

Javier Marías and Antonio Muñoz Molina: between two languages¹

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Cuando uno habita, aunque sea transitoriamente, otra lengua, es como si habitara otra música, otro país, y el placer de hablarla, incluso el de leerla, es el de hacer un viaje y el de cambiar de vida y de país. (Antonio Muñoz Molina, “Lenguas Vivas”, *El País Semanal*, 13 May 2001)

*The reader that Spanish novelists Javier Marías and Antonio Muñoz Molina have in mind in *Todas las Almas*, *Corazón tan blanco* and *Carlota Fainberg* is not only an educated reader, but also a reader who is presumed to be proficient in English, and who will, therefore, be able to comprehend the numerous examples of code-switching, the “philological dissections” and cultural references to the English-speaking world that appear in their respective novels. This paper shows how these two authors create fictional images of linguistic interference and translation in order to add credibility to both their characters and narrators. It also addresses the question of whether or not, while still writing from an unequivocally Spanish perspective, they manage to successfully integrate (both in aesthetic terms and in terms of mimetic accuracy) elements pertaining to the English-speaking world into their novels, endowing them with an intercultural dimension.*

0. Introduction

The question of how two (or more) languages in contact influence each other has been central to studies in the fields of education, psychology, linguistics, translation studies, etc. The most common types of influence in language contact and bilingual language usage are the borrowing² of words (Thomason 2001: 10) and the mixing of languages (Pfaff 1979; Romaine 1989; Milroy & Muysken 1995), especially in what is known as code-switching, the use of different languages in the same discourse. The purpose of this article is to explore the fictional representation of language contact in three contemporary Spanish novels – *Carlota Fainberg* (henceforth abbreviated as CF), *Todas las Almas* (TA) and *Corazón tan blanco* (CTB) – by observing how the insertion of English terms and references to the English-speaking world contributes to the creation of a particular atmosphere. More specifically, we shall look into the rendering of linguistic interference³ in the speech of characters whose professions and lifestyles involve the use of two or more languages: two university lec-

turers and a translator and interpreter. These three novels have been selected because they have a similar type of protagonist from a professional point of view.⁴ The main characters in CF, TA and CTB have in common their proficiency in a second language. They exhibit abilities that only bilinguals appear to have, such as code-switching, borrowing, and simultaneous translation. They possess a wide array of bilingual and bicultural skills which are conditioned by their own professions and the environment that surrounds them.

A preliminary brief overview of the context in which these authors began to write seems necessary, in order to be able to understand why in their attempt to escape from or break with the Spanish literary tradition, they opt for a sort of hybridisation that endows their fiction with a note of foreignness which, as Labanyi (1995: 397) points out, during the dictatorial regime would have been associated with *la anti-España*.⁵ The Spanish novelistic genre underwent a period of crisis around 1975. As Darío Villanueva (1992: 251) indicates, “en los alrededores de esa fecha no hay obras de particular relieve firmadas por las sucesivas promociones surgidas desde la guerra civil y ya bien establecidas en los medios literarios y editoriales”. This is the context in which the revival of the Spanish novel took place: new names began to appear, breaking into an editorial market that welcomed the wide variety of narrative styles and themes that these young writers were bringing:

Estos escritores, en términos generales, no se sienten herederos de los enfrentamientos ideológicos de sus padres (al contrario de lo que sucede con la generación del medio siglo). Su actitud política es de rechazo del franquismo, pero distinguen entre el compromiso cívico y la actitud literaria. Su primera madurez coincide con el auge de los postulados estructuralistas [...]. Coincide también con el triunfo del llamado “boom” de las letras hispanoamericanas [...]. [En los alrededores de 1975] se inicia el rescate de un gusto por contar [...] y una gran pluralidad de líneas narrativas. (Villanueva 1992: 253-254)

Marías and Muñoz Molina belong to this new generation of writers. Their stories lack the Spanishness, localism, realism and seriousness that characterized the type of writing produced in the three decades that followed the end of the Civil War (Catelli 1991: 146; Simonsen 1999: 194-195). As Grohmann (2002: 17) points out, their respective styles are a reaction against the patriotism, mimesis and Spanishness which was so characteristic of previous generations of writing. In their rejection of all those traditional elements, their particular styles place the emphasis on form and language, and open the door to the influence of foreign elements.⁶ The incorporation of foreign words and foreign cultural allusions forges the basis of their heterodoxy. As will be argued here, these authors’ knowledge of languages other than their native Spanish is one of the tools enabling them to challenge the traditional limits of their own literary medium.

