

**MA in Translation Studies**

**Module 1**

**Question ITS/02/04**

*Choose an original text and its translation. Discuss the strategies the translator used to deal with collocations, fixed expressions, metaphors and idioms.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The challenge for the translator in translating occurrences of collocation, fixed expression, metaphor and idiom consists of achieving equivalence above word level (Baker, 1992: 46), as well as reducing translation loss to an acceptable minimum “by deciding which of the relevant features in the ST it is most important to respect, and which can most legitimately be sacrificed in doing so” (Hervey et al, 1995: 17).

I shall look at the application of the strategies open to a translator when dealing with collocation, fixed expression and idiom, as outlined by Baker (1992) and, in the case of metaphors, Newmark (1988), in a text about the concerns of youth in Europe. The following section of this essay examines the above lexical items and said strategies.

## **2. Collocation, fixed expression, metaphor and idiom: definitions and relevant translation strategies.**

### **2.1 Collocation**

Collocation is the concept of word co-occurrence, where certain words appear predictably next to or within a certain number of words from each other; the usual string considered is of four words to either side of the node word, sometimes known as a *nine-word span* (Sinclair, 1991: 121).

The idea covers lexical items (*lexical collocation*) and grammatical items (*grammatical collocation*, or *colligation*).

Lexical collocation is the co-occurrence of nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs, such as *strict rules* (rather than *rigid*), or *he pricked his finger* (rather than *pierced* or *punctured*).

Colligation is the co-occurrence of nouns, verbs or adjectives with prepositions or certain features of grammar, for example, a comparative form of an adjective with the word *than*, or the verb *deal* with the preposition *with* (Carter, 1998: 60).

A further feature of collocation is the occurrence of words related to the topic of the text, providing cohesion, or *textuality*, through the mechanisms of collocation and reiteration (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Thus, discourse dealing with the concerns of today's youth in a political context, as is the case of the text under examination here, may be expected to involve lexis from areas related to education, entertainment, employment, health as well as politics, decision-making, etc.

Baker (1992: 53) considers it “disputable whether a word on its own can ‘mean’ anything”. If we also take into consideration Sinclair's idiom principle, which proposes that the choices open to a speaker or writer when generating discourse are greatly narrowed by the words that have been previously produced or are about to be produced:

“There are sets of linguistic choices which come under the heading of register, and which can be seen as large-scale conditioning choices. Once a register choice is made [...] then all the slot-by-slot choices are massively reduced in scope or even, in some cases, pre-empted.” (Sinclair, 1991: 110),

the importance of collocation with regard to the naturalness of a translation may be considered paramount. Further support for the importance of collocation in language is given by McCarthy (1990: 12):

“it is a marriage contract between words, and some words are more firmly married to each other than others. It is an important organising principle in the vocabulary of any language.”

### **2.1.1 Strategies for translating collocations**

Baker (1992: 48) suggests that:

“patterns of collocation are largely arbitrary and independent of meaning. This is so both within and across languages. The same degree of mismatch that can be observed when comparing the collocational patterns of synonyms and near-synonyms within the same language is evident in the collocational patterning of ‘dictionary equivalents/near equivalents’ in two languages.”

A further consideration to bear in mind when dealing with collocation in translation is specificity; the more specific a word is, the shorter its collocational range.

The correct choice of a collocate across two languages should also be influenced by register or genre (Baker, 1992: 52); collocations that are valid in one area of discourse may not be so in another. For example, in a religious text, a *swerving cross* or a *long* or *short cross* may not function as credible collocates, but they would be considered unmarked in a text on football.

Certain collocational combinations give the combination as a whole a meaning different to that of its individual components (Baker, *ibidem*: 53). For example, *sharp eyes*, would be

mistranslated if the translator failed to recognise that the word *sharp*, when collocating with *eyes*, needs to be rendered as *keen* or *especially observant*.

## 2.2 Fixed expressions

“As their name suggests, fixed expressions [...] allow little or no variation in form. In this respect, they behave very much like idioms. Unlike idioms however, fixed expressions and proverbs have fairly transparent meanings.” (Baker, 1992: 64).

Fixed expressions are syntactically and semantically ‘frozen’, although certain variation in form may be possible if the speaker or writer wishes to create special effect. As with idioms, they constitute “essentially non-creative, stereotyped formulaic expression” (Carter, 1998: 66)<sup>1</sup> and are located at the opposite end of the fixedness scale from collocations.

