Pragmatics in Catalan (socio)linguistics

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Abstract

This article describes the process by which the pragmatic perspective was introduced into the field of Catalan language studies. Three stages can be distinguished: the beginnings (the 80s), expansion (the 90s) and a third stage, still under way, which may represent the consolidation of pragmatic studies on the Catalan language.

1. Introduction

This article sets out to present a chronological portrait of the adoption of the pragmatic perspective in the field of research into the Catalan language. More specifically, our intention here is to show how the concept of pragmatics in this area has evolved and what was the process of its institutionalisation since the beginnings around 1980, until the present time. Here, we will not be concerned with giving an overall review of the objectives of pragmatic research into Catalan, which will be treated in another work (Alturo, forthcoming).[1]

In the following sections, we distinguish stages or phases in the development of Catalan pragmatics: *the beginnings* (section 3.1), which we situate in the eighties, *the expansion* (section 3.2), which occurred during the nineties, and now a third stage which, we hope, is a one of *consolidation* (section 3.3), which began around 2001. This chronological portrait of the field is preceded by a brief definition of the concept of pragmatics, upon which this article is founded (section 2).

2. Pragmatics

The articles that make up this monographic issue present pragmatics as a many faceted discipline, founded on independent areas of study (philosophy, sociology and psychological, cognitive, linguistic and literary anthropology) and this has lead to certain authors describing it as an "interdisciplinary perspective on the use of language resources in human communication" (Haberland and Mey 1977, Reyes 1990, Verschueren 1999). Pragmatics, understood in a wider sense, is a frontier discipline, which shares both the goal of systematisation typical of the linguistics of resources and the open humanist spirit of interdisciplinary research on language.

The logical consequence of this conception of pragmatics is the necessary acceptance of theoretical and methodological pluralism, limited by just three basic conditions:

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[1] Alturo (in preparation) reviews existing studies Catalan pragmatics published since the beginning of the eighties from a two-fold perspective: on the one hand, that of the studies that have as their main objective the exposition of the principles regulating the processes of language use; on the other, that of the works that set out, in the first place, to describe the structural objectives which can be seen to be affected in different ways by these processes. This is complementary to the overview presented in other bibliographic reviews / essays (Payrató and Salvador 1990, Boix and Payrató 1995, Piquer 2000).

1. Pragmatics is a scientific discipline, and assumes that language use is systematic and can be observed, described and ultimately explained. This means, obviously, that it cannot be prescriptive or normative. The function of the pragmatist is not to shape and dictate the rules of linguistic behaviour, but rather to discover the laws and principles that govern this behaviour. This fact, clearly, in no way denies the importance of the scientific analysis of standard language in the framework of studies on intralinguistic variation, nor the application of such to different fields (for example, language teaching).

2. Given that pragmatics investigates language as a variety of behaviour, or studies it in relation to human behaviour generally, only the data that reflects this behaviour should be accepted as empirically valid evidence.

3. Linguistic activity is of interest only to the extent that it relates to the meaning that it has for the people who are involved. In this respect, the empirical orientation which is adopted has to enable analysis of meaning in relation to the processes of production and interpretation.

Apart from these basic requisites, pragmatic research should be able to bring together and integrate empirical evidence of the cultural, social and psychological dimensions of language use. This, however, is little more than a theoretical ideal, even today, despite the integrating forces that have repeatedly been in play since the discipline's first beginnings. And in fact, compliance with the basic requisites stated above is not, nor has been in the past, a constant in pragmatics research, particularly where "real" data is concerned. As a number of authors have emphasised (Reyes 1990: 35, Salvador 1997: 206), the philosophic origins of pragmatics and its intimate relationship to semantics have, often, encouraged research based on materials constructed by linguistics, with sentences taken out of context. A classic example of this is the work on speech acts and inferences, which while constituting a fundamental part of the study of meaning in context, has traditionally used isolated, artificially contrived phrases as data. Nonetheless, pragmatics has evolved toward more empirical techniques of investigation, in part as a consequence of its intimate relationship with disciplines which "avoid" the idealisation of the object of study, above all sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, and in part thanks to technological advances, which have made it feasible to process large corpora consisting of real oral and written language.

3. The pragmatics of Catalan[2]

As is the case with general pragmatics, Catalan pragmatics emerged and took shape out of different traditions which converged (or are converging) on interest in language use. Thus pragmatic studies on Catalan have tended come to us by way of sociolinguistics, general linguistics, descriptive grammar, stylistics, applied linguistics… What studies in such disciplines have in common, what makes them of interest to us in this article, is that, like the pragmatics described in the previous section, they offer an interdisciplinary perspective on language use. To speak, then, of Catalan pragmatics is not to speak of an autonomous discipline, with theoretical and methodological components well defined and clearly differentiated from other disciplines, but rather to speak of studies of the Catalan language incorporating the interdisciplinary view of the processes of language use, together with the systematic description of different linguistic levels of Catalan.

In this section, then, we show how interest in the processes the language use, and their effect on linguistic structures, have continued to extend and grow within the framework of Catalan language studies. We will look at considerations relating to the focus of the research, the wish to compile and disseminate interest in language use, the introduction of pragmatics into university programmes, the increasing number of publications in Catalan on pragmatics issues, etc.