1. Linguistic interference and stylistic exotism

Language, and the concern with the use of words, is a pervasive element throughout these novels. Linguistic interference, in its broadest sense, plays an important role and it contributes towards the characterization of the protagonists as well as of some of the characters. Language use, linguistic awareness and metalinguistic reflections reinforce the link between author, narrator and protagonist.

In TA, the narrative voice of a young visiting Spanish lecturer recounts his experiences in Oxford some time after having returned to Madrid, a narration that is imbued with the yearning for a language no longer spoken on a daily basis, but deeply rooted in the protagonist's memories.⁷

In CF, the voice of Claudio, another Spanish lecturer, who teaches in Pennsylvania, narrates his encounter with Marcelo Abengoa, an extrovert Spanish executive with whom he has nothing in common except nationality. Due to flight delays at the airport in Pittsburgh, Claudio, who is on his way to a conference in Buenos Aires, is forced to listen to Marcelo's secret story about his experience in a hotel in the Argentinean capital. Coming from an English-speaking environment as well, and accustomed to thinking in both English and Spanish, Claudio feels free to code-switch between Spanish and English constantly.

Juan, the narrator in CTB, is a translator and interpreter who has just got married to his colleague Luisa and who lives in Madrid, but travels to New York and Geneva on business. He is obsessed by the activity of translating: "no puedo evitar traducir automática y mentalmente a mi propia lengua, e incluso muchas veces (por suerte no siempre, acaso sin darme cuenta), si lo que me alcanza es en español también lo traduzco con el pensamiento a cualquiera de los otros tres idiomas que hablo y entiendo" (36).⁸

Both Marías and Muñoz Molina's protagonists are native Spanish speakers who live in (or have contact with) English-speaking countries and environments. The presence of the English language in the narration of the nameless Oxford lecturer in TA, Claudio in CF, and Juan in CTB adds credibility to their speech. That is, in order to enhance the authenticity of their narrative voices, the authors, who are certainly familiar with the linguistic consequences of speaking two or more languages, create fictional code-switching, insert reflections on the use of words in one language and the other, and use other types of interference. The analysis of these features reveals a clear intention to make the discourse of the narrators look as spontaneous, unplanned speech. In all three novels, the narrative voice is governed by an apparent spontaneity that allows for interference from the other language, in the same way as the bilingual's speech does. What we as readers are presented with in the three cases is a story told by a narrator whose use of the English language is part of his everyday life, and who in his automatic speech cannot avoid drawing on it.

Linguistic interference, as is well known, is an important factor in the speech of bilingual and multilingual speakers. Switching, even the type that

involves just the insertion of single words, can have different functions in conversation (see Appel & Muysken 1987: 118-120), and these often have sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic implications. However, for our purpose, the most interesting aspect of the portrayal of monologues where interference takes place is how these switches are integrated into the text, what they represent within the narrative and how they are to be received by the Spanish reader.

2. Code-switching in *Carlota Fainberg*

The mixing of Spanish and English in CF is an important component of the character of Claudio. Claudio's story is replete with English words, which emphasize the unplanned nature of his narration and the spontaneity of his thoughts. This characteristic of the novel is also related to the argument that literary texts exploit creatively the essence of everyday conversation, and "that many texts composed and transmitted in the written medium and meant to be read 'mark' themselves on the surface of the text as echoing that which might be spoken and heard" (McCarthy 1993: 171). In a sense, the borders between spoken and written language are challenged here.

One of the most striking aspects of the narrator's mixed speech in this novel is that it bears certain similarities to the type of code-switching that has been observed in conversations among Spanish-English bilinguals in the United States. The following passage exemplifies some of the features I refer to:

Mi paper sobre narratividad e intertextualidad en el soneto *Blind Pew*, además, no me tocó leerlo en la sesión plenaria, tal como estaba scheduled. [...] Mi nombre atrajo una exigua audiencia de cuatro personas, pero cuando me situé delante del lectern y me puse las gafas para empezar a leer noté que había entrado un quinto espectador. [...] Ann Gadea Simpson Mariátegui, a quien conocí por sus fotos, porque nunca hasta aquel día desdichado, la había visto in the flesh. (CF, 151)

