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Historical Sociolinguistics: A Current Trend of Research **Brauli Montoya, Manuela R. Hernandez, And Francisco Gimeno**

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HISTORICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS: A CURRENT TREND OF RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

Though the great syntheses of historical linguistics are often oversimplifications of the true and specific history of language, they have provided one of the field's most solidly established principles: the regularity of linguistic change.

However, we need something more than these diachronic formulations if we want to understand the extremely complex process involved in any development of linguistic change. Moreover, historical linguistics not only deals with the history of one or of several related languages; it also deals with the nature, that is, the process and the result, of linguistic change.

An excellent working hypothesis was proposed by U. Weinreich, W. Labov and M. I. Herzog (1968): an empirical basis for a theory of linguistic change, founded on sociolinguistic research. This basis, with the 'ordered heterogeneity' of language and variability included in the sociolinguistic competence of the speaker and speech community, proved to be the main contribution to the study of linguistic variation and evolution. These authors proposed five principles required to fully explain linguistic changes. These foundations have become "five problems" to be solved by linguists concerned with this task: constraints, transition, embedding, evaluation and actuation. Labov's contributions have solved only three of them: transition, embedding and evaluation, but not the first (the linguistic universals that constrain change) nor the last. Later on, J. Milroy (1992) and L. Milroy and J. Milroy (1992) tried to account for the beginning and the behaviour of change by studying different kinds of individuals and their relationships within the social network.

More than twenty-five years later, in spite of the greater emphasis placed on historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, more studies are still needed to complete research in both disciplines, thus allowing us to explain the past in terms of the present and vice versa according to Labov's *uniformitarian principle* (Labov, 1994).

HISTORICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Thanks to historical sociolinguistics, new ways of describing the social and contextual dynamics of the historical process of linguistic change have recently been developed. S. Romaine (1988) has proposed two levels of analysis for the reconstruction of language in its social context: the use, at the microlevel, of sociolinguistic contributions in order to understand and explain linguistic change, and the use, at the macrolevel, of sociolinguistic methods to study the first stages of a language, as a means towards reconstructing this language in its social context.

Historical sociolinguistics would incorporate both levels, either the sociolinguistic methodology suitable for looking into the earlier stages of a language in order to understand the process of change and to explain the present, or the findings of sociolinguistics in order to explain linguistic change or to control the process of reconstruction. Therefore, historical sociolinguistics is at present an alternative to historical linguistics.

Nowadays, sociolinguistics –starting from the empirical research on linguistic change “in progress,” creolization and linguistic shift– has provided a new correlation, namely, a systematic relationship between data on linguistic variables and linguistic and social factors. In particular, a sociolinguistic theory of multilingualism (and of multilectism) could offer a new and socially authentic alternative to the theoretical and methodological study of linguistic variation and change, and could, according to H. Schuchardt and A. Meillet, make an important contribution to historical linguistics. Moreover, sociolinguistics presently connects historical linguistics and dialectology closely to the social sciences.

In this sense, historical sociolinguistics would deal with the general and historical foundations of linguistic change: comprehension and explanation of the particular process of change based on correlations between linguistic and social factors, because many of the questions relevant to historical linguistics are more quantitative than qualitative (i.e. they show more covariation and gradual substitution in the frequency of use than a sudden occurrence of innovation).

1) As a nomothetical science, sociolinguistics aims to discover regularities, based on intermediate strategies for connecting variables, and a systematic observation of linguistic facts. Specifically, sociolinguistics establishes the mutual relationship between variation and variety of language and the social structure of speech communities, and in general, the covariation of linguistic and social

facts. On the other hand, and as a complement, historical sciences deal with any specific process in all its irreducible complexity and originality. Nomothetical and historical sciences follow different paths although they share common contents: the former deal with abstraction, the latter deal with the reconstruction of the concrete. However, in spite of these important differences, we can find intermediate stages between nomothetical and historical analysis.

In this sense, the main purpose of historical sociolinguistics would be to look for regularities, i. e. variable rules, and to understand and explain the sociolinguistic process of change. According to J. Piaget (1976:46-50), these intermediate stages will confine themselves exclusively to finding what are known as "development laws." This kind of symbiosis between a nomothetical and diachronic science and a historical one allows us to contemplate the possibility of a "diachronic linguistics" and a "history of language." On the other hand, a proper theory of historical sociolinguistics implies that historical reasoning must continue to characterize any intermediate stage in order to explain how change really occurs, as it is a complex historical process. Moreover, with this aim in view, a general or interdisciplinary sociolinguistic approach is needed. In other words, a social history of language is only possible if we start from the theoretical and methodological assumptions of sociolinguistics.

