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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigating Non-human Discourse: An Analysis of the language used to represent animals in *Alice in Wonderland*

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| ABSTRACT
Anthropomorphism of animals is common in literature, particularly in children's stories. It is pervasive and ingrained in human popular culture. Authors and illustrators of children's literature use it to enter a child's mind in order to tell a story or impart knowledge. They do this by using animals and other creatures to tell stories about their own humanity, giving children the impression that the tale is about the animal. The limits of this kind of domestication require careful consideration and research, since they may have a number of detrimental implications for the way kids perceive nature. Based on these suppositions, this study analyzes how language is used to portray animals in two different versions of *Alice in Wonderland*: the 1865 original and Tim Burton's 2010 fantasy adaptation. Specifically, the paper explores how non-human thought, behavior, and subjectivity are represented by examining some language patterns used to depict them, such as verb and noun phrases, adjectives, and pronouns. The three-dimensional framework that forms the basis of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (micro level, macro level, and discursive use) is the methodological reference used to emphasize hidden ideologies, power dynamics, and social hierarchies based on "human exceptionalism;" i.e. the idea that humans are not only fundamentally distinct from other creatures, but morally superior to them as well.

| KEYWORDS
Discourse analysis; ecolinguistics; discourse; non-human, anthropomorphism

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Animals are frequently anthropomorphized in literature, especially in children's books. Anthropomorphism is embedded in human popular culture and is ubiquitous in literature and cultural production, as can be seen in works such as *Black Beauty*, *The Wind in the Willows*, Mickey Mouse, and many others (Markowsky 1975: 460-466).

Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities, including animals. There are many mechanisms in language that can be used for an anthropomorphic representation of animals. An author can portray animals capable of human speech, engaged in conversations; assign them human physical traits; attribute thought processes to them so that the animals exhibit. An author can depict animals engaging in human activities, such as wearing clothes, cooking, or adopting societal roles (Urquiza-Haas, Kotrschal 2015; Regier 2006). By attributing human characteristics to animals, storytellers can illustrate ethical lessons in a relatable and engaging manner. Anthropomorphized animals can reflect human societies, allowing for critique and exploration of social issues from a unique perspective. Moreover, giving animals human traits fosters empathy and a deeper emotional connection between the audience and the described narrative (Mecit, Lowrey, Shrum 2022; Boyer 1996).

In children's literature authors and illustrators utilize animals and other kinds of creatures to tell youngsters stories about their own humanity, so that they are given the impression that the story is about the animal and not about them: anthropomorphism is a way to enter a child's mind in order to convey a tale or impart knowledge. As Helen Adhuze writes: "In juvenile literature, anthropomorphism is used in building a relational attitude between the young readers and the fictional characters in the text for subtle facilitation of knowledge" (2022: 48).

The impressive growth in anthropomorphism in children's literature in the second half of the nineteenth century is a consequence of the spread of Darwinian ideas about the animal origins of the human species (Magee 1969). Cronin (2017) clarifies: "Getting to know one's biological neighbours appeared more pressing as the evolutionary evidence pointed in particular direction," (78) that of strong relation between human and non-human species. This approach has persisted to this day. It is common to come across texts for children in which animals are portrayed as humans. This narrative strategy continues to be used because it has proven to be efficient and successful.

The limitation of this domestication needs attention and thorough investigation, since it can have several negative effects on children's understanding of the natural world. Studies suggest that stories featuring anthropomorphized animals can interfere kids' learning about the natural world. Such portrayals might compromise their ability to grasp factual information about animal species and their habitats (Ganea et als 2014).

Moreover, assigning human emotions to animals may cause children to misinterpret animal signals, leading to inappropriate interactions. Research advises that children exposed to stories featuring anthropomorphized animals may learn less about animals compared to those who engage with materials that depict animals in a realistic manner. This diminished learning is linked to confusion between fantasy and reality, making it challenging for children to differentiate between human and animal behaviors. For instance, expecting a wild animal to exhibit human-like affection can result in unsafe situations (Sealey, Oakley 2013; Mota-Rojas et als 2021).

Anthropomorphic narratives can send mixed signals to children about animals, blending fictional representations with real-world understanding. This ambiguity may lead to unrealistic expectations and misunderstandings about animal needs. Children might assume animals have the same needs and desires as humans, which can affect how they believe animals should be treated or managed. By projecting human attributes onto animals, there is a risk of overlooking the intrinsic value and unique nature of animals. This perspective can influence how children perceive and treat animals, potentially leading to ethical concerns regarding animal welfare and conservation (Andrianova 2021).

