2014	2.52	2.35	2.68	5.4250 E-25
NCPI ⁵	1940-1981	6.89	6.24	7.55	1.7994 E-23
	1982-2014	17.26	14.11	20.41	2.1138 E-12

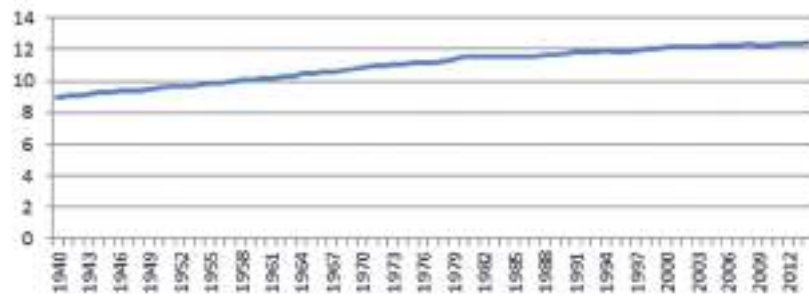
- 1 Annual growth rate: variable's coefficient in percentage, obtained by the regression of a semi logarithmic model.
- 2 Limits of the interval containing the variable's coefficient, at a 95 percent confidence level, using the distribution *t*.
- 3 F critical value below 0.05 which allows us to accept the hypothesis of a non-zero value for the growth rate.
- 4 Economically Active Population. Based on EAP's historical series built with data from NAFINSA, Banco de Mexico, ENE and ENOE (INEGI, Mexico).
- 5 National Consumer Price Index. Based on the historical series of the consumer price index, constructed with data from IGMCM and INPC (INEGI, México).

Table 2. Correlation coefficient between the gross domestic product and the minimum wage

1940-1981		
	GDP	MW
GDP	1	
MW	0.944461353	1
1982-2014		
	GDP	MW
PIB	1	
MW	-0.888111499	1

Source: Own elaboration based on the natural logarithm of GDP's historical series and minimum wages prices of 1940, built from data of CONSAMI, Banco de México e INEGI.

Chart A.1 Gross Domestic Product Evolution¹



Source: Own elaboration based on GDP's historical series on 1940 prices built on data from Banco de Mexico and INEGI

¹ In natural logarithms.

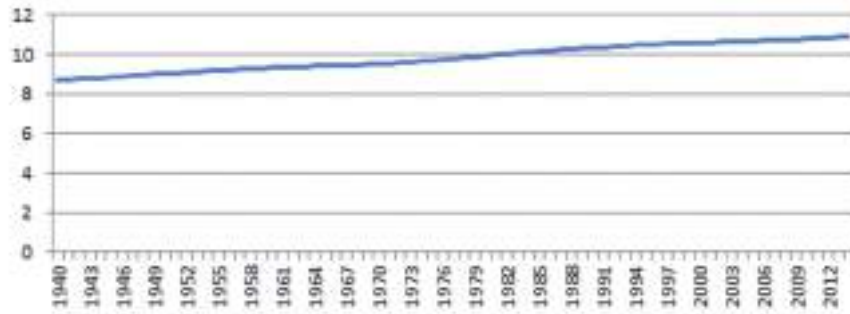
Chart A.2 Minimun Wage Evolution¹



Source: Own elaboration based on daily minimum wage's historical serie according to 1940 prices, built on data from CONSAMI, INEGI and Banco de Mexico.

1 In natural logarithms.

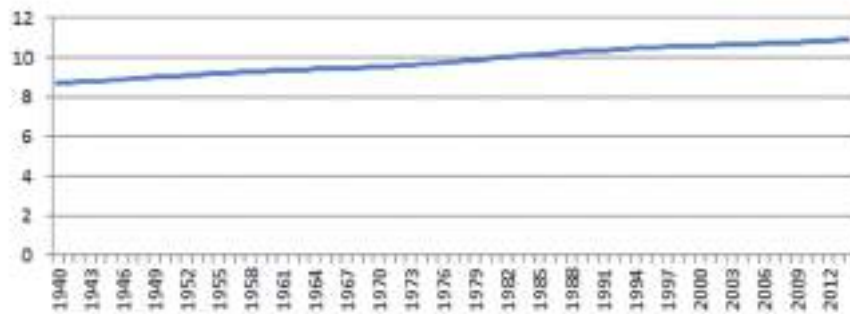
Chart A.3 Economically Active Population Evolution¹



Source: Own elaboration based on EAP's historical series, built on data from NAFINSA, Banco de Mexico, ENE and ENOE (INEGI, Mexico)

1 In natural logarithms.

Chart A.4 Consumer Price Index Evolution¹



Source: Own elaboration based on historical series of the consumer price index, built on data from IGPMCM and INPC (INEGI, Mexico)

1 In natural logarithms.

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OPTIMIZACIÓN DE LA
DISTILACIÓN *ORIGANUM
VULGARE* L, CON EFECTO ANTIFUNGO
EN *MONILIOPHTHORA
RORERI* (CIF & PAR)

—
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— Abstract—

Moniliophthora roreri (Cif & Par), since entering Mexico in 2005 (Lopez *et al.*, 2006) it significantly decreased grain production of dry cocoa, passing 43,974.52 to 22,405.01 ton of dry cocoa (Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food [SAGARPA], 2015). This pathogen became the main threat for cocoa producer; the measures were still scarce for sustainable management. The objective of this work is to optimize the extraction process by distilling of *Origanum vulgare* L, by evaluating *in vitro* its antifungal effect; eight were obtained hidrodestillation, these were obtained with fresh and sun-dried material and two solvents (Water: Alcohol) by using the technique of liquid culture medium in test tubes, by consisting of a solution of more cocoa extract water ratio (1:1 v/v) to which they were added fungus conidia. To this solution is added the hydrodistillation of *O. vulgare* L. in relation (1: 1 v / v), by determining its effect on the formation and germination of conidia of the fungus in five observation times (0, 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours). The results show that all hydrodistillation *O. vulgare* L metabolites present with inhibitory effects on the variables evaluated, being the best treatments. It is the best treatments of control over the formation of conidia the O7 and O3 (*O. vulgare* L. dry, 45 g L⁻¹ water ratio 10.0: alcohol and fresh *O. vulgare* L., 300 g L⁻¹ ratio of 10: 0 water: Alcohol) the bests, by reaching 68.3% at 48 hours and 65.6% after 72 hours respectively, compared with the control.

Keywords

Plant extracts, hydrolate, Theobroma cacao.

Cocoa's moniliasis caused by the fungus *Moniliophthora roreri* (Cif & Par) is the main problem in 11 countries of the American continent, including Mexico and Colombia (Phillips et al., 2007; Sánchez and Garcés, 2012). This pathogen under natural conditions exclusively attacks the fruit at any stage of development, with fruits up to three months of age being the most susceptible (López, 2015). Among the main symptoms are protuberances or "humps", oily spots, yellowing or premature maturation and chocolate spots (Merchán, 1980; Evans, 2002; Oliveira and Luz, 2005; López et al., 2006). It causes the total loss of its seeds or decrease in its organoleptic quality due to the degradation that it causes in the tissues (Ramírez, 2013).

In March 2005, it was detected for the first time in plantations of Pichucalco's municipality in the state of Chiapas - Mexico (López et al., 2006), leaving behind the demolition of large number of hectares planted, abandonment of plantations and great production casualties (Ramírez, 2008a; Ramírez et al., 2011a).

With Colombian origins; carried out by the departments of Santander and Antioquia (Phillips et al., 2005; Phillips, 2006; Grisales and Afanador, 2007; Jaimes and Aranzazu, 2010), up to this date there has been found five generic groups of this fungus (Phillips and Aime 2005; Alvarez et al., 2014), which has devastated the country and traditional control strategies have generated collateral results, such as changes in the organism leading to resistance to fungicides and mutations that have originated several strains in some regions (Meinhardt and Rincones, 2008, Meinhardt et al., 2014). The control of *M. roreri* through the use of chemical synthesis fungicides has been tested in several places; but, the results are not completely effective for the management of this disease; in addition, the high frequencies of application, the pollution they cause and their cost are also questioned, since it is often uneconomical for the cacao tree, despite having an effect on the decrease of the disease (Meza and León, 1972; Suárez, 1979; Achicanoy and Buritica, 1981, González, 1982, Cruz, 1986, Martí et al., 1987, Sánchez et al., 2003).

As part of their metabolism, plants have components that are known as secondary metabolites and their chemical properties have been extensively investigated since the mid-nineteenth century (Vergara, 1997; Croteau et al., 2000); which can be a useful tool for pest and disease control, with a very high potential to handle the main phytosanitary problems of agricultural production (Hernández et al., 2007; Barrera and Bautista, 2008).

In Mexico, research has been carried out with extracts of plants and it has been found a great diversity of plants (among them oregano (*Origanum vulgare L.*) with inhibitory effect on the growth and development of

pathogens including *Phytophthora spp.*, *Colletrotrichum gloeosporioides* and *Moniliophthora roreri*, (Ramírez y López, 2006; Ramírez, 2008b; Ramírez *et al* 2011a). Oregano and ginger have shown an effect on the inhibition of various types of bacteria and fungi that cause diseases in animals and crop plants, both at the field as at the post-harvest period (Bertelli *et al.*, 2003; Nguiefack *et al.*, 2004; Kulisic *et al.*, 2004; Nostro *et al.*, 2004; Sahin *et al.*, 2004; Sacchetti *et al.*, 2005; Hersch *et al.*, 2005).

The objective of the this research was to provide new alternatives that are environmentally friendly and effective in the management of *M. roreri*, considering the reports of Ramírez *et al.*, (2011a), it was intended to optimize the extraction process by distillation of *Origanum vulgare L.*, evaluating their antifungal capacity, on the formation and germination of *M. roreri* (Cif and Par) conidia isolated from cocoa pods from plantations in Mexico.

EQUIPMENT AND METHODS

Pathogen isolation: The *M. roreri* fungus was multiplied from a fungus strain present in the Agrotechnologies Laboratory of the AUDES Cacao-Chocolate of the Universidad Autonoma de Chiapas, previously isolated from samples of diseased fruits in the state of spot, collected in cacao plantations of Comalcalco's municipality, in the state of Tabasco, Mexico; according to methodology described by Ramírez and collaborators (2011b).

Hydrolates preparation: The distillates were prepared in the Agrotechnologies Laboratory of the AUDES Cacao- Chocolate, from Orégano (*O. vulgare L.*), eight hydrolates were obtained, which are described in Table I:

Table I. Conventions for different treatments.

Treatments.		Plant	Quantity g L-1	Water: alcohol ratio
1	O ₁	Fresh Oregano	300	10:1
2	O ₂		600	10:1
3	O ₃		300	10:0
4	O ₄		600	10:0
5	O ₅	Dry Organo	45	10:1
6	O ₆		90	10:1
7	O ₇		45	10:0
8	O ₈		90	10:0
9	Absolute control (Abs. cont) Distillated water			

For the extraction process the plant material and the respective solvent were placed in the kettle and subjected to constant heating until the hydrodistillation was obtained in stainless steel distillation equipment made for this purpose.

Liquid medium test in test tubes: The methodology described by Ramírez, (2011a) was used to determine the total number of conidia and the number of conidia germinated in the presence of each treatment.

Stock solution: Four 50 mm Petri dishes containing 12 days of planting *M. roreri* crop were taken, a superficial scraping of the fungus was performed and washed with 50 ml of sterile distilled water, added in an Erlenmeyer and was added 50 ml of cocoa extract and one drop of tween 80.

Hydrodistilled solution: The stock solution was divided into six test tubes: three as a control (with 5 ml of distilled water + 5 ml of stock solution) and three containing the hydrolate to be analyzed (5 ml of hydrodistillate + 5 ml of stock solution); then vortexed to homogenize the mixture and readings were made in the Neubauer chamber, with three replicates, counting the number of total conidia and the number of germinated conidia. Tubes with treatments and their respective controls were incubated in the dark at 28°C +/- 2°C.

Variables: The variables that evaluated were: formation of total conidia and number of conidia germinated at 0, 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours, according to the methodology described by Ramírez (2013) and Ochoa (2015).

Experimental design: A completely randomized design (DCA) was used with nine treatments, three replicates per treatment at 0, 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours. A variance analysis was performed and, if significant differences were detected, Tukey's measures comparison test was applied at 5%, using the statistical software SPSS STATISTICS 2.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the statistical analysis, there were significant differences in the effect of treatments on conidia formation at 24, 48, 72, and 96 hours, while at 0 hours no significant differences were observed (Image 1). At 0 hours, the treatment with the highest conidia formation corresponded to treatment O6 (dry material ratio 10:1 water:alcohol), with 211,11 conidia x10⁴ ml⁻¹, and the treatment with the lowest formation of these structures was O8 with 143.61 conidia x10⁴ ml⁻¹ (Image 1A). At 24 hours, the treatment with the highest conidia formation was the absolute control, presenting significant

differences with the other treatments, where the O1 treatment had less formation of these structures, with 82.92 conidia $\times 10^4 \text{ ml}^{-1}$, where all extracts inhibited the formation of conidia in comparison to the control (Image 1B). At 48 hours, the control treatment presented significant differences in relation to the other treatments, being O3, the one which presented less conidia formation with 86.11 conidia $\times 10^4 \text{ ml}^{-1}$, similar to O5 and O7, the last two obtained from dry material (Image 1C). At 72 hours the control presented greater conidia formation, where the O7 treatment had the best behavior with 72.22 conidia $\times 10^4 \text{ ml}^{-1}$ similar to O5 and O8 (Image 1D). At 96 hours, the treatment with the best performance was O7, with 77.78 conidia $\times 10^4 \text{ ml}^{-1}$, presenting significant differences with the control (Image 1E).