### 2.2.1 Strategies for translating fixed expressions

In translation, fixed expressions must be taken as one single lexical item and consequently, the task for the translator lies in relaying the meaning of the expression as a whole. However, as both Baker (1992: 64) and Carter (1998: 66) state, one of the roles of fixed expressions in communication is that of carrying out a maintaining or stabilising function as they conjure up “in the mind of the reader or hearer all the aspects of experience which are associated with the typical contexts in which the expression is used.” (Baker, *ibidem*). This would indicate that when rendering a fixed expression into a TL, a translator must (1) translate the lexical pattern as one single item and (2) look to evoke in the TL reader’s mind

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<sup>1</sup> Whereas Baker appears to differentiate between fixed expression and idiom (cf. the quotation at the beginning of section 2.2 *Fixed expressions*), Carter groups together all expressions with a degree of fixedness (proverbs, stock phrases, etc.) under the term of *fixed expressions*, and includes idioms under this heading.

the vital experiences suggested to the SL reader through the expression in the ST by referring to similar or equivalent experiences in the TL culture, i.e. satisfactorily render all the different kinds of meanings involved in the use of the expression.

### **2.3. Metaphor**

Newmark (1988) distinguishes six types of metaphor:

- *Dead metaphors*, whose images are highly unmarked, e.g. at the *mouth* of the river.
- *Cliché metaphors*, which refer to the use of cliché expressions in text, e.g. *Long time, no see*.
- *Stock or standard metaphors*, which he defines as “an established metaphor [...] not deadened by overuse.” (ibidem: 108)
- *Adapted metaphors*, where the ‘fixedness’ of a stock metaphor has been adapted or personalised in some way.
- *Recent metaphors*, where an anonymous metaphorical neologism has become generally used in the SL.
- *Original metaphors*, which are created by the writer or speaker usually to make discourse more interesting and often used to highlight particular points or as reiteration.

#### **2.3.1 Strategies for translating metaphors**

Newmark (1988) suggests the following strategies:

- While *dead metaphors* are not especially problematical, literal translation is often not possible.
- In vocative texts, *cliché metaphors* should be upheld in the TT (ibidem: 107). In informative texts, they should be reduced to sense or replaced with a more credible stock metaphor.
- For the translation of *stock metaphors*, the SL image should be legitimately reproduced in the TL, but the metonyms used may be transferred as long as the substitutes have the same connotations as the SL. However, the SL image is more commonly translated by images that are established to a similar degree. Stock metaphors may also be reduced to sense or literal language.
- *Adapted metaphors* should be translated using equivalent adapted metaphors or reduced to sense.
- *Recent metaphors* should be translated using componential analysis (ibidem: 114).
- In vocative texts, *original metaphors* should be translated literally as they “contain the core of an important writer’s message...” (ibidem: 112). If the metaphor is obscure and of little importance to the text, it should be replaced with a descriptive metaphor or reduced to sense. In informative texts, consideration should be given to the number and variety of original metaphors in the text as a whole and a decision be taken between literal translation, reduction to sense or modification of the metaphor.

## 2.4 Idiom

According to Baker (1992: 63), idioms are:

“frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and [...] often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components.”

Idioms vary in their fixedness at both syntactic and semantic levels but, when used formally, tend to comply with the five conditions given by Baker (except for effect, writers cannot usually (1) change the order of the words (2) delete a word (3) add a word (4) replace a word with another (5) change the grammatical structure) (1992: 63).

Furthermore, Moon suggests that idioms contribute to discourse at levels beyond those of semantics and syntax through “their paradigmatic properties, which are of importance in relation to interaction.” (1994: 117).

The difficulties involved in translating idiom are summarised by Baker (1992: 68-71) as follows:

- An idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the TL.
- An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the TL, but its context of use may be different; they may have different connotations or not be pragmatically transferable.
- An idiom may be used in the ST in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time and this play on idiom may not be successfully reproduced in the TT.
- The convention regarding idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used and their frequency of use may be different in the SL and TL.

### 2.4.1. Strategies for translating idioms

Baker proposes the following strategies for translating idiom (1992: 72-78):

- Using an idiom of similar meaning and form (S1).
- Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form (S2).
- Paraphrasing, where the expression is often reduced to sense and translation loss occurs (S3).
- Omission, if the idiom has no close match and paraphrase is either difficult or results in clumsy style (S4).

