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**TRANSLATION AND ANALYSIS OF WELCOME TO OROSI
FROM SPANISH INTO ENGLISH FOR ESTEBAN MATA AND
THE POINTE BOOK FROM ENGLISH INTO SPANISH FOR
BIANCO&MAINIERI DANCE STUDIO**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Degree in English with Concentration in Translation

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is about the way the translator can analyze the effect of procedures and methods used to translate the novel *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English and the book called *The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique (second edition)* from English into Spanish. The people involved in this thesis are the author of the novel *Welcome to Orosi* who is looking forward to using the translated version to present it to English speaking readers as well, to expand his audience for them to have access to his work; the Bianco&Mainieri dance studio which wishes to apply all the knowledge with their ballet students; also the translator who is doing the research and applying all those methods and procedures to deliver the best translation possible according to each of the documents contexts and intentions. After completing the research, it can be determined that the translation techniques do not change much overtime, what makes every translation unique is the original document, the context, the audience, the intention, among other variables to take into consideration by the translator.

RESUMEN

El siguiente trabajo de investigación trata sobre la manera en que el traductor puede analizar el efecto que tiene la aplicación los diferentes procedimientos y métodos de traducción utilizados a la hora de traducir la novela *Welcome to Orosi* del español al inglés y el libro *The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique (second edition)* del inglés al español. Las personas involucradas en este proyecto son el autor de la novela *Welcome to Orosi*, quién está ansioso por utilizar la versión en inglés para presentarla a los lectores de habla inglesa, así como expandir su audiencia y que puedan tener acceso a su trabajo. Además, los encargados del Estudio de Danza Bianco&Mainieri quienes desean aplicar todos esos conocimientos con sus estudiantes de ballet y puntas. Asimismo, el traductor quien realiza la investigación y aplica todos esos métodos y procedimientos para poder brindar la mejor traducción posible de acuerdo con los documentos, el contexto de cada uno y la intención con la que se desarrollaron. Al finalizar la investigación, se puede determinar que las técnicas de traducción no han sufrido tantos cambios con el paso del tiempo, sino que lo que hace a cada traducción única es el documento original, el contexto, a quién va dirigido, entre otras variables a considerar por el traductor.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY FRAMEWORK

The following paper is about the translation and analysis of two texts chosen for very different and specific purposes. The Spanish text is a Costa Rican novel called *Welcome to Orosi* written by Esteban Mata. It is a narrative text full of many Costa Rican idioms and phrases which represent a challenge for its translation to another language, so that it does not lose its form and meaning and still maintains its authenticity. The main objective of translating this text is to make it accessible to other language readers, so they can be exposed to Costa Rican literature, enjoy it, and learn more about our culture and reality.

The other text is called *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique* written by Janice Barringer and Sarah Schlesinger. This is a book written in English and details all that it is to know about the importance and characteristic aspects of Pointe for ballet dancers. This book is very vast and its translation will focus on specific chapters which are more of the interest of the academy it has been translated for. The chapters chosen are Chapter 10 which is the Basics of Teaching Pointe and Chapter 13 dealing with the Pointe-Related Injuries and their Remedies. The main purpose of translating this text is to make this type of material available to make the teaching process more accurate and effective, since there are very few accessible texts in Spanish related to Pointe.

1.1 Problem Statement

The immediate problem to be solved in this particular project is to provide translated versions of the given texts, since there are not many options for the Spanish language speakers to access this type of documents.

The effect of the procedures and methods used to translate the documents *Welcome to*

Orosi from Spanish into English by Esteban Mata and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (second edition)* from English into Spanish for Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy will be seen at the end of the translation process.

This will be achieved through the use and application of all methods and techniques previously studied to be able to translate the documents the best way as possible. That means to maintain the style and intention throughout the translations and to remain as close as possible to the original texts.

According to the National Network for Translation website (2015), translation can be described as “The process of transferring written text from one language into another. Anything that is written can be translated”. Also, according to this website, what a translator needs are “excellent skills in your own language and at least one other language as well as knowledge of and interest in other cultures and interpersonal and problem solving skills. For translators, the ability to write well in your own language, thoroughness and, research skills are essential.”

Some of the limitations which can be faced when translating the Spanish text into English are to keep the intention and the style of the text. There are different variables that should be taken into consideration in order for the researcher to translate the texts truthfully. First, the style, this is a novel, so the narrative is something the translator needs to keep as much as possible to be true to the way the writer expressed the ideas. There is a reason why the author used those words and organized those thoughts in that specific way and the researcher needs to keep that intention to be able to transmit the same meaning and make sense to the target readers. Another aspect is the use of Cost Rican idioms; this novel has many of those idioms and phrases which are a challenge to be translated so the idea can be

understood by the English speaking readers without losing its authenticity. This is an actual work done together with the author so we can discuss which necessary changes can be made with his approval so the translation is effective and precise.

On the other hand, for the English text, what it can be identified as the biggest limitation will be the use of more technical and specific vocabulary. First, because we are mainly talking about injuries so this will involve medical and therapy related vocabulary; and teaching of this art so the vocabulary is more particular to this artistic area.

Therefore, the main purpose of this thesis is to translate the documents in the most accurate way possible. Translators can only achieve this by acknowledging all the important aspects of the translation techniques and procedures, and to be fully aware of all the different variables that need to be taken into consideration when translating to a second language. How can translators analyze the effect of procedure and methods used to translate the documents *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique (second edition)* from English into Spanish?

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

1.2.1 General Objective

To analyze the effect of the procedures and methods used to translate the documents *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English by Esteban Mata and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (second edition)* from English into Spanish for Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- To translate the documents *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English by Esteban Mata and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (second edition)* from

English into Spanish for Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy

- To apply various translation techniques to the documents in order to achieve communicative texts
- To evaluate the effect of the translation techniques applied to the documents
- To create a glossary with the most relevant terminology found on both texts

1.3 Justification of the Study

As mentioned before, the translation of the two texts chosen have very precise reasons. The importance of comparing the differences between cultures was mentioned to better deliver the message and the accessibility that those texts can have with the translation to the other language. Below, those reasons are explained in more detail.

Costa Rican literature is not well recognized, not even for Costa Rican people. Therefore, the exposure that writers have is not the biggest and some of the best works do not reach the impact they could have national and internationally speaking. There are many great novels, stories, and papers written by Costa Ricans that stay within the barriers of this country and are not known in other countries.

There are several reasons for this phenomenon. For example, the Internet and the accessibility to everything online, in general, make it easier for people in general and readers in this specific case to get products and find things that can catch their attention. But, if the books are not exposed enough or adapted for different types of readers then those will not be able to have the potential to go internationally.

Some of the most beloved Costa Rican literature is mainly known only by us, and even though they have amazing quality and great content, very few people other than Costa Ricans know them and have the pleasure to read them. Books such as *Cocorí* by Joaquín Gutiérrez,

Marcos Ramírez and Mamita Yunai by Carlos Luis Fallas, La Isla de los Hombres Solos by José León Sánchez, Cuentos De Mi Tía Panchita by Carmen Lyra, Viaje al Reino de los Deseos by Rafael Ángel Herra, Única Mirando al Mar by Fernando Contreras Castro, Las Fisgonas de Paso Ancho by Samuel Rovinski and Uvieta by Alberto Cañas, just to name a few, could have reached many other readers that would have enjoyed them and loved them as much as we do if they would be accessible for them.

That is why, with this book Welcome to Orosi, there is a great opportunity to bring all that richness of the culture and Costa Rican identity that can trigger the curiosity for our literature and talent. This book is so filled with our reality and everyday life that makes us (Costa Ricans) feel really identified with it even if it is not our personal experience we have definitely lived something similar or seen it closely, and will make foreign understand and visualized an authentic regular rural Costa Rican life.

Regarding the second text, Ballet is not really a discipline that Costa Ricans have a close relationship with. In our culture, some people enjoy arts in general and go to the Theater, for example, to see a ballet presentation, but those are usually by international artists and companies.

Over the course of time, Costa Rican people have acquired a more artistic overview and have internalized the importance of arts and sports and developed the sensitivity for them. But even when we have improved on that matter regarding ballet, we are not getting the most formal basis to form professionals in this area. For example, at the National University (UNA) there is a major in Dance, however, the professionals take ballet classes but the specialty is basically Contemporary Dance.

With very few bases, some of those professionals open their own Studios and

Academies and start teaching ballet to students and cannot get the best out of them because those teachers or academy owners do not have the enough knowledge to properly teach that specialty. So, we end up with students not qualified enough to meet the standards to go internationally and the quality is not improving.

There is a lot of excellent material that teachers can use as reference to improve their knowledge and the approach to better teach their students, but one of the main issues is that most of that material is not in Spanish, so even though there are many sources available, the greatest of them are not accessible to all Spanish speaking teachers.

The language barrier makes a big impact on the possibility of growing as a country in this particular discipline and it can be narrowed down by making some of that material accessible for the teachers and eventually for the universities and all professional in that field. It can also create more opportunities for Costa Ricans to participate in different recognized academies all over the world.

Ballet is not only about the positions and the beauty of the movement. It implies many different aspects, for example, the human body, the injuries, the different types of ballet regarding pointe and all the techniques that this involves, among many other studies. This is very well explained on *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique* and that would be a first step into improving the teaching and also the learning process for students that really understand all that is involved.

1.4 Antecedents

The translation is the process of rewriting a text from one language to another, so it has been part of the human life since the early eras. Translators have been working on many

different types of documents from books, novels, speeches, researches, medical and legal documents, among many others. “In fact, translators are essential for culture, literature, science, and knowledge.” (Racoma, 2018).

According to biblical literature, it all started with the Babel Tower. The story tells that the Babylonians were making a tower so powerful and mighty that will reach the heavens. God intervened by confusing the language of the workers in the tower, so they could not communicate and therefore could not finish the construction of it. As reported by The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2019) “The myth may have been inspired by the Babylonian tower temple north of the Marduk temple, which in Babylonian was called Bab-ilu (“Gate of God”), Hebrew form Babel, or Bavel. The similarity in pronunciation of Babel and *balal* (“to confuse”) led to the play on words in Genesis 11:9: “Therefore its name was called Babel because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth.”

One of the first and most representative examples is Saint Jerome, who translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, which is the official version of the Bible for Catholics. He is the patron saint of translators. Racoma (2018) mentioned in her article that “In the 3rd century, it is believed that the 'sense for sense' term was made up by St. Jerome. It was included in the Letter to Pammachius that he wrote. According to records, St. Jerome said that the translator should translate sensibly instead of word for word.”

The work of the translator is vital for the documents and the meaning to be accurately translated to the target language. The translator gives form and shape to the new text, so it can adjust to the culture and context of the target language and the meaning does not get lost in the process. That is why the translator needs to be fully knowledgeable of both the original and the target language. Translators need to be able to use all the linguistic skills and

competences to provide the best equivalent text in the target language.

Translators also need to be curious and willing to read and learn a lot about many different topics, they almost need to be or become experts on the topics they will translate about. The reason for this is that the translator needs to completely understand all the information he/she is transferring to the other language so he/she can adjust the expressions and look for the best option to be as natural and native as it can be. Translators must be creative and willing to learn everyday about everything, also they need to have an open mind since the topics can be as varied and different or extreme as they can possibly be, and the translator needs to be able to handle all types of topics and see them objectively.

There are many types of research and papers related to Translation since it is a simple yet meticulous process of transferring into a target language something that it is already thought and written in the source language. A process as challenging as translating a text is to teach how to translate correctly a text. When talking about teaching, there are many situations that need to be taken into consideration. The fact that there are already many different variables involved when translating a text, indicates that the process of teaching and evaluating deals with even more aspects like “the complexity of the many fields involved, the subjectivity of the assessment methods used and the difficulty of obtaining representative samples and control groups” (Pym, 1992).

In his paper, *Translation Error Analysis and the Interface with Language Teaching*, Pym also mentions the discussion around the topic of comparing the teaching of a foreign language with the teaching of the translation process, or, in other cases, the use of translation to teach a foreign language. “There can be no doubt that translators need to know a good deal about grammar, rhetoric, terminology, world knowledge, common sense and strategies for

getting paid correctly, but the specifically translational part of their practice is strictly neither linguistic, common nor commercial. It is a process of generation and selection between alternative texts. This is presumably what should be taught in the translation class. More interestingly, it is not what is usually taught in the language class” (Pym, 1992, p.3-4.)

1.5 Scope

With this paper, the translator will be able to first apply all the knowledge gained through the course of this program. Analyzing and using all the techniques and methods that were learned in the courses taken. Also, the final texts delivered to the author and the academy will be of great help for them.

In the case of the academy, the whole book will not be translated during this thesis term, but it will be eventually so they can have the complete book translated. On the other hand, the Costa Rican book will be translated at its full and will be delivered to the author Esteban Mata so he can use that text revised by his team to be able to present that version for the English speaking people to read it.

This research will focus on the techniques and procedures applied to translate the documents, to determine and analyze which techniques were used to be able to deliver the best translation into the target language so the readers can understand the meaning and the context in which those texts were written.

The relevance of this research is to be able to provide access to these documents, so more people can understand and obtain the message, so it can be reached by many other readers. The main objective of translating this Spanish into English text is to make it accessible to other language speaking readers so they can be exposed to Costa Rican literature and get to enjoy it and know more about our culture and reality. The main purpose of

translating the Pointe Book is to make this type of material available so the teaching process is more accurate and effective since there are very few accessible texts in Spanish related to Pointe.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the following chapter, some theories needed to render a suitable target text will be explained in depth. It is very important for the translator to be able to manage in detail all of them to analyze and translate the documents in the best way possible.

2.1 Text Analysis

The translator needs to take as a basis the text analysis which provides a better understanding of the intention and the style of the text to be translated. It also provides the set up or the context on the way the translations will be held. In order for the translator to do an excellent job, he/she needs to have a clear idea of what the style of the texts is, what audience this text is intended to, what the intention is, what the author is trying to transmit, among other variables to take into consideration equally important for the translation to be the best being as true to the original text and the author as possible.

2.1.1 Text Styles

According to Nida (as mentioned in Newmark, 1988), there are four types of text (literary and non-literary) which will be explained as follows.

The first one is the *Narrative Text*, which is a “dynamic sequence of events, where the emphasis is on the verbs or, for English ‘dummy’ or ‘empty’ verbs plus verb-nouns or phrasal verbs” (Newmark, 1988, p. 13). Usually, those events are narrated in a chronological order, and it is most frequent on the Story Telling. This is mostly used for entertaining, but it can also be used for other purposes like teaching, for example. Those texts can have a similar structure, which is the introduction, the development of a situation or problem, and then finally the resolution of that problem. They are factual, fictional or a combination of both.

The next one is the *Descriptive Text*, which according to Newmark (1988) “is static, with emphasis on linking verbs, adjectives, adjectival nouns”. This means that unlike the previous one, this describes a specific moment or object in time. It is used to provide a “picture” or vivid impression of a person, place, object or event. This is mostly used to get the reader’s attention, to create characters, or make them perceive a certain mood.

The third one is *Discussion*, defined as “a treatment of ideas, with emphasis on abstract nouns (concepts), verbs of thought, mental activity (consider, argue, etc), logical argument and connectives”. (Newmark, 1988, p. 13). As mentioned before, this type of text analyzes, interprets and evaluates an issue. The author presents information to the readers to support his/her ideas and arguments and anticipates answers and more information to respond to the other’s arguments as well.

And finally, the fourth type of text according to Newmark (1988), is the *Dialogue*, “with emphasis on colloquialisms and phaticisms”. This is basically a conversation that can be spoken or written. The readers can notice a mayor use of dialogues in classical literature. There are two types of dialogues, the Inner Dialogue which is the one that happens when the person talks to oneself, and the Outer Dialogue which happens with the interaction with others, a simple conversation.

2.1.2. Stylistic Scale

This part will stablish the “personality” of the text. This will provide the identity based on different aspects that will be explained below. The style is the basis of how the translation will be held to be as true as the original text as possible. This will establish the intention, the tone and the vocabulary to be used in the translation so it will have the exact same impact as the original text.

2.1.2.1 Scale of Formality

It is suggested by Newmark (1988) the following Formality Range. Those will be explained according to the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the examples provided in the text.

Officialese: It uses more elaborated and complex grammatical structures and vocabulary; Official: It is very direct and uses clear and formal vocabulary; Formal: It is softer yet also direct; Neutral: There is no room for misinterpretations. It is very straightforward and simple; Informal: It does not use complex vocabulary, and it is shorter in length; Colloquial: It uses everyday vocabulary and ways of expression, even though it is written; Slang: It is very specific for a certain type of audience. It can be very jargon like, and some people may not understand if they are not close to that region or style; and Taboo: It uses certain words or expressions that are not usually used in written communication that might offend or cause different reactions on the readers. It might affect the sensitivity of the readers.

2.1.2.2 Scale of Generality or Difficulty

As well as the Scale of Formality, Newmark also proposed a Scale of Generality or Difficulty that determines six different types of texts. Those are the following: (1) Simple: As the word says, it uses simple vocabulary, understandable for most readers. There are no complex structures or ideas; (2) Popular: It uses everyday vocabulary. It is very similar to the previous one, where it is for most people to understand without any complications of structure or vocabulary; (3) Neutral: It uses only basic vocabulary. It is clear enough to transmit the idea without any room for misinterpretations or confusion; (4) Educated: It is more academic and formal. It uses more elaborated vocabulary and complex ideas; (5) Technical: It is more

specific to a specific field of audience. The vocabulary is more complex and the reader not used to that type of topic may not understand the meaning of certain words or ideas; and (6) Opaquely Technical: Comprehensible only to an expert. It uses extremely specific and complex vocabulary, not suitable for readers that do not manage that topic completely.

2.1.2.3 Scale of Emotional Tone

Newmark establishes a correlation between the Emotional tone and the Formality of the text. Those go hand by hand since it is more likely to have a formal text to be going on the factual style and therefore a slang to have more emotive characteristics, for instance. That is how the text gets its identity and the way the translator should transfer it to the target language. There are also certain characteristics related to the language itself, for example, Spanish can be more romantic and informal compared to Russian which is more straightforward and rigid. Newmark (1988) determines the following scale of Emotional Tone for the texts: Intense: Profuse use of intensifiers. Hot. It takes the text to the extremes so it can intensify the intention of the author; Warm: It gives a little warmth or tenderness to the text so the readers can relate; Factual: Cool. It uses a more subjective vocabulary. It sticks to the reality. It is what is it, not what people think or feel it is; and Understatement: Cold. It does not show any outstanding characteristics of the subject and does not give any possibility to feel identified with it. It diminishes it.

2.1.3 Text Function

The Text Function determines the main reason for using language. This is basic to identify on a text because it will indicate the reason why the author wrote the text, and the intention he/she wanted to share with or transmit to the readers. Whether if it is a novel to

entertain, an instructional book to inform, or any other, this is important for the translator to know what the text is intended for.

2.1.3.1 Informative

As the name suggests, the Informative Function is to present facts, reality, and support ideas based on theories and confirmed data. “The core of the informative function is an external situation”, (Newmark, 1988, p. 40). This can be about any topic and any area of knowledge, leaving out the literary matters since those may have more room for interpretations and value judgments by the author and/or readers, rather than just sticking to the facts of the subject.

The format is mostly the same in all cases, as a report, an article, a textbook, a thesis, which are very structured and factual on the information presented. According to Newmark (1988), this function has four points on a scale of language varieties: The first one is *Formal*, a very technical text, with no influence of emotions and/or personal opinions or perceptions on behalf of the author; it uses literal language and no metaphors. The second one is *Neutral or Informal*, which also uses some technical terms and “basic conceptual metaphors. Third, in line, it is *Informal Warm*, commonly used for art books and popular science texts which contain a variety of simple vocabulary and images to illustrated definitions, and “stock metaphors”. And lastly, the fourth one is *Familiar*, which does not use any technical vocabulary, uses more every-day spoken expressions and vocabulary with “surprising metaphors”.

2.1.3.2 Expressive

Unlike the informative, the Expressive Function is all about the thoughts and opinions or feelings of the author. “The core of the expressive function is the mind of the speaker”,

(Newmark, 1988, p. 39). The writer expresses himself/herself without particularly caring for any type of feedback or response from the readers. It is important to note that the translator needs to identify the unique characteristics of this text, in order to translate in a proper way. Since this type of texts is very personal to the author, it may contain original metaphors, strange words, 'untranslatable' words, and the unique feeling of the writer's expressiveness, and the job of the translator is to keep those and not to normalize it. The following are the characteristics Newmark defined for this text type:

(1) *Serious imaginative literature*. Of the four principal types – lyrical poetry, short stories, novels, plays – lyrical poetry is the most intimate expression, while plays are more evidently addressed to a large audience, which, in the translation, is entitled to some assistance with cultural expressions. (2) *Authoritative statements*. These are texts of any nature which derive their authority from the high status or the reliability and linguistic competence of their authors. Such texts have the personal 'stamp' of their authors, although they are denotative, not connotative. Typical authoritative statements are political speeches, documents, etc., by ministers or party leaders; statutes and legal documents; scientific, philosophical and 'academic' works written by acknowledged authorities. (3) *Autobiography*, essays, personal correspondence. These are expressive when they are personal effusions when the readers are a remote background (Newmark, 1988, p.39.)

2.1.3.3 Vocative

This type of text seeks for the reaction and emotions of the readers. "The core of the vocative function of language is the readership, the addressee", (Newmark, 1988, p. 41). The intention of the writer is to create an impact on the readers' feelings, opinions and/or thoughts

to get a reaction result; for example, to sell something to the reader (product or idea), to get the readers' vote, or just for entertaining, among other intentions. There are two factors involved, the first one is that the authors need to build a relationship with the audience so he/she can create a bond to be able to influence them; and the second one is that the writer needs to maintain a language that is understandable for everybody, so there will be no distractions on the way and the message is clear and effective.

2.1.4 Translation Methods

One of the main dilemmas translators often come across with is the way to carry the translation. How it should be properly done to deliver the message without losing the form. There are two possible ways of translating a text, those are literal and free. In his book, *A Textbook of Translation*, Newmark describes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century it was considered by the translators that the best way to go was the free translation, which will give the possibility to transmit the idea without having so much trouble with maintaining the original form, that at the end, what matters is the sense and the meaning and not so much the exact words or structures. Then, later that century, there was this notion that translation was not possible due to the idea that the obstacles in linguistics were impossible to overcome, and that if it was attempted it should be as literal and true to the original as possible. Both methods will be detailed below.

2.1.4.1 Semantic Translation

This type of translation comes from the Word-for-Word, Literal and Faithful Translations. Those are more rigid and do not typically allow any type of modification. Semantic Translation, however, pays more attention to the “aesthetic value (that is the beautiful and natural sound)” (Newmark, 1988, p.45) of the Source Language, so it can

compromise the meaning of the Target Language only to avoid repetitions, duplications or any similar situations. It allows the translator to change cultural words for neutral words but not cultural equivalents, and it is more flexible.

2.1.4.2 Communicative translation

The communicative translation is the modest of the ‘Adaptable’ methods. It does not really compare to the Adaptation, Free and Idiomatic translations. It tries to deliver the message and keep the context and meaning of the original text without compromising so much of its language structure and vocabulary. The translated version will be easily understandable for the readers, although it may not seem completely culturalized and modified for that culture.

2.2 Translation Procedures

There are many different translation procedures that derive from the methods explained before. Those procedures help the translator to find the most suitable option to deliver the message in the best way. Some of them stay very true to the original text in form and meaning because the structure allows it on that specific case, but in some others, there are many changes that need to be made in order for the meaning to be understood by the readers. For example, when translating sayings or idioms, the literal translation in most of the cases is not the option since word-for-word translation makes no sense and there can be equivalents in the target language that have the same meaning but using an entirely different sentence. The following are the most frequently used translation procedures:

2.2.1 Transposition

Also known as ‘shift’, it is a procedure that changes the grammatical structure of the original text into the translated version. Although, sometimes it is used too often, and in some

cases, it is better to keep the word order, look for a lexical synonym, and miss the transposition to maintain the sentence stress. The different types of transpositions will be detailed below.

From Singular to Plural: When the word in the source language modifies from singular to plural or vice versa. For example, ‘noticia’ changes to ‘news’.

Adjective Positioning: Since the grammatical structure in English is Adj+Noun, the translator has no option to play with the word order, and the translation is automatic. For example, ‘casa azul’ translates to ‘blue house’.

Original language grammatical structure does not exist in the target language: In this case, there are always options to accommodate the words in a structure that works in the target language. For example, the use of gerunds in English offers different options, ‘Going out with you is the best’, it can be translated to a verb-noun ‘el salir...’, or as a subordinated clause, ‘cuando, si, etc. salgo...’.

The literal translation is possible but not natural: This case is when it is possible to translate in a literal way, but it does not sound natural in the target language. For example, the use of the passive voice in English is very common, but in Spanish, its use is not that frequent. There is an attempt to standardize the transpositions according to Vinay and Darbelnet (mentioned in Newmark, 1988, p.86) which goes like this: (1) SL verb to TL noun, (2) SL conjunction to TL indefinite adjective, (3) SL clause to TL noun group, (4) SL verb group to TL verb, (5) SL noun group to TL noun, (6) SL complex sentence to TL simple sentence. There are also standard transpositions from Romance Languages to English that is useful to take into consideration, even though there are always different options: “(1) SL adjective plus adjectival noun to TL adverb plus adjective, (2) SL prepositional phrase to TL

preposition, (3) SL adverbial phrase to TL adverb, (4) SL noun plus adjective of substance to TL noun plus noun, (5) SL verb of motion with *en* and present participle of description to TL verb of description plus preposition, (6) SL verb to TL empty verb plus verb-noun, (7) SL noun plus (empty) past participle or adjectival clause (etc.) plus noun to TL noun plus preposition plus noun, (8) SL participial clause (active and passive) to TL adverbial clause or (occasionally) group” (Newmark, 1988, p.86-87.)

Replacement of a virtual gap with a grammatical structure: That is when in the target language there is a gap or a missing part according to the correct grammatical structure. For example, ‘salió de la casa’ to ‘he came out of the house’.

2.2.2 Modulation

This procedure is used when the translator transfers meanings or ideas (images) to the target language but the phrases used are different from the original text into the target language version. This, evidently, is not a word-for-word or literal translation, but looks for more natural ways to present the same idea into the translated text so that the reader is not going to feel he/she is reading a translation of a text but an original text written in his/her native language. For example, the translator can use modulations to change the symbol used, ‘at a snail pace’ into ‘a paso de tortuga’; to change body parts, ‘hand to hand combat’ into ‘combate cuerpo a cuerpo’; or even changing the measurements like kilos for pounds, or meters for miles, ext. It can also turn a double negative into a positive or vice versa, ‘él no titubeó en hacerlo’ into ‘he did it at once’. Other times when this procedure can be used are when translating abstract for concrete, cause for effect, the reversal of terms, active for passive, space for time, among others.

2.2.3 Omission

This procedure consists of eliminating a word or words from the original text at the time of translating. This can happen due to the cultural differences and ways of expression between the two cultures and/or languages. For example, in Spanish the writers tend to extend the sentences and explain in greater detail, even sometimes being redundant to make a point; that does not happen so often in English since those writers are straighter to the point. Also, in some cultures, there are certain words or expressions that can cause negative reactions, and therefore some of them are omitted from the original text not to cause unnecessary reactions that are not intentioned by the original text.

2.2.4 Amplification

The amplification is used when there is the need to extend or explain in more detail into the target language the word or term used in the original text, and there is no equivalent to translate it as it is in the target language. This can be more frequent in situations when technical terms are used and there is no such exact term in the target language; or, for instance, when translating to Romance languages, which tend to be more elaborated and longer in written format.

2.2.5 Explication

The basic concept of this procedure is to make explicit into the target language what it is already known or implicit in the original text. This could be as simple as to specify the name of the person when the pronoun he/she is too often used in the original text so confusion can be avoided, for example.

2.2.6 Literal Translation

This type of procedure refers to the method of translating the grammatical structures as near as possible into the source language, looking for the closest equivalents in the target

language. The words are translated individually without any context to follow. “Literal translation ranges from one word to one word..., through group to group..., collocation to collocation..., clause to clause..., to sentence to sentence...” (Newmark, 1988, p.69) This type of translation can be useful when doing a pre translation work, so the translator can identify the moments when different types of procedures are needed to render an accurate translation. The use of this type of procedure is not wrong by any means, and, in fact, it should be applied any time the grammatical structures and meaning allow it.

2.2.7 Punctuation changes

This procedure is rather common not to notice it, that sometimes it has a huge impact on the translated version that can even change the intention of the whole text. It is best for the translators to revise the translated version against the original to determine whether the punctuation on the original can or should remain or if, in fact, it needs to be modified. Some changes are evident since their use on the target language may not be as common as in the original text, but some other need to be carefully analyzed so the meaning and the intention or stress are not altered. “Punctuation is an essential aspect of discourse analysis since it gives a semantic indication of the relationship between sentences and clauses, which may vary according to languages” (Newmark, 1988, p. 58).

2.2.8 Compensation

Compensation is a procedure that translators use when there are many differences between the source and the target language regarding semantics, linguistics, and syntax; and a more literal translation is not possible due to the loss of meaning and, therefore, an incorrect and/or unnatural translation turns out as a result. There is when the translators use alternative

grammatical, linguistic or syntactical techniques to maintain the message, for example, in the use of metaphors or other figures of speech.

2.2.9 Equivalence

This method has different variables: The Cultural Equivalent is used to translate a cultural word from the original language into another one culturally related to the translated version. Since those words are referring to their specific culture sometimes there are no accurate equivalences, so the most approximate word needs to be used to fulfill the need.

“They have a greater pragmatic impact than culturally neutral terms. Occasionally, they may be purely functionally, hardly descriptively, equivalents”. (Newmark, 1988)

The Functional Equivalent is one of the most common procedures, which ‘deculturalises’ the word in the source language. This procedure uses a non-cultural word so it generalizes or neutralizes the cultural word in the original language. This can be considered the most accurate method to translate since it “is a cultural componential analysis”. (Newmark, 1988)

The function and the description of the word are combined in the Descriptive Equivalent procedure. These two are crucial parts of explanation, which it was somewhat neglected in the past and now it has gained more presence and tends to be exaggerated.

2.2.10 Adaptation

This procedure is quite an Equivalent in certain specific situations, most likely related to cultural expressions. For example, at the end of a letter, the expression ‘yours ever’ can be translated into Spanish like ‘un abrazo’.

2.2.11 Borrowing

This procedure is one of the most used translation techniques. It means that the translator uses the same word for the original language into the target language. This can happen in various situations. The first can be when there is no equivalent in the target language, so the translator uses the same term so the text can go through clearly, within the members of the communities that share the same interests and there are no linguistic boundaries when using those specific terms. Many words are borrowed from different languages, for example, English, French, German, and many others, most of the time without even being noticed. In some cases, the borrowed words can be the same from the original to the target language but can have different meanings. It is also important to note that this procedure is not always used when there is a term that has no equivalent in the target language, it can also be used to maintain the intention of that word, the cultural background it represents that may be lost if the translator attempts to translate it. Whenever a Borrowing occurs, this will be used under the grammatical rules of the target language, and it will also adjust to the pronunciation of it. This type of translation is so common and natural than most of the time people do not even realize when using it and translators get used out of it mostly when in need of a specific term not found in the target language.

2.2.12 Calque

Calque is a very useful translation technique. It is actually a word or phrase borrowed from another language into the target language in a literal or word-for-word translation. This means the translator borrows that word or phrase and literally translates it into the target language to “create a new lexeme”. (Grassilli, 2016). Calques can be mostly found in globalized or particular fields and in some cases can be accepted by the majority of the general population. An example of this can be ‘flyweight’ into ‘peso mosca’ or even ‘White

House' like 'Casa Blanca'. It is also important to mention that the translator needs to be careful at the time of using this procedure since if it is not well accomplished, the result can be a very unnatural and humorous version of the term in the target language.

According to Grassilli, 2016, there are four types of Calque that will be discussed as follows. First, Paronymous calque or loan word: This happens when two words that are very similar in form and etymology grow in a different way in both languages so the meaning changes completely. Second, Orthographic calque: It usually appears during the literal translation of some names of people, places, among others. The rules of the original language are copied even when those have no much sense in the target language. Third, Typographic calque: "takes place when typographical conventions that only exist in the source language are transferred to the new language" (Grassilli, 2016). Fourth, Syntactic or structural calque: This happens when the borrowed word is not correctly used in the translated version, and that causes wrong connections between the words or phrases, coming up with a "third language", for example, Spanglish.

2.2.13 Sentence inversion

According to Vasquez Ayora, 1977, the Inversion is a type of 'shift'. A shift means that one element or phrase can move around and change position within a sentence. In this particular case, a Sentence Inversion means that two words or phrases interchange positions in the sentence. In Spanish, there are way more possibilities and options to do this due to the flexibility of the language. This procedure can cause the change in the stress or the intention of the sentence, since depending on the emphasis that is being given to the word that is the meaning or the intention the sentence will transmit. The use of this technique should be used carefully not to cause tension to the style, or to get to the point of being considered flashy or

glaring. But, in some cases, it is necessary to make the translated version appear more natural and eye-catching to the readers.

2.3 Glossaries

Another crucial instrument for translators is the construction and use of glossaries. The translation of documents is a very meticulous and time-consuming process, which has to be consistent throughout the whole text or work and detail-focused since the idea needs to go directly to the readers in a very clear and precise way. There is an infinite amount of topics to be translated and to build up a glossary can help the translator during the process as well as the readers to have guidance when looking for specific terminology.

Since the main objective of translation is to present an existing written text into a second language, the assortment of topics can be endless, going from novels to cookbooks, technical articles to medical instructions, and many others. Translators are experts in the use of language, but, evidently, they are not experts in all topics there are; so they need to do deep research and find more information to get a more complete picture depending on the topic to be able to come up with a professionally translated version of the original text. Sometimes texts are not easy to comprehend for someone that is not an expert on the field and a glossary is like a “best friend” in this type of situation since it can help the translator to get more accurate definitions and to be constant and consistent throughout the text.

For a translator, terminology and the correct term usage is vital to deliver the best rendition. The translation process takes time and precision and those two normally generate more costs. During the process, the translator first needs to verify if there is a previous work already done or if the person/company requiring the translation already has some specific

terminology that needs to be used. If there is, the job of the translator is to continue with that line to give consistency between the documents and not to cause confusion to the readers. This will reduce the time spent in the translation and will make it easier for the translator to present the work faster. Revising and reworking on a project will consume more time and unnecessary resources that will raise the costs of the translation.

Since this tool is to help the translator during the process, it needs to be simple and friendly to use. Some of the most important characteristics are explained below.

Each term will be included in the glossary only one time, and in the case of compound nouns, the terms would be included separately and not repeated together. Also, the terms that need to be defined will be included in the glossary. The terms that should be included are the ones that belong exclusively to the specific client; or terms that need to be standard and managed by all readers. The translator should not include terms that can be found in any other dictionary or general public glossaries. The glossary needs to be as simple and short as possible since huge glossaries are difficult to go through and would even make it harder for the translator and users to go over it. A more complete glossary is a guide for the translator at the time of the translating process, for the readers and also for future translators that may need to do other documents related to the topic. For that reason, the best way of presenting it is to include the term, the definition and the translation of that term, as well as a context example so the user will understand better the way to apply it. There are certain words or terms that should be left as they are in the original language and not to be translated. These also need to be placed on the glossary so the translator can identify them and not spend time to come up with the translated version. It is important to include the definition and the context as well for a proper usage of the term. A good practice is to have an expert validate the glossary before

using it as a basis for the translation process. So the tool will be already examined and approved and there will be no chances for errors or misinterpretations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

According to IGI Global (2019), the Methodological Framework is the “Approach for making explicit and structuring how a given task is performed.” Therefore, the Methodological framework for this research is the use of different instruments to be able to analyze the translation methods used in both texts. Three instruments will be used to carry out this investigation.