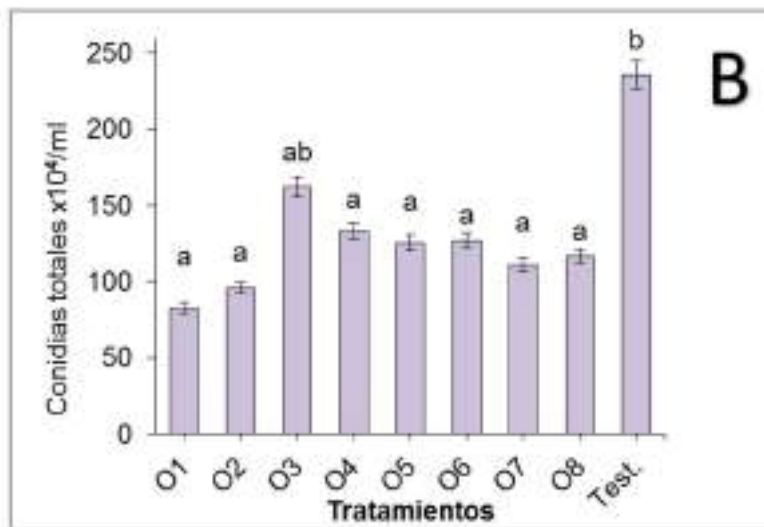
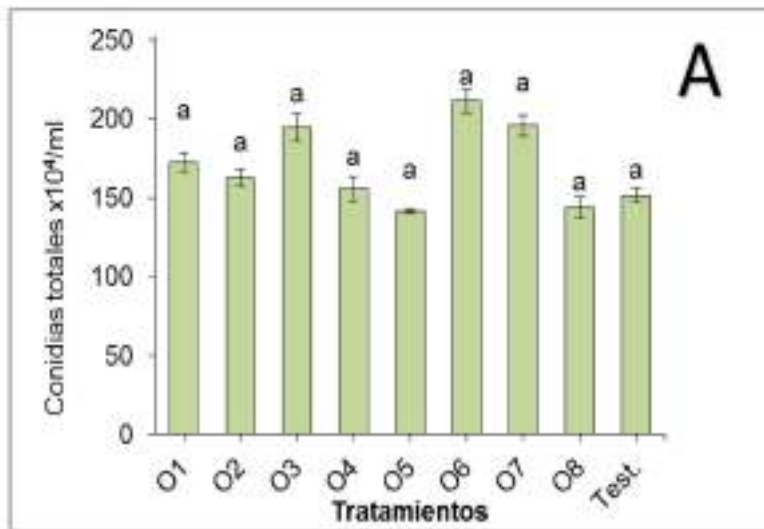
After 48 hours, the O7 treatment presented low values in the formation of conidia, reaching 68.3% at 72 hours.

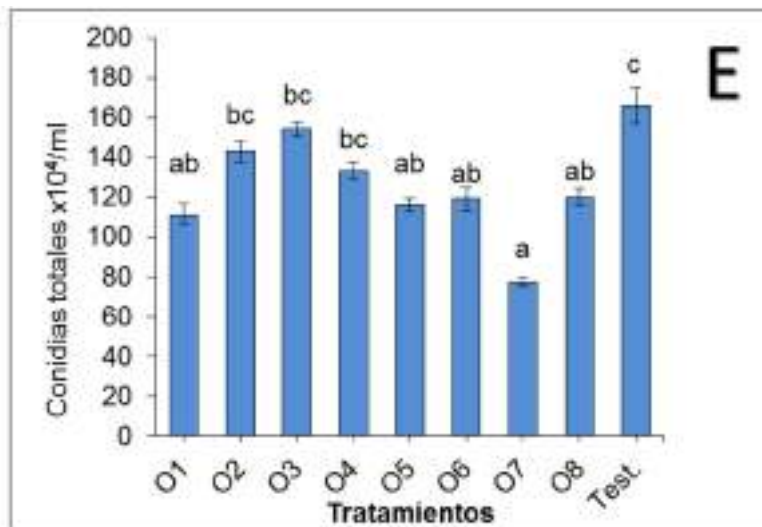
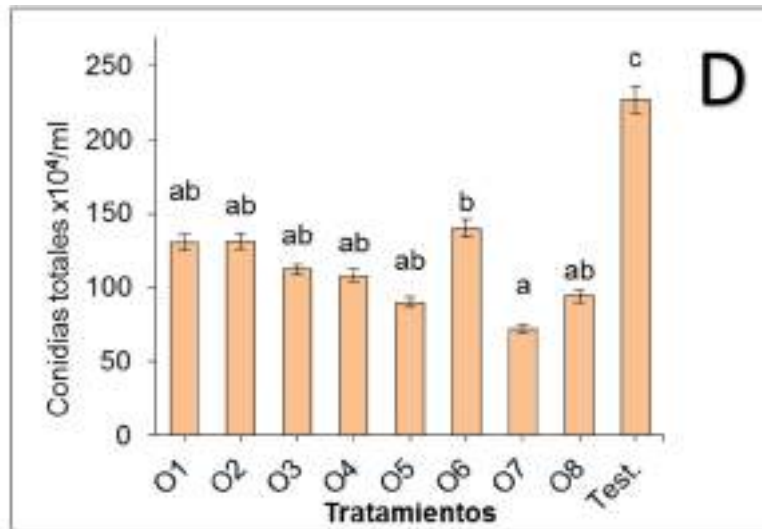
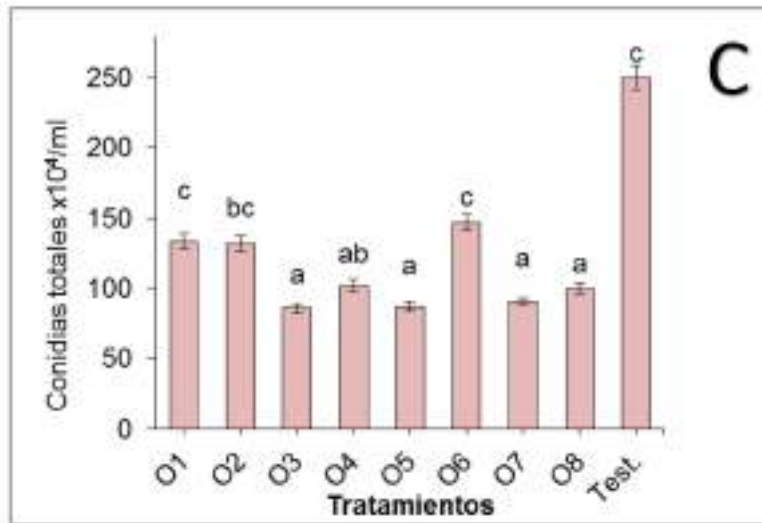
The results obtained indicate that the oregano hydrolate has a regulatory effect of *M. roreri*, as reported by Ramírez (2013), adding to the reports of antibacterial and antioxidant activities, as well as having an effect as a natural food preservative (Hersch *et al.*, 2005; Kulisic *et al.*, 2004; Nostro *et al.*, 2004).

As for its antimicrobial activity, the research results confirm that the oregano's essential oil has multiple effects, including antimicrobial against gram-positive bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Bacillus cereus* and on gram negative bacteria (Albado *et al.*, 2001), besides observing an antifungal activity for the inhibition of the formation and germination of conidia.

According to García *et al.*, (2006) cinnamon's essential oils (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) and oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) were evaluated for their antifungal activity against *Aspergillus flavus* and the production of aflatoxins in pecans. Both oils had fungicidal activity in vitro against *A. flavus*, the oregano's essential oil from 1000 ml. L^{-1} .

Image 1. Oregano extracts' effect, on the number of total conidia $\times 10^4 \text{ ml}^{-1}$. A: 0 horas. B: 24 hours. C: 48 hours. D: 72 hours. E: 96 hours. Treatments with different letters indicate significant differences according to Tukey's test ($P \leq 0.05$)





According to Ramírez *et al.*, (2011a), the extraction form of *O. vulgare* influences the extraction of active metabolites, since the hydrolate presented total inhibition of the growth and conidia formation of the pathogen. Therefore, according to Sahin *et al.*, (2004) the most important component of oregano is essential oil, containing 60-75% volatile phenols, particularly thymol and carvacrol, which have a similar chemical structure (carvacrol naturally is a thymol isomer) and an antimicrobial effect.

For the conidia germination variable, none of the oregano treatments presented statistical differences at any moment of observation, although at 48 hours none of the oregano treatments present germinated conidia, the absolute control (distilled water) presented 1.39 germinated conidia $\times 10^4$ ml⁻¹.

CONCLUSIONS

All oregano treatments presented significant differences with respect to the control (distilled water) after 24 hours, inhibiting in different percentages the formation and germination of *M. roreri*, conidia, being able to be associated to the production of secondary metabolites that have effect antifungal activity affecting the formation of structures that produce cocoa moniliasis.

The O7 treatment (dry oregano, 45 g/L 10:0 water: alcohol ratio) was the best hydrolyzate of the eight evaluated, showing an inhibitory effect after 48 hours, which over time presented the best levels of control in the formation and germination of *M. roreri* conidia with a percentage of inhibition of 68.3% at 72 hours; therefore, it constitutes a potential alternative for the management of cocoa moniliasis, both for conventional and organic production systems.

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ONE MORE TIME ABOUT READING:
CONSIDERATION SINCE THE
RECENT HISTORY AND THE NEW
VIRTUAL SCENARIOS

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— *Abstract*—

Today, facing the realm of the virtual and the fear of the predominance of the image over the writing, practices and habits of reading seem to be in a paradigm shift. However, and beyond detractors and Web supporters, reading in Mexico seems to be stalemate. This short journey, about the reading in our country, which takes as a point of reflection the Porfiriato, seeks to debate about practices and habits readers and some of their imaginary. I also want to emphasize that, above triumphalism's or gloomy omens, it is necessary to increase the quantitative and qualitative studies around all the variables that are involved in this act called reading, placing the current subject as the main axis of the investigation.

Keywords

Reading, History, Readers, Written Culture, Mexico.

1° ACT

The power of the letter -whether it be papyrus, from a book or flickering on a touch screen-, its influence in proposing models of behavior, reiterating or defending concepts and ideals, or its role in generating (and even silencing) debates on these and other matters has been the subject of many reflections. It has been praised for its ability to guide and train the individual; it has been condemned for being a source of evil and perdition; it has been branded as soul food or poison for innocence, but since the appearance of writing, reactions and even contradictions have been present, as Anne Staples points out in reference to nineteenth-century Mexico, despite being «a country with a large number of illiterates, the weight of the written word was such that it aroused real fears as to its influence» (2005: 120).

Kings, leaders from different religions, nobility members or the upper bourgeoisie, elements of the middle class or members of the «people», have been protagonists, witnesses, victims, or perpetrators of this power –something that until this day it's hard to specify– in several times in history. The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, which for four centuries had a category of ecclesiastical law from the Catholic Church, was not only an index that allowed pointing heretics or persecute the ungodly, it is also a good example that confirms the scope and dangers that were attributed to the written word. Most of the times the same texts include the anecdote, just as Julio Sesto narrates: «and in the customs of Veracruz, a prepared employee stopped the second consignment of The Mexico of Porfirio Díaz believing it was a book against the government, like the one from Carlo di Fomaro (Díaz, czar of México)» (1910: XI), and thus could be followed by a long list of examples, since:

Those who burn books, who ban and kill poets, know exactly what they're doing. The undetermined power of books is incalculable. It's undetermined precisely because the same book, the same page, may have totally disparate effects on its readers. It can exalt or deface; seduce or disgust; appeal to virtue or barbarism; magnify the sensibility or trivialize it. In a way that cannot be more disconcerting, it can do both, almost at the same time, in a impulse response so complex, so fast in its alternation and so hybrid that no hermeneutics, no psychology, can predict or calculate its force (Steiner, 2007: 59).

It is true that in Mexico, in its diverse historical moments, can be found attempts and initiatives to teach people how to read and write. During a good part of

the colonial period, and even during the first part of the XIX century, the teaching of reading was prioritized over that of writing. The primers, the syllabus and the cantons, all of them focused so the person could learn how to spell, first only letters, then words and finally sentences, are part of this history that, like all, have moments of success and complete failures.

In the first half of the XIX century in several sectors of the population agreed on the idea that educating a major number of individuals would be a sort of lucky magical elixir to fight all ills (real and imaginary ones) that the country was facing –economic challenges, alarming social inequalities, precarious hygiene and a high mortality (mainly among new borns), political chaos, etcetera–, but it was during the Porfiriato (1876 – 1911) that most of the plans could be transformed into projects. However, the vast majority of them remained only in good intentions or did not have the desired effects, which means, we are far from talking about an ideal period of time.

In Mexico, before the adventure of becoming an independent nation began, there were people who read write and published. Although in general terms, reading was a restricted area, first to the clergy, then to the nobility members and the Novo-Hispanic elite, religious text were a majority,¹ and the oral culture predominated, the role that the print and the manuscripts played amongst the diverse social fabric went beyond of just transmitting information or narrating daily and extraordinary events.²

The so-called Letter's Republic, alluding to the multiplication of forms, authors and literary genres during the Porfiriato, is probably a good reflection point to navigate between the concepts of appropriation, engagement and

1 While doing a classification of works in a library of the XIX century (724 books), according to its content, Clara Elena Suárez finds that, out of 313 titles, 39.3% corresponded to religious themes, 10.64% to medicine, 10.32% to history, 6.45% language and literature, 6.12% laws and jurisprudence, 3.87% politics, 2.9% philosophy, 2.25% veterinary, 11% of difficult classification. (Suárez Argüello in Castañeda, 2004: 195-216).