The letters in brackets (S1, S2, etc.) are my references for the ensuing analysis.

## 3. The Text

The text is a 625-word extract from a white paper issued by the European Commission on the concerns of youth in Europe. It is a contemporary text (2001) and informative (Newmark: 1988). It is available to the general public but its style and purpose would suggest that it is aimed at educated readers. The text contains sufficient fixed expressions to warrant its choice for analysis in this essay but, as might be expected in a text written for several countries, each with their own mother tongue, the occurrence of culture-specific items is minimal.

### 3.1 Analysis

#### The title

The title contains the metaphorical use of the word *impetus*, which has been translated by the word *impulso* (impulse) (S1). This is the figurative alternative to the Spanish word

*ímpetu*, which is used to describe physical force. If the translator had chosen the latter, the metaphor would have been carried over fully but the word *impulso* was chosen probably because of its greater figurative characteristics and collocational appropriateness.

### The foreword

The reiteration of the word *decision+to+verb* (L5&7) and the resulting cohesion is almost rendered fully in the TT, where the translator has used *decisión+de+verb* in the first instance and then *decisión+de+phrase* (L5&7) in the second. The effect of *decision to* is carried over with *decisión de* in both instances but a more faithful effect would have been achieved if the translator had used a verb such as *decisión de llevar a cabo/implementar una amplia consulta preliminar* instead of his/her chosen phrase.

The fixed expression *white paper* (L5), in reference to the document itself, has been translated by the term *libro blanco* (white book) (L5), which is not a literal, word-for-word translation but is another example of an S1 strategy and collocational correctness.

The expression *wide-ranging consultations* (L6) has been translated by *amplia consulta* (broad enquiry) (S2) (L8), where the plurality of *consultations* has been lost and the extension of *wide-ranging* has been flattened to a lesser intensity. The effect is that the TT gives the impression that the consultations made were nearer the token-survey end of the scale than what the ST wishes to imply.

The botanical metaphor *rooted* (L8), which suggests depth and source has been translated by the light metaphor *reflejan* (reflect) (S2) (L8). This involves a grammatical change to

the sentence; in the ST the decision is rooted in the desire (is a part buried in it), but in the TT the decision reflects the desire (is a superficial part of it). The effect is a loss of stylistic intensity, but the style achieved in the TT is perhaps correct for formal discourse in Spanish (the use of *arraigado* (rooted) would perhaps be seen as too poetic and figurative).

For the expression *fully coherent with* (L11), the translator introduces a metaphor not present in the ST: *se inscribe perfectamente en la línea trazada por* (is inscribed perfectly on the line drawn by) (L11). This gives the TT cohesion as the connotations of *línea trazada* involve planning and projection, in accord with the cohesive lexical string of politics, decision-making, etc. A literal translation (e.g. *completamente coherente con*) was perhaps considered too much of a calque by the translator.

The use of the verb *adopted* (L13), which provides cohesion with the aforementioned occurrences of *decision to* is respected in the TT (*adoptó*) (L13) and the cohesion is carried over.

The dead metaphor *point* (L14) is reduced to sense with the verb *consiste en* (consists of) (L15), probably due to the unavailability of any literal translation. The use of a verb also enables the omission of the colon and the joining of the two phrases into one sentence in the TT, Spanish being a language that feels at home with long subordinate clause-filled sentences.

The idiom *open up... to* (L14) is translated with *abrir... a* (S1) (L15) and the effect is carried over fully.

The occurrence of the expression *young people* (L17) is the first of a string of cohesive collocations of the same expression recurring throughout the text. It is translated constantly as *jóvenes* (L18), which maintains the cohesive effect.

### Paragraph 1

The nautical metaphor *to the fore* (L22) is translated by means of an S2 strategy with *en primera línea* (on the first/front line) (L22), which, despite losing the nautical sense of the expression, does render a military edge as one of its connotations is equivalent to the metaphor *on the front line*.

This paragraph affords cohesion to the text through the reiteration of *wide-ranging consultation* (this time in the singular) (L23), and the cohesion is maintained in the TT with the corresponding translation, *amplia consulta* (L23); the same can be said of the occurrence of the metaphor *white paper* (L25).

The metaphorical use of the verb *share* (L27) is translated using an S1 strategy with the Spanish verb *comparten* (L26), maintaining the same effect and style in the TT.