The insertion of nouns such as *paper*, *audience* and *lectern* and the switch into the participle *scheduled* is very representative of the type of lexical borrowing undertaken by Claudio throughout the novel. As happens in real bilingual speech, words related to the profession of the speaker are often the most likely items to be transferred from the second language into the first (Weinreich 1953: 81). Many bilinguals are accustomed to discussing some topics in only one of their languages or to use only one language to talk about specialized matters, and, therefore, a transition to the other language opens the door to interference. As Field (2002: 45) indicates in relation to the prediction of borrowed elements in bilingual contexts, "frequency of exposure and relevance undoubtedly play greater roles in whether or not a form is learned by an individual speaker. That is, for a particular content item to be learned, a speaker needs to be exposed to it, and it will need to be relevant (there is a need to learn it)".

The character of Claudio is obviously used to employing certain academic words in English and these emerge in his speech in a rather natural manner. Terms such as the following find their way into his narrative: *journals, paper(s), laptop, conference, chairman, intertextuality, lecture, dean, italics, digression/transgression, devices, quote/unquote, computer, story/discourse, semesters, tenure, badge, scholars, seminars, lectern, mentions, footnote*.

Similarly, nouns that belong to his daily routine or to activities which he is used to carrying out in the English language (e.g. travelling) are also borrowed without any type of explanation to the reader, as is the case of *blizzard(s), check in, desk(s), fares, parties, quarters, counter, jet-lag, t-shirt(s), ice-cream, snowstorm, lobby, hall, snapshots, newsstand, raincoat, boarding, gate, catnap, straight, shorts, chestnuts, and mortgage*, among others. This type of lexical borrowing appears to be very common among English-Spanish bilingual speakers in the USA (Silva-Corvalán 1996). Otheguy (2004: 2), when discussing the grammatical gender of this type of loanwords into Spanish, reports similar examples of lexical borrowing, e.g. “En el cuarto del niño hay un *pool table*”.

As stated by Field (2002: 45), adjectives and verbs are also frequently borrowed in the speech of bilinguals. The number of adjectival forms contained in Muñoz Molina’s novel is considerably smaller than the list of single nouns. Among the adjectives used by Claudio, we find *cheap, unpleasant, warm, helpless, stocky, polite, childish, suitable*, the compounds *tightfisted* and *bloodshot*, and among the verbal forms, many of them with adjectival functions: *disgusting, delayed, cancelled, disappointed, acquainted, overheated, scheduled, abducted, astonishing, polished*.

Lexical units consisting of two nouns, or a noun and an adjective are also found throughout the novel: *weather forecast, soft drinks, freudian slip, visiting professor, late forties, old fashioned, Hispanic Studies, room service, case study, whole wheat sandwiches, lunch (break/time), self esteem, adult movies, domestic flights, writing workshops, Spanish department(s), answering machine, double scotch, blind drunk, lawn mowers, full professor(ship), sexual orientation, sexual intercourse*, etc.

All of these elements follow a pattern similar to the results obtained by Poplack (1980) in her study of New York Puerto Rican speakers. According to Poplack, Spanish-English bilinguals favour switches of this type but, for example, do not tend to switch between clitic and verb or between negative and verb; hence sentences such as **El niño le hit* (the boy hit him) or **Su amiga no comes tonight* (his/her friend is not coming tonight) would be rare.

Set phrases, idiomatic expressions, and prepositional phrases such as *in the flesh*, which appears in the extract above, are often considered to behave like single units, and therefore are borrowed as a whole by bilingual speakers (Otheguy 2004). That is the case of expressions such as *by the way, frame of mind, self-made-man, right to the point, out of the blue, everything is OK*, and also *a ghost of a chance* and *out of the closet*, which are used by

Moreli, Claudio's Latin-American colleague. The character of Moreli is mentioned by the narrator/protagonist throughout the novel, but he only appears at the end. In his conversation with Claudio, we observe a similar type of mixing to that employed by the narrative voice. Moreli's turns of speech contain the use of other profession-related words such as *mentions*, *journals*, *papers* and *mark*. He also employs single nouns and two-word combinations such as *race and gender*, *self pity*, *white supremacist*, *african-american*, *chinese-american*, which, as in Claudio's case, seem to be part of his own idiolect due to frequency in use.⁹