The principle which gives priority to synchronic description –its preliminary and empirical character within linguistic research– is one of the foundations of contemporary linguistics. The dual approach in linguistic studies carried out up to the 1950s from synchronic and diachronic perspectives has been replaced by an analysis of the ordered and dynamic heterogeneity on which the understanding and explanation of the complex reality of human language (seen as a continuum of unfragmented speech) are based. This has led to the revision and renovation of the homogeneous contemporary models (Saussurean and Chomskian).

The connection between structure and homogeneity does not mean that we cannot study them separately. The recognition of sociolinguistic structures does not imply that we have to ignore either the functional or the structural aspects of language, but that we must describe and systematize the dynamics of the linguistic variety. Therefore, linguistic ordering and regularity should include the possibility of describing the (apparent) temporal, geographic, social and contextual differentiation of the linguistic repertoire. Thus, variability and regularity are not mutually exclusive, and can provide a means by which to correctly account for the general and historical comprehension and explanation of the process of linguistic change.

Linguistic variability is not concerned with the dialectal stock or mere performance, but rather with part of the communicative competence of the speaker (and, of course, of the speech community). To construct the speaker's best –or simplest– communicative-textual-linguistic competence grammar, we have had to develop a pragmatic component of discourse analysis, within a linguistic-textual pattern. Nowadays, the linguistic and pragmatic components are included in the speaker's communicative competence, and this, in turn, includes the sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic components.

2) On the other hand, it seems that variations are distinguished more often by stability than by change, so that the –not even historical, but just conclusive– study of any current speech community or sociolect concerns historical sociolinguistics. Therefore, the stability of language must be understood not only in terms of categorical rules, but paradoxically, also in terms of the general and historical dynamism of its variability. Only the history of language considers both the heterogeneity and the homogeneity of language. An abstract description of a system cannot consider variety without losing its coherence. Furthermore, variety is not a secondary dimension, but rather an inherent dimension of language which reflects the essential creativity of language. And language does not work only through its internal structures but also through the variety which is known by the speakers (Coseriu 1992: 31).

The consequences of partial differences between linguistic varieties can be synchronic as well as diachronic. History is inherent to the synchronic variation of language, so that dialectological and sociolinguistic studies can extract inferences from variety about how linguistic traditions work, how they are set up and modified. Variability and linguistic change are closely bound so that they constitute the double (synchronic and diachronic) side of the language. But variability and heterogeneity in the linguistic structure do not involve a linguistic change. Even more, not all synchronic variation involves a change in progress, since we have to distinguish between stable and unstable sociolinguistic variables. However, all linguistic change involves variability and heterogeneity in the speech community.

The complementary nature of historical linguistics, dialectology, sociolinguistics and pragmatics can result in a pattern which balances the synchronic and historical description and explanation, and restores the integration of general and historical linguistics. Obviously, synchronic and diachronic regularities are interdependent, and we cannot accept a historical process which leads to a synchronic stage

that contradicts a synchronic and universally valid norm. Therefore, historical linguistics is set up within integrated linguistic sciences, which aims to consider its objects (languages) in all their aspects and with all their internal and external characteristics (see Gimeno, 1995).

CATALAN SPEAKING AREAS

Our specific purpose here is not a theoretical exposition but a description of the state of the art in Catalan speaking areas. In the following paragraphs, according to the above mentioned trends, we are to distinguish between four intersecting directions in our applied studies. On the one hand, we can use either a social or linguistic approach. Whatever our approach, we can –depending on the point of departure we adopt– take a given fragment from the remote past from the memory of present-day speakers, or start from the present and go back.

In addition to this applied approach, we can distinguish a theoretical proposal to study Catalan speaking areas (Gimeno, 1984a) and abroad (Gimeno, 1983a; 1983b; 1988) which coincides with that of Romaine (1982) and Várvaro (1982). Moreover, there are two points in historical sociolinguistic theory that have recently been dealt with by linguists devoted to Catalan: research on the more colloquial records we can attain from the language of the past (Montoya, 1989a) and the explanation of the actuation problem with regard to specific linguistic changes (Wheeler, 1993).

But before we begin our review of the few works we have in Catalan historical sociolinguistics, it is necessary to recall briefly the autochthonous precedents from which we have started. Among these, we can distinguish between those on general background, with the classical works following the traditional neogrammarian style, and a new line based on a few scattered works that have put forward some innovative ideas related to our line of research.

