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Doing Catalan Spanish: Pragmatic Resources and Discourse Strategies in Ways of Speaking Spanish in Barcelona

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1. Introduction

The last decade has seen the publication of many corpus-based studies about Spanish in Catalonia (cf. e.g., Atienza et al., 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Casanovas Catalá, 1996a, 1996b; Galindo Solé, 2003; Hernández García, 1996, 1998; Sinner, 2002a, 2002b, 2004; Vann, 2001, 2002b; Wesch, 1997, 2000). With an emphasis on the linguistic characteristics that Spanish in Catalonia maintains or has acquired as a result of its prolonged contact with Catalan, these studies have started to catalog the lexicon, phonology and morphosyntax of Spanish in Catalonia. Relatively little attention has been dedicated, however, to the pragmatics of Spanish in Catalonia, that is, to the discourse strategies that constitute Catalan ways of speaking Spanish (cf. e.g., Sinner, 2004; Vann, 2000, 2003a). The present investigation proceeds in this direction by identifying some of the pragmatic resources employed in Catalan ways of speaking Spanish in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Data for this investigation have been transcribed from an oral corpus of twenty hours of informal group conversations in Spanish recorded in 1995 in two naturally-occurring social networks in Barcelona (N = 58).¹ The methodology of the data collection is described in detail in Vann (1996) and summarized in Vann (1998). Digitization and transcription of the data are described in detail in Vann (2003b). The digital audio corpus currently awaits web archiving, and a monograph of selected transcripts with a critical introduction to Spanish in the Països Catalans is in preparation (Vann, In preparation). The present investigation uses excerpts from conversations in the corpus described above to discursively illustrate four separate pragmatic resources used in Catalan ways of speaking Spanish in Barcelona. In each case, the investigation then analyzes things that Spanish speakers in Barcelona do through their use of language when they “do Catalan Spanish” via ways of speaking that exploit the pragmatic resources identified.

2. Four pragmatic resources used in Catalan ways of speaking Spanish in BCN

Discourse analysis of conversations in my corpus reveals that Catalan ways of speaking Spanish can make use of at least the following four pragmatic resources to do Catalan Spanish: (1) bilingual simultaneity (Woolard, 1998), (2) speech play (Sherzer, 2002), (3) narrative pragmatics (Prince, 1983), and (4) conventionalized indirectness (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). When doing Catalan Spanish in these ways, people in Barcelona act to construct cultural messages of self and Other, expressing Catalan culture in Spanish language discourse. As extracts from the corpus clearly illustrate, two or more speakers may do Catalan Spanish together to co-construct common ground and, given audience design, to further construct cross-cultural messages.

¹ The collection of these data was supported by Program for Cultural Cooperation between Spain’s Ministry of Culture and the United States’ Universities subvention #1490. The transcription of these data was supported by Western Michigan University’s Faculty Research and Creative Activities Support Fund grant # 98-050.

2.1 Bilingual simultaneity

Bilingual simultaneity is a term used by Woolard (1998) to encompass and build on related concepts previously discussed by Bakhtin (1981). Bakhtin (1981) defined the concept of hybridity as “the mixing, within a single concrete utterance, of two or more linguistic consciousnesses.” He furthermore defined the concept of polyglossia as “the simultaneous presence of two or more national languages interacting within a single cultural system” (Bakhtin as quoted in Woolard, 1998, p. 4). Woolard’s notion of bilingual simultaneity extends the Bakhtinian notion that language use reflects the intersection of multiple voices or speaking positions. According to Woolard, opposed social and linguistic values can be simultaneously and equally present in many bilingual phenomena and, in particular, “we should think of bivalence as a linguistic resource that is strategically marshaled and rhetorically manipulated by speakers” (1998, p. 12).² For Woolard, linguistic resources stemming from forms of bilingual simultaneity function to create sociolinguistic meaning.

2.1.1 Discursive illustration of bilingual simultaneity in Catalan Spanish

Consider the discourse in (1), an extract from my corpus, in which the use of the term *entofuido*, literally ‘fled inside’ (page 9, line 33), is contextualized:

Discourse (1): S2-8

Speakers S1-14 (A) and S1-12 (B), 15 July 1995, home of S [p. 9, lines 27 – 40]

- 27 B: No ...
 28 A: No. O sea<>
 29 B: Yo creo que si hemos aguantado una guerra civil, como hemos aguantado, y que<>
 30 A: Exacto<>
 31 B: Ahora también<>
 32 A: Pero, o sea se ha aguantado, ¿por qué es? Porque la gente aquí, a ... se, o sea, se ha
 33 en...tofuído<>
 34 B: ¡Ay! Sí (risas). Eh, em<>
 35 A: Se ha, se ha ... Bueno, ha querido.
 36 B: Sí<>
 37 A: Conservar la identidad y las raíces, ¿no?
 38 B: Sí (risas).
 39 A: Entonces ...
 40 B: (Risas) No, sí claro. Y ha tenido el valor para defender su tierra y defender sus ideales.

