



Sinner, Carsten and Katharina Wieland (eds.), *Norma, ús i actituds lingüístiques. El paper del català en la vida quotidiana* (Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2015), 178pp. ISBN: 978-3-86583-970-1

The thirtieth anniversary of the passing of the *Llei de Normalització Lingüística* offered scholars a time to pause and reflect on the effects of normalisation. This edited volume, rather than looking at processes of linguistic normalisation, chooses to focus on the use of Catalan in contemporary society. Taking the creation of a normalised Catalan language as the backdrop for this collection of articles, the volume examines how standardised language use (in terms of both corpus and status) is manifested in Catalonia and the Comunitat Valenciana, thus raising a number of questions. Which specific linguistic elements or constructions are widely considered as normative? What can be said of the diatopic/diastratic knock-on effect, wherein certain regional varieties of Catalan are regarded as less prestigious due to contact influence from Castilian? To what extent has the normalised use of Catalan in turn led to changes in the Catalan language itself? This volume aims to address these issues through a wide range of contributions.

After a brief introduction from the editors, Georg Kremnitz further sets the scene with a comprehensive discussion of language policy from the 1978 Constitution to the 2010 decision of the *Tribunal Constitucional*. This chapter provides all the necessary political and historical background for the subsequent studies, while bringing the reader's attention to often

overlooked elements worthy of consideration, such as the role of new immigrant groups to Catalonia, and the recent surge in global prestige for Castilian. Benjamin Meisnitzer continues with an analysis of the creative use of verb tenses in the literary opus of Quim Monzó, maintaining that such linguistic freedom is born out of a certain sense of security – after centuries of different *decadències* and *renaixences*, Catalan’s current upswing arguably means that authors such as Monzó feel less constrained by prescriptive norms. Antolí Martínez engages in a diachronic corpus study of the specific constructions ‘*parèixer/semblar* + infinitive’ and ‘*parèixer/semblar* + *ser* + *que*’, in order to get to the root of what actually constitutes a perceived Castilianism. Using historical data, he attests the existence of the first construction in Medieval Catalan, thus confounding perceptions of this structure as a recent contact feature from Castilian. This study very neatly leads into the next chapter by Elisenda Bernal, who uses empirical data to examine what neologisms actually are. She asks how new must an element be in order to be considered as interference, and conversely how old does something need to be for speakers to see it as authentically Catalan. Moving into translation studies, Jenny Brumme’s contribution looks at how translators into Catalan face numerous challenges, and how this is constrained by language normalisation. Emili Boix-Fuster, a leading figure in Catalan sociolinguistics, offers a qualitative examination of intergenerational language transmission in mixed scenarios: how and to what extent is Catalan passed down through families where certain members are native speakers of varieties other than Catalan? This linguistic anthropological study reveals a great deal about the ideologies at work behind language choices in the multilingual scenarios in which Catalan inevitably finds itself. Montserrat Sendra i Rovira provides a quantitative analysis of language contact phenomena among schoolchildren, largely focusing on frequent borrowings (*bueno*, *pues*, *vale* etc.), and her results show remarkably little change over the last

twenty years as regards the degree or direction of borrowings, despite the increasingly normalised and standardised use of Catalan over this period of time. Josep M. Baldaquí Escandell turns the reader's attention to the Comunitat Valenciana, with a detailed quantitative analysis of some very interesting questionnaire data regarding speaker evaluations of the competing Valencian language norms. He found that norms supported by the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* were often viewed more favourably than those promoted by the *Acadèmia Valenciana de la Llengua*, which will undoubtedly be of great interest not only to the language academies concerned, but also to speakers from around the Països Catalans. The collection concludes with three shorter contributions addressing the different potential agents of normalisation. Alfred Quintana's discussion focuses on the role of the media, schooling and language events aimed at foreign learners of Catalan; Carla González Collantes conducts a small corpus study of norms followed by digital media from the Comunitat Valenciana; and Rolf Kailuweit and Vanessa Tölke briefly examine the musical phenomenon of *Nou Pop Català* as a possible actor in the diffusion of the normalised use of Catalan.

This edited volume, thanks to its broad range and innovative take on the subject matter of normalisation will be of great value not only to linguistics scholars, but also to people with an interest in contemporary Catalan studies more widely. A range of empirical methods has been employed and a number of fascinating conclusions drawn. While a great deal of attention has been paid to the actual political and linguistic processes and mechanisms of normalisation in Catalan-speaking areas in the late-twentieth century, this collection really goes one step further in examining on-the-ground consequences, from language attitudes to translation, from journalism to pop music and from the school playground to the online community. As such, this volume makes a definitive

contribution to the field of contemporary Catalan sociolinguistics and beyond.

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