2 What has been given the name of the first report made in America, printed in the city of Mexico by Juan Pablos in 1541, as a leaflet, is a good example of information, but is also a sample of the values of the time, as well as of social practices or imaginaries. The letter reads: "Relation of the frightful earthquake that has now happened again in the Indies in a city named Guatemala is a matter of great admiration and great example so that we may all amend our sins and be ready for when God would serve to call us". Consult: http://www.revistadeluniversidad.unam.mx/ojs_rum/files/journals/1/articles/12064/public/12064-17462-1-PB.pdf

access (Kalman, 2003) when talking about reading and readers. In the parenthesis that will open more than thirty years with the same political leader, concerns and obsessions for hygiene, morality and the role (public and private) of each of the genres appeared from different social groups; but in these interstices of peace and a certain economical balance, books and manuscripts will find eco in a certain group of society, especially by those who among their many interests was to educate and appear educated.³

Jesús Galindo y Villa mentions that, regarding the national periodic publications, «the Republic's Yearly Statistics corresponding to 1899, which has just been printed, registers about 201, only in this Capital» (1901: 76).⁴ But at the national level, the document gives an account of many subjects that were treated in an equal number of newspapers, magazines, yearbooks, journals and bulletins.⁵

Texts/manuscripts and society are interconnected worlds and not only in a providers-consumers circle. The link that appears between the participants, talks about an outline of groups of readers, places of socialization of texts and prints, forms of reading and transmission of information, literary associations, writers, journalists or playwrights, plays, literary movements, literary genres, production agencies, amongst other, and all together represent a circle in constant traction.

3 Although they never reached the limits of Julio Torri's imagination (and irony) in his 1917 tale: «It was a poor country»: «Then a curious phenomenon was first noticed, much later quoted by the writers of Political Economy: the literary peak produced a rise of values in the foreign markets. What a surprise for businessmen! Who would suspect that the books of poetry and deception possessed such useful virtues! [...] A law was issued that placed literature and other arts under the jurisdiction of the finance minister.... On the stock market, there was talk of realism and idealism, of problems of expression, of the Memoirs of Goethe and the Reisebilder of Heine. By Christmas, the finance minister presented a budget for the Parliament for the probable literary production of the following year: so many novels, so many poems [...] the government majorities were for the prose genres, while the opposition left always demanded greater copy of verses». (Torri, 2008: 18 – 19).

4 In all cases of citations of texts from the XIX century, it was adapted the orthography to the present time.

5 The author gives account of 71 texts, from *El Abogado Cristiano*; the *Annals of the Mexican Society of Surgery*; the *Fiscal Statistical Bulletin*; the *Semanary of Economic and Statistical Affairs*; the *Monthly Pass-Partout Guide* (tariffs, railways, etc.); *The Mexican Miner*; the *Journal of Legislation and Jurisprudence*; *Illustrated Literary Time*; *The popular*; the *Courrier du Mexique et de l'Europe*; *The Mexican Herald* to the *Deutsche Zeitung*. (Galindo y Villa, 1901: 76 – 79)

During a good part of the nineteenth century the newspapers, along with their owners and employees, suffered many onslaughts not only from the government's part, since the paper's shortage; the typography service expenses; the lack of dynamism in politics; a deficient cable information and very few readers, encountered unwanted characters, such as the one who at the time exercised a funnel in the sale, Trinidad Martínez (bought the publications at half the price), who also controlled a large part of the "paper workers", who will later be known as «speakers», who played an important role in the transmission of information, precisely in their ability to get the attention of passers-by through exaggeration and misrepresentation of information.⁶

In spite of it all, the periodical press was the biggest penetration tool in society of the time. To researcher Milda Bazant, «the journalism was the only type of publication that reached all social classes and stimulated the reading's development» (2006: 17). In a country where by 1895 barely a 14.39 percent knew how to read and write and by 1900 just a 16.06 percent (Secretary of Economy, 1956), it is necessary to emphasize the affirmation that newspapers reached all social classes. One of the possible ways, but not the only one, was that newspapers could be read from a public open space all the way to the house, the canteen or the hairdresser, but in any case it allowed the multiplication of information between the listeners, who in turn replicated it to other groups in different spaces.

In 1910, Julio Sesto, claimed that the newspaper *El Imparcial*'s director, Reyes Spíndpola, was the one who «taught the people of this country how to read». Sesto attributes the journal's popularity to its low price and goes as far as to credit there all «cultural evolution of a town» (1910: 17). Beyond the fact that Sesto's text was an advocacy on behalf of the Porfiriato, it is true that the different problems that the Mexican press faced during a big part of the nineteenth century made the public generally limited and less faithful to these

6 «Trinidad Martínez, who was nicknamed The General, was the first to promote the circulation of newspapers by the proclamation or speak procedure, as he delivered the leaves of the day, still moist, [...] announcing them loudly and in a scandalous manner. To inflate the news, these devilish youngsters had no reputation for shattering or crime that did not raise the utmost horror. In a few cries they stripped the most honorable of their honor, made the most meek murderer or bankrupt the wealthy. The ponderous disregard of these «paper-makers» came to such outrages that the authorities were compelled to force them to simply mention the title of the printed paper offered for sale by them». (Ceballos, 2006: 155 – 156).

publications, which resulted with some of them lasting less than a year in the market. Although the case of *El Imparcial* –who’s most revealing fact is that by 1910, fourteen years after its apparition, it had a circulation of one hundred thousand copies– is important, let’s not forget a part of the Mexican people was already an accomplice of the newspapers from long ago.⁷

In the middle of the century, and even in the midst of mockery of a figure such as the «countet» (counter poet), Frías y Soto, y Rivera, coincides in talking about the one who worked as a teller or a wine store, like so: «So far the poet has formed himself with readings of novels and newspapers: those are his main study, the secret of his science, the nod of its fecundity, the source of its verbosity, and the juice and substance of its verbs» (Frías, 1974: 120).

Virginia Woolf, in *The years* (1937), set in 1880, narrates one of the characteristics that, I believe, are a cornerstone to understand this long-winded associations game between readers and newspapers: «That man (who writes an editorial at *Times*) always said exactly what Mrs. Malone thought, which comfort her and gave her a sense of security in a world that, according to her, went from bad to worse» (2001: 91). Every newspaper had and has its own public, the one that identifies (precisely in that sense of security) and demands the information according to its ideas, opinions, values and unorthodox knowledge.⁸

In addition to newspapers, the novel was the strongest protagonist in the likes of Mexicans. Mílada Bazant assures that: «more than any other literary genre, the Mexican had a preference with novels. This is reflected in the memories of some people of that time, private libraries, readers of public libraries, and printed catalogs in bookstores» (2005: 228). Ciro B. Ceballos, at the same time as he recalls Pedro Castera and his novel *Carmen: Memories of a Heart* (1882), writes: «the romantic novelist [...] author of a badly-written novel [...] profusely soled to the readers of the cheesy society»

7 See: Abramo Lauff, Marcelo and Yolanda Barberena Villalobos (1998). *El estadio. La prensa en Mexico* (1870 - 1879). Mexico, INAH. Pérez-Rayón, Nora (2001) *Mexico 1900: percepciones y valores en la gran prensa capitalina*, Mexico, Porrúa, UAM Azcapotzalco. Adriana Pineda and Fausta Gantús (coord.) (2013) *Miradas y acercamientos a la prensa decimonónica*, Mexico, Michoacana University of San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Network of Historians of the Press and Journalism in Latin America. Of the latter, visit the website <http://reddehistoriadoresdelaprensa.blogspot.com.es/>

8 As Walter Benjamin reflected: «the arbitrary assimilation of facts goes hand in hand with the equally arbitrary assimilation of the reader, who suddenly becomes the collaborator of his newspaper» (2009: 239).

(2006: 238). The incisive writer seems to share his opinion with Amado Nervo, who recalled that «Dumas said that half of the letters that are lost must be lost, and I think that three-quarters of the books we read should not be read» (1991: 581).⁹

Bookstores are an important part of the link between the nineteenth-century society and the written culture, not only as a space for storing, distributing and selling books, but because they have long become places where problems and ideas of the time were discussed, in addition to selling books, one could buy from theater to travel tickets, as well as articles of perfumery, medicine or jewelry.

For both contemporary and old school researchers,¹⁰ and according with the traveler's manuals, the Bouret Bookstore was the best-stocked library in Mexico City. After analyzing the two volumes of the *General Catalog of the collection of works from the library of the Ch. Bouret's widow* (1909 – 1910, and the one from 1912) that I found in the National Newspaper of Mexico, I emphasize the points that I consider most important.

The work is divided in 21 sections. The themes they work with go from Agriculture, Architecture, Commerce, Electricity, Geology, Gymnastics, Magic, Mathematics, to love affairs. The subject dedicated to *Literature* is the the one with the highest number of titles, with 1,492, followed by those in the *Teaching* area with 996 titles. The literature section occupies 124 pages with a variety of authors from different countries; the genres: novel, theater, poetry and essay..

In the catalog of 1909 - 1910 a number of novelists, both foreign and Mexican, are grouped together in twelve «Libraries». These libraries include classic authors and writers of the time. Cervantes will be a recurring presence,

9 While reviewing the works that were announced in the newspaper *La patria ilustrada* of July 7, 1884, there are authors such as Ireneo Paz (*Cardos y violetas*), José Negrete's novel *La niña Mártir y la mujer verdugo*; Emilio Zola's *La Ralea y Una página de amor*, Balzac's *Maese Cornelio*, Alexander Dumas' *The adopted daughter*, or José Peón Contreras' poetry. In summary, out of 27 works that were announced, 15 were novels, 3 poetry and 9 of various subjects. From the printing press of the Diario del Hogar (January 4, 1885), the novels by the Colombian Jorge Isaacs (*Maria*), or the Mexicans Vicente Riva Palacio (*Calvario and Tabor*) and Hilarión Frías y Soto (*El hijo del estado*) stood out.

10 See also: Zahar, Vergara, Juana. (1995). *Historia de las librerías de la Ciudad de México: una evocación*, Mexico, UNAM. García Cubas, Antonio.. (1904). *El libro de mis recuerdos: Narraciones históricas, anecdóticas y de costumbres mexicanas anteriores al actual estado social. Ilustradas con más de trescientos fotograbados*. Mexico: Printing of Arturo García Cubas, Successors Brothers.

as well as Shakespeare, Machiavelli, Homer, Plato, Virgilio, San Austin, Calderón de la Barca, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, Zorrilla or Alighieri. Leon Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky are authors with a large number of works in the catalog, especially when comparing the more than a dozen titles both of them have against two of Stendhal or three of Flaubert (which does not include *Madame Bovary*).¹¹

Poetry occupies a fifth of the texts, with Juan de Dios Peza and his *Songs of the home* (1884) as one of the most enduring Mexican works within the widow's catalogs (a success among the Mexican middle class at the time), or Manuel Acuña's poems, without forgetting Amado Nervo's production. For the case of children's literature -included within the area of *Teaching* -, highlights the entire work of Hans Christian Andersen.¹²

Roughly speaking: the European literature dominated most of the catalog's titles. And within this literature, the novels were the undisputed queens. The so-called classic texts appeared in both expensive and very economic versions, almost always as part of the group: *essentials*. The Mexican authors could be found with little presence and aloof.

The diversity of titles, as well as the mastery of the area of literature, can be read as part of the reading practices and the variety of interests of the Mexican public. It can also be seen as one of the reasons why this bookstore was so famous and as a sample of what the publishing industry of the time produced for the Spanish-speaking market.¹³

11 Other authors that appear are: Goncourt, Daudet and E. Zola. Alexander Dumas, Nietzsche, Balzac, Ibsen, Schopenhauer, Maupassant, Víctor Hugo, Voltaire, Edmundo de Amicis, Calderón, Emilio Castelar and Spencer Herbert. For the Mexican case: Ignacio M. Altamirano, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, José López Portillo and Rojas, Amado Nervo, Federico Gamboa, Justo Sierra, Pedro Castera, Manuel Carpio, Francisco Bulnes, Julio Guerrero, Lucas Alamán among others.

12 Although not included in the catalog, it is worth mentioning the stories for children and manuals of urbanity written by José Rosas Moreno, whose productions reached several reprints. For example (1878) *Fábulas*. Mexico: Printing of the Vda. and Sons of Murguía. 4th edition. (Guadalajara, León and Mexico City). (1877) *La ciencia de la dicha. Lecciones de moral en verso*. Mexico: Printing of the Vda. and Sons of Murguía. 3rd edition. (Guadalajara, León and Mexico City). (1877) *Nuevo amigo de los hijos*. Mexico: Old Imprint of Murguía. 6th edition. (Guadalajara, León and Mexico City). (1889) *Un libro para mis hijos: últimos pensamientos, máximas, consejos, fábulas y poesías. La moral verdadera al alcance de los niños*. Mexico: Murguía Bookstore. 3rd edition. (Guadalajara, León and Mexico City) (1892) *Nuevo libro Segundo para uso de las escuelas*, edition number 25.

13 It is true that the area of literature is the one with the largest number of copies, but other types of writing do not lose their brilliance. Matters about race, education, and sociological issues had a good

The fact that there are so many libraries of classics, as well as versions for all the pockets of these *essentials*, tells us about the need from the middle class to present themselves as cults (and thus distinguish themselves from their own class) and educated, that is to say: civilized; but also as a necessity of the time, since, as Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera reflected in 1893: «tevery father aspires that his son rises on the social ladder a step higher than what he has climbed. The craftsman wants his son to be a merchant, the merchant expects him to be a lawyer, doctor or engineer» (2007: 369), and for this, reading, *ergo*, general culture, was (and is) considered as the best form of access to these changes of social level.¹⁴

2º ACT

It wouldn't be a bad idea to rethink the ways in which the Mexican population acquired information and knowledge, since to assume a direct relationship between literacy and the capacity to receive information or knowledge is to simplify the complexity of individual training processes, as well as to eliminate everyday variables which allowed the development of networks between individuals and the environment.