Detailed pragmatic analysis of *entofuido* in this discourse is given in Vann (In press). Of interest in the present investigation is how speakers A and B in discourse (1) do Catalan Spanish through a way of speaking that exploits the pragmatic resource of bilingual simultaneity. Specifically, A and B do Catalan Spanish in discourse (1) through their use of bivalent discourse markers. Speaker A’s use of the term *entofuido* (line 33) includes three bivalent morphemes in terms of Woolard (1998): the prefix *ento*, the lexical root *fu-*, and the thematic vowel *-i-*, all of which could be either Spanish or Catalan or both. Of course, the fourth morpheme, the suffix *-do*, is clearly of Spanish morphology. According to Woolard (1998, p. 7) words that begin bivalently frequently do not resolve their valency until their final syllable. Speaker B’s responses ¡Ay! *Sí* (line 34), *Sí* (lines 36 / 38), and *No, sí* (line 40) are also bivalent.

² Woolard defines bivalency as “the use by a bilingual of words or segments that could ‘belong’ equally, descriptively and even prescriptively, to both codes” (1998, p. 7).

2.1.2 Things Spanish speakers in BCN do through ways of speaking that exploit bilingual simultaneity

When Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of bivalent discourse markers as in discourse (1), what do they do through their use of language? For Woolard, linguistic elements that simultaneously belong to two linguistic systems can often carry simultaneous linguistic messages and social identities. Indeed, transcodic markers (Lüdi, 1987) can often convey extralinguistic information, as can the responses they provoke.³ Turell (2001, p. 20) has documented ethnographically the use of contact phenomena as pragmatic resources with which communicative strategies are formed. Indeed, one important thing that Spanish speakers in BCN do through ways of speaking that exploit bilingual simultaneity is respect and reflect the different components of the speech event: the setting, the participants and their identities, the topics, the goals and agendas of each participant, etc.

More specifically, when Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish in this way, they begin the co-construction of certain acts of identity (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985) by literally searching for common ground between two languages and two cultures. For a moment they are speaking both languages simultaneously, subtly inviting their interlocutor to respond to a translanguaging stimulus in anticipation of potential pragmatic benefits. In the case of discourse (1) the anticipated perlocutionary effect is realized successfully, as Speaker B cooperates with Speaker A, expressing solidarity and doing Catalan Spanish in tandem (lines 34, 36, 38, and 40). The subtle co-construction of linguistic and cultural meaning in discourse (1) depends on pragmatic competence and corresponds to a way of speaking Spanish that is likely particular to the speech community under investigation.

2.2 Speech play

Sherzer (2002, p. 1) defines the term *speech play* in his book by the same name as “the manipulation of elements and components of language in relation to one another, in relation to the social and cultural contexts of language use.” This definition is wide enough to include linguistic manipulation at any level. Speech play may include different ways of pronouncing the same word or different ways of expressing the same idea, and it may refer more specifically to a particular linguistic performance such as the telling of a joke or a story. In flirting with the limits of what is socially, culturally, and linguistically appropriate, speech play is a metacommentary on social, cultural, and linguistic systems and structure. Furthermore, it is typically a conscious act. Sherzer notes that speech play is most evident in puns, jokes, verbal dueling, proverbs and riddles; in multilingual situations, speech play is often located in the juxtaposition of languages (p. 4). Heteroglossia itself can be both a source and a result of speech play (p. 10).⁴

2.2.1 Discursive illustration of speech play in Catalan Spanish

Speech play is common in my corpus of Catalan Spanish.⁵ For this investigation, let us consider the following example in discourse (2):

Discourse (2): S2-8

Speakers S1-14 (A) and S1-12 (B), 15 July 1995, home of S [p. 2 line 45 – page 3 line 29]

45 A: O sea, es todo y pff, la, allí pintadas en *les parets*<>

46 B: En las paredes (risas)<>

1 A: En las paredes de, de las clases de: “Viva España” y eh, sólo “Un sólo rey” un só-, y la
2 gente calla y no dice nada.