The occurrence of phonological cohesion by the adjectival use of the word *changing* (cohesive with *wide-ranging*) (L30) is totally omitted in the TT, which adds to the overall flattening of the text so far and the reduction to the formal style appropriate for this type of discourse in Spanish.

The expression *switching backwards and forwards between* (L32), which involves a metaphor of movement, is translated with an S2 strategy *intercalan* (intersperse/combine) (L32), which omits a great deal of the emotional colouring and negative connotations of the expression in English. Indeed, the connotations of the expression in the TT are at best neutral and may even be understood as positive (succeed in combining), unfaithfully rendering the opinion put forward in the ST. The original negativity could have been reflected in the TT by use of an expression such as *están inmersos en un ir y venir entre períodos...* (are immersed in a coming and going between periods...) or by the use of the verb *saltan entre... y...* (jump from...to...), both of which would also have maintained the metaphor of movement.

The metaphor *individual pathways* (L34) is translated using an S2 strategy by *itinerarios personales* (personal itineraries) (L34), which is less colourful and more formal than the ST and loses the connotations associated with *pathways* (winding, adventure, nature, youth, etc.), bringing in the more formal qualities of route, organisation, timetables, etc., all of which are quite contrary to the implications given in the ST.

The personification of *school and university, work and the social environment* (L36) in the theatrical idiom of *play the same integrating role* (L37) is upheld in the TT but the theatrical metaphor is translated using an S2 strategy by *desempeñan la misma función integradora* (carry out the same integrating function) (L37), which offers a depersonalised version of the ST metaphor. The translator could have used an S1 strategy here and translated the expression with *hacen/cumplen/desempeñan el mismo papel integrador* and the fact that s/he chose to change *papel* for *función* (role for function) probably results from

the tendency to demetaphorisation and formalisation of Spanish texts of this kind and may be a result of a search for collocational cohesion, where *function* is more in line with the subject matter of politics than *role*.

### Paragraph 2

The reiteration of *decision-making* (L44), this time with *systems* instead of *process* is maintained in the TT (L44) and the different collocate is also observed. This imitates the cohesion of the ST in the TT.

The above reiteration is followed by a cohesion of form with the *-tion* repetition of *disaffection, traditional, participation, organisation* (L45), all of which occur in a span of sixteen words (four components). This phonological cohesion is generally observed in the TT by the *-ción* repetition in *tradicionales, participación* and *organizaciones* (L46), with the loss of only one of the four words (*disaffection* is translated by *desinterés* (disinterest)), in a span of eleven words (three components). However, the repetition has no significant effect on the intended meaning of the ST and its rendering in the TT would not have been an issue of great consideration for the translator.

The idiomatic expression *find their own concerns reflected* (L49) is paraphrased (S3) in the TT with *se identifican* (identify with) (L49). This implies a flatter, more formal style and the translator could have translated the expression with an S2 strategy (e.g. *ver sus preocupaciones/intereses reflejados*), introducing a cohesive element through reiteration in the TT with the S2 translation of the metaphor *rooted* in paragraph 1, which was rendered with the verb *reflejan*.

The idiom *have taken refuge in* (L51) is translated using an S1 strategy with *se refugia en* (L52) and the grammatical cohesion of the two present perfects (*have taken* and *have tried*) is carried over into the TT with two present simples (*se refugia* and *se siente*).

The use of *individualism* (L53) reiterates the *individual pathways* from paragraph one and is translated literally with *individualismo* (L53). The reiteration is lost however due to the previous translation of *individual* as *personales* (L34) in paragraph one.

The metaphorical use of *margins* (L55) is subjected to an attempted S1 strategy, but the colligation of *margins* with the preposition *on* has been mistranslated with the Spanish preposition *a* (*al margen*) (L56), probably as a result of TL interference (Baker: 1992). In the ST, *on the margins* implies ‘on the edges’ (but still a part of), whereas *al margen* in the TT implies ‘separation from/beyond’ (not a part of).

### Paragraph 3

The expression *have a lot to say* (L61) is translated using an S1 strategy with *tienen algo que decir* (L61). However, the TT idiom involves a slight mistranslation in that it omits the intensifier *a lot* and replaces it with *algo* (something). The translator could have used *mucho* (a lot) and although the use of the intensifier may be understood as marked in the TT, as it is in the ST, its omission leads to a slightly unfaithful rendering of the ST.