While anthropomorphic stories can be engaging and foster imagination, it is essential to balance them with accurate information about animals to help children develop a realistic and respectful understanding of the natural world.

With these premises, the paper will examine the representation of animal discourse in two versions of *Alice in Wonderland:* the original 1865 text, and the 2010 fantasy version by filmmaker Tim Burton. In particular, the study will investigate the representation of non-human thought, activities and subjectivity by analyzing some features of the language used to depict animals, including verb and noun phrases, adjectives, and pronouns. The aim is to identify the intended image of animals being proffered at a textual and cultural level.

2. Method

Research will be conducted using Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA). His work explores the ways in which language and discourse contribute to the construction and maintenance of social power relations, ideologies, and identities. Fairclough states that: "power is conceptualized both in terms of unequal capacity to control how texts are produced, distributed and consumed (and hence the shapes of the texts) in particular sociocultural contexts. A range of properties of texts is regarded as potentially ideological, including features of vocabulary and metaphor, grammar presuppositions and implicatures, politeness conventions, speech-exchange (turn-taking) systems, generic structure, and style." (2) By integrating linguistic analysis with social theory, Fairclough's method becomes an authoritative tool for examining how discourse both reflects and shapes social structures. The three-dimensional framework that forms the basis of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis looks at discourse from three angles:

1. Text (Micro Level): this entails a thorough examination of how language is used in particular texts, with an emphasis on linguistic elements including coherence, grammar, and lexicon.
2. Discursive Practice: this dimension examines the creation, dissemination, and consumption of texts in particular social situations, taking into account how texts relate to one another and how they are understood.
3. The level of social practice (Macro level) looks at the larger social and cultural systems that both influence and are influenced by speech. It examines the role that speech plays in upholding institutional practices, ideologies, and social power dynamics (Fairclough 1995: 36-44).

The paper will explore these three levels of discourse as they concern the representation of animals in the two versions of *Alice*, attempting to highlight their ideological framework of reference. This because it is evident that "the function of language in increasing the importance and prominence of the non-human world" (Awny 2023: 1; Stibbe 2015) is becoming a crucial issue in contemporary society.

3. The two versions of *Alice in Wonderland*

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll has inspired numerous adaptations and versions across various media. The story was originally written by Lewis Carroll in 1865 and was entitled *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. As a children's novel, it details the story of a young girl (Alice) who falls through a rabbit hole into a fantasy world of anthropomorphic creatures. The novel is

seen as an example of the literary nonsense/fantasy genre and one of the most famous works of Victorian literature. It is recognized for having contributed to the eradication of didacticism in children's literature and to the beginning of writing for children's enjoyment. As mentioned earlier, this version was undoubtedly influenced by Darwin's discoveries – in other words by the idea that there is continuity between human and non-human – but also demonstrates how humans excel at a degree of hierarchization. The other version being examined is the 2010 American adventure fantasy film *Alice in Wonderland*, produced by Walt Disney Pictures and directed by Tim Burton based on a 2008 screenplay by Linda Woolverton. The film is a live-action adaptation and reimagining of Lewis Carroll's books and Walt Disney's 1951 animated feature film of the same name. It centers on Alice Kingsleigh, who inadvertently falls down a rabbit hole, returns to Wonderland, and, together with the Mad Hatter, fights the Red Queen and her Jabberwocky, a dragon that frightens the locals of Wonderland, in order to help restore the White Queen to her throne. The film was shot at a time when issues related to animal rights and the recognition of their subjectivity had already been given substantial attention, although they were not yet completely accepted by the wider public. It seems interesting therefore to verify how a rapidly-changing context is received by the authors and the film director.
The different temporal and socio-cultural settings of the two versions suggest an equally different approach to the representation of animals through language, precisely the element the following analysis seeks to explore.