3 B: Sí sí. Primero lo pintaron y la gente se sorprendió y dijo: ¡Ala qué pasada! Pero nadie
4 cogió ...

³ Cf. Zentella (1997, p. 92) about similar effects with codeswitching.

⁴ Sherzer defines heteroglossia as “languages, dialects, and speech styles in contact and competition within communities” (2002, pp. 9-10).

⁵ Sherzer indicates that speech play occurs principally among friends and that its informality is in fact a marker of friendly relations (p. 5).

- 5 A: Pero nadie<>
 6 B: Y se fue a conserjería y luego<>
 7 A: Y nadie denunció nada, ni dijo nada.
 8 B: Claro.
 9 A: Los únicos que... No es por nada, pero los únicos que reivindicaron algo, fueron dos del
 10 BEI (Bloc d'Estudiants Independentistes) <>
 11 B: Sí<>
 12 A: Y los, y los mismos de siempre. Ya no es una cosa ... Si a ti te pintan una pared poniendo
 13 que el único rey, o el único Dios es el rey español o no sé qué...pues, eso ya no, ya
 14 no hace falta ser independentista, ni estar en el BEI para quejarte<>
 15 B: No, no no<>
 16 A: O sea, ya se puede quejar desde una persona católica, hasta una persona, o sea decente y
 17 moral, porque<>
 18 B: Sí, claro. Y que tiene un poco la, la democracia como punto de partida<>
 19 A: Sí sí, pero nada. O sea es, nadie ... O sea, no, la gente te dice: “¿Has visto la pintada que
 20 hay en la aula tal? ¡Ah sí, sí!” Pero<>
 21 B: O se limita a decir: ¡Ah sí, qué pasada! Ya está bien. Pero en cambio no se va a ... no va a
 22 denunciarlo a ningún sitio, a la dirección o dónde sea.
 23 A: Sí. Lo de las pintadas, es así un poco ... Pero, que allí o sea se declara la diferencia, se
 24 declara la diferencia.
 25 B: Jum.
 26 A: Porque no ha, no has encontrado ninguna pintada en la pared que dijese:<>
 27 B: “Visca Catalunya!”
 28 A: Ni “Angel Colom es el Dios” (risas).
 29 B: No, no (risas).

In discourse (2), Speakers A and B do Catalan Spanish through a way of speaking that exploits the pragmatic resource of speech play. Specifically, they use bilingual speech play frame markers. According to Sherzer (2002, p. 4), play is a type of frame (Goffman, 1974) in discourse, organizing an activity as real, literal, practiced, rehearsed, talked about, etc. Speech play is often used to mark frame transitions between different sequences of discourse, indicating openings to topic shifts, codas, etc. As openings, frame markers indicate breaks in dominant conversational frames to change topics. As codas, frame markers indicate the impending wrap-up of a topic. In discourse (2), Speaker A employs bilingual speech play (*les parets*) to transition to a discourse about graffiti in which she co-constructs a metalinguistic commentary on society with Speaker B, who eventually signals the wrap-up of the discourse sequence with her own bilingual speech play (*Visca Catalunya*).

2.2.2 Things Spanish speakers in BCN do through ways of speaking that exploit speech play

When Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of speech play as in discourse (2), what do they do through their use of language? For Sherzer (2002, p. 9) speech play reveals use of and attitudes towards the sociolinguistic repertoire of a community. Indeed, language mixing in its many forms can reflect linguistic competence and proficiency, linguistic knowledge and awareness, and the emic view of the symbolic power structures associated with such competence and knowledge (cf. among others, Vann, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2003a, In press). Through their fluent speech play in discourse (2), Speakers A and B reveal their advanced linguistic and pragmatic competence as well as their practiced proficiency in bilingual discourse framing and bilingual discourse organization in Catalan Spanish. Furthermore, when Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of speech play frame markers as in discourse (2), they emergently construct, imagine, negotiate, and subvert representations of culture. For the initiated listener, the codeswitched frame markers act as contextualization cues to interpret the speech event that they surround. Given that both events of speech play were met with consecratory laughter (p. 2, line 46 and p. 3, lines 28-29), it is fair to say that both individuals were likely aware of their social, cultural and linguistic metacommentary and, moreover, they approved of it.