3.1 Research Approach

For a research project or thesis, there are three different types of approaches that can be used to obtain the best results to be analyzed by the researcher and be able to find a variety of conclusions. The type or types of approaches to be used will depend on several variables such as the intention of the research, the type of information that will be collected by the researcher, the different types of sources available, the objectives to be developed throughout the project, the problem statement or question to be analyzed and answered, the time the investigator counts with, among others. Those three approaches will be developed bellow.

The Quantitative Approach provides results that can be counted, more related to numbers that can be used to develop statistical analysis. On the other hand, with the Qualitative Approach,

Qualitative data are collected through direct or participant observation, interviews, focus groups, and case studies and from written documents. Analyses of qualitative data include examining, comparing and contrasting, and interpreting patterns. The analysis will likely include the identification of themes, coding, clustering similar data, and reducing data to meaningful and important points,

such as in grounded theory-building or other approaches to qualitative analysis” (ATSDR, 2015).

So we can get more information related to content and context rather than numbers.

Frequently, these two types of approaches are used together and that is called the Mixed Approach since they provide different information which can help to have a better view of the project depending on the diversity of the matters taken into consideration (ATSDR, 2015).

For this specific research, the approach that will be applied is the qualitative since it is a translation project. This approach will provide valuable information from the different data analyzed due to the various results it will generate after applied since the researcher will work with written texts. The researcher will utilize the qualitative approach to analyze the meaning and the characteristics of both texts through the different instruments that will be applied. This approach is the most suitable for this type of research since the researcher will be working with two very different texts, one in Spanish called Welcome to Orosi and the other one in English which has for title The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique. The information collected as the results of this research will determine the style, meaning, translation methods and techniques used, the most relevant and specific words in a glossary, and other variables.

3.2 Research Design

For this thesis, the translator will work under the frame of a Descriptive Scope due to the nature of the research. The Descriptive Research can be defined as the type of research that observes, measures and describes without having any influence on the subject of study, so it helps to get a better idea or picture of what it is being studied (Bhat, 2019). That being said, this research does not control or manipulate the variables studied. This descriptive scope can

help answer the *what, when, where, who* and *how*, but in order to answer the cause-effect question (*why*) a different scope is needed.

The Descriptive Scope can use both qualitative and quantitative research methods such as surveys, observations and case studies. This last one mentioned is the most suited for this type of thesis since the researcher can use it to gather more unusual, specific and/or interesting data that completes the more general picture, or shows new information about a research problem.

This particular research will have a Phenomenological Focus which precisely determines the experiences and behavior and helps the translator to come up with theories of the cases being studied. The researcher will use those experiences as tools to better understand the social, cultural, political, historical or technical context so the translator can focus on meaning and interpretation of the reality and the world within a given context.

3.3 Information Sources

There are three different levels of information sources, the primary, the secondary and, the tertiary source. “The distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary sources hinges on how far from the original event or phenomenon the information source is created” (Empire State College, 2014).

The primary source corresponds to the closest to the original even as it can be; in the case of translation, in particular, the texts in the source language would be the primary source. Then, the secondary source is one step away from that, where the source is based on the primary one. And, the tertiary source is one step away from the secondary; which refers to textbooks or references.

As it was mentioned before in Chapter I, this research is going to be developed taking

into consideration two very different texts. One is a Costa Rican novel and the other one is a book related to ballet and pointe teaching. These two texts are the primary source of the research paper.

Welcome to Orosi by the author Esteban Mata is the text that will be translated from Spanish into English. In its specific format, the book is 72 pages long, and the first edition was printed in April 2016. Since it is a novel, the characters and the development of the story are constructed in more detail, which provides more material to work with when translating it and looking for equivalents on the target language when there are no close enough similar situations or expressions. It contains many Costa Rican idioms, phrases, and exposes situations that are very characteristic from this country, so that makes it a real challenge to be accurately translated to the English language so the target readers will get the complete picture of what is being presented to them.

The second book is *The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique* written by Janice Barringer and Sarah Schlesinger. This is the text written in English that will be translated into Spanish. It is more extended with 302 pages total, and fourteen chapters. The translator will be working with the second edition which was published in 2004. This book is a basic compilation of all there is to know about the pointe dancing and those chapters cover a brief story of the pointe dancing, the foot and the pointe shoemaking process, the size charts depending on the brand, the preparation and care for the pointe shoes, the shoe accessories, the shoe master, the profiles of pointe shoemakers and sellers, the pointe shoe characteristics, basics of teaching pointe, the profiles of the training methods, sample pointe classes, the pointe-related injuries and their remedies, and finally different conversations and opinions related to pointe from experts on that matter. The academy is very interested in getting the

whole book translated, but for the execution of this research they chose the most important chapters for them to start, and then the full translation will be delivered to them. Those two chapters chosen are Chapter 10 which is the Basics of Teaching Pointe and Chapter 13 that deals with the Pointe-Related Injuries and their Remedies.

As secondary sources, the translator has determined the textbooks and articles related to the academic and theoretical sections of the research, which explain about the research and translation processes followed to achieve the correct structure and execution of this paper.

3.4 Analysis of Categories

The sources for this research are the books **Welcome to Orosi** by Esteban Mata and **The Pointe Book: Shoes, training & technique** written by Janice Barringer and Sarah Schlesinger. The first book is the one in Spanish which will be translated into English for the author, so he can use that English version to present it to the English speaking readers. And The Pointe Book will be translated from English into Spanish for the Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy, so they can use it to improve their technique and have a better understanding when teaching ballet and pointe classes.

Esteban Mata is the author of the book **Welcome to Orosi**. He was born in Cartago in 1978. He is a journalist and studied philosophy. Mata has a wide experience in written media as a journalist mostly on political, human rights and national reality topics. He has won a United Nations award among others. This novel **Welcome to Orosi** is his first publication. Mata will be the main source since he is available to be contacted during the translation process and analysis.

About the Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy, bellow we present the mission, vision, and values. This academy is located in Curridabat and it first opened its doors on May 15th,

2017. Its Vision is to be a recognized dance academy nationally and internationally for teaching the correct fundamentals and techniques for the dancer to achieve a real higher level of improvement. The Mission is to form and teach versatile dancers with the correct technique and fundamentals teaching through a familiar and professional environment. And the Values the academy believes in are that the Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy stands out for a real teaching adjusted to all ages and levels. If you wish to learn from the very beginning about dance this is your ideal academy. “The age is not an excuse not to dance” Live your best moments with Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy and become a professional in dance.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The following three instruments were chosen to help with the research since they are the ones that adjust the most to the type of project developed. The translation and analysis of texts are very specific tasks and those instruments are the ones that are the most practical to get accurate and precise results for the analytical process.

The instruments which will be used in this research are the text analysis, color coding, and glossary. Those will be explained below.

3.5.1 Text Analysis

The Text Analysis consists of identifying all the characteristics the text has. It should consist of “ 1) considering factors external to the linguistic text; 2) establishing the style and genre of the text; 3) designating the type of the information represented in the text” (Roza Ayupova, 214). The use of the text analysis before the translation is done helps to understand the text at its full. “This approach is oriented to establishing genre, type of the text, the position of the narrator and designating the type of vocabulary of the text and peculiarities of its syntactic organization.” (Roza Ayupova, 214). Text style could be official,

scientific, journalistic, colloquial every day and literary. This will help identify the main activity and purpose of the text and therefore who writes it and to whom it is mainly directed to. It is very important to recognize the form but also the meaning of the text to be able to deliver the most accurate translation. The context also plays a fundamental part in the analysis so it can help identify the source language context and the target language context to make it possible to adapt the best way possible and be understandable for the readers. It pays attention to the linguistic and extra-linguistic aspects of the text.

Text Analysis

<i>DOCUMENTS</i>	<i>Welcome to Orosi</i>	<i>The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (Second Edition)</i>
Text Analysis		
Text Style		
Text Function		
Stylistic Scale		
Formality		
Generality or difficulty		
Emotional tone		
Type of translation		

Table 1 illustrates the aspects that will be taken into account during the text analysis.

Source: Researcher's own creation

3.5.2 Color Coding

Color coding is a very practical instrument that can help to easily identify the different types of techniques utilized to translate in a paragraph. It is easy and fast for the eye to identify and helps to gather information such as how many types of techniques were used on a specific paragraph, which ones and also how many were used and how often through the entire translation. This instrument can be used in many different types of researches, not only related to translation, and it provides both qualitative and quantitative feedback to the researcher.

Color Coding

{Transposition}
<u>Modulation</u>
Omission
Amplification
Explicitation
Literal Translation
Compensation
Equivalence
Adaptation
Borrowing
Calque

*Table 2 shows the colors that will be used in the color coding.
Source: Researcher’s own creation*

3.5.3 Glossaries

The glossary is a way to gather information for the qualitative approach since it gets all the meaningful and important words so they can be fully understood by the reader. The glossary provides an explanation of the word used. It defines the part of the speech so the reader can use it correctly, and also provides an example when necessary to be completely understandable and the meaning of the idea can be expressed. It is important to note that the glossary should not be too extensive, and it should only contain the words that are really specific to the text of the topic, or for further explanation to understand it.

Glossary

Source Language	Grammatical Category	Target Language	Definition

*Table 3 illustrates the format that will be used to create the glossaries from English into Spanish and from Spanish into English.
Source: Researcher’s own creation*

3.6 Collection data process and data analysis

The first instrument that will be used by the translator is the Text Analysis. The reason for this decision is that it is of great importance that the translator goes through this analysis first in order to be able to come up with the best translation possible depending on the style, function, formality, difficulty and, the emotional tone used in each of the original texts. This analysis will give the translator a clear picture of the text and will be able to reproduce it as close to the original as possible.

The second instrument used is the Glossary since this will help the translator in the translation process. When gathering the words for the glossary this will save the translator time not to be looking for the term again, or even translating it differently on various occasions. This will set the consistency of the translation and will also serve as a guide for both the translator and the future readers.

And finally, the third instrument will be the Color Coding. This will work for revising the translation and helping in the further analysis. When the translation is over, the color coding can help the translator identify the different procedures applied and, that way the translator can visualize some better options to be used in some cases. It can assist the translator to improve the work already done so the text will be better understood and more natural for the readers. On the other hand, this instrument also can be useful in the study of the translation process, to analyze what was done by the translator and to know the reasons why he/she chose a specific type of technique in a certain sentence or phrase.

CHAPTER IV**TRANSLATION OF WELCOME TO OROSI FROM SPANISH INTO ENGLISH**

To Omar

Each leaf of each branch of each tree has a history.

The peach is loaded with small fruits,
and other branches are in bloom.

1.

As he approached the door, a scent alerted him. He knocked with his fist closed, with no answer. That day, he remembered that the silence of death is the most eloquent of all silences.

On the Holy Innocents day, Dad walked through the pasture of the entrance to Los Diques, he got lost among the ballast alleyways, jumped over the stones that make way over the Reventado River towards the bend of the road to Carmen town. The hill was going up in the middle of charrales and small houses that filled the edge of the street. Rolando Linares' house was in the middle of the road. A part of the house was built with concrete and the rest with wood painted of a sad yellow color.

The wind lifted the dust, while two dogs tore the offal of a calf's leg. He found the doors and windows closed and the sliding board gate without hinges. After a quarter of an hour knocking and throwing stones at the ceiling, he realized that no one would come out. He decided to jump the wall.

A sudden dryness, typical of terrible moments, went through his mouth and throat. He got close to the wall and the dead stench hit him on the face. He looked through the window, barely bearing the stench, and in the gloom he saw old Roland's dead body lying on the cot in

a strange position. His elbow was bent and his right hand was lifted as in his one last gesture. The cats were around him and climbed over the body, scratching his exposed bowels.

That is how, two hours later, the bailiffs who came to take the remains of what cats had not taken, found my grandfather.

2.

It had been two months since Christmas. The colored light bulbs were kept lit at the edges of the windows and doors of the slums, insisting on the happiness of the holidays, almost like a claim. My grandfather's little wooden house had been left empty, cornered among the other small houses that stood against the laws of physics, while taking away any charm on the banks of Reventado River. I walked with my dad down the dusty street to check the house. When we arrived, the emptiness was suffocating. I don't know if anyone took care of the cats. All I know is they were gone by then. Dad removed my grandmother's photograph that was still stuck with a stub nail to the central wood lumber pile of the living room. We hardly spoke. Grandpa's empty bed still had the stain that his body had left there. The dust piled on every plank of the floor, covering everything, drowning everything, even the noise of our footsteps. Dad threw in a bag two or three more things from my grandfather: a leather belt that had a die-cut buckle with the effigy of two roosters facing each other with their wings deployed in full battle, a pair of boots, and a pita hat that I still keep. It was a sad afternoon filled with the words we did not say, memories that were lost in the dark corners of that room and that courtyard, that in that moment and forever, it will be unfamiliar to me.

I didn't come back to that house anymore. It was as if with his death, the desire to forget had razed it, but perhaps it is still standing. I remember it, because it was the house where my grandfather had gone to die after spending his life among whores and bottle

bottoms, to end up living alone until the day he was found in the midst of hungry cats. It was until many years later that Dad told me in detail what had happened that day of the Holy Innocents.

On Christmas Eve, Aunt Reina brought him some food and eggnog to toast for Christmas Eve. Despite the years, the eldest of his daughters continued to return to the Father who once had thrown her into the street for the sole reason of existing. That day, Reina went back over her footsteps, stepping on the stones of the narrow alleys on Los Diques, with the certainty that something terrible had happened, but she failed to find out what it was. She tried to calm herself down and left the bag with food at the foot of the brown door. Two days later, she came back and the food was gone. She called as loud as she could, but no one came out. Two more days went by and, then, the woman went to my dad's house to tell him that something strange was happening. By then, my grandfather was already the food of the worms and the cats, that desperate had begun to lick the purulent fluids that sprouted from his body. Soon after, he looked out at the window to find grandpa, face up, being devoured by the felines.

After that, Dad took care of the burial arrangements. The silence marked the pace of the night in which we walked the three miles from my house to Rumbo Radio, where he placed the obituary announcing the country the death of a man that I barely knew. I do not know if the whole country would be interested in the news, but it was very clear to me that, despite everything, Dad wanted to tell everyone that my grandfather had died. That night was the Catholic Vigil. Lulled by the pray of the rosary, smoked by the tobacco in the social hall of the district of San Ignacio, and dizzy by the sleep, I was there almost the whole night, while the parade of strangers gave condolences to the family, big slaps on the back, moans and

small candles. The candle wax dripping down to the floor. Several times, I approached the coffin's glass. There he was, stiff, pale, with his broad forehead and lips barely closed. I had never paid actual attention to the silence of the dead and I understood that even when only the crystal separates us, we were too far away from each other. That man lying there had come late for me.

I went to the kitchen. They were all speaking in a low voice, as not to awaken the old man's remains. My uncle Fernando gave without discrimination alcohol drinks that were served among coffees, while my aunts with swollen eyes were whining. My Uncle Roman was sitting quietly, with a tired face and serene eyes, that were lost in the flower tablecloth where the bread was cut and the food was being prepared. I was surprised not to see Dad. I went to the room. I was alone on a bench. Serene. Since that night, something within him changed. He insisted on visiting his sisters more often, and get closer to his family. He told anecdotes of his past, that he always rose like a blurred and confusing wall, where life and death were coupled in stories that sometimes were funny and sometimes sad. Somehow, the memory of the old dead man united them, made them look for each other, and from there, precisely, was born the intention that I was to spend a week at the house of my Uncle Roman, the most miserable and abandoned of Rolando Linares' children.

I was twelve years old and my vacations went by between the rope of the spinning top and street soccer matches until one day of February, I was on an old Blue Bird bus heading towards Paraiso canton, on the way to the house of the poorest and simplest of my dad's brothers, Uncle Roman. The idea was to work for a week picking coffee in the mountains of Orosi, southeast of Cartago, in the coffee plantations that were under the command of a man

called *Tiger Rivera*, a very distant relative, with whom I do not think we have even a freckle in common.

The bus came coughing among hops and squeaks to the village of La Laguna, a hamlet scattered near the so-called Doña Ana lagoons, in the midst of a dustiness that rose to the window frames and eaves of the houses, saturating the spider webs of very fine particles that dulled everything. The village was crossed by a winding main street that opened to the sides in small alleys and twisted roads without asphalt. The roofs have seen many summers, so they had suffered the cracking similar to the crocodile's skin. Yet, for me, everything had the new taste of the unknown. I jumped the last step of the bus and looked at the houses dull by the heat, without collapsing on their foundations. It was mid-afternoon. To the east, an alley was opened cut by a deep spout that stopped the access of the cars. I had a bag-pack full of old clothes that Mom had chosen for me to work in the field, two pairs of tennis and a pair of soccer shoes that I did not get to use. I also had a thousand colones bill for unforeseen expenses.

At the end of alley, Uncle Roman's blue house barely raised by the insistence of having a place to get into.

Stretched skin gives in. The fabric tears. Screams at night are drowned in half-drunk water glasses. The eyes are opened up full of terror. Roman waits for dawn, for fear to dissipate with the morning's first lights, but the morning does not arrive. In the room, there were the seven brothers clogged with each other, and scattered in two bunks stinking like human. In the shadow, the slit in the wall draws the face of fear. The cut sleep is torn like paper. The liquor evaporates in sweat drops on the tormented forehead. Rolando hears him and walks tumbling from his own cot to the other side of the door. The house is abandoned.

Since Carmela's death, it has all been a chaos. Cryings, screamings. Two days a week one of his sisters-in-law comes in to wash the clothes, make the beds, louse the children, but she cannot do it all. The two youngest girls are useless. You have to do something. Rolando thinks, and what should I do. He has to go back to the trail, to open up the road with the tractor, to get lost in the road, winding on the dust without looking back. You have to do something, his sister-in-law told him, but he does not know what to do. Roman is still crying. I'm scared, he said, with those tangled words he speaks. Out of all, this is the dumbest, Rolando says to himself. He looks at him with anger. He walks around the room. Shut up, you're going to wake your brothers up. Roman is scared, so he hides among his brothers' bodies, still crying. Rolando takes off his belt, If you do not shut up, I will beat you up, he says, but he is already fed up with doing that. He's tired. He leaves the room and rinses a feeding bottle from the sink where the dishes are all piled up forming dirty towers. Then he crouches; under the sink he keeps three white gallons. He brought them from the illegal distiller. He takes the feeding bottle and fills it half way with contraband liquor, then takes a little milk from a white jar and prepares the mix. Roman wrinkles his face, and keeps crying while drinking. He doesn't know what he is drinking, but little by little he calms down. As the night progresses, the night gets silent, like him. Until, intoxicated with a strange tranquility, forgets fear, forgets hunger, forgets darkness, and falls asleep. Rolando looks at him, satisfied. Tomorrow he'll start figuring out a way to get rid of the children.

3.

It was a small wooden construction, with a single water roof to the south side, a broken glass, and a splintered door. All of it seemed to claim eviction. A barbed fence separated the property from the street. The ensemble, illuminated by the afternoon sun,

acquired a strange tonality common to the old films, where everything looks a little more abandoned and stale than it actually is. I just pushed the small wooden gate when the door opened; Joseangel came out to greet me with his crooked smile.

My arrival was planned since a week ago and Joseangel, Brunilda's youngest son, was already waiting for me. We considered ourselves half cousins because, as we understood during my grandfather's burial, we were kind of cousins-in-law. I had not seen him since my grandfather's funeral and, as he peeked out the door, I thought he looked different, without those clothes that were a couple of sizes down and that made him look uncomfortable. This time, he looked relaxed; if I saw him now for the first time, I would understand without hesitation that he was just a good guy. Yes, a little slow if I may say, but at that time I only saw him as someone who should be there, because at the end of the day in my world everything was how it should have been, and I did not have the experienced mind that I do now.

He gave the tour of the house in two minutes. It only took two minutes to go through it. At first, my eyes took a while to recognize the shapes and contours, as the street light was much more potent compared to the one inside the house. When I was able to see clearly, I found myself in a small living room that also worked as a dining room. It also had two raggedy armchairs that showed their springs to whom would want to sit on them. Two steps beyond, there were a table and three chairs that challenged gravity with their uneven legs. In the main wall, there was a plaster of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a cardboard of Maria Auxiliadora decorated with flies' poo, that competed with a fifty-volt bulb to see which one lighted the house more. On the other wall, two black-and-white portraits looked close and

distant at the same time; one was my grandfather's, and the other one was Carmela, my grandmother.

The look of my grandfather, seemed as he was tired and had the eternal gesture of someone who wants to ask for a last drink. It did not tell me much about the man who had abandoned his children one by one and two by two, who had seen them as a heavy lump that would not let him walk through life. I never got to care for him, though sometimes I feel that, in a strange way, I did. Long before he became my grandfather and long before he had been devoured by the cats, he was a tall young man with a proud look. A sort of a fifties dandy, wearing a leather jacket and sunglasses, driving his Harley, making the windows vibrate with its snoring, shaking the dust under the soles, a tough man with a pistol in his belt. Back then, he made a living by opening trails with huge tractors, with mechanical iron arms and wheels, which he operated on national highway projects undertaken by the government, but financed by the United States, which saw in the country an ally against, what at that time it was considered, the communist threat that expanded in the university fields of Latin America.

Rolando Linares knew nothing on international politics, but international politics began to generate him money as he had never imagined, by working on the expansion of roads that represented a mechanism of development for the country and, for the Americans, a preventive mechanism in case of being in the urgency to mobilize troops to Panama by land. Those were hard times, in which anti-communist paranoia shoved through the pores of Central American leaders, injected by the American tension that saw the risk of invasion risk against the Canal. That job made him to be many days away from home, taking attendance between the legs of an inn manager or throwing bills at the hands of bookmakers in roosters' fights.

Therefore, it was not surprising that the afternoon when he heard the news that his wife, my grandmother, had died, he felt the fear of losing his freedom. At that time, it was not natural for a man to leave everything behind to take care of the seven children who had remained as the living memory of Carmela, a woman with deep eyes and dry eyelids, who appeared to him at night with a silent claim. A few days later, the Harley Davidson was parked outside the house of as many close relatives as Rolando Linares had. Door-to-door, he sought out someone to help him raise the seven children whom were waiting for him with hunger and who, anyway, did not seem to be of great importance to him. But it wasn't easy to find them all a home. One morning of May, stunned by the children crying, hysterical to see how his life had changed, he gave the two girls to the nuns at Sacred Heart to assist the cloisters, clean the floors, wash the clothes, iron habits, wash dishes, and pray eternal rosaries lit by weeping candles of flashing sperm in front of a Jesus with a sad androgynous face, who never revealed them the color of joy. My Father, because of his age, was not taken neither by the nuns nor by the priests at Fray Parasiano Home in the hot Puntarenas. The youngest of them, named after his father, was raised by the owner of a tailoring in Guadalupe, who made him his heir until the last day of his life.

One night, before putting out the candles, a motorcycle stopped on a dirt road, in front of Jose Linares' house, the butler of the Fello Meza stadium, who immediately looked through the window and saw his nephew's figure, Rolando, getting off his Harley. The biker unfastened his jacket, smoothed his fringe, and knocked at the door with the solemnity of the foxes. It was a short conversation and there was no record of it. The night swallowed it, in the same way the tombstones swallowed regrets and, at the end of the night, the old key master found no way to refuse the petition, despite of the fact that by then he and his wife could

hardly keep their fourteen children dressed and alive. That day, without knowing it, my father gained fourteen brothers, who were going to change his life.

Roman and his two older brothers, Arturo and Fernando were not as lucky. All three were raised in hospices and work houses. Orphaned by mother, abandoned by their father, they depended on their cleverness and the kindness of others to survive, as scarce as ever since the world turns. Arturo and Fernando got used to their role, but it was more difficult for Roman. He had born as good as slow, and that slowness had doubled after my grandfather fed him bottles with contraband liquor with the loving purpose of getting him to sleep and stop crying. He never learned to calm him down. Almost thirty years later, Roman wept all the way to the burial of the scarcely remembered Rolando Linares.

Indeed, he loved him, because most of the time, affection is not deserved, so he kept that black and white photo in the small room of the blue house, refusing to forget the devious gaze of my grandfather, which reflected such a great thirst so great that one just wanted to give him something to drink.

Another thing was the picture of my grandmother, Carmela, whom Roman placed at a short distance from the man who gave her children away. Only few remember her alive, but those who speak of her insist on the awakened gaze of her deep eyes, her slightly rounded face, very similar to my sister Vera. It always seemed to me that, no matter where it was seen, grandma Carmela followed you with her eyes; beyond her graceful gesture, sharp lips, and upturned nose, her gaze reflected an intense claim.

A copy of that same photograph was in each of my other uncles and aunts' houses, and I also remember seeing it in the lonely house where Rolando Linares died, alone, one December afternoon, with a dozen scavenger cats as his only company. A death that had me

there, in my uncle Roman's house, looking at every detail of that small living room, affectionate with the dust and the sun, with webs of suicide spiders and the silent flies, the roof filled with small holes that let see the blue sky through the rusty tin, upholstered walls with old photos that took over the place, with the bizarre beauty of Roman and Brunilda's matrimonial photograph.

It was a beautiful contrast. She was wearing a remarriage yellow dress that showed her chubby figure like a hyperbole of misery and madness, her somewhat crooked look in the opposite direction to her twisted nose that gave her a unique enhancement, a parrot with a broken beak and a false teeth smile that barely showed under the upper lip, as if she was holding it with the lower lip. The whole scenario was completed by the gigantic wing of a yellow hat with a bow included. Roman appeared dressed in a pair of pointed and trashy ankle boots. The suit was larger than it should had been, the shirt barely hanging from his neck, his saliva threatening to come out from his lips, and the hair all shaved; a real Jean Valjean of the tropics. However, those rude features did not obscure at all the happiness showed in his face. Half a meter to the right, Joseangel's photo, on his knees and with his first communion suit. He had an even sillier face in the picture than in person. It occupied a place of privilege in the stale wall of broken paint. As for the rooms and the kitchen, there was not much else to say. I remember the floor very clearly. It was wooden in the living room and in my uncle's room. In Joseangel's room, there were wide and badly coupled planks, which let glimpse an inner universe full of the most curious bugs. The kitchen, meanwhile, had nothing but the rammed earth. The bathroom was an added of old tins and half-riveted planks that threatened to fly away at the mercy of any storm. That construction protruded from the house like a giant wart

on the devil's face. The wind passed through the slits and the hollows of badly hammered nails and the roof rattled by twisting on its rust with the afternoon sun.

After the tour, which included the view of the abandoned paddocks next to the backyard, Joseangel and I sat down to see the sunset, while Roman or Brunilda arrived. Flies fluttered in the window frames, uselessly trying to trespass the glass. The lagoon began to dress with the night and the fresh air took away some of that warmth of the environment. At that time, I could not imagine what it was going to happen in that house, but when you are twelve years old all you want to do is to explore, have fun, and meet people. It was not an amusement park, everything was very different from my life at home, where my sisters and my mother, my father and my friends from the neighborhood were. In my house, I had a patio with green areas and fruit trees, a dog, and a parrot. Here, on the other hand, there was almost nothing and, at the same time, there was everything.

4.

I had been half an hour at Uncle Roman's house when Brunilda came snorting, sweating, complaining about the heat of the afternoon. All her curls were scrambled on her forehead and had a market handle bag in her hands. She was a short, plump woman with a very peculiar face; even though, at first gaze she did not seem to be pretty, she had a particular tenderness attached to her long, pointed and twisted nose, nailed to her round and big-cheeks face. Her thin lips let see a tongue that entangled her words, partly because of the clumsiness she had since her birth and partly because of her lack of practice to use the false teeth that danced in her mouth. She also had small, round, dark eyes; her left eye was somewhat twisted like insisting on looking in the direction of the nose. Her curly hair, looked as if in an act of rebellion, it tried to jump from her head to the floor to escape. A little hump

always made her look to the ground; although, I am not sure if it was a habit of hers to always look at the ground that had provoked the hump on her back. Her hands were small, with chubby fingers. She was dressed in a bizarre combination, as a traveling circus host. That character, however, exhaled such warmth that overflowed her presence. This was Brunilda, and she showed that moment on the hinge of the door, soaked in sweat.

A sudden joy brightened her face when she saw me there in the room next to the youngest of her children. She smiled without calculations or second intentions. She seemed to walk in the air with awkward and short steps. Without any notice, she stamped a wet and mucus kiss on my cheek and, in the blink of an eye, she was turning on the stove to boil water to make some coffee. She loudly spoke to me from the kitchen, asking about my family, and assuring that Roman would arrive at any moment, as if she feared that I suddenly just left. She talked stumbling, braking every word with the tip of her hissing tongue, wetting the phrases, trying to remove her snoring with saliva. She told me she came from Caballo Blanco, where she had spent the evening knocking from door to door to ask in the houses for something, anything; *look, she told me she said, a pound of salt, some beans, if they had a bit of stale bread they would not eat, if they needed her to run some errands, an appointment in the hospital, to clean the windows or anything*, just to be able to help Roman and Joseangel to buy some food.

She was born in a hot and humid corner of Alajuela. Brunilda grew up on el Llano, in the middle of coffee-plantations. From some boyfriends unknown by the family tree, she have had seven children like rosary beads, all alike and the result of a mortal sin in which in the eyes of the district priest were set again and again. The last one to be born was Joseangel, with whom she went from neighborhoods and plains till one good day she arrive to La

Laguna, dressed in yellow, to fill Roman's life with a love that could conquer all, a kind of ugly fairy that had illuminated my uncle's life. In that way, her beautiful presence filled his life with wet kisses and laughter, something that Roman had not known before. Brunilda didn't take the weight off his life, but she helped him to carry it.

The woman walked on the dirt floor, putting some things on their place, without stop talking. She put the handle bag on the floor and then pulled out a bag of rice and sugar, a pound of coffee and a couple of sad and dented potatoes, that she was putting on a grinder where she had a two disc electric pan that she did not longer use.

"One day, I will go with Roman to see the sea," she said.

If the beauty fairy had stumbled before reaching her cradle, the truth is that that ugliness got distracted her with words. While moving her tongue, Brunilda put the groceries on a three-table cupboard next to the wall facing the living-dining room. From there, she moved to a aluminum pot that laid at the foot of the electric pan and then she pulled, soaked in clear water, a few pieces of boiled yucca and chayote that she heated in the stove where, with the other hand, removed the water for the coffee. They just had that to eat and that's exactly what we ate. She looked for the best mug to give me the coffee. I just threw the second piece of yucca into my mouth when the laughter of Roman came from the street. He entered through the front door, singing a song that have just invented.

5.

«*Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo*», he sang when he saw me sitting with a coffee mug in one hand and a piece of boiled yucca in the other. Then, he laughed loudly. His face was cheerful, his lips curved in a smile and a bright glance. The cap covered his ears and his beard scarcely showed in his wide and strong chin. He wore formal pants, the ones you

can find in the bales of used American clothes stores and a frayed shirt that testified having had better times. He wore rubber boots and had a basket in his hands.

«So, Santiaguillo stays with us for a week, » he said, scratching his ears and seeing me with my mouth full of salty yucca.

«I have a basket for you to go down tomorrow to get coffee from the field», Joseangel said.

It was already decided. The next day, I was going to become a full-time coffee picker, at least for that week; first in Paraiso and then on a great-uncle's property, or something like that, at the entrance to the Orosi valley, called Puente Negro.

«He says he's going to help us. Because you're going to help us, right? Because Roman is very poor, isn't he, right, right?», Brunilda said, looking at Roman and talking to me.

«Sure», I answered.

«I have said to Roman that he is very poor, right? And we have to help those who are less fortunate, right?» Brunilda insisted, with an almost desperate gesture that I did not understand well.

«Ah, mom, leave him alone», Joseangel said.

«No, he is going to help us, because we have to help. We help each other, right? And I have told Roman that he has to work to bring food home, right? And help me to go and ask for help at Caballo Blanco, right? You see, some ladies help us, they ask him mowing the grass and I run errands, because only asking for things is very ugly, right, right, right?»

Right, I said, getting some of the sociological rhetoric from that woman who bites the words with her incisors, just before leaving the tip of her tongue barely drawn on her lower lip in an almost comical way.

Roman burst out laughing, he was leaning back and forth clasping his hands in a loud applause and closing his eyes he began to sing again.

«*Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo* is a coffee picker. Santiaguillo has become a man; right, Brunilda? »

Who was I to contradict them, to tell them that those phrases did not lead anywhere; to understand that this was the way that they spoke and that once there, I was part of that singular herd that laughed at their misfortunes while drinking a coffee.

«He really looks like the deceased Rolando Linares. Roman, your nephew looks like Rolando Linares, right, right, right? »

«Yes, man, don't you see how much they look alike», Roman said, looking up at the old man's black and white photo.

I looked at the picture. The old man looked young and it seemed to me that I had nothing in common with the man that father had found dead in his house at Los Diques, in the midst of cats. I never liked cats. Then, I remembered the times I saw him, or perhaps I remember him now. Because there was a time when I saw him almost every day to bring him the lunch my mother prepared for him. I don't remember how he came into my life, I only know that one night, that proud man appeared with his pita hat in my house kitchen.

I remember he was tall, much taller than Dad, lying on the sink with his long arms crossed on his chest. He was talking to my father about some business related to a farm in Peralta, between Siquirres and Turrialba. It was a property located deep in the mountain, he

already worked with pastures and cattle, which the man insisted that it was infested with snakes. He looked at my dad with indifference and made affirmative gestures that reminded me of my uncle Arturo, the eldest of Dad's blood brothers. He has slight almond eyes, which made his square and long faced to look puffy in a gesture of concentration that implied a kind of malice, like suspicious vipers. His lips were identical to my uncle Roman's and the broad forehead seemed to lack any eyebrows trace. All of him was disturbing. The hat increased his height. That same brown hat, made of Italian pita, was part of the little that had remained of the wild life that led him to misery, that same misery that crushed his pride and made him deal with the embarrassment of going back to the son he abandoned almost thirty years ago.

From my height, I saw the hem of his pants more than his face. The belt fastened by a wide metallic buckle, a little longer and wider than a game card. In it, embossed on the metal, two roosters were challenged in a ring, with menacing wings and raised spurs, frozen on a piece of metal that was certainly another of my grandfather's treasures. He had bred and sold roosters like those, and with them he had made the money he drank in sprees, besides drinking the same contraband liquor he produced in his property, abandoned to a life of eternal singleness while his children took the luck on paths that he never cared about. Yet, that night he was there, in front of my father, the same one who fortunately and by destiny ended up in the House of José Linares and Maria Pia, who received him despite the fact of having to do miracles to keep their own fourteen children eaten and dressed.

I don't know if I'll ever have my old man's ability to forgiveness. He had the right to send that stranger back to his house on Los Diques. Just him and his brothers could claim abandonment. By that time, Dad was over thirty years old and yet, he received this phenomenon of prodigal father who sought him humiliated, defeated, with no more capital

than two fighting roosters, several cats, and a house embedded in a slum. The man was barely standing, drowned by the same vices that one day stole the future from his dead wife's children.

From my Grandpa's visit no more than three years had passed, and now I was there, with a piece of chayote in my hand, listening to Roman comparing me to that man with a wide forehead and a grim gaze who had abandoned him.