4. A Critical Discourse Analysis of selected linguistic patterns

4.1 Nous and pronouns

The use of pronouns and nouns in these two versions of *Alice* is quite remarkable. In the movie , the main animal characters have proper names: for instance the Chesire Cat is named Chessur; the Caterpillar is Absolem; the Dormouse is Mallymkun; The Bloodhound is Bayard, etc. Naming non-human protagonists is a way to establish a bond, a meaningful relationship that provides a sense of continuity and stability with their human counterparts. A name communicates an individual's special and unique essence (Benjamin 1962). At the micro level, this involves the association of two nouns: one determines the species to which the animal belongs; the other gives her/him a proper name. At the discursive level, this connection facilitates dialogue between human and non-human characters; at the macro level it suggests a position of equality between humans and non-humans within the socio-cultural context of reference.
As for common nouns, there is a very famous scene in the novel in which "a hedgehog" and "a flamingo" are represented as "a ball" and "a mallet." When Alice notices a door on a tree, she passes through and finds herself back in the room where her journey began. She takes the key and opens the door to the garden, which turns out to be the Queen of Hearts' croquet court. The queen invites Alice to play, and the game immediately becomes a great confusion of players shouting and playing in unison. Hedgehogs are used as balls, flamingos as mallets, and soldiers act as hoops. The Queen is short-tempered and orders different creatures beheaded left and right.
This scene is portrayed in both versions of *Alice*. Here is a more detailed look at the way the scene is described in Carroll's original edition, and in the screenplay by Woolverton and Burton:

"Get to your places!" shouted the Queen in a voice of thunder, and people began running about in all directions, tumbling up against each other; however, they got settled down in a minute or two, and the game began. Alice thought she had never seen such a curious croquet-ground in her life; it was all ridges and furrows; ***the balls were live hedgehogs, the mallets live flamingoes***, and the soldiers had to double themselves up and to stand on their hands and feet, to make the arches.
The chief difficulty Alice found at first was in ***managing her flamingo***: ***she succeeded in getting its body tucked away***, comfortably enough, under her arm, with its legs hanging down, but generally, just as she had got its neck nicely straightened out, and was going to give the hedgehog a blow with its head, it *would* twist itself round and look up in her face, with such a puzzled expression that she could not help bursting out laughing: and when she had got its head down, and was going to begin again, it was very provoking to find that the hedgehog had unrolled itself, and was in the act of crawling away: besides all this, there was generally a ridge or furrow in the way wherever she wanted to send the hedgehog to, and, as the doubled-up soldiers were always getting up and walking off to other parts of the ground, Alice soon came to the conclusion that it was a very difficult game indeed. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Here is the scene as described in the screenplay:

The Queen and her Courtiers play croquet. The Red Queen with her huge head is surrounded by three powdered and painted COURTIERS with equally out-sized body parts: a woman with an EXTRA-LARGE NOSE, another with LONG HANGING EARS, a man with a HUGE PROTRUDING BELLY. ***The Queen swings her mallet.*** There's that small cry again. Alice looks around for the source. ***The ball rolls toward her and lays, furry and gasping, in the grass. It's a HEDGEHOG tied by its four legs into an awkward ball.*** Its fur is matted and filthy, its face buried in the grass. THWACK! It cries out as it's hit again. ***The mallet is a miserable FLAMINGO tied by its feet. The hedgehog rolls to a stop near Alice.*** She attempts to untie it. It cries out fearfully. …

Alice frees the hedgehog. It stares at her mutely before stumbling into the foliage. Alice sees two large white furry feet. Her gaze travels up to the White Rabbit, dressed as a court page. (Woolverton 2008: 43-44)

In both versions the mallet is a flamingo, and the ball is a hedgehog. Animals are represented as objects, probably to make them funnier. From a linguistic point of view, it is noteworthy that these animals (flamingo and hedgehog) do not speak human language. Apart from a short line in the 2010 film, where the "miserable" flamingo says "so sorry" to the hedgehog, they are silent. Thus, there are animals that speak the human language (White Rabbit, Chesire Cat, Caterpillar, etc.) and assume human behaviors and appearances, and animals that do not speak it and are represented as objects to be disposed of at will. In such a context, human language is a sign of superiority even among animals. This may not have been the authors' conscious intention in these two texts, but the message that living beings can be used as "things" is quite clear.
It must be said that even when non-human characters use our language, their linguistic abilities are never characterized by particular depth and articulation, possibly because children are the ideal audience for the two works and therefore the conversations must remain simple, but also because animals are not considered capable of articulating complex dialogues. For example, in the 1865 edition the White Rabbit often uses repetition to outline his character; a characteristic that can no longer be found in the film version, despite the fact that the White Rabbit's speech remains simple from both a lexical and syntactic point of view. Some examples from the novel:

"**Oh dear! Oh dear**! I shall be late!"
"**Oh! the Duchess, the Duchess! Oh!** won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!"
(Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

And a conversation between Alice and the White Rabbit from the movie:

WHITE RABBIT
Well! It isn't the wrong Alice.
What brings you here?
ALICE
I've come for two reasons.
She beckons him closer. He bends down. She punches him.
ALICE (CONT'D)
That's for dragging me down here
against my will!
WHITE RABBIT
You didn't have to hit me! Now
there's going to be a bruise. Is
there?
He shows her his chin. She looks, indulging him.
ALICE
No.
WHITE RABBIT
What's the other reason?
ALICE
I'm going to rescue the Hatter.
WHITE RABBIT
You're not rescuing anyone being the
size of a gerbil.
ALICE
Do you have any of that cake that made
me grow before?
WHITE RABBIT

Upelkuchen? Actually, I might have
Some left.
(Woolverton 2008: 44)

Moving back to an analysis of the flamingo and hedgehog scene, at the micro level we note the association of nouns that define animals (flamingo and hedgehog) with nouns that define objects (mallet and ball). At the level of discursive practice, this involves dissemination of the idea that animals can be considered objects, a concept further emphasized by the fact that they do not speak the human language. At the macro level, this reflects a social context that in both 1865 and 2010 admits the possibility of animal objectification, with animals perceived as beings not endowed with subjectivity.
As for pronouns, in the original narrative text animals are indicated with "it", "he" or "she". But there is no coherence in the use of these pronouns. It can be inferred that the author of the text does not consider non-human subjectivity to be an issue worth caring for and dealing with in his writing. This problem disappears in the movie, where the pronouns referring to animals are almost always those used for humans.
Some examples:

The White Rabbit put on **his** spectacles. "Where shall I begin, please your Majesty?" **he** asked.
"It isn't directed at all," said the White Rabbit; "in fact, there's nothing written on the *outside*." **He** unfolded the paper as **he** spoke. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The Rabbit actually took a watch out of **its** waistcoat-pocket.
It was the White Rabbit, trotting slowly back again, and looking anxiously about as **it** went, as if **it** had lost something; and she heard **it** muttering to **itself** "The Duchess! The Duchess! Oh my dear paws! Oh my fur and whiskers! She'll get me executed, as sure as ferrets are ferrets! Where *can* I have dropped them, I wonder?" (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

There is inconsistency in the pronouns used to refer to the White Rabbit in the 1865 text that is not found in screenplay of the movie version:

The White Rabbit throws up **his** hands. (Woolverton 2008: 6)

WHITE RABBIT
Well! If it isn't the wrong Alice. What brings you here?
ALICE
I've come for two reasons.
She beckons **him** closer. **He** bends down. She punches **him**. (Woolverton 2008: 44)

The same can be said for the Cheshire Cat, another character in the story. In the 1865 version the pronouns referring to him are not consistent, while the 2010 film displays a coherent use of the singular masculine pronoun.
In the original 1865 version:

The Cat only grinned when **it** saw Alice. **It** looked good-natured, she thought: still **it** had *very* long claws and a great many teeth, so she felt that **it** ought to be treated with respect. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The Cat's head began fading away the moment **he** was gone, and, by the time **he** had come back with the Duchess, **it** had entirely disappeared. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

In the 2010 film version:

The Cat disappears then reappears as a whole cat. CHESSUR is all calm, casual sensuality with a seductive grin. **He** inspects the wound, then tries to lick it. (Woolverton 2008: 26)

CHESHIRE CAT
Fine. I'll take you to the Hare and the Hatter. But that's the end of it.
He disappears suddenly. She looks around. **He** reappears ahead.
The Cheshire Cat puts **his** paws over Alice's ears. (Woolverton 2008: 27)

The Caterpillar is always referred to as "it" in the original version, and always as "he" in the 2010 version:

Alice thought she might as well wait, as she had nothing else to do, and perhaps after all **it** might tell her something worth hearing. For some minutes **it** puffed away without speaking, but at last **it** unfolded **its** arms, took the hookah out of **its** mouth again, and said, "So you think you're changed, do you?" (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

This time Alice waited patiently until **it** chose to speak again. In a minute or two the Caterpillar took the hookah out of **its** mouth and yawned once or twice, and shook **itself.** Then **it** got down off the mushroom, and crawled away in the grass, merely remarking as **it** went, "One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Here are relevant examples from the 2010 movie screenplay:

THE CATERPILLAR
Not Hardly.
He blows smoke, obliterating **himself** from view. (Woolverton 2008: 21)

THE CATERPILLAR
How do you know?
He blows smoke in her face… **He** chuckles and **his** whole body abruptly like green jelly.
He keeps chuckling as **he** obliterates **himself** from view. (Woolverton 2008: 70)

The Dormouse character provides a peculiar example. In the 1865 edition, Caroll uses either the singular, neuter, third-person or the singular masculine third-person to describe the character; while the film edition uses the singular feminine pronoun.
In Caroll's edition:

"Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only, as **it**'s asleep, I suppose **it** doesn't mind." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The Dormouse slowly opened **his** eyes. "I wasn't asleep," **he** said in a hoarse, feeble voice: "I heard every word you fellows were saying." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

In the 2010 movie version:

THE DORMOUSE
Good thing the Bloodhound *is* one of us or you'd be.
She draws **her** finger across **her** throat ominously. (Woolverton 2008: 35)

THE DORMOUSE
Right here.
She hikes up **her** maid's skirt to reveal **her** breeches beneath. The Bandersnatch eye is still at **her** waist. (Woolverton 2008: 60)

The hedgehog is represented by the pronoun "it" in the 1865 version, and with the pronoun "he" (with variants) in the 2010 version:

"… and I should have croqueted the Queen's hedgehog just now, only **it** ran away when **it** saw mine coming!" (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Alice searches in the bushes, passing the **HEDGEHOG who**'s cleaning the caked dirt off **his** fur.
He picks up a whole pot of soup and throws it. (Woolverton 2008: 53)

Some differences in the use of pronouns can be noted in the two editions. In the 1865 novel, there is an inconsistency in their use that varies from neuter to masculine to feminine. In the 2010 edition, the pronouns referring to animals are always the same as those used for human beings: "he" and "she" (micro level). The inconsistency in Carroll's text leads to a certain confusion at the discursive level (discursive practice) and signals a lack of attention to the social representation of animals as subjects with proper identities (macro level). However, this problem vanishes in the 2010 movie version. At the textual (micro) level, the use of masculine and feminine gives the animals a human subjectivity. This legitimizes a discourse (discursive practice) in which animals fully assume all human characteristics, and can be read as a sign of growing socio-cultural awareness (macro level) of the need to assign a subjectivity to non-human creatures as sentient beings capable of carrying out conscious actions and experiencing emotions.

However, the idea that humans are special in respect to other creatures is still present. "Human exceptionalism," i.e. the idea that humans are not only fundamentally distinct from other creatures, but also morally superior to them, is the hidden ideology behind

both editions. This concept is widespread and forms the basis of the intricate and frequently erratic relationship between people and other creatures (Finlay, Workman 2013).

4.2 Verbs and Verb phrases

Both versions employ a similar approach to verbs. Verbs associated with non-human actions are often those commonly used to represent human actions (micro levers). At the discourse level, this leads to a distorted representation of what animals can and cannot do, which can become problematic because the messages they convey are addressed to children, and kids can easily confuse reality with fantasy. At the macro level, this shows a common way of representing animals that fails to take their true subjectivity into account; one that is different from human subjectivity. Here some examples of what the White Rabbit, the Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, the Dormouse and the March Hare can do in the novel:

It was the **White Rabbit**, **trotting** slowly back again, and **looking** anxiously about as it went, as if it **had lost** something; and she heard it muttering to itself "The Duchess!)
(Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Very soon the **Rabbit noticed** Alice, as she went hunting about, and **called out** to her in an angry tone, "Why, Mary Ann, what *are* you doing out here? (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Presently the **Rabbit came up** to the door, and **tried to open** it; but, as the door opened inwards, and Alice's elbow was pressed hard against it, that attempt proved a failure. Alice heard it say to itself "Then I'll go round and get in at the window." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The **Caterpillar** and Alice **looked at** each other for some time in silence: at last the **Caterpillar took** the hookah out of its mouth, and **addressed** her in a languid, sleepy voice. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

"Who are *you?*" said the **Caterpillar.**

"You!" **said** the **Caterpillar** contemptuously. "Who are *you?*"

Which brought them back again to the beginning of the conversation. Alice felt a little irritated at the **Caterpillar**'s **making** such *very* short remarks, and she drew herself up and said, very gravely, "I think, you ought to tell me who *you* are, first."