The cohesion resulting from the textual collocations *economic change*, *demographic imbalance*, *globalisation* and *cultural diversity* (L64), which are examples of the

collocations expected in a political text, is translated using an S1 strategy in the case of the first three, *transformaciones económicas*, *desequilibrios demográficos* (pluralized in the TT) and *globalización* (L63) and an S2 strategy in the case of the latter, where the noun group is turned into the noun phrase *diversidad de culturas* (L66). The effect of cohesion is maintained as no change is made to the components used.

This paragraph contains further examples of cohesion with the words *social relations* and *solidarity* (L67), both of which are translated by an S1 strategy with *relaciones sociales* and *solidaridad* (L68), respectively.

There are also examples of reiteration: *different ways* and *differences* (L68), echoing the *indifference* (L52) mentioned in paragraph two, as well as *diversity* (L66) in the previous sentence. This reiteration is unaccounted for in the TT, where the translator has chosen to use the terms *nuevas* (new) (L67) and *otras* (other) (L68), perhaps to avoid what s/he may have considered repetition. Although repetition is avoided, the stylistic effect of the reiteration is lost and, once again, the TT loses colour.

The expression *coping with differences* (L69) is translated using an S2 strategy, where the word chosen for the TT is *vivir las diferencias* (to live differences) (L70). This choice omits the connotations of the ST (success in dealing with, understanding, overcoming, etc.) and offers a verb with neutral connotations – a neutralisation in keeping with the flattening of the text.

#### Paragraph 4

The idiom *it is up to* (L76) is reduced to sense and paraphrased (S3) by *tienen la responsabilidad de* (L78). The paraphrase has led to unnecessary redundancy due to the translation of policy-makers as *responsables políticos* (L77), where the adjective *responsables* could have simply been omitted. Having not introduced cohesion into the TT when previously possible, in preference for avoiding repetition, it seems unlikely the translator would here be searching for any kind of cohesion. *Es la tarea de los políticos nacionales y europeos el facilitar...* may have been a more faithful and less clumsy rendering of the ST phrase.

The metaphor *stakeholders in* (L79) has also been paraphrased (S3) and holds up to Newmark's concept of componential analysis (1988): *participen plenamente en* (L81). The occurrence of two rather longwinded paraphrases in the same sentence tends to halt the flow of the text.

In this paragraph, the translator introduces anaphoric reiteration of the word *adaptación* (L80 with L77). This cohesion is not present in the ST and may be considered an example of compensation in place (Hervey et al: 1995).

#### Paragraph 5

The cliché machine metaphor *up and running* (L85) has been reduced to sense in the TT (S3) with *se ha iniciado* (it has begun) (L85) as has the metaphor *wave of enlargement* (L86), which has been rendered as *ampliación* (extension) (L86). The former fails to carry over the connotation of 'functioning' and 'progressing/moving forwards'. This could have

been achieved in the ST by *se ha puesto en marcha*, which would also have reflected the metaphor of movement and machine. The latter is flattened from three to two dimensions and loses the connotations of increase in relevance, strength, power, etc. However, the demetaphorisation of both expressions is in keeping with the style required of this type of text in Spanish.

The same can be said of the phrasal verb *coming across* (L89), which is translated as *envían* (send) (S3) (L89) and involves a grammatical turnaround with the adverb of time *recent years* (L90) in the ST being personified in the TT and *the message* (L88) repositioned as the direct object of the TT verb. The demetaphorisation of the phrasal verb is compensated in kind by the effect of personification.

The expression *take shape with* (L91) is demetaphorised (S3) and translated with the verb *construirse* (L90) acting in a passive sense (be built) and the occurrence of *consultations* (L93) affords cohesion by reiteration of the same word in the foreword. The TT translates *consultations* as *consulta* (L91) and the aforementioned cohesion is carried over in the same way.

In this paragraph, the word *governance* (L94) provides cohesion with the same word in the first paragraph. Here the translation is *gobernanza* (L94), which maintains the cohesion; however, possibly because s/he considered it a near-calque or borrowed item, the translator has chosen to put the word between quotation marks. The monolingual Spanish dictionary of the Real Academia Española (*Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, 20<sup>th</sup> edit. 1984, vol. 1) defines it as “acción y efecto de gobernar o gobernarse” (the action and effect of

governing or self-government). It is then not a borrowed item and would seem to be an appropriate literal translation of the ST item.

The metaphorical use of *young* (L97) to describe the project is translated using an S1 strategy with the word *joven* (L96).