These single-word or single-unit switches, which, as can be observed, are rather recurrent in CF, constitute one of the most important stylistic elements of the novel. The correspondence between fictional and real code-switching¹⁰ contributes to the characterization of Claudio, as well as of Moreli. Although the majority of these items are inserted into the novel without any type of explanatory comment addressed to the reader, thus presuming a certain degree of proficiency on their part, other elements are actually the subject of (brief) metalinguistic reflections and explanations which are not necessarily addressed to the reader, but employed to add more credibility to the characters: "As a matter of fact, como dicen aquí, nos habíamos visto por primera vez hacia las once a.m." (18); "Pertenezco a lo que los sociólogos llaman aquí, con una metáfora no infortunada, el tipo cocoon" (20); "he meant business, como dicen aquí" (46). That insistence on the deictic *aquí* in these three sentences at the beginning of the novel is necessary from a narrative point of view in order to foreground the location from which the narrator's story is told. Other expressions such as *onion layers* and *bloodshot*, are accompanied by their corresponding translation into Spanish with a similar metalinguistic function: "los onion layers del significado, término este que a mí me da un poco de reparo traducir por 'las capas de cebolla'" (42); "Tenía los ojos bloodshot, inyectados en sangre, como se dice en España" (166).

The adjectives *naïf* and *embarrassed* and the noun *kindness* are also subject to comment by the narrator with the implication that certain English words are more precise, or closer to the definition of the concept that they refer to, and, as a result, they need to be borrowed into his speech (a phenomenon which has been observed in the behaviour of bilinguals as well; see Romaine 1989: 64): "Su ignorancia de las tremendas gender wars me pareció, contra mi voluntad, tan envidiable como su desenvoltura de narrador inocente, o naïf, para ser más exactos" (54); "También debo añadir que con los años me he acostumbrado a lo que al principio me atosigaba tanto, a las formalidades y reservas de la etiqueta académica norteamericana, y que ya me siento incómodo, o más exactamente embarrassed, ante cualquier despliegue excesivo de simpatía" (20); "estudiaba el tipo de clientes que recibía el hotel y el grado de corrección o de kindness con que eran tratados" (42-43). The alleged precision of English terms is also emphasized in the reflection upon the Spanish noun *sueño*: "no sé si adormecida o soñadoramente (una irritante deficiencia del

español es que usa la palabra sueño para dos cosas tan distintas como sleep y dream)” (50).

On other occasions, paradoxically, Claudio’s brief digressions are critical of the use of anglicisms in Spanish: “mi imaginación no aceptaba la expectativa del regreso a la estación [...] de Humbert, al estacionamiento (qué horror que en España se haya generalizado la palabra ‘parking’)” (24). *Parking* is used in Peninsular Spanish to refer to a car park, and it belongs to the category of words that, like *footing* (jogging) or *puenting* (bungee jumping), show an English form but are actually invented terms that have been integrated into Spanish and are now widely used; they are *loan creations*, i.e. “prompted by a foreign word, but formally independent [...] and whose origin is often difficult or impossible to supply” (Görlach 1997: 145-146). This, and other terms such as *barman* or *smoking*, and the words *look* and *topless*, used by Abengoa are in fact seen by Claudio as a result of the influence of the English language around the world, and, therefore, different from the type of language contact that his speech displays. His own use of English terms is due to daily contact with the language in an English-speaking country, it is ‘justified’, whereas Abengoa’s use of economic terms such as *input*, *output*, *cashflow* (44), *downsizing*, *uplifting* (38), or *strategical advisor* (on Abengoa’s visiting card), as Claudio’s comment seems to imply, is merely due to the fascination of Spanish businessmen and executives with the English language:

Llega a extremos enternecedores la fascinación de los empresarios y ejecutivos españoles por el idioma inglés, habida cuenta además de que la mayor parte de ellos manifiestan una incapacidad congénita para hablarlo con un mínimo de decoro, con un acento que no resulte bochornoso escuchar. (33)

This thought is followed by Claudio’s use of the word *helpless* and preceded by *soft drinks* in a self-parodical manner, which Muñoz Molina uses to ridicule his protagonist’s attitude towards linguistic hybridization, and which makes the reader reflect upon the excessive use of English words both in the speech of Claudio himself and of his colleague Morini.

