



**Universitat de les  
Illes Balears**

Faculty of Tourism

**Final Project Report**

An insight into the postcolonial work of Zadie Smith's *NW* and the analysis of some cultural referents in its translation into Spanish.

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**Degree in Tourism**

Academic year 2016-17

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Work's keywords: postcolonialism, translation, Zadie Smith, exoticism, hybridity, cultural referents, domestication, foreignization

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### **Abstract**

This work will be based on studies related with postcolonial literature and translation in order to analyse some cultural referents in Zadie Smith's *NW*. Colonialism's effects on society gave room to the need of a liberation for the dominated peoples. Literature helped, then, to build an agency space where the subaltern could express themselves via differentiation, the exaltation of exoticism and the representation of their realities. Postcolonial literature is also related with feminism as women have experienced the patriarchy's oppression, just like the dominated societies by colonialism. Furthermore, the translation of these works into the masters' languages have caused controversy until nowadays. Some authors, such as Carbonell, argue that some current translation tools may be detrimental for postcolonial writers. As a result, standardised translation methods have been established to achieve a respectful representation of distant cultures (Marco, 2002:208; Venuti, 2008:19), which are described in the current paper.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the following final degree project has been to analyse the cultural referents of the translation into Spanish of Zadie Smith's *NW*, acknowledging how domestication and foreignization strategies, among others, have been used to neutralise the imperialist and western continuous rejection towards exotic literature representations. This analysis has been done due to the still current controversy that translation has in the field of cultural studies. The report has been divided in a specific way to help the reader establish a proper contextualization. Firstly, an abstract, an introduction and the description of the methodology used have been provided. Secondly, there is a division between two main chapters. The first one gives information on Zadie Smith's novel, postcolonialism, postcolonial literature and what characteristics make *NW* a postcolonial work. The second part of this report analyses the current debate on postcolonial translation, identifies the main translation methods used to represent cultural referents, illustrates what the concepts of domestication and foreignization are and includes some examples of both the English and the Spanish version of *NW* to investigate what criteria has the translator used to represent the linguistic, social, cultural and political essence of the novel.

### **Methodology used**

The methodology used to elaborate this project started with face-to-face tutorials with the corresponding supervisor, who provided me with some useful resources. The main books thanks to which this work has been elaborated are the English and the Spanish versions of Zadie Smith's *NW*. Furthermore, other books, international journal articles and diverse Internet sources have also helped in providing background and in developing proper conclusions.

## Chapter 1 Zadie Smith's *NW* & Postcolonialism

### 1.1. *NW*

*NW* is a tragicomedy by the English author, Zadie Smith (2012). This book describes the life of four Londoners, who were born in the suburb of North-West London. These four main characters are Leah Hanwell, Natalie Blake, Nathan Bogle and Felix Cooper. It is noticeable that the author wanted to reflect their evolution since they were young until nowadays.

Two issues the author wants the reader to take into consideration are the "vital standstill and chronic dissatisfaction" the characters suffer throughout the reading (Vicente, 2013).

Firstly, a description of the protagonists will be given, highlighting their distinguishing features from one another:

Leah Hanwell is the first character to appear in the book. She is the only white person described. The first story narrated in the book is related to her: she is at home when, suddenly, a desperate woman knocks her door. The latter begs Leah to give her some money because she needs a taxi to take her mother to the hospital. Leah, taking pity of the woman, known as Shar, gives her the money. Nevertheless, it is all a lie. She has suffered a scam. Leah keeps on remembering this throughout the chapters dedicated to her. Furthermore, her French black husband, Michel, and her mother, remind her that she made a stupid decision. Other characteristics to be considered about Leah are that, despite having a degree in Philosophy, she ends working in a non-profit company. Or that her husband is desperate to have a baby, but when she realises she is pregnant, she secretly starts taking drugs that cause abortion (Franklin, 2012).

The last two things explained reflect two issues: she is the only white person working in her office. Her colleagues are all African-American and cannot believe how she ended marrying one cute black man, and they have not. She, then, suffers some disrespectful attitudes towards her. Secondly, Smith wanted to illustrate the current social pressure women, either white or black, still experience, just for the fact of not wanting a baby. Indeed, women being judged for making their own decisions (Mars-Jones, 2012).

On the other hand, there is Natalie Blake, formerly known as Keisha Blake. She is Leah Hanwell's best friend, with a Jamaican background. Her ups and downs in her friendship since the beginning are easily detectable all over the reading. Consequently, Leah is jealous of what Natalie has accomplished in life: a privileged Italian husband, two kids, a fancy house and a good job. Natalie is the one having achieved success, unlike the other three characters. She has always wanted to forget her 'Keisha' times. That is why she studied hard at school and overcame some other difficulties (Thomas, 2012).

May I quote a paragraph of the book itself where Natalie Blake's need for self-actualization is perceivable. Smith (2012) describes her as follows:

More prosaically, Natalie Blake was crazy busy with self-invention. She lost God so smoothly and painlessly she had to wonder what she'd ever meant by the word. She found politics and literature, music and cinema. 'Found' is not the right word. She put her faith in these things, and couldn't understand why – at exactly the moment she'd discovered them – her classmates seemed to be giving them up for dead. (p.183)

To some extent, the author of the book herself, is reflected in Natalie's character (Mars-Jones, 2012). Additionally, Smith portrays the life of Nathan Bogle. He is related with the childhood of both Leah and Natalie. They attended the same school and was Leah's first crush. However, he has become a drug addict and a drug dealer (Hensher, 2012). On a different note, we find Felix Cooper. He is the only one who is not connected with Leah or Natalie's lives. He encounters Nathan Bogle at some point. The author describes his situations while illustrating some of the streets of London. He has also tried to improve his lifestyle, although with some difficulties (Thomas, 2012). Regarding the style used, one of the differentiating features of the book is that the author does not use 'inverted commas', as reported by Mars-Jones in one of his reviews. Furthermore, this gives 'extra clarity' and enhances the connection between author and reader (Mars-Jones, 2012).

Here another extract of the book to exemplify the abovementioned style features. Smith (2012) narrates:

The fat sun stalls by the phone masts. Anti-climb paint turns sulphurous on school gates and lamp posts. In Willesden people go barefoot, the streets turn European, there is a mania for eating outside. She keeps to the shade. Redheaded. On the radio: I am the sole author of the dictionary that defines me. A good line – write it out on the back of a magazine. In a hammock, in the garden of a basement flat. Fenced in, on all sides. (p.3)

Overall, Smith wanted to reflect the multiculturalism of North-West London, the characters' continuous search for a happy ending (which, as reported by her, does not exist), the gender battles and the prejudices people in general are exposed to in a city like London. It is all narrated with a realistic point of view (Vicente, 2013). Moreover, in the words of the writer and reviewer Philippa Thomas (2012), the book is also characterised "by the tensions of class, of race and of casual violence".

## **1.2. The author, Zadie Smith**

Zadie Smith is an English writer, who was born in North-West London, in 1975. She is half English, half Jamaican and graduated from Cambridge University. Furthermore, she has been awarded many prizes throughout the years, by means of the publications of her books (British Council, n.d.).

In agreement with some papers where her literature has been analysed, her first two novels, *White Teeth* (Smith, 2000) and *The Autograph Man* (Smith, 2002), address the identity struggles their characters are experiencing in multicultural London (Sell, 2006:40). Some authors and reviewers have stated that Smith's style in both works, has similarities with such authors as Salman Rushdie (Sell, 2006:32; Fernández Carbajal, 2016:77) or Charles Dickens (Sell, 2006:32), along with Hanif Kureishi (Berástegui, 2014). Other novels from Smith are *On Beauty* (Smith, 2005) and the most recent, *Swing Time* (Smith, 2016). The first one narrates the story of two families and deals with opposing issues (Lasdun, 2005). The newest novel describes the life changes experienced by two girls (Selasi, 2016). She has also written the fiction novel *The Embassy of Cambodia* (2013), and a set of essays: *Changing My Mind* (Smith, 2009). In addition, she is currently a lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of New York (Vicente, 2013).

### 1.3. On Postcolonialism

Zadie Smith has been considered a postcolonial writer, more specifically, a “diaspora writer” (Boehmer, 2005:230). That is why it is meaningful to describe what the term ‘postcolonialism’ means. Furthermore, some of the main features of postcolonial literature will also be specified. The following information will be useful to understand how *NW* is structured, why is Smith writing in a specific way, what kind of society she is trying to portray through the life experiences of the main protagonists, as well as how she expresses her ideals.

“Postcolonialism means a break from the past, as the sign of the new, as a critical reappraisal in the context of imperialism and the rise of capital, and as a register of social and political assertiveness” (Mishra, 2015:369). It may also be present in different forms: history, politics, culture or literacy. It is an “interdisciplinary” subject present in all territories colonized by European countries (Young, 1998:1). Since the last century, culture and literature have been highlighted as the most useful aspects of postcolonialism to fight against the colonial thinking, creating a space for the colonized or dominated to express themselves freely. This space has been defined as “affirmation or agency space” (Carbonell, 1997:20).

The subordinated have been considered inferior, in need of domination by a Western country. This statement is called “colonial discourse”, used by these ‘Masters’ to appropriate themselves with the colonized regions’ culture, literature or way of living to enhance their power and to ensure their existence (Carbonell, 1997:21). The ‘Other’, which is the term by which the dominated or subordinated are known, is set aside. This term means difference, something external through which the dominant’s power is magnified (Boehmer, 1995 in Madsen, 1999:8). Colonizers used the colonial discourse to emphasize the differences between themselves and the ‘Other’ (Carbonell, 1997:20).

Because of this situation, the postcolonial discourse’s aim is to make the ‘Other’ as “an intentional object” (Carbonell, 1997:24; Mishra, 2015:370). Nevertheless, this “counter-discourse” (Carbonell, 1997:21) may not mean the authentic release of the ‘Master’, as subordinated have been stressing all the negative effects that domination has left behind. This may be giving more importance to the power of colonialism, making its strength persist and last longer.

Postcolonial discourse, in turn, has been related to the concept of “hybridity”. It embraces multiculturalism and difference to dare the basic principles of colonialism, having room for the affirmation space of the dominated. Salman Rushdie was the first migrant writer to mint this concept and give the importance it deserves in the postcolonial context (Madsen, 1999:6).

Postcolonialism is related to politics, too (Helgesson, 2014:488). Some doubts have emerged regarding the relation between postcolonialism and Enlightenment, because it represented an era of imperialism. In addition, its basic principles have been definitely associated with Marxism (Cantor, 1999:23; Dutton *et al.*, 1999:123) and poststructuralism (Mishra, 2015:369). The dominated areas, known as the Third World from the capitalism’s point of view, have benefited from the principles of Marxism in order to support the postcolonial discourse. In addition, poststructuralism had a higher influence in the European postcolonial theory since the end of the main communist powers in the mid-60s (Young, 1998:7).

Gender, ethnicity, race, migration or the endowment of indigenous’ resources from colonizers are issues that have given rise to other postcolonial discussions,

such as the exclusion of some 'Third World' intellectuals and activists in the postcolonial context itself, racism or even feminism (Ali, 2007:191).

To bear in mind at what extent colonialism has had negative impacts, it is significant to mention that even inside the postcolonial theory some dominated countries have been relegated by others where colonialism had an effect. It is the cases of Latin-America or China, which ways to promote their agency space do not match with the postcolonial theories of places such as India, Africa or the Caribbean. These differences have especially influenced the migrant literature, as non-white authors, activists or intellectuals are still being relegated to a second place (Ali, 2007:197). This may be contradictory, as postcolonialism's ideals are based on defending the difference.

As mentioned previously, feminism is strongly related with postcolonialism. First of all, they share the fact that they are not theories as such, but strategies influencing and challenging gender patterns in order to reduce the disadvantageous situation both the dominated and women in general are facing. Not having a proper theoretical framework has helped both feminism and postcolonialism to build a stronger positive perception among society in general. In fact, postcolonial literature or even the arts may be more valued because they give voice to people experiencing inequalities or unfairness in this capitalist world. Other common features are that both terms have been called into question for either being relegated to an intellectual minority or to really represent the needs of a wider sector of the population. For instance, racism had a negative effect on black women at the time (and even nowadays). The lack of resources and the cultural differences prevented them to be represented by the advantaged Western women (Ali, 2007:207). Again, this is a consequence of colonialism: difference considered as something inferior.

Feminism came into being in the Western society during the 60s to change the considerations of women as weak and inferior, oppressed by the patriarchy. Their aim was to stop being subordinated and dominated, being able to express freely and to stop the sexist socially accepted conceptions about women (Ali, 2007:194). As noticed, this is exactly the same situation that drove postcolonialism to arise, as dominated people wanted to end the oppression of colonialism and imperialism.

In conclusion, there is something to be clarified. The existence of postcolonialism does not mean that colonialism has come to an end or that its side effects have been completely vanished. There is also a strong confusion surrounding the term, which is characterised by its complexity. However, the best way to define postcolonialism would be that it serves as a useful means of enhancing the importance of being different in a world which is still affected by the domination of the Western thinking (Dutton *et al.*, 1999:124) as well as the white hegemony (Ali, 2007:194).

#### **1.4. On Postcolonial Literature**

Globalization has given rise to a wide variety of literature, which has received influences from different cultures and backgrounds due to colonialism by the Western European powers (Mishra, 2015:371).

The native communities' postcolonial literature has its origins in regions such as the Caribbean, Africa, India, and many more. Although they are geographically distant and have been colonized by various authorities, their way of writing has had the same goal: changing the patterns of a world characterised by difference

through literature, which pursues the affirmation of these subordinated peoples' culture and individuality (Madsen, 1999:1).

Postcolonial literature or "counter-discourse" (Carbonell, 1997:21), has been a tool for the subordinated to determine their autonomy, changing the perceptions of them as being inferior and without any right to express themselves. Its use has eased the spread of a sense of community among all of these former-colonized regions in an ethical, fair manner (Boehmer, 1995 in Madsen, 1999:9).

The fact of being willing to change social patterns and the Western vision, enabled the expansion of subaltern studies through writing (Spivak, 1993 in Madsen, 1999:9). In order, then, to really switch the Western's mind-set, postcolonial writers may address their work to the colonizers themselves (Madsen, 1999:9). They might be using the Master's language, too. That is why there has been some criticism regarding this issue, as some authors consider them as "traitors" (Williams and Chrisman, 1993 in Ahmad, 1995:2), or believe that there is a lack of authenticity in their literature (Cantor, 1999:23). According to these postcolonial critics, using the dominant's tongue when writing would not be the best way to represent the real history or customs of native communities. Furthermore, they would be showing that what the imperialists were defending in their colonial discourse would be true, somehow (Cantor, 1999:23). For the critics, using the "vernacular" could help audiences to really connect with what these people felt while being subordinated and oppressed (Baker, 2013 in Mishra, 2015:375).

On the other hand, authors such as Ashcroft *et al.* (1989 in Madsen, 1999:9), state that not accepting English, or any other Masters' language, such as Spanish, French, would be detrimental to all the literary mechanisms used to weaken colonial discourse. This is defended by Salman Rushdie, who expressed that writing in these languages may foster "multiculturalism" and difference, as well as helping authors to target broader audiences so as to stand up and be counted (Cantor, 1999:26). Similarly, Gayatri Spivak argues this issue in her book *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (1993, in Ahmad, 1995:2). According to her, colonized or migrant writers have experienced what it is like to be under the control of an oppression system. That is why they are more capable of better expressing their thoughts between both worlds. As a result, "exchange" and "transnationality" are facilitated when writing in the colonizer's language, favouring the mix of diverse cultures (Spivak, 1993 in Ahmad, 1995:3).

This is related with the abovementioned term hybridity, which means that globalization has modified society in such a way that there is no possibility to talk about nations as completely unmodified, as some critics support (Ahmad, 1995:13). As a result, it has allowed authors to experiment with language using different techniques, such as combining both native's and colonizer's language words, translation of specific terms or even use of expressions to achieve an agency space (Madsen, 1999:9).

Postcolonial criticism is not bearing in mind that it is impossible not to be affected by the Western thought while writing, as part of their culture and history is based on the period when they were subordinated. In fact, postcolonialism appeared due to the presence of colonizers in exotic lands. Both worlds are mixed and connected, whatever the circumstances (Madsen, 1999:6).

Having discussed the controversy and various opinions on whether using the dominants' language, it is significant to mention that hybridity has also brought class or gender differences among writers (Ahmad, 1995:16).

Firstly, this concept may be related with migrant writers, but the ones belonging to an educated elite who develop and defend their postcolonial ideals in colonisers' modern and major cities, such as London, Paris or New York, which way of life is based on capitalism. In addition, they believe that they are the ones having the monopoly on postcolonial truth, unlike people living in their original communities. This kind of belief would be part of "postmodern" standards (Ahmad, 1995:13) and could be related to what has been explained earlier about Spivak's way of thinking. Edward Said (1990 in Ahmad, 1995:13) designated these people as "cultural amphibians". In his essay, Ahmad considers Salman Rushdie as one example of author in possession of this truth and notes that class inequalities in postcolonial literature derived from hybridity are also a consequence of imperialism. The fact of hybridity being exclusive for just a sector of postcolonial writers represents a weakness for the field, as one of its main purposes is to defend the difference and to give voice to the subordinated (Ahmad, 1995:13).

Boehmer brings up the issue of hybridity on a different note: gender inequalities. Female writers' works have not been regarded as important as men's in the postcolonial field. In turn, minority or Third World female authors have suffered racism and been told apart from the White and Western postcolonial ones. In any case, they would use writing to express their own thoughts, as well as defending her ideals and autonomy (Boehmer, 2005:215-216).

Especially notable were the works of black women since the 70's, through which they tried to change the perceptions of Third World writers in the Western society. This led to a sense of togetherness among feminists at the time. Two examples of the main works of feminist black authors cited by Boehmer (2005:217) are *Call Me Woman* (Kuzwayo, 1985), which is a post-apartheid book that expressed a need for a more solidary world, as well as *Our Sister Killjoy* (Aidoo, 1977), where the author confirmed the powerful "otherness" of black women.

### **1.5. NW as a postcolonial work**

The features defined by Boehmer about postcolonial or migrant writers are comparable to Smith's writing characteristics in *NW*. According to her, the typical postcolonial writer of this present century is usually living in the former colonizing country, while maintaining a link with his or her parents' or grandparents' country of origin, which is normally a former dominated one. Multiculturalism, diversity, the emphasis of their racial and cultural background, as well as the effects of this culture clash and social interaction are the main principles of nowadays' postcolonial books. Moreover, these kinds of novels are written in a way that demonstrates criticism towards the socially accepted patterns, but doing it in a relative comic way (Boehmer, 2005:227), such as Smith in *NW*.

*NW* represents the confusing, urban and at the same time genuine stories of "diasporic" people living in a city such as London, probably one of the most multicultural places in the world (Fernández Carbajal, 2014:77). Furthermore, according to Fernández Carbajal (2014:76), *NW* reflects the troubled relationship between two friends, Natalie and Leah, whose lives are affected by the fact of living in a sexist society. Issues about ethnicity, social status, gender and feminism are present, too (López-Roper, 2016:123).

Smith brings women to the centre of the story, representing how they have tried to achieve self-actualization as people having an immigrant background in a former colonizing society, such as the British. The novel also shows that

sometimes it is not possible to achieve the desired self-determination or assertiveness space, which is clearly comparable with the affirmation or agency space, commented previously. This is significantly showed in the book's section, 'Host'. This yearning of self-determination is shown by the phrase "I am the sole author of the dictionary that defines me" written throughout the book (Smith, 2012 in López-Ropero, 2016:129). To be more specific, Leah represents feminism as she struggles with the continuous comments from her colleagues, mother and husband about her obligations as a woman, such as marriage or motherhood, but is against all of this carrying out abortions and taking Natalie's contraceptive pills (López-Ropero, 2016:129). Therefore, Natalie achieves individualism when she becomes a lawyer and changes her name from Keisha to Natalie, as well as by beating ethnic barriers during her life. Nevertheless, Smith portrays her unsuccessful finale to show that she has been defeated by domination and "meritocracy" (López-Ropero, 2016:131). These two girls' freedom of being is symbolised when they are portrayed as teenagers. They respect each other. Natalie accepts Leah's hidden homosexuality and Leah, in turn, agrees with Natalie's name change. Nevertheless, sexism strikes back when they show resentment between each other at some stages of their lives (López-Ropero, 2016:129). On the other hand, Felix Cooper and his death depict the social and racial tensions existing in London (López-Ropero, 2016:134).

## Chapter 2

### Postcolonial translation & analysis of cultural referents in *NW*'s Spanish translation

#### 2.1. Postcolonial Translation

Colonialism has had its aftermath in the translation of Third World works. These were translated into the masters' languages and in such a way that they did not seem distant to the dominators' way of thinking. Colonization was undeniable in literacy, as specific grammar, among other translation tools were used to silence the history and culture of the colonized (Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999 in Conisbee Baer, 2014:233). The acts of imperialism were excused through translation, as works were altered to praise the power of the masters (Conisbee Baer, 2014:234). In essence, there was no space for self-differentiation and exoticism, which are the main mottos of postcolonialism. Spivak also criticised that there was an intention by pro-colonialism translators of showing a fake kindness towards the subaltern, which aggravated the problem and avoided even more the possibility of a reciprocal transfer of "linguistic" and "cultural, political and economic" realities (Carbonell, 2003:4; Conisbee Baer, 2014:237). Nevertheless, the latter author stated that translation could serve to empower the dominated.

In this day and age, controversy on postcolonial translation is still in vogue. Carbonell addresses the issue of "exoticism" (2003:1) and argues that it is difficult to know at what extent representing a different culture as distant is moral and respectful for the subaltern peoples. Some translators stay away from altering the original work, as this is still considered as "eurocentric" and in favour of colonialism's thinking (Carbonell, 2003:1). Others use translation tools to do so and one of the reasons why may be attracting wider audiences (Cantor, 1999:28), approaching the extraneous literature to the readers' customs and lifestyle. Nevertheless, he finds that this polemic is comprehensible since translation gives room to a blend of socio-cultural, political, and linguistic customs that may tangle with each other.

López Heredia discusses Carbonell's thoughts on exoticism and hybridity, identifying two translation processes by which exotic texts may be translated. According to this author, the "translation-creation" method is based on the fusion of customs from both cultures, the distant and the recipient ones, respectively. This is consciously done by postcolonial translators who want to emphasise the effects that "hybridity" has on the different societies (López Heredia, 2003:162). Other system that is used is the mere and truthful reproduction of a culture that wants to express the effects that domination and oppression have had on their peoples (López Heredia, 2003:163). The first method is related with "the creation of bridges between cultures", concept also addressed by Carbonell (1997:28). The last one is referred to "the translation of cultures" since the author must have knowledge of the past and current history of the postcolonial author whose work is going to be translated (López Heredia, 2003:163).

These postcolonial translation strategies are strongly related with Lawrence Venuti's "domestication" and "foreignization" techniques (Venuti, 2008:19), which will be described later on.

## 2.2. Cultural referents' main translation techniques and examples in *NW*

With the aim of analysing some cultural referents of *NW*'s translation into Spanish, the translation tools of these referents must be acknowledged beforehand (Marco, 2002:208-210). Marco establishes a new category of techniques based on the ones determined by Newmark (1988 in Marco, 2002:208-209). Moreover, Venuti minted the concepts of domestication and foreignization in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* (2008:19). It is worth noting that the examples provided are from the English and the Spanish versions of Zadie Smith's *NW*.

- a) *Transference* is defined as the linguistic element by which there is no literal translation of the word in question since it is properly integrated in the context of the translated story:

### Original Text:

The guy opposite nodded to a loud *break-beat*.

### Translation:

El tipo de delante meneaba la cabeza al ritmo de un estruendoso *breakbeat*.

*Breakbeat* is a musical genre and they are not used to be translated. For instance, *hip-hop*, *R&B*, *funk* are the same in Spanish.

- b) *Naturalization*: "the alteration of an adopted foreign word so that it conforms more closely to the phonology or orthography of the adopting language" (Online Oxford Dictionary, 2017):

### Original text:

Back up on the roof Annie had changed position – a cross-legged yoga pose, eyes closed – and was now wearing a green *bikini*. (p. 133)

### Translation:

De vuelta en el tejado, Annie había cambiado de posición: ahora estaba sentada en postura de yoga, con las piernas cruzadas y los ojos cerrados; llevaba un *biquini* verde. (p.173)

The English word *bikini* was minted in 1940 after an "atom bomb was exploded in 1946 (because of the supposed 'explosive' effect created by the garment)" (Online Oxford Dictionary, 2017).