In this sense, prints with particular characteristics such as loose pages and sheets –known as string literature– are an important piece of the puzzle. In addition to being very economical (as accessible to the majority of the population), these writings included content, images, rhymes and short stories, which seemed to bring readers and printmakers together more easily, and improved a greater circulation of content and information.¹⁵

One of the characteristics of this model is that they played songs that interested most people, and did it in verse, tenths or runs, using «a simple

presence in the catalog (in quantity and variety). Again, it is striking that the plurality and number of printed works of the time do not coincide, in a first approximation, with the low percentage of literate people at the time.

- 14 It is never unreasonable to revisit the work of Peter Gay (1992). *La experiencia burguesa. De Victoria a Freud*, 2 volumes, Mexico, FCE.
- 15 «Sheets and loose-leaves, with scandalous headlines and illustrations from Manuel Manilla and Jose Guadalupe Posada, who gave news of facts and miraculous apparitions, phenomena or natural disasters, political events and sensational crimes, as well as entertain their readers with the marital fights and the adventures of Don Chepito Mariguano ... They usually opened with a prose writing and closed with verses or corridors, that synthesized the content of the story or reaffirmed the message of the narrator». (Speckman, 2001: 68 – 69)

and pleasant language, full of idioms that they took up from the same town» (Flores, 2003: 171). These loose pages, booklets or sheets played «sometimes an important role in the interpretation of historical events and in the diffusion of ideas» (Gilard, 2005: 310).¹⁶

Reading aloud,¹⁷ and reading quietly, have a long history. In the first case, their practice and the spaces where they took place went from the exercises in the schools –as part of the teaching method of reading (syllabus, booklets, etc.)– as well as churches, family, athenaeums and literary or scientific associations, even within some groups such as the militia, as recalled by the Mexican writer and diplomat Federico Gamboa, on December 11, 1896, regarding his third novel published: «Nárrame Sánchez Azcona that during the statutory excursion [...] undertaken by the Military College [...], the cadets carried up to five copies of the *Supreme Law*, which they read aloud, grouped together at night, next to the fires of the bivouacs» (Gamboa, 1908: 279).

José M. Rivera, in 1855, describes the typesetter¹⁸ as a «hman of letters, just as the shoemaker is a man of lasts and the writer one of feathers» (1974: 167), since these characters possessed information that they gladly shared with their environment and who wanted to listen to them, that is, multipliers of printed content. For the author, these characters had information about the bulls of the bullfights in the same way that they did theatrical or dance chronicles: «The *Typesetter*, in short, is a being to whom nothing escapes him; he sees everything, he investigates everything, he knows everything, and it would be a magnificent *Guide of Strangers* if it were possible to place a *Faith*

16 The taste for this type of print within the Mexican public also speaks of a way of coexistence that would have to be investigated in more detail, especially in the readers' spirit to taste the falls of others or to recreate the vices and defects, real or imagined, of others, of all those who were subjects and objects to be exhibited in print. For example, during the commemoration of the deceased, as Ceballos recalls, anyone with a little ingenuity and access to a medium of print, they would publish it with illustrations, almost always, "quartets, acrostics or tasteless spinels, alluding to personal defects of the victim, or defaming them in their private life, or else, insulting them in a gratuitous way as well as profanity... the more rudeness they contained, the more solicited they were"(Ceballos, 2006: 273).

17 Frenk, Margit. (2005). *Entre la voz y el silencio. La lectura en tiempos de Cervantes*, Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica. Ong, Walter J. (2006). *Oralidad y escritura. Tecnología de la palabra*, Buenos Aires, FCE.

18 «With the types ordered in the cases began the composition or task of «caser» that consisted of placing type to type, line after line, until completing the page in a metallic frame called branch. The composition, once united and strongly fixed on the branch, was ready to be placed under the press» (Grañén, citada en Castañeda 2007: 87).

of erratas: it would be an excellent *diary of warnings* if he wanted to make himself responsible editor» (1974: 169). But they were not the only ones, among the other components of the social fabric, M. Rivera calls the Barber: «a living gazette, or what is equal, the *newspaper man*» (1974: 26), we could continue tracking these spokespersons by conviction, which I doubt very much that they were diluted at the end of the Porfiriato.

The pleasure of talking, criticizing, sharing printed ideas, turning them into topics of discussion, reflection or mockery, allows subjects to get information directly, without forgetting that this information did not arrive in its original state, since in addition to the spirit of misrepresentation, transmitted by word of mouth suggests that it suffered from modifications, increases, omissions or exaggeration according to the particularities of the speaker and the possibilities and dispositions of listening.

Reading within the Porfirian family environment finds an ally in the *mothers-wives*.¹⁹ Women, especially those of the middle class who wanted to adapt to the norms of behavior and values of the moment, were assigned the role of educators of the children in the first years of life, mainly to introduce them to the first letters, the basic rules of urbanity, but above all to instill religious concepts and practices (Catholic in this case). This was supported by catechisms, hagiographies and other printed matter, which were not erased from the mental map by an anticlerical or positivist assertion, for «the fading of the hegemony of Catholicism was neither massive nor linear during the nineteenth century [...] (in addition), the Church (relied on) women to perpetuate their influence» (Corbin, 2005: 57).

In the formal educational environment, as part of the pursuit of modernizing the country in the Porfiriato, several attempts were made to modify the teaching models. As of 1883, with the modern method, in which it was taught simultaneously to read and write, had to adapt the contents of the textbook.²⁰

19 I got the term from the text: Lagarde y de los Ríos, Marcela (2003). *Los cautiverios de las mujeres: madresposas, monjas, putas, presas y locas*, México, UNAM.

20 “Since the first pedagogical congresses in Mexico, warned about the existence of foreign books poorly translated and without attachment to the country’s ideas and aspirations [...] by the end of the XIX century a small group of publishers dedicated to publishing for primary school’s education had been established. In Spain appeared the publishing houses of Calleja and Spanish Magisterium, along with those of Hernando and Gómez Fuentenebro, and the Catalan ones of Bastino, Dalmau Carles and Salvatella. Their works circulated in Mexico, in addition to the branches that were established in Mexico

One of the objectives was for children to learn how to read, understand and develop their ability to express themselves, therefore, «the subject of textbooks was at the center of the educational debate of the Porfiriato, it was a source of controversy and disagreements among different groups of intellectuals, educators and even parents [...] the government of Díaz considered them as basic materials for the training of future citizens, and thus encouraged their publication and reading» (Menéndez, 2004: 101).

Nevertheless, several investigations indicate us that, in spite of the ignition of many speeches from the intellectual elites or the attempts impelled from the government, and even above the quantity and variety of printed matter that appeared at the time, the good intentions were not enough. We can argue that the vast majority of individuals at that time had to meet other needs rather than learn to read or encourage reading among their children, or that aspiration for culture was a field for the middle class, but in any case, and a general way, it can be said that the reading among the inhabitants of nineteenth-century Mexico was a minority exercise, and there are many complaints and bad omens about what that left, those who did not always read but did write, in an extensive line of forms.

3° ACT

Today, from a distance, we can infer that many of the educational plans and projects proposed during much of the nineteenth century, and especially in the Porfiriato, were permeated by the hopes, yearnings and fears of that society «proud of its own virtues and eager to reform their vices»(Staples, 2005: 11). But it also allows us to suppose that this insistence on education as the panacea found in the stubborn reality its worst enemy.

No one doubts that the twentieth century Mexico left a trail of great advances in all areas of knowledge; and that despite the tragic pauses for internal wars, it will continue to fight against illiteracy. But again, there are cases of success and pathetic setbacks. Just as literacy or reading promotion campaigns were orchestrated by government and schools, there were also heated debates over the contents of textbooks (the thorny themes of sexuality and

as that of Herrero Brothers, Vda. of Bouret and the Appleton, these were the ones who were in charge of modernizing the textbooks, since they responded to the pedagogical suggestions of the time” (Martínez, 2004: 133)

religion as the best example) or plans for study. The desire to increase the number of readers remained alive throughout the century, as well as the regrets of not achieving it.

In spite of everything, we reached the XXI century. And now we are facing other educational paradigms, but we continue with the same pending issue: the low percentage of readers in Mexico. So, as a way of contributing to the debate, I begin the closure with some reflections.

It is true that yesterday, in a majority, the letter adhered itself to a leaf (to use a generic) and today many of them float in the virtual. I think it is valid to say that we are no longer in the Republic of Letters, but in the Republic of Screens. As Lipovetsky and Serroy reflect it:

The century that we have left behind and the one we have begun has taught us [...] that there is such a power on the screen. This power comes from birth: the canvas of the cinema screen (the first moment) [...] immediately exerted a sort of extreme captivation, because it attracted and subjugated the spectators, who could not take their eyes from it [...] Television (second moment) captured on its own the magic of the screen. The attraction that it produced at the beginning [...] has been greatly attenuated [...] but it still exerts that power that makes us turn it on every day in an almost mechanical way [...] It is lawful to think that thanks to the personal computer we have entered a third moment. The immediacy, the interactivity, and the access to every click are aspects that generate a new seduction (Lipovetsky, 2009: 312 – 314).

Day by day, electronic devices multiply beyond the timid classification of fixed and mobile. There are screens for tablets, video game devices, e-book readers and the so-euphemistically-called smart phones.

It is worth remembering that, before what Lipovetsky and Serroy call the third moment, there were debates about the disappearance of the book and the low number of readers due to the emergence of media. Cinema was, in some part of history, reading's main enemy, due to the idea that it was more entertaining to see a film than to read a book, which caused a gesture of pain in more than one reading lover and promoter. The case of television was something similar: the accusations were several and, in any case, the book, the reading and the subject (almost always young) rhymed badly against the dissuasive power of the «silly box's» images. But it must not be overlooked that these media can, at certain moments, swing from one end to the other, as they have more than once proven their capacity to produce masterpieces

of emotion as well as new categories of banality or even to overcome their own stupidity, and in others, to place themselves in each of the shades from black to white with its usual variants of gray.

The travel route that links the cinema with television and electronic devices tells us that many of the surfers reached the beaches of the Web with a rather heavy baggage, and that many others, by age especially, have learned to surf in the three waves with great ease, carrying with it some characteristics from one medium to another to the degree that today it is difficult to determine who lends to whom.

Television and radio programs (news, political analysis or shows) tend to take the pulse of social networks, especially to Twitter or Facebook, accounts for the loans that are made between each other, as well as mutual dependencies if what is sought is to influence the public agenda of the debate, reach out to a larger number of people or simply cooperate to the noise of a new scandal.

It is a fact: the trending topics in Twitter have achieved notoriety and have managed to permeate in a greater number of homes thanks to the complicity with other media. And it is common to find that television or radio play the role of receivers and echoes of a tweet's information, and likewise, it is a daily practice for someone to tweet some news that has been published in a printed medium or in the various sites of the Web (newspapers, magazines, television channels) or on video platforms such as YouTube. That is to say, all these media function as suppliers and consumers at the same time in a circle that generates synergies of different kinds.

I think the screens' world has proven its extraordinary ability to adapt to the times and, above all, to use everything that is within its reach, either because it is fashionable, because it is a rugged subject, because of its permanence in time or by personal searches or by certain groups. A good example is the cinema, which for many years has been the par excellence reproducer of the so-called classics of literature: as proof there can be found the multiple versions of *Hamlet*, *Jane Eyre*, *Romeo y Julieta*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Ana Karenina*, *Drácula* or the novels of Jane Austen, which are even able to cohabit with the zombies' fashion.

The editorial area has not been immune to these communicating dynamics between the screens. On the contrary, from the confessions of writers who admit the influences of film directors or of particular films to the publicity

accompaniment of certain books, both printed and digital, that emphasizes the text as the primordial material for such a film or for that TV series.

Similarly, some of these books usually present film or television script features: the short scene, the characters easily identifiable (stereotyped), the objective and the obstacle go hand in hand and there is more weight in the action than in the dialogues. Many of the texts that go into the best-seller lists are a good example. *The Da Vinci Code*, *The Pillars of the Earth* or *50 shades of Gray*, share the maxim: «we must give more importance to the story that is told than to tell it» (Viñas, 2009: 105) and hold some reading certificates that speak of obscene quantities of printed copies and, most importantly, multitudes of people who read and are fond of these authors and consume all that of these works can be derived.

Whether we like it or not, best-seller books, magazines focused on show business or sports, comic books, low-cost illustrated magazines or those "aimed" at the female or male audience, erotic-romantic novels, tabloids newspapers, self-help books, self-published books or so-called religious literature, to mention just a few examples, are also part of the reading practices and habits of the general population.²¹

The dividing line between cultured literature and popular literature has shown over the years its porosity and, in some cases, a misleading character. And this serves the same equally to cinema, the TV and it is not surprising that it is present in the virtual environments. The insistence on establishing dichotomies, on some occasions, has drawn false antipodes. From the art cinema to the commercial cinema, as the TV-trash to the series (mainly of American manufacture, that today find their public even among the intellectuals.

But that is not all. Today, more and more subjects are demanding the Network, the cinema and the television, immediacy, excess (of sound, im-

21 It is true that such works do not enjoy good criticism among certain social groups, but it should not be forgotten that, as David Viñas points out, «without the seductive power of a literary work, marketing, however sophisticated, does not have anything to do [...] (and) without subtle commercial strategies there is no best seller, however seductive a work may be» (2009: 17). Also, it should be thought that most of these best-selling books are originally written in English. The case of the best seller written in Spanish, although it exists, is in second place very far from the Anglo-Saxon case.

ages and color)²², speed, shallowness and brevity (in dialogues and stories). Once again, the publishing market is no stranger to these demands. Books also respond to fads, and the emergency of certain groups of readers, as has happened in recent years with children and teenagers, who have become devourers of stories like *Harry Potter* or the trilogies of *Twilight*, *Divergent* or *The Hunger Games*.