3. Philological lessons

The insertion of English words into the narrative in TA and CTB tends to have an analytic nature, and is usually followed by a philological reflection, or a translation. In the following excerpt from CTB, the idea of being at somebody’s back, protecting them, makes Juan think about the verbs *respaldar* in Spanish and *to back* in English, which becomes a sort of ‘leitmotiv’ throughout the novel:

Es el pecho de otra persona lo que nos respalda, sólo nos sentimos respaldados de veras cuando hay alguien detrás, lo indica la propia palabra, a nuestras espaldas, como en inglés también, to back, alguien a quien a caso no

vemos y que nos cubre la espalda con su pecho, que está a punto de rozarnos y acaba siempre rozándonos, y a veces, incluso, ese alguien nos pone una mano en el hombro con la que nos apacigua y también nos sujeta. (CTB, 70)

In TA, the act of eavesdropping on Cromer-Blake makes the narrator think about the etymology, definition and translation of the English verbs *to eavesdrop* and *to overhear*, which, as the narrator explains, have different semantic nuances to the Spanish word *respaldar*:

En inglés existe un verbo que en español sólo se puede traducir explicándolo, y *to eavesdrop* (éste es el verbo) significa (ésta es la explicación) escuchar indiscretamente, secretamente, furtivamente, con una escucha deliberada y no casual ni indeseada (para esto, en cambio se usa *to overhear*), y la palabra se compone a su vez de dos, la palabra *eaves*, que significa *alero*, y la palabra *drop*, que puede significar varias cosas pero que tiene que ver sobre todo con *gota* o *goteo* (el que escucha se pone a cierta distancia, mínima, de la casa: se pone allí donde el alero gotea después de la lluvia, y desde allí escucha lo que se dice dentro. (TA, 192)

Other words such as *dons* are explained to the Spanish-speaking reader who may not be familiar with Oxbridge traditions and terminology. The same occurs in the following extracts with the words *fellows*, *warden* and *high table*, whose translation into *mesas altas* allows the author to give further comment on the quality of the conversation and the food served at these events:

[...] ya antes de entrar suele haber alguna que otra discusión o rencilla, empujón, zarandeo o codazo, por culpa de los miembros o *fellows* ambiciosos u olvidadizos que, por así decirlo, intentan torpedear el protocolo y colarse en la fila para ganar prestigio. [...] El *warden* o director o administrador del *college* (con frecuencia un miembro bostezante de la nobleza) preside la mesa [...] (TA, 52)

Cromer-Blake fue mi guía y mi protector en la ciudad de Oxford, y fue él quien me hizo conocer a Clare Bayes a los cuatro meses de mi llegada, nueve antes de aquel 5 de noviembre, en una de las grandilocuentes cenas que allí se conocen como *high tables*. Estas cenas tienen lugar en los enormes refectorios de los diferentes *colleges*, y cada *college* celebra la suya una vez a la semana. Si se llaman literalmente mesas altas es más porque la mesa a la que se sientan los anfitriones con sus correspondientes invitados está sobre una tarima y preside sobre las demás [...] que porque la calidad de las viandas o de las conversaciones sea muy elevada. (TA, 51)

No translation is provided for *colleges* in these extracts, where the word is integrated into the narration without digression, thus allowing the author to concentrate on the wordplay that *high tables* lends itself to. But the noun *college(s)* is repeated throughout the novel and any reader unfamiliar with it will finally understand its meaning from the context. What is interesting about its direct integration into the narrative is that it is typographically marked to highlight its foreign nature.

The words *awe* and *awesome* are also accompanied by their counterparts in Spanish, as if implying, as Claudio does in CF, that the English terms are more accurate, or express the idea better: “era un hombre demasiado sagaz y demasiado verídico [...], y hacia el que no era fácil sentir otra cosa que admiración abierta y quizá un poco de miedo (lo que en inglés es *awe*, y me entenderán algunos)” (TA, 145); “El beso de los tres es el beso dado por quien ya ha hecho suya la sensación de descenso que conocen Rylands demoníaco – *awesome* – y Cromer-Blake enfermo y que yo no conozco” (TA, 187).

Translations of words and references to the activity of translating are much more recurrent in CTB, given that, as was stated above, the influence of the protagonist’s own profession as translator and interpreter leads him to a self-conscious or self-reflective use of language:

En Ginebra no tengo ningún amigo ni amiga que viva allí normalmente en un piso, por lo que mis semanas de interpretación en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos del ECOSOC (siglas que en una de las lenguas que hablo suenan como si fueran la traducción de una cosa absurda, ‘el calcetín del eco’) transcurrieron en un minúsculo apartamento amueblado [...] (CTB, 217)