1) J. Martí (1990) has put together a useful compilation and a bibliographic classification of the fundamental works and names that have contributed to the present state of the art of historical linguistics devoted to Catalan. For this reason we will only refer to the great works we have available, whose full bibliographical reference is provided by Martí (1990), and to some other later contributions. Thereby, we have four historical grammars: three in the neogrammarian school, the ones by A.M. Badia (1951), F. de B. Moll (1952) and Blasco (1984), and only one following the generative school,

that of Duarte & Alsina (1984-86). This latter grammar addresses some of the problems stated by the former, even though it is in opposition to Martí's opinions (1990: 104). Moreover, we have to add two excellent historical dictionaries: the one by Alcover & Moll (1926-1962) and the one by Coromines (1980-1991), two monuments to the history of the Catalan language (see Colon & Soberanas, 1986). We also have some anthologies of non-literary texts, such as the one by Martí & Moran (1986), and the histories of the Catalan language by M. Sanchis Guarner (1980) and Nadal & Prats (1982). This last one offers a deep split between the description of historical and linguistic facts with a reduction of these to a minimum (see E. Casanova, 1989a: 8).

After the review by Martí (1990), we can mention the publication of some new external histories of the language. Among these we find the one by Ferrando & Nicolàs (1994), which represents a small step towards the introduction of sociolinguistic questions in the so-called "external history of the language." For instance, in the prologue, these authors speak about "historical or diachronic sociolinguistics," although in the text, they only present an initial approximation to this subject. The same term had already been used by M. Sanchis Guarner (1980) in another prologue to A. Ferrando's work (1980). In two other works, (Ferrando, 1989 and De Melchor, 1995) the social factors referent to the birth of the Valencian dialect have also been taken into account. In the same line, D. Rasico (1989a) and E. Casanova (1990) have explored the effect of population exchange on an important phonological change that took place in central Valencian. With regard to the origins of Catalan language we can mention the papers of J. Bastardas (1989) and J. Moran (1989).

Other bibliographic novelties found in Martí's compilation (1990) include the publication of two special issues of the journal *Caplletra* devoted to diachronic linguistics (6: 1989; 11/12: 1991/92), and the proceedings of the area of Language History of the Second International Congress of the Catalan Language (Segon Congrés Internacional de la Llengua Catalana. Història de la Llengua, 1989). Each of these volumes include some scattered references to the social aspects of linguistic use (see also Rasico, 1987a; 1989b). There have also been some novelties in the field of the edition of texts such as Miralles & Cantallops' book of recipes (1989), and Casanova's memoirs of a priest (1989b). Both of these refer to the 18th century, which offers little in the way of texts for the study of the Catalan language of that period. Finally, we must point out a volume that gathers some of the most important works on the evolutionary process of Catalan, the one by J. Gulsoy (1993), and a paper that proposes some spelling changes in modern Catalan that are not in keeping with the tradition of western

Catalan pronunciation or the historical laws of the language (Colomina, 1995).

2) The new line we mentioned above that brings Catalan historical linguistics to our field of study is based on the proposal of a new source of texts for the study of colloquial language. We find this in Miralles' book (1984). This author has studied a kind of text that has become of great interest in identifying Catalan Language as it was spoken in the past. These texts come from trial records, where we find people's everyday language. The court clerks had to take down verbatim everything said in front of the judge. A good example of the style of language we have in these texts is the following fragment:

E.l dit Magaluf anà ves lo dit Bernat Virgili e lo dit Bernat si li dix: "Digau, en Magaluf, què us deg yo per la panyora que tanits mia?", e.l dit Magaluf li respòs, dient que: "Per tot lo mes de marts proppassat ma daviau XLV sous, e despuys ma davau la puge dell dit temps enssà," e.l dit Bernat li respòs irosament: "En ca, fill de ca, que no és axí, que no.t deg tant! (...) Traydor, ffill da traydor!", e con fo pres la porta d'en Sayt, lo dit Bernat li percutí I colp ab una aguyada que tania.

[And Magaluf went towards Bernat Virgili and Bernat said to him: "Tell me, Magaluf, what do I owe you for the pawn you got from me," and Magaluf answered, saying that: "The past month of March you owed me 45 sous, and besides you owe me the interest until now," and Bernat answered angrily: "Dog, son of a bitch it isn't so, I don't owe you so much! (...) Traitor, Traitor's son!", and when he was near Sayt's door, Bernat gave him a blow with a goad he had.]

[MONTUÏRI, 1359; MIRALLES, 1984: II, 259]

Despite this important work and Casanova's recommendation (1986: 89) to study this kind of text, most studies have not been accompanied by a renewal of methods and we can find more recent works, such as the ones by M. D. Farreny (1986) or M.N. Vila (1987), that incorporate these sources, however, with the same neogrammarian methods that Miralles practised.

The renewal of methods in Catalan historical linguistics has come from competing with this kind of source and from the change of heart of some important representatives of the traditional school. So, the compiler we mentioned above has insisted on using non-literary texts to study the everyday language of the past (Martí, 1990: 52-53), has offered some of the Labovian concepts on language change as an explanation of the past from the present or the distinction between real time and apparent time (40-41), and has claimed the incorporation of sociolinguistics in historical grammar studies (108-109).