### Paragraph 6

The bird metaphor *fully-fledged participants* (L106) has been demetaphorised in keeping with the S3 strategy and paraphrased with *interlocutores plenos* (full interlocutors) (L106). The TT misses the ST connotation of ‘coming of age’, which affords cohesion in the ST with the theme of youth, and the translation contributes to the overall flattening of the text.

The idiom *play their part* (L108) has also been demetaphorised to *contribuir* (contribute) (L107) but compensation in kind occurs with the created alliteration in the TT, *contribuir a construir*.

The fixed expression *in other words* (L113) is translated by *por tanto* (L113), which, although a fixed expression of similar standing in Spanish, leans more to the meaning of *therefore* and is a slight mistranslation, though not one of great semantic significance. A more literal translation, *en otros términos* (in other terms), of equal status and acceptance, could have been used.

Finally, the metaphor *players* (L116) is translated using an S2 strategy with *agentes* (agents) (L115).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Nida (1964) states that a translation must (1) make sense, (2) have a natural and easy form of expression and (3) produce a similar response in the TL reader.

The analysis of the translation above shows that the text generally fulfils these three conditions. It is a reasonably literal translation of the ST and is appropriate to the text type.

The fixed expressions have been rendered mostly using S2 and S3 strategies (Baker: 1992), which has led to an overall demetaphorisation and levelling-off of the ST, but has resulted in a TT in keeping with the appropriate style for formal informative Spanish discourse.

The collocational cohesion achieved through reiteration and the use of strings of lexis related to politics (policy, decision, consultation, governance, situation, ambition, system, process, etc.) and to youth (young people, job market, school, university, work, youth, etc.) is more or less maintained in the TT and where the cohesion has been lost, the effect has been compensated in kind with other effects.

## Appendix

Text for analysis: an extract from the European Commission white paper *A New Impetus for European Youth*, available for download from the Internet at <http://europa.eu.int>.

### 1 **A NEW IMPETUS FOR EUROPEAN YOUTH**

#### **FOREWORD**

5 The decision to publish this White Paper on youth policy, and especially the decision to conduct wide-ranging consultations beforehand, is rooted primarily in the desire to promote  
10 new forms of European governance. The White Paper is fully coherent with the Commission's White Paper on Governance adopted in July of this year: the point is to open up the European  
15 Union (EU)'s decision-making process to the people who will be affected by those decisions, and that includes young people.

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#### **Young people to the fore**

The results of the wide-ranging consultation exercise which preceded this  
25 White Paper are clear: despite highly divergent situations, young people largely share the same values and the same ambitions, but also the same difficulties. Young people form a  
30 changing group, tending to enter the job market and start a family later in life; they are switching backwards and forwards between work and learning; but above all is that their individual  
35 pathways are much more varied than in the past. School and university, work and the social environment no longer play the same integrating role that they used to. Young people are acquiring autonomous  
40 status later and later in life.

All this is often reflected in a sense of fragility, a loss of confidence in the

### **UN NUEVO IMPULSO PARA LA JUVENTUD EUROPEA**

#### **PRÓLOGO**

La decisión de publicar el Libro Blanco sobre la juventud y, en particular, la decisión de que estuviera precedido por una amplia consulta, reflejan ante todo la voluntad de promover nuevas formas de gobernanza europea. Así pues, el Libro Blanco se inscribe perfectamente en la línea trazada por la Comisión en julio del presente año cuando adoptó el Libro Blanco sobre la gobernanza, y que consiste en abrir el proceso de toma de decisiones de la Unión Europea (UE) a la participación de los ciudadanos y, por tanto, también de los ciudadanos jóvenes, por lo que respecta a las decisiones que les afectan.

#### **Los jóvenes en primera línea**

Los resultados de la amplia consulta que precedió a este Libro Blanco son claros: a pesar de que se encuentren en situaciones muy diversas, los jóvenes comparten valores y ambiciones, así como dificultades. Estos jóvenes constituyen un grupo en plena transformación, caracterizados por lo siguiente: acceden al empleo y fundan una familia más tarde de lo que era habitual, intercalan períodos de trabajo y de estudio y, sobre todo, sus itinerarios personales son mucho más variados que en el pasado. La escuela o la universidad, el empleo y el entorno social ya no desempeñan la misma función integradora. Además, se independizan cada vez más tarde.