His reflections upon the activity of interpreting occupy a significant place in the novel. Juan’s detailed accounts of the type of work carried out at international organizations also contribute, together with the insertion of English words and their translations, to the depiction of the protagonist. In the following extract he launches a harsh attack on the absurd and meaningless circulation of speeches and texts that have to be translated with no particular purpose at times:

Lo cierto es que en esos organismos lo único que en verdad funciona bien son las traducciones, es más, hay en ellos una verdadera fiebre translaticia, algo enfermizo, algo malsano, pues cualquier palabra que se pronuncia en ellos [...] es inmediatamente traducido a varias lenguas por si acaso. [...] Cualquier idiotéz que cualquier idiota envía espontáneamente a uno de esos organismos es traducida al instante a las seis lenguas oficiales, inglés, francés, español, ruso, chino y árabe. (CTB, 55)

He also underlines the power that translated words can have, and jokes about the misunderstandings that can sometimes take place as a result of “las imprecisiones de los intérpretes” (CTB, 59). This is even more conspicuous in a deliberately humorous scene where Juan acts as an interpreter between the Spanish head of State and the English prime minister. Juan, who is very conscious of the fact that in these types of meetings the heads often do not have any important items to discuss, starts by translating: “Oiga, ¿le molesta que fume?” into “Do you mind if I smoke, Madam?” (CTB, 62). However, when he realizes that the pauses are becoming too long he decides to ‘translate’ the Spanish leader’s question “Quiere que le pida un té?” into “Dígame, ¿a usted la quieren en su país?”. This falsification becomes the

trigger that finally sets off the conversation between the two leaders, but, of course it causes a second mistranslation: “Traduje con exactitud, si acaso de modo que en la version inglesa desapareciera el ‘lo’ de la primera frase y todo quedara para nuestro superior como una reflexión espontánea británica que [...] pareció complacerle [...] ya que miró a la señora con sorpresa mínima y mayor simpatía” (CTB, 65). The translation of the Spanish leader’s reply is then edited again: “Consideré que el ultimo comentario, ‘que además va siempre en aumento’, era un poco exagerado si no falso, por lo que traduje todo correctamente menos eso (lo omití y censuré, en suma)” (CTB, 65). The rest of the conversation continues to be edited and censured according to Juan’s judgement. The reasons behind the omissions or adaptations are always offered to the reader, who has to imagine the English part of the conversation until the English lady quotes Shakespeare: in the recounted version given by Juan, the reader first comes across the translated version of that quotation: “Los dormidos, y los muertos, no son sino como pinturas” (CTB, 69), but later in the text, Juan, in his self-conscious habit of analysing the words he hears, begins to wonder where that quotation, “The sleeping and the dead are but as pictures”, comes from, and then admits he has hesitated about the translation of *sleeping* and *pictures*: “y yo había dudado si decir ‘durmientes’ y si decir ‘retratos’ en el momento de oírla salir de sus pintados labios” (CTB, 70).

Juan later remembers that the quotation is from *Macbeth* (2.2.52-53), which causes further reflections upon Lady Macbeth’s use of the expression “to think so brainsickly of things” (2.2.44-45), which, as he indicates,

[es] de difícil traducción, pues la palabra ‘brain’ significa cerebro, y la palabra ‘sickly’ quiere decir ‘enfermizo’ o ‘enfermo’, aunque aquí es un adverbio; así que literalmente le dice que no debe pensar en las cosas con tan enfermo cerebro, o tan enfermizamente con el cerebro, no sé muy bien cómo repetirlo en mi lengua [...] (CTB, 73)

The reference to Shakespeare’s play leads onto another sentence used by Macbeth: “I have done the deed” (2.2.14) which again leads to a linguistic reflection: “‘He hecho el hecho’ o ‘He cometido el acto’, aunque la palabra ‘deed’ se entiende hoy en día más como ‘hazaña’” (CTB, 74). From this point onwards this sentence is consistently repeated throughout the novel, together with the quotation (from the same scene) that appears after the dedication at the beginning of the novel: “My hands are of your colour; but I shame / To wear a heart so white” (*Macbeth* 2.2.63-64). The word *white/blanco*, poses semantic problems to Juan, who wonders whether it denotes the idea of “pálido y temeroso” or “acobardado”. The translation of this image, “corazón tan blanco”, is, in fact, what gives the novel its title.