¿And how does all this affect the area of reading? Lorenzo Soccavo, for example, speaks of a reading revolution much more significant than the one happened by the appearance of the press. The author believes that the «great mutation in the book and reading environment», is present on four levels. The first level focuses on reading and documentary practices.²³

Today we can see a change in reading practices at three levels. 1st level: a less linear and more fragmented reading, fruit of the reading that we call «enriched» or «augmented», hyper textual and interlayered with multimedia contents. 2º level: a social reading, fruit of the development of social networks, a commented, shared and potentially enriched reading with the writing of so-called collaborating readers. 3º level: a connected reading, the result of the development of cloud computing, a real-time reading (streaming), as with listening to music or videos on demand (Soccavo, 2013: 9).

The apparent advantages of using the Network and video games, such as the alleged ability to perform or attend several activities at the same time (multitasking), appears as a competition generated in consumers, which will allow enriching reading habits. But for the philosopher Byung-Chul Han, «multitasking attention does not mean a progress for civilization [...] it is rather a setback. In fact, multitasking is widely spread among wild animals. It is an essential heed technique for survival in the jungle » (2012: 33 – 34).

But beyond the accumulation of new definitions, or the readjustment of the old scenarios, the news does not end there. For Soccavo, "the book, and in general printed media, is no longer the main way of accessing knowledge

22 And «its components: the exaggerated, the hyperbolic, the multiple, the superabundant, the overflowing, the excessive» (Lipovetsky, 2009: 82)

23 The second level of mutation would be the reading devices, the third, the book market and the fourth language and literature.

in 2013, not even the main support for writing" (2013: 10). And although the author points out that this transition is likely to be consolidated until the next generation, I believe that this kind of statement requires passing through the sieve of verification and reflection more than once before being taken as a medicine prescribed by the specialist physician.

Likewise, it is advisable to read them as a healthy provocation to generate more questions around the subject and not to increase the list of motifs that celebrate the appearance of the Net as if it were a miracle or a paradise dorr, because as any anticipated celebration is directly proportional to the degree of disappointment. And this is not an invitation to become the enemy of the Network. I simply think that we need to continue to do studies and analysis about practices and reading habits in virtual or electronic environments, instead of being busy announcing with great fanfare the (definitive) disappearance of printed books or reading's death.

I am convinced that an approach to the virtual world without so many prejudices or hopes can give better answers, because, as reflected by Byung-Chul Han, «we limped behind the digital medium, which, under conscious decision, decisively changes our behavior, our perception, our sensation, our thought, our coexistence. We get drunk today with the digital medium, without being able to fully appreciate the consequences of this drunkenness» (2014: 11)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

The Network is one more tool, but it is not the origin of farewell to books, nor the solution to the problems of educational models, nor the end of social disagreements. To praise, as well as condemn, more than transitive verbs are extreme verbs, which makes us think of *res judicata*, and in these matters of virtuality and reading we are barely at the stage of presentation of evidence. In addition, the fact that many people have changed reading's format does not dissolve the convoluted phenomenon.

It should not be forgotten that «in human experience there is no more complex phenomenology than the encounters between text and perception» (Steiner, 2007:59). Does the idea sustain if we change print for screen? I think, in general, yes. In addition as Michèle Petit points out, «awhile reading, in our time, one isolates himself, keeps himself at a distance from his peers, in a self-sufficient interiority. Reading is a room of its own, to use the words of Virginia Woolf. One separates himself from whatever it is closest, the evidences of the everyday. One can read on the banks of life» (1999: 26).

¿Can it be said that the same thing happens when reading on the Net? In any case, both ideas can help us to put the subject in the center of the debate and, from there, study the relationships and links that can be established with the reading's format(s), without forgetting such important issues as «the alchemy of reception, (since) it is never possible to really control how a text will be read, understood, interpreted» (Petit, 1999: 25).

The most complex part of this marriage lies in the person, in the pact he signs with words, with those sentences that say something from the ink or on a screen, because, despite the «appealing of best-seller books [...] and of the blockbuster films, the tastes and practices of individuals, are irremediably particularized, diversified, differentiated» (Lipovetsky, 2015: 317). Moreover, when one comes in contact with the beliefs, ideas, prejudices or suppositions of the one who reads, the words cease to be of the author to be part of a new text, since «the reader does not passively consume a text; it appropriates it, interprets it, modifies its meaning, slips its fantasy, its desire, its anguish between the lines and intermingles with those of the author» (Petit, 2001: 28).

At the moment, it is still accepted that the transition from the print edition to the digital edition will change reading practices, and it is assumed that all those who want to read will choose to do it on the Net or by an electronic device (and perhaps for tomorrow through spectacles or hearing aids). But research on the subject, whether from the field of sociology, literature or directly from neurology, warns us that paper has a long life, and that readers, surely, will have the last word.²⁴

24 «The glare that produced the new electronic reading devices has stabilized. They stopped being fashionable to become, as a fact, a phenomenon that came to stay. The threat many publishers saw at the beginning of the century in the e-book has changed in appearance. It hides inside the mobile». Joseba Elola's article, «I want to read on paper», *El País*, October 9, 2016: http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2016/10/07/actualidad/1475841443_203357.html

«We know as readers, that reading on a screen is not the same thing as in paper. But we also know the benefits of being able to find one or the other device according to access possibilities, conveniences and motivations. The good thing, in any way, is that reading is there. That is why, the key is, rather than in the instrument, the support and channel of words, in the development, critical capacity and the reading's brain well-being». Facundo Manes, artículo «El cerebro persigue las palabras», Facundo Manes, article "The brain pursues the words", *El País*, October 9, 2016: http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2016/10/07/actualidad/1475868260_813583.html

Consult the electronic edition of the journal *Scientific American* the text «The Reading Brain in the Digital Age: The Science of Paper versus Screens», de Ferris Jabr (11 of April of 2013) <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/#>

Having access to books (electronic, printed or virtual) does not in itself guarantee increased reading. There are as many variables as race, gender, age, socioeconomic level, among many other, that speak about the formation of a subject, and are also the desires and the pursuits of these same ones, as well as external influences (the media as the maximum representative), without leaving aside the time, geography or economy variables.

The virtual space is presented as a free environment, without borders, in which the individual can get all kinds of literature, as well as consulting news in several languages, searching virtual libraries from all over the world, sharing essays, articles or personal writings. It is commonplace to say that, thanks to digital media, anyone can create their own virtual library with the most diverse world's thinking or the latest best sellers. But I do not think that is the nodal point of reflection.

More information is not necessarily greater knowledge. Accumulating eBooks does not guarantee that they are read. The emergence of, say, opinion leaders in spaces such as YouTube (known as the Booktubers), tell us that, among the tangle of variety and quantity, people often seek support points not to succumb to vertigo, the same way that some readers (or possible readers) do with the list of best-selling books or those who tend to bow before the texts that have prizes, or those who do not want any complication and opt for the "essential" that, as we saw in the case of the catalogs of Ch Bouret's widow's library, drag the aura of necessary (as illuminators) and that ability to give luster to whoever dares to approach them.

In this sense, Enrique Serna's reflection comes very closely, since a gigantic assumption has been made that in order to read the classics, «it is necessary to know the bibliography and the socio-cultural context of the author, to know how to fit him into the literary currents of the time, to have studied his precursors and to be familiar with the style of his works» (2013: 213), but as Serna himself reminds us, «if it were necessary to have a prior preparation for the readings that change our lives and you know locating them on the map of universal letters, no one would ever have started as a reader» (2013: 213).

But let's get to the data. According to IAB Mexico, Millward Brown and televisa.com, in its 8th edition of the Study of Media Consumption between Mexican Internauts (2016), 57 percent of the Mexican population, are Internet users (about 68 million). Of this group, the segment Millennials (Mexican men and women between 24 and 30 years of age) are the most time spent connected to the Internet, with an average of more than 7

hours a day. This segment reviews their social networks 5 times a day. Late Millennials (women and men aged 25 to 34) excel by consuming health videos (67%) and exercise (59%).²⁵

In the National Reading Survey of 2012, carried out by the Mexican Foundation for the Promotion of Reading, A.C., it was concluded: «in Mexico people read less [...] reading is still a strictly educational issue [...] and access to the written culture is seriously restricted for the majority of the population».²⁶ In the National Survey of Habits, Practices and Cultural Consumption conducted by CONACULTA in 2010 the results speak of similar situations: 27 percent read at least one book in the last twelve months and 68 percent did not read any.²⁷

Along with surveys, numbers and statistics, complaints and lamentations often appear about the lack of taste that subjects generally show in a book and the arrival of the new electronic messiah. It is and has been a constant, to mark the differences. For example, Federico Gamboa, in what will be his first newspaper, writes: «September 26, 1896. It is legion that in «a invite for drinks» is spent more, but much more than a book» (1908: 273). In the XXI century, Guillermo Sheridan states in an article: «It is no longer subjective appreciation but scientifically proven: the Mexican is not interested in books». (2007). And the Mexican writer Jorge Volpi warns: «The dominance of the electronic book could become the greatest democratic expansion of culture since the invention of the printing [...] booksellers and distributors will disappear and few libraries will store bound titles. Change is drastic, immediate and irreversible. We will have to overcome our nostalgia». (2011).

There are many more examples, but for now let us stay with those three. What I want to point out is that, on one hand, it seems that some intellectual class has been stuck for years in the lamentation pit for the lack of readers. And although complaints often vary in form, the book (still in its digital version) continues to appear as the representative object of culture and

25 <http://www.iabmexico.com/estudios/consumo-medios-2016-infografia/>

26 <http://www.caniem.org/Archivos/funlectura/EncuestaNacionaldeLectura2012/EncuestaNacionaldeLectura2012.html>

27 http://www.cultura.gob.mx/encuesta_nacional/#.V9mqjfmLSaE

reading as a way for personal and social improvement. On the other hand, *education* appears as the formula that nobody dares to concretize because then it loses its hope and its quality of magic formula.

When it is said that Mexicans are not interested in books, you have to ask yourself what do they refer to when using the generic books? Do those who do read are not Mexicans? Perhaps we must overcome other things than overcome our nostalgia as supposes the anxious gravedigger Volpi; for example, that wall which so comfortably divides the cults from the others, the barbarians, aliases the functional ignorant. We must not ignore that «the book remains. The challenge is here of the first order: to touch it is to touch a pillar of our civilization, hence the condemnatory nature adopted by the Casandras' forecasts that the world's tomb is becoming more and more visible in the growing power of the screen» (Lipovetsky, 2009: 311).

Reading is an animal of many faces, which almost always leaves two traces on its gait: «the absolute power attributed to the written word, and on the other, to the reader's irreducible freedom» (Petit, 1999: 21). Correct, but now we are facing the virtual word. Do we attribute that same power to the word when it appears in a blog, such as a comment on a social network or on the official page of a prestigious university? Is this type of reader an Internet subject who is a prisoner of hyperactivity, fleeting emotions and saturation of information?

Society has changed; let's say that the governments also have, but despite insisting from their particular trench with campaigns of promotion and foster of reading, which have been from fun to pathetic, have not managed to have a direct impact on the increase of readers.²⁸

Individuals, who read from books to chats, are the result of many evolutions. They are no longer like those nineteenth century subjects, nor are they like those of the twentieth century, that century that left its wounds and its achievements, as well as the outlined path to hyper-individualism. Today, the millenary snake hisses directly into the ear of the individual of late modernity and proposes: strip yourself, you have returned to paradise, and

28 See: Yanet Aguilar Sosa, "With lemmas read more?", *El Universal*, January 29, 2011, <http://archivo.el-universal.com.mx/cultura/64677.html>

they agree to unveil their entire life, looking for something: «The hyper-individualistic regime of consumption that unfolds is less stationary than experiential, hedonistic, emotional, that is, aesthetic: what is important in the future is to feel, to live moments of pleasure, discoveries or evasion, not living according to codes of social representation». (Lipovetsky y Serroy, 2015: 23)

This type of subject, with his anxieties and desires, who sniffs in the abyss of the Web with fear but excited, is the one who reads today, touches with letters or looks for them, and is also the one who will want to read tomorrow, or will be tempted to flipping through a book, listening to it, browsing the Internet, or looking over his favorite screen.²⁹

Perhaps, as Viñas Piquer proposes, we should take more seriously the variable of pleasure when thinking about readers (current and future), because «it is not that we try to win readers at any price; is about the readers end up winning. And only if they experience the pleasure of reading does this seem possible [...] or the only right that will end up exercising will be the right not to read». (2009: 129)

It is extremely worrying that Mexico is not a country of readers, and will never be, because such a survival in time seems very comfortable for some sectors, both from the government and from the intellectual elites, who do not seem willing to yield not a single iota of what they have defined as their field (the literary field, Bourdieu would say). I insist: it is necessary to continue plowing on the subject, and it must be done with all the participants of the game, but without losing sight of the individual, which is the unequivocal axis of this story.

29 To philosophers like В-чн Han (2014), we are faced with a society more addicted to the fleeting and intense emotions, as sheltered, a tired society and incapable of coming to action, disinterested in public and political life, and little empathic with the problems of others. In the same way, they speak of the fact that in a space that was supposed to be free, autonomous and where everything was going to be possible, a multitudinous choir of individual voices has been gathered, isolated, obsessed by themselves, enemies of intermediation, longing to be heard among the noise of the Web through the display of intimacy. Like any reflection, it can help the moment of thinking about subjects of the new millennium.