3) However, regarding the vernacular, there are still things to be said. As we know, the real Gordian knot is to obtain samples of an informal register as close as possible to everyday vernacular. The variety of the situational and social factors as well as the different techniques which determine this vernacular have been open to question. Among these techniques, the spontaneous interview cannot really be considered a communicative event and may therefore mislead the informant and give rise to a less informal register than was expected. According to Wolfson (1976), only the ethnographic method of observation, taking in a large number of communicative situations, would allow valid samples of vernacular to be obtained.

If these are the difficulties found with regard to the synchrony of language, what could we then say about its history? B. Montoya (1989a) has stated that the reconstruction of past vernacular is one of the challenges of historical linguistics. It is quite true that the complete reconstruction of the colloquial register of past times is nearly impossible due, among other reasons, to the fragmentation and scarcity of surviving documents, and to the nature of the specific strategy of written registers. Nevertheless, several sources such as, for instance, statements made by accused parties and the testimony given in judicial proceedings, satirical press and short comedies, recipes, account books and memoranda, allow us to propose certain techniques aimed at a hypothetical reconstruction of some linguistic variables in terms of linguistic and social factors. The task is thus tricky, but some valuable theoretical, methodological and empirical works are already available (Labov 1982; Romaine 1982; Gimeno 1983a, 1983b, 1995; Montoya 1986a) and this allows us to accept the challenge.

Today, the real practitioners of Catalan historical sociolinguistics are still few in number and, in most cases, on account of their origin, their object of study is restricted to southern Catalan as spoken in the Valencian region, as we are going to see. But this fact does not mean a lack of sociolinguistic interest, because from the beginning of this century, these Valencian areas have attracted external dialectologists and philologists who wanted to mark and justify the boundaries of the linguistic domain of the Catalan language in an area whose multifold conflicts –geographical, historical, sociocultural and linguistic– date back to the beginning of the Christian Conquest, when the Castilian and Catalano-Aragonese joined. All these factors have contributed to a confluence and concentration of different pressures in these areas, where linguistic substitution has not paralleled social change (see figure 1).

FIGURE 1 Map of the southern Valencian region and the whole Murcian region with its shared borders.



THE FOCUS ON SOCIAL STRUCTURES

The historical disappearance of the Catalan language from the south of the Valencian region has been an interesting question studied by linguists. This process has taken place in two different stages: the first step, developed all along the 17th century, concerned the Oriola and Elda areas (B. Montoya, 1986a; 1987, 1989b) and the second step has taken place since the 19th century in the city of Alacant (Montoya, 1986b; 1986c; 1995a; 1995b; 1996a; 1996b; Gimeno & Montoya, 1988; Gimeno, 1991).

1) For the earlier period, a series of trial records with the actual speech of the people of that time have been studied (Montoya, 1986a). There is a rich mixture of Catalan and Castilian, although an increase in the use of Castilian and a decrease in the use of Catalan can be observed. Throughout the target time studied we can see a quantifiable descent of the use of Catalan that coincides with the chronology stated by historians, who have largely demonstrated the arrival of Castilian people to occupy the empty lands of Oriola and Elda after the 1609 expulsion of the Moors, and the great mortality caused by an epidemic in 1648. As an example of the possibilities that the kind of texts studied offer, we transcribe here two samples of speech from the above mentioned first period, from the town of Elda:

—Hermana, yo no quiero las viñas; arrende-les vostra merced a qui li parega.

Y li respongué que era forçós arrendar-o tot junt. Y ell li respongué:

—Arrende vostra merced les viñes a qui li parega. Y si a cas reparàs el que les arrendarà en el olivar, en collir la collita següent per haver-lo procurat a ús de llauradors, lo y dexarà.

[—Sister, I don't want the vineyards; lease them to whomever you want.

And she answered that it was necessary to lease everything. And he answered her:

—Lease the vineyards to whomever you want. And if the one who is going to lease them realised that the olive grove was included, when he had gathered the following harvest by having taken care of it and grown the crops according to custom, he would leave it.]

[Elda, 1678; Montoya, 1986a: 71-72]¹

Feliph Sempere (...) dix que ell, testimoni, en lo dia de dumenge (...) en la nit, que es contaven catorse del propasat mes de maig, estava gitat en son llit dormint. Y a la que seria a les dos ores de la matinada, poch més o menys, senti uns cops a la porta y finestra de sa casa, y responent

¹ The fragments in bold face are said in Castilian; the rest are in Catalan.