References to English authors are a prevalent feature in Mariás’s work. In TA, the nameless Oxford lecturer recalls a quote from Marlowe, which comes to his mind after hearing Clare Bayes’s story about her mother’s lover, whom he associates with John Gawsworth:

Y fue entonces cuando no pude evitar recordar unos versos leídos como una cita, los versos de otro autor inglés del que (al revés que de Gawsworth) se sabe mucho, menos de su muerte oscura [...]: en Deptford, que quería decir Vadoprofundo, cerca del río Támesis, que es como se conoce al Isis en todo lugar y tiempo menos a su paso por Oxford. Y pensé: “*Thou hast committed fornication: but that was in another country, and besides, the wench is dead*”. O bien, lo mismo: “Has incurrido en fornicación: pero eso fue en otro país, y además, la moza ha muerto”. (TA, 221)

Although Marías does not name the author of those lines, they come from Marlowe’s play *The Jew of Malta* (scene 4.1). In this extract, as can be seen, the English quotation is translated into Spanish, as is the name Deptford. There is also a geographical reference to the river Isis/Thames endowing the end of this chapter with cultural, linguistic and literary references which add an exotic flavour to the Spanish text.

Apart from the etymological analysis and translations of words into Spanish, and the examples of intertextuality, the fact that the reader is reminded occasionally of the presence of the English language (“y añadió ya en inglés”, TA, 136; “hablaba en inglés frente a la cámara”, CTB, 148; etc.) adds to the general effect of foreignness that surrounds both stories.

4. Summary and conclusion

This paper has analysed how the selection and arrangement of linguistic items, cultural references and metalinguistic reflections in CF, TA and CTB contribute to the general effect of exoticism, a particularity of the style of Muñoz Molina and Marías. I started by suggesting that these authors’ incorporation of foreign elements, which is so characteristic of their writing, initially arose from a will to break with the Spanish literary tradition. However, and in spite of this sort of rejection of traditional elements and topics, it cannot be denied that the protagonists of these three novels narrate their respective stories from an unequivocally Spanish perspective that allows the readers to identify themselves with the characters and the Spanish referents contained in the novels. The character of Claudio, for example, rejects and strongly disapproves of Abengoa’s Spanish habits, linguistic sexism and mannerism, but at the same time is amused by his interlocutor’s Spanish behaviour. Marías’s protagonists, on the other hand, are able to compare cultural differences between Spain and England or the USA, and refer to linguistic nuances in Spanish and in English.

All in all, the appearance of foreign items in these three novels emphasizes the multicultural essence of Marías’s and Muñoz Molina’s writings through the contrast established between the foreign and exotic value of the English forms and the Spanish. The degree with which the English words and phrases are integrated into the text is revealing in this sense, because it marks the degree of exoticism each author is seeking. In Muñoz Molina’s novel, where the appearance of linguistic interference is

much more abundant, no typographical devices show the transitions to and fro between Spanish and English. Foreign words are firmly integrated in the style of Latino writing, where a sort of hybridized narrative is used in order to provide a fusion of languages and fictional worlds. This has a clear function within the novel: it contributes to the characterization of the protagonist, who has become so americanized that he does not perceive English words and expressions as foreign anymore (see Senís-Fernández's 2004: 109). In the case of Marías's novels, non-Spanish words are presented in italics, thus highlighting their foreignness and drawing the reader's attention to them; this enhanced salience is necessary inasmuch as the total number of foreign items is not as high as in *CF*. Again, this is a key element for the depiction of his protagonists: Marías's characters in these novels do not live in an English-speaking country anymore, they are not constantly immersed in an anglophone atmosphere as in the case of Claudio, and yet, both Juan and the nameless Oxford lecturer are so used to analysing words that these inevitably appear in their respective narrations as a natural element of their own train of thought. This results in a slower, reflexive type of narration in comparison to Claudio's spontaneous speech which provides a more fluent narration. As Grohmann (2002: 235) points out, Marías's novels *TA* and *CTB* are essentially "a narrativization of the narrator's thoughts". In both cases the protagonists' voices consist mostly of their own digressive thoughts, where references to the English language permeate through the narration. However, as in *CF*, apart from the obvious purpose of representing the thought of the protagonists and adding authenticity to their speech, Marías's references to the English language also have that function sought by Muñoz Molina of turning the reader into an ally, of establishing a certain complicity with the readership by presuming their knowledge of the use of the English language, of establishing a connection with the anglophile reader (Amador Moreno 2001). Thus, the linguistic phenomena analysed here greatly contribute to that wider resonance that Andrés-Suárez refers to (1997).