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A C A D E M I C
P A P E R S

A LOOK INTO THE SFL TEACHING
IN MEXICO: LIST OF TEACHING
MATERIALS, SPECIALIZED
ARTICLES, ELECTRONIC RESOURCES
AND TRAINING COURSES FOR
SPANISH TEACHERS

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— *Abstract*—

In different countries, much research has been done about teaching Spanish to foreigners; didactic materials, articles related to teaching Spanish as a foreign language, electronics resources and formation courses for Spanish teachers. In 1492 Spain began to spread its language as result of conquered the continents of America and its domains and some parts of what is now Germany. On the other hand, in Mexico there are few researches done in the teaching of Spanish area. Additionally, as far as it is known very little or almost nothing has been investigated about others Spanish variants, like the Latino American variants and European variants, among others. This article reports the findings obtained through a search on electronic media about didactic materials, articles related to teaching Spanish as a foreign language, electronics resources and formation courses for Spanish teachers in Mexico and Spain, carried out during the summer 2015. The main objective of this article is to present existing information about teaching Spanish to foreigners in a wider and synthesized form, to be reachable for; Spanish teachers as a foreign language, Academics interested in materials and resources of Spanish as a foreign language and any person interested in learn about teaching Spanish to foreigners in Mexico. A second objective is to demonstrate how much access to teaching materials, articles related to the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language, electronics resources and formation courses for Spanish teachers in Mexico students of Spanish as foreign language have. Results suggest that all the materials previous mentioned are not affordable and even hard to access for those interested in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language in Mexico. Furthermore, most of the material is based on the Spanish from the Iberic peninsula and for this reason the interest in teaching or learning Spanish from Mexico is being lose.

Keywords: *Teaching, Spanish, Mexico, Foreigners.*

Today we can say that the borders between countries have been demolished, since terms like globalization and internationalization are part of our daily expression. According to M. Caruso and H.E. Tenorth "internationalization has become the key descriptor of education in contemporary societies. National education systems are increasingly linked through supranational discourses and structures, which in turn have a growing specific weight in national educational realities, in the configuration of pedagogical knowledge and in educational policies." (2011)

The global expansion trend will mean that in a few decades -according to international forecasts- only a few hundred languages will be spoken and written, and many more will be lost. At the same time, a healthy competition arises between the countries to spread their language and Spanish also participates in this project.

The SFL is no new task, since the 14th century there were treatises on *Spanish grammar in Europe*, for example the Spanish language grammar that Nebrija published in 1492 may well be considered as the first stone of importance in the construction of a "history of teaching Spanish", not because this grammar was written for the teaching of Spanish to foreigners, but because it was the first attempt to formalize the Spanish language. Since then, Nebrija's grammar was a permanent reference for grammarians and authors of manuals for teaching Spanish.

Thus Spain began to excel in the teaching of the Spanish language. It was after 1492 and the grammar of Nebrija that other authors like; Juan de Valdés who with his book "Dialogue of the Language" in 1535 that placed the Spanish language at the level of other prestigious languages, especially of Latin. It is a key work to understand the literary and erasmist linguistic ideal, plausibility in the narration, simplicity and precision in the style and imitation of the spoken language. The numerous observations contained throughout the work are a valuable document on the average Spanish of the golden centuries, in particular of the sixteenth century, which shows the criteria and the sensitivity of the educated speakers. In addition, even one hundred years after *The Spanish Grammar*, Dr. Bernardo José de Aldrete in his book *On the Origin and Principle of the Spanish Language or Romance that is used in Spain* in 1606, enunciates many of the phonetic laws related to the transformation of the Latin sounds when passing to the Castilian. Likewise, the grammarian Bartolomé Ximénez Patón publishes a small grammar called *Brief Spanish Grammar Institutions* in 1614. That could be called a Spanish grammar for natives, a grammar that is dedicated to the author of the first monolingual dictionary of Castilian, Sebastián de Covarrubias. A few years

later, Gonzalo Correas "Professor of Greek and Hebrew at the University of Salamanca" writes a much more voluminous Castilian grammar, but not published until now; Great art of the Castilian Spanish tongue in 1626. By the middle of the seventeenth century, another Castilian grammar appears which, with a certain right, could be mentioned in this context, if -I repeat the "if"- the title will not lead us to think again about the teaching of Latin, which also applies to the grammars of Jiménez Patón and Gonzalo Correas, both teachers of classical languages; Villar, Juan. 1651. Art Of The | Lengva | Spanish. | Redvced to rules, and pre | cepts of rigorous grammar, | With notes, and usseful notes | for the perfet knowledge of this, | and the Latin language¹. In other words still in the seventeenth century, more than 150 years after Nebrija's *Castilian Grammar*, the idea of writing a Castilian grammar for natives does not seem definitively established.

In 1991, to be more exact on May 11 of said year, the Cervantes Institute was created in Madrid, Spain. The Cervantes Institute was created with the purpose of universally promoting the teaching, study and use of Spanish and to contribute the spread of Hispanic cultures abroad. Within its activities, it mainly serves the linguistic and cultural heritage that is common to the countries and peoples of the Spanish-speaking community. With 87 centers distributed in 44 countries across five continents, Spain is the forerunner in teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language or SFL. (Arsophia, 2015)

The objective of this article is to present the results of an electronic media search about the teaching of the Mexican Spanish language to foreigners. As has been said, to provide the reader with the information that is available to those involved in teaching SFL. Next, we present some relevant topics for professionals who are dedicated to teaching SFL in Mexico, such as; teaching materials, articles specialized in teaching spanish as a foreign language, electronic resources and training courses for spanish teachers in Mexico. Likewise, mention will be made of undergraduate and postgraduate studies that exist in Mexico.

1 As read in the original article: Arte De La | Lengva | española. | Redvcida a reglas, y pre | ceptos de rigurosa gramatica, | Con notas, y apuntamientos utilissimos | para el perfoto conocimiento de esta, | y de la lengua latina

THE SFL LANDSCAPE IN MEXICO MEXICAN ACADEMY OF LANGUAGE



image 1, Mexican Academy of Language

Before reaching his independent life, Mexico manifested with the cultivation of Mexican Spanish, among other expressions, the will to achieve its cultural emancipation; for this reason, throughout the nineteenth century, several attempts to create an own academy that among its objectives had to preserve and restore the purity of Spanish, reprint and circulate the works of classical authors, write dictionaries and grammars of the languages spoken in national territory, form atlas about the use of language, select useful works for the study of poetry and eloquence, assist in the use and style of the language to those who required it, establish awards and correct the anarchic use of spelling. Thus, in 1835, the Academy of Language, which was ratified by a presidential decree in 1854, and later the sections devoted to the philology and literature of the Imperial Academy in 1865, and the National Academy of Sciences and Literature, in 1870, all institutions whose development was curtailed, in one way or another, by the political instability and the ideological confrontations of the time. (Arsophia, Mexican Academy of Language, 2016, October, 28). The Mexican Academy of Language had lacked an official address. On August 7, 1956, thanks to the efforts of Don Alejandro Quijano who acted as director, he acquired as property the house number 66 in Donceles Street, which was inaugurated on February 15, 1957. Thanks to this, it was possible that, in 1959, the academy will consolidate its library, named Alberto María Carreño in honor of the illustrious academic. The bibliographic background, which comes from the private collection of Don Alejandro Quijano, was purchased by the government of the republic's president Don Adolfo López Mateos. Since then the collection has been constantly increasing: to the deliveries of the works published by the academic masters have been added those of the Royal Spanish Academy, the corresponding Academies, some publishing houses and bookstores and

some official and private cultural entities, as well as the important ones of Don Alberto Vásquez del Mercado who donated to the Academy a valuable collection of historical and literary works. At present, about eighteen thousand volumes are part of the collection, which, by agreement of the plenary and initiative of Mr. José G. Moreno de Alba, is classified, cataloged and enriched with works by and on the academics themselves, so that constitutes the most complete collection specialized in the matter..

Since then the institute has intervened in various ways and in various places to promote the culture of the Mexico's Spanish language, such as; Its members represented Mexico in the XII and XVIII congresses of the Academies of the Spanish Language Association held in San Juan de Puerto Rico (2002) and in Medellín, Colombia (2007), as well as in the II, III and IV Congresses of the Spanish Language, held respectively in Valladolid, Spain, in October 2001; in Rosario, Argentina, in November 2004, and in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in March 2007. In 2003, the Academy organized the IV Meeting of the Anti-Academic Commission responsible for drafting the *Pan-Hispanic Dictionary of Doubts* (PDD), held in Mexico City from March 31 to April 4, and, with the sponsorship of the San Millán de la Cogolla Foundation and the Government of La Rioja, established, convened and administered the San Millán de la Cogolla Prize, whose purpose was to recognize the trajectory of a Mexican dedicated to the study of the Hispanic language or literature. The award was awarded to Mexican academic Margit Frenk. New publications appeared in 2004 with the editorial seal of the Academy: the xxxvii volume of her Memoirs; in co-publication with the *Fondo de Cultura Económica*, *The Mexican Refranero*, of the corresponding scholar Don Herón Pérez Martínez, and the *Academic Semblances: old, recent and new*, edited by José Luis Martínez; and of the academic Don Arturo Azuela, Agustín Yáñez in letters and in history, in condition with the Seminary of Mexican Culture and the Government of the state of Jalisco. Since 2004 and during 2005, the Mexican Academy of Language has joined the commemoration of the fourth centenary of the publication of the first part of *The Quixote*.

RESEARCH

This section reports the findings of a web search to learn more about the information that is available to teachers, academics, students who receive and teach Spanish classes in Mexico. It was decided to classify 3 great features:

1. Sites that show the upper level studies and postgraduate that offer specialization in SFL and Spain (List of Universities)

2. Articles focused on SFL and virtual search engines such as; Redalyc, Latindex, Google Scholar.
3. Libraries specialized in languages such as; CEPE UNAM, CELE UNAM, Self-access UAEM Faculty of Languages.

SITES THAT SHOW UPPER LEVEL STUDIES AND POSTGRADUATE THAT OFFER SPECIALIZATION IN SFL IN MEXICO AND SPAIN (LIST OF UNIVERSITIES)

One of the main centers for SFL teachers training in Mexico is the Teaching for Foreigners Center of the UNAM (TFC), whose original name was "Summer School", founded by José Vasconcelos in 1921 with the mission of "Universalize knowledge of the Spanish language and Mexican culture, as well as academic support to Mexican communities abroad." Among its objectives, TFC contemplates the training of teachers in this area. This center has several locations in Mexico and abroad, offers the Diploma in Teaching Spanish for Foreigners (DIPELE), on-site or initial distance for Spanish teachers and specialization in teaching Spanish as a foreign language distance mode, along with the Teaching Foreign Languages Center (TFLC), the latter with postgraduate validity. (CEPE-UNAM, 2016, octubre, 28)

The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) for its part, has the Degree in Spanish Teaching, which in addition to teaching other languages such as; German, French, English, Italian as a Foreign Language (LICEL)² distance learning, aims to train highly qualified professionals in the area of language teaching with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively develop teaching and research in this field. (National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2016, October, 28).

The Ibero-American University campus Puebla, offers the Diploma in training Spanish as a foreign language teachers, among its objectives are to help universities, schools and companies that offer exchanges with foreigners or teach Spanish by providing methods and techniques to teach this language; it also enables teachers to diagnose and implement programs for teaching Spanish. (Ibero-American University Puebla, 2016, October, 28). In addition, the Veracruzana University offers the Diploma in Spanish as a foreign

2 LICEL: Bachelor's Degree in Language Teaching

language Didactics, offered by the school for foreign students (EEE), on-site, with the purpose of helping professionals interested in the area, through Spanish theoretical and methodological instruction, this diploma is directed mainly to graduates of the UV, with a degree in languages or related, and teachers, active students or foreigners who fulfill a command of the Spanish language. (Veracruzana University, 2016, October, 28).

The Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (UAEM), has the diploma for the strategic preparation for the teaching of Spanish to foreigners, which imparts the Language and Culture International Center (LCIC) together with the Faculty of Languages, organized in 7 modules which contemplate the preparation in linguistic, pedagogical and educational technology aspects, this diploma is focused on people who wish to improve their knowledge in teaching Spanish to foreigners. (Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, 2016, October, 29).

The University of Guanajuato offers a Bachelor's Degree in Teaching Spanish as a second language, with the objective of preparing professionals trained in the area of teaching Spanish as a second language, with knowledge and linguistic abilities, pedagogical and research skills that enable their effective development in this area, the degree is made in 8 semesters or four years and the promotion is annual. (University of Guanajuato, 2016 October, 29).

Other postgraduate studies; are the virtual masters offered by some universities abroad, the page of the FUNIBER (Ibero-American University Foundation) offers the masters in the Spanish teachers training as a Foreign Language, in order to train teachers with the necessary skills to teach classes in Spanish and English in different contexts. (Fundación Universitaria Iberoamericana, 2016, October, 29). In a virtual way, the Ibero-American University has the masters in Linguistics applied to teaching Spanish as a foreign language. It has developed a type of training that emphasizes the autonomy of learning without neglecting a constant interaction, flexible and adjusted to the needs of teachers in training. For this reason, the materials offered are designed to be used over the Internet in an interface designed for this purpose. This type of training focuses on a virtual interaction through channels such as email, forums, chats, etc. (Fundación Universitaria Iberoamericana, 2016, October, 29).

The FUNIBER Association a group of Spanish and Latin American universities jointly offer a distance-learning interuniversity program to train Spanish as Foreign Language teachers (FOPELE), in which it seeks to create a synergy

combining existing capacities in each institution. (Fundación Universitaria Iberoamericana, 2016, October, 29).