—*Qui està aí?*,
conegué en la veu a Joseph Coronel y a Juan Arnau, mañans, que dixeren a ell,
testimoni:

—*Avisé usté a los Garcias, que avemos visto lus en el colmenar y les cortaran las colmenas, que ya vamos nosotros delante.*

[Feliph Sempere (...) said that he, the witness, Sunday night, the fortnight of the past month of May, was in bed, sleeping. And at two o'clock in the morning, more or less, he heard some blows on the door and the window of his house, and answering

—Who is there?,

he recognized Joseph Coronel and Juan Arnau's voices, who told him, the witness:

—Call the Garcias because we have seen light in the apiary and they are going to cut down your beehives; we are already going ahead]

[Elda, 1690; Montoya, 1986a: 79]

The texts show us different signs of the decline in the use of the Catalan language; the first one (1678) exhibits a case of code-switching, typical of people in bilingual communities, who try to speak their second language but with difficulty. In this scene, the peasant, who speaks to the landowner's wife, utters his first sentence in Castilian, (bold face) but when he realizes to whom he is speaking, he changes to Catalan. In the second text (1690), the more advanced point in the linguistic shift process presents the first Catalan intervention from being answered in the same language, but the still general understanding of Catalan helps to bring about bilingual communication (see Montoya, 1989b).

2) The study of the disappearance of Catalan from Alacant is an analysis of the immediate past (19th century) connected with the present day (20th century). In this case a combination of methods has been possible: texts from the 19th century were taken from popular literature, the printing press and the theatre (Montoya, 1986b; 1986c; Gimeno & Montoya, 1988). As far as the more recent times are concerned—and also some of the earlier periods of the 20th century—, it has been necessary to carry out interviews with people who have seen the use of their first language interrupted in their generation or in their children's generation (Montoya, 1996a; 1996b). As the disappearance of Catalan began to take place a long time ago, it seemed difficult for people to remember when substitution of their language by Castilian language had occurred in the city (above all, for the Castilian speakers):

Cuando yo vine al mundo, ya todo el mundo, en castellano (...) ya en los

comercios se parlava el castellano, ya empezaron con el castellano ya (...) ya todos los chiquitos (...) en castellano todos.

[When I came into the world, everybody already spoke Castilian (...) they already spoke Castilian in the shops, they already knew Castilian (...) all the children already (...) everybody in Castilian]

[Woman, aged 89; Montoya, 1996b]

Even the reasons given for parents shifting from their usual Catalan usage to Castilian when they spoke to their children are really vague:

Se veu que ia... io qué sé... que ia parlaven... tot el món ia parlava en castellà... És que això ia no ho sé... ia no es parlava a ningun xiquet en valencià; tots ia se parlaven aixina.

[It seems that already... I don't know... that they already spoke... everybody already spoke Castilian... I mean that I don't know this... they don't speak Valencian to any child; everybody already spoke like that.]

[Woman, aged 62; Montoya, 1996a]

Això no se sap... no, no s'ha comentat mai, pero, no sé, quissàs... No mos ham preocupat mai

[This is unknown... no, it hasn't ever been mentioned, but, I don't know, perhaps... We have never worried about this.]

[Man, aged 62]

Perquè... se veu que era moda el castellà.

[Because... it seems that Castilian was in fashion...]

[Woman, aged 79]

Pos no ho ham pensat mai perquè ho ham vist normal: entre la gent major pos se parlava sempre valencià, i ho ham considerat normal, v(er)itat?

[So we have never thought about it because it has seemed normal to us: among old people, then, Valencian was always spoken, and we have considered this normal, haven't we?]

[Man, aged 45]

Since this phenomenon begins in the upper classes, only people from the lower socio-economic classes are still experiencing language shift at home and are able to describe this situation correctly:

Es meus pares, entre ells parlaven el valencià, pero normal... a mosatros, as dos xiquetes, en castellà, perquè això era... "Oi, no, no, no!".. això era de la gent del camp i de la... Sí, sí, sí: ho tenien a menos.

[My parents spoke Valencian to each other, but as usual... to us, the two little girls, Castilian, because this was... "Oh, no, no, no!".. It was used by farmers and ... Yes, yes, yes: they thought little of it]

[Woman, aged 63]

Based on a classification made by each subject interviewed from their ancestors who had first shifted to Castillian language, we have been able to move back until 1865 to date the introduction of the linguistic shift in the wealthy class of the center of the city and study the chronological diffusion of the shift to the lower classes and peripheral neighborhoods. In an analogous way, the interventions in the different languages among the quotations of the subjects allow us to build a parallel descent in the use of Catalan. As for as the kind of predominant argumentation to justify the shift (the passivity with regard to the general trend), it shows an advanced case of linguistic shift.