In conclusion, the presence of foreign ingredients in these novels contributes to the re-creation of a more authentic multilingual and multicultural universe where interpreters and Spanish lecturers who "change lives and countries" code-switch, translate and analyse words constantly, and where literary references come to mind in the original versions. Both novels can be said to be a reflection of the international environment of diaspora and trans-cultural connections that we live in, where double visions are no longer uncommon, and where national, traditional and cultural boundaries are increasingly eroded.

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² To avoid creating terminological confusion that might possibly obscure subsequent discussion, the term *borrowing* will be used in its broader sense as "the introduction into a language or dialect of elements from another language or dialect by contact and/or imitation" (Hartman & Stork 1972, s.v. borrowing).

³ The term *interference* is used here as a general term to refer to the product of the bilingual individual's use of more than one language in everyday interaction, which, as Romaine (1989: 50-51) points out, "at the level of the individual [...] may be sporadic and idiosyncratic". In the context that the term will be used in here, *interference* seems a more appropriate term than *transfer*, which has been used particularly in connection with the study of second-language acquisition and might be understood as being the result of native-language influence only (however, see Odlin 1989: 25-28), and than *cross-linguistic influence*, which could be seen as implying reciprocity, that is, showing instances of Spanish influence on English and not only vice-versa, which is the type of language contact found in the novels analysed here.

⁴ Due to lack of space, Muñoz Molina's *El Jinete Polaco*, whose protagonist is also a translator, has been excluded from analysis here.

⁵ In an interview with Marías, Paul Ingendaay (2000) asked the author about the lack of Spanishness that some critics have observed in his novels: "PI: A pesar de su éxito usted sufre constantes ataques en España por su falta de españolismo. ¿Dónde comienza esa polémica sobre su españolismo? JM: Me temo que comenzó muy al principio, cuando publiqué mi primera novela. Una de las cosas que no quería ser era lo que se llama un 'auténtico escritor español'. En los años 80, cuando mis últimos libros eran más exitosos que los anteriores y comencé a ser traducido a diferentes idiomas, sorprendentemente algunos editores italianos rechazaron mis libros. Decían que no eran 'suficientemente españoles' [...] me temo que esperaban que la literatura española fuese como Lorca, o algo que se le pareciese, incluyendo gitanos, mujeres con cuchillo en las medias, vestidas de negro y mucha pasión y violencia. Ese tipo de folclor español para extranjeros principalmente. Y siento decir que muchos pintores, e incluso directores de cine, han explotado ese aspecto del folclor español tremendamente. Por supuesto que existe, pero es sólo una parte muy

pequeña de la vida española. España también ha sido un país muy normal en muchos aspectos. Los personajes de mis novelas son gente normal, parecida a la que te puedes encontrar en Milán o en Dublín, o en París. Pertenecen a nuestra clase media, gente modesta y educada. Así que en mis novelas no hay corridas de toros, ni mujeres apasionadas como Carmen. Al carecer de esos ingredientes de españolidad, se decía de mis libros que sonaban a traducciones. Obviamente eso para mí era un piropo, aunque pretendía ser un insulto”.

⁶ As Andres-Suárez (1997: 21) indicates in her paper dealing with Muñoz Molina’s writing: “Muñoz Molina es una manifestación modélica de los jóvenes escritores españoles de finales de este siglo y milenio. Sin haberse desprendido del todo de las preocupaciones de sus mayores [...] sus inclinaciones van por otros derroteros. Son políglotas, han viajado, comparten los mismos modelos culturales que el resto de los jóvenes del llamado mundo occidental, han visto las mismas películas, leído los mismos libros, vibrado con la misma música. Este es uno de los factores que, en mi opinión, explica el fervor que la obra del andaluz despierta entre los jóvenes cultos españoles y extranjeros.”

⁷ TA is an account of the author’s own two-year teaching experience at All Souls College, Oxford, where he taught Spanish, translation and Spanish literature.

⁸ All quotes to the novels refer to the editions listed in the bibliography.

⁹ See also Senís-Fernández’s (2004: 110) observations.

¹⁰ Clearly, the behaviour of real bilinguals does not involve this type of borrowing only. Many other features such as phonological adaptation of English words like *boila* (for *boiler*), *chores* (for *shorts*) or *repocá* (for *report card*), syntactic calques, and simplification of the verbal system, for example, are often found in research dealing with bilingualism. See Field (2002) or Otheguy (2004).