"Why?" **said** the **Caterpillar.**

(Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

And she began thinking over other children she knew, who might do very well as pigs, and was just saying to herself, "if one only knew the right way to change them—" when she was a little startled by seeing the **Cheshire Cat sitting** on a bough of a tree a few yards off. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the **March Hare** and the Hatter were **having tea** at it: a **Dormouse was sitting** between them, fast asleep, and the other two were **using** it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and **talking** over its head. "Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only, as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The **March Hare took** the watch and **looked at** it gloomily: then he **dipped** it into his cup of tea, and **looked at** it again: but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, "It was the *best* butter, you know." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The long grass rustled at her feet as the **White Rabbit hurried by**—the frightened Mouse splashed his way through the neighbouring pool—she could hear the rattle of the teacups as the **March Hare** and his friends **shared** their never-ending meal….(Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

The three characters act like human beings: for example, the White Rabbit opens a door; the Caterpillar holds a conversation; and the March Hare checks the time on his watch. The same happens in the movie:

The **White Rabbit unrolls** an ancient PARCHMENT lying on a
toadstool. (Woolverton 2008: 19)

White Rabbit turns the scroll further into the future. (Woolverton 2008: 20)

THE CATERPILLAR
Not Hardly.
He **blows** smoke, obliterating himself from view. (Woolverton 2008: 21)

The **Dormouse pulls** a long sharp hat pin from her scabbard. (Woolverton 2008: 21)

THE DORMOUSE
Hatter!
He **jerks and drags** himself back from the edge of hysteria. (Woolverton 2008: 34)

CHESIRE CAT
I never **get involved** in politics.
You'd best be on your way. …
CHESHIRE CAT Fine. I'll **take** you to the Hare and the Hatter. But that's the end of it.
(Woolverton 2008: 27)

The **March Hare taps** his watch, **listens** to it, **dips** it into his tea cup, **listens** again. (Woolverton 2008: 30)[1]

4.3 Adjectives

Adjectives serve as modifiers of a noun, denoting a quality of the thing named. But they are barely used to qualify animals or their actions in either version of the story. This could be linked to the fact that the story is largely based on dialogue between characters who are featured mainly by what they say and how they say it. The few descriptions that exist are very precise, especially in movie. It is interesting to examine use of the adjective "queer." In the 1865 version of the story, the word is used to define location, situation and atmosphere. The same word is entirely absent in the movie version, substituted by words like "odd" and "mad." The Oxford English Dictionary provides a reconstruction of the term's linguistic history:

Etymology
Summary
Of uncertain origin. Perhaps a borrowing from German.
Etymon: German quer.
Origin uncertain; perhaps < (or perhaps even cognate with) German quer transverse, oblique, crosswise, at right angles, obstructive, (of things) going wrong (now rare), (of a person) peculiar (now obsolete in this sense), (of a glance) directed sideways, especially in a surreptitious or hostile manner (now rare), (of opinion and behaviour) at odds with others (see thwart adv.), but the semantic correspondence is not exact, and the figurative senses in German are apparently much later developments than the English word.

3.a. 1914. Originally U.S. colloquial. Of a person: homosexual. Also: of, relating to, or associated with homosexual people. Frequently derogatory and offensive. Cf. earlier queer n. 2a.

[1] Some exceptions, verbs that we use to refer to animal actions and behavior:
1865 edition:
Dinah: "Well,
perhaps not," said Alice in a soothing tone: "don't be angry about it. And yet I wish I could show you our cat Dinah: I think you'd take a fancy to cats if you could only see her. She is such a dear quiet thing," Alice went on, half to herself, as she swam lazily about in the pool, "and she sits purring so nicely by the fire, licking her paws and washing her face—and she is such a nice soft thing to nurse—and she's such a capital one for catching mice—oh, I beg your pardon!"
The flamingo: "He might bite"
Lizard: …the poor little thing was waving its tail. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)
And in the screenplay:
The Chesire Cat: He inspects the wound, then tries to lick it (Woolverton 2008: 34).
Jabberwocky: So my old foe, we meet on the battlefield once again. Alice is shocked. She hadn't thought that it could talk…. He strikes out suddenly with his spiked tongue. Alice lifts the Sword to defend herself and the Sword slices off the Jabberwocky's tongue. It falls to the ground wriggling in the dirt. The Jabberwocky can only make a burbling sound. (Woolverton 2008: 81).