THE APPROACH TO LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES

Within the studies on linguistic structures, both the object area being studied and the temporary scope have been directed towards two chronological trends of research: the one that takes a given fragment of time in a remote past and analyzes it (Romaine's approach), and the one that situates the starting point in our time and goes backwards (Labov's approach).

1) The studies that refer to a remote past are centered on Southern Valencia and the neighbouring Murcian lands, which requires the authors to go backwards to the 13th century. The aim is to characterize sociolinguistically the Alacant, Oriola and Murcia medieval Romance, which in the early period of the Christian conquest is difficult to define. The approach to Alacant and Oriola –two secure Catalan speaking areas in the 14th century– is obtained through some notifications from the *Libro de los primitivos privilegios de Alicante de Alfonso X el Sabio* (Gimeno, 1983b, 1984c, 1985).

The Murcian case is more problematic because scholars do not agree on its linguistic past. On the one hand there are those who claim that Catalan was spoken there, during at least one and a half centuries between the 13th and the 14th centuries; afterwards, Castilian would substitute Catalan until our day. On the other hand, the scholars who disagree think that Catalan has never been spoken in Murcia but they do not present any clear-cut evidence (cf. P. Díez de Revenga, 1986). In the meantime, there are many linguistic features, apapoulj rt from the historic ones, that would demonstrate a Catalan substrate in the region, like the onomastics and the obsolescent lexic (Colomina, 1992; Montoya, 1995c). The same features are found in Oriola, but here, as evidence of a more recent language shift, we have a phonetic change:

the Castilian phoneme /θ/, non-existent in Catalan, is pronounced [s]; this feature has allowed F. Gimeno (1983c, 1984b) to explain this pronunciation in this speech community using the substratum hypothesis.

2) But the most important studies that focus on this zone describe the linguistic variety spoken in the so-called *Governació d'Oriola* during the Modern Age (see figure 2) and just before the language shift that affected the capital city (Oriola) and some other areas in the southern and the western part of this territorial demarcation, as we have seen above (4). The Oriolan dialect was influenced by two different forces at the same time: the one from Valencia, the capital city of the Catalan speaking Valencian Kingdom, and the other from Murcia, the already Castilianized neighbouring Kingdom. The first brought about the adoption of morphological solutions such as the preposition *en* in place of *ab* ('with'), the past subjunctive morpheme *-ara* instead of *-às* (Montoya, 1986a: 233-256), another verbal morpheme, *-ix*, in place of *-eix*, and the article *el* instead of *lo* (Mas, 1994: 140-157). This influence gradually eclipsed that of eastern Catalan and made language more valencianized, although the present residual dialect from old Oriolan still retains some characteristics that do not exist in the more northern variety of Valencian, as Mas (1994) has shown in his study on Elx between 1565 and 1740. A good example of this linguistic variability during the target period is the co-variation correlated to the social factors that the change between the prepositions *ab/en* shows. The use of the new *en* was more frequent in the more northern areas of the *Governació* (such as Elda or Novelda, with a range of probabilities between .61 and .51) and less frequent in the capital, in the south (Oriola: .30). The temporary advance was slower (.02 before 1650 and .03 after 1651), but the most clear-cut factor was the stylistic and cultural one, as we can see in a trial against a stonecutter who threatened a woman:

(stonecutter:) ...*fonch forsos, en un compàs que portava en la una mà, en l'altra fer-li un ademan.*

[It was compulsory, with a compass he was carrying in one hand, to make her a motion with the other]

(prosecutor:) ...*ab un compàs llarch que portava en les mans.*

[...with a long compass that he was carrying]

[Elda, 1629]

FIGURE 2 Map of the Catalan speaking lands after the 18th century.



The accused man was from a lower class and always used the innovative *en*, while the prosecutor, able to produce a higher level of expression, uses the traditional *ab*. The quantification of this different kind of usage produces a .69 probability index in the first register and to a .30 one in the second register (Montoya, 1986a: 236-237).

However, the power influences coming from Murcia are more important than the Valencian ones. Besides the language shift produced in one part of the region, due to these influences, there are also the important linguistic changes that modified the local Catalan in the direction of Castilian. High frequency lexical items such as *portar* ("to carry, to bear") or *traure* ("to take out") were substituted by the Castilian ones *llevar* and *sacar*, respectively, throughout the region. Even though their introduction was by way of Oriola, the capital, they were finally Castilianized. In the following fragment we can see an example of a more extreme symptom of Castilianization from this city:

En lo dia de hui, a cosa de les set hores del matí, poch més o menys, passant ell, testimoni, per lo carrer dels Ostals, lo cridà a ell (...), la muller de Antoni Joiell, flaquer, en presència de son marit, y li dix:

-Señor Vicent Ferrando, no veu com es ve pa en aquella esquina, cassa de Mariana Ferrandes, sens ser panadera? On es consent axò?

[Today, at seven o'clock in the morning, more or less, when he, the witness, was walking along *Ostals* street, the wife of Antoni Joiell, the baker, called him, when her husband was present, and told him:

-Mister Vicent Ferrando, don't you see how they are selling bread in that corner, in Mariana Ferrandes' house, without her being a baker? Where is this allowed?]

[Oriola, 1653; Montoya, 1986a: 156]

The speaker makes a mistake that would not be considered typical of a current Catalan speaker: instead of saying *es ven* with its normal morpheme ending *-n* in the verbal flexion, she says *es ve*, with the elision of the *-n* that pertains to the nominal flexion. This is a predictable ultracorrección for a native speaker of Spanish that simplifies the Catalan rule or perhaps a possible feature of the high Castilianization that the language structures of the Oriolan Catalan underwent at that time. The other feature, the word *esquina* instead of the normal Catalan *cantó*, although it represented an unusual Castilianism then, does not have the same "gravity" as the former one, since it is only a lexical item.

The only study based on this kind of textual sources produced outside of the *Governació d'Oriola* refers to the Catalan spoken in the Tarragona area in the 17th century (Montoya, 1986d). Through these

texts we find a transition period in which Catalan variety of the studied area, western Catalan, is incorporated gradually to the eastern one, under the powerful influence of Barcelona. Examples of this are very frequent words such as *eixir* ("to go out"), *fadri* ("boy"), *plegar* ("to pick up"), *roja* ("red"), *rompre* ("to break"), and so on, today unusual in the same area and replaced, respectively, by *sortir*, *noi*, *recollir*, *vermell* and *trencar*. An example of the transition within the same generation is seen in the following declarations. Both present the same facts:

...i nos digueren que u agrehíssem a dita Francisca Llorens, que era tornada, si no, nos aurien rompudas las xupas de folre o fórem anadas ab ells

[And they told us to thank Francisca Llorens, who has gone back, if not, they would have **torn apart** our lined jackets or **we would have gone with them**]
[Woman, aged 40]

...i nos digueren que u agrehíssem a aquella dona que ere tornada, si no, nos haurien trancadas las xupas de folre o auríam anats ab ells

[And they told us to thank that woman who has gone back, if not, they would have **torn apart** our lined jackets or **we would have gone with them**]
[Woman, aged 24]

The first woman, older, says *rompudas* while the younger woman uses only the present form, *trencadas*. The rest of the declaration is nearly identical with the exception of another feature of an earlier language in the woman 40 yrs. old: the use of the verb *ser* ("to be") as an auxiliar verb. Instead of this, the twenty-four yr. old woman uses the verb *haver* ("to have,") commonly used nowadays.

3) The rest of the topics studied in the Catalan bibliography on historical sociolinguistics refers to a more recent time that it links with the present day. Again the southern Valencian area has been the main objective of researchers, and popular literature has become one of the principal sources of the language as it was spoken in the recent past. But we also find other areas of the speaking lands that are incorporated into these studies and other kind of sources that provide the spoken language.

As a consequence of the absence of a prescriptive grammar or the ignorance of it, the satiric printing press and the short comedy written in Catalan during the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th show a level of language closest to the more colloquial forms. One of the changes that occurred during this period in the southern variety of Catalan in the Valencian region is the elision of the intervocalic /-d-/ in forms like the feminine past participles (*casada*, *sabuda*...: "married," known'...). Since 1860 there has been a lexical

spread of elision in Alacant, Elx and Novelda (Colomina, 1985: 110-127; Montoya, 1986b; 1986c). Other variable rules studied in the same zone and chronological period are mainly morphological, most of which represent a continuation and generalization of Castilianisms introduced in the *Governació d'Oriola* during the Modern Age.

The analysis of interference also has a good field of study in the area, as Alpera (1981) shows starting from the lexical borrowing found in the weekly *El Amic del Poble* (1899), from Alacant. The same can be said about the paper by M.R. Hernández & F. Gimeno (1995), in which the authors attempt a reconstruction of the vernacular of two satiric journals of the cities of Elx (*El Bou*, 1885) and Alacant (*El Cullerot*, 1898) by studying the different stages in which several types of transferences are present in the process of a linguistic substitution: interference, borrowing (partially or totally integrated), code-switching and loan-translation. These stages can be understood through the agreement carried out between the two (sub)systems in covariation (the standard Castilian and the local vernacular of Catalan) which characterizes the two above mentioned speech communities.