Relax, Roman, said the man. It's okay. Be quiet. But he couldn't be quiet. The straps tightened his wrists and ankles. Be quiet, repeated the man in the white coat. The room, dimly lit by a flashing fluorescent, was painted of a light green color. The bed was cold, like the air. Man, but I'm good. Yes, Roman, very good, we're trying to help you. The throat was dry. A woman put a cotton ball in his mouth. Open big, she said, and with her fingertips she pushed the cotton in. Eyes open, wide open. Suddenly, the sharp needlework. A man at one side of the table, wires, a metal crown on his head. This is going to be quick, a third man who arranged the wires of the machine said. Then the hum was heard. The wire man stood by the switch. The machine was vibrating. Fear. Sweat. The Hum. The machine and a scream caught in cotton, while the fluorescent flashed. The electric shock made him jump, one, two, three times. Again, the hum and, out of nowhere, all the lights went out.

6.

Shortly before eight, Joseangel threw a mattress stuffed with wheat straw to the floor; so I could sleep on it. My cousin-in-law would sleep on the bed boards, softened by some cartons and a blanket.

«The best for visitors, man," said uncle Roman, with some sorrow for leaving Joseangel without a mattress. Ten minutes later, the light was turned off. I settled the best I

could and tried to sleep. At first everything seemed okay, but as I relaxed, I began to notice the presence of certain elements that would make that night an unforgettable one.

It all began with a slight urine smell that until that moment I had not noticed and, subtlety at first, climbed from the inside of the mattress to become unbearable. At the same time, a mosquitoes squad started attacking my cheeks and the tip of my ears. Without having time or resources to face the situation, the attack magnified when two rows of countless hungry fleas arose from the inside of the gnawed blanket and began to sting me in parts that I have never come to see. As if the fleas situation was not enough, the mosquitoes and the stench of the new cousin's old pee, there was a night element that I was missing to witness. It stated as a distant murmur, a raging, but far-off river, dragging stones and sticks that turned into what should be the very roar of the cauldrons of Hell.

No, it was not Lucifer who emerged to carry me in body and soul, smelly and eaten everywhere; it was Brunilda, who snored like the devil and the old house shake to its foundations. That was one of the worst nights I've ever had in my life. Thinking about the warm bed and the room free of mosquitoes I had back home didn't help me at all. How did Roman do? I was clueless. Anyway, any noise or protest would have been dulled by his wife's snoring. After all, he had been seen in worse situations in his existence. Sleeping with Brunilda would be more like a paradise for a guy like him. Sleeping with a woman who hugged him with her arms like traps, was a thousand times better than sleeping alone, under a strange roof, just like he did most of his life, after being orphaned by mother. From house to house, from hospice to hospice. That slow child ended up more than once as a guinea pig in the madhouse, where he was given electroshocks to try to awaken the intelligence he may

have never had, and if he once had it, his head got numb after the contraband liquor prescribed to him in his feeding bottles.

Over time, Roman became the legitimate town idiot, farm worker, errand boy, shovel expert, bachelor in putting his back to work, market joke, pity on the street, miserable at all times, in a land where the poor does not starve, but he remains to be poor for the rest of his life. Champion, the workers told him every time he helped his uncle Napoleon to unload food sacks for the cattle. Behind each *Champion*, Roman raised not only one, but two quintals and, encouraged by other workers, he loaded two quintals and pulled the wagon, demonstrating an almost herculean strength that actually only hurts his back slowly. I knew nothing about it. The only thing that mattered to me at the moment was trying to quiet my mind, lulling myself with Brunilda's rhythmic snoring and ignoring the bites and the fleas walking in my belly, my crotch, and my back. The night went by and the bug hordes continued to eat me up until, defeated by fatigue, I felt nothing else.

7.

It was still dark when I opened my eyes. I still remember the cold. Strange sounds, footsteps running from one place to another, a door that opens, and in the distance, roosters, hens, birds at dawn, the smell of freshly-brewed coffee, laughter, unfamiliar questions and answers. I got up not being able to see anything, left Joseangel's little bedroom and stumbled across Brunilda that brought a steaming mug in her hand. Roman began singing while bathing.

«You want coffee, right? You'd better take a bath first, right? You're going to take a bath, right? Yes, you'd better take a bath first» she said, wetting her lips with the tip of her tongue after each sentence.

I was not used to the strange and peculiar way Brunilda talked but, I understood that I was sent to get a shower. I went back to the bedroom, where my cousin-in-law was getting rid of his crusts with his fingers. I grabbed the ones that would be my working pants, my t-shirt and underwear. The shower was already empty and I walked in. In that kind of added to the house made of tin sheets, where there was only room for the toilet and a stopcock shower at the top stuck to a wobbly PVC tube, I got undressed and the cold made me much stronger. The wind gusts lashed the weak structure. I thought the walls were going to fly, leaving me naked in the middle of the street. I opened the key and the water was shot in a vigorous stream, just above me.

The water brought out the little warmth I had in my body; The bites and the urine stench disappeared, as well as any other feeling of discomfort.

The cold water almost paralyzed me. I felt a freezing pressure on my chest. The water went through every pore, each stroke of bitten skin, until little by little, I awakened from the lethargy that still dominated me. As I left the bathroom, I was already disguised as a coffee picker and I thought I was ready to face anything. I rushed the mug of coffee and a piece of boiled yucca that Brunilda gave me. Then, my uncle Roman gave me the basket I was going to use and he explained to me how to tie the strap to avoid it slipping from my waist. He also gave me a roll-up sack to pour the coffee I would collect. Brunilda came near and gave me a can with rice, beans, a piece of yucca, and a hard-boiled egg. On her other hand she had a Coca-Cola bottle filled with sugar water; then I looked at Joseangel opening the door. The three of us went out, under the intense and penetrating gaze of grandmother Carmela, and we walked through the dawn of penetrating needles to the main street, beyond the deep sewer, to wait for the truck.

On the street, there was already a group of neighbors who were also on their way to the harvests. Sometime later, a pick up car with a wooden crate arrived, in which we got in the ones that fitted. Others with less luck, or that were waiting for another truck for another farm, stayed in the middle of the street.

I closed my eyes. The wind hit my face. Freedom is also to stand in a crate getting the cold slap of the sunrise in the face. My fellow travelers were seated on the floor, net to each other to bear the cold. I, however, felt like: a restless puppy who took the head of the group not to miss that dawn of intense colors, which dyed sky of with blows of light that broke the darkness of the dawn. After a while, we entered a property on the way to Orosi, but still the small and rugged town of Paraiso. The alleys of the coffee plantation stretched with the branches ready to deliver the grain. A grumpy-face man addressed my uncle with the authoritarianism of the Nazi coronels I saw on TV.

« Roman, you and the kid take this road », he said.

I did not move away from my uncle, who already began to give me the preliminary instructions of the art of picking coffee beyond the coffee-maker. People started to disappear among the alleys and the coffee plantation came alive, as if it had just awakened. The coffee-tree branches were furiously agitated before the indecent hands of the pickers and the sound of the first grains, falling in the clean baskets, began to disappear at the speed that pickers dictated it.

« Take this side of the road and I go this other side, *then I'll go over your branches to go over them* » Roman said.

The first contact I had with a coffee plant was like the first timid caress I gave to a woman. Only the result of that anxiety was to be seen. Soon, what it was theoretically a

mechanical act of cutting the beans from the branches became a fight between me and the coffee tree. I stirred my hands, scatterbrain, trying to catch the reddest grains, but the plant was not easy and in an hour I noticed with dismay that I had barely managed to fill half of the basket. Of course, the poor coffee-trees were the beaten witnesses of my clumsiness. You have to add the fight the ants gave me and the unfortunate *stepping* on a shit. In the meantime, Roman was singing. The other pickers made jokes that he avoided with the unobjectionable response of a laughter, and from time to time singing my name, saying *Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, is already a coffee picker*. But I knew it wasn't like that. The day ended shortly before two o'clock in the afternoon when, at a fairly distant place from where we started, the pickers met with their sacks full of coffee.

We sat on the sacks, on the roadside of the property, to wait for the truck that came with the grain meters and, of course, with the pay of three hundred colons for each coffee measure. The catch of that first day was little less than humiliating. After a day of fighting with the coffee beans I only had been able to put together two baskets. It was still exciting and I was betting that my second day as a picker would be much more profitable.

«Don't worry, Santiaguillo, we're going to Orosi tomorrow. There are better pants there » Roman said, and I smiled naively, hopeful, not knowing what I still had to learn from the coffee picks and poverty, as I was anything, but poor.

We were gone, looking at the horizon broken by blue hills beyond the properties, when out of nowhere, he began to sing.

How beautiful the mountains are

the mountains of life

how beautiful your hands are

warm as the sea.

Brunilda, Oh, Brunilda

I am in love with your eyes

clear and awake

like the waves of the sea.

«And that? », I asked.

«One day I will take Brunilda to the sea», he said.

8.

When I got off the truck, I was dead tired. I dragged the basket and my enthusiasm, my pants seemed like taken from an embankment, almost fell into the deep spout that went to the alley and I was about to go back home on the first bus to Cartago. Behind me came my uncle Roman, singing *Santiaguillo Santiaguillo Santiaguillo* and I, who was fed up with the song, walked faster to leave him behind. He reached me and put his hand on my shoulder. He didn't say anything; he didn't try to teach me any lessons, no advice, nothing. He was just there, walking with me, smiling with that simple smile. Nothing else. And as we walked, the blue house looked closer and I started singing to him, *uncle Roman, uncle Roman, uncle Roman*, and we laughed.

In his simplicity, Roman did not need anything to sing and laugh; to be there, even for me. Now, after many years went by, I envy him. At that time I did not think of all the things around us. I did not have the conscience to stop and be aware of his poverty, his looks, or his wife's appearance, much less to think on those problems that drawn people who try to be happy. I just limited myself to see him singing all the time, as he said, not to cry.

The night was very similar to the previous one. Brunilda gave us a frugal dinner; we ate white rice and boiled yucca, some coffee and the laughter of Roman that sang from one of the chairs, while scratching his head looking at my grandfather's picture. Rolando Linares himself, the old man who, after my grandmother's death, soon stopped riding his Harley Davidson. Years of alcohol left him facing the loneliness of failure. He soon lost the properties he purchased with the profits he made through the road-opening projects of the Americans.

During the Seventies, the gringos had their own internal crises and the Cold War had pointed to other latitudes after the control of the Latin American governments through military regimes in the South, sown with guns and treason. However, my grandfather had no idea of political maneuvers or geopolitics, so he ignored the real reasons why his career as a road-opener had dropped. He only understood that his tractor had stopped to be a gold mine for him. Without anyone telling him, tractors and bulldozers were sold and traders came out of nowhere offering trucks by payments and flatteners with discounts. It was modernization, development, something they called the agricultural revolution that filled with incredible machinery the roads where only mules and oxen could go.

The oil crisis had cheapened the price of everything with an engine and that meant that his business was worth less. Back then, he had had some contact with some of his children, especially Roman, whom he recruited as his farm assistant, rooster breeder, and firewood supplier for the illegal liqueur distillers that he had hidden in Peralta River's banks.

That story was told in pieces in my uncle's house, where the night goes by slowly between laughter and mosquito clouds that claimed with blood their night flight. Before I went to bed, I could see Roman talking with his family, gossiping about his things and the

neighbors' talking, with the smallest battery radio hanging from a nail in the kitchen, they heard bolero songs by Julio Jaramillo that Radio Rumbo broadcasted the whole day.

Joseangel spoke lively and laughed at all the things I said as if they were jokes. My uncle considered him his son and I tried to see him as my cousin. To remember them now, this way, it is almost as if we were there again, chatting in the small living room of the house, in a space without time sown in La Laguna, Paraiso.

The mirror was hanging from a nail in the bathroom wall. It was early, and for some reason, he looked at himself for a long time. His beard had grown without desire. It was as if it did not want to grow. He looked closer. His protruding chin, crushed lips, small eyes, straight and firm nose, thick straight hair. He wasn't handsome. He wasn't ugly either. However, there was something that made him feel different and he didn't understand what it was. Who's that in the mirror? It is me, he said, hello, said aloud, and no sound came out of the mirror, but he was sure he was there. This is who I am, he said to himself. That day, Roman introduced himself. He went out into the street and saw in the windows the Roman that the others saw, and still, he felt that his reflection was not him, that he was another one, he was the one who walked and could not see himself, so he never ended up knowing himself completely. The days and the months passed by, and sometimes he lived with Rolando, and some other times he slept in some uncle's house, or in a farm or in a banishment in the market, without ever understanding why that man in the mirror followed him everywhere; until one day when he felt the desire within his skin and sought for a woman who could fall in love with him or, ultimately, with the man in the reflection.

9.

That second night, I felt completely exhausted. My whole body was a complaint wrapped in skin. However, and in spite of the tiredness, the buzzing of the mosquitoes near my ears would not let me sleep. I decided not to be easy prey to those blood-sucking bugs. I tried to establish a strategy. I would let them approach without moving, appearing indolent and, when they were sure that they could sip of my cheeks and ears, I would throw the slap they deserved. The first attempts were indeed a masochistic act, where in most cases the mosquitoes came out winning; however, little by little I began to win the game and, slap by slap, I was bursting their fragile bodies full of blood against my cheeks, ears, and forehead. I think I killed more than twenty mosquitoes that night. Although that did not mean that the bugs' suicide revenge did not charge me a good *B positive* dose that circulates through my veins.

The next morning, besides the bruises, I felt that Stone Hand Duran and I had an intense fight. My face was stained with my own blood, as a result of the serial murders that I made against the flying species. Luckily, there was the freezing bath of the early morning, that almost fixed my face. At five thirty, I was already perched in the crate of a cattle truck with my uncle Roman, on our way to Orosi, to work in the properties of some Yazdani to plant the coffee of the Arabica species, the most Arabic one I got to know.

The place was on the valley's esplanade, just after going down to a place known as Puente Negro.

The land was surrounded by steep hills that threatened to spit stones on the coffee plantation. The plain was opened on both sides of the road, where for several hectares the coffee beans raised small but proud, slightly shaded by gigantic eucalyptus. The view was

prodigious and exhaled an great harmony, picking up the amazing shades of green that gave life to the coffee trees waiting for the pickers' agile hands, and mine too. The road that goes to the Orosi village is still there, leading the traveler towards the center, where the centenary church was risen centuries ago with the bereaved faith of the bearded Franciscan friars and the blood of the Indians tormented by the terror of the Colony, and which is still there, in that valley of hot springs and storms like blows from a furious god belching beauty.

«*Santiaguillo Santiaguillo Santiaguillo*, today you are going to get several baskets from here,» Roman sang as we walked to the place where the harvest began. In the coffee plantation, the pickers quickly distributed themselves in the roads. I followed my uncle, just as I had done the first day, listening to him singing with the basket in his waist, withdrawn, smiling at me from time to time.

The land was flat, the air was fresh, and the morning light uncovered the colors of the valley and then spit them in the air fanned by the wings of hundreds of birds that were cornered in the treetops. I smiled happy, seeing the bottom of the basket that I was filling with red grains that would then be exchanged for the money that had motivated me to visit my uncle. I could not help looking at him, so relaxed, with the same pleasant expression I had seen before, the afternoon when he introduced me to Brunilda, a few years ago.

10.

It was a Saturday afternoon, one of those in which the storm gets tired of raining and the fog sits on every street, stone, light pole, and soul that moves under the Cartago sky. Soon after he arrived from the match, in which the team he played with, *Las Once Estrellas*, had fallen crashed against the Real Fatima four to zero. Losing always helps to gain experience, they say, although, the truth, there were days when I felt that we already had too much of that

football experience on our backs and the victories remained unreached by the team led by Salvador Guzman, the owner of the oldest town market berries shop, so wrinkled from screaming that one day he was hoarse for life and directed his pupils with high-pitched whistling; it did not matter if it was sunny or rainy, if the berries were rotted in the trays of his market shop or if his wife was even bitter standing at his house door. That is how Salva was, and so he was like that until the last day of his existence, when he got tired of whistling in the middle of a match between Las Once Estrellas and the La Fortuna Sports Club. However, this was not the case in the afternoon I was already bathed, watching TV with my uncle Sergio while my mom was cooking some plantains in the kitchen, someone knocked at the door. Without taking the eyes of the TV, I heard Sergio greeting Roman, who responded with his singing. I jumped out of the couch and my uncle took me in his arms and began to sing *Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, you are so big, man, Santiaguillo, you see. I can't even get you up anymore.*

He laughed and looked at the house as you would look at a strange neighborhood. He wore white trousers and ankle boots, a button shirt and a plastic comb, of those that seem to have a handle and that they look very odd; it came out of the back pocket in his trousers. My mother greeted him and complimented his hairstyle, clothes, and the stench of the cologne that was impossible to ignore.

Roman, where are you going so groomed? my uncle Sergio asked, who back then was a young guy who thought he knew everything by then. Roman looked at the floor and scratched his ear. He said he was going to the Paraiso fair and he came to see if anyone wanted to go with him. It was strange, because as far as I knew, Roman lived in Paraiso. He

was up to something and mom, who was on top of everything (and I can say it, since she always caught in the air any trick I tried), discovered it in an instant.

«To me he is going to see a woman », Mom said.

That was enough for uncle Roman to uncomfortably move in the chair he had just sat on and laughed with his laughter loaded with nerves. *Ah, you see, you see*, Mom celebrated her cleverness and uncle Roman scrubbed his rattled hands over his face, as if he had been discovered in some terrible mischief. Sergio laughed and teased Roman, while pouring some coffee and dipping a fried plantain in sourcream.

«And why do you want to go with someone, Roman, if one does not go to interfere» Mom said.

Roman stuck his eyes on the ground and said:

«Well, I don't want to go alone, anyway, since she is not going alone either, she is going with some friends»

I didn't quite understand what the hell my uncle was talking about; I just clearly heard the word *fair* and he said: *And, well I came to see if anyone wanted to go with me.*

It's been twenty-five years. Now, I think I understand it a bit better. He was scared. I don't know if it was afraid of love or of facing the woman who he was in love with. The truth is that his face reflected fear and his excess of cologne stunk a badly-disguised fear. I still can see him, all distressed, I still get mad when I remember my uncle Sergio's mocking laughter making fun of him, not directly but with that double sense that, although I did not understand it well, it did understand that he was teasing him. Mom scolded Sergio and told him not to be rude, that he was also a coward regarding women's affairs. Roman laughed and wiped his beard with the back of his hand. He rushed a mug of coffee that Mom gave him without me

noticing. There was a somewhat uncomfortable silence. Sergio got just scolded and Mom was mortified of seeing my uncle in love. And my uncle, who was still slow, he was dumber than usual due to that so rare sickness called love. After all, if it happens to anyone, why wouldn't it happen to him?

It was still raining outside. The afternoon was slipping through the windows, while the smell of coffee entered Roman's face and gave him a gesture despair that has not repeated anymore in the face of a man with fear of love. I insist, I didn't even understand what was going on, but I did understand that he needed someone to go with him to face that terrible fear that made him comb the little hair he had on his head.

« I'll go,» I said.

And, I went.

11.

The bus steps were wet. Roman leaned the tip of his boot on a step and slipped. That was the first time I got on a bus with him. In fact, it was the first time I was going anywhere with him. At that time I was only nine years old and was still very far from that little boy that three years later would go to Orosi to pick coffee. That Saturday afternoon when I met Brunilda I left home with a fifty colones bill in my pocket and a ton of silly warnings from my uncle Sergio in my head. *Remember that your uncle is half nutsy. Be careful. Open your eyes well and see where you are going*, and some other equally silly things, that only people with a lot of fear can think of. The bus ride from my house to Cartago downtown was a road full of holes on the ballast street that first went to the colonial village of Quircot, where, through the strength of the Adobe, a temple is erected with more than four hundred years of threatening the parishioners with falling over them every Sunday. Before taking the road to Cartago, the

bus took a four-kilometer journey among farmhouses and paddocks, in which the *GMC* bus jumped on the stones without getting out of the way. With a cruising speed among ten and twenty kilometers per hour, the vehicle was spitting mud at the sidewalks after getting into every hole, while I was trying to draw figures in the steamed-up glass and Roman looked at the emptiness, wobbled by the stumbles of that can assembled in some lost Detroit workshop many years before Brunilda herself was born.

After a while, and a little shaken, we got off the bus in Cartago downtown. That man who was not afraid of ridicule, who was not afraid of the filthiest jobs, who was not afraid of loneliness or hunger or abandonment, was terrified with fear due to his encounter face to face with that woman who, according to what he told me, was waiting for us at the Mata sawmill. I would realize by my own means why that woman was worth the fear. But before, Roman put the tip of his boot in the slippery and cold step, as an omen that no matter what he wanted, that woman would make him fall, and he fell.

The sudden fall on the sidewalk drove away a few frightened walkers. I got down the bus behind him. With all the dignity that corresponded to the situation, Roman shook his wet, white, and tight trousers. *Nothing, nothing happened to me*, he said, as he looked a little disoriented. And when he looked up, he looked at me smiling.

We were able to see the city at each step as the fog was beaten. The shapes and colors appeared blurred by an insistent white veil that touched everything. Only the nearest objects were directly conceived by my eyes, as if by habit we only believed in what we have within the reach of a stumble.

It was Saturday afternoon, there were a lot of people on the market street. By the time we arrived to the place agreed with his sweetheart and friends, the afternoon was already

coming to an end. They had not arrived there yet. So, we leaned back to wait in the white walls of the old Mata mill while waiting. Roman waited with an undisturbed patience barely pinched by my presence. Love is not only cruel, but it tortures you with the wait. But for Roman it wasn't like that. The wait had never been absent in his menu, nor in the rest of his history, he simply did not know what anxiety was.

Thus, Roman was a very patient man. He has never expected a salary increase, a promotion, a taxi, a lottery price. Waiting for him was a tacit act and not a sacrifice. His waiting was confined to the art of surviving. So, for example, once he waited eight hours outside a building to be able to talk to the manager to find out if it was possible for him to be given a job as a security guard, but when everyone left the building, he realized that the manager did not visit the place that day. He knew it because he was told by the guard whose position they had told him he could have. In fact, it was a joke to the guard of the night shift. Roman knew how to wait and at the same time, he didn't expect anything. The same thing happened that afternoon, when he went to my house to talk to Mom, and try to convince someone to accompany him to his date with Brunilda. Therefore, it's weird to wonder what he could expect from love, if it was there.

You'll see, Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, what a lovely person this woman is, he said every now and then, trying to make the wait less boring for me. But I wasn't bored, I was rather anxious at the idea of going to Paraiso fairs and watching the bulls ring, the machines, the games to win money, the cotton candy, the candy peanuts, the churros, the hoops games, the colorful lights spinning at full speed while hiding broken pine nuts and old engines, men on stilts, magic shows, marked cards, sweet corn with butter, display case chicken, rings and bottles, target shooting, pee in the corner, mud on the ground, white steam coming out of the

mouth at ten degrees Celsius, beautiful, ugly and deceived girls, men with booties, hats facing back, late eighties fashion bangs raised by the deed and grace of Plastigel, cigarettes between fingers, gargled alcohol, ranchera music, incandescent bulbs sizzling at the top of the wire, door calls in the ring and doors that open in the infinite space of a cantina dead of love; all those things that a fair meant for a little boy like me. In such derangement I waited with my gaze absorbed in the air, drawing silhouettes, and studying curious figures in puddles; as my dad said: acting like a fool, to the extent that I had even forgotten what we were waiting for, when suddenly Roman said: here she comes.

The woman looked at him attentively. The man standing at the gate seemed undecided. What can I do for you?, the woman asked from the door hinge. They told me you do some works, he said. It looked like he was going to run off at any moment. He was afraid that she might get offended if he called her a witch. Get in, it is okay, the woman added. The man laughed nervously. I was told that you're very good, the man said. Come in, don't be afraid. Are you being referred? Yes. It's okay. Get inside, close the gate please. The wooden floor cracked under his feet. The room was dimly lit by a window hanged with a thick red curtain. Extinguished candles, sideboards with potions, a round table with a tablecloth red like blood. The smell to old book penetrated every slit. Roman sat in front of that woman who with exquisite subtlety asked for two hundred colones for the work. Extend your hand, she said, and Roman, obedient, stretched out his hand. I see love, she suddenly said, while opening her eyes widely. Roman nervously laughed. That's what you're looking for, isn't it? And a new laugh shook him. Love will come soon, so for it to arrive, sing, sing a lot, and when it arrives, do not forget to always sing to her, and take her to the sea. That night Roman bathed himself in herbs and prayed a rosary, a white beads rosary. He never stopped singing.

12.

I cannot say if his tone was of joy or resignation, all I know is that suddenly the sidewalk had overflowed with the presence of four characters taken from a carnival. It was them. Four prodigiously ugly women. They all had a disheveled figure; smiling, cheerful, carefree and awakened, they walked filling the sidewalk, hysterically smiling, freshly dispatched and swollen, in the best case scenario, by passion. It did not mean my uncle Roman and I were just a couple of gallants lying there on the sawmill white walls, but it seemed that if those women had fallen from the sky, they had hit their faces against the floor.

The ugliest one approached my uncle and, pulling out the tip of her tongue, she stamped a noisy and wet kiss on his cheek. She moved with the tender clumsiness of a lame penguin and smiled between snorings and gruntings. I must assume that the innocence of my shot age kept me attentive and silent before that woman's tender treat. Thrown to my luck, I received with stoicism the slimy greetings of Roman's friends. Kiss to kiss, stamped their faces on mine and I got infected of that terrible beauty in which, being all ugly, we became all pretty.

Brunilda was the same old woman who I would find years later in the house of La Laguna, only that that afternoon, as natural, she looked a little less old and wore a little more tied and colorful clothes. Her three friends were very peculiar, as well. One was Miriam, the skinny one, a slender staircase of bones and sinews, long and sharp jaw towards the front, and who laughed without getting sick of it, showing her perched teeth, wrinkling her almond yellow eyes, sculpted under a hundred wrinkles *colored* with blue and red gleams; a kind of French harlequin celebrating the storming of the Bastille. She was a jewelry specialist. When she moved, the rings of her arms sounded all at the same time and she had the power to see

beyond time and space, according to what Brunilda told me afterwards. Miriam was sort of a witch of the El Guarco Valley, as she read the cards and the coffee cups, and had told her in a dream that Roman was the man of her life, the same night that in La Laguna a calf with two heads was born.

The second woman after Brunilda was Lorna. Lorna *the Portentous*, I thought. I never said it aloud, but I am sure, since Miriam the witch knew what I thought, one day she was going to tell her. *Lorna the Portentous* had long arms as vines and was the only woman I had seen that was able of smiling without opening her mouth. She also looked without opening her mouth, sang without opening her mouth, and drank soda with a straw, also without opening her mouth. She was a gigantic woman, at least four heads taller than Roman. She looked at me silently, without opening her mouth. It was portentous, impressive, powerful. I knew that, if she wanted to, she could crush, with a single slap, any man as big as he could be, and with just one look she could also make you feel good. The third one was the tiniest and strangest of the four. Glenda had red and short hair, but no red as a redheaded, but as a tomato red. Her hair slipped down the neck in tiny snakes that kissed her skin. She was as short as me.

I watched her walking, she walked over the puddles without making waves. People in Caballo Blanco said she was a saint and that's why it was normal for her to walk on water.

She extended her hand so Roman could kiss it as knights in television do and he did not understand what the small, transparent onion skin, jasmine scented, woman meant. Glenda laughed when she saw him so mortified and laughed so joyfully, that things seemed to dazzle with the brightness of hopes with the desire to be born.

Brunilda, well, it is enough to say that that afternoon, as many years later, in the small blue house at La Laguna, she snarled lovingly at him.

We walked to take the bus to Paraiso. It was easy to understand that the plump short woman who snored was the one who got my uncle even more foolish than he normally was. I have hardly ever had as much fun as I did with those women that others would have considered as ugly. I do not remember having enjoyed so much with characters as curious as them, and if we add my uncle's dumb love face, I could say it was a great afternoon, because, since I didn't give any resistance, I was also awarded. Without calculation or interest, I clapped every occurrence and nonsense; they applauded mine, I was outstanding listening to their observations, being amazed by their astonishment and getting excited with their joy, in such a way that Roman's friends were excited to buy me whatever I wanted. That was a lot more than I could have won if I'd stayed thrown in the couch watching TV in the living room.

In the fair, everything was all noise and confusion, lights hanging from improvised premises, mud, people, laughter, and the memory of the red walls of the ring to which we walked several laps, but never entered. I soon forgot my uncle Sergio's clumsy warnings about Roman. I merely listened to him laughing as he scratched his arms tormented with the presence of that woman, that many would consider ugly, to whom he said again and again *Brunilda, Brunilda, Brunildita*, and in whom he was hopelessly lost in a simple happiness, a happiness that I now see in the distance with the desire to imitate it.

The little boy I could not imagine that, years later, that woman was going to be my uncle's wife and she would give me a slow and surrogate cousin, who yelled at me in the middle of the coffee plantation to the other side of the plant: *Well, cousin, you are being eaten by the ants, don't you feel them?*

13.

I have known crisis since I was born. People never again heard about another state in the country rather than the state of economic alert and, although, my uncle Roman seemed indifferent to any reality conceived by the government technocrats, such reality of poor poverty was the only one in which he had splashed in. Dad, on the other hand, worked most of his life from the sweet warm trench of bureaucracy, to the point that we could afford to be part of that strange class called middle class. Dad did not cease to repeat over and over again that we were poor and that as poor, we had to live. However, true poverty, the one that boils beans in a rancid broth every morning to eat, I lived it in full-bodied in the blue house at La Laguna. There was a sort of camaraderie among these poor people with dirty ankles and black nails of working, that chatted with my uncle after their day of work.

One of these evenings, I witnessed the arrival of a short man, with scarce mustache, and glassy eyes. He came slowly and smiling. Jesus, a neighbor who said to be Brunilda's and my uncle's friend, spoke with his storyteller voice somewhat charlatan. He sat on the best of the three armchairs of the house, he took out a bottle of booze, the one they call missiles, and sipped in for a long time. My uncle Roman laughed loudly at all the occurrences that Jesus said and Brunilda snored between comments at the bottom of the page that did not make any sense to me, while she brought him some yucca. The truth is I cared less what this bottle-in-hand Jesus had to say, the only thing that mattered to me was that the next day we were going to pick coffee. I was losing my sleep and the rashes in my arms were starting to itch.

I saw Jesus falling three times that night and the three times Roman helped him as the Cyrene and Brunilda, seemed like Magdalena, but instead of crying, she was laughing. Joseangel was pushing me out of the house so we wouldn't miss the show of seeing Roman,

who had not had more than a coffee with a piece of chayote, picking Jesus up from the ground.

He had practice. He had learned to pick drunks people up from the ground ever since he was a child. When he was not in a hospice or working in a relative's home, Rolando Linares had the habit of taking him to help him in the distillers he had on his land, where he distilled contraband liquor and had played cock fightings. A revolver on his belt, a wad of bills tight to his right pocket, drink in hand, Rolando Linares became such a host who ended up drunk on his own alcohol, while Roman tried to revive him so that the players did not take too much advantage of that administrator who got slept over his earnings. Then Roman poured him strong coffee, wet his back, pulled him where the other players or drinkers could not see him and the next day he had to endure the fury of the old man who cursed the fate of having a child who did not know how to contain him.

With that background, it was not a surprise that Roman knew exactly how to pick up a drunk.

14.

The next day, I woke up less stunned by the night fight. I was almost used to the legions of mosquitoes. In fact, I became an expert in the art of killing mosquitoes and almost did not feel the crawling attacks of fleas. With what I did not count on was that the truck would come ahead of schedule, forcing us to run out of the house so it would not leave us behind. It was an absurd race. Joseangel had lent me some rubber boots that fitted large and, at each step, I looked like a donkey trying to balance in high heels. When dropping the foot on the floor and supporting the weight of my body, my ankles lost the support point. My heels, literally, swam

inside the rubber boots, which due to the filling and emptying of the air emitted the same sound as a toad splashing in a pool.

Those are the Devil's farts, Jesus said, laughing aloud. They were the most agitated and clumsy fifty meters I remembered in the last two months.

Run, Run man, Santiaguillo, Roman shouted as we watched with grief how the last of the coffee pickers climbed into the cabin, who turned out to be a such Luis, who appreciated my uncle very much.

Easy, easy, there comes Roman, Luis shouted. And the car suddenly stopped. By then, we were reaching the cabin and kicking and fighting with the rubber boots, I managed to climb. We turned right after Puente Negro, at the entrance to Orosi Valley. The early morning ice needles pricked my face and my fingers were cold. The light began to show up when I noticed the Reventazon River that fell zigzagging down the valley. On the left, there were the huge orange trees on the side of the road, guarding the coffee plantations at the La Maquina farm. The truck left us inside the farm; there, a grasshopper took us even further up, in a wagon that in the afternoon the coffee would be transported. As we went along, I noticed a lot of pickers, some were walking and others went in a wagon. I had never seen so many pickers together; whole families, with small children who barely walked, were already climbing the slopes to get experience. I felt lucky that morning. Already in the road to the coffee plantation, my uncle and I applied the same strategy of previous days; he grabbed the ones on the left and I the ones on the right, then he would go over the plants that I left badly harvested. I was already warming up my hands and cutting the juicy little fruits of the branches when I started noticing them. First there were just a few, then hundreds and then thousands the ants that moved among the branches, raging without a doubt by my clumsy swipes. I got

hypnotized, seeing the bugs, when I suddenly felt a bite on the back, then another and another, and through my arms and between my trousers I felt my unpleasant feeling of being walked over by thousands of legs.

I walked away; jumping as I were possessed, and yelled at the same time that I was shaking in an attempt to get rid of the basket and my shirt. My uncle ran to help me, frightened, and slapped my back and chest, trying to kill the carnivorous things that ate my backbone for breakfast. I managed to take off my shirt and trousers; I passed my hands over and over again through my body, while sending everything to hell.

Man, Santiaguillo, they really bit you, man, my uncle said with some regret while shaking my clothes against an orange tree. That morning, all bitten, I sat down for a while to see him work while I calmed down a little and drank the water with sugar which was my drink for lunch. I noticed Roman was mortified, he murmured my name, worried, and seeing him like that, unable to stop working to assist me, I felt a bit distressed, too.

I looked at him and in that moment, I thought I knew little or nothing of that guy, who saw me with an anguished gesture because the ants had bitten me.

It's okay, man, he said. And honestly, I felt the worst was over. Roman had, without knowing it, a serenity in his voice that calmed storms and sorrows.

That afternoon, when we arrived home, Brunilda gave us a mug of hot coffee with a piece of boiled yucca. Through every hole in the house, the light penetrated into dust-bouncing jets, which seemed to shine suspended in the air. Brunilda walked balancing all her sturdiness through the room, snoring, looking with that nervous tic of anxiety on my uncle's face. *Right, Roman, right, right, that it is unfair as we are so poor we live so badly?* She said, looking at my uncle without leaving any doubt that he had to agree with her.

Yes, it's a shame, it's a shame, Roman answered, with that curious repetition of words that only reaffirmed his misery. Brunilda walked from one place to another, thoughtfully. From what I could understand, that day she had walked all the way to Caballo Blanco asking for food in houses, but apparently it had gone wrong and, adding to that, that day Roman had only picked four baskets of coffee. I think it was because he was watching me, so nothing happened to me and besides he went over the plants that I badly picked; therefore, it decreased the amount of coffee he could gather. In addition, it had to be added what Joseangel would have taken in other coffee plantations, but the truth is that he could not do a big difference, because my poor cousin was slow not only to understand the things of the world, but in general, to move around the world, as well. You didn't have to be too smart to understand that they were having a hard time. On my end, it was little what I could contribute; my two and a half baskets did not add up to five hundred colones more. At this point, my economy was not any better than when I arrived at the beginning of the week, the temptation of a neighborhood market two hundred meters from the house was enough to lessen the profit that I could have accumulated. Still, my uncle started singing a song.