Esto se traduce a menudo en un sentimiento de fragilidad, en una pérdida

<p>45 existing decision-making systems, and a degree of disaffection in terms of the traditional forms of participation in public life and in youth organisations. Some of them feel that they do not always find their own concerns reflected in public policies conceived by and for their elders. Some young people have taken refuge in indifference or individualism, while others have tried forms of expression which may have been excessive or even on the margins of democratic means. The majority, though, want to influence policies, but have not found the appropriate way of doing so.</p>	<p>de confianza en los sistemas de toma de decisiones existentes y en un cierto desinterés por las formas tradicionales de participación en la vida pública y en las organizaciones juveniles. Algunos declaran que no siempre se identifican con las políticas públicas concebidas por y para los adultos. Una parte de los jóvenes se refugia en la indiferencia o el individualismo, mientras que otra se siente atraída por modos de expresión que en algunos casos son excesivos y pueden incluso situarse al margen de los canales democráticos. No obstante, la mayoría de los jóvenes desea influir en las políticas, pero no encuentra la manera de hacerlo.</p>
<p>60 Nonetheless, young Europeans have a lot to say; after all, these are precisely the people who are primarily affected by economic change, demographic imbalance, globalisation or cultural diversity. We are expecting them to create new forms of social relations, different ways of expressing solidarity or of coping with differences and finding enrichment in them, while new uncertainties appear.</p>	<p>Sin embargo, los jóvenes europeos tienen algo que decir, ya que son los primeros afectados por las transformaciones económicas, los desequilibrios demográficos, la globalización y la diversidad de las culturas. Es a ellos a quienes se pide que inventen nuevas formas de relaciones sociales y otras maneras de expresar la solidaridad, de vivir las diferencias y de enriquecerse con ellas, en un momento en el que aparecen nuevas incertidumbres.</p>
<p>75 Despite the more complex social and economic context, young people are well equipped to adapt. It is up to the national and European policy-makers to facilitate this process of change by making young people stakeholders in our societies.</p>	<p>A pesar de un contexto social y económico más complejo, los jóvenes demuestran poseer una gran capacidad de adaptación. Los responsables políticos nacionales y europeos tienen la responsabilidad de facilitar esta adaptación haciendo que estos jóvenes participen plenamente en nuestras sociedades.</p>
<p>85 <b>Young people and Europe</b> The debate on the future of Europe is up and running. An unprecedented wave of enlargement will soon be creating entirely new perspectives. The message that has been coming across clearly over 90 these recent years in the political life of</p>	<p><b>Los jóvenes y Europa</b> Se ha iniciado el debate sobre el futuro de Europa. Asimismo, una ampliación sin precedentes abrirá nuevas perspectivas. Los últimos años de la vida política europea nos envían un mensaje sin ambigüedades: la Unión debe construirse</p>

<p>95 Europe is that the EU must take shape with the people of Europe. It is important that consultations on the way the EU will develop and on its form of governance should include the people to whom tomorrow's Europe belongs. The European project is itself young, still forming and still being debated. If it is to make progress, it needs ambition and enthusiasm, and commitment on the part of young people to the values on which it is based.</p> <p>100</p>	<p>con los europeos. Las consultas organizadas para preparar su evolución y las reflexiones iniciadas sobre su «gobernanza» deben incluir también a quienes tomarán el relevo en el futuro. El proyecto europeo es joven, se encuentra en un proceso continuo de formación y sigue sometido a debate: para que progrese se precisa ambición y entusiasmo, así como la adhesión de la juventud a los valores en los que se fundamenta.</p>
<p>105 If young people have one clear message, it is that they want their voice to be heard and want to be regarded as fully-fledged participants in the process; they want to play their part in building Europe; they want to influence the debate on the way it develops. It is time now to regard youth as a positive force in the construction of Europe rather than as a problem. In other words, we have to give young people the wherewithal to express their ideas, and to test them against similar ideas from other players in civil society.</p> <p>110</p> <p>115</p>	<p>Los jóvenes lo han dicho con claridad: quieren que se les escuche y se les considere como interlocutores plenos, quieren contribuir a construir Europa y quieren influir en el debate sobre su futuro. Ya es hora de considerar a la juventud como una fuerza en la construcción europea, en lugar de como un problema al que debemos hacer frente. Por tanto, debemos ofrecerles los medios para expresar sus ideas y confrontarlas con las de otros agentes de la sociedad civil.</p>

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