2.3 Narrative pragmatics

Prince (1983, p. 529) explained that “narrative pragmatics specifies the cognitive and communicative factors affecting the processing, tellibility, suitability, and value of narratives.” Essentially, there are different ways to present stories, which in turn, necessitate different interpretive strategies on the part of interlocutors. On the pragmatic level, people may represent many different “things to do” with narrative (Ryan, 2003). Constructing a story is an action, and story telling is a performance. Narrative pragmatics allows story-tellers to cooperatively construct valued narratives by taking the setting, the participants, and the relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1995) of the performance into account in order to script it appropriately. According to Fisher (1987), narratives have sequence and meaning for those who live, create or interpret them. In Fisher’s terminology, narrative pragmatics refers to the strategies that storytellers use to match the values, beliefs and experiences that are common to their audiences.

2.3.1 Discursive illustration of narrative pragmatics in Catalan Spanish

The use of narrative pragmatics is commonplace in my corpus. Consider, for example, the discourse in (3).

Discourse (3): M2-6

Speakers M1-3 (A), M1-26 (B), fieldworker (M), 22 July 1995, home of M [p. 6 lines 6 – 26]

- 6 B: Se está llevando a, a otro extremo, ¿eh? Para mí como todos los extremos son malos.
 7 Es muy típico, muy tópico, pero que es así.
 8 M: ¿Qué quieres decir, que se está llevando a otro extremo?
 9 B: Que según la opinión de mucha gente, yo no creo que esté, en tan extremo, pero yo he oído
 10 mucho en la universidad por ejemplo ... que, que, que, que se está haciendo
 11 demasiada política de, o sea, que ya no es la política de normalización lingüística, lo
 12 que hay. Que es una dictadura, del catalán. O sea, que ya todo el mundo tiene ya
 13 que hablar el catalán, sea de aquí, de allá o de acullá. Pero que si está aquí ...
 14 *toqui's*, que tiene que hablar en catalán, dominarlo perfectamente, no sé qué. Y
 15 claro, los que no son de aquí ... y han venido aquí, pues se encuentran muy
 16 cortados, ya ¿no? en los sitios, y según cómo, diciendo, no les hablan en castellano.
 17 Y esto yo ... en extremo, en extremo, lo encuentro mal también, ¿no? Porque para
 18 mí, en mi casa todo el mundo es ... bien recibido, ¿no? Entonces, a mí si alguien
 19 me habla en castellano, yo lo contesto en castellano ... sin problema<>
 20 A: Pero tú indirectamente, ¿has aprendido esto? Porque es que yo no cojo ni un caso. Me
 21 puedo, me puedo creer que estas situaciones pueda ser.
 22 B: Sí.
 23 A: Que esto está sucediendo<>
 24 B: ¿Qué? Dices ¿esto que te estoy contando?<>
 25 A: Sí<>
 26 M: Ui, y tanto<>

In discourse (3), Speakers A and B and fieldworker M do Catalan Spanish through a way of speaking that exploits the pragmatic resource of narrative pragmatics. Specifically, A, B, and M do Catalan Spanish in discourse (3) through their practiced use of narrative as performance. That is, desirous of co-constructing an esteemed narration, they all make attempts to express the values, beliefs and experiences that they hope and believe to be commonly shared by all. Often described emically as *tópicos* (line 7), recurring themes in Catalan Spanish community discourse are commonly represented and evaluated pragmatically through the group performance of conversational narratives.

2.3.2 *Things Spanish speakers in BCN do through ways of speaking that exploit narrative pragmatics*

When Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of narrative pragmatics as in discourse (3), what do they do through their use of language? Labov (1972a, p. 366), reminded us that one of the most important aspects of oral narrative is its point, its *raison d'être*. Through the narrative pragmatics of Catalan Spanish, Spanish speakers in Barcelona communicate pointed underlying social and cultural messages via particularized conversational implicatures.⁶

More specifically, as I have detailed in Vann (2003a), when Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish in this way of speaking, they are performing a ritual practice of Catalan habitus. In the case of discourse (3), tolerance and open-mindedness are idealized and transformed into building blocks of constructed Catalan identity. Relevant virtues of Catalanhood are imagined (lines 17-19), considered (lines 20-21), affirmed (line 22) and confirmed (line 26) in the performance of an oral narrative that tells of community values.⁷ Indeed, respected narratives often require an evaluative framework in which good or bad character helps to produce respectively happy or unfortunate outcomes (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 456). Furthermore, such performances serve as a sort of daily affirmation, a comforting mantra that binds any one individual to the other members of a group who may also practice this way of speaking. Gergen (1998) calls such affirmational performances *stability narratives*, concluding that the narrative pragmatics of such performances serve to demonstrate true roots in the local culture and stakes in its future.⁸ In the presence of outsiders to the community like myself, a performance such as the one in discourse 3 also serves to convey a crosscultural, didactic message.⁹ In essence then, Spanish speakers in Barcelona build community when they do Catalan Spanish through ways of speaking that exploit narrative pragmatics.

2.4 *Conventionalized indirectness*

Requests are face-threatening by definition (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 66) because they pressure people to do things that they may be unable or unwilling to do. There are many ways for speakers to mitigate infringements on addressee freedom from imposition, thus minimizing the possibilities that their addressees will lose face. Conventionalized indirectness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989) is one such redressive tactic. According to Blum-Kulka (p. 18), strategies of conventionalized indirectness in requests may be formulaically suggestive or query preparatory. The latter type of conventionalized indirectness in requests is typically manifested in discourse as a strategy to accompany the request proper with an inquiry as to the ability or willingness of the addressee to commit to the request. The form of such inquiries is arbitrary crosslinguistically but conventionalized in any specific language.

2.4.1 *Discursive illustration of conventionalized indirectness in Catalan Spanish*

The following example illustrates conventionalized indirectness in Catalan Spanish. Consider the discourse in (4).

Discourse (4): M2-5

Speaker M1-9 (B) and fieldworker (R), 20 July 1995, home of M [p. 27 lines 10-14]

⁶ Of course, these implicatures are contextually embedded in culturally relevant scripts. Therefore, given cultural variation, different interlocutors may perceive different implicatures and those who perceive the same implicatures may not assign them equal relevance. In other words, the point may be lost on some people.

⁷ For a discussion of the importance of community values in constructions of Catalanism in Barcelona, cf. Vann (2002a).

⁸ Moreover, Gergen notes that stability narratives show how one's moral ideals are unailing despite otherwise suspicious outward appearances.

⁹ The crosscultural message is intended to show outsiders the importance of tolerance and open-mindedness in Catalan culture.

- 10 B: (teléfono) Ah pues si toda la vida ¿eh? Y qué raro porque- [contestando el teléfono] diga <>
 11 R: Que los, los latinos no lo dicen jamás <>
 12 B: Hola, ¿qué tal? ¿Vienes o qué? <>
 13 R: Y los españoles, que no tengan contacto con el catalán <>
 14 B: Venga pues vente, bueno <>

In discourse (4), Speaker B does Catalan Spanish through a way of speaking that exploits the pragmatic resource of conventionalized indirectness. Specifically, B does Catalan Spanish in discourse (4) through her use of the tag *¿o qué?* in her request by telephone for her interlocutor to come over. The expression *¿o qué?* is a good example of what Searle (1975, p. 76) called a standard idiomatic form for indirect speech acts. Indeed, while it still keeps its literal meaning of ‘or what’, the tag inquiry *¿o qué?* has become conventionally established in the speech community investigated as a query preparatory indirectness strategy.¹⁰ This strategy is explained below.

2.4.2 Things Spanish speakers in BCN do through ways of speaking that exploit conventionalized indirectness

When Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of conventionalized indirectness as in discourse (4) what do they do through their use of language? Blum-Kulka (1989, p. 19) established that internal modifiers linked to the Head Acts of requests can function as both indicating devices as well as sociopragmatic devices. While indicating devices signal pragmatic forces, sociopragmatic devices signal culture-specific variations in the relative assignment of pragmatic value to conversational principles and maxims (Leech, 1983). Within given cultures, sociopragmatic devices will vary in their social impact; they may downgrade (mitigate) the Head Act or they may upgrade (emphasize) the Head Act. In Catalan Spanish, contrary to its indicative value in most other Spanish varieties, the query preparatory *¿o qué?* can function sociopragmatically as a phrasal downgrader.

When Spanish speakers in Barcelona do Catalan Spanish through their use of conventionalized indirect requests as in discourse (4) they soften their requests, lessening the FTAs inherent in them through the sociopragmatic device *¿o qué?* This device ostensibly communicates the speaker’s lack of a presupposition concerning a preferred positive response. Playing on the duality of absolute interrogatives,¹¹ the query preparatory inquiry makes apparent the possibility that Speaker B’s request may be merely a question and not a directive.¹² In opening the door to alternative interpretations of

¹⁰ Pragmatic commentary of the discursive consequences of questions involving *¿o qué?* is given in Busquets, Koike, & Vann (2001), Koike, Vann, & Busquets (2001) and Vann, Busquets, & Koike (2002). These analyses viewed the query preparatory tag ‘*¿o qué?*’ as a negative politeness strategy requesting alternate explanations in Catalan Spanish. This strategy was analyzed in a context of the FTA that it potentially represents by pressing for more information than the addressee may initially be willing to offer. The analyses concluded that FTAs inherent in such AltQs may provoke pragmatic countermoves by interlocutors including the grammaticalized discourse particle *no-sí*. Nevertheless, as argued below, in the community under investigation the AltQs themselves also function to (indirectly) attenuate the FTAs inherent in the independent, previously existing questions/requests that they accompany.

¹¹ Blum-Kulka (1989, pp. 42-44) concludes that pragmatic duality of this kind is unique to conventional indirectness: “By using conventional indirectness, the speaker can mean to convey either a question or a request, or both...and the hearer can interpret and answer either to one level or to both.”

¹² Note that the unheard answer to Speaker B’s *¿Vienes o qué?* could have been either *bueno* to accept an invitation or *sí* to answer a question. Nevertheless, even in questions that contain no directives, there may still be implicit FTAs that get redressed/downgraded in this speech community by the sociopragmatic device *¿o qué?* Consider discourse (5):

Discourse (5): M2-4

Speakers M1-7 (A), M1-2 (B), M1-25 (C), 15 July 1995, home of M [p. 51, lines 25-29]

- 25 C: Sí, no... una cosa relacionada *amb la meva germana*.
 26 A: Es lo mismo <>

the interrogative this sociopragmatic device, conventionalized in Catalan Spanish, serves to mitigate the FTA inherent in the request. Thus, for interlocutors in on the convention, use of the query preparatory expression *¿o qué?* is a conventionally indirect redressive act meant to counter a simultaneous FTA.

Given that politeness strategies are generally culturally bound, outsiders to this Catalan Spanish cultural convention such as native speakers of other dialects of Spanish will likely only discern (literal) utterance meanings of the question containing the query preparatory expression *¿o qué?* as opposed to the actual speaker's meaning of a polite request. If such people interpret *¿o qué?* as an illocutionary force indicator rather than as a sociopragmatic device, the lack of recognition of the indirectness strategy can actually result in the opposite perception of aggravated directness (insistence), even rudeness on the part of the speaker.

3. Conclusion

In this paper we have seen four different ways of doing Catalan Spanish in Barcelona, each based on the exploitation of a different pragmatic resource within the Spanish language. Together with other discourse strategies, the Catalan ways of speaking Spanish that exploit these pragmatic resources make up culture-specific interactional styles. Continued study of these interactional styles will further reveal the ethnographic richness that characterizes dialects of Spanish in the Països Catalans.¹³

One of the most important aspects of any sociolinguistically informed dialectology is the study of language in its social context. In describing and analyzing the patterns of use of languages and dialects within specific cultures, we uncover the ways in which speakers draw upon the resources of their language to perform certain functions (Labov, 1972b). In its description and analysis of patterned pragmatic usage in Spanish in two social networks in Barcelona, the present investigation has uncovered some of the ways in which people draw upon the pragmatic resources of the Spanish language to perform the function of constructing and expressing Catalan culture. In this regard, the pragmatic resources present in ways of speaking Spanish in Barcelona function as potential ethnolinguistic tropes in discourse strategies to do Catalan Spanish.

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- 27 B: ¡Ah! Pues lleva *la germana* <>
 28 C: Pe- ¿él va a venir o qué? <>
 29 B: Sí.

The function of *¿o qué?* in discourse (5) is the same as it is in discourse (4) except that in (5) the tag appears in a nondirective question. Though discourse (5) contains no request, the question itself that the query tag prepares is potentially face-threatening, insofar as C imposes on B to commit to the actions of a third party, something that could easily make B uncomfortable. In both cases, the query preparatory *¿o qué?* serves the same mitigating function.

¹³ One potential direction for such study, suggested to me by Lotfi Sayahi following the reading of my paper at WSS3, could involve future analysis of conversational sequencing (Auer 1995) in Catalan Spanish, which, in the strategies investigated above, appears to be stronger in discourses 1 and 2 than in discourses 3 and 4.

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