«Ah Roman, you only sing and sing, and we will not eat with that », Brunilda said, and looking at me she insisted on the complaint:

«Singing is not going to feed us, right, right?» And I did as my uncle's. « *Yes, it's a shame* », and I left the house.

A word to the wise is enough. Anyway, the money I made as a coffee picker had to be good for something, so after listening for a while longer, I went to the neighborhood market and spent all the capital I had accumulated in a few things to eat. It was not much, I could only buy a bag of rice and beans, a quarter of a kilo of coffee, and two spirals to keep the

mosquitoes away. My uncle, upon seeing me come in with the bag in my hand, heartbroken asked me about eight times *why I had done that, if that was my money*, and I answered just that, because it was my money. I slept a little better that night. That was the first time that economic problems meant something to me.

You can't handle that quintal. Yes, man. No, Roman, you can't handle it. He can carry it, Roman, show him. And Roman carried the quintal on his shoulder. Ah, but you can't take two. And Roman carried two quintals on his shoulder. Ah, but bet he doesn't go from here to the cellar. Roman then showed that he could, that he could cross the whole market with two quintals of flour on his shoulder. And when he came back, they said, the Champion is strong. And another said no, he's not that strong. And then he carried another quintal of flour on his shoulder, and his back would respond with a sharp stab, but he would manage it, because he was Champion, and then he would take the second, and then a third, and Roman walked singing with his knees trembling all over the market, until he got to the San José cellar, where he left the load. And then someone said, where is this guy coming from? From the other side of the market, another responded. They're making fun of the poor guy. No, that's the Champion, said the first, and Roman laughed out loud, and continued pulling the flour. He did not remember that until many years later, when the doctor told him that he had a severe wear on the spine discs and he no longer could carry sacks in the market.

15.

His nickname was *Macho Tigre* (Blonde Tiger) and he was supposed to be something like a second great uncle or something like that. I really didn't see much of a tiger or a blonde. He was rather an old man, with brown hair and few teeth. Roman introduced me as his brother David's son, and it was enough for a few old ladies to come over while drying their hands in

an apron and saying that I was all grown up, and that I looked just like my dad. I did not believe them a bit, but I started to like them when they sat me down on an old wooden bench, in front of a very big table that was in the middle of the kitchen. In a blink of an eye I was already with an aguadulce (sugar cane juice with water) mug on one hand and a biscuit on the other, happily eating something that was not parboiled chayote.

We had arrived with the baskets in hand ten minutes before. That day, as much as Luis and even Jesus, interceded for us, we did not get to the truck, so we arrived to Orosi by bus. It's funny, despite the years, as I remember that morning, I still feel in the air the smell of wallowed earth, rubber boots, basket, biscuit, aguadulce, freshly brewed coffee, ignited sticks, embers, smoke, iron, stale hair, washed apron, old pants, morning sun, and newborn remembrance.

Where are you going today? *Macho Tiger* asked. With some sadness, Roman replied that probably they had already distributed the roads in La Maquina and that arriving to the fields by foot would take half of the morning, so we were screwed. *That's screwed up*, my new relative repeated. *You can go to the hill across from here, if you want.*

Macho Tigre (Blonde Tiger) spoke while poorly grounded sweet-bread crumbs between his teeth loomed in the corners of his lips.

«Those guys at La Maquina come here around one, before weighing the coffee up there, and they can pay you at once, without you having to climb to where they weigh the coffee up.»

The look in Roman's face changed completely and asked if the coffee was well placed in the hills that were across the property, to which the Tiger agreed and that he himself would have picked coffee there, but he clarified that he had a bad leg and that he better let Martin do

it, a nephew who lived nearby and did not have a job, so thought there was a problem in starting with him. We went to the yard. It was about seven o'clock in the morning.

«Where should we begin? » my uncle asked.

«Up to down», Macho Tigre (Blonde Tiger) answered, pointing to the hill that was right in front of his property, crossing the street. It is still there and every time I pass by it, I remember such morning. It is a sturdy and steep hill, very steep, full of coffee bushes with some stems and güitites. It excels from the landscape because it is exactly around the corner of Puente Negro and in that time, it had a long and wide sign, to which I did not pay much attention to.

We got in through a wooden gate and, by putting my hands on the sign, I looked up, looking for a reasonable path to start climbing. My uncle did not wait for me, we had already lost two hours in the morning and the truth was that if we did not pick coffee, we would not eat; taking that into consideration, I hurried to follow him uphill, grabbing branches and trunks.

In a few minutes, I climbed to where the noise of the plants told me that I had reached my uncle. This was not a coffee plantation like Yazdani's or La Maquina, where the roads were well defined. No. This was a coffee plantation on a hillside and had grown as it could. Uncle Roman pointed out a few plants to his right and told me to start over there, going around them and down a step each time I reached to where the fruit had been cut, so that I would bring an even cut as I went down the hill. That morning I was willing to pick more than ever. I had the challenge of grabbing more than the three baskets of previous days. I stood hard in the soft land and began to move my hands the best that I could. The grains began to cover the bottom of the basket and, little by little, I began to notice that it was getting filled.

When I had three quarters full, I stopped and unrolled the sack that was tied to the supply, put it on the floor and emptied the coffee carefully so I could not lose a bean. I also was careful of not throwing leaves or trash, because I had been warned that they penalized it when paying, as there were tricky pickers that, to increase their measures, they threw dirt, leaves, and green coffee beans in the sack. I kept ripping beans as fast as I could, with the conviction that day was going to be different. Soon it was half-filled. That meant I had almost four baskets. I can't explain the excitement I had when I saw the sack half full. I was putting it near an orange tree, when suddenly the coffee inside got disarranged and the sack started rolling downhill.

I threw myself with my tummy to the ground with my basket and stopped the sack from emptying. I rearranged it, so I felt proud of my reflexes. I went to the plant I was working on and suddenly I heard the sound of the sack slowly slipping. I turned around and helplessly looked how the coffee had begun to come out of the sack's mouth that had turned to the slope. I threw myself back in the direction of the sack and lifted the edge to prevent the coffee from coming out, but the land under my feet gave way and I slipped with the sack in my hand and basket in the waist. I could not control my body, the basket stood on my way so I could hold onto anything, as for anything in the world I wanted to release the sack I had on the other, so the sack, the basket and I went down the hillside tumbling and hitting on each stick, stone, and branch.

I only remember seeing the ground and the branches, the sky in pieces, and feeling over and over again the basket beating my body up every turn I rolled down. What hurt me the most was seeing the coffee beans as they came out from the sack and spilled down the hill without being able to avoid it. I kept rolling until the fence at the foot of the hill suddenly made me stopped. When I realized that I had stopped, I was lying face down, with my arms

crossed. The basket had disappeared at some point in my rugged descent. I still had the sack on my left hand, but it was already empty. I leaned with my right hand and got up, staggering and cursing my luck. As I looked up, I was in front of the sign that adorned the foot of the hill. The same one I had not paid attention to when we were going to start picking coffee. It was nothing less than the first lesson of sarcasm until that moment in my life.

In front of me, as if it was mocking me, there was that misspelled sign I will never forget, telling me with derision: "Welcome to Orosi."

16.

More than twenty years have passed since that fall and my return home. I don't quite remember the farewell. There are moments that are forgotten if we don't tie them to our ankles. So, I must confess that those last evenings at Roman's house were lost in time. My memory was filled with useless things that took space from his last laughter. My life kept going. New days came and got piled up in this past that I am; and so came school, and friends, and girlfriends and year-end rides to beaches and parks and slowly, moment by moment, I walked away from him, and if I saw him I was glad, but I did nothing to stay in his universe. So one goes, like a wave in the water that moves away from its center, growing bigger and weaker until getting lost in the current. Years passed, boys, bottles and calendars, the sweet acidity of sweat in the neck of a run-away companion and the Immaculate Saints' prayer falling into their original sin in a world where I got lost by being a brat every day and night. With five buried dogs, four deadly enemy ex-girlfriends, six jobs, five presidents, two hundred and eighty nine deputies, thirty-eight professors, five trips around the world in paper planes, and a gang of friends forgotten in the corner; It was like, without realizing it, I became a man, with wife, two children, work, a mortgage, three new dogs, a good car and a bad one,

somewhat bitter about the economy, somewhat happy with soccer, one day yes and other not, a middle class guy who half lives and half dreams of barrels moored to the bank account port; without realizing it, I became one of those who line up to go to the cinema or to pay their bills.

One afternoon at the office, I got a text message on the phone. It was my sister, announcing in thirteen characters and a space that Brunilda had died.

I got off work thinking about her and Roman. The last time I had seen them was two burials back, by the time aunt Ersilia died. He was fatter and broader on his back. He was starting to drag the years like dirty and frayed sacks of stones like him. He had the same childish look, shaved head and he laughed as in my childhood memories. She seemed to have stayed in a stage of pause in which her features could not be any more grotesque, despite the wrinkles accumulated in her crow's feet. One could say she was the same Brunilda that snored in the blue house at La Laguna. But no one would listen to her again.

Sadness is the most sincere and solemn station. No one escapes from it; it hides under the fingernails and walks under the skin biting the bones. Roman held himself beside the coffin with one hand on the wood and the other tightening his eyes, so that he seemed to be holding his head while he was making a slow and sustained groan from the inside. Every wrinkle in his face squeezed that desolated sadness that threatened to completely emptied him. He was a bunch of pain that barely could walk with the inertia of a world that didn't stop to see him cry. In the streets, the light lit colored signs and, in the distance, the mountains were lost until reaching the tides that kissed the poles of the piers from where he and Brunilda never left. In the chapel, the prayer women were entrusted to their black bead rosaries, to

repeat over and over again the litany of killing the one who saves us, while Roman, standing next to the coffin, wept for not being the wood holding the dead woman there.

The next day, when I saw him leaving the church with his right hand on his forehead, his eyes on the floor, and his other hand on the coffin, I felt miserable and small. That afternoon, in the Paraiso cemetery, he himself pushed the coffin with the cold body of that huge and cheerful woman who had given him what no one ever gave him: a home, a warm body in bed, smiles, fights, and a life. The light went off dissonant to the West and I hugged him as I have almost never done in my life.

Then we left him at his blue house, at the end of the boulevard.

17.

The peach in the garden is loaded with small fruits. In a couple of months, they can be cut. The wind of these cold and strange days whips them but they do not fall. It grew lush. In the late hours of the afternoon, his shadow is projected on the garden as the memory that it brings me.

The afternoon we planted it, Dad told me that after Brunilda's death, things had changed for Roman. Joaseangel got married and had sold the blue house, which shortly after was taken down to lift a manufactured house with other people and another story. Overnight, he had been seen himself again in the street, just like when he was thrown out of the orphanages. With his stuff in a bag, he walked through the muddy streets of Las Latas slums, where he went to live with my aunt Reina, who continued to be the skinny and beautiful woman as a chamomile flower, who still prays to the Saints that she made up herself. We decided to enjoy the Sunday afternoon by visiting them. Less than an hour later, Dad, my wife, and I arrived. The house was small. Dad had built about ten years ago, after Reina

divorced a rogue husband she had. The wooden house was in the middle of a boulevard full of kids coming and going, clouds of mosquitoes coming out of the sewers and from time to time guys with an unfriendly face passed by, studying who had entered the neighborhood. We walked in. My aunt greeted us, wiping her hands with a cloth. She was preparing some coffee. In a few minutes, she brought us the news from Roman.

According to her, after Brunilda's death, life had lost sense to him. He spent his days humming songs in a hallway chair, not interested in anything or anyone; he refused to take medication and ate little. In the afternoons, he would go out for a walk, singing sad songs.

«He even has a new nickname. Now he is called Julio Iglesias», Reina said looking at the emptiness of the wall, where, just as in the blue house at La Laguna, the photographs of my grandparents were hung. «And, where is he now?» Dad asked. She twisted her mouth and looked the other way; then she bowed her head and said:

«Oh, David, that boy goes away every afternoon to where they had the house in La Laguna. He stands there like a fool, to serenade Brunilda.»

There were still a couple of daylight hours. We got on the car and took the way to La Laguna. We got to the alley street. I went down and jumped the ditch that more than twenty years ago I jumped with my uncle at dawn to take the truck that took us to the coffee plantations. My wife stayed in the car. I felt Dad's footsteps behind me, then beside me. I don't know why, but I walked with my eyes on the floor, and every step of it was wallowing in memories, sensations, and sounds, until I started listening to him. His crisp, out-of-tune voice floated like a plaintive whisper through the air. Roman hugged his chest as he hummed with his eyes closed, swaying, without noticing us, in the direction where his blue house once was.

That afternoon, nostalgia was dressed as a sad man.

18.

Upon noticing us, he came out of the slumber. Suddenly, he seemed to be himself again. *Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo, Santiaguillo*, he said. We got out of there; it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to do something different with him. We went to pick my aunt up and took them for a walk around the tree nurseries next to the road to Cartago. We talked just to talk, to fill the gaps and from time to time he would repeat, like when I was a child: «*Ah naughty Santiaguillo, you are already a man, Santiaguillo.* »

We walked among the hedges and the begonias, the almond trees and the willows and, at the end, we chose a peach tree to sow it that afternoon. We took the road again and climbed to the mountains buried among the Irazú and Turrialba massifs, to the yellow house where I write this story. It was a little cold. Roman sowed the peach tree and you could see in his hands the fatigue of the years.

That was the last time I was with him.

All I have from him is this peach tree that opens giving shade, as if it wanted to sing. As it can be seen, it is loaded with small fruits and other branches are in bloom.

A couple of months later, I got my mother's call with a broken voice on the other side. Roman had died at dawn. He had been depressed the last months and that added to a heart problem that we always suspected he had and that the death certificate came to confirm: old Roman had a very big heart.

Esteban Mata (Cartago, 1978)

He is a journalist with studies in philology. He has extensive experience in written media as a reporter for political issues, human rights, and national reality. It has been awarded

by the United Nations Organization (UN), the Ombudsman's Office and the Supreme Elections Tribunal (TSE). The novel *Welcome to Orosi* is his first publication. In addition, he has two story books and another unpublished novel. With this work **lethe ediciones**, he inaugurates his **pasadomañana** collection.

Novel

At the age of twelve, Santiago Linares spent a week in his uncle Roman's house, in Orosi Valley. Three decades later, he narrates this chapter of his life that happened among coffee plantations, marginalization, and his uncle's songs, for whom joy is some yucca, a basket of ripe coffee, or a song for his companion, Brunilda.

Death, as a prelude to life, is portrayed in *Welcome to Orosi* with the stark distance of the meticulous observer, who unravels a story of abandonment and misery, where light sprouts in so much dark space.

This is Esteban Mata's first novel. A forceful, luminous, and hard text, in which his poetic voice flows through the waters of the narrative as does the Reventazon River in the valley where this story converges. The author, with the soundness of the narrator who knows well his craft, seals in this book a definitive pact with the reader.

"Extend your hand," he said, and Roman, obedient, stretched out his hand. I see love, she suddenly said, while opening her eyes widely. Roman nervously laughed. That's what you're looking for, isn't it? And a new laugh shook him. Love will come soon, so for it to arrive, sing, sing a lot, and when it arrives, do not forget to always sing, and take her to the sea. That night Roman bathed himself in herbs and prayed a rosary, white bead rosary. He never stopped singing."

TRANSLATION OF THE POINTE BOOK FROM ENGLISH INTO SPANISH

10 Fundamentos sobre la Enseñanza de Puntas

Aspecto fundamental: ¿Cuándo una bailarina está lista para usar puntas?

La pregunta más apremiante que enfrenta un maestro de puntas es cómo determinar de la mejor manera si una estudiante está preparada para comenzar el entrenamiento de puntas.

Durante nuestras entrevistas con especialistas médicos y profesores de maestría, llegamos a la conclusión de que no existe una respuesta simple a esta pregunta. Todos coinciden en el hecho que el maestro debe considerar una combinación de factores, incluyendo la edad, la anatomía, el desarrollo óseo, la fuerza, la duración del entrenamiento, el peso y la actitud de la estudiante antes de tomar dicha decisión. El llegar a un consenso sobre el conjunto de lineamientos que se deben utilizar en la evaluación de estos factores, es otro tema.

En su libro *Dance Technique and Injury Prevention*, el Dr. Justin Howse, exortopedista del Royal Ballet School, asegura que, durante mucho tiempo, los doce años era la edad para comenzar a trabajar en puntas. Él considera que no existe una edad en específico en la que se debe comenzar el trabajo de puntas. El Dr. Howse afirma que: "El único factor que importa es el estado del desarrollo de la niña y que el ser dogmático sobre una edad no hace ninguna referencia a la madurez o inmadurez de ésta".

Howse añade que no existe ninguna vergüenza o desventaja en iniciar el trabajo de puntas en una edad más avanzada debido a que un comienzo temprano antes que ésta presente la preparación física y técnica, puede ser potencialmente perjudicial. Una bailarina que espera para usar puntas hasta el momento correcto para su cuerpo en particular y el nivel de desarrollo de su habilidad, tendrá menos riesgo de sufrir lesiones, será capaz de lograr la técnica correcta con mayor facilidad y progresar más rápidamente. Asimismo, Howse indica

que una serie de bailarinas conocidas no eran lo suficientemente fuertes como para comenzar el trabajo de puntas hasta que fueron adolescentes, lo cual no fue ningún impedimento para sus carreras.

En situaciones de formación donde la única ruta hacia una carrera profesional es a través de las escuelas de compañías, tal como en el sistema ruso, no habría dudas de que una estudiante iniciara con puntas, si no estuviera anatómicamente preparada para hacerlo. El proceso de selección y admisión elimina a las solicitantes con tales limitaciones o son excluidas de la escuela. Sin embargo, un maestro de puntas en los Estados Unidos puede perfectamente enfrentarse a estos casos, ya que el único requisito para estudiar ballet puede ser el deseo de bailar.

Este enfoque más democrático, le pone una gran responsabilidad adicional al maestro, quien decide cuándo y si una estudiante debe hacer puntas. Esta decisión sólo se puede tomar sobre la base de la habilidad y el conocimiento y no estar sujeta a la presión de las estudiantes o de los padres. Bailar en puntas es un asunto serio y los maestros deben proteger a sus estudiantes de sufrir un daño permanente en la estructura ósea y muscular de sus cuerpos y pies. Tales riesgos superan con creces la decepción temporal que una estudiante puede experimentar cuando se le dice que no está lista o físicamente diseñada para el trabajo en puntas.

Es muy posible que algunas estudiantes nunca "estén listas" para hacer puntas. Si un maestro toma el camino menos complicado y le permite a dicha estudiante hacer puntas, con la excusa de que encontrará otro maestro que lo haga, estará pasando por alto su responsabilidad para con la salud física actual y futura de la estudiante. Por esta razón, es importante que los maestros desarrollen una fuerte relación con los padres. Una vez que los

padres tienen confianza en el juicio de un maestro, es más probable que entiendan una explicación detallada y científicamente sustentada de porqué su hija no debe hacer puntas.

También es importante indicar que las puntas no son clave para estudiar ballet. Si a las estudiantes que no deben o no quieren hacer puntas, se les hace sentir como una parte significativa del programa de estudio, les será mucho más fácil permanecer en la lista.

Una buena estrategia, es dejar de lado la idea de poner en puntas a todas las estudiantes, así como pensar que la preparación es un asunto individual parece ser una buena estrategia. Esto es útil porque las niñas maduran a diferentes velocidades y le quita algo de presión a la niña a quien se le pide que espere o aplace el trabajo inicial de puntas. Si una estudiante que fue colocada incorrectamente en puntas en otra escuela llega a la clase y muestra evidencia de problemas tales como rodillas dobladas y colocación incorrecta, se le deben quitar las puntas hasta que se resuelvan sus problemas.

Frecuentemente, el tema del cuándo los estudiantes podrán utilizar puntas eclipsa la importancia de un entrenamiento previo adecuado. Hay que tener mucho cuidado a la hora de diseñar un plan de estudios antes de iniciar el trabajo de puntas, el cual haga hincapié en el desarrollo de la fuerza y el tono muscular necesario. Se debe poner especial énfasis en el desarrollo de la fuerza y la flexibilidad en los pies y la fuerza de los músculos posturales.

Por esta razón, los estudiantes de la Royal Ballet School en White Lodge usan medias en lugar de mayas durante el entrenamiento previo de puntas, para así permitirles a los maestros observar la forma en que están trabajando sus pies y piernas. Asimismo, llevan elástico en sus zapatos de ballet en lugar de cintas, para que éstos sean más fáciles de quitar y poner. Los maestros se preocupan por revisar los pies descalzos de los estudiantes para asegurarse de que no están apretando o se están sosteniendo con los dedos de los pies en

“*tendu*” o formando otros patrones que pueden tener un impacto negativo en el trabajo de puntas.

Christine Beckley, exprofesora de ballet en la Royal Ballet School, destaca la importancia de tocar a las niñas como método de enseñanza, en vez de enseñar y demostrar de lejos. El elemento táctil los hace conscientes de lo que deben sentir, pues es poco probable que una niña pueda comprender completamente las acciones musculares relacionadas con las puntas al solo imitar lo que ve en el cuerpo de otra persona.

Las estudiantes necesitan entender que "hacen puntas" no solo se trata de iniciar el estudio de una nueva técnica. Están trabajando en su técnica de puntas cada vez que hacen un ejercicio en la barra, ya que estos ejercicios las preparan para ejecutar movimientos en los dedos de los pies. Los principios del movimiento de ballet clásico son también los principios del trabajo de puntas. Una vez que una bailarina tiene una excelente colocación, puede abordar el trabajo de puntas como una serie de ajustes en la distribución del peso, áreas de estrés y de tiempo y no como una nueva forma de baile. El trabajo puntas es una habilidad adicional que se debe practicar y dominar.

Muchos profesores están convencidos de que la única manera de tener un estudio o academia exitosa es permitirle a cada estudiante femenina hacer puntas tan pronto como sea posible. Parte de esta práctica se basa en la poca comprensión de la base anatómica y técnica del trabajo de puntas y otra se basa en una lógica deficiente. Probablemente, poner a cada estudiante en puntas puede provocar que estas se alejen, en vez de retenerlas. Muchos de las estudiantes que adquieren un dominio razonable de los zapatos blandos encuentran la realidad de las puntas muy frustrante, por lo que se desalientan de continuar sus estudios de danza.

Algunos profesores consideran que las niñas que hacen danza por diversión, a diferencia de las que quieren una formación preprofesional, no deben hacer puntas en absoluto. Sienten que una niña sólo debe iniciar puntas si su interés en la danza cuando cumpla los trece o catorce años, y tiene una base técnica sólida con pies, piernas y espalda fuertes.

En *Anatomy and Ballet (Anatomía y Ballet)*, Celia Sparger cuestiona poner a una estudiante en puntas, a menos que se encuentre en una situación de formación profesional, concentrada y sistemática. Sparger explica que una clase una vez a la semana no puede considerarse como una preparación adecuada para el trabajo de puntas, dado que conlleva el riesgo a sufrir de una discapacidad de por vida. Los maestros rara vez ven los resultados de un entrenamiento de puntas deficiente, los cuales pueden aparecer más adelante en forma de problemas en los pies, rodillas o espalda.

Las políticas claramente establecidas sobre el baile en puntas, las cuales se explican al entrar en un programa escolar, son una buena base para reducir la tensión que rodea este tema. Una posibilidad es ofrecer una opción de preparación de puntas, que requiere que las niñas que se preparan para las puntas tomen varias clases a la semana durante al menos dos años. Desde el principio, los padres que no elijan esta opción deben estar conscientes de que las puntas no es una probabilidad para su hija.

Otra estrategia se basa en analizar los problemas anatómicos de una niña desde el momento de la admisión y así prepararla a ella y a sus padres para aceptar cualquier posible inadecuación para el trabajo de puntas. Capezio distribuye copias de un folleto gratuito llamado “Why Can’t I go on My Toes?” (¿Por qué no puedo pararme en los dedos de los pies?) en sus tiendas minoristas. Está bien escrito y es ideal para dárselo a los padres.

El conocimiento es la mejor arma para tratar con éxito el tema de la preparación. Los maestros deben saber cómo evaluar a una niña para la preparación de puntas y ser capaces de interpretar claramente el proceso para los padres. Se puede obtener una guía útil al hablar con podólogos y ortopedistas que trabajan con bailarines, al asistir a seminarios en convenciones y al conversar con especialistas en talleres de danza. Muchas universidades ofrecen cursos de anatomía y algunos están diseñados especialmente para las especialidades en danza. Tomar un curso de este tipo podría proporcionar una valiosa base de conocimiento. El apoyo externo a un enfoque cauteloso para poner a los estudiantes en puntas se puede obtener al pedirles a las estudiantes obtener el consentimiento de sus médicos, donde se indique la etapa apropiada en su crecimiento y desarrollo físico para comenzar las puntas.

Edith Royal, quien, junto con su esposo, Bill, dirigió una exitosa compañía y escuela de danza durante más de treinta años, desarrolló un método de enseñanza de puntas que buscaba mantener los estándares profesionales en un entorno de estudio privado. Su enfoque es una demostración vívida de que esto es posible. Royal basó su método en su propio entrenamiento en el Royal Ballet School de Londres, la Escuela de Ballet de la Opera de París y con Robert Joffrey.

Royal les realizaba una prueba de puntas a las estudiantes de su escuela cuando éstas cumplían los once años de edad para así determinar su preparación. Antes de tomar el examen, la estudiante debía tomar clases por un periodo de dos años. La prueba examinaba el levante de las piernas, la articulación de los pies y la fuerza de la espalda. Las estudiantes que no pasaban la prueba permanecían en la misma clase que aquellos que obtuvieron sus puntas; sin embargo, realizaban los ejercicios de punta en *media punta*. En otras palabras, puntas era una posibilidad y no una inevitabilidad.

Al encuestar a varios maestros de todo el país, se les preguntó las razones por las cuales no les permitían a sus estudiantes comenzar puntas. Las respuestas incluyen colocación inadecuada, los estudiantes son demasiado jóvenes, no se suben en su cuerpo y los pies, estos no están lo suficientemente arqueados, tienen sobrepeso, poseen una falta de fuerza en el torso, sus rodillas o tobillos son demasiado débiles, su postura básica en *media punta* no es fuerte ni correcta, están tomando muy pocas clases por semana. Por consiguiente, al determinar un sistema para evaluar la preparación para puntas, un maestro debe considerar las siguientes áreas.

Tiempo e intensidad de estudio

El tiempo y la preparación son necesarios para que los estudiantes desarrollen la fuerza y la técnica adecuadas para iniciar el proceso de puntas. Es esencial que la musculatura de la estudiante sea lo suficientemente fuerte como para sostener a todo su cuerpo. Gran parte de la elevación en el trabajo de puntas depende de los dos músculos de la pantorrilla, los cuales se encuentran en el tendón de Aquiles. La mayoría de los maestros que entrevistamos requieren al menos dos o tres años de entrenamiento serio de ballet e insisten en que una estudiante debe tomar como mínimo de dos a tres clases a la semana. Muchos requieren cuatro años de entrenamiento.

En su libro *Anatomy and Ballet*, Celia Sparger afirma que: "La capacidad para trabajo de puntas es el resultado de un entrenamiento lento y gradual de todo el cuerpo, espalda, caderas, muslos, piernas, pies, coordinación general del movimiento y la colocación del cuerpo para que así el peso se levante hacia arriba sobre de los pies, con las rodillas rectas, equilibrio perfecto, una *media punta* perfecta, y ninguna tendencia de los pies a arquearse hacia adentro o afuera, o los dedos de los pies a encogerse o agarrarse."

El Dr. William Hamilton, médico oficial del New York City Ballet, defiende a George Balanchine al decir que una estudiante debe haber estudiado ballet durante cuatro años antes de iniciar puntas. Cabe señalar que Hamilton no está de acuerdo con los datos de investigación disponibles, los cuales indican que poner a una niña en puntas antes de una edad en particular es necesariamente perjudicial. Sin embargo, siente que una niña con cuatro años de entrenamiento tendrá la fuerza y la técnica necesarias para comenzar su trabajo de puntas. Además, añade que la técnica de aprendizaje en *media punta* le pone menos tensión al pie que el usar las puntas, ya que el peso sigue estando en los metatarsos.

Algunos maestros ponen un mayor énfasis en el factor de formación. Por ejemplo, Nathalie Krassovska, quien fuera bailarina del Ballet Russe de Montecarlo y el Gran Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, considera que el nivel de entrenamiento y el desarrollo corporal son mucho más importantes que la edad. Ella considera que si una estudiante recibe clases todos los días, puede desarrollar fuerza rápidamente y eventualmente puede iniciar puntas a los ocho años de edad, después de varios años de estudio intensivo. Sin embargo, ella pondría en puntas a las bailarinas menos serias, las que toman menos clases, hasta los catorce o quince años de edad. Krassovska insiste en que las estudiantes deben recibir clases al menos tres veces a la semana para poder tomar clases de puntas.

Fuerza

El Dr. James Garrick indica que, contrario a lo que se dice que poner en puntas a una estudiante "demasiado pronto" produce problemas musculoesqueléticos significativos, la División de Medicina de Danza de su Centro de Medicina del Deporte en el Hospital St. Francis en San Francisco observa estudiantes que físicamente luchan con las puntas ya que carecen de la fuerza y la técnica necesarias para "esta labor tan exigente". Él considera que

una estudiante debe ser capaz de hacer un *passé* sólido en *media punta* con una rodilla recta y levantada hacia arriba. Esto requiere que la estudiante ponga todo su peso en una pierna, con extensión completa de la rodilla y *relevé* completo. Además, agrega que si una bailarina puede pasar de un *gran plié* en el centro a estar de pie con las rodillas rectas, sin tambalearse y sin alterar las posiciones de los pies, puede ser el momento para empezar puntas.

El Dr. Richard Braver, exconsultor médico de Capezio, afirma que una estudiante debe ser capaz de permanecer de pie en *media punta* durante cuarenta y cinco segundos en cada pie, sin vacilar o tambalearse.

El Dr. Justin Howse indica que la fuerza debe haberse logrado en los pies y alrededor de los tobillos, con el control total de todas las articulaciones relevantes. Las estudiantes deben ser capaces de mantener la rotación en las caderas y tener en el área de la cadera estable cuando están de pie en ambas piernas o en una sola pierna. También debe haber fuerza y estabilidad en el tronco. El control inadecuado de los músculos del tronco, la cadera y el muslo pueden hacer que una estudiante esté inestable e insegura en puntas. Si los pies y el cuerpo están de alguna manera blandos, móviles o flojos, el trabajo en puntas debe retrasarse.

Muchas niñas vienen al ballet con ligamentos sueltos, dice el Dr. Louis Galli, podólogo de la ciudad de Nueva York, quien trabaja con bailarines en espectáculos de Broadway, así como en las principales compañías de ballet. Por lo general, descubren el ballet porque son capaces de hacer movimientos que otros niños no pueden y debido a que sus ligamentos están sueltos (lo cual simplemente significa que cuentan con articulaciones poco rígidas), tienen una mejor extensión y mejores líneas.

La preocupación del Dr. Galli se refiere al hecho de que los ligamentos sostienen las articulaciones, entonces, si los ligamentos están sueltos, ¿qué los sostiene? La respuesta es los

músculos y tendones; sin embargo, esa no es su función principal, sino es mover el cuerpo. Por lo tanto, estas niñas tienen una falsa sensación de flexibilidad. Sus articulaciones están flexibles, pero sus músculos y tendones están apretados. Por lo tanto, están pidiendo a sus músculos y tendones que hagan el trabajo que normalmente sus ligamentos harían.

El Dr. Galli considera que estas estudiantes nunca serán lo suficientemente fuertes, por lo que sugiere hacer ejercicio como Pilates o nadar para fortalecerlos. Él subraya la importancia de lo anterior; ya que de lo contrario, es probable que estas estudiantes se lesionen porque sus músculos trabajan demasiado duro.

Edad y desarrollo del hueso

Los huesos tienen diferentes tasas de osificación. Las *epífisis* son capas de cartílago o tejido celular sólido y resistente que está presente en el hueso que aún no ha completado su crecimiento. Algunas de estas capas de cartílago no se osifican totalmente hasta que los seres humanos alcanzan los veinte años. Los huesos se endurecen gradualmente desde el centro hacia afuera. En los huesos largos, como los de la pierna, el antepié y los dedos de los pies, que soportan el peso del cuerpo cuando la bailarina está en punta, el eje se osifica primero. Las epífisis permanecen conectadas al eje solamente por cartílago, hasta la adolescencia temprana. Existe una gran variación entre los niños sobre cuándo el cartílago se vuelve óseo; la osificación puede retrasarse hasta los catorce años de edad. Para compensar este hecho, los músculos deben estar particularmente bien desarrollados y así proteger la alineación de las articulaciones. De lo contrario, la presión del peso corporal en los pies y los dedos de los pies, que todavía son suaves y están en crecimiento, puede causar malformación de los huesos y las articulaciones. Con el entrenamiento correcto, el peso del cuerpo debe mantenerse y distribuirse de tal manera, que el peso mínimo caiga sobre los dedos de los pies.

A la luz de estas consideraciones de desarrollo, pocos de los maestros que entrevistamos piensan que las niñas deben hacer puntas antes de los diez años. La mayoría espera que las estudiantes tengan once o doce años, independientemente de que tan jóvenes hayan comenzado su formación. Joanna Kneeland, destacada profesora de baile quien realizó una extensa investigación en el campo del movimiento de la danza, sugiere enviar a las niñas a un médico y hacerse radiografías de los pies, para determinar si las puntas de los dedos de los pies han cambiado de cartílago a hueso. Ella sospechaba que el cuerpo podría alcanzar con más rapidez esta etapa de madurez en climas cálidos.

Incluso después de determinar si los estudiantes están listos para hacer puntas, algunos maestros grafican cuidadosamente los estirones de crecimiento por medio de gráficos de medición de altura en el estudio. Si una estudiante principiante de puntas experimenta un crecimiento acelerado, se le quitan las puntas durante tres o cuatro meses hasta que su crecimiento se estabilice. Durante los estirones de crecimiento, la distribución del peso, el centro de gravedad y las proporciones de las partes del cuerpo cambian. Las bailarinas que crecen rápidamente sufren un mayor riesgo de lesiones que los otros. Dado que el crecimiento de los músculos puede no ser tan acelerado como el óseo y pueden crecer de forma ajustada, la tensión resultante en el cuerpo puede tener un impacto de larga duración. Los estudiantes se mantienen en la misma estructura de clase, pero trabajan en zapatillas suaves hasta que termine su crecimiento. Es posible que se les den ejercicios adicionales para estirar los cuádriceps, los tendones y los músculos de la pantorrilla, para así mantenerlos fuertes, estirados y flexibles.

Anatomía del pie y del tobillo

Un maestro debe evaluar la estructura del pie y del tobillo de la estudiante. Aunque rara vez se encuentran pies "ideales", se deben identificar problemas extremos que puedan causar dificultades. El pie ideal para puntas debe ser ancho, dos o tres de los dedos de los pies deben tener la misma longitud y un tobillo fuerte. Este tipo de pie proporciona una base amplia para la distribución del peso. Un estudiante con un dedo gordo largo puede hacer trabajo de puntas, pero a aquellos con el segundo dedo del pie extremadamente largo les es más difícil. Un pie estrecho en punta y con un arco alto también indica posibles problemas.

Asimismo, se debe examinar la flexibilidad del tobillo y el volumen del arco natural del empeine. Con una flexibilidad y arco limitados, una estudiante puede tener problemas para alinear su tobillo entre la rodilla y los dedos de los pies en puntas. Un estudiante con pies que no son flexibles puede experimentar problemas del tendón de Aquiles debido al trabajo de puntas, debido a la presión creada cuando el hueso del talón entra en el tendón.