Although frequently used derogatorily, queer may also be used as a neutral or positive term, esp. of self-reference; cf. sense 3b, from which such uses may sometimes be difficult to distinguish.
3.b. 1990. Of a person: having a sexual or gender identity that does not correspond to, or that challenges, traditional (esp. heteronormative) ideas of sexuality or gender. Also: of, relating to, or associated with such people or identities; concerned with such people or identities.
Although the term is recorded earlier in the context of gay rights activism (see e.g. quotes. 1970, 1987), this sense emerged alongside queer theory n. in the early 1990s. Originally used provocatively by LGBT activists such as members of the Queer Nation organization, it was intended to convey an assertive and radical alternative to […]]conventional notions of sexuality and gender as part of a wider campaign in response to the AIDS crisis. The term may still be considered controversial due to association with pejorative uses of sense 3a.
Queer may be used as an umbrella term similar to LGBT, LGBTQIA, etc., to include various specific sexual gender identities.
(Oxford English Dictionary. https://www.oed.com/dictionary/queer_adj1?tab=meaning_and_use#27444388 4/9)

The original meaning – "transverse, oblique, crosswise, peculiar, at odds with others" – fits perfectly with the use of the adjective in the 1865 version of *Alice*, but would seem inadequate if used the same way in the film, considering its evolution in contemporary discursive use to define various gender identities. The adjective is repeated thirteen times in Carroll's novel, used to describe strange, eccentric and peculiar situations, conditions, atmospheres, "things," a party, characters (human and non-human), and so forth. Here some significant examples:

"Dear, dear! How **queer** everything is to-day! And yesterday things went on just as usual. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

"I wish I hadn't cried so much!" said Alice, as she swam about, trying to find her way out. "I shall be punished for it now, I suppose, by being drowned in my own tears! That *will* be a **queer** thing, to be sure! However, everything is **queer** to-day." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

They were indeed a **queer**-looking party that assembled on the bank—the birds with draggled feathers, the animals with their fur clinging close to them, and all dripping wet, cross, and uncomfortable. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Alice was not much surprised at this, she was getting so used to **queer** things happening. While she was looking at the place where it had been, it suddenly appeared again. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

"How **queer** it seems," Alice said to herself, "to be going messages for a rabbit! I suppose Dinah'll be sending me on messages next!" (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

"Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet," said Alice; "but when you have to turn into a chrysalis—you will some day, you know—and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel it a little **queer**, won't you?" (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

"Not a bit," said the Caterpillar.
"Well, perhaps your feelings may be different," said Alice; "all I know is, it would feel very **queer** to *me*." (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

Alice caught the baby with some difficulty, as it was a **queer**-shaped little creature, and held out its arms and legs in all directions, "just like a star-fish," thought Alice. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

First, she dreamed of little Alice herself, and once again the tiny hands were clasped upon her knee, and the bright eager eyes were looking up into hers—she could hear the very tones of her voice, and see that **queer** little toss of her head to keep back the wandering hair that would always get into her eyes—and still as she listened, or seemed to listen, the whole place around her became alive with the strange creatures of her little sister's dream. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)

…and all the other **queer** noises, would change (she knew) to the confused clamour of the busy farm-yard—while the lowing of the cattle in the distance would take the place of the Mock Turtle's heavy sobs. (Alice's Adventures in Wonderland | Project Gutenberg)
Analysis of the adjective "queer" is deliberate. Its meaning has evolved dramatically over time, evolving to represent an entirely different concept. In the 1865 text, the adjective contributes to the creation of the story's non-sense/fantasy atmosphere, in which

humans and non-humans participate in the same world (discursive use). It mirrors the meaning of the adjective in the larger social and cultural systems of Carroll's time (macro level). In the 2010 film, the adjective disappears precisely because at the micro, macro and discursive levels it has taken on a different meaning, now being replaced primarily with the adjectives "odd" and sometimes "mad." The atmosphere of the nonsense/fantasy human + non-human world is depicted by the use of terms more appropriate to the social context of reference. Still, the frame of nonsense/fantasy is in both cases featured by the coexistence of humans and non-humans.