The university master in teacher training of Spanish as a second language online, taught by the faculty of philology of the UNED (National University of Distance Education, 2016, October, 29), Madrid, Spain. Similarly is the course called "Spanish online ELE-UNED" aimed at Spanish as second language learners. The University of Nebrija offers a master's degree in linguistics applied to the Spanish teaching as a foreign language, a semi-on-site modality with a duration of one year, in addition offers the Doctorate in Applied Linguistics to the SFL Teaching, an on-site program that arises from a scientific, economic and social development characterized by the need to develop the citizens' multilingual competence. The UNIBA (International University Center of Barcelona) offers the Master's Degree in Teacher Training in Spanish as a Foreign Language, a distance modality, lasting 18 months, which prepares future professionals in Spanish research and teaching. The online master provides a complete theoretical and practical training in the teaching of foreign languages in general and of Spanish in particular.

The University of Barcelona (UB), offers the masters in Spanish as a foreign language teachers training (FPELE), provides a complete theoretical and practical training in the teaching of the Spanish language. (University of Barcelona, 2016, October, 29).

Below is a list of other universities with masters and doctorates related to the Spanish teaching in the old continent:

Andalucía

- *University of Granada*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *University of Málaga*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *University of Sevilla*: Máster en Formación de Profesores de Español como Lengua Extranjera. Doctorado en Adquisición de Segundas Lenguas.
- *Pablo de Olavide University*: Máster en Formación de Profesores de Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *Pablo de Olavide University*: Doctorado en Adquisición de Segundas Lenguas.

Aragón

- *University of Zaragoza*: Doctorado en Didáctica de Segundas Lenguas.

Cantabria

- *Menéndez Pelayo Internacional University*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera (en colaboración con el Instituto Cervantes).

Canarias

- *La Laguna University*: Máster Universitario en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *University of n Las Palmas de Gran Canarias*: Máster Universitario en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.

Castilla y León

- *University of Valladolid*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *University of Salamanca*: Máster universitario. La Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.

Cataluña

- *IL3 - Universitat de Barcelona*: Máster en Formación de Profesores de Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *Universitat de Girona*: Máster en Formación de Profesores de Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *Universitat de Lleida*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español / Catalán para Inmigrantes.
- *Universitat Rovira i Virgili*: Máster oficial en enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras (Español Lengua Extranjera / Inglés Lengua Extranjera).

Euskadi-País Vasco

- *Universidad de Deusto*: Máster Europeo en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.

La Rioja

- *University of La Rioja*: Máster en Didáctica del Español como Segunda Lengua o Lengua Extranjera (en línea); Experto Universitario en Fundamentos de Pedagogía y Lingüística Aplicada para la Enseñanza del Español como Segunda Lengua o Lengua Extranjera (en línea); Diversos programas de Especialista Universitario relacionados con la Enseñanza del Español como Segunda Lengua o Lengua Extranjera (en línea).

Madrid

- *Madrid's Complutense University*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua extranjera.
- *Rey Juan Carlos University*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.
- *University of Alcalá de Henares*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera y Máster en Enseñanza de español e inglés como L2/LE.
- *Camilo José Cela University*: Experto en Enseñanza del Español para Extranjeros.
- *Antonio de Nebrija University*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera. Doctorado en Lingüística aplicada a la Enseñanza de ELE.

Murcia

- *University of Murcia*: Curso de especialista universitario en ELE.

Navarra

- *University of Navarra*: Máster en español e inglés como Lenguas extranjeras y Nuevas Lenguas.

Valencia

- *University of Valencia*: Máster Universitario en Didáctica de Lenguas.
- *Universty of Alicante*: Máster en español e Inglés como segundas lenguas / Lenguas extranjeras.
- *UNED (On-line Education Nacional University)*: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Segunda Lengua.

- *Ibero-american Fundaition University: Máster en Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera.*

ARTICLES FOCUSED ON SFL AND VIRTUAL SEARCH ENGINES LIKE; REDALYC, LATINDEX, GOOGLE SCHOLAR AND LINGMEX

These search engines are specialized in scientific articles of several disciplines and are the most known nationwide.

Lingmex: The aim is to bring together, in the most representative way possible, the production emanated from the linguistic research carried out in Mexico by Mexican or foreign linguists. In this database there are a large number of articles that relate to the teaching of Spanish to foreigners in Mexico, approximately 1,000 articles. To access them it is necessary to send an e-mail to the authors of these articles requesting permission to read them. Of a total of 20 petitions, only 5 of them were answered with a waiting period of up to 2 months. Hereunder are listed each one of them: (LINGMEX, 2016, October 20)

Alarcon Neve, Luisa Josefina, «La enseñanza del español para extranjeros en las universidades mexicanas», *Lenguas y letras*, 1997. Lingüística y Educación Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas. Español.

Cruz Iturribarry, Sandra L., José Carlos Escobar Hernández y Marcela Nieto Rodríguez, *Dicho y hecho 3. Español como lengua extranjera*. Coords. Sandra Luz Cruz Itubarry y José Carlos Escobar Hernández, Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2014, 280 pp. Lingüística Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas. Español.

Pfleger, Sabine y Cristina Monzón, "Interculturalidad y la enseñanza de ELE en México: el caso de la especialización en la enseñanza de español como lengua extranjera, a distancia", *Aportaciones a la educación intercultural, ponencias del Primer Congreso en la Red sobre Interculturalidad y Educación. Málaga: Practicas en educación*, Coords. Félix Villalba y Javier Villatoro. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2010, pp. 190-200. Lingüística Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas y Sociolingüística. Español.

Ruiz Ávila, Dalia, reseña a Rosa Esther Delgadillo Macías, María de los Ángeles Andonegui Cuenca y Magdalena Ramírez Vázquez, *Así hablamos español como lengua extranjera. Básico 1* (Santillana-UNAM, México,

2007), en *Lingüística Mexicana*, 5 (2010), núm. 1, 147-151. Lingüística Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas. Español.

Campos Gómez, Eva, Rosa Esther Delgadillo Macías y Sara Martínez García, *Memorias del III Simposio Internacional "La enseñanza del español y la cultura a extranjeros"*, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2005. Lingüística Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas y Lingüística y Educación. Español, Lenguas Extranjeras (Internacionales).

Redalyc: It is a search engine promoted by the Mexico State Autonomous University (UAEM), with the aim of contributing to the dissemination of scientific publishing activity in and about Latin America. Only one article was found in its database. The page has problems with searches since it does not load the next page, for example; sometimes does not follow paging sequences when switching from one to the next, or the next one never loads. Despite not having found more articles on the subject, Redalyc is an excellent search engine for many other disciplines. (REDALY, 2016, October, 20)

Ávila, Raúl. (2005). Españolismos y mexicanismos: un análisis cuantitativo. *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, LIII julio-diciembre, 413-455.

Latindex: It is a system of Information on scientific, technical-professional and scientific dissemination and cultural research journals published in the countries of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal. The idea of creating Latindex emerged in 1995 at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and became a regional cooperation network from 1997. (National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2016, October, 20). Due to its nature as a directory there were no entries for articles related to teaching Spanish, however, the search was made since it is a very important source in terms of academic material.

Google Scholar: The Spanish version is **Google Académico**, the **Google** search engine specialized in academic and scientific documents. In this search engine an article was found.

Pfleger, Sabine y Cristina Monzón, "Interculturalidad y la enseñanza de ELE en México: el caso de la especialización en la enseñanza de español como lengua extranjera, a distancia", *Aportaciones a la educación intercultural, ponencias del Primer Congreso en la Red sobre Interculturalidad y Educación. Málaga: Practicas en educación*, Coords. Félix Villalba y Javier Villatoro. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2010, pp. 190-200. Lingüística Aplicada: Enseñanza de Lenguas y Sociolingüística. Español.

Following a search in lingmex, Redalyc, Google academic and Latindex, we found that search engines concentrate very little information about SFL in Mexico. Unlike other countries like Colombia, Peru, and Argentina from South America who frequently investigate this matter

SPECIALIZED LIBRARIES IN LANGUAGES LIKE; CEPE UNAM, CELE UNAM, AUTO-ACCESO UAEM FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

CEPE UNAM

In the CEPE UNAM, specialized library, whose bibliographic collection is very broad on the teaching of Spanish to foreigners, no books were found with Mexico's Spanish. Despite having searched and reviewed each shelf, no title was found with the features we were looking for. However, on their website we find that they have several titles which are used with the CEPE school's students and are also for sale to the public.

One of these books is the series *Said and done (Dicho y hecho)* in which underlies a methodology that considers the use of the language for communicative purposes, emphasizes the natural processes of learning, values the individual variables, focuses on the student, gives importance to the relations between language and sociocultural context and, finally, it propitiates the student's development of autonomy. In terms of contents and levels of action, it also responds to the proposal of the Common European Framework of Reference for Learning, Teaching and Evaluation (CEFR).

- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 1* (Cruz, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 2* (Osorio, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 3* (Iturribarri, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 4* (Haces, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 5* (Llomas, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 6* (Añorve, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 7* (Ruiz, 2014)
- *Dicho y hecho español como lengua extranjera 8* (Ruiz M. S., 2014)

Permission to talk! (¡Pido la palabra!) This edition is the result of the commitment assumed, by the teachers of this Center, in teaching Spanish to non-Spanish speakers in a non-immersion system. The contents of this book link the Spanish language in relation to the history of Mexico, as well as our customs, cultural heritage and social current, of the vast Mexican culture.

- *Pido la Palabra 1er nivel* (De Río, Elin, & Ehnis, 1998)

- *Pido la Palabra 2o nivel* (Cortes, Galindo, & Montoya, 1996)
- *Pido la Palabra 3er nivel* (Álvarez, Cervera, & Gutiérrez, 2003)
- *Pido la Palabra 4o nivel* (Cordero, 1993)
- *Pido la Palabra 5o nivel* (Jurado, 1991)

I'm ready! Levels 1, 2 and 3 (¡Estoy Listo!). This edition is the result of the commitment assumed, by the teachers of this Center, in teaching Spanish to non-Spanish speakers in a non-immersion system. The contents of this book link the Spanish language in relation to the history of Mexico, as well as our customs, cultural heritage and social current, of the vast Mexican culture.

- *¡Estoy listo! Nivel 1* (Canuto, 2003)
- *¡Estoy listo! Nivel 2* (Cortés, Escobar, & Galindo, 2004)
- *¡Estoy listo! Nivel 3* (Campos, Montemayor, & Montoya, 2004)

The series *That's how we talk (Así hablamos)* is a Latin American model of didactic support for the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language with levels approved to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and consists of eight titles, four of basic level, three of intermediate and one of superior.

- *Así hablamos español como lengua extranjera 1* (Llamas, 2009)
- *Así hablamos español como lengua extranjera 2* (González, Ríos, & Bustos, 2009)
- *Así hablamos español como lengua extranjera 3* (Erdely, Elisa, & Mendoza, 2009)
- *Así hablamos español como lengua extranjera 4* (Gutiérrez, Sosa, & Gaytán, 2007)

Mexican Studies (Estudios Mexicanos) offers a study guide of modern Mexico. The years of 1910 are established as the beginning of this stage and 1968 as the end of it. It exposes the revolutionary trajectory, its institutionalization and its entry into crisis. Although the Revolution signified the standard of national modernity, the country project began to be questioned in the middle of the 20th century. From history, art and literature focus on three major themes: "The Mexican Revolution and nationalisms", "The ways of modernity" and "The rupture and crisis." The reader can follow in these pages the points of interdisciplinary convergence. This book serves as support material, especially reinforcing the reading comprehension and at the same

time teaching history and in general aspects of the Mexican culture with those that normally complement the language courses.

Spanish for daily life (Español para la vida cotidiana) is a series of four booklets for the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (SFL) which, together, cover the main linguistic and communicative contents of levels A1-A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching and evaluation (CEFR). Each booklet is made up of thematic units and each lesson includes contents related to all aspects of the use of the language that will allow the speaker to develop his competence to deal with situations of communication typical of everyday life.

- *Español para la vida cotidiana, 1. La gente y los lugares* (Hall, 2015)
- *Español para la vida cotidiana. 2. La vida diaria*
- *Español para la vida diaria 3. Gustos planes y consejos* (Hall, Español para la vida cotidiana 3. Gustos, planes y consejos, 2015)
- *España para la vida diaria 4.* (Hall, Español para la vida cotidiana 4. Las experiencias, 2015)

CELE UNAM

The Center for Teaching Foreign Languages (CELE) develops and promotes foreign languages in different ways; certification, training and updating of human resources; research in applied linguistics and the extension and dissemination of these quality services to Mexican society in general and the UNAM community in particular to achieve their academic, work and professional performance. (National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2016, October, 30)

SIIts library has books for teaching several languages like; German, Arabic, Catalan, Chinese, Korean, French, Modern Greek, Hebrew, English, Italian, Japanese, Nahuatl, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Swedish and Basque but they do not have books for teaching Spanish from Mexico because the institute in charge of them is the CEPE UNAM, which is in the same university of Mexico City. The CELE is an important piece for the students who take their courses, because it gives them a great didactic collection and with this helps them to be more self-taught.