Un tobillo débil y un empeine con demasiado arco también pueden ser una limitante. Cuando este tipo de pie se coloca en puntas, los dedos de los pies generalmente se curvan debajo, forzando la parte delantera del pie y empeine hacia abajo y hacia adelante desde el tobillo. Los músculos del muslo y la rodilla están tensos y el peso no se centra sobre los huesos de las piernas. Los hombros, el cuello y todo el torso superior pueden verse afectados negativamente. Las estudiantes con este problema necesitan hacer ejercicios de fortalecimiento adicionales antes de comenzar el trabajo de puntas.

Un estudiante con pies pronados o arcos caídos que ruedan hacia el interior, con más peso sobre el dedo gordo del pie y el arco, no debe hacer puntas hasta que los músculos

alrededor del tobillo se pueden volver a entrenar para mantener el tobillo en la posición correcta. La pronación puede causar juanetes y problemas longitudinales del arco.

Mientras que los músculos de la articulación del tobillo pueden ajustarse a posiciones cambiantes, cuando están en punta se mantienen en una posición fija y no se pueden mover. Por lo tanto, estos deben ser lo suficientemente fuertes como para evitar que el pie se tuerza y el peso del cuerpo se desplace hacia el interior del pie. Cuando esto sucede, los ligamentos y los músculos pueden estirarse demasiado y el peso adicional en el lado del dedo gordo del pie puede hacer que este se desplace. El torcer el pie de esta manera puede provocar que el tobillo sea propenso a los esguinces. Una estudiante que tiene arcos altos o pies torcidos que se desplazan hacia el exterior y la mayoría del peso está colocada sobre el cuarto y quinto dedo del pie, no debe iniciar puntas hasta que los músculos del tobillo se puedan volver a entrenar.

Una estudiante con un empeine débil que hace puntas sin la preparación correcta puede sufrir daños duraderos en el pie y el tobillo. Los músculos del pie y el tobillo necesitan fortalecerse para que el pie esté bien controlado y sea capaz de mantenerse en la posición correcta, en lugar de la posición sobrepasando la punta.

Peso

Se debe alentar a las estudiantes con sobrepeso a bajar de peso antes de hacer puntas. De lo contrario, corren el riesgo de dañarse a sí mismas al ejercer una presión adicional sobre los dedos de los pies.

Actitud

El disfrutar la danza es un requisito previo definitivo para el estudio de puntas. Una actitud negativa hacia la clase de danza antes del entrenamiento en puntas sólo empeorará, una vez que se inicie con ello.

Preparación de una estudiante para su primera clase de puntas

Al principio, las estudiantes a menudo se sienten molestas por lo diferente que se sienten las puntas de las zapatillas de ballet o los zapatos convencionales. El maestro debe dedicar tiempo a discutir las partes de las puntas y su función.

Debe recordarse que los estudiantes que usan puntas por primera vez necesitan instrucciones cuidadosas sobre asuntos tales como coser y atar cintas, protección de los dedos y cuidado de las puntas.

Longitud y organización de la clase de puntas

Existe un consenso general de que el entrenamiento en puntas debe ser lento y cuidadoso para darles a los huesos y músculos la oportunidad de desarrollarse adecuadamente. La atención individual es vital, ya que no se pueden pasar por alto pequeños errores o movimientos descuidados. El estudiante no debe usar calentadores de piernas durante esta fase temprana del trabajo de puntas, para permitirle al maestro observar cuidadosamente la rodilla, la pantorrilla y el tobillo.

El entrenamiento de puntas está programado en formatos muy variados. Las estudiantes principiantes pueden usar puntas de diez a treinta minutos al final de cada clase de ballet, y una vez que hayan calentado, de una a cinco veces por semana. En otras palabras, al principio, pueden usar sus puntas una vez a la semana, luego dos veces por semana y así aumentando gradualmente hasta usar puntas durante cuarenta y cinco minutos. En algunos

estudios, las principiantes toman una clase separada de una hora de duración de puntas. Muchos maestros indicaron que prefieren enseñar puntas a principiantes al final del entrenamiento en la barra en vez del final de la clase, antes que las alumnas se cansen demasiado.

Las estudiantes de puntas más avanzadas pueden tomar clases de puntas durante media hora dos veces por semana, o bien, pueden tomar media hora de cada clase de hora y media para hacerlo. En algunas escuelas, a las estudiantes se les introduce lentamente en clases completas de una hora y quince minutos en puntas, ya que según la teoría, finalmente bailarán casi en su totalidad en puntas y necesitan desarrollar la resistencia para hacerlo desde el inicio de su entrenamiento. En este capítulo y en el capítulo 11 se puede encontrar una descripción más detallada de cómo se integra la educación de puntas en los planes de estudio de las principales escuelas de formación y estudios privados.

Algunos consejos para la Enseñanza de Puntas

Dame Ninette de Valois una vez dijo: "Cuando estés sobre los dedos de tus pies, aléjate de ellos". Si no se levanta el peso de las caderas, los dedos de los pies se aprietan y se curvan hacia abajo, en lugar de estar alargados y estrechos. El peso debe quitarse de las puntas y distribuirse por todo el cuerpo. El hundirse en las puntas causa estrés y dolor en las articulaciones de los pies y crea un desgaste excesivo en las puntas (Véase el capítulo 12, Ejemplos de clases de puntas, para obtener notas completas sobre los ejercicios para el primer y segundo día en puntas, y clases que van desde principiantes hasta niveles avanzados.)

El maestro debe guiar a la alumna para que se ponga de pie correctamente en puntas, con toda la punta de la plataforma tocando el suelo y los dedos perpendiculares al suelo. El pie no debe empujarse hacia atrás o hacia adelante. El empeine debe estar completamente

estirado para lograr esto. Leslie Browne, estrella de la película *The Turning Point* y exbailarina principal del American Ballet Theatre, asegura que ella hace énfasis en esta posición del pie en puntas, así como la forma del pie a sus estudiantes. El maestro debe ser capaz de dibujar una línea recta a través del centro de la cadera, la rodilla, el tobillo y las articulaciones de los dedos grandes del pie al ver a un estudiante pararse en puntas desde una vista lateral. Desde el frente, el maestro debe ver una línea recta desde las articulaciones de la cadera, la rodilla y el tobillo a través de la caja del zapato, entre el segundo y el tercer dedo del pie. Nathalie Krassovska anima a las estudiantes principiantes de puntas, a mirar hacia arriba y enfocarse a nivel de los ojos.

El maestro debe hacer énfasis en trabajar ambos lados, para así evitar que las estudiantes desarrollen un pie más que el otro. Esto puede ser un problema particular con los giros, donde las estudiantes tienden a favorecer un lado "bueno". Recuérdese que la forma como una estudiante baja de puntas es tan importante como la posición que sube de puntas.

Un maestro debe usar el lenguaje correcto, con base en el conocimiento de los músculos, tendones, ligamentos y huesos y cómo éstos funcionan. No se intenta enseñar puntas utilizando imágenes verbales vagas. Se educa cuidadosamente a la estudiante acerca de la mecánica de lo que está aprendiendo. Se le anima a hacer preguntas.

Un maestro debe mirar a cada estudiante de puntas como un individuo y no tratar de imponerles los mismos principios de movimiento a todas. Si la estructura del pie de una estudiante es diferente de la de otra, es posible que necesite llevar su peso de manera diferente. Las posiciones no deben forzarse ya que no todos los cuerpos pueden soportarlo.

En el libro *The Teaching of Classical Ballet*, Joan Lawson aboga por enseñarle a la estudiante a encontrar su propio centro de equilibrio a través del uso del impulso. Ella explica

que este centro de equilibrio cae entre la primera y la segunda y, a veces, en la tercera, falanges del arco metatarsal.

Después de ascender un cuarto, la mitad y a tres cuartos de punta, la bailarina toma un ligero impulso para llegar a las puntas de los dedos de los pies. Si una bailarina tiene los dedos largos, este impulso se toma antes. Es un movimiento ligeramente hacia atrás llevando los dedos de los pies por debajo del talón para hacer que el tobillo y los dedos de los pies se estiren hacia abajo y hacia afuera, de modo que el talón no vaya hacia atrás en dirección al tendón de Aquiles. Al discutir el impulso, Delores Lipinski de la facultad de Ruth Page Foundation School, señala que el método inglés de saltar de puntas tirando de los pies hacia abajo es "agradable y ligero", pero no funciona para los estudiantes que tienen "pies de banano" que carecen de fuerza. Ella considera que mientras que el impulso tiende a estirar el pie y hacerlo más suelto, el "rolling" aumenta la fuerza.

Los defensores del "Rolling", ponen a las estudiantes a que se levanten lentamente hasta la punta completa y rueden sobre la bola hacia abajo a través del talón, usando todo el pie. El empeine se desarrolla a medida que sube y baja el talón. Nathalie Krassovska enfatiza el "rolling"; ella comienza con sus estudiantes frente a la barra y las pone a practicar el "rolling" hasta la punta. Ella no les enseña el impulso a los principiantes. Joanna Kneeland también aboga por el "rolling"; ella dice que el ascenso a puntas debe requerir un ajuste mínimo. Debe ser una sensación suave en lugar de una agitada. No se trata de impulsarse y reemplazar el talón con los dedos de los pies, sino de desarrollar la fuerza necesaria para bajar suavemente a través de los metatarsos. Ella dice, "No es el trabajo de los dedos de los pies saltar por debajo del cuerpo. El pie es la base y no puede perturbarse."

A Christine Spizzo, quien fue solista del American Ballet Theatre y ahora de la facultad de la Escuela de Artes de Carolina del Norte, le desagradan las puntas que no permiten que una estudiante pueda rodar por el pie. Algunos de ellos están hechos para que sólo sea posible un *relevé* con impulso y Spizzo siente que esto no permite a la estudiante desarrollar los músculos de los pies correctamente.

Otra prominente profesora de ballet, Nancy Bielski, quien ha impartido clases infantiles, clases abiertas profesionales en Steps, Nueva York y también ha estado en la facultad del American Ballet Theatre, enfatiza el uso adecuado del pie con subidas lentas y trabajo en *media punta*. Ella quiere que sus estudiantes principiantes sean capaces de subir y bajar sin saltar o caer.

Los *Pliés* y *relevés* se evitan porque los principiantes tienden a saltar mientras prueban estos movimientos en puntas.

La postura también se enfatiza en las clases de Bielski, pues las estudiantes jóvenes tienden a sacar el estómago y doblar sus rodillas mientras miran al suelo.

El grabar las clases de puntas es una buena idea, dado que las estudiantes pueden observar sus errores y también su progreso. Asimismo, les permite a las estudiantes ver sus pies de cerca y al maestro ver el error cometido por una alumna que podría haberse perdido mientras la atención se centraba momentáneamente en otra. Las cintas pregrabadas hechas profesionalmente o las realizadas con estudiantes más avanzados en el estudio, también se pueden utilizar para mostrarles a las estudiantes ejemplos de un paso realizado correctamente.

Filosofía de la Enseñanza de Puntas de David Howard

Las ideas del maestro David Howard sobre la formación de puntas son provocativas e informativas. Las raíces de la filosofía del movimiento de Howard se encuentran en su estudio

sobre la cinesiología y muchos años dedicados a observar a las bailarinas en el estudio y en presentaciones. Tiene su propio plan de estudios recopilado de varios sistemas y ha incorporado las mejores características de todos ellos.

David Howard está particularmente interesado en los patrones de energía. Señala que mientras que la mayoría de las personas se pone de pie con dos pies en el suelo y llevan el cuerpo hacia arriba, él primero trabaja desde "arriba" y piensa en términos de ir hacia "abajo", luego hace estiramientos contra el suelo usando la pantorrilla como un depresor en lugar de un agente tirador. Dice que la pantorrilla debe empujar hacia arriba y contra el suelo cuando va hacia abajo. Nunca cambia su función de músculo. Según Howard, si la pantorrilla se utiliza como un músculo de tracción, las rodillas se bloquean y la coordinación natural en las áreas articulares desaparece. La pantorrilla debe considerarse un músculo que empuja todo el tiempo. Cuando una persona camina, no tira de la pantorrilla, sino que la presiona atravesándola cada vez.

La misma dinámica debe aplicarse cuando se está en puntas. Cuando sucede, la bailarina puede lograr la calidad de que el trabajo de puntas parezca una extensión del dedo, en lugar de una función de la caja de la zapatilla. La mayoría de las bailarinas recurren al camuflaje artístico para rodar hacia arriba y hacia abajo en puntas. Ellas ruedan hacia arriba y hacia abajo empujándose del suelo en lugar de usar la pantorrilla como depresor para ponerlas en puntas. Cuando la pantorrilla se utiliza como depresor al bajar, ofrece un gran control ya que los músculos de la pierna se utilizan tal como fueron diseñados.

Howard cree que el trabajo de puntas es una extensión del movimiento natural. Siente que muchos maestros enseñan un movimiento en la barra y luego esperan que sus alumnos hagan otro en el centro. En otras palabras, encierran a los estudiantes en un estado diferente

en la barra y luego les gritan cuando no se mueven libremente en el centro. Si malos patrones de energía inician en la barra, dichos patrones inevitablemente se van a repetir en el centro. Pero si el patrón de energía es correcto, entonces la estudiante se levantará bajo su tobillo, tendrá un arco fuerte y no "nudillo".

La naturaleza del trabajo de puntas hace que el cuerpo esté rígido. Howard indica que los niños a menudo progresan en el entrenamiento de danza más rápidamente que las niñas a la edad en que estas inician puntas. Él considera que esto se debe a que el entrenamiento tradicional de puntas conspira para darle a una bailarina dos piernas rectas rígidas bajo un cuerpo espástico, mientras que los niños experimentan un mayor rango de movimiento. Aunque los chicos comienzan más tarde, terminan siendo más coordinados.

A las niñas siempre se les dice que sus piernas deben ser rectas y levantadas, lo que traducen como rígidas. Luego, cuando se mueven con rigidez, se les grita que se muevan. El énfasis debe estar en las piernas fuertes, estiradas y alargadas, en vez de piernas rectas.

Howard observa que los buzos siempre tienen buenos pies, ya que estiran sus pies en vez de apuntarlos. Ellos alargan los pies a través del tobillo y el empeine tanto como les sea posible y una punta es el resultado. Howard siente que "apuntar el pie" es la expresión correcta en términos de imágenes, pero equivocada en términos de sensaciones de enseñanza.

Él explica lo siguiente:

No apuntas los pies. Los alargas hasta el final de la extremidad. Se obtiene energía hasta el final de la extremidad y luego sientes como se estira. En lugar de tirar y apuntar, empujas hacia abajo hasta el final de los dedos de los pies. Estirar y alargar. No es estático. Necesitas el flujo de energía. Es una acción circular. Es visualmente recto, pero no en sensación. El *Demi-plié* va hacia abajo y hacia fuera, y debajo hacia arriba y a través. Es un

patrón circular en las rodillas y las articulaciones del tobillo. Estas áreas tienen que sostener el peso. Deben subir para bajar, para estirarse contra el suelo.

Advierte que una bailarina nunca debe ir más debajo de lo que su pantorrilla pueda empujar en un *demi-plié*. Ella debe sentir como si se empujara lejos del suelo sin hacer nada. La idea de que cuanto más baje una bailarina, más puede subir no es válida, según su teoría.

Howard enfatiza que no inventó estos conceptos, sino que es simplemente incorporar la forma como el cuerpo funciona en la técnica del ballet. Asimismo, considera que el ballet está atrapado por sus ideas confiables de hace doscientos años y no está aprovechando el conocimiento contemporáneo sobre el cuerpo. Cree que el ballet ha llegado tan lejos como puede, encadenado a estas prácticas obsoletas. Para llegar a otro nivel, las bailarinas y los maestros tienen que ser reentrenados según un tipo diferente de comprensión sobre la mecánica del cuerpo y enfatizando especialmente el patrón de energía que pasa a través de los músculos. Sin el patrón adecuado de energía, la bailarina tendrá dificultades. Las bailarinas no deben aprender por imitación, y deben hacer lo que sienten para ganar fuerza y lograr un movimiento hermoso.

Howard ve la gravedad como el único obstáculo para el movimiento humano, el "beso de la muerte" para una bailarina. Además indica que:

Si usamos la gravedad como una aliada en lugar de un agente dañino, esta nos puede ayudar. Si empujamos hacia abajo nuestra energía contra la gravedad y sólo nos estiramos en la dirección opuesta, estaremos usando la gravedad como ayuda. Y si estamos empujando en un empuje hacia abajo para enviar el cuerpo lejos del suelo como un trampolín, entonces usaremos la gravedad como fuente de ayuda. Pero si alejando el cuerpo del suelo, nunca podremos ganar. Podemos obtener cierta altura, pero no podemos alcanzar nuestro máximo

potencial. En otras palabras, Howard sugiere que usemos las reglas y la física y la naturaleza para obtener cuerpos mucho más fuertes y más alargados, y así lograr cosas en el aire. De lo contrario, nos basamos en milagros, y como él asegura, "Tarde o temprano el tiempo se acaba". A menos que un bailarín esté trabajando en armonía con la naturaleza, tarde o temprano algo puede salir mal.

Howard cree que Gelsey Kirkland, Jennifer Gelfand, Tamara Rojo, Alexandra Ansanelli y otras bailarinas quienes han trabajado con él se ven diferentes cuando bailan, debido a que su centro de gravedad es alto. Mientras su estructura ósea está hacia arriba, sus músculos están empujando hacia abajo en oposición, lo que resulta en un patrón de energía bidireccional. Los bailarines que usan su método tienen la capacidad de liberar cada área: los hombros, el diafragma y el estómago. Tienen flexibilidad en las caderas y en las rodillas. Cada uno de estos factores contribuye a llevar a la bailarina a puntas. El *relevé* viene del torso al pie, mientras que tirar hacia arriba en *relevé* produce hiperextensión.

Howard señala que las bailarinas son tan decididas y fuertes que encontrarán una manera de subir a puntas, incluso si sus madres les pegan sus pies al suelo. Algunas estudiantes sobreviven pese a sus maestros, al encontrar una forma diferente de la que les han enseñado para hacer que funcionen.

Para Howard, "tirar hacia arriba" es algo visual, no una sensación. En consonancia con su filosofía de empezar arriba y bajar en lugar de empezar abajo y subir, comienza a trabajar con *piqués* en la barra en lugar de *relevés*. Durante los dos primeros años utiliza *piqué plié* en lugar de *relevé plié*.

Howard está en contra de hacer todo el trabajo de clase en puntas, debido a que cree que hay mucha velocidad y flexibilidad que ganar trabajando en *media punta*. Además,

enfatisa que el trabajo de puntas es sólo otro nivel de ballet, no una disciplina individual en sí misma. El trabajo de puntas es un nivel en el que el cuerpo puede trabajar y no es cuestión de que alguien se suba sobre los dedos de los pies.

A lo largo del proceso de entrenamiento, Howard desarrolla ejercicios y combinaciones para construir patrones de energía y siempre enfatiza que la energía debe venir del torso a través de la estructura ósea hasta el final de las extremidades. Ve el cuerpo como un instrumento expresivo que tiene que actuar. Los pasos de danza no son una serie de movimientos frenéticos, sino que representan una necesidad de comunicación; son un medio de expresión.

Howard piensa que Katherine Healy es la más pura realización de su teoría de entrenamiento. Aunque Gelsey Kirkland, a quien describe como la máxima exponente de la danza clásica que ha visto, fue muy receptiva en cuanto a sus conceptos. Healy era muy joven cuando comenzó a trabajar con él. Alcanzó un increíble nivel de logro técnico y artístico bajo su tutela a una edad muy temprana. Howard cree que entrenar a una bailarina en puntas es tomar algo inherentemente artificial y transformarlo en arte genuino.

Pensamientos de Peff sobre las puntas

Peff Modelski, profesora de ballet con sede en la ciudad de Nueva York e instructora del Método Feldenkrais, piensa que muchas lesiones de baile son innecesarias y podrían evitarse. Ella dice que cuando las estudiantes inician puntas demasiado pronto y pasan demasiado tiempo en ellas en el entrenamiento inicial, lo cual en el futuro puede dar paso a la artritis. "Los maestros no hacen suficiente trabajo preparatorio", dice. "Cuando las bailarinas no están listas para hacer puntas, el peso del cuerpo no puede viajar a través de los dedos de los pies. Viaja hacia los dedos de los pies, lo que inicia un problema para todo el sistema. Los

dedos de los pies son muy pequeños y los huesos también. La bailarina comienza a aprovechar sus pantorrillas, luego las rodillas, las cavidades de la cadera y la espalda. Ella hará lo que necesite para no caerse y decepcionar al maestro o ella misma.

Peff dice que es muy fácil enseñar puntas a estudiantes principiantes, si se pasa la cantidad correcta de tiempo en clase y si hay suficiente tiempo entre lecciones. De esta manera, una bailarina puede construir un pie fuerte, cómodo y flexible porque los huesos que soportan peso en la parte superior no están inhibidos, doblados o retorcidos. Ella considera que hay un problema con el pensamiento de las escuelas que ponen en puntas a todas sus estudiantes a cierta edad, ya sea a los nueve años o a los quince. Para apoyar su teoría indica que: "Las puntas fueron inventadas para una bailarina principal que ya tenía fuerza, resistencia, tiempo y experiencia profesional. Marie Taglioni no tenía nueve años cuando comenzó a usar puntas a pesar de que pudo haber sido la consentida de su padre [un bailarín y coreógrafo]".

Peff también comenta que el lenguaje utilizado para enseñar puntas tiene que ser diferente del que se utiliza para enseñar una clase de técnica, aunque las dos están relacionadas. Ella siente que la mayor controversia en el ballet es si "tirar hacia arriba" o "empujar hacia abajo". El idioma que usa un maestro y el tono de voz pueden determinar si la alumna realmente comprende lo que debe hacer. Las instrucciones deben delinearse pacientemente una y otra vez.

Algunas de sus estudiantes que fueron bailarinas profesionales han sufrido tendinitis de los tobillos, así como problemas con sus muslos y caderas, debido a la hiperextensión extrema de la pierna. El explicar que no deben levantar nada excepto su suelo pélvico y sus párpados, y que lo demás debe ser alargado en la dirección del suelo, ayudó a las bailarinas a

entender cómo trabajar exitosamente con este problema. Ella les pide a las bailarinas que visualicen el levantamiento desde debajo del corazón. Asimismo, continúa diciendo que: "Si ves las piernas como una plataforma donde el corazón se apoya, puedes empujar los pies hacia el suelo en líneas específicas que proporcionen equilibrio sin apretar los dedos. Creo que los maestros tienen que estar más informados sobre cómo funciona realmente el cuerpo humano, cómo utiliza el mensaje visualizado y cómo se traduce ese mensaje".

Entrenamiento de puntas para adultos

El límite máximo de edad para poner a un adulto en puntas depende de cuántas horas a la semana estudie, condición física general, fuerza muscular y dedicación. Patricia Klekovic, quien enseña una clase de puntas para adultos en la Ruth Page School de Chicago, describe a sus estudiantes como "mujeres muy valientes que han tenido el sueño de querer bailar en puntas toda su vida, o bailaron cuando eran niñas y quieren experimentar el sentimiento de nuevo". Ella sólo les permite hacer puntas si toman un mínimo de tres clases a la semana y toman una clase de ballet inmediatamente antes de su clase de puntas. Ella nunca alienta a los adultos a hacer puntas e insiste en que sea completamente su decisión. Klekovic señala que para las niñas es mucho más fácil aprender a trabajar en puntas que para los adultos, debido a que los adultos tienen mucho más peso en sus tobillos. Asimismo, las niñas también tienen menos miedo a enfrentarse a un desafío, tal como una *pirouette* en puntas.

La mayoría de las mujeres en la clase de puntas para adultos son bastante jóvenes y pocas mujeres mayores han hecho la solicitud. Klekovic siente que muchas de sus estudiantes adultas no pueden lastimarse a sí mismas porque no están ejerciendo suficiente energía. En lugar de querer perfeccionar su técnica de puntas, ella les permite moverse a su propio ritmo.

Edith Royal también enseñó puntas para adultos en su estudio en Orlando, Florida, y aplicó los mismos estándares que sus clases infantiles para principiantes. La mayoría de las estudiantes en las clases para adultos tenían entre veinte y treinta años y eran mujeres que habían estudiado danza hasta que asistieron a la universidad. Lo que ellas querían era reanudar su entrenamiento de ballet tanto para el acondicionamiento físico como para la satisfacción que este les brinda. Royal insiste en que ellas posean la fuerza básica para realizar puntas y tomar el mismo número de clases requeridas que a las más jóvenes estudiantes de puntas. Dado que estas estudiantes eran bastante hábiles en la técnica básica de su formación previa, a menudo eran capaces de llegar a ser bastante competentes en puntas.

Formación de puntas en Educación Superior

Los participantes en programas de danza universitaria van desde personas que llevan especializaciones que emprenden el currículo completo de danza como para ser bailarines o para su enseñanza, hasta estudiantes que desean tomar varios cursos de danza de forma electiva. Ellos pueden llegar al campus con años de entrenamiento de puntas con una calidad variante o sin experiencia previa en puntas. La pregunta de cuál es la mejor manera de servir a estas poblaciones divergentes en términos de formación de puntas no es sencilla de responder. Un vistazo a cómo se aborda el entrenamiento de puntas en la Universidad del Sur de Florida en Tampa, bajo la dirección de las profesoras Gretchen Ward Warren y Sandra Robinson Waldrop, ofrece una idea de cómo se puede manejar este problema.

Cualquier estudiante que aplique a la universidad puede ser admitido en el curso Fundamentos del Ballet, en el cual se reúnen dos veces por semana durante un semestre. Los estudiantes deben audicionar para niveles posteriores, Ballet I, II, III, o IV y se colocan de acuerdo a su capacidad, independientemente de su estatus de pregrado. Pueden permanecer en

cualquier nivel durante tres semestres, pero no pueden avanzar hasta que se determine que están listos.

Los estudiantes del Programa de Grado Performance Track B.A. no son aceptados formalmente como bailarines hasta que se ubiquen en una clase de técnica de nivel III (o IV). Una vez que son admitidos en el programa, se selecciona un énfasis de ballet o danza moderna. La especialidad en ballet incluye más requisitos de puntas y de variación.

El trabajo de puntas generalmente se inicia en ballet II, una clase de dos horas de duración que se imparte cuatro veces a la semana. Durante los últimos diez minutos de cada clase, las alumnas trabajan en ejercicios sencillos en puntas como *pliés* y *relevés* frente a la barra, *échappés*, *pas de bourrée*, y, en el centro, *pas couru* en todo el piso. Los estudiantes varones y las estudiantes cuyos pies se consideran inadecuados para el trabajo de puntas son excusados de esta parte de la clase.

En Ballet III, que se imparte cuatro veces a la semana, se incluye más trabajo de puntas como parte del plan de estudios. Las alumnas hacen puntas en la barra dos veces a la semana y usan sus puntas durante la última parte de la clase los otros dos días. Los ejercicios de puntas en el centro alternan con el trabajo de los hombres para los estudiantes masculinos. Además, muchas de las estudiantes del Ballet III también toman una clase completa de puntas el quinto día de la semana. La clase más avanzada, Ballet IV, se imparte cinco veces a la semana con un trabajo integral de puntas en cada clase.

Warren y Robinson Waldrop crearon el programa que ahora se sigue y establecieron un programa diseñado para lograr sus objetivos. Su enfoque se basa en sus experiencias en el Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, North Carolina School of the Arts y el Pennsylvania Ballet. Ellos utilizan el sistema Vaganova como base para su programa, pero le han añadido

elementos de las escuelas Bournonville, Paris Opera Ballet y la Escuela de Ballet Americano (Balanchine).

El enfoque de la Universidad del Sur de Florida ofrece una progresión rápida a través del plan de estudios para el bailarín de mayor edad, quien está listo mental y físicamente. Una preocupación constante es equilibrar la preparación física de los estudiantes con su necesidad de conocer la mecánica de todo el vocabulario clásico.

Al asesorar a las bailarinas con respecto de su potencial, Warren y Robinson Waldrop tratan de guiarlas en una dirección honesta. Dependiendo de la fuerza de cada individuo, le pueden sugerir que audicione para una compañía pequeña, la enseñanza o un posgrado para aquellos que muestran talento como coreógrafos o escritores.

Han descubierto que algunos estudiantes que comienzan ballet en la universidad puede que no avancen en absoluto, debido a la falta de capacidades físicas y no por su edad. Por otro lado, muchos estudiantes aprenden a hacer lo más posible con lo que tienen. Por ejemplo, Warren y Robinson Waldrop tenían una estudiante que carecía de la hipermovilidad necesaria en las articulaciones del tobillo para estar completamente vertical en puntas. Ella era una bailarina entrenada que se movía bien y sus piernas estaban bien desarrolladas. Ellos fueron capaces de ayudarla a trabajar sus pies a su máximo potencial; sin embargo, había poco que hacer para cambiar las limitaciones inherentes causadas por la estructura de sus pies.

El gasto en puntas es un verdadero obstáculo para las estudiantes en el programa, dado que muchas trabajan para pagar su educación y la carga añadida de pagar por las puntas es una gran tensión. En consecuencia, a menudo trabajan con puntas quebradas o no pueden permitirse experimentar lo suficiente como para encontrar el ajuste adecuado.

Entrenamiento de puntas para hombres

Existe amplio desacuerdo sobre el hecho de que los estudiantes masculinos estudien puntas. Los hombres pueden estar interesados en experimentar con las puntas porque desean fortalecer sus pies, pueden planear dar clases en algún momento en el futuro y quieren tener conocimiento de primera mano del proceso, o bien, pueden formar parte de ensambles de interpretación como Les Ballets Trockadero de Montecarlo o Les Ballets Grandiva, que requieren trabajo de puntas.

El profesor asociado Richard Sias, de la Universidad Estatal de Florida en Tallahassee, considera que la formación de puntas les ofrece a los estudiantes masculinos un nivel de estiramiento que no es posible en *media punta* o en zapatillas de ballet blandos. Rodney Irwin, quien enseña *pas de deux* en la Ruth Page School en Chicago, piensa que a un bailarín masculino que ha experimentado puntas le resulta más fácil entender los problemas de puntas de su pareja femenina. También cree que esto le ayuda a un coreógrafo masculino a entender los límites del trabajo de puntas.

Mikhail Messerer, maestro de ballet para el Royal Swedish Ballet y el Ballet de la Opera de Múnich, en el momento de nuestra investigación (y sobrino del famoso Asaf Messerer) piensa que el entrenamiento de puntas para hombres es sensato si pueden encontrar puntas que no dañen sus pies. Messerer entrenó en la Escuela Bolshoi, donde los hombres tomaban clases de puntas para la fuerza y un mejor equilibrio. Joanna Kneeland, sin embargo, duda que las puntas construyan la fuerza de los hombres, la cual no puede ganarse a través de otros ejercicios. Otra preocupación de aquellos que se oponen al entrenamiento de puntas de los hombres, es que ellos pueden soportar más peso en sus tobillos y pies, lo cual posiblemente resultaría en lesiones.

Uno de los principales inconvenientes para los hombres estadounidenses que deseaban experimentar con las puntas era el problema de encontrar las puntas adecuadas. La mayoría del inventario llegaba hasta la talla 8 u 8.5 de mujer y con frecuencia no eran lo suficientemente anchos para los pies de los hombres. Incluso actualmente es un problema; sin embargo, los fabricantes de puntas han ampliado recientemente los tamaños y los anchos. Sansha Recital (202) ahora se hace hasta la talla 16 en negro, específicamente dirigido a los hombres.

El bailarín Anton Wilson comenzó a trabajar en puntas para fortalecer sus pies mientras estudiaba en la Universidad Estatal de Towson. Inicialmente usó Capezio Pavlowas en talla 8.5 D y para darles un apoyo extra a sus pies, alargaba el empeine con mezclilla color rosa. Después de terminar su educación en la Escuela de Artes de Carolina del Norte, se unió a Les Ballets Trockadero de Montecarlo, la cual es una compañía masculina de ballet que realiza obras clásicas y originales, donde hombres vestidos de mujer interpretan papeles femeninos. Los miembros del Trockadero son bailarines de formación clásica que actúan en puntas y también son hábiles comediantes. Una vez en la compañía, Wilson mandó a hacer sus puntas a medida y comenzó a usar 8.25 E Contempora. La caja más cuadrada le dio más espacio a los dedos de los pies.

Cuando empezó a hacer puntas, sufrió de un gran número de ampollas y también se encontró con un problema importante con las uñas de los pies magulladas. Incluso, el peso de una sábana se volvió insoportable. Las uñas también le dolían en zapatos planos y le temía a la idea de actuaciones debido a dicha condición. En el lado positivo, la experiencia de Wilson le dio un nuevo respeto por las bailarinas de puntas y una comprensión más completa del

trabajo en pareja. Descubrió nuevos músculos en sus pantorrillas y muslos cuando bailó en puntas, y también aprendió valiosas lecciones sobre subirse "desde" sus piernas.

El director de Les Ballets Grandiva, Víctor Trevino, tiene algunas observaciones interesantes sobre los hombres en puntas. La Compañía se formó en 1996, después que el Trocadero original se separara un par de años antes. Señala que los pies de los hombres tienden a ser más anchos que los de las mujeres y sus talones son más grandes, lo cual significa que, cuando está en puntas, la línea del pie de un hombre no es tan atractiva como la de una mujer. Trevino piensa que los hombres necesitan usar almohadillas en los dedos para una amortiguación adicional, pues sus dedos son generalmente mucho más grandes que los de las mujeres y su tamaño y peso general ponen mucha más presión en la punta.

NOTAS

1. Howse, Justin. *Dance Technique and Injury Prevention* (Nueva York: Theatre Arts Books, 1988), pág. 59.
2. Sparger, Celia. *Anatomy and Ballet* (Nueva York: Theatre Arts Books, 1970), pág. 121.
3. Lawson, Joan. *The Teaching of Classical Ballet* (Nueva York: Libros de Artes Teatrales, 1983), pág. 121.
4. La información atribuida a David Howard en este capítulo se obtuvo el 19 de mayo de 1989 durante una entrevista en su estudio y otras entrevistas antes de la publicación de la Segunda Edición.

Nota: Además de los profesores mencionados a lo largo del capítulo, se recogió material sobre los fundamentos de la enseñanza de puntas por medio de encuestas a profesores de todo el país. A los maestros encuestados se les preguntó a qué edad pusieron a sus estudiantes en puntas, cuándo consideran es el momento adecuado para las puntas, qué puntas sugirieron,

cómo integraron las puntas en sus planes de estudio, cuánto tiempo los estudiantes pasaban en puntas por semana y qué tipo de ejercicios utilizaron en clases de puntas para principiantes.

Se reunió material adicional en las escuelas perfiladas en el capítulo 11.

13 Lesiones relacionadas con las puntas y sus soluciones

Prevención de lesiones

La siguiente es una lista de consejos para ayudar a prevenir problemas físicos innecesarios relacionados con las puntas:

No use cintas demasiado apretadas. Las cintas ajustadas cortan la circulación y enmascaran los problemas del ajuste de las puntas.

No permita que los nudos de la cinta o el elástico apretado le apliquen presión excesiva al tendón de Aquiles.

No culpe a las puntas por los problemas en los pies, si estos son causados por una mala elección de los zapatos de uso regular. Cuando camine sobre concreto, use zapatos deportivos bien acolchados y no zapatillas o zapatos de tela.

Tenga en cuenta cómo se utilizan los pies cuando no se está bailando. Un hábito como colocar los pies alrededor de las patas de un sofá mientras ve televisión puede ser la causa real de lo que parece ser una lesión inducida por la danza.