3.1 The beginnings

Catalan scholarly interest in the area of pragmatics, as we have already mentioned, did not begin until the eighties. It is true that there were authors before that who were interested in variation in language use covarying with context (among others, López del Castillo 1976, Vallverdú 1968, Coromines 1971, Eberenz-Greoles 1979, Vinyoles 1978, or indeed the much

[2] Some of the information on the development of Catalan linguistics we owe to Amadeu Viana and to Lluís Payrató. Thank you to both of you.

earlier precedent, Calveras 1925, revindicated by Aracil 1983: 102), but these were isolated pieces of work, not part of a generalised move to open up to new trends, trends which were ushering in pragmatics on the international scene. Catalan sociolinguistics, which could have constituted the entering wedge for activity converging on pragmatics, was simply too busy, during the long period of the Franco regime, speaking out against the political and cultural situation of the Catalan language. Furthermore, Catalan linguistics kept firmly within the descriptive and normative tradition which prevailed in the Philology faculties of Spanish universities and only very gradually began to open up to other approaches.

In the eighties, this situation changed. A sociolinguist, Aracil, began to lecture at universal level on questions of linguistic variation conditioned by context.[3] At the same time, other language specialists began to be interested things pragmatic and published writings which were to be of key importance in the subsequent development of the discipline: Serrano (1980), Rigau (1981), Payrató (1988) and Salvador (1984*a*, 1984*b*). The work carried out by these authors, alongside that of Aracil and the various researchers who produced short empirical or theoretical studies on pragmatic-related issues (Calsamiglia and Tuson 1980, Marí 1983, Cabré 1984), or dissertations (Viana 1983, Conca 1985) and doctoral theses (Espinal 1985,[4] Bassols 1988[5]), all opened up Catalan linguistics to the different currents and trends of the discipline. Apart from these individuals, mention should be made of the journal *Límits*, as well as the organisation of the first groups and seminars focussing on the sort of issues discussed here (the Seminari de Sociolingüística de Barcelona (Barcelona Sociolinguistics Seminary), promoted by Aracil; the setting up of the Cercle d'Anàlisi del Discurs (Discourse Analysis Circle), not officially known by that name until 1991; and the holding of certain seminars on textual analysis in Valencia and Lleida, etc.).

The plurality of perspectives coexisting on the international scene had the effect of fostering, among Catalan researchers, new interest in the nature and name of a new discipline that set out to increase awareness of language use from an interdisciplinary perspective (Rigau 1981, Aracil 1982*a*, 1983, Serrano 1980, 1982, Salvador 1984*c*, 1990, Cabré 1984, Viana 1986, Payrató 1988). Aracil, as a sociolinguist and Rigau, as a linguist, at that moment represented the two poles of a movement, an opening up to new international trends which would lead to the institutionalisation of pragmatics.[6]

In an article written in 1978, and published for the first time in 1982, Aracil presented some of the traditions which make up modern pragmatics: the studies on English-language and French language discourse, Hymes' Ethnography of speaking, Halliday's functionalism, Kaplan's comparative rhetoric, Austin's and Searle's philosophy of language, Bernstein's work on elaborated and restricted codes, as well as the sociology of everyday life and common sense (Shutz, Berger) ethnomethodology (Cicourel, Garfinkel, Goffman). For Aracil, these research approaches would contribute to the emerging of a new autonomous discipline ("new" in Catalan linguistics, that is) that would be concerned with linguistic usage (language use) in different communicative settings and which would have the discourse or text as the basic working unit. Aracil's article provoked a debate in which at least three other scholars participate: Salvador (1984*a,c*), Viana (1986) and Payrató (1988). Salvador (1984*a,c*) expressed his general agreement with the proposals put forward by Aracil and suggested that these could be the basis of a new epistemological area: sociolinguistics, semiotics, the philosophy of language, text linguistics and literary theory. Salvador presented the field with

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[3] In the timetabled subject Colloquial Catalan, an optative (non-core) subject on the 1981 curriculum for Catalan Philology at the University of Barcelona.

[4] Revised and published in 1988 with the title *Significat i interpretació* (Meaning and interpretation).

[5] Revised and published in 1990 with the title *Anàlisi pragmàtica de les endevinalles catalanes* (Pragmatic analysis of Catalan riddles).

[6] The institutionalisation of Pragmatics as a discipline in its own right is a relatively recent development. Even though the term "pragmatics" had emerged as early as the thirties, referring to one of the components of semiotics (the others are syntax and semantics), this institutionalisation did not really come about until the seventies (with *Pragmatics of natural languages*, edited by Bar-Hillel, 1971, and *Semantics of natural languages*, edited by Davidson and Harman, 1972; or with the creation of journals like the *Journal of Pragmatics*, which began publication in 1977, or *Foundations of language: International Journal of Language and Philosophy*, which began publication in 1965 and which in 1977 was renamed *Linguistics and Philosophy: a Journal of Natural Language Syntax, Semantics, Logic, Pragmatics, and Processing*) and above all in the eighties with the appearance on the scene of the first manuals –Leech 1983, Levinson 1983– the increase in production specifically on pragmatics –in 1987, Nuyts and Verschueren published a complete review of the discipline's bibliography– and the creation of the International Pragmatics Association, IPrA) which consