**From This Side of Pyrenees:
An Overview of Autoethnography in Spain**

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Abstract: In recent years, we have witnessed a growing interest in autoethnography in Spain. However, the visibility of Spanish autoethnography within and beyond our borders continues to be limited. In this article, I have examined autoethnographic texts written by Spanish authors for the first time. I based this examination on a traditional bibliographic review of texts published in Spanish and English up to 2020. I organized texts according to my proposal for three stages of the development of Spanish autoethnography: its emergence, its dissemination from anthropology to other academic fields, and its consolidation and diversification. In these, I address the description of the content, the disciplinary fields and the main topics researched. I focus on those which most clearly convey their concepts and visions of autoethnography. I conclude with a description of the particularities with which Spanish researchers have used the autoethnographic method, the obstacles to its consolidation and the uncertainties that may threaten its future.

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1. Introduction

In 2010, when my senior academic director suggested that I do a doctoral thesis from an autoethnographic perspective, I had to acknowledge my complete ignorance of this research strategy. The ensuing search for texts in my native Spanish language yielded such a scant number of texts that I had to turn to Anglo-Saxon autoethnographic papers to familiarize myself with the method and find enough examples with which to construct and support my arguments. [1]

Fortunately, today, the autoethnographic method in Spain has ceased to be an unknown practice, restricted to certain academic circles, and has become a narrative research strategy that continues to consolidate its place. This form of qualitative research emerged in the United States in the mid-sixties and its introduction in Spain has been relatively recent. The volume of work is not comparable to that on the other side of the Atlantic. Its influence in social

research has also been minor with respect to other traditional qualitative methodologies such as life-history or participant observation. Its dissemination, in the format of articles, books, book chapters or doctoral theses has only taken off over the last twenty years. Consequently, the use of the autoethnographic method has spread from the disciplines closest to its origin such as anthropology, to the areas of knowledge concerned with the social sciences and other technological and artistic disciplines. Today we can read autoethnographic texts in which we become familiar with the backstage of the research process, evoke the intersubjectivity of personal experiences or explore the multiple forms of contemporary identities. And yet, the recognition of autoethnography in Spain and the visibility of Spanish authors in the world are still issues to be successfully tackled. [2]

Several reasons can be pointed out. Firstly, some authors (BOLÍVAR & DOMINGO, 2006; GONZÁLEZ & OCHOA, 2014; VALLÉS & BAER, 2005) have considered that the bloody civil war and the subsequent dictatorship determined the history and development of qualitative research in Spain. Thus, GONZÁLEZ and OCHOA (2014) stated that the narrative turn was accepted by our academic community a decade later than in other neighboring countries. This delay consolidated the pre-eminence in Spain of the biographical method and the socio-critical paradigm, confining the use of autoethnography to a few academic spaces and perspectives until the beginning of the 21st century. Secondly, BOLÍVAR and DOMINGO (2006, 2018), GONZÁLEZ and OCHOA (2014) and VALLÉS and BAER (2005) did not include autoethnography in their literature review about the history of qualitative and narrative research in Spain. Other authors (ALEGRE & RICCÒ, 2017) did, but in a very limited way. These facts explain that, following the work of DENZIN (1989) and ELLIS and BOCHNER (2000), we must look for the immediate antecedents of Spanish autoethnography by tracing the evolution of the biographical method, and specifically, of the autobiographical genre. [3]

Finally, even though Spanish is the third most-spoken language in the world, it accounts for only 2% of articles published in academic journals compared to more than 52% in English.[1] In addition, Spanish-language publications, especially in the Spanish social sciences, continue to attract low indices in terms of international journals. Consequently, language has become a double barrier: it directly hinders access for many who write autoethnographic studies to publications that enjoy wide dissemination and impact (mostly in English); and indirectly, their scarce presence in these types of publications has tended to undermine their acceptance and has restricted their dissemination. In fact, it was not until 2017 that Spanish authors managed to publish their autoethnographic works in English. All of this has hindered the interconnection between Spanish speaking countries, in which, students, academics and writers, think, write and share their autoethnographic texts in a common language. Moreover, this scenario could be perpetuating ethnocentric discourse in an increasingly asymmetrical world in terms of academic diffusion (ALASUUTARI, 2004;

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1   https://www.elsevier.com/es-es/connect/ciencia/en-que-idioma-publico-mi-articulo-la-incuestionable-hegemonia-del-ingles [Accessed: September 20, 2021].

COLLYER, 2018; PIOVANI, 2020), privileging autoethnographic texts and topics that are presented in English and rendering those of other languages invisible. [4]

In this article I therefore aim to build bridges in various directions. Based on a larger project, in which I aim to identify and analyze the production of autoethnography in all Spanish-speaking countries since its inception, I offer an overview of the work published in Spain up to 2020. My dual purpose in this work has been: to overcome the possible ethnocentric narrative of modernization (ALASUUTARI, 2004) by illuminating the knowledge void of Spanish autoethnography in the world; and to propose an approach from which I can analyze the past, describe the present and suggest some questions that may influence the future of this methodology in my country. [5]

To this end, I have structured the article around four sections. This introduction is followed by the methodology, in which I have given an account of the process used to review the literature (Section 2). Subsequently, I outline a chronological description of the development of autoethnography in my country, identifying the disciplines, authors and research interests, as well as the characteristics with which I have shaped each of the proposed stages (Section 3). I conclude the article with a reflection on the present and the future of autoethnography in Spain (Section 4). [6]

2. Methodology

Methodology has been a question I have extensively considered throughout this work, all the way from the preparatory tasks to the final write-up of the work. I have taken into account the different alternatives, both those closest to autoethnography itself (DOUGLAS & CARLESS, 2013; ELLIS, 2009) and the most orthodox approaches of qualitative research (SANDELOWSKY & BARROSO, 2006). I have not attempted a systematic review of the literature, as I considered that it would offer greatly generalized results, of little interest to the autoethnography reader. For this reason, I opted for a traditional literature review that would entail the most complete description of the way in which autoethnography has been incorporated and developed in Spain, although the limitation of space has forced me to reduce the number of texts cited to those considered to best represent Spanish autoethnography. As selection criteria I used: the length and depth of the autoethnographic content of the texts; that they served to illustrate the different types of autoethnography; the novelty with respect to the disciplinary field or the topic addressed; and the representativeness in the field of Spanish autoethnography. [7]

I started the search process in March 2020 and it lasted until summer 2021. I carried out searches in seven databases (ERIC, ProQuest Dissertations, Psicodoc, Scopus, Sociological Abstracts, Teseo, TDx and Web of Science) and four electronic journal repositories (Dialnet, Latindex, Redalyc and Scielo)[2] that I subsequently transferred to the bibliographic manager Refworks. My objective

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2   Access to all databases has been provided by the Universitat de València.

was to identify the largest possible number of articles published in Spanish in peer-review journals, books and/or book chapters and doctoral theses written in Spanish or English until December 2020. [8]

First, as search criteria I used only the term "autoethnography" in Spanish and English, as well as the most usual forms derived from it (auto-ethnography, auto/ethnography), which appeared anywhere in the content of the text. In this work I have used the most widespread definition of autoethnography in Spain (ELLIS, ADAMS & BOCHNER, 2011, §1) as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)." [9]

However, as explained by HUGHES and PENNINGTON (2017), autoethnography takes more than 20 different forms (among the best known, analytical, collaborative, evocative or performative) which differ, according to whether the "emphasis is placed on the study of others, the researcher's self and interaction with others, traditional analysis, and the interview context, as well as on power relationships" (ELLIS et al., 2011, §15). To these must be added other hybrid forms from the field of social science that are used in autoethnography, such as poetry, performance or art and audiovisual media. All of these are identified in the article. [10]

Secondly, I applied the criteria that such documents were written and published in Spanish or English. In this regard, it should be noted that, usually, academic journals in Spanish also offer the title, keywords and abstract of the article in English. For this reason, it is common for false results to occur in the search process, creating confusion and making the task of identification, collection and processing more difficult. To avoid this, I conducted the search process separately in each language. The last criterion I used was that the authors were of Spanish nationality or other nationalities but were nonetheless linked to Spanish universities or research institutions. [11]

My first searches in impact databases gave a very limited number of results in Spanish (36 documents), clearly lower than those obtained in English (145 documents). The extension of the search to ERIC, Psicodoc and Proquest did not substantially increase their number either (six papers in Spanish versus ten in English). Given the small number of documents obtained in Spanish, I subsequently searched the repositories of peer-reviewed journals in the Spanish language (Redalyc, Scielo and Dialnet). This approach allowed me to significantly increase the initial number of articles retrieved from 42 to 486. To obtain results in the category of books and book chapters, I found the ProQuest Sociological Abstract and Dialnet to be very useful. I obtained the doctoral theses by searching the Teseo, TDx and Dialnet databases. [12]

Once I eliminated the duplicate documents, 483 articles, 44 book chapters and/or complete books and 33 doctoral theses remained. The numerical difference with respect to the language of publication was clear: 372 articles, 30 book chapters and/or complete books and 32 doctoral theses published in Spanish versus 111

articles, 14 book chapters and one doctoral thesis published in English by Spanish authors. I established three exclusion criteria: 1. documents published in Spanish that were translations of original works in English or *vice versa*; 2. book reviews; and 3. documents in which the term "autoethnography" was only mentioned in the bibliography. Finally, I subjected 72 articles, 25 doctoral theses and 19 books and book chapters in Spanish and 28 articles, one doctoral thesis and five books and book chapters published in English for study and analysis. I considered that the high number of documents finally rejected was explained by the fact that, in a large number of them, the term autoethnography only appeared in the bibliography section but not in the body of the text. [13]

I reviewed all documents extracting information on 13 variables: title, year of publication, author(s), type of source, name of the journal and/or publisher, level of impact of the journal, keywords, area of knowledge, abstract, object of the text, typology of autoethnography and defining reference author(s). In addition, I kept a record of the readings in which I reported the review process and the ideas and reflections that emerged. I then incorporated all this information into the Excel database which enabled me to establish the two main sections in which this article was organized: how autoethnography arose and developed in Spain, and what its present state is and what its outlook might be. [14]

3. A Historical Approach to Autoethnography in Spain

This attempt to trace the path of autoethnography in Spain must be understood as the result of a process in which different disciplines, genres, theoretical currents, and research methods have converged. In addition, we have to take into account the relationships of simultaneity and interconnection between them and the deep external influences that have shaped them. [15]

At the beginning of the 90s, the crisis of the neopositivist paradigm and the hermeneutical turn in the social sciences gave way to a kind of paradigmatic pluralism in Spain. The works of various French sociologists and American philosophers and psychologists opened up a new era in qualitative research: the so-called "narrative turn" (RORTY, 1989, p.16). During the 90s, most Spanish qualitative researchers strove to establish and disseminate the biographical method, seeking to expand their areas of knowledge and study topics (DE MIGUEL, 1996; MARINAS & SANTAMARINA, 1993; PUJADAS, 1992). They took most of the ideas of the postmodern paradigm: losing the fear of becoming a native, questioning the classic criteria of validity and objectivity or maintaining a self-critical attitude that does not separate ethnographic work from the experience undergone. But at this time there were very few who pursued this path. Only in the field of education, influenced by the postulates of the narrative inquiry (CONNELLY & CLANDININ, 1990), did I find that noteworthy progress was made towards the incorporation of the subject's experience in research. Under the name given in Spain of an "investigación biográfica y narrativa" [biographical and narrative research] (BOLÍVAR & DOMINGO, 2006), a number of them showed a special preference for autobiography in the study of identity and professional development (BOLÍVAR, DOMINGO & FERNÁNDEZ, 1998; LARROSA et al.,

1995; VELASCO, GARCÍA & DÍAZ, 1993). These authors, together with the anthropologists, laid the bases for the turning point of autoethnography in Spain. They defended biographical-narrative research as a meeting place between various methodologies that have, as a common link, the role of writing (*text*), culture (*ethno*) and the subject (*self*) in the research process and the generation of knowledge. [16]

Consequently, it is essential to combine different disciplinary perspectives, in terms of the academic relationships and influences between Spanish-speaking countries and, in turn, between them and those from other countries, especially the United States. Finally, I have tried to establish distinct stages, ranging from the appearance of the first text in Spain in 1999 to 2020. The criteria I used to configure each stage were the number of publications, their regularity and some milestones associated with the years of each period. I therefore propose to distinguish between three stages:

1. emergence of autoethnography (1999-2007);
2. the shift from anthropology to education: dissemination of autoethnography (2008-2014);
3. the consolidation and diversification of autoethnography in Spain (2015-2021). [17]

3.1 The emergence of autoethnography (1999-2007)

At the end of the 1990s, two of the trends pointed out by the American anthropologist REED-DANAHAY (1997) converged in the Anglo-Saxon world, thereby facilitating the emergence of autoethnography in Spain. On the one hand, among Hispanic anthropologists, there was an intense debate in the 1980s about the legitimacy of knowledge and the place of the researcher in the research field (ANTA, 2011). Anthropology was then assumed to be a form of cultural criticism in which ethnography was written and therefore mediated by language. On the other hand, the interest of a sizable number of Spanish writers who had lived in exile, was extended to other narrative forms of the self, breaking down some of the sociocultural barriers that had hitherto belittled this form of introspective study of Spanish culture. One of the closest examples of this convergence was "Perder la piel" [Losing skin] by the anthropologist ALLUÉ (1996). Although this work cannot be fully classified as autoethnographic, she combined autobiographical writing with certain types of ethnographic observations in relation to her hospital admission after an accident in which she sustained severe burns. [18]

This period, from which I compiled 14 texts in Spanish and one in English, began in 1999 and concluded in 2007, with the publication of a special issue of the Spanish magazine *Athenea Digital*. The first known text was an article by HERNÁNDEZ (1999) in which she presented autoethnography at the intersection of three consecutive moments of the inquiry process (*auto*-biography, *auto*-ethnography, and *self*-portrait). This allowed her to place herself in the space chosen as an object of study and to question the categories and the vision

imposed from the androcentric experience from the feminist perspective. HERNÁNDEZ ventured into autoethnography in the process of preparing her doctoral thesis on the transmission of the Basque language and culture in the domestic sphere, concerned with the self and with the recognition of the value of the personal, the subjective and the reflective in research practice. This inaugural work was followed by those of feminist anthropologist PECHARROMAN (2003) on the emigration of Basque women to the United States and by ESTEBAN (2004) on female body identity. In the latter, under the term "Antropología encarnada" [Incarnated anthropology] she addressed body image as a social and political production. For her, autoethnography was akin to a written bodily itinerary; hence if the autobiographical memory was the one that sustained one's identity, that self was experienced first of all in one's body. Somehow, these authors indicated the way of understanding the narratives of the self and marked the preference of Spanish autoethnographic feminism for issues related to or intimately linked to bodily identity, such as fatphobia (NAVAJAS, 2019), menstruation (GUILLÓ, 2013; POO, 2009), illness (IRUETA, 2016) or pregnancy (VERDAGUER, 2019). But other anthropologists also published articles during these early years in which they understood autoethnography as "the anthropologist's observation made fiction when their field data is presented" (ANTA, 2004, p.2).[3] They thus recognized autoethnography as a genre halfway between autobiography as a literary genre that links the identity of the self to a cultural and historical context and anthropology, which studies and interprets that reality from a cultural perspective. [19]

Four features characterized these publications. The main one was that all the authors came from anthropology and their exercises had a marked ethnographic nature. Second, they included autoethnography as a continuity or complement to autobiography. Third, they used autoethnography to specify their place in the research process, in those cases where there were links between them and the phenomenon or object of study. And finally, they adopted a heightened feminist orientation rooted in the vindication of the role of memory and the "crisis of confidence" inspired by postmodernism. [20]

Alongside these anthropologists, there were researchers linked to social psychology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona who were interested in using this methodology in subjects related to the organizational spaces of companies. But what really marked the beginning of autoethnography in Spain was the publication in 2007, in the magazine *Athenea Digital,* of nine autoethnographic texts on the personal relationship with information and communication technologies (ICTs). Taking HARAWAY's (1995 [1991], p.186) notion of "conocimiento situado" [situated knowledge] as a starting point, its authors offered several ways of giving presence to the self in the research process; the result was ground-breaking pathways for writing about reflexivity and the self. Among them, FELIU (2007, p.270) defended the incorporation of "practicas analíticas creativas" [creative analytical practices] into traditional academic literature, and GIL (2007), who gave visibility, through the use of this

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3   All translations from non-English texts are mine.

methodology, to the processes of approach, consumption, and appropriation of ICT in public and private spheres. The publication of this special issue was the first turning point of autoethnography in Spain, by making it visible as a method to address issues and situations that otherwise would not have been addressed in an academic context. [21]

3.2 From anthropology to education: The gradual consolidation and expansion of autoethnography (2008-2014)

The second period coincided with the years of the worst socioeconomic crisis in Spanish contemporary history. I identified 37 texts from this stage in Spanish and six in English. Of these, the majority corresponded to anthropology and education, and to a lesser extent, to literature, the arts, social work, and physical education. The features that characterized this period were: the consolidation of autoethnography as indicated by the number of publications from this period; the diffusion of autoethnography from anthropology to other disciplinary fields; the diverse ways of understanding the meaning of this method; and the openness of authors to other topics and interests that reflected the concern for phenomena hitherto invisible. [22]

In the first place, once the ethnographic crisis among Spanish anthropologists had passed, the main objective turned towards reflexivity, which led to considering autoethnography as a new ethnographic style in which to integrate the anthropological self within the social context of research (ANTA, 2011). In this vein, there are several examples. RUÍZ (2014) incorporated her *multiple self* as a woman, immigrant, and feminist into her autoethnographic exercise on the construction of narratives in social movements that emerged from the crisis. Chinese language teacher MA (2013) used autoethnography to conduct research, from her condition of being a Spaniard of Chinese origin, on how the Spanish see the Chinese community in Spain; and GUILLÓ (2013) who reflected on the way in which her anthropological self interacted with that of the participants of her study on the resignification of female menstruation. But if I were to highlight a single autoethnographic text from this period, it would be the work of POO (2009). From the experience of her own body and disease, she proposed a vision of illness as a path towards healing and the resignification of what we understand as "healthy." Her work was possibly the first completely autoethnographic text published in Spain. In it, she united the experiential with the political, the ethnographic with the emotional, embracing a feminist perspective which brings her style of writing very close to evocative autoethnography. [23]

At this stage, literature researchers continued to be interested in autoethnography, either by focusing on the analysis of indigenous literary studies (DE SWANSON, 2014; OLIVER, 2009) or on the study of literary production in English (DARIAS, 2014; IBARROLA, 2010). But what I found really remarkable was its expansion into other disciplines. I identified autoethnographic texts in the field of education, although there was still confusion between autobiography and life stories (GONZÁLEZ & MARTÍNEZ, 2009); in sociology, as a way of reflecting on what GOFFMAN (1997 [1959], p.123) named the "trastienda" [backstage] in

the research process (see also VALLÉS, 2014); in social work as an alternative source for emancipatory social research (GUERRERO, 2014); and in artistic research, accounting for the process of audio-visual artistic production (KLETT, MEDIERO & TUDURÍ, 2013). [24]

In this period, I also noticed the growing interest of PhD students in the autoethnographic method. The number of PhD theses they published increased from one to eleven in the fields of education, health, the arts, or social work. This lends credence to the potential of this method to link theory and practical situation (HAYES & FULTON, 2015), while guiding and accounting for the research process. However, I found that different ways of understanding autoethnography as a product coexisted. Although most authors used the well-known definition of autoethnography by ELLIS and BOCHNER (2000), they did so with different meanings. All this, despite the fact that in this period I identified several fundamental articles on autoethnography, translated into Spanish, and some seminal works written by Spanish-language speakers (BLANCO, 2011, 2012; GUERRERO, 2014; SCRIBANO & DE SENA, 2009) in which they explained the method and the steps herein. I found confusion between the autobiographical and autoethnographic genres (HERNÁNDEZ, SANCHO, CREUS & MONTANÉ, 2010; SANCHO & HERNÁNDEZ, 2013) where some authors considered it to be simply another perspective of narrative research. This situation was probably influenced by the scant attention paid in Spanish academic circles to the intense debates about its scope and meaning (BLANCO, 2017; MONTAGUD, 2016) that had taken place in other countries. Thus, the texts published as autoethnographies often described only the backstage of the research process or field work; in others, the authors exclusively mentioned that they had been part of the object of investigation. [25]

In those years, the use of autoethnography opened up to other topics and interests. However, I observed a primary differentiation between work of a theoretical or informative nature and that which genuinely included some type of autoethnographic exercise or writing. The high number of the former in contrast to the few explicitly autoethnographic exercises led me to consider that, as HATCH (2006) argued, researchers were more interested in writing and theorizing about autoethnography than in applying it in this period. [26]

I also observed that educational researchers showed a significant interest in autoethnography. Although until then they had previously treated it as one more perspective of narrative inquiry, they now defended it as a timely method to analyze the identity of teachers and their development in educational contexts by reflecting on their personal experiences (HERNÁNDEZ et al., 2010; JIMÉNEZ, 2010; KREUSBURG & ALBERTO, 2014). This same interest in identity appeared in such disciplines as health sciences (MÍNGUEZ, 2011), social work (MONTAGUD, 2014) and artistic disciplines (MOLET, 2012). In all of their work, the authors defended autoethnography as an ideal tool for training and improving professional practice through evocative, analytical, performative, or dialogic forms of writing. [27]

3.3 The consolidation and diversification of autoethnography in Spain (2015-2020)

I recognized three features in this last period. First, Spanish and Latin American authors interested in autoethnography intensified their relationship. Second, I found that the number of texts published on autoethnography in Spanish increased significantly with respect to previous periods. Finally, I detected that Spanish authors published the first explicitly autoethnographic articles in English-language journals. [28]

The publication in 2015 of the special issue dedicated to autoethnography in the Argentinian journal *Astrolabio* marked, in my opinion, this last stage. For despite the distance, the exchanges between Spanish language authors on both sides of the Atlantic were continuous and influenced the way autoethnography was understood in Spain. Examples of this exchange were: the Latin America doctoral students who defended their doctoral theses with an autoethnographic basis in Spanish universities (AGUIRRE-ARMENDARIZ, 2012; BOTERO, 2019; FAJARDO, 2019); and the incorporation of a series of Spanish-speaking authors (BLANCO, 2011, 2012; ESTEBAN, 2004; SCRIBANO & DE SENA, 2009), as an indispensable reference, together with the Anglo-Saxon classics (CHANG, 2008; DENZIN, 2014; ELLIS et al., 2011) in the works of the new group of Spanish autoethnographers. Another sign of this mutual interest was the contribution of autoethnographic authors who gave an account of the cultural and personal relationship between the two sides of the Atlantic. To this, the work by ANTA (2004), conducted during his stay in Mexico DF, and the observations of FERNÁNDEZ-JUÁREZ (2018) on the interaction between an indigenous medical friend of Bolivian origin and his experiences in Madrid can be added. [29]

From this period, I recovered 65 texts in Spanish and 27 in English, which would confirm the strength of autoethnography in Spain. The interest in this method, already consolidated among researchers in anthropology, education, and physical education, strongly expanded into artistic disciplines and to a lesser extent in other fields. In anthropology, interest in methodological aspects was now combined with concrete applications in various fields. In her paper, ALONSO (2016) presented the difficulties of reconciling student life with family and work life from a gender perspective. RUBIO (2017) addressed the role of popular gastronomy in the migratory processes of young Spanish people. Meanwhile, ZHANG-YU and LALUEZA (2017) analyzed the complexity of the construction of identity in environments of cultural diversity. A final example of this thematic diversity can be found in the article by VIVES and OBRADOR (2020) in which the anthropological tradition in popular festival studies was reformulated as an original performative transgression. Also noteworthy was the so-called "Tarragona Ethnographic School," whose authors showed an interest in the processes of health, disease, and medical care through the use of ethnographic self-awareness strategies. In 2019, this research group published "Autoetnografías, cuerpos y emociones" [Autoethnographies, bodies and emotions] (ALEGRE & FERNÁNDEZ, 2019), in which the members explored issues relating to health anthropology. In this same field of study BRAVO (2017)

wrote her autoethnography on the experience of single motherhood in Spain, and how it is permeated by sociocultural, political and religious values. [30]

Educational researchers, for their part, added a critical view of the Spanish university system and its demands after the crisis to their traditional interests. Of particular interest was the autoethnographic work on the neoliberal transformation of academia from a feminist perspective (GIL, 2019; GONZÁLEZ & ARIAS, 2018; MARTÍNEZ & OLMOS, 2018) and on the role of qualitative research in the field of academic research, in which I found one of the few examples of collaborative autoethnography (ABERASTURI, CORREA & MARTÍNEZ, 2020) and performative autoethnography (SUÁREZ, 2020). [31]

In education and social work, interest from researchers continued to revolve around the possibilities of autoethnography as a tool to account for the learning process and professional development, but without notable autoethnographic work. On the contrary, physical education authors established this discipline as one of the privileged spaces for autoethnography in Spain (FERNÁNDEZ-BALBOA, 2017; GÓNZALEZ, MARTÍNEZ & HORTIGUELA, 2018; MARTOS & DEVÍS, 2017). It was in artistic disciplines, however, that I observed the greatest visibility of autoethnographic exercises. Most of the fourteen authors compiled in this area presented their work using their reflexive self between performance and performative autoethnography (DENZIN, 2014). In this, they used various creative processes to show themselves. These processes are characteristic of this type of autoethnography, and include incorporating images, poetry and sounds that brought the reader closer to musical composition, audio-visual art, dance, fashion and its multi-faceted intersections (FAJARDO, 2019; MATEO, 2020; VALERA, 2018). [32]

In other disciplines where I had thus far found no interest in autoethnography, several authors published interesting works at this time. Sociology researchers focused on the political consequences of the crisis, accounting for the rise of populisms (CORTÉS, 2020) and new social movements (COTA, 2019; ORDÓÑEZ, FEENSTRA & FRANKS, 2018). In tourism studies, others used autoethnography as a written (VIVES & OBRADOR, 2020) and visual (FUSTÉ, 2020) medium to account for the interaction between tourists and their leisure destination. Also at this stage, several autoethnographers published work in fields as diverse as computer science (MALINVERNI & PARES, 2016), health sciences (DÍAZ, ALCÁNTARA, AGUILAR, PUERTAS & CANO, 2020; GIL, 2020), English language teaching (BANEGAS & DEL POZO, 2020; RUÍZ, 2019), gastronomy (FUSTÉ, 2020) and international accounting (ZICARI & PERERA, 2020). Thus, I was able to see that in this period, autoethnography reached its highest degree of diversity, thus far. I found them often focused on the reality of the crisis that the country was experiencing, namely: the consequences of migration (FAJARDO, 2019; RUBIO, 2017), the struggle for social justice and equality (BOTERO, 2019; COTA, 2019; ORDÓÑEZ et al., 2018) or the conditions of vulnerability that these situations entailed (MARTOS & DEVÍS, 2017; ZHANG-YU & LALUEZA, 2017). Researchers' interests lasted over time until the appearance of the first effects of

the COVID-19 pandemic (DÍEZ, BELLI & MÁRQUEZ, 2020; EVANGELIDOU & MARTÍNEZ, 2020). [33]

There were two qualities among the authors who have published their work in these recent years that were most remarkable. They showed greater depth in the way they approached their issues and a greater capacity to move the reader. Furthermore, they did so using other, more engaged forms of autoethnography. This change was clearly observed in the case of Spanish authors who published in English. Until 2017 their contributions were scarce. Since 2017, the number of autoethnographic works and types of autoethnography has increased. Thus, in 13 of the 26 works published in English by Spanish authors, I found a rich variety of autoethnography styles. From analytical autoethnography (BRAVO; 2017; RUÍZ, 2019) and evocative autoethnography (GONZÁLEZ, 2019; VERDAGUER, 2019), to performative autoethnography (MATEO, 2020; SUÁREZ, 2020; VIVES & OBRADOR, 2020), and the collaborative (ABERASTURI et al., 2020; ZICARI & PERERA, 2020), including one of the few Spanish examples of duoethnography (BANEGAS & DEL POZO, 2020). In contrast, this conception and variety of forms did not occur in the texts published in Spanish. Of these, only the doctoral theses by FAJARDO (2019) on performative autoethnography and BOTERO (2019) on evocative autoethnography stand out at this time. In any case, all these authors and their works pointed to the beginning of a stage of disseminating Spanish autoethnography to the world. [34]

4. The Present Situation and the Future of Autoethnography in Spain

Throughout this article I have tried to describe how autoethnography emerged and developed in Spain. I consider that it has not been an isolated phenomenon but was part of that intense process of criticism of the traditional way in which research had been carried out in the social sciences. Spanish autoethnography would therefore share characteristics with autoethnography in the Anglo-Saxon and Latin American world, although I consider that it presents elements that give it an individual identity. [35]

In the first place, following the description of autoethnography as process and product (ELLIS & BOCHNER, 2011), I observed that the majority of Spanish authors understood autoethnography as a way of giving an account of the research process or fieldwork closer to ethnography or autobiography than to autoethnography itself. Thus, some authors included a brief mention of how they themselves were immersed in their object of study (CORTÉS, 2020; COTA, 2019) or incorporated a brief fragment from their fieldwork diaries for the analysis of a topic (FERNÁNDEZ-JUÁREZ, 2018; PERAL, 2018; RUBIO, 2017). This reveals that in Spain there are still some who confuse autoethnography with other qualitative methods, with which it shares its interest in showing the visibility and reflexivity of the self (such as biographical narrative inquiry, reflexive ethnography, self study, etc). Nonetheless, I have shown several examples in which autoethnography was accepted as a method in doctoral theses, while simultaneously, in Spanish academic journals, the traditional canons (namely, separation between subject and object of study, eliminating subjectivity, writing in

the third person, etc.) persist in choices regarding the acceptance for publication of autoethnographic papers. [36]

Secondly, I recognized different ways of understanding the narrative scope and intensity of the self in the autoethnographies under review, which corresponded to different types of autoethnography. Most authors were closer to analytical autoethnography (ANDERSON, 2006) than to evocative (ELLIS & BOCHNER, 2000), performative and collaborative forms of autoethnography (DENZIN, 2014). In the former, theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena prevail over the aesthetic of the narrative, the author's involvement in the text or its ability to move the reader - characteristics of the latter. However, I did not find examples of other types of autoethnography such as interpretative (ibid.), meta-autoethnography (ELLIS, 2009) or racial autoethnography (TAYLOR, LEHAN MACKIN & OLDENBURG, 2008), which are more common among other authors from Latin America and the United States. I also observed differences in disciplines. Among those who used forms close to analytical autoethnography were authors linked to the fields of sociology, education, and social work (ALONSO, 2016; MONTAGUD, 2014; RUBIO, 2017). In their texts, they paid attention to theoretical analysis but avoided or minimized the use of literary resources. On the other hand, the majority of authors who used performative alternatives belonged, as we have seen, to artistic disciplines and were a rare exception in the other fields (SUÁREZ, 2020; VIVES & OBRADOR, 2020). They focused on transmitting the creative processes in which they were immersed, and they did not hesitate to combine narrative, graphic and audio-visual elements to connect the reader with their work. In addition, I found that the authors who opted for evocative autoethnography did not belong to any particular discipline, but were closely linked to the perspective and interests of feminism (BOTERO, 2019; POO, 2009; VERDAGUER, 2019). They stood out for offering the reader the emotional experience and the author's own involvement in the text, making use of language that transgressed the boundaries between the scientific, the aesthetic and the literary and often gave visibility to and questioned established power relations. [37]

There were also differences in the way in which the authors incorporated their vulnerable self in the text, in accordance with proposal of autoethnography by ELLIS et al. (2011). This was the case in some of the analytical works (MONTAGUD, 2014), even if it was more apparent in the performative ones (GÓMEZ-URDA, 2019; KLETT et al., 2013). However, it was in the evocative texts, where these features appeared more forcefully (FAJARDO, 2019; POO, 2009). In Spain, the authors were generally cautious about revealing their vulnerable selves or using the literary forms (narrative, dialogue, poetry or drama) that we so often find in the autoethnographic production of North America. According to SARABIA (1985), this distinctive feature could be linked to the Spanish religious (Catholic) and political (authoritarian) heritage, in which confession is sanctified and thereby relegates the intimate to the entirely private sphere. It also indicates the resistance in the Spanish academic world to admit the possibility of first-person research activity in which the subject *per se* forms a visible part of the object of research, in line with the criticisms by ATKINSON

(1997) or WALDORF (2004); as well as resistance to the incorporation of new forms of expression in academic texts. My appreciation is supported by three observations: 1. the fear of rejection that some authors expressed in their autoethnographic exercises (BOTERO, 2019; FAJARDO, 2019); 2. the rare occasions during which academics from social sciences spoke in the first person and tried to break the molds of scientific writing (ANTA, 2004; VALLÉS, 2006); and 3. the reported imbalance between the number of explicitly autoethnographic texts published in Spanish and those published by Spanish authors in English. I attributed the latter difference to the lower exposure of the author's self if he/she publishes in English and the difficulties posed for his/her papers being accepted in Spanish-language journals. This situation is surprising; at a time when Spanish novelists are actively cultivating self-fiction, academic researchers remain reluctant to follow the opposite path. [38]

Even though the interest in autoethnography has increased in Spain—as this secondary review of literature suggests—I did not find a substantial number of texts committed to this form of reflexivity and writing in which the emotional dimension of the ethnographic experience is fully exposed. This is only true, however, up to a point: since the mid-nineties, researchers of feminist social anthropology in Spain have worked intensively on epistemological discussion, examining the ways in which the researcher faces the intersubjective relations of fieldwork and the way in which they are represented textually, questioning androcentric practices, class, sexist, and colonial influences (GREGORIO, 2019). Its mark on the promotion and dissemination of autoethnography in Spain is evident in many of the works that I have shown here; and this would partly support ETTORRE (2017) when she stated that autoethnography is a feminist method. [39]

Today, under the name of autoethnography, a series of narrative practices are presented in Spain, in which researchers incorporate different degrees of reflexivity, implication, subjectivity and writing styles. It is true that its recognition at a theoretical level has not yet been accompanied by its standardization as a research method and that difficulties persist in obtaining its acceptance and visibility among Spanish academic journals. But the autoethnographic studies I have mentioned herein would suggest their suitability for researchers to approach reflexivity of the self on issues such as gender, body, social class, culture of belonging or professional identity, in line with what was pointed out by ELLIS et al. (2011). However, we should remember that the object of autoethnography cannot be reduced to a purely self-confessional narrative but must incorporate a deep cultural analysis and interpretation (CHANG, 2008) that connects the personal with the cultural (ELLIS & BOCHNER, 2000). [40]

The sustained growth of autoethnography in Spain does not prevent me from observing worrying signs about its future. Throughout the article, I have pointed out some of the obstacles and limitations that autoethnography has faced here regarding its recognition and dissemination. I have identified issues related to its epistemological status: the difficulty in distinguishing between certain forms of autobiography and ethnographic narratives, the plurality of meanings it may

encompass and the position it occupies among research methods. I have shown the sociocultural conditioning factors and material conditioning factors, namely: the scarcity of academic spaces (congresses, training seminars, discussion, etc.) and of academic publications in Spain that accept this type of exercise. But probably, as one author puts it, it is also one of the reasons that autoethnography is not offered, and even discouraged, at universities, and this may be due to the fact that academia remains colonialist and canonical (BOTERO, 2019, p.42). [41]

More than 20 years have elapsed since the first text on autoethnography was published in Spain and a decade since I wrote my first autoethnographic exercise. Despite the continued interest in autoethnography shown by the number of texts published in Spain, it appears that this field has not yet reached its full maturity and has not yet obtained the recognition it deserves. We will probably require more time and more texts to confirm whether autoethnography has a firm foothold in Spanish academia or whether it is only considered an occasional academic venture restricted to a certain profile of researchers or study subjects. More high-quality autoethnographic exercises will be required to attract interest from junior researchers. Furthermore, as autoethnographers we will have to demonstrate our ability to transmit sensitive knowledge through our texts if we want other researchers to follow in our footsteps. [42]

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