Cuando empiece a "irse hacia adelante", busque debilidades en los músculos. La alineación de la cadera podría estar fuera de eje o un arabesque podría estar hacia adelante. Si el problema no es un fallo técnico, intente utilizar puntas con una caja cuadrada en lugar de una redonda.

Observe todo el cuerpo en puntas cuando se las pruebe. No compre puntas que cambien el centro de gravedad. Observe cómo las puntas afectan el resto del cuerpo. Tenga cuidado con las puntas que empujan las caderas hacia adelante.

Nunca se salte el calentamiento y el estiramiento. Cuando el cuerpo no está lo suficientemente caliente o no tiene el suficiente rango de movimiento para estar en una postura o posición particular, algo se puede tensar o tirar. El calentamiento y el enfriamiento son cruciales para la longevidad de una carrera en danza, no importa qué tan flexible o fuerte la bailarina piense que es.

Siempre que sea posible, tome una clase de técnica regular antes de realizar una clase de puntas completa. No baile en puntas sin calentar primero, ya que esta es una causa frecuente de tendinitis.

Compruebe el patrón de desgaste en el talón de las puntas. Si existe evidencia de contacto de una media pulgada o más en el satín del talón de las puntas, puede que la talla demasiado pequeña.

Recuerde que los calentadores de piernas calientan el exterior y no el interior. Por lo tanto, es una buena idea ponérselos después de calentar para así preservar el calor, en lugar de usarlos para calentar y luego retirarlos.

Use medias con fibras naturales como el algodón, las cuales le permitan a las piernas respirar. Las mallas de licra y los pantalones de plástico pueden ser perjudiciales para la circulación. Estas telas fomentan la "transpiración en frío" y dificultan la evaporación de la misma. Tal como comentó un profesor de baile, "Si te pones pantalones de plástico sobre la cabeza y tratas de respirar, tendrás una buena idea de lo que le estás haciendo a tus extremidades inferiores al usarlos".

Unas puntas más pequeñas pueden crear una mejor línea y hacer que el empeine se vea más alto; sin embargo, pueden causar tendinitis o un espolón óseo en la parte posterior del pie. El uso de puntas demasiado pequeñas en longitud evita que el arco se expanda. Una vez que se pierde la elasticidad del arco, se pierde la capacidad para saltar. Unas puntas más pequeñas también pueden disminuir el plié de una bailarina.

Por el contrario, las puntas demasiado grandes disminuyen el control sobre los movimientos. Unas puntas que se ajustan correctamente permiten una flexión completa y la capacidad completa para extender el arco, así como el control del pie y el tobillo. Rellenar unas puntas grandes con lana de oveja o una almohadilla de dedos para "hacer que calcen" no permitirá un control adecuado. Unas puntas más grandes pueden causar el esguince de tobillo, tendones demasiado estirados y el sobredesarrollo de los músculos que se están esforzando para aferrarse a la punta. También se puede crear rigidez en la espalda, los hombros y el cuello, pues el cuerpo intenta compensar la pérdida de rango de movimiento experimentada cuando se pierde el control del pie.

Piense siempre en fortalecer las articulaciones para lograr el máximo rango de movimiento posible. No se arriesgue a sufrir lesiones imitando a otra persona. Cada cuerpo tiene su propio rango de movimiento; cada cuerpo puede hacer algunas acciones mejor que otros.

Estirar y trabajar en el empeine y el antepié puede disminuir las posibilidades de sufrir problemas en el tobillo.

John Gossett, del Houston Body Conditioning Studio, sugiere pensar en los pies y en los dedos de los pies como manos y dedos de las manos mientras se ejercitan. Abra los dedos de los pies para fortalecer todos los músculos pequeños. Trabaje en la articulación del pie.

Asimismo, Gossett recomienda poner los pies en hielo al final del día. Los músculos se hinchan a medida que la bailarina trabaja y aunque al aplicarles calor se puede sentir bien, el hielo es una mejor idea. Después de una aplicación de calor, los músculos se tensan; sin embargo, después de un tratamiento de hielo, los vasos sanguíneos se contraen y la temperatura corporal se reduce. La hinchazón y el dolor disminuyen después del enfriamiento. Use agua helada o agua helada con cubitos de hielo.

Mantenga la piel de los pies seca y flexible en todo momento. No deje que se seque para que así no se formen grietas o se vuelva húmeda y delicada, permitiendo que se deslice y se formen ampollas o callos blandos entre los dedos de los pies. Haga esto masajeadando con vaselina la piel de los dedos de los pies cada noche; empuje la vaselina en el espacio alrededor de las uñas de los pies y frótela en los talones. Masajee cada dedo y el arco del metatarso con los pulgares.

Tenga especial cuidado cuando esté muy cansada. Los especialistas médicos han observado que la mayoría de las lesiones de ballet ocurren entre cuatro y seis de la tarde, cuando la fatiga física y mental aparece después de un largo día de clase o ensayo.

El baile en puntas y las lesiones

Además de la capacidad natural, la motivación y la dedicación, una bailarina debe tener un cuerpo y pies flexibles, rotación natural, rodillas sanas y un entrenamiento de excelencia orientado al desarrollo de una técnica adecuada para sobrevivir al rigor del trabajo de puntas.

Tal como explica el Dr. Justin Howse, quien fue cirujano ortopédico de la Royal Ballet School, en su libro *Dance Technique and Injury Prevention*, ninguna lesión relacionada con la danza es un "acto de Dios"¹. Indica que variables tales como el tiempo dedicado a la danza

por día, semana o mes, experiencia, limitaciones anatómicas, conocimientos técnicos, calidad de la enseñanza y el ajuste de las puntas, antecedentes de lesiones previas, superficies sobre las que se realiza el baile, la fuerza y el nivel de acondicionamiento, se encuentran entre los factores que determinan la probabilidad de sufrir una lesión relacionada con las puntas.

En su libro *Dancer's Guide to Injuries of the Lower Extremities*, Stuart Wright, quien ha trabajado con estudiantes de la Escuela de Artes de Carolina del Norte así como con muchos bailarines profesionales, comenta que: "Prácticamente todas las lesiones de danza son el resultado de una técnica deficiente"². Wright considera que una línea incorrecta y una colocación del peso inadecuada son los principales factores que conducen a lesiones y, por lo tanto, indica que la corrección técnica es el mejor medio de prevención y tratamiento.

Incluso con una técnica óptima, las bailarinas que usan puntas están destinadas a experimentar algún tipo de desgaste en sus pies. Problemas estructurales en las puntas, clases y ensayos largos y extenuantes o la mala colocación causada por músculos cansados o débiles incapaces de sostener los pies en la alineación adecuada, pueden causar una variedad de tensiones físicas.

Las lesiones también pueden ser el resultado de un descuido por parte de los profesores o coreógrafos. Los médicos esperan un fuerte aumento en el número de lesiones de ballet cada invierno y primavera durante el Cascanueces y las temporadas de conciertos y recitales. Los horarios de ensayo se multiplican repentinamente, lo que resulta en lesiones por uso excesivo. Estos podrían evitarse comenzando los ensayos antes e incrementando de forma gradual.

El Dr. Louis Galli, podólogo de la ciudad de Nueva York quien trabaja con muchos bailarines del Ballet de la Ciudad de Nueva York, asegura que un factor que hace que un

bailarín sea exitoso, es saber cuándo decir que no y cuándo retirarse. Un joven bailarín tiene la capacidad pulmonar y la frecuencia cardíaca para bailar durante diez horas al día, pero mecánicamente puede no estar hecho para ello. Además, los bailarines jóvenes están muy ansiosos por trabajar, por lo que muchos coreógrafos sacan provecho de ello, pues están más preocupados por el trabajo que por su salud.

El Dr. William Hamilton señala que las lesiones de los bailarines profesionales y no profesionales son muy diferentes. Él encuentra un "tremendo darwinismo en el trabajo en ballet; es decir, la supervivencia del más apto". La mayoría de los cuerpos "inadecuados" y los niños menos talentosos son eliminados en el proceso de entrenamiento y se deja a los "caballos de carreras de pura sangre" para entrar en la profesión. Muchas de las lesiones que ven en pacientes no profesionales ocurren porque sus tipos de cuerpo no son adecuados para el ballet.

Una consideración importante en muchas lesiones es que la bailarina promedio a menudo carece de los conocimientos más básicos de la anatomía, la quinesiología y la biomecánica de su propio cuerpo. Para satisfacer las demandas físicas y artísticas del baile en puntas, tal conocimiento es vital.

Búsqueda de atención médica

Es necesario buscar la atención médica para tratar lesiones relacionadas con las puntas por parte de un profesional que tenga conocimiento de la danza y de la medicina. Sin embargo, esto es muy difícil de conseguir. A excepción de los especialistas médicos que trabajan con las principales compañías de danza, existen muy pocos médicos que saben acerca de las lesiones relacionadas con la danza. Muchas bailarinas tienen que conformarse con un médico competente con poca experiencia tratando bailarines o incluso atletas.

Existen algunos trastornos musculares exclusivos de las bailarinas, los cuales un médico común no sabe cómo tratar eficazmente. Tal como explica el quiropráctico Janiz A. Minshew, el hecho de que las bailarinas estén tan lejos de la norma, en términos de acondicionamiento físico, las convierte en un misterio para los médicos. Una bailarina puede estar fuera de servicio profesionalmente y todavía puede aparentar estar sana según los estándares normales (no dancísticos). Los médicos que tratan a las bailarinas aprenden rápidamente a reconocer qué puede ser normal en la radiografía de una bailarina y qué no para alguien común.

Dado que las bailarinas tienen una amplia gama de movimiento, ellas deben mantener músculos excepcionalmente fuertes y no se pueden tratar de la misma manera que a las personas comunes. Tomar un tiempo de descanso puede provocar dolor en zonas no lesionadas, donde no había antes. Aunque una bailarina esté en su mejor condición física, más rápido perderá dicha condición si no hace ejercicio.

A menudo los doctores que no tiene conocimiento al respecto, les aconsejan a las bailarinas que buscan atención para tratar una lesión de rutina que dejen de bailar hasta que esta sane. Este no suele ser el consejo correcto para una bailarina, quien sabe que debe hacer todo lo posible para mantener su nivel de entrenamiento. Durante el tiempo que una lesión tarda en sanar, la bailarina puede perder su condición física. Cuando vuelva a bailar, podría volver a lesionarse como resultado de la falta de entrenamiento. Por lo tanto, al darse cuenta de que debe mantenerse activa, tiende a ignorar el consejo de los médicos que tratan de decirle lo contrario.

Es muy difícil encontrar especialistas como el Dr. Nathan Novick, quiropráctico de Nueva York, quien dice: "Cuando una bailarina dice '¡tengo que seguir!' y sé que no debería,

sólo digo ¡buena suerte y te veré mañana! La salud emocional y mental de las bailarinas es tan importante como su salud física. Si les quitas la danza, sufrirán de otras maneras.”

La Dra. Lillie Rosenthal, directora de Medicina Física y Rehabilitación del Miller Institute for Performing Artists, asegura que ella se enfoca en el estado emocional y físico de la bailarina. Ella dice: "Lo miro todo, no se trata sólo del pie. Si una bailarina no puede actuar, hay un gran impacto emocional. La situación debe abordarse en muchos niveles. Es importante leer entre líneas para saber lo que está pasando con la bailarina, tanto emocional como físicamente. Por lo tanto, es muy importante que las bailarinas vean a alguien que los entienda".

Dado que los campos de la medicina deportiva y la medicina de la danza están empezando a atraer más interés, el simple hecho económico es que pocos médicos pueden permitirse el lujo de especializarse en el tratamiento de los bailarines. En muchos lugares existen pocos bailarines a quienes tratar y obtener la habilidad y el trasfondo específicos necesarios para lidiar con sus problemas especiales requiere una gran cantidad de tiempo y por supuesto, conocimiento sobre la danza. Las lesiones de baile son con frecuencia mucho más sutiles que las lesiones deportivas y exigen conocimiento de los complejos patrones de movimiento que pudieron haberlas causado. Además, los bailarines, a menudo, tienen ingresos limitados y no tienen seguro médico.

Afortunadamente, algunos profesionales de la salud han demostrado su pasión y compromiso con la danza y las artes escénicas. Instalaciones como el Harkness Center for Dance Injuries y el Miller Institute for Performing Artists, ambos ubicados en la ciudad de Nueva York, tratan bailarines y artistas de forma gratuita si es necesario. Reconociendo la necesidad de los médicos entiendan las necesidades especiales de los bailarines, el Dr. Donald

Rose, director del Harkness Center, dice que han desarrollado un programa de capacitación, el cual ha atraído a médicos y fisioterapeutas de todo el mundo. Muchos de estos especialistas en la salud están involucrados en la medicina deportiva y quieren mejorar su experiencia mediante el desarrollo de una comprensión de la técnica de la danza y la medicina de la danza. Este interés suele deberse a un compromiso con las artes, ya que la remuneración en este campo suele ser escasa.

Aun así, es importante que un bailarín lesionado haga todo lo posible para ver a un médico con experiencia en lesiones de danza. Ella o él deben buscar especialistas en medicina deportiva para descubrir si están familiarizados con la danza, llamar a la compañía de ballet más cercana o al jefe del departamento de danza universitaria para que les sugiera a alguien y preguntarles a otros bailarines. En caso de lesiones graves, un bailarín podría tener que viajar una gran distancia para llegar al médico adecuado. Las molestias y los gastos de los viajes para encontrar atención especializada tienen que ser sopesados contra la posibilidad de poner fin a una carrera en la danza.

El Dr. James G. Garrick, del Centro de Medicina del Deporte de San Francisco, insta a los bailarines a "ver ventanas" hasta que encuentren a alguien que escuche sus necesidades y ofrezca ayuda informada. Además, agrega que es importante evitar "tratamientos rápidos y de una sola inyección", alguien que le inyecte cortisona a una bailarina a petición para mantenerla bailando hoy, puede no importarles lo que le pase dentro de dos años.

El dicho "sin dolor, no hay ganancia" puede ser peligroso para una bailarina. Aunque existe cierto grado de malestar que se "siente bien" por ser saludable, proviene de un músculo bien estirado, también existe una fina línea entre eso y el tipo de dolor resultante de un

estiramiento incorrecto. Aprender a diferenciar entre el dolor "bueno" y el dolor "malo" es vital si una bailarina quiere evitar daños permanentes tanto a ella como a su cuerpo.

Las bailarinas a menudo esperan demasiado tiempo para tratar una lesión; ellas intentan ignorar aspectos pequeños que innecesariamente se convierten en problemas más severos. Esta es una tendencia humana básica, los maestros, directores y coreógrafos poco comprensivos alientan a las bailarinas a seguir bailando debido a la presión.

El Dr. Garrick señala que, a menudo, las bailarinas profesionales tienen problemas médicos durante las giras, dado que el personal médico local se siente presionado para que ellas vuelvan al escenario a expensas de su bienestar a largo plazo. Además, aconseja a las bailarinas a que pidan consejo de un centro de atención en el que confíen y no tomen una mala o imprudente decisión bajo presión.

Este problema está relacionado con el hecho de que, a diferencia de los bailarines de otras partes del mundo, los bailarines estadounidenses no poseen seguridad laboral. A menudo, los miembros de las principales empresas europeas tienen su trabajo garantizado por contrato durante veinte años. Tienen un salario durante los períodos de lesiones médicas y sus gastos médicos están cubiertos, dado que ayudarles a mantener su salud y productividad es una preocupación directa de sus empleadores. Esto está muy lejos de la típica bailarina estadounidense, quien está aterrorizada de lesionarse porque no puede permitirse pagar las facturas médicas, teme perder su trabajo y no puede encontrar un especialista calificado para tratarla.

Un especialista en danza abordará la lesión de una bailarina como si fuera un detective médico. Tal como lo explica el podólogo Dr. Tom Novella, un especialista en danza debe mirar todo en la historia de la bailarina y no una sola lesión. Todo está vinculado. El médico

necesita identificar la lesión original en una cadena. Necesita tratar la causa de una lesión específica y curarla. De lo contrario, existe una fuerte posibilidad de que la lesión regrese.

Los problemas de muchas bailarinas se deben a la falta de movilidad causada por las puntas, sin embargo, algunos problemas que parecen ser causados por las puntas son en realidad problemas técnicos o estructurales. Por otro lado, a veces lo que parece ser técnico o estructural, podría ser el resultado de las puntas. Una vez más, el doctor debe ser un sabueso.

En los últimos años, los especialistas médicos de danza han notado una tendencia inquietante entre las bailarinas de puntas con respecto de la cirugía estética electiva. Por ejemplo, una bailarina podría querer que hagan sus arcos más altos. El Dr. Tom Novella atendió la consulta una bailarina, cuyo coreógrafo quería que su pie tuviera un aspecto más alado; por lo que ella quería que un juanete fuera inducido quirúrgicamente. Observando que incluso los mejores cirujanos tienen tasas de fracaso de uno en cada cuarenta casos, el Dr. Novella indica que si una bailarina está activa y sana, debe aferrarse a lo que tiene y trabajar con eso. En otras palabras, si no duele, déjalo en paz.

La quiropráctica Janiz A. Minschew les recuerda a las bailarinas otra razón vital para prestar especial atención al tratamiento de cualquier lesión que pueden sufrir. Ella dice: "La edad por sí sola no alterará significativamente el rendimiento y la capacidad física. Sin embargo, la edad combinada con una lesión, aunada a años de compensación causan la capacidad de disminuir rápidamente. Si puedes arreglar problemas en lugar de compensarlos a lo largo de tu vida, este desgaste no será tan agudo o tan rápido".

La Dra. Lillie Rosenthal añade que una bailarina quiere que su cuerpo funcione a largo plazo. Reconoce que la danza es una pasión "que los bailarines comen y toman; es parte de su

identidad. Idealmente, deberían tener carreras largas y saludables, que no se quemen como una estrella brillante".

Especialistas médicos: ¿Quién hace qué?

Cuando se busca asistencia médica, es necesario tener una idea clara del papel de cada especialista.

En primer lugar, se debe definir la palabra "médico". En los Estados Unidos, existen escuelas de medicina paralelas, pero separadas. El médico M.D. descrito como alopático y D.O. descrito como osteopático son médicos con licencia completa y generalmente tienen las mismas habilidades, capacidad, pues pasan por un entrenamiento similar. Luego de graduarse, ambos pueden elegir cualquier especialidad. Lo que diferencia el D.O. del M.D., es que el primero tiene entrenamiento adicional en el sistema musculo-esquelético y en técnicas de curación manual.

El enfoque general del D.O. es un poco más holístico que lo un M.D. tradicional. Un médico puede ser D.O. o M.D. y aun así ser un cirujano ortopédico u otro tipo de especialista. El público está menos familiarizado con el trabajo de los osteópatas. Sólo existen dieciocho escuelas osteopáticas en los Estados Unidos, a diferencia de las muchas escuelas donde se puede obtener un M.D. En la siguiente lista, los ortopedistas, osteópatas y fisiatras son médicos con licencia completa; sin embargo, los podólogos, quiroprácticos y fisioterapeutas no lo son. Eso significa que no pueden recetar medicamentos y no pueden hacer cirugías. Esta regla varía de un estado a otro para los podólogos, en algunos lugares pueden operar sólo el pie o el pie y la pierna - en otras palabras, algunos hacen cirugía y otros no.

Los ortopedistas son médicos que se especializan en los huesos y en los músculos. Después de la escuela de medicina, completan una residencia de cinco o seis años en cirugía

ortopédica. Aunque están entrenados para tratar cualquier área del cuerpo, un número pequeño pero cada vez mayor se especializa en problemas de los pies y de los tobillos y muchos han realizado postresidencias en este campo.

Los osteópatas son médicos que diagnostican, prescriben y tratan enfermedades y lesiones corporales. Se ocupan de la investigación sobre las causas, la transmisión y el control de enfermedades y otras dolencias atribuibles a deficiencias en el sistema músculo-esquelético y trastornos de los huesos, músculos, nervios y otros sistemas del cuerpo. Usan rayos X, medicamentos y otros métodos aceptados de atención médica y quirúrgica. Cuando lo consideran beneficioso, utilizan terapia manipulativa para tratar y corregir las deficiencias corporales.

Los fisiatras son M.D. u osteópatas que se ocupan de cualquier discapacidad, por ejemplo, una lesión aguda como un esguince de tobillo o discapacidades más graves. Un fisiatra es una mezcla entre un ortopedista neutral, un neurólogo, un médico de familia y un fisioterapeuta.

Los podólogos, o Médicos de Medicina Podológica (D.P.M.s, por sus siglas en inglés), tratan los pies exclusivamente. La escuela de Podiatría requiere cuatro años de entrenamiento más allá de la universidad y algunos podólogos realizan entrenamientos adicionales. Aquellos certificados por la Junta de Cirugía Podológica de los Estados Unidos tienen experiencia práctica adicional.

Los quiroprácticos ajustan la columna vertebral y otras articulaciones del cuerpo para prevenir enfermedades y corregir anomalías, las cuales se cree que son causadas por interferencia con el sistema nervioso. Por medio de rayos X y otros instrumentos y equipos,

examinan a los pacientes para determinar la naturaleza y el alcance del trastorno que presentan. Los quiroprácticos no poseen títulos médicos.

Los fisioterapeutas planifican y administran programas de tratamiento de terapia física recetados médicamente, los cuales restauran la función, alivian el dolor y previenen la discapacidad después de una enfermedad o lesión corporal. Los fisioterapeutas pueden trabajar en la práctica privada o en hospitales y centros de rehabilitación.

Niveles de lesión

Existen tres niveles principales de lesiones relacionadas con la danza. Primero, las lesiones agudas, las cuales son lesiones en el momento en que ocurren, como un esguince de tobillo. Si las lesiones agudas son leves, moderadas o graves, por lo general producen sangrado o hemorragia en las estructuras de tejido blando circundantes. El tratamiento de estas lesiones está diseñado para disminuir la lesión inicial en los tejidos blandos, pues la recuperación está directamente ligada al grado de trauma original y el sangrado.

El Dr. Hamilton sugiere que las bailarinas deben recordar el acrónimo DIFE (RICE, en inglés), cuando se enfrentan a una lesión aguda: Descanso, Inmovilización, Frío y Elevación. Descansar significa quitar el peso de la lesión para evitar el sangrado y la hinchazón. La inmovilización significa una férula. En el caso de una lesión leve, la férula puede ser un simple vendaje Ace aplicado lo suficientemente holgado para permitir la circulación, pero lo suficientemente apretado como para restringir la hinchazón. La elevación y el hielo también ayudan a controlar la hinchazón. El hielo debe envolverse en una bolsa de hielo o toalla, ya que no es aconsejable ponerlo directamente sobre la piel. Se debe colocar hielo en una lesión en forma intermitente durante las primeras doce a veinticuatro horas. No se debe aplicar calor durante este período, porque dilata los vasos sanguíneos y puede causar un sangrado excesivo.

El sangrado ya no es un factor después de veinticuatro a treinta y seis horas; en ese momento, el calor puede aumentar la circulación, por lo que tiene un impacto positivo en el proceso de curación.

Para lesiones agudas de la pierna, el Dr. Hamilton les indica a sus pacientes que para eliminar la lesión de la pierna, deben elevarla y aplicarle hielo durante veinticuatro horas. Luego, no deben poner peso en la pierna tanto como les sea posible, mantenerla elevada durante las próximas veinticuatro horas y comenzar baños calientes después de treinta y seis horas.

Las lesiones crónicas, el segundo nivel de lesiones relacionadas con la danza, son aquellas que nunca se han curado o de las cuales el paciente no se ha recuperado completamente. Si una lesión aguda se trata de forma incorrecta o recibe un descanso inadecuado, puede convertirse en una lesión crónica. Por ejemplo la tendinitis, las tensiones por uso excesivo, las fracturas por estrés que nunca han sanado debido a la falta de descanso, o los tendones que están crónicamente apretados y han desarrollado tejido cicatricial doloroso. Los problemas crónicos requieren una reducción prolongada de la actividad para sanar y pueden limitar a la bailarina durante varios meses.

Un tipo de lesión crónica es el uso excesivo, el cual puede ser el resultado de una técnica defectuosa, según lo indica el Dr. Galli. Las lesiones traumáticas, como por ejemplo que tu pareja te deje caer, tienen un principio y un final; sin embargo, las lesiones por uso excesivo tienen un principio, pero no un final.

El tercer nivel lo comprenden las lesiones recurrentes, las cuales sanan pero regresan eventualmente. Por ejemplo, un esguince de tobillo puede sanar, pero aun así estar débil; por lo tanto, puede lesionarse nuevamente un mes más tarde. Este ciclo sólo se puede romper a

través del fortalecimiento y la rehabilitación. El Dr. Galli sugiere que cuando una bailarina descubre que las lesiones se continúan repitiendo, es posible que necesite aumentar su rango de movimiento, aumentar su fuerza o usar puntas diferentes. Algunas de estas lesiones pueden ser causadas por factores externos, tales como pisos duros o errores en la técnica, colocación o alineación.

El Dr. Hamilton observa que las lesiones crónicas son las más comunes entre las bailarinas y las lesiones específicas difieren en frecuencia de compañía a compañía. Este es el resultado de diferentes estilos coreográficos, así como la diferencia en los pisos en los que bailan, cuánto viajan y los tipos de cuerpo que busca la compañía.

Lesiones del pie y el tobillo relacionadas con las puntas

En 1986, el Dr. James Garrick dio a conocer los resultados de un estudio de cinco años, en el cual analizó 1.055 lesiones de bailarines de dos compañías profesionales de ballet y una gran escuela profesional. Los bailarines en estudio oscilaron entre los cinco y poco más de los cuarenta años de edad. Observó que el nueve por ciento de estas lesiones ocurrieron en la columna vertebral, 3,8 por ciento en las extremidades superiores, 9,7 por ciento en la cadera, 22,3 por ciento en la rodilla, 11,4 por ciento en la pierna, 16,6 por ciento en el tobillo y 21,6 por ciento en los pies.

Mientras que las puntas y el trabajo de puntas tienen consecuencias en una variedad de lesiones en la rodilla, pierna, cadera y columna vertebral, se ha optado por destacar los sitios donde la tensión de bailar en puntas tiene un impacto más inmediato: el pie y el tobillo. La mayoría de las lesiones comienzan de abajo hacia arriba, con problemas como los pies que se doblan o se enrollan hacia adentro o hacia fuera, tobillos débiles, ligamentos laxos y arcos extremadamente altos o bajos, que se ven agravados por una técnica defectuosa. Por otro lado,

el Dr. Novella sugiere que si una bailarina es propensa a lesiones en los pies, la causa podría ser debilidad en las caderas o la espalda, lo cual conlleva a la presión en los pies. Sin la fuerza adecuada en el torso superior, la bailarina puede aterrizar demasiado fuerte y lesionar sus pies.

La siguiente revisión de las lesiones y condiciones del pie y el tobillo es una recopilación de información y sugerencias recibidas del personal médico que entrevistamos. Estos breves resúmenes le pueden ayudar a una bailarina a identificar una lesión; sin embargo, no están destinados a sustituir el consejo de un especialista médico debidamente calificado. Los diabéticos no deben automedicarse ni siquiera en los problemas más pequeños en los pies sin la supervisión de un médico.

El pie

En el estudio del Dr. Garrick sobre lesiones de ballet, las lesiones en los pies fueron la segunda lesión más frecuente. Bailar en puntas le añade una nueva lista de demandas a un pie comprometido. La bailarina no sólo tiene que soportar su peso en las puntas de los dedos de los pies, sino que también tiene que adaptarse a aspectos no anatómicos del diseño de las puntas.

Cuando las lesiones del pie y el tobillo obligan a la bailarina a mantener el peso en sus extremidades inferiores, el Dr. Novella sugiere hacer barra en el suelo y otros ejercicios que no involucren los pies, para así mantener el resto del cuerpo estirado.

Problemas en la superficie externa del pie

Pie de atleta. El pie de atleta es una infección fúngica que prospera en un ambiente húmedo y oscuro. Los zapatos apretados y cerrados y los pies sudorosos proporcionan el ambiente ideal para el pie de atleta. Para evitar el pie de atleta, la bailarina debe lavarse los pies al menos una vez al día y debe tener cuidado de secar la piel entre los dedos de los pies.

Si desarrolla esa condición, medicamentos de venta libre pueden ayudarla, o bien, un médico puede recetarle un medicamento antimicótico fuerte. Ella necesita continuar con las medidas preventivas una vez que la condición se aclare, pues puede regresar fácilmente. El pie de atleta es contagioso y se puede contraer al no usar zapatos en el vestidor o en las duchas.

Ampollas. Las ampollas son causadas por la fricción continua cuando la piel sensible se roza contra el interior del zapato. Esta fricción separa las capas de la piel, por lo que una capa se desliza sobre la otra. La bolsita resultante se llena de un líquido transparente o de sangre. Muchas ampollas causadas por las puntas son ampollas de sangre. Las ampollas pueden ser el resultado de puntas que no calzan correctamente, o bien, pueden desarrollarse durante el proceso de quebrar o amoldar las puntas. Las costuras en las medias o calcetines que son demasiado ajustadas o arrugas en aquellas que están demasiado sueltas, también pueden ser responsables.

El uso de talco puede reducir la humedad y las posibilidades de sufrir de ampollas. Las bailarinas propensas a las ampollas por lo general envuelven con cinta rutinariamente los dedos de los pies problemáticos, o bien, los lubrican con vaselina y los envuelven en lana de cordero. En los días de la Rusia zarista, las bailarinas ponían finas rodajas de ternera en sus zapatillas para prevenir las ampollas.

Lo mejor es detectar las ampollas antes que se formen. La señal de advertencia es un "punto caliente" rojo. Tan pronto como la bailarina ve que la piel está irritada, debe usar una sustancia a prueba de fricción como la vaselina o cubrir el área con una curita o molesquín. Existen numerosos productos nuevos en el mercado que están orientados especialmente para las bailarinas de puntas y así proteger la piel del pie.

Una vez causada, una ampolla puede ser una pequeña molestia o una infección grave. La bailarina necesita tratar las ampollas antes que se abran y sangren. Una vez que la ampolla se abre, la bailarina debe encontrar una manera de evitar que la infección avance mientras continúa bailando. Cuando la piel cruda está expuesta, el dolor de bailar con una ampolla grande puede ser extremo. En tales casos, puede ser necesario darle tiempo a la ampolla para que sane, en lugar de correr el riesgo de profundizar o infectar la zona mediante más fricción. La piel expuesta se puede tratar con mertiolato.

Una ampolla de sangre requiere consultar a un médico especialista en forma inmediata, ya que existe un mayor riesgo de infección; sin embargo, una bailarina puede tratar por sí misma una ampolla con líquido transparente que no se haya reventado. Primero, debe esterilizar la zona de la ampolla con alcohol y luego esterilizar una aguja con alcohol o llama. Con la aguja, debe perforar la ampolla en varios puntos alrededor del borde, luego empujar cuidadosamente la ampolla con una almohadilla estéril para liberar el líquido.

Tiempo atrás, se les decía a las bailarinas que cortaran la piel muerta, pero ahora se les aconseja no hacerlo, para así reducir el riesgo de sufrir una infección. A continuación, se aplica una pomada antibiótica de venta libre en la ampolla y se cubre con molesquín. Repítase este procedimiento completo tres veces más dentro de las próximas veinticuatro horas. Después de tres o cuatro días, la piel muerta se desprende naturalmente. Además cubrir la nueva piel con un producto como Second Skin de Spenco o New Skin, hasta que se endurezca por completo.

Exponer la ampolla al aire fresco siempre que sea posible y mantenerla siempre esterilizada. Si bailar en puntas es doloroso antes que la ampolla haya sanado, es mejor

intentar rodearla con varias capas circulares de molesquín o algún otro producto amortiguador.

Callosidades. Las callosidades son montículos de piel gruesos y duros que aparecen en la parte inferior o lateral del pie. Son causadas por la fricción y la presión de frotar la piel de los pies contra superficies de apoyo. Por lo general, se producen en los nudillos y la parte superior de los dedos de los pies y en el tendón de Aquiles donde el zapato frota el talón. Las bailarinas con pies planos o arcos excepcionalmente altos tienden a desarrollar una gran cantidad de callosidades. El exceso de callosidades también se forma con frecuencia a un lado de un talón doblado o de un dedo gordo del pie desequilibrado.

Las callosidades aparecen como áreas enrojecidas que pueden estar sensibles después del trabajo de puntas, pero se endurecerán más adelante. Aunque la formación de callosidades es útil para las bailarinas dado que endurecen los pies, una gran cantidad de callosidades también puede indicar una mala postura y peso o puntas mal ajustadas.

Las callosidades que se vuelven demasiado gruesas pueden producir dolor y una sensación de ardor. También agrietarse y sangrar, por lo tanto, pueden producirse infecciones. Las callosidades gruesas que ha perdido su elasticidad tienden a moverse como una masa y llegar a romperse.

Una ampolla dolorosa puede formarse debajo de una callosidad. Si una ampolla de este tipo se rompe, la callosidad puede caerse, lo cual puede resultar en un pie muy dolorido y en un proceso de curación largo y doloroso. En ocasiones, una callosidad bajo el segundo metatarso puede formar un núcleo duro, lo cual es otra fuente de dolor considerable. Las callosidades bajo el segundo metatarso son un problema común para las bailarinas con juanetes.

Para mantener las callosidades bajo control, remojar los pies en un tazón con agua tibia y varias cucharadas de jabón suave de diez a quince minutos. A continuación, limar suavemente el exceso de acumulación de callosidades con una lima de esmeril y masajear la zona con una pequeña cantidad de aceite de oliva. No intentar eliminar toda la acumulación de callosidades en un solo tratamiento y asegurarse de mantener el resto de la callosidad al mismo nivel de la piel que lo rodea. Por último, alisar el área con el lado más fino de la lima de esmeril. Repetir este procedimiento después de bañarse o ducharse y tener cuidado de no limar demasiado la callosidad. El área se puede proteger mediante la aplicación de moleskin u otro tipo de almohadilla antes de bailar.

Callos. Los callos son el resultado de una presión anormal de las puntas mal ajustadas y pueden ser bastante dolorosos. A diferencia de las callosidades, los callos se forman en lugares que no soportan peso o se desarrollan entre los dedos de los pies. Las bailarinas con arcos altos son susceptibles a los callos, ya que sus dedos tienden a doblarse.

Existen dos tipos de callos: los duros y los blandos. Ambos tipos son el resultado de las puntas, las cuales presionan la capa superior del tejido y hacen que el tejido se presione hacia adentro. Dado que los callos presionan las terminaciones nerviosas y causan inflamación, pueden ser dolorosos e incapacitantes.

Un callo duro se encuentra más a menudo al lado o en la parte superior del dedo pequeño del pie y puede ser causado por puntas más pequeñas. La forma más lógica de deshacerse de un callo duro es eliminar la fricción que lo está causando. En otras palabras, amortiguar los puntos donde se están formando los callos y observar la forma en que el ajuste de las puntas puede estar causando el problema.

La extracción quirúrgica de los callos no es una opción para las bailarinas. Las almohadillas químicas para callos también deben evitarse, debido al riesgo de infección por una quemadura en la piel. Si una bailarina insiste en usar tales almohadillas, debe leer las instrucciones con cuidado y estar pendiente de cualquier signo de infección, como enrojecimiento (particularmente rayas rojas por la pierna), calor, dolor o hinchazón. Ella debe buscar atención médica inmediatamente si estos signos persisten, porque podría tener intoxicación de la sangre y necesitar antibióticos.