4) The alternative sources we have cited above are, as Labov (1972) suggests, the data picked up in past linguistic studies in connection with present descriptions. This is the method Colomina (1985: 127-137) uses to once again raise the question of the final phoneme /-r/ in Catalan. In opposition to the accepted hypothesis among Catalan philologists that the elision of this phoneme represents the innovative state of this rule, he has stated that evidence regarding southern Valencian shows precisely the opposite: its elision is a conservative trend (as in the rest of non-Valencian Catalan) while the pronunciation of /-r/ in Central and Northern Valencian is a reintroduction that took place between the 15th and 17th centuries (see also Montoya, 1986: 223-226; Lluís Gimeno, 1989: 132; Mas, 1994: 83-84). The reintroduitory rule would still be in progress in the 19th and 20th centuries, according to the facts on Petrer, also in southern Valencia (Montoya, 1992), Alacant (Montoya, at press: 82-84), and beyond the Valencian region, in Alt Camp, near Tarragona (Montoya, 1993: 67-72).

But the most useful link between linguistic facts on the recent past and the present day ones are those reported by Ph.D. Rasico (1987b) in his study about the Maonese Minorcans emigrated to Florida in the 18th century. After their departure from the island, in the 19th century, an important change in their vocalic system took place (the phoneme /ə/ shift to the preexistent /e/) and, gradually, during the first half of the 20th, spread through most of Minorca. So, when, at the end of the 19th century, some voyagers (including a linguist) visited the town in

Florida where the Maonese had established themselves, they found an obsolete Catalan that still preserved the earlier /ə/ in the lexicon. And even today, Rasico (1989c) has been able to find scattered words in the English speech of two older men that has retained the Catalan heritage and some /ə/ (viz. *paleta*, with the meaning of 'excrement').

Two of the linguists who have provided the most useful and abundant information about the development of several changes in Catalan are A.M. Alcover (1908-09) and F. de B. Moll (1929-32). Both have described in detail the development of the change we mentioned above, insofar that the quantification of this variable rule in covariation with the grammatical factors has been possible with reference to the period 1917-1921 in the Balearic Islands (Montoya, 1996c). The social factors, although specified by Alcover, are not assigned to the concrete subjects interviewed and this makes it difficult to fully reconstruct the sociolinguistic situation. However, according to Labov (1994), this is enough to verify that past linguistic facts are not very different from the present ones and so, the present can help to explain the past.

CONCLUSIONS

Recently, diachronic functionalism has reincorporated all the temporal and spatial contributions of the first patterns, in order to become the only possible historical linguistics. Nowadays, this framework has proved to be insufficient to understand the social and contextual dynamics involved in the historical process of linguistic change. Therefore, we have to attempt a hypothetical reconstruction of the general and historical conditions of the linguistic and social factors involved in a specific stage and in a speech community.

1) In this sense, historical sociolinguistics has recently provided new possibilities and has proposed two levels of analysis for the reconstruction of language in its social context. At a microlevel we shall have to use the contributions of sociolinguistics to understand and explain linguistic change. At a macrolevel sociolinguistic methods should be used to study the first stages of a language as a means for the reconstruction of this language in its social context. Historical sociolinguistics incorporates both levels and therefore, proposes a new alternative to historical linguistics.

Thus, historical sociolinguistics is concerned with the general and historical foundations of linguistic change: comprehension and explanation of the concrete process of change, starting from the

correlations between linguistic and social factors, as many questions relevant to historical linguistics are more quantitative than qualitative. To comprehend and correctly explain the general and historical process of linguistic change, the main cue is the systematic covariation of linguistic data with social data, through a probabilistic processing of a quantitative paradigm. A qualitative historical analysis is not conclusive, whereas any quantification presupposes a previous explicit or implicit qualitative study. A historical sociolinguistic study has to turn what is qualitative into something quantitative, what is iterative into something accumulative, and an opinion into a demonstration.

2) As for empirical analyses with a specifically historical dimension, we will soon have to differentiate a line of research within the area of Catalan sociolinguistics, although studies in this direction have hardly been carried out apart from the scholars trained at Alacant University. Even more, we have some quantitative variationist analyses at our disposal which have applied the VARBRUL 2 and GoldVarb 2.0 programmes. Our main purpose has not been a theoretical exposition but an application of the principles of this line of research in the Catalan speaking lands, especially a reconstruction of the status and the linguistic features of the vernaculars spoken in the southern part of the Valencian region and Murcia from the 13th century to the present day.

Obviously, it is insufficient to speak about variation phenomena and linguistic changes in multilingual (or multilectal) speech communities as if they were mere interferences or some isolated elements from the perspective of a strictly linguistic functionalism. Linguistic data have to be analyzed not only within the linguistic structure itself, but also within the larger contexts of the time dimension as well as of social behaviour. Therefore, we have considered these phenomena within the interdisciplinary framework of historical sociolinguistics and we have claimed the need for this trend of research.

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