- c) *Literal translation* consists of "representing the exact words of the original text" (Online Oxford Dictionary, 2017) into the reader's language:

### Original text:

1. *Top-secret*: Nathan Bogle (p.153).
2. *Honeymoon* in Positano (p.202)

### Translation:

1. *Supersecreto*: Nathan Bogle (p. 200).
2. *Luna de miel* en Positano (p. 262)

- d) *Neutralization*: “Explanation of the cultural referent with words that allude to its function or to its external characteristics” (Marco, 2002:208):

Original Text:

An ancient Leica rests on his stomach, awaiting the sunset over *NW*, for the sunsets in this part of the world are strangely vivid (p. 17).

Translation:

Sobre el vientre tiene apoyada una vetusta Leica a la espera de que se ponga el sol en *NW*, *la zona noroeste*, porque los atardeceres son extremadamente vistosos en esta parte del mundo (p. 29).

The translator has added that *NW* means the north-west zone in London. This sentence is at the first part of the book and is useful for the Spanish reader to know that postcodes are widely used in Britain to designate areas, as well as initials. This practice is not as applied in Spain, that is why these initials could give room to some confusion, especially for the ones that are not familiarized with this issue or are not as knowledgeable about the British customs.

- e) *Addition of information*, for instance footnotes.

Javier Calvo (Smith, 2013; Vicente, 2013) who is *NW*'s translator into Spanish has not included any footnote or explanation of the translation of specific words neither at the end, beginning of any chapter nor at any part of the book.

- f) *Cultural equivalent*: “use of a concept from the recipient culture that is approximately equivalent to the original text” (Marco, 2002:208):

Original text:

Feliz licked a *Rizla* and watched the boy concede to a Peruvian holding a *twelve-foot* banner: BARGAIN CARPET SALE 100 YARDS (p. 104).

Translation:

Felix lamió el *papel de liar* y vio cómo el chico cedía el paso a un peruano que llevaba una pancarta de *cuatro metros*: ALFOMBRAS DE SALDO A CIEN METROS (p. 138).

This example shows three cultural equivalents used by the translator. The first one is a well-known British brand of cigarette paper, *Rizla*, which is not commercialised in Spain. The translator has not used a Spanish brand, but substituted it into the Spanish translation of cigarette paper, *papel de liar*. Secondly, he has put the equivalent of twelve foot into metres, *cuatro metros*, since it is the unit of measurement that is commonly used in Spain. However, the exact equivalence of twelve foot would have been 3.6576 metres. The third element is the substitution of *yards* into metres, too. Furthermore, the translator has confined itself to translate 100 yards into 100 metres, although the real equivalent is 91,44 metres. The translator has done the previous two translations considering that putting the exact equivalent would have not been suitable for the essence of the paragraph.

g) *Omission* of components that are considered unnecessary (Marco, 2002). There is no evidence in the Spanish translation of any specific elimination of linguistic components, as in the case of section e).

h) *Domestication*: this term is defined as the technique “by which the foreign text is rewritten” in relation to the context and values of the receiving culture (Venuti, 2008:165).

Original text:

Now the boy read off a series of facts from a small piece of paper he took from his pocket: ‘MG Midget, one thousand five hundred cc Triumph 14 engine, 100,000 on the clock, manual, petrol, two-door roadster, transmission requires – (p.108).

Translation:

Luego el chico leyó una lista de datos anotada en un papelito que se sacó del bolsillo:

- MG Midget, motor Triumph 14 de 1500 centímetros cúbicos, 160.000 kilómetros justos, descapotable biplaza con transmisión manual, motor de gasolina y dos puertas. La transmisión requiere... (p. 143).

The equivalent adaptation of *miles* into *kilometres* shows that there has been an intention of approaching the story to the Spanish context since miles are not used in Spain as the main unit of measurement in terms of speed. This, then, could be related with an intentional domestication practice, as the translator could have just translated *miles* into *millas*, which is the literal translation into Spanish of this word.

i) *Foreignization*: this term has been regarded as the method by which differentiation and exotic elements of a distant work are not intentionally modified by the translator (López Heredia, 2003:166). Foreignization “locates an alien in a cultural other, pursuing a cultural diversity, signalling linguistic and cultural differences unsettling the hierarchies in the translating language” (Venuti, 2008:266).