Para reducir de forma segura el tamaño de los callos duros, hay que remojar los pies en agua tibia con jabón de cinco o diez minutos. Seque los pies y masajee los dedos de los pies con aceite de oliva. Frote cuidadosamente el callo con el lado grueso de una lima de esmeril y alise el área con el lado más fino de la lima. No lime demasiado lejos en primer esfuerzo. Repita esta rutina cuando los callos se ablanden gracias a una ducha o un baño hasta que el callo esté uniforme con el resto de la piel. Sólo un podólogo puede eliminar un callo.

Los callos blandos, los cuales se desarrollan en el ambiente húmedo entre los dedos de los pies, tienen un aspecto más suave que los callos duros. Tienen un color gris-blanco y a menudo aparecen entre el cuarto y quinto dedo del pie, como resultado de puntas que están demasiado apretadas en el área del metatarso. Los callos suaves pueden indicar la necesidad de usar puntas con una caja más amplia. Los callos blandos prosperan en condiciones cálidas y húmedas, por lo que los pies deben mantenerse lo más secos posible con un talco antiséptico.

Para tratar los callos blandos, la bailarina debe separar los dedos de los pies involucrados para eliminar el punto de presión. Una vez que la presión se ha ido y el área se mantiene seca, los callos blandos pueden desaparecer. Los dedos de los pies se pueden separar

con lana, algodón o un espaciador comercial de los dedos del pie. Sin esta amortiguación, los espolones óseos pueden frotar el tejido y causar una úlcera, la cual es muy dolorosa y puede infectarse peligrosamente. Si esta estrategia de separación no tiene éxito, consultar a un médico sobre la posibilidad de quitar la cubierta de la ampolla sobre el callo. Una vez más, la extirpación quirúrgica de los callos blandos no es una alternativa para las bailarinas y se debe evitar el uso de almohadillas de callos medicadas.

El Dr. Novella advierte que un callo blando grueso puede convertirse en un absceso, sin que la bailarina lo sienta, si se está enmascarando un nervio pellizcado. A menudo, Novella ve que esto sucede entre el tercer y cuarto dedo del pie. Un médico debe comprobar si la sensibilidad en la zona del callo blando es la misma que en el resto del pie. Si no es así, él o ella pueden tratar de descubrir la causa antes que se infecte.

Dermatitis. La dermatitis es una irritación de la piel, la cual se produce por reacción a algo, generalmente un alérgeno o estrés. A menudo, los pies se ven afectados por la picazón, el ardor o áreas enrojecidas. Pueden aparecer protuberancias o ampollas rojizas. La dermatitis de contacto, por lo general, resulta del contacto de la piel con una sustancia a la que se es alérgico. A veces el cuero de los zapatos se procesa con productos químicos fuertes que son altamente alergénicos. Si es necesario, se puede realizar una prueba para determinar la naturaleza de la alergia. La neurodermatitis está relacionada con el estrés.

Problemas con las uñas de los pies

Las uñas de los pies son estructuras mucho más complicadas de lo que parecen ser. Cada uña tiene seis partes, comenzando desde el interior y hasta la punta - la matriz, la lúnula, la cutícula, la raíz, el lecho ungueal y la punta. Las uñas de los pies están hechas de queratina

proteica, la cual es similar a la proteína que compone el cabello. Para evitar problemas, las uñas deben mantenerse adecuadamente recortadas y limpias.

Uñas encarnadas. Las uñas encarnadas se producen cuando el borde lateral de la uña del pie se curva y empuja bajo de la piel suave del dedo del pie, lo cual causa irritación o infección. Las uñas encarnadas pueden ser causadas por la presión anormal de las puntas que son demasiado pequeñas o estrechas, por uñas de los pies mal recortadas y por uñas engrosadas por el trabajo en puntas.

El enrojecimiento es el primer signo de una uña encarnada y le puede seguir un dolor agudo e hinchazón. Si hay pus o infección, se debe consultar a un médico inmediatamente. Si produce dolor, remojar el pie en agua caliente y jabón antibacteriano varias veces al día y colocar un poco de algodón delgado y empapado en alcohol debajo del borde de la uña para alejar la piel mientras la uña crece. Al levantar la uña lejos del lecho ungueal, el algodón debe proporcionar alivio ante el dolor.

Si la uña encarnada ha llegado a un punto en el que debe recortarse, es aconsejable ver a un médico. El podólogo Dr. Steven Baff trata casos graves al cortar la uña encarnada para que el tejido alrededor de la uña no se inflame o eliminar permanentemente la parte encarnada de la uña hasta la raíz usando un producto químico o un rayo láser.

Las bailarinas pueden evitar el problema al recortar la uña en forma recta, con sólo un ligero redondeo en las esquinas. La uña nunca debe estar lo suficientemente redondeada como para entrar en contacto con la piel a ambos lados del lecho ungueal. Algunas bailarinas cortan la uña un poco más corta en el medio, dándole a la uña la forma de una letra U o V y luego insertan un pedacito de lana de cordero en las esquinas de la placa ungueal. Invertir en un buen par de cortauñas es esencial para el mantenimiento de las uñas de los dedos de los pies.

Uñas magulladas. Los dedos de los pies reciben una paliza cada día cuando se utilizan las puntas y pueden mostrar evidencia de hematomas y sangrado debajo de las uñas. Esto es particularmente cierto si las puntas son demasiado pequeñas o demasiado estrechas, o bien, si las uñas de los pies están demasiado largas. Cuando los vasos sanguíneos debajo de los dedos de los pies se rompen, esta sangre no puede escapar, lo cual causa un coágulo debajo de la uña. Esta condición también puede ser causada al dejar caer un objeto lo suficientemente pesado sobre el dedo como para magullarlo.

Si se coloca hielo en la uña tan pronto como el trauma ocurre y se mantiene con hielo periódicamente, se puede evitar que se forme el coágulo de sangre. Si el coágulo se forma, la uña del pie se puede salvar si se trata dentro de los dos días después de que la sangre haya entrado en el espacio entre la uña y el lecho ungueal.

Para tratar la uña, el Dr. James Garrick sugiere calentar un clip en una llama hasta que esté rojo y empujarlo a través de la uña para liberar la sangre. Es posible que el clip tenga que recalentarse varias veces para completar el procedimiento y también se debe aplicar presión adicional a los lados de la uña. Este método debe traer alivio instantáneo. Después de realizar este procedimiento, remojar el pie tres veces al día en agua tibia y sales de Epsom, así como mantener la uña pintada con mertiolato. Mantenga la uña cubierta con una curita.

Si no se trata lo suficientemente pronto, es probable que pierda la uña en el lapso de un mes. Si la uña comienza a desprenderse y no hay signos de infección, asegurar la uña en su lugar con cinta adhesiva para proteger el tejido de abajo. La nueva uña tardará unos seis meses en volver a crecer.

Uñas engrosadas. Una uña engrosada tiene un color grisáceo-negro o marrón y ocurre cuando el dedo del pie está constantemente presionado por las puntas. La presión produce una

capa adicional de uña, la cual a su vez crea más presión contra el lecho de la uña. Ha de consultarse a un podólogo para un tratamiento adecuado de las uñas engrosadas de los pies.

Uñas con hongos. Una uña gruesa que se vuelve de color amarillo-marrón y tiene crecimientos esponjosos debajo, podría ser un signo de una infección por hongos. Una infección por hongos puede ser una afección muy grave y puede propagarse a otros dedos de los pies. Consultar inmediatamente a un médico si sospecha que tiene una infección por hongos.

Problemas con los dedos de los pies

Dedos de varias longitudes. El Dr. Richard Braver estima que un tercio de la población tiene un segundo dedo más largo que el primer dedo del pie, un tercio tiene un primer dedo del pie más largo que el segundo y un tercio tiene ambos dedos de los dedos de la misma longitud. Un segundo o tercer dedo del pie no está destinado a funcionar como el dedo del pie que soporta la presión, por lo que el dolor en la bola del pie y las fracturas por estrés pueden resultar en bailarinas de puntas que tienen segundos o terceros dedos más largos. Mientras que los pies con segundos o terceros dedos más largos no están diseñados para ser sometidos a puntas, los dispositivos ortopédicos introducidos recientemente pueden ayudar al elevar o reposicionar los dedos de los pies para evitar una presión indebida.

Juanetes (Hallux Valgus). El Dr. Novella cree que casi todas las bailarinas tienen uno o varios juanetes en alguna etapa de desarrollo. Un juanete es una protuberancia ósea en el exterior del dedo gordo del pie, la cual se forma cuando el dedo del pie se ve obligado a inclinarse hacia adentro y hacia los dedos más pequeños. La proyección es causada por la desviación de la articulación de uno de los huesos del dedo gordo del pie. La presión sobre la proyección hace que la piel que la rodea se engrose, lo que aumenta la presión. Una parte del

juanete se compone de una bolsa entre la piel y el hueso. Este saco lleno de líquido puede sentirse duro como los huesos. Un juanete rojo e hinchado es el resultado de una bolsa inflamada.

Esta condición a menudo se hereda y generalmente se puede observar en pies donde el segundo dedo es más largo que el primero, el primer metatarso es corto y la bola del pie es demasiado flexible. Bailar en puntas y rodar para aumentar la rotación puede causar un caso leve de hallux valgus (juanete) por estirar los ligamentos en el interior del pie.

Mientras que algunos juanetes no producen dolor al bailar, en algunos casos la presión de las puntas en la articulación que sobresale puede causar bursitis o inflamación de la articulación, haciendo que se vuelva dolorosa, hinchada y sensible. Un juanete puede ser causado por el estrés y la fricción de las puntas apretadas. Cuando los juanetes son dolorosos, se puede usar un espaciador de dedo del pie entre el dedo grande y el segundo posicionando correctamente el dedo gordo del pie y evitando que se aplaste hacia los otros dedos en un ángulo. Los espaciadores pueden ser de lana de cordero o una tira de una pulgada de toalla de papel doblada en un pequeño rectángulo y colocada entre los dedos. También se pueden utilizar almohadillas para durezas o juanetes, las cuales son fabricadas comercialmente.

Se debe tener cuidado y verificar que las puntas (y zapatos de uso cotidiano) son lo suficientemente anchos en la parte de las articulaciones metatarsales, para así evitar presiones indebidas y que el pie se coloque correctamente en punta. El relleno alrededor del juanete es útil y los escudos de juanetes de látex o las férulas para juanetes del Dr. Scholl pueden proporcionar un alivio a la presión. Es mejor tratar de cortar las hendiduras en el lado o la parte posterior de las puntas para reducir la presión, o cortar las cuñas fuera de estas áreas y llene con elástico o moleskin.

Cuando las protuberancias del juanete producen dolor y están inflamadas, tratarlas con hielo y baños de contraste (calientes y fríos). Los antiinflamatorios también pueden ser útiles. A menudo, como resultado de un juanete, otras partes del pie pueden comenzar a doler. La bailarina podría tener dolor en el segundo dedo del pie o desarrollar un dedo de martillo. Asimismo, se puede formar un callo blando entre el primer y el segundo dedo del pie.

La mayoría de los médicos están de acuerdo en que los peligros de la cirugía de juanete superan los beneficios para las bailarinas. Aunque el resultado cosmético puede ser más atractivo, tal cirugía puede resultar en un movimiento limitado de la articulación, rango de técnica marcadamente reducido en *media punta* y dolor crónico.

Juanetes pequeños. Un juanete pequeño (a veces llamado juanete de sastre) es una ampliación de la cabeza del quinto metatarsal. Esta afección congénita hace que el pie esté expuesto a una presión anormal, por ello se puede formar una bolsa sobre la articulación para protegerlo. Cuando esta bolsa se llena de líquido y se inflama, se puede producir una sensación de ardor, hinchazón y dolor. Tomar antiinflamatorios y aplicar hielo ayuda a reducir el dolor y la hinchazón. Un juanete pequeño puede cubrirse con fieltro o moleskin o con un escudo de juanete producido comercialmente para protegerlo de la presión de la punta.

Dedos de martillo. Los dedos de martillo son los que se curvan o se enganchan hacia abajo. Esta condición puede ser heredada o agravada por el uso de zapatos demasiado apretados y demasiado pequeños, lo cual fuerza las articulaciones de los dedos y al tendón extensor a contraerse. Eventualmente, los dedos se bloquean y el tendón se acorta en forma permanente. Los dedos de martillo pueden acompañar a un juanete. Con frecuencia ocurren en individuos cuyos segundos dedos son más largos que el primero o tienen un arco alto.

Las almohadillas protectoras en forma de U pueden evitar que los dedos de martillo doblados se froten contra el interior del zapato y causen callos. Estos callos en la punta de los dedos son una fuente real de dolor de los dedos de martillo. Hay que tratar el callo duro del dedo de martillo como si fuera un callo duro en cualquier otro lugar. Un podólogo puede cortar una porción del callo si este se vuelve excesivo.

Un dedo de martillo se puede envolver con cinta adhesiva de media pulgada junto con alguno los dedos de al lado durante el ensayo o la presentación para quitarle peso. Un podólogo puede guiarte en la forma de amarrar el dedo del pie. Un dedo de martillo sólo puede ser corregido con cirugía, la cual no es una opción sugerida para los bailarines.

Hallux Limitus y Rigidus. La rigidez de la articulación del dedo gordo del pie es común entre las bailarinas adolescentes y proviene del impacto y la fuerte presión en la articulación. La tensión repetida hace que la articulación del dedo se inflame y se endurezca en la fase hallus limitus. Dado que el rango de movimiento en el dedo gordo del pie es limitado, el peso corporal cambia hacia el exterior del pie cuando la bailarina está en *media punta*, lo que puede causar tensión en el tobillo externo, en los músculos del pie débiles y dolor en la pierna externa. A menos que se controlen las causas, el dedo puede quedarse totalmente rígido, momento en el que la condición es llamada hallux rigidus. El síntoma clave es el dolor extremo en la articulación del primer metatarsal cuando la bailarina pasa de *media punta* a punta completa. La tendencia es cambiar de peso hacia el exterior del pie para evitar el dolor en el dedo gordo del pie.

La bailarina debe tomar antiinflamatorios, amortiguar los zapatos de uso diario y rellenar el área debajo e inmediatamente detrás de la articulación. Pueden ser necesarias varias semanas de descanso. Consultar a un médico para obtener consejos sobre esta

condición ya que, en su forma extrema, el hallux rigidus puede requerir cirugía para restaurar el movimiento, lo cual conduce al debilitamiento permanente de esta importante articulación.

Dedos gordos atascados. Como resultado de muchas horas consecutivas de trabajo de puntas, se puede producir un esguince en los ligamentos de la articulación del dedo, magullar el cartílago o estirar y desgarrar la cápsula articular. Cualquiera de estas lesiones puede ser extremadamente limitante. Esto se puede tratar tomando antiinflamatorios y masajeando con hielo tres veces al día durante quince minutos.

Neuromas. El neuroma de Morton es un nudo de fibras nerviosas que causan dolores punzantes, los cuales se extienden desde la bola del pie entre los metatarsales hacia los dedos de los pies. Estos nervios agrandados e inflamados en la bola del pie generalmente ocurren entre el tercer y cuarto dedo, pero a veces entre el cuarto y el quinto.

Al inicio, el neuroma de Morton puede aparecer como una sensación de ardor que se extiende desde las cabezas de los metatarsales hacia el talón, lo cual en forma inicial se nota cuando el peso se lleva al pie. Eventualmente, la sensación también está presente en otras ocasiones. Luego, comienza a parecerse a una descarga eléctrica desde la bola del pie hacia los dedos. El entumecimiento y los calambres también pueden estar presentes. El dolor por lo general desaparece cuando se quitan las puntas. Si se ignora, el nervio involucrado puede hincharse aún más y desarrollar cicatrices permanentes. La condición generalmente es causada por puntas en extremo apretadas, las cuales presionan las cabezas de los metatarsales juntas.

El nervio vuelve a la normalidad si se elimina la presión. Debe tratarse con hielo tres veces al día por veinte minutos y tomar antiinflamatorios. Asegurarse de aplicar hielo después de la clase, ensayo o presentación. También buscar almohadillas especiales para separar los

dedos de los pies afectados. Poner una almohadilla detrás del área que causa dolor para reducir la presión sobre el nervio. Con suerte, el alivio llegará en varias semanas. Antes de volver a las puntas, consultar a un experto en ajuste de zapatillas y experimentar con puntas con cajas más anchas. Si esto no proporciona alivio, consultar a un ortopedista para más información. Dado que la extirpación quirúrgica de neuromas no implica articulaciones ni huesos, este procedimiento puede ser realizado en bailarinas.

Problemas en la parte superior e inferior del pie

Tendinitis Extensor. Esta lesión implica dolor en la parte superior del pie, acompañada de hinchazón y enrojecimiento, lo cual sucede cuando las puntas están demasiado ajustadas y no proveen suficiente espacio esta área. Como resultado de la presión y la fricción, los tendones extensores se inflaman. La parte superior del pie se puede hinchar, por lo que levantar los dedos de los pies causa molestias.

Ha de protegerse los tendones cubriendo el pie o el interior de la punta con moleskin. Tan pronto como sea posible, consultar con un experto en el ajuste de puntas para encontrar un estilo que brinde más espacio sobre la parte superior del pie.

Exostosis dorsal. Esta protuberancia ósea en la parte superior del pie puede ser congénita o bien, debido a una presión constante sobre el dedo gordo del pie. La fricción causada por las puntas agrava la protuberancia, la cual produce inflamación e hinchazón. Los pies planos o pronados son particularmente propensos a desarrollar estas protuberancias. Tratar el bulto óseo que se encuentra hinchado y agravado, con hielo varias veces al día por veinte minutos y tomar antiinflamatorios. Rodear el bulto con moleskin para aliviar la presión.

Fascitis Plantar. La fascia plantar es un haz denso de hebras de tejido fibroso que comienza en el talón y se conecta con los huesos metatarsales en la base de los dedos de los

pies, la cual se estira y contrae cada vez que se utiliza el pie. Si se estira hasta perder su flexibilidad, se puede desgarrar y causar una condición de uso excesivo llamada fascitis plantar. El síntoma clave es el dolor en la parte inferior del pie, el cual puede magullarse o hincharse. Las bailarinas con arcos altos y fascias apretadas son las principales candidatas a sufrir dicha lesión.

Para tratar la lesión procurar no hacer movimientos que causen dolor, así como con antiinflamatorios, hielo y baños de contraste. Visitar a un podólogo para discutir cómo reducir la presión sobre la fascia.

Verrugas Plantares. Estos crecimientos son causados por virus en las plantas de los pies, los cuales provocan que una bailarina sienta como si tuviera algo en sus puntas. Las verrugas plantares crecen hacia adentro, en lugar de hacia fuera y aparecen bajo el talón, en la bola del pie o al lado del dedo gordo del pie. Las crestas normales de la piel, que continúan a través de la superficie de un callo, rodean una verruga plantar, dejando sólo la superficie de crecimiento lisa. A veces las verrugas aparecen en grupos. Si se dejan tranquilas, las verrugas plantares finalmente desaparecen por sí mismas. Si se hacen más grandes o causan molestias, ha de consultarse a un podólogo sobre cómo eliminarlas.

Las verrugas plantares son contagiosas, por lo que debe usarse zapatos en el vestidor y en la ducha. Si una compañera de clase o de la compañía que comparte tales instalaciones descubre una verruga plantar, desinfectar el área con Clorox sin diluir.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

The following chapter will show the results from the analysis and the interpretation of all the collected data through the different instruments used. It is very important for any research, and this one in particular, to go over the results shown on the instruments before starting the translation process so it will be done correctly, taking into consideration all the variables related to each document and apply them to come up with the best suitable translation possible for the determined audience and context of the target language without losing the identity and intention of the original text.

5.1 Analysis and interpretation of the results

Each of the instruments applied shows different and specific data about the texts which are key to maintain the form and deliver the message in the most appropriate way depending on the various characteristics of the original texts. The researcher will present the complete information gathered through those research instruments bellow.

5.1.1 Text Analysis

<i>DOCUMENTS</i>	<i>Welcome to Orosi</i>	<i>The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (Second Edition)</i>
Text Analysis		
Text Style	Narrative Text	Descriptive Text
Text Function	Expressive	Informative
Stylistic Scale		
Formality	Colloquial / Slang	Formal / Neutral
Generality or difficulty	Popular	Technical
Emotional tone	Warm	Factual
Type of translation	Semantic	Semantic

Table 4 demonstrates the text analysis results.

Source: Researcher's own creation

Only by looking at the table, we can deduct those are two very different texts. The Welcome to Orosi text is a novel, which determines the style being narrative. The author expresses his feelings and experiences as a child in the majority of the text. It is a very Costa Rican text, filled with expressions and idioms proper of this country. Also, this novel is mostly written by the author's perspective and thoughts as a child, so the vocabulary is popular and understandable for regular readers, only the idioms can cause certain doubts about meaning. Since this novel is completely personal, it contains a warm tone so we can easily relate with the author.

On the other hand, the text *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique* (Second Edition) has a descriptive style, which describes a specific topic in detail, taking all aspects into account to show them to the readers. It is informative because it presents facts and realities, and also uses technical terminology particular to this area, but with a very clear and regular writing so it can be read for most people as well. It is factual since it presents the facts in a very subjective way.

5.1.2 Color Coding

There will be a selection of 15 paragraphs from English into Spanish and 15 paragraphs from Spanish into English to be analyzed to visualize the way the translation procedures were applied on both translations.

{Transposition}
<u>Modulation</u>
Omission
Amplification
Explicitation
Literal Translation
Compensation
Equivalence
Adaptation

Borrowing
Calque

Table 5 presents the colors and procedures used in the color coding.

Source: Researcher's own creation

In this specific case the Transposition and Modulation are within brackets and underlined respectively because those two procedures can contain other techniques at the same time as part of them; so, that way, the translator will be able to identify them and make them visible in the text.

TRANSLATION FORM ENGLISH INTO SPANISH

Paragraph 1

It is entirely possible that some students may never "be ready" to go on pointe. If a teacher takes the course of least resistance, and allows such a student to go on pointe, using the excuse that she will only find another teacher who will put her "up," that teacher is overlooking his or her responsibility for the student's current and future physical health. For this reason, it is important for teachers to develop a strong rapport with parents. Once parents have confidence in a teacher's judgment, they are more likely to understand a thoroughly explained and scientifically supported discussion of why their child should not be placed on pointe.

Translated Version

Es muy posible que algunas estudiantes nunca "estén listas" para hacer puntas. Si un maestro toma el camino menos complicado y le permite a dicha estudiante hacer puntas, {con la excusa} de que encontrará otro maestro que lo haga, estará pasando por alto su responsabilidad para {con la salud física actual y futura de la estudiante}. Por esta razón, es importante que los maestros desarrollen una fuerte relación con los padres. Una vez que los padres tienen confianza en {el juicio de un maestro}, es más probable que entiendan una

explicación detallada y científicamente sustentada de porqué su hija no debe hacer puntas.

Paragraph 2

Many teachers have convinced themselves that the only way to have a successful studio is to allow every female student to go on pointe as soon as possible. Part of this practice is rooted in a lack of understanding of the anatomical and technical foundation of pointe work, and part **of it** is based on poor logic. Putting every **female** student on pointe probably does as much to drive students away as to retain them. Many students who have gained reasonable proficiency in soft shoes find the reality of being on pointe so frustrating that **they** are discouraged from continuing their dance studies.

Translated Version

Muchos profesores están convencidos de que la única manera de tener {un estudio o academia exitosa} es permitirle a cada {estudiante femenina} **hacer puntas tan pronto como sea posible**. Parte de esta práctica {**se basa en la poca comprensión**} de la {**base anatómica y técnica del trabajo de puntas**} y la otra se basa en una lógica deficiente. Probablemente, poner a cada estudiante en **puntas puede provocar que estas se alejen, en vez de retenerlas**. Muchas de las estudiantes que adquieren un dominio razonable en {zapatillas suaves} encuentran la realidad de las puntas muy frustrante, por lo que se desalientan de continuar sus {estudios de danza}.

Paragraph 3

Knowledge is the best weapon in successfully dealing with the issue of readiness. Teachers must know how to evaluate a child for pointe readiness and be able to interpret the process clearly for parents. Helpful guidance can be obtained by talking to podiatrists and orthopedists who work with dancers, attending seminars at conventions, and conferring with fitting specialists at dance shops. Many colleges offer courses in anatomy, and some are designed especially for dance majors. Taking such a course on a - not-for-credit basis could provide a valuable base of knowledge.

Translated Version

El conocimiento es la mejor arma {para tratar con éxito el tema de la preparación}. Los maestros deben saber cómo evaluar a una niña para {la preparación de puntas} y ser capaces de interpretar {claramente el proceso} para los padres. Se puede obtener una guía útil al hablar con podólogos y ortopedistas que trabajan con bailarines, al asistir a seminarios en convenciones y al conversar con especialistas en {talleres de danza}. Muchas universidades ofrecen cursos de anatomía y algunos están diseñados especialmente para las especialidades en danza. Tomar un curso de este tipo podría proporcionar una valiosa base de conocimiento.

Paragraph 4

Some teachers place the greatest emphasis on the training factor. For instance, Nathalie Krassovska, former ballerina with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, feels that training level and body development are more important than age. She believes that if a student takes class every day, **she** can develop strength **very** quickly and occasionally can go on pointe **as early as** eight, after several years of intensive study. However, she would keep less serious dancers, who take fewer classes, off pointe until as late as age fourteen or fifteen. Krassovska insists that students come at least three times a week to be able to take pointe class.

Translated Version

Algunos maestros ponen un mayor énfasis en el {factor de formación}. Por ejemplo, Nathalie Krassovska, **quien fuera** bailarina del Ballet Russe de Montecarlo y el Gran Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, **considera** que {el nivel de entrenamiento y el desarrollo corporal} son mucho más importantes que la edad. Ella considera que si una estudiante recibe clases todos los días, puede desarrollar **fuerza** rápidamente y eventualmente puede **iniciar** **puntas** a los **ocho años de edad**, después de varios años de {estudio intensivo}. {Sin embargo, **ella pondría en puntas a las bailarinas menos serias**, las que toman menos clases, **hasta los catorce o quince años de edad**}. Krassovska insiste **en que las** estudiantes **deben recibir** **clases** al menos tres veces a la semana para poder tomar {clases de **puntas**}.

Paragraph 5

Dr. James Garrick has stated that, contrary to finding that going on pointe "too early" produces significant musculoskeletal problems, the Dance Medicine Division of his Center for Sports Medicine at St. Francis Hospital in San Francisco observes students who physically struggle with pointe because **they** lack the strength and technique necessary for "this demanding endeavor." He believes a student should be able to do a solid *passé* on *demi-pointe* with a straight, pulled-up knee. This requires that she put all her weight on one leg, with full knee extension and full *relevé*.

Translated Version

El Dr. James Garrick indica que, contrario {a lo que se dice} que poner en puntas a una estudiante "demasiado pronto" produce {problemas musculo-esqueléticos significativos}, la División de Medicina de Danza de su Centro de {Medicina del Deporte} en {el Hospital St. Francis} en San Francisco observa estudiantes que físicamente luchan con las puntas ya que carecen de la fuerza y la técnica necesarias para "esta {labor tan exigente}". Él considera que una estudiante debe ser capaz de hacer un {passé sólido} en media punta con una {rodilla recta y levantada hacia arriba}. Esto requiere que la estudiante ponga todo su peso en una pierna, con {extensión completa de la rodilla} y {relevé completo}.

Paragraph 6

During growth spurts, weight distribution **changes**, the center of gravity **changes**, and the proportions of body parts change. Rapidly growing dancers run a greater risk of injury than others. Since muscles may not keep up with bone growth and may grow tightly, the resulting strain on the body can have a long-lasting impact. Students are kept in the same class structure, but work in flat shoes until the growth spurt ends. They might be given additional exercises to stretch the quadriceps, hamstrings, and calf muscles, to keep them strong, stretched, and flexible.

Translated Version

Durante los {estirones de crecimiento}, {la distribución del peso}, el centro de gravedad y las proporciones de las {partes del cuerpo cambian}. {Las bailarinas que crecen rápidamente} **sufren** un mayor riesgo de lesiones que los otros. **Dado que el crecimiento de los músculos puede no ser tan acelerado como el óseo y pueden crecer de forma ajustada**, {la tensión resultante} en el cuerpo puede tener un {**impacto de larga duración**}. Los {estudiantes **se mantienen**} en la misma {estructura de clase}, pero trabajan en {zapatillas suaves} hasta que {**termine su crecimiento**}. Es posible que **se les den** {ejercicios adicionales} para estirar los cuádriceps, los tendones y los {músculos de la pantorrilla}, para así mantenerlos fuertes, estirados y flexibles.

Paragraph 7

While the muscles of the ankle joint can adjust to changing positions, on pointe they are held in a fixed position and cannot move. Consequently, they must be strong enough to keep the foot from sickling out and causing the weight of the body to be shifted to the inside of the foot. When this happens, ligaments and muscles can be overly stretched and the additional weight that presses on the side of the big toe can cause it to become displaced. Sickling can make the ankle prone to sprains.

Translated Version

Mientras que los músculos de la {articulación del tobillo} pueden ajustarse a {posiciones cambiantes}, cuando están en punta {se mantienen en una posición fija} y no se pueden mover. {Por lo tanto}, estos deben ser {lo suficientemente fuertes} como para evitar que el pie se tuerza y el peso del cuerpo se desplace hacia el interior del pie. Cuando esto sucede, los ligamentos y los músculos pueden {estirarse demasiado} y el {peso adicional} en el lado del dedo gordo del pie puede {hacer que este se desplace}. El torcer el pie de esta manera puede provocar que el tobillo sea propenso a los esguinces.

Paragraph 8

Chronic injuries—the second level of dance-related injury—are those that have never healed, or from which the patient has not completely recovered. If an acute injury is incorrectly treated or receives inadequate rest, **it** may develop into a chronic injury. Tendinitis, overuse strains, stress fractures that have never healed owing to lack of rest, or pulled hamstring muscles that have become chronically tight and developed painful scar tissue are examples. Chronic problems require prolonged activity reduction in order to heal, and can limit the dancer for **as long as** several months.

Translated Version

Las lesiones crónicas, el segundo nivel de {lesiones relacionadas con la danza}, son aquellas que {nunca se han curado} o de las cuales el paciente {no se ha recuperado completamente}. Si una {lesión aguda} se trata de forma incorrecta o recibe un {descanso inadecuado}, puede convertirse en una {lesión crónica}. Por ejemplo, la tendinitis, las tensiones por uso excesivo, las {fracturas por estrés} que nunca han sanado debido a la falta de descanso, o {los tendones que están crónicamente apretados y han desarrollado tejido cicatricial doloroso}. Los {problemas crónicos} requieren una {reducción prolongada de la actividad} para sanar y pueden limitar a la bailarina durante varios meses.

Paragraph 9

At first a Morton's neuroma may appear as a burning feeling that spreads from the heads of the metatarsals toward the heel, initially noticed when weight is borne on the foot. Eventually, the feeling is present at other times too. Then **it** begins to resemble an electric shock **that shoots** from the ball of the foot into the toes. Numbness and cramping may be present as well. The pain usually goes away when shoes are removed. If ignored, the involved nerve may become more swollen and permanently scarred. The condition is usually caused by excessively tight pointe shoes, jamming the heads of the metatarsals together.

Translated Version

Al inicio, {el neuroma de Morton} puede aparecer como una {sensación de ardor} que se extiende desde las cabezas de los metatarsales hacia el talón, lo cual en forma inicial se nota cuando el peso se lleva al pie. Eventualmente, la sensación también está presente en otras ocasiones. Luego, comienza a parecerse a una {descarga eléctrica} desde la bola del pie hacia los dedos. El entumecimiento y los calambres también pueden estar presentes. El dolor, {por lo general,} desaparece cuando se quitan las puntas. {Si se ignora, el nervio involucrado puede hincharse aún más y desarrollar cicatrices permanentes}. La condición generalmente es causada por {puntas en extremo apretadas}, las cuales presionan las cabezas de los metatarsales juntas.

Paragraph 10

Nathalie Krassovska stresses the roll; she starts her students facing the barre and has them practice rolling up onto pointe. She does not teach beginners to spring. Joanna Kneeland also advocates the roll; she says the rise to pointe should require minimal adjustment. **It** should be a smooth rather than jerky feeling. **It** is not a matter of springing and replacing the heel with the toes, but of developing the strength needed to lower softly through the metatarsals. She says, "**It** is not the toes' job to jump under the body. The foot is the foundation and cannot be disturbed."

Translated Version

Nathalie Krassovska enfatiza el "rolling"; ella comienza con sus estudiantes frente a la barra y **las pone a practicar el "rolling" hasta la punta**. Ella no les enseña {el impulso a los principiantes}. Joanna Kneeland también aboga por el "rolling"; ella dice que el ascenso a **puntas debe requerir un {ajuste mínimo}**. Debe ser una {sensación suave en lugar de una **agitada**}. **No se trata de impulsar{se} y reemplazar el talón con los dedos de los pies, sino de desarrollar la fuerza necesaria para bajar suavemente a través de los metatarsos**. Ella dice, "**No es el trabajo de los dedos de los pies saltar por debajo del cuerpo**. El pie es la base y no puede {perturbarse}."

Paragraph 11

David Howard is particularly concerned with patterns of energy. **He** notes that while most people stand with two feet on the floor and pull the body up, he works from "up" first and thinks in terms of going through **to a** "down," then stretching away from the floor using the calf as a depressor rather than a pulling agent. **He** says the calf should push **on the way** up, and **push** against the floor on the way down. **It** never changes its function as a muscle. According to Howard, if the calf is used as a pulling muscle, the knees lock and the natural coordination in the joint areas is gone. The calf must be thought of as a pushing muscle. When a person walks, **he or she** does not pull the calf but pushes through it every time.

Translated Version

David Howard está particularmente **interesado en** los patrones de energía. Señala que mientras **que la mayoría de las personas se pone de pie** con dos pies en el suelo y llevan el cuerpo hacia arriba, él primero trabaja desde "arriba" y piensa en términos de ir hacia "abajo", luego **hace estiramientos contra el suelo** usando la pantorrilla como un depresor en lugar de un {agente tirador}. Dice que la pantorrilla debe empujar **hacia** arriba y contra el suelo **cuando va hacia** abajo. Nunca cambia su función de músculo. Según Howard, si la pantorrilla {se utiliza} como un {**músculo de tracción**}, las rodillas se bloquean y la {coordinación natural en las áreas articulares desaparece}. La pantorrilla debe **considerarse un músculo que empuja todo el tiempo**. Cuando una persona camina, no tira de la pantorrilla, **sino que la presiona** **atravesando** {la} cada vez.

Paragraph 12

If **we** use gravity as an aid rather than a harmful agent, we can use it to help us. If **we** push our energy down toward gravity and only stretch in the opposite direction, we are using gravity to help us. And if we are thrusting in a downward thrust to send the body away from the floor like a trampoline, then we are using gravity to help us. But if we are pulling the body away from the floor, **we** can never win. **We** can get certain height, but **we** cannot reach our fullest potential. In other words, Howard suggests that **we** use rules and physics and nature to **help us** end up with much stronger, more elongated bodies and to accomplish things in the air.

Translated Version

Si usamos **la** gravedad como una **aliada** en lugar de un { agente dañino }, **esta nos puede ayudar**. Si empujamos { hacia abajo nuestra energía } contra **la** gravedad y sólo **nos** estiramos en la { dirección opuesta }, estaremos usando **la** gravedad **como ayuda**. Y si estamos empujando en un { empuje hacia abajo } para enviar el cuerpo lejos del suelo como un trampolín, entonces **usaremos la gravedad como fuente de ayuda**. Pero si **alejamos el cuerpo del suelo**, nunca podremos ganar. Podemos obtener cierta altura, pero no podemos alcanzar nuestro máximo potencial. En otras palabras, Howard sugiere que usemos **las** reglas y **la** física y **la** naturaleza para **obtener cuerpos mucho más fuertes y más alargados**, y así lograr cosas en el aire.