Auto-acceso UAMEX

In this small library that is located on the third floor of building H of the Autonomous University of the State Mexico are 5 volumes of Martha

Jurado's *Permission to talk!*, this book allows the student to acquire linguistic competence, through simple and practical lessons. In addition, he makes a great effort to include the Spanish of Mexico in his lessons. The library called "self-access" is a comfortable facility that, although small is very well equipped with computers, 16 to be exact. In addition, it has small rooms with flat screens in which students can play the movies that are in the video library. Their tables for bibliographic consultation are very comfortable and are in excellent condition. All this makes it a very useful tool for students.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2016 was created the International Service of Evaluation of the Spanish Language (SIELE), is a new service of Spanish evaluation and certification, promoted by the Cervantes Institute (IC), the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the University of Salamanca (USAL) and the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). The SIELE is a domain exam that certifies the degree of competence in the Spanish language. It operates on a scale of points with equivalences to levels A1, B2, B1, B2 and C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

FINAL THOUGHTS

This research has fulfilled the objectives initially set, demonstrating the strength that has taken the Spanish language in the current years. The Spanish language has linguistic characteristics that have allowed, to a great extent, to become an important world language. On the other hand, Spanish is one of the most universal languages of culture, because of the history and influence of its literature, and it is an international language, with an official and vehicular character in 21 countries of the world. In addition, Spanish enjoys a very compact geography and a demographics in constant expansion since the colonization and, mainly, from the xx century. The Spanish of Mexico accuses the indigenous influence in the lexical field, especially of *Nahuatl*, from where many words have passed that are not only general throughout the Hispanic world, but from here they have been generalized to many other languages (for example, *chocolate*, *cacao*, *aguacate*). Along with this lexical feature, Mexican and Central American Spanish offer others that give it personality as a well-identified Hispanic area. (Fernández & Roth, 2007)

As regards the first objective, to present the existing information about the teaching of Spanish to foreigners or Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) in this article, in a more extensive and synthesized form to make it available to; spanish as a foreign language teachers, academics interested in materials

or resources about sfl and anyone else who wants to know more about teaching Spanish in Mexico. We have checked how much real information is available to stakeholders. This is the reality that must be taken into account when planning; courses, degrees and subjects, as complications can arise from these issues. Certainly for such difficulties to occur, the curricular plan to be carried out must be entirely based on the Mexican Spanish. We cannot ignore that there is a great area of opportunity for institutions that invest in the quality of materials to teach Mexican Spanish and improve it in certain aspects, thus achieving some generalized economic growth in this institution or in Mexico. The current volume and growth pace from publishing houses joining the launch of such materials are increasing (Santillana).

The second objective is to show how much didactic material, articles specialized in the teaching of spanish as a foreign language, electronic resources and training courses for spanish teachers in Mexico can access students of spanish as a foreign language. The results obtained on the four indicators are diverse. From the searches that were carried out through the different portals, we can establish that there is little information from Mexico about them, of course it could not be so radical, because it was possible to find enough didactic material in what was searched, but what we value in this work is the excellent quality of information with which these materials were made.

We do not want to end without referring to two issues. First, we conclude this paper knowing that the research remains open for many more inquiries, as the subject is very rough for any researcher. But, the inconsistency in a space as important as the field of language teaching is something difficult to accept in Mexico. Secondly, we all know the debate that exists between which language is more preponderant than another, but we know that it is a matter of time before it becomes known what the preferred language will be. At the moment the debate has begun, as standard bearers have been placed Spanish, English and Mandarin. We know that the data can be criticized, but the true value of the work is to set a precedent that serves as a base, to carry on analyzing the Mexican Spanish and to continue to produce material for the teaching of it.

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ORFEO AGAINST ACADEMO
FOR A LIRA ON TOGA DEFINITIVE
VICTORY

—

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School books tell how Plato founded his academy in the vicinity of an Athenian garden owned by the mythological hero Academus. The old institution is also known for its entrance inscription that prohibited the access to those who did not know geometry. It is also recognized that its founder conceived an ideal republic where poets would not have room. These legends of origin on this particular school and its first director were already tracing the authoritarian and segregationist profile that is today indelible stigma of their universities heirs, in which also are not admitted those who cannot register their bibliography in the system of cited in fashion, lack a curriculum, a theoretical framework, a methodology, among other credentials that, to put it shortly, prove that the aspirant is a mental corpse, or at least, an evicted man ready to enter an ultra-theoretical Hades of which no intelligence comes out alive.

Never. Not even a poet.

The Orpheus of our days never penetrates Academus' domains unless it is a suicide driven by the imperious necessity of seducing an increasingly prostituted Eurydice, named currently scholarship, full time place or SNI¹ membership. We then see the bard exchange his lyre for a university doctor's robe, and in that transaction, which assures him survival material, consummate his most resounding failure. Forget that the only price to pay for the victorious laurel of poetry is always the sacrifice of Eurydice.

Between poetry and academy, the only conceivable coincidence is his timely appointment on a battlefield. It is a very tricky strategy, although often effective, to want to amuse them and attribute them common affinities and tasks. The lion and the lamb do not eat nor will never eat from the same dish. For some time it would have been convenient that poetry would be kept on the lion's share, however Orpheus let himself be caught in the first ambush of a war that has not yet ended. The academy, in undisguised complicity with the capital, has put to the knees as many a poet has fallen in its insides. Orpheus had to have rescued Eurydice from Hades, that is to say, to remove it from there, but in the end, and by now, voluntarily, the poet himself has resignedly stayed in the bureaucratic hell of the university, espoused with a Eurydice so dead and spectral like him. The poet's funeral

1 Researchers National System (Sistema Nacional de Investigadores Conacyt)

is thus disguised as triumphant nuptials. The groom's outfit consists of a cap and a toga, and beside it a Eurydice, resplendent as a new bank account, promises to gain weight over time, thanks to the publication of articles by order in indexed magazines, tutorials, points' accumulation and other well-known skills.

Nothing more opposed to a poet than a university professor. As Borges wrote in his "Art of Injustice," one refers to the author of *Sentimental Lunario* as Dr. Lugones, and the poet's divine halo disappears instantly to give way to a bureaucratic lord without much relief. I once heard him say a benevolent Subirats, to mitigate the intransigence of Borges, who unlike the Yankee professors, technocrats par excellence, the professors of the Latin American universities still carry within themselves a poet, a writer who is intimately reluctant to colonial literary theories imported from the United States and Europe. I do not rule it out either. But it has been just that closeted poets' shyness has put a damper on the best that remains in them. To give reason to Subirats is as much to assume that the academy is a refuge of ashamed poets. It is true that one can still find among the academics those who hold in their curricular books some juvenile poems. More of that past adventure is not usually heard from his mouth, let alone during his chair. It is certain that his students will not learn a single arcane about poetic creation; on the contrary, they will evaluate their mastery of the subject taught, denounce to the corresponding authority any nostalgic digression of the ex-poet and even watch the political correctness of their statements and comments. Except for very few and plausible exceptions, a standard class is more interested in discussing what theorists have said about a poem and what poetry should be, than to promote the pupil's personal reading, compensating for the humble or "impressionistic" that it may seem with its honesty, with the merit of being the fruit of his reflection and not of the submissive acceptance of what the professor has suggested to him to read in Roman Jakobson or Leo Spitzer. That, of course, the Letters' pupil has the obligation to know, but fundamentally, to question and approach at all times with a critical look, not with automatic subordination. There is also a broad consensus among teachers and students about the polysemic and never univocal nature of poems, and yet the academy frequently filters its demand for theoretical and methodological rigor to the point where the student has to define "poetry" as a plain, or severe, three-syllable word, two hiatus, six letters, two vowels, a closed tonic and four consonants. You will tell me that I am caricaturing; and I am. But it must also be admitted that my parody definition is an irrefutable, exact and even well-regarded truism by certain theories that do not disdain the classification and accounting of tropes and grammatical elements.

The misfortune of the shameful poet with a postgraduate degree also reaches the lauded glories of the literary tradition. To so-called classics, the academy amasses them into paradoxically disobeyed authorities. The case for antonomasia in Mexico is the one of Octavio Paz. Their judgments and ideas about poetry are often quoted by teachers and students with the sufficiency and vanity of fencers grateful for the many occasions they have to brag about the brilliance of their florets. This academic sport has made the once belligerent Octavio another harmless master. The blunt swords of the university fencers have a point of arrest that leaves their ego undamaged while ensuring their permanence in the house of studies where they pretend to debate and fight as intellectuals. The matter is gratifying: in respect to Octavio, but the dissertations and investigations of his admirers are far from emulating the style and persuasive power of *The Bow and the lyre* or the intellectual ambition of *The Traps of Faith*. Peace proclaimed where a poet was going to be. Even his essays benefited from this vocation by honing his analyzes and reflections with the analogical vision characteristic of poetry. Not so the doctors, who no longer have permission to imitate him nor are they trained to write with the same literary quality. In their case, each statement must be justified and supported in footnotes rigorously fitted with the theory and method chosen in advance and came from its synod. In these times of demanded "intellectual honesty," I cannot imagine the misery and condemnation of a university thesisist who had the audacity to repeat Octavio's celebrated mistake, when he answered Salazar Mallén's accusations of plagiarism saying: "The lion eats lamb". Nowadays, any shameful poet in the academy who imagines himself to be a "pacifier" mordant, would lose in a moment the possibility of being reopened the doors of any university. No. The poet does not eat academic. It is technocracy that swallowed up our creativity. And the most compelling evidence that Octavio, the poet, is dead, is the worship and veneration that the academy gives him. His prestigious teaching is only a mirage. The students no longer discuss or surpass the teacher, as ordered by the adage. The lyrical Sword of Orpheus, forgotten of that glorious adventure between Argonauts in which it was proclaimed victorious, fulfills this time functions of machete. Like us, gray scholarship *macheteros* who keep the academy's garden clean and fit the undefeated demigod of the nine ropes has been integrated into a floe grazed by bureaucrats who have made the university one more business, a company of little success that does not take time to fall apart.

This collapse will not, of course, be a poets' feat. When I was young, I still dreamed of a real bard, immune to the scholarships and plazas temptations, a genuine Orpheus who, like Jesus in the temple, according to Matthew 26:61, could rebuke in front of the academy's gates: this building in two and

with greater splendor you will see reconstructed in three days. I then fantasized to understand and applaud the spirit of that invective as the necessary, violent imposition and mastery of the poets over the doctors. I could not. There has been more to the humanists' spirit and vocation, the imperative to thrive, to consolidate a meager prestige, and in the worst cases, which are the most, to merely survive at the expense of what the capital orders. In a neoliberal regime, of all against all, of whoever can, pat on the back to the entrepreneur, in a society whose relentless fetish is money, departments of humanities, which could constitute the most honorable resistance to the system, come out leaving aside that its members spend more time to the bureaucratic procedures of accountability to CONACYT than to the reading of books, a complaint very frequently among members of academic bodies, members of the SNI and other managers of the universities. "I no longer have time to read or write", whine doctors in the midst of his exhaustion. Other more supposedly scientific departments, such as medicine, that overlap the country's intoxication with transgenic and drugs, are strategic and may last a little longer. But the literary academy and the faculties of philosophy and letters no longer even have the consolation to suppose themselves necessary for their legitimation of power. It is the mass media of communication with its trashy propaganda that in this respect they carry the singing voice and they fulfill this function to a great extent. More than one no doubt longs for the time when Paz, Monsiváis, Galeano or Fuentes still gave their opinion about matters of national and global interest. That authority has been snatched by journalists, columnists and other mechanics readers of newsletters on television. In the least bad of cases, an alleged specialist is consulted. And let's no longer talk about the poet. He just wants to raise his voice, that extravagant "unproductive" is sent without contemplation to count vowels and trace consonances. "You take care of yours, dear sir."

In this context, the academy has its days counted. And it will be precisely the economic system to which he has bowed the same as easily and without remorse without it when other pressing matters demand the budget that he assigns to date. As we all know, at the crucial time of the carnage and preparation of the barbecue, the lambs do not make the agony of the pork and barely let slip a tear or two while they slit them. Only this simile is too complacent and even undeserved. In comparing ourselves with the lambs, I take it for granted that the academicians have life, and that disqualifies and contradicts my allusion to the descent of Orpheus to hell. So I return to the comparison and add that this gray cemetery named academy will be swept away and will soon cease to be an instrument of domination and indoctrination for the simple reason that it is already unnecessary and no vision of rebellion or subversion dwells in its enclosures.

Poetry, however, will survive. I'm not interested in predicting how long. I do want to make it clear that once the academy is destroyed, it relies on a more heroic confrontation of poetry against capitalism. Poetry is life, and life does not let itself be captured in any kind of imprisonment, however remunerative, in "prestige" or monetarily, that these are. In the outskirts' difficult freedom, among a multitude of marginalized self-taught people, excluded from the privilege of university education, poetry survives as a bastion of dignity and a commitment to humanism in a supermarket-looking, calculating, selfish world getting ready minute by minute to a third great conflagration.

So far I have not said anything new, nothing that is not there already and even better formulated, in the minds of all who listen to me. In confronting poets and academics as those who oppose life and death I have not tried to hope for a conspiracy of poets imprisoned in a classroom. I think I have made it very clear that the condition of admission to the academy is the abandonment of poetry and, consequently, would require conspirators. The bellicose synecdoche in the title of these lines ("for a victory of the lyre over the toga") does not aim to stimulate among us, autistic full-time volunteers to a research project, to dynamite from the inside the academy or exile ourselves from it with a view to regaining our longed for creativity and freedom of thought. No. It's just an invitation, a warning not to succumb to the lure of an Eurydice that will only please us for two or four years, or if we take root permanently in this greenhouse that is the university, it will repay us on the condition of forever giving up the poetic creation and resign ourselves to its mere analysis and interpretation.

Let's avoid that. Since selfishness and other priorities prevent us from organizing ourselves, even at the individual level, we prevent doctor's prescriptions in which we are converted from imposing ourselves daily on our pen. Let us wear and throw the robe before the lyre, and let the intimate music of our personality not be intimidated or diminished by the authoritative counterclaims of our university education.

Orpheus is the victory. I am convinced. And since we, as scholars, will not share with him the glory of combat, for we have not been trained for such bravura, hopefully we may celebrate his triumph as a choir at a distance. Hopefully, after the disappearance of the academy, none of those present today have to exclaim, Dante, how painful it is to remember the time of the scholarship in days of misery. Let us have the strength to abandon in Hades that Eurydice, patronized by bureaucrats. The muse is only given to those who treat it with rigor. Plato, that divine pimp, masterfully abandoned and mistreated poetry, but she never abandoned him and, to this day, continues

to reward him. "The tree flies in the bird that leaves it," confirmed another expert in these tasks. Let's not miss that lesson.