Original text:

During periods of stress, Augustus Blake stood on the balcony and smoked *Lambert & Butlers* and this he did now (p.154).

Translation:

Durante las épocas de ansiedad, Augustus Blake se retiraba al balcón y fumaba cigarrillos *Lambert & Butler*, y eso era justamente lo que estaba haciendo ahora (p. 201).

In this example, the translator could have used a cultural equivalent of a cigarette Spanish brand. The translation has included a specification that the brand *Lambert & Butler* refers to cigarettes, instead. Moreover, this is the opposite technique used when the cigarette paper brand, *Rizla*, has been omitted since he has just indicated that Felix was licking cigarette paper: *Felix lamió el papel de liar* (See section f). So, the insertion of the British cigarette brand with the clarification of the latter being a cigarette brand, has had a foreignizing aim.

### Original text:

Keisha thought: now she is going to say she's heading to *Marks & Sparks*, and when this was exactly what she did say Keisha experienced an unforgettable pulse of authorial omnipotence (p. 155).

### Translation:

Keisha pensó: ahora va a decir que se va al *Marks & Sparks*, y cuando hizo justamente eso Keisha notó una punzada inolvidable de omnipotencia creativa (p. 202).

Again, the translator has not used a Spanish cultural equivalent for *Marks and Sparks* (*Spencer*), which may have been *Carrefour*, for instance. In this case, he did not mention that this was a food and clothes British store, which may mean there is an intention for the reader to be aware of the British, and in this case, London context.

First of all, according to Venuti's perspective both domestication and foreignization must not be considered as mere opposite techniques nor as the only methods that must be used in the translation of cultural referents (2008:19). It may also be worth noting that although foreignization is a well-accepted practice, it may bring the problem of stereotyping the distant cultures. Because of this, "First World" readers may have misconceptions towards these cultures. Therefore, a translator must bear in mind the changing and progressive essence of language, the source culture and the readers that will be consuming the translation, before adopting one method or the other. The target audiences will have a preconceived idea of specific works, and the translator must adopt its translation accordingly. Nevertheless, there must be a balance since the reader also wants to explore the distant culture of the book to be read. Because of this, none of these strategies may be considered detrimental or beneficial *per se* since "heterogeneity of significance" is unavoidable. Essentially, any translation will have been applied both techniques, although depending on the circumstances previously described, some works will have more elements of domestication or vice versa. As a result, the reader will be more or less approached towards and knowledgeable about the other culture (Carbonell, 1997:67-72).

The examples displayed previously show the translator's aim to adapt the text according to the cultural, linguistic, political and economic context of both cultures.

### **Results of the analysis**

The use of the previously analysed examples has shown that Javier Calvo has used some of the main techniques that must be implemented in the translation of cultural referents. His almost imperceptible and subtle use of domestication and foreignization tools shows that he has made an adaptable representation of the postcolonial essence of *NW*, put into the Spanish context in a smooth and proper way. By any manner of means, he has shown a wide knowledge of the culture he has "manipulated" and has been capable to adapt it to the readers' conditions without sacrificing the intentions or values to be reflected by the original author.

## **Conclusion**

This final degree project report has put into context the issue of postcolonialism in literature and translation using as an example the novel *NW* (2012) by the English author Zadie Smith. It concludes with a modest analysis of the potential use of cultural referents, such as domestication and foreignization tools, in its translation into Spanish. Firstly, an abstract, an introduction and the description of the methodology used have been displayed at the beginning of the present work. Then, Chapter 1 has focused on presenting Zadie Smith's novel *NW*, on describing some historical aspects of postcolonialism, how and when it began, how it has influenced worldwide literature and why *NW* must be recognized as a postcolonial work. Chapter 2's aim has been to identify postcolonialism in translation, establishing the proper translation techniques for the representation of the cultural referents in postcolonial works. Chapter 2 finishes with actual examples of both versions of *NW*, the English and the Spanish ones, so as to analyse what methods have been used by the translator and why he has used them. Finally, a list of references will be displayed onwards for the reader to acknowledge which sources have been used to elaborate this work.

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