Paragraph 13

In Dr. Garrick's study of ballet injuries, foot injuries were the second most often seen injury. Dancing on pointe adds a new list of demands to an **already** challenged foot. Not only does the dancer have to bear her weight on the tips of the toes, but also **she** has to adjust to the non-anatomically designed aspects of pointe shoes.

When injuries of the foot and ankle force the dancer to keep weight off her lower extremities, Dr. Novella suggests doing floor barre and other exercises not involving the feet, to keep the rest of the body stretched.

Translated Version

En el {estudio del Dr. Garrick sobre lesiones de ballet}, {las lesiones en los pies} fueron la segunda {**lesión más frecuente**}. Bailar en puntas le añade una nueva lista de demandas a un {pie **comprometido**}. {**La bailarina no sólo**} tiene que soportar su peso en las puntas de los dedos de los pies, sino que también tiene que adaptarse {a aspectos no anatómicos del diseño de las puntas}.

Cuando las lesiones del pie y el tobillo obligan a la bailarina a mantener el peso fuera de sus {extremidades inferiores}, el Dr. Novella sugiere hacer barre en el suelo y otros ejercicios que no involucren los pies, para así mantener el resto del cuerpo estirado.

Paragraph 14

Facilities like the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries and the Miller Institute for Performing Artists, both located in New York City, will treat dancers and artists for free, if necessary. Recognizing the need **for more** physicians who understand the special needs of dancers, Dr. Donald Rose, director of the Harkness Center, says that **they** have developed a training program that has attracted doctors and physical therapists from around the world. Many of these health-care specialists are involved in sports medicine and want to improve their expertise by developing an understanding of dance technique and dance medicine.

Translated Version

Instalaciones como el Harkness Center for Dance Injuries y el Miller Institute for Performing Artists, ambos ubicados en {la ciudad de Nueva York}, **{tratan}** bailarines y artistas **de forma gratuita si es necesario**. Reconociendo la necesidad **de los** médicos que entiendan las **{necesidades especiales}** de los bailarines, **el** Dr. Donald Rose, director del Harkness Center, dice que han desarrollado un **{programa de capacitación}**, **el cual** ha atraído a médicos y fisioterapeutas de todo el mundo. Muchos de estos **{especialistas en la salud}** están involucrados en la **{medicina deportiva}** y quieren mejorar su experiencia mediante el desarrollo de una comprensión de **la {técnica de la danza}** y **la {medicina de la danza}**.

Paragraph 15

Dr. Hamilton suggests dancers remember the acronym RICE when confronting an acute injury: Rest, Immobilization, Cold, and Elevation. Rest means getting weight off the injury to avoid **stirring up more** bleeding and swelling. Immobilization means splinting. In the case of a mild injury, the splint might be a simple Ace bandage applied loosely enough to avoid impairing circulation, but tightly enough to restrict swelling. Elevation and ice also help keep swelling down. Ice should be wrapped in an ice bag or towel and not applied directly to the skin. An injury should be iced intermittently over the first twelve to twenty-four hours.

Translated Version

El Dr. Hamilton sugiere que las bailarinas deben recordar el acrónimo DIFE (RICE, en inglés), cuando se enfrentan a una lesión aguda: Descanso, Inmovilización, Frío y Elevación. Descansar significa quitar el peso de la lesión para evitar el sangrado y la hinchazón. La inmovilización significa una férula. En el caso de una {lesión leve}, la férula puede ser un simple {vendaje Ace} aplicado lo suficientemente holgado para permitir la circulación, pero lo suficientemente apretado como para restringir la hinchazón. La elevación y el hielo también ayudan a controlar la hinchazón. El hielo debe envolverse en una {bolsa de hielo} o toalla, ya que no es aconsejable ponerlo directamente sobre la piel. Se debe colocar hielo en una lesión en {forma intermitente} durante las primeras doce a veinticuatro horas.

*TRANSLATION FORM ENGLISH INTO SPANISH***Paragraph 1**

Habían pasado dos meses desde Navidad. Las bombillas de colores se mantenían encendidas en los bordes de las ventanas y puertas de los tugurios, insistiendo en la felicidad de la época, casi como un reclamo. La pequeña casa de madera de mi abuelo había quedado vacía, arrinconada entre los demás ranchos que se mantenían en pie contra las leyes de la física, mientras le quitaban cualquier encanto a las orillas del río Reventado. Caminé con Papá por la calle polvorienta para revisar la casa. Cuando llegamos, el vacío era asfixiante. No sé si alguien se ocupó de los gatos. El caso es que ya no estaban. Papá removió la fotografía de la abuela aún pegada con un chinche del horcón central de la sala. Casi no hablamos. La cama vacía del abuelo todavía tenía la mancha que había dejado su cuerpo allí.

Translated Version

It had been two months since Christmas. {The colored light bulbs} {were kept lit} at the edges of the windows and doors of the slums, insisting on the happiness of the holidays, almost like a claim. {My grandfather's little wooden house} had been left empty, cornered among the other small houses that stood against the laws of physics, while taking away any charm on the banks of {Reventado River}. I walked with Dad down {the dusty street} to check the house. When we arrived, the emptiness was suffocating. I don't know if anyone took care of the cats. All I know is they were gone by then. Dad removed {my grandmother's photograph} that was still stuck with a stub nail to the central wood lumber pile of the living room. We hardly spoke. {Grandpa's empty bed} still had the stain that {his body had left} there.

Paragraph 2

El polvo se amontonaba sobre cada tabla del piso, cubriéndolo todo, ahogándolo todo, incluso el ruido de nuestros pasos. Papá echó en una bolsa dos o tres cosas más de mi abuelo: una faja de cuero que tenía la hebilla troquelada con la efigie de dos gallos enfrentados, con las alas desplegadas en plena batalla, un par de botines y un sombrero de pita que aún conservo. Fue una tarde triste, llena de palabras que no nos dijimos, de recuerdos que se perdieron en los rincones oscuros de aquella sala y de aquel patio que en ese momento, y para siempre, me sería ajeno.

Translated Version

The dust piled on every plank of the floor, covering everything, drowning everything, even the noise of our footsteps. Dad threw in a bag two or three more things from my grandfather: {a leather belt that had a die-cut buckle} with the effigy of two roosters facing each other with their wings deployed in full battle, a pair of boots, and a {pita hat} that I still keep. It was a {sad afternoon} filled with the words we did not say, memories that were lost in the {dark corners} of that room and that courtyard, that in that moment and forever, it will be unfamiliar to me.

Paragraph 3

Yo tenía doce años y las vacaciones se me iban entre la cuerda del trompo y las mejengas hasta que, un día de febrero, me vi montado en un viejo autobús Blue Bird rumbo hacia el cantón de Paraíso, en camino a la casa del más pobre y sencillo de los hermanos de mi papá, el tío Román. La idea era trabajar por una semana como cogedor de café en las montañas de Orosi, al sureste de Cartago, en las fincas que estaban bajo el mando de un hombre al que le decían Tigre Rivera, un familiar tan lejano que no creo que entre nosotros haya siquiera una peca en común.

Translated Version

I was twelve years old and {my} vacations went by between the rope of the spinning top and street soccer matches until one day of February, I was on an old {Blue Bird bus} heading towards {Paraiso canton}, on the way to the house of the poorest and simplest of {my dad's brothers}, Uncle Roman. The idea was to work for a week picking coffee in the mountains of Orosi, southeast of Cartago, in the coffee plantations that were under the command of a man called Tiger Rivera, a very distant relative, with whom I do not think we have even a freckle in common.

Paragraph 4

Mi llegada estaba pactada desde una semana atrás y Joseángel, el hijo menor de Brunilda, ya tenía rato de esperarme. Nos veíamos como medios primos pues, según nos entendimos durante el entierro de mi abuelo, éramos una especie de Primastros. Desde el entierro de mi abuelo no lo había vuelto a ver, y al asomarse a la puerta, lo vi diferente, ya sin esa ropa regalada y un par de tallas más pequeña que le hacían ver incómodo. Esta vez se veía relajado; si lo viera ahora, entendería sin reparo que solo era un chavalo buena gente.

Translated Version

My arrival was planned since a week ago and Joseangel, {Brunilda's youngest son}, was already waiting for me. We considered ourselves half cousins because, as we understood during my {grandfather's burial}, we were kind of cousins-in-law. {I had not seen him since my grandfather's funeral} and, as he peeked out the door, I thought he looked different, without {those clothes} that were a couple of sizes down and that made him look uncomfortable. This time, he looked relaxed; if I saw him now for the first time, I would understand without hesitation that he {was just a good guy}.

Paragraph 5

En dos minutos me hizo el recorrido por la casa. Solo se ocupaban dos minutos para recorrerla. Al principio, mis ojos tardaron un poco en reconocer las formas y contornos, pues la luz de la calle era mucho más potente comparada con la del interior. Cuando vi con claridad, me encontré en una pequeña sala que hacía las veces de comedor. También tenía dos sillones impúdicos que mostraban sus resortes a quien quisiera sentarse. Dos pasos más allá, una mesa y tres sillas que retaban a la gravedad con sus patas desniveladas.

Translated Version

{He gave me the tour of the house in two minutes}. **It only took two minutes to go through it.** At first, my eyes took a while to recognize the shapes and contours, as the {street light} was much more potent compared to the one inside the house. When I **was able to see clearly**, I found myself in a small living room that **also worked as a dining room**. It also had two {raggedy armchairs} that showed their springs to whom would want to sit on them. Two steps beyond, **there were** a table and three chairs that challenged gravity with their {uneven legs}.

Paragraph 6

La tristeza es la estación más sincera y solemne. Nadie se escapa de ella, se esconde bajo las uñas y camina bajo la piel mordiendo los huesos. Román se sostenía al lado del ataúd con una mano sobre la madera y con la otra apretándose los ojos, de manera que parecía sostenerse la cabeza mientras que desde adentro le brotaba un gemido lento y sostenido. Cada arruga en su cara apretaba esa tristeza desolada que amenaza con vaciarlo entero. Era un manojo de dolor que apenas caminaba con la inercia de un mundo que no se paraba a verlo llorar.

Translated Version

Sadness is the {most sincere and solemn station}. No one escapes from it; it hides under the fingernails and walks under the skin biting the bones. Roman held himself beside the coffin with one hand on the wood and the other **tightening his eyes, so that he seemed to be holding his head while he was making a slow and sustained groan from the inside.** Every wrinkle in his face **squeezed that {desolated sadness}** that threatened to **{completely emptied him}**. **He was a bunch of pain that barely could walk** with the inertia of a **world that didn't stop to see him cry.**

Paragraph 7

Al buen entendedor, pocas palabras. De por sí, para algo tenían que servir los pesos que me estaba ganando con lo que estaba recogiendo por las cogidas de café, así que después de escucharla un rato más, salí a la pulpería y gasté todo el capital que tenía acumulado en unas cuantas cosas para comer. Tampoco se crea que me alcanzó para mucho, mi ayuda no pasó de un paquete de arroz y uno de frijoles, un cuarto de kilo de café y dos espirales para espantar los zancudos. Al verme llegar con la bolsa en la mano, mi tío se acongojó mucho y me preguntó unas ocho veces que *para qué había hecho eso, si esa era mi plata*, y yo le contesté que por lo mismo, porque era mi plata. Aquella noche dormí un poco mejor. Esa fue la primera vez que los problemas económicos significaron algo para mí.

Translated Version

A word to the wise is enough. Anyway, **the money I made as a coffee picker had to be good for something**, so after listening for a while longer, I went to the neighborhood market and spent all the capital I had accumulated in a few things to eat. **It was not much**, I could only buy {a bag of rice and beans}, a quarter of a kilo of coffee, and two spirals {to keep the mosquitoes away}. {My uncle, **upon seeing me come in** with the bag in my hand, heartbroken asked me about eight times *why I had done that, if that was my money*, **and I answered just that**, because it was my money}. {I slept a little better that night}. That was the first time that {economic problems} meant something to me.

Paragraph 8

Era la belleza hecha contraste. Ella con el vestido amarillo de segundas nupcias que resaltaba su redondez como una hipérbole de **la** miseria y **la** locura, la mirada algo torcida, en dirección contraria a la torcedura de nariz que le daba un realce único algo así como una cotorra con el pico quebrado y una sonrisa postiza apenas enseñada por debajo del labio superior, como si estuviera sosteniéndose **la plancha** con el labio inferior. Todo el conjunto tocado por el ala gigantesca de un sombrero amarillo con lazo incluido. Román aparecía vestido con un par de botines puntiagudos y estropeados, el traje más largo de la cuenta, la camisa apenas colgando de su cuello, la saliva amenazando con salir **escupida** de sus labios y el pelo cortado al rape; todo un Jean Valjean del trópico, pero sin que aquellos rasgos rudos opacaran en nada la felicidad que se le pintaba en la cara.

Translated Version

It was a beautiful contrast. She **was wearing** {a remarriage yellow dress} that showed her chubby **figure like a hyperbole of misery and madness,** **her** {somewhat crooked look in the opposite direction to her twisted nose} that gave her a {unique enhancement}, like a parrot with a {broken beak and a false teeth smile} that barely showed under the {upper lip}, as if she was holding it with the {lower lip}. **The whole scenario was completed by the gigantic wing of a** {yellow hat} with a bow included. Roman appeared dressed in a pair of {pointed and trashy ankle boots}. The suit **was** larger than **it should had been,** the shirt barely hanging from his neck, his **saliva threatening to come out from his lips,** and the hair **all shaved; a real Jean Valjean of** {the tropics}. **However, those** {rude features} **did not obscure at all the happiness showed in his face.**

Paragraph 9

Hombré, Santiaguillo qué picada le pegaron, hombré, decía mi tío con algo de pesar mientras sacudía mi ropa contra un árbol de naranjas. Esa mañana, todo mordido, me senté un rato a verlo trabajar mientras se me pasaba un poco el colerón de las picadas y me bebía el agua con azúcar que era mi refresco para acompañar el almuerzo. Lo notaba acongojado, murmuraba mi nombre, preocupado, y el verlo así, sin poder dejar de trabajar para atenderme, me daba un poco de congoja a mí también.

Lo miré y en ese momento pensé que sabía poco o nada de ese tío que me veía con gesto angustiado porque me habían picado las hormigas.

Translated Version

Man, Santiaguillo, they really bit you, man, {my uncle said} with some regret while shaking my clothes against an {orange tree}. That morning, all bitten, I sat down for a while to see him work while I calmed down a little and drank the water with sugar which was my drink for lunch. I noticed Roman was mortified, he murmured my name, worried, and seeing him like that, {unable to stop working to assist me}. I felt a bit distressed, too.

I looked at him and in that moment, I thought I knew little or nothing of that guy, who saw me with an {anguished gesture} because {the ants had bitten me}.

Paragraph 10

Si el hada de la belleza se había tropezado antes de llegar a su cuna, lo cierto es que esa fealdad la distraía con las palabras. Sin dejar de mover la lengua, Brunilda acomodó los comestibles sobre una alacena de tres tablas junto a la pared que daba a la sala comedor. De ahí se movió hasta una olla de aluminio que yacía al pie de la plantilla y sacó, remojados en una agua clara, unos pedazos de yuca y chayote sancochados que puso a calentar en el fogón de donde, con otra mano, quitaba el agua para el café. Solo tenía eso para comer y fue eso lo que precisamente comimos. Buscó el mejor jarro para servirme el café.

Translated Version

If the {beauty fairy} had stumbled before reaching her cradle, the truth is that that ugliness got distracted her with words. **While moving her tongue**, Brunilda put the groceries on a {three-table cupboard} next to the wall facing the living-dining room. From there, she moved to a {aluminum pot} that laid at the foot of the {electric pan} and then she pulled them, soaked in {clear water}, a few pieces of {boiled yuca and chayote} that she heated in the stove where, with the other hand, removed the water for the coffee. They just had that to eat and that's exactly what we ate. She looked for the best mug to give me the coffee.

Paragraph 11

La más fea se acercó a mi tío y, sacando la punta de la lengua, le estampó un sonoro y húmedo beso en la mejilla. Se movía con la tierna torpeza de un pingüino renco y sonreía entre ronquidos y gruñidos. Debo suponer que la inocencia de mis nueve años me mantuvo atento y silencioso ante el despacho de ternura de aquella mujer. Echado a mi suerte, recibí con estoicismo los babosos saludos de las amigas de Román. Beso a beso, estamparon su cara en la mía y yo me contagié de esa terrible belleza en la que, siendo todos feos, nos volvemos todos bonitos.

Translated Version

The ugliest one approached my uncle and, pulling out the tip of her tongue, she stamped a noisy and wet kiss on his cheek. She moved with the tender clumsiness of a {lame penguin} and smiled between snorings and gruntings. I must assume that the innocence of my shot age kept me attentive and silent before that {woman's tender treat}. Thrown to my luck, I received with stoicism the slimy greetings of {Roman's friends}. Kiss to kiss, stamped their faces on mine and I got infected of that terrible beauty in which, being all ugly, we became all pretty.

Paragraph 12

Así, Román era un hombre con esperas no desesperadas. Nunca había esperado un aumento de salario, **ni** un ascenso, **ni** un taxi, **ni** ganarse la lotería. Esperar era para él un acto tácito y no de sacrificio. Sus esperas se limitaban al arte de sobrevivir. Así, por ejemplo, una vez esperó ocho horas afuera de una construcción para poder hablar con el encargado a ver si le daban un trabajo de guarda, pero al irse todos los del edificio, se dio cuenta de que el encargado no había visitado la obra ese día. Lo supo porque se lo dijo el propio guarda cuyo puesto le habían dicho que podía tener. En realidad, lo que le habían hecho era una broma para el guarda del turno de la noche. Román sabía esperar y, al mismo tiempo, no esperaba nada.

Translated Version

Thus, Roman was a **very patient man**. He had never expected a {salary increase}, a promotion, a taxi, a **lottery price**. {Waiting for him was a tacit act and not a sacrifice}. His **waiting was confined to the art of surviving**. So, for example, once he waited eight hours outside a building to be able to talk to the manager to find out if **it was possible for him to be given a job as a security guard**, but when everyone **left the building**, he realized that the manager did not visit **the place** that day. He knew it because he was told by the guard whose position they had told him he could have. In fact, **it was a joke to the guard of the {night shift}**. Roman knew **how** to wait and at the same time, he didn't expect anything.

Paragraph 13

Todavía no me acostumbraba a la extraña y peculiar forma de hablar de Brunilda pero, entendiendo que me mandaba al baño, fui al cuarto, donde mi Primastro estaba restregándose las lagañas. Cogí el que sería mi pantalón de trabajo, mi camiseta y la ropa interior. Ya el baño estaba desocupado y entré. En aquella especie de anexo de la casa hecho de latas de zinc, donde solo cabían la taza del sanitario y una ducha de llave de paso en la parte superior, pegada a un tambaleante tubo de PVC, me desvestí y el frío se me hizo mucho más fuerte. Las ráfagas de viento azotaban la débil estructura. Creí que las paredes iban a volar, dejándome desnudo en media calle. Abrí la llave y el agua salió disparada en un vigoroso chorro, justo encima mío.

Translated Version

I was not used to the strange and peculiar way {Brunilda talked} but, I understood that I was sent to get a shower. I went back to the bedroom, where my cousin-in-law was getting rid of his crusts with his fingers. I grabbed the ones that would be {my working pants}, my t-shirt and underwear. {The shower was already empty and I walked in}. In that kind of added to the house made of tin sheets, there was only room for the toilet and a {stopcock shower} at the top stuck to a wobbly {PVC tube}, I got undressed and the cold made me much stronger. The {wind gusts} lashed the weak structure. I thought the walls were going to fly, leaving me naked in the middle of the street. I opened the key and the water {was shot} in a vigorous stream, just above me.

Paragraph 14

Cerré los ojos. El viento me azotó la cara. La libertad también es ir de pie en un cajón recibiendo el manotazo frío del amanecer en la cara. Mis compañeros de viaje iban acomodados en el piso, acuerpados entre ellos para sortear el frío. Yo, en cambio, iba como lo que era: un cachorro inquieto que sacaba la cabeza de entre el grupo para no perderme aquel amanecer de violentos colores, que desteñía la noche del cielo con golpes de luz que rompían la negrura de la madrugada. Al poco rato entramos en una finca camino a Orosi, pero aún dentro del pequeño y accidentado pueblo de Paraíso. Las callejuelas del cafetal se extendían con las bandolas listas para entregar el grano. Un hombre mal encarado se dirigió a mi tío con el autoritarismo propio de los coroneles nazis que veía por la tele.

«Román, usted y el chamaco agarren esta calle», dijo.

Translated Version

I closed my eyes. The wind hit my face. Freedom is also to stand in a crate getting the {cold slap} of the sunrise in the face. My fellow travelers were seated on the floor, next to each other to bear the cold. I, however, felt like: {a restless puppy} who took the head of the group not to miss that dawn of intense colors, which dyed the sky off with blows of light that broke the darkness of the dawn. After a while, we entered a property on the way to Orosi, but still the small and rugged town of Paraiso. The alleys of the coffee plantation stretched with the branches ready to deliver the grain. {A grumpy-face man} addressed my uncle with the authoritarianism of the {Nazi coronels} I saw on TV.

« Roman, you and the kid take this road », he said.

Paragraph 15

Esa fue la última vez **que** estuve con él.

De él me queda este árbol de durazno que se abre dando sombra, como si tuviera ganas de canturrear. Como se puede ver, está cargado de pequeños frutos y otras ramas están en flor.

Un par de meses después recibí la llamada de mi madre con la voz quebrada al otro lado. Román había muerto al amanecer. Había estado deprimido en los últimos meses y eso se sumó a un problema cardíaco del que siempre sospechamos y que el parte de defunción vino a confirmar: **el** viejo Román tenía muy grande el corazón.

Translated Version

That was the last time **I** was with him.

{All I have from him is this peach tree} that opens giving shade, **as if it wanted to sing**. **{As it can be seen}**, **it** is loaded with small fruits and other branches are in bloom.

A couple of months later, **I** got **{my mother's call}** with a **{broken voice}** on the other side. Roman had died at dawn. **He** had been depressed the last months and that **{added to a heart problem}** that we always suspected **he had** and that the **{death certificate}** came to confirm: old Roman had **{a very big heart}**.

5.1.3 Glossaries

Source Language: English	Grammatical Category	Target Language: Spanish	Definition
pointe shoes	noun phrase	puntas	zapatillas de ballet duras y rígidas que permiten a la bailarina subirse a los dedos de los pies.
studio	noun	estudio, academia	lugar donde se imparten clases de danza
fitting	noun	ajuste	búsqueda del ajuste perfecto tomando en cuenta todas las variables de las puntas
training	noun	formación	entrenamiento o formación en ballet
demi-pointe	noun	media punta	posición de ballet donde todo el peso del cuerpo está sobre el metatarso y los dedos de los pies
passé	noun	passé	movimiento de doblar la pierna libre a la altura de la rodilla de la pierna de apoyo
relevé	noun	relevé	movimiento de elevación de los talones del suelo al balance sobre los dedos de los pies
plié	noun	plié	movimiento de flexionar las rodillas de manera suave y continua
tendu	noun	tendu	movimiento de extensión de una pierna (adelante, atrás o al costado) sin levantar la punta del suelo
turnout	noun	rotación	giro de las piernas y los pies hacia afuera desde la cadera a un ángulo de 90 grados.
barre	noun	barra	primera parte de la clase, donde los bailarines practican los ejercicios usando la barra como apoyo
rolling	verb	rolling	movimiento de subir despacio a puntas y bajar despacio a planta, sin saltar o impulsarse
soft shoes	noun phrase	zapatillas suaves	zapatillas suaves de media punta
flat shoes	noun phrase	zapatillas suaves	zapatillas suaves de media punta
pronation	noun	pronación	rotación del pie hacia adentro
legwarmers	noun	calentadores de piernas	piezas textiles que ayudan al cuerpo a mantener el calor
spring	verb	impulsar	movimiento hacia diferentes direcciones con impulso

vamp	noun	empeine	parte de la punta de ballet que mide la altura del empeine
box	noun	caja	parte de la punta de ballet que mide la caja, donde van los dedos y metatarso
sickling	verb	torcer	movimiento de torcer el pie hacia adentro perdiendo la forma correcta
sprains	noun	esguinces	torcedura o distensión violenta de una articulación que puede ir acompañada de la ruptura de un ligamento o de las fibras musculares
metatarsals	noun	metatarsales	grupo de cinco huesos largos en el pie, situados entre los huesos tarsales de la parte posterior y media del pie y las falanges de los dedos
balance	noun	balance	estado de inmovilidad del cuerpo sometido a la gravedad
center of balance	noun phrase	centro de equilibrio	se hace referencia a este centro en puntas o relevé, en uno o ambos pies
banana feet	noun phrase	pies de banano	Pies colocados de forma errónea torcidos hacia adentro

Table 6 presents the glossary from English into Spanish.

Source: Researcher's own creation

Source Language: Spanish	Grammatical Category	Target Language: English	Definition
horcón	noun	central wood lumber	vertical wood lumber that works as a support
rancho	noun	small house	poor small house
mejenga	noun	street soccer match	unformal street soccer match
finca	noun	property, coffee plantation	an area of land and its buildings used for growing crops and rearing animals, typically under the control of one owner or manager.
cafetal	noun	coffee plantation	an area of land used for growing coffee plants
chavalo/a	noun	guy	unformal way to make reference to a person
pulpería	noun	neighborhood market	small market typically owned by one of the neighbors
acongojado/a	adjective	heartbroken, mortified	felling of discomfort and stress

cajón	noun	crate	crate used at the back of the trucks to pull things and/or people
bandola	noun	branch	coffee branch
chamaco/a	noun	kid	informal way to make reference to a child
canturrear	verb	to sing	to sing in a careless way
charral	noun	charral	neglected area of land
yuca	noun	yuca	any of a genus plants of the agave family
vela	noun	Catholic Vigil	activity where the relatives pray for the deceased person the night before the funeral
candelilla	noun	small candle	small candle
despiojar	verb	to louse	to take the lice out of the hair and head
atarugado	adjective	mouth full	action of filling the mouth of food to the fullest
patacones	noun	plantains	fried plantains
silampa	noun	white veil	white veil over the landscape
aguadulce	noun	aguadulce	sugar cane juice with water
finado	adjective	deceased	deceased
mofletuda	adjective	big-cheeks	chubby rounded face
atado de comida	noun phrase	bag with food	Typically a fabric folded as a bag filled with food
buena gente	adjective	good, decent	Adjective to describe a good, decent, harmless person

Table 7 presents the glossary from Spanish into English.

Source: Researcher's own creation

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

6.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

One of the most important parts in a research paper is the conclusion. This will provide the opportunity for the researcher to support the relevance of the research. This will be achieved not only by mentioning the findings but also by demonstrating your global understanding of the research problem. A proper conclusion will contain the following aspects:

First, giving the last thoughts about the key points on the paper. The same way the researcher presented the reader with the first thoughts or impressions at the beginning in the introduction, there needs to be the last impressions on the conclusion of the paper. This way no key points should be left without a closure. Also, showing the relevance of the ideas presented in the research. This is the opportunity to prove the relevance and give meaning and significance to the research and the ideas elaborated, as well as the results obtained through the process. And finally, placing new possible ideas or analysis of the research question. This does not mean to provide new information about the research, since this should never be done on a conclusion, but to provide new ideas or approaches for the problem based on the findings developed on the research. (SHU, 2019)

There also need to be recommendations on new courses of action; since other researchers may come across with this problem developed in this paper.

6.2 Conclusions

Considering again the main objectives and the problem first established on this research paper, the researcher has come to the following conclusions and final thoughts regarding each

one of them.

6.2.1 To translate the documents *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English by Esteban Mata and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique* (second edition) from English into Spanish for Bianco&Mainieri Dance Academy

This exercise takes almost half of the whole paper. It is the basis where all the other variables were examined and evaluated. It is the practical part since the translator applies all the techniques and procedures studied during the major. It is definitely not easy; it takes a lot of attention to detail and sensitivity to the intention of the original author. The translator comes to the conclusion that he/she needs to study the topics so those become familiar to him/her and the translation process gets easier because of the knowledge acquired and applied.

It is also essential to elaborate the text analysis prior to the translation process, since this provides a clear idea of what it is to be expected in each of the translations and in any translation in general. This helped the translator to understand the intention and the type of text so he/she would be able to deliver the best version, without compromising meaning and style as much as possible. It helps the translator analyze the context and the identity of the text, so the readers will be able to feel identified with it and not feeling the translation process.

6.2.2 To apply various translation techniques to the documents in order to achieve communicative texts

During the translation process, the translator needs to go back and forth several times to adjust the translation in order to come up with the best version possible. This is conceivable due to the different techniques studied. The translator needs to be fully aware of all the options and techniques available, try different scenarios and, if possible, get someone else to

read it, so the naturalness can be maintained.

These techniques helped the translator to look for the best options for each of the sentences in the original text. Since sometimes there are ideas that cannot be exactly translated and need to be modified somehow to be understood in a natural way by the target reader.

6.2.3 To evaluate the effect of the translation techniques applied on the documents

To analyze the procedures used provides a clearer vision of the work done. It can help the translator to improve the final texts, to determine the types of texts he/she is working with and, to identify his/her own strengths and weaknesses as a translator who's gaining more and more experience every day.

In both texts, the translator used a mayor amount of literal translation, combined with modulations and transpositions. Those three were the most common used by the translator. Even though both texts are different, they allowed literal translation in the majority of the sentences. Then, some adjustments and modifications were needed, and some deal with cultural expressions and/or idioms that needed to be adapted. This happened because the two texts were mostly written in a neutral, simple, understandable way, despite some expressions or technical terms, both were written for almost everyone who wishes to read them and the translations were presented as well.

6.2.4 To create a glossary with the most relevant terminology found on both texts

This practice is fundamental for the translation process, especially for longer and more complex texts. This helps both the translator during the translation process and the reader to have a better idea of the terminology and its meaning during the reading of the text. This is a

great tool for the translator to apply because it saves him/her time and extra effort, even when there are previous translations similar to these. This helps unity and coherence throughout the translated texts.

6.3 Restatement of the Research Question

How can translators analyze the effect of the procedures and methods used to translate the documents *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English and *The Pointe Book: Shoes, Training & Technique (second edition)* from English into Spanish?

The first basic analysis that should be done by the translator is the text analysis. In this case, both texts were completely different in all aspects and. The text analysis helps to set the environment of each of text and adapt each translation to the form and intention of the original texts.

Depending on the stylistic scale identified by the translator, he/she can decide the type of translation to be used, and also on the different procedures that can be applied. In this case, there were translation procedures that were used in one translation but not applied in other one. This analysis also helps the translator assess the quality of the work he/she is doing.

6.4 Recommendations

Finally, coming to the end of this research, there are some recommendations that need to be presented by the researcher. There is always room for improvement and this will help future translators and researchers to achieve their goals when working on this type of research paper or translations.

The first thing that needs to be done is to be fully aware of the theory before starting the translation of the texts or project. This will save time and the translator will know exactly what he/she is doing. So there will be no need to go back so much on the theory and the

translator may focus more on the actual translation process. Also, when doing a research paper the outline should be presented as clear and precise as possible, so the researcher will not redo aspects that should have been established from the very beginning.

Another recommendation is to get familiar with the topic that will be translated, that is, first, the translator should research on the topic to know what it is about, so that he/she will be able to transmit the message and the intention of the author as best as possible.

Also, the translator needs to take the time to analyze the different aspects of the text before starting the translation process. This will give the translator a clear idea of the way the translation should be held. That is the importance carrying out the text analysis before the translation process, so that the whole scenario is presented and the translator will know exactly what to do. It is also recommendable to elaborate a glossary that will serve as a tool for the translator and as a guide for the readers.

Lastly, the translator should not be afraid of using all the tools and applications available to assist him/her during the translation process; but, the translator needs to be sure about the liability of the sources and tools and does not rely only on that. All these tools are used to support the translation process, they should be reviewed by the translator, and finally approved by the him/her.

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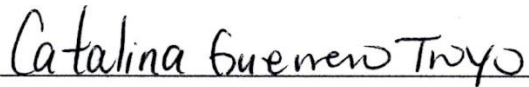
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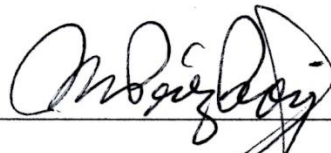
ANNEXES

Tribunal Examinador

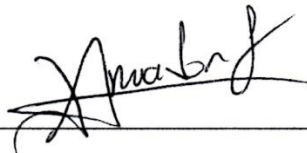
Esta Tesis fue aprobada por el Tribunal Examinador de las Carreras de Inglés de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, como requisito para optar por el grado de Licenciatura en Inglés con énfasis en Traducción.



M.Sc. Catalina Guerrero Troyo
Tutora



Licda. Margarita Pérez Roig
Lectora



M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Director de Carrera

San José, 9 de diciembre de 2019

Señores
Universidad Internacional de las Américas
Estimados señores:

El suscrito M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano, Director de las Carreras de Inglés, hace constar que ha revisado la Tesis de la estudiante, Jessica Alejandra Meza Campos, portadora de la cédula de identidad no. 1-1328-0158, que ha titulado: Translation and Analysis of *Welcome to Orosi* from Spanish into English for Esteban Mata and *The Pointe Book* from English into Spanish for Biaco&Mainieri Dance Studio.

La mencionada Tesis, responde a los requisitos exigidos en la Guía que nuestra carrera tiene para estos casos. Por tanto, se autoriza al autor para que lo presente ante el tribunal examinador nombrado para esta ocasión.

Atentamente,



M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés



Universidad Internacional de las Américas Código de Ética

La suscrita **Jessica Alejandra Meza Campos**, número de carné: 1-1328-0158 graduada del grado de **Licenciatura en Inglés con énfasis en Traducción** de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, se compromete a cumplir, durante el ejercicio profesional, con el Código de Ética de la Institución, que se rige por los siguientes principios:

PROBIDAD: actuar siempre con rectitud y honradez.

PRUDENCIA: actuar con pleno conocimiento de la materia sometida a su consideración.

JUSTICIA: permanente disposición hacia las funciones de la profesión, bajo los lineamientos legales que debe respetar todo profesional.

RESPONSABILIDAD: cumplir con los deberes, tanto en calidad como en oportunidad.

DISCRECIÓN: guardar respeto sobre los hechos o informaciones de los que tenga conocimiento con motivo del ejercicio profesional, sin que esto perjudique las funciones y responsabilidades.

INDEPENDENCIA DE CRITERIO: no involucrarse o comprometerse con situaciones, intereses o actividades contrarias a la moral, a la sana crítica y que, por ley, sean incompatibles con las funciones profesionales correspondientes.

DIGNIDAD Y DECORO: actuar con sobriedad y moderación.

TOLERANCIA: evidenciar una actitud paciente y de comprensión ante las opiniones divergentes que puedan expresar otras personas.

EQUILIBRIO: desempeñar las funciones profesionales con sentido práctico, buen juicio y equidad.

ACTUALIZACIÓN: comprometer parte del tiempo en actualizar los conocimientos y adaptarlos en el desarrollo de la actividad profesional.

VOCACIÓN: mostrar siempre apego al trabajo y a la educación recibida, como fundamentos para el desempeño laboral.

BUENA FE: toda conducta o comportamiento, criterio emitido y labor desempeñada debe basarse en los más altos principios éticos y tendrá como fundamento la buena fe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessica M. Campos', enclosed within a circular scribble.

Jessica Alejandra Meza Campos

1-1328-0158