Here are some suggestive examples for "odd" where the adjective "queer" would have worked if used considering its original meaning. Thus, "things," "a party," "a person" can be "odd or queer":

LADY ASCOT,
What an **odd** thing to say. Come along.
She hurries her along the path. Alice hears a *jingling* sound. (Woolverton 2008: 10)

The tea party has been going on for years.
The tea set is an **odd** admixture of cracked pots and chipped cups. (Woolverton 2008: 28)

RED QUEEN (CONT'D)
There they are! Aren't they adorable?
And they have the **oddest** way of
speaking. Speak boys. Amuse us. (Woolverton 2008: 47)

The same happens with "mad." A situation, a party, or a character can be "mad or queer", as in the following examples:

LORD ASCOT
I was a fool for not investing in his
mad venture when I had the chance. (Woolverton 2008: 6)

KNAVE OF HEARTS
You're all **mad.**

Hare/Hatter/Dormouse laugh hysterically. The Knave goes off.
The Hare and Dormouse stop laughing, but the Hatter's
laughter goes on and on. (Woolverton 2008: 34)

Hatter laughs out loud, not a mad laugh but with
genuine amusement. They look at him.
RED QUEEN
Never mind him. He's **mad**. (Woolverton 2008: 62)

Her dream *comes flooding back. She's Young Alice in Wonderland; Young Alice in the Room of Doors; Young Alice with the Cheshire Cat; Young Alice at the* ***Mad*** *Tea party; Young Alice with the Red Queen and Playing Cards painting the* roses red, *Young Alice with the Caterpillar.* (Woolverton 2008: 78)

ALICE
What an idea a crazy, **mad** wonderful
idea. (Woolverton 2008: 86)

The "queer" atmosphere is also conveyed at the beginning of the film through a brief description that lists a series of adjectives that perfectly represent the Wonderland Alice is about to enter:

She enters a fantastical world. Underland is **bizarre,**
illogical, often dangerous, absurd, and **strangely beautiful**. (Woolverton 2008: 16)

In a word, "queer." Synonyms seem to work in the screenplay, although the lack of adjectives is felt because they gave the story a special quality that is difficult to convey with other words.

5. Conclusions

The analysis shows that the language representing animals is extensively anthropomorphized in both versions of *Alice*. In the 1865 version, animals seem to lack a real subjectivity. Although some of them do not speak, the nouns, verb phrases and pronouns used to describe them demonstrate that animal individuality was not a culturally sensitive issue when the original story was written. In the 2010 version, some animals have a very well-defined subjectivity that is determined – in language – by the use of pronouns, nouns and verbs that could be used to define human beings and their actions. However, there is an absence of awareness that animals have their own subjectivity that cannot overlap, merge and confuse with human subjectivity. Animals acquire subjectivity through anthropomorphosis; somehow they are represented as human beings in non-human guise.

In this sense, the cultural/ideological context of reference appears similar for both versions of *Alice*: animals are excluded from forms of meaningful participation and have no control over decisions that often threaten her/his very existence. This happens even when they speak and are represented as human beings.

The flamingo and hedgehog scene is almost identical in both versions. The two animals are characterized as objects, and are deprived of human language precisely due to the "roles" they are asked to perform in the story: "a mallet" and "a ball."

The analysis of the adjective "queer" highlights a difference with respect to the general discourse that is built on animals. This does not change much in the film version, even though more than a century has passed. On the contrary, the authors of the screenplay demonstrate that they have assimilated the change in the word's meaning, and avoid using it so as not to create discomfort in the reader, aware that the adjective "queer" is no longer appropriate for the story's context. Other adjectives such as "odd" and "mad" are used, but they do not seem capable of restoring the same transspecies atmosphere that is created in the original edition.

Concerning the method, the paper uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis in an ecolinguistic perspective, aiming to identify linguistic theories that can help analyze discourses that shape environmental perceptions. CDA methodological framework shows how in both editions of *Alice*, at the micro, macro and discursive levels, the representation of animal language is deliberately distorted when compared to reality. Animals are either creatures that are inferior to humans, or comparable to them only when they speak human language. The hidden meanings in these texts and in interactions are revealed through language that perpetuates ideologies, power dynamics, and social hierarchies based on "human exceptionalism." Anthropocentrism, speciesism, ingroup/outgroup biases, and our denial of our animal nature are all closely linked to human exceptionalism (Finlay, Workman 2013).

Future (eco)linguistic research should focus on developing awareness of the systems of information transmission operating in different species (Cronin 2017), thoroughly examining discourses that represent animals in order to reveal distortions and misconceptions in the way they are portrayed and help encourage a more respectful and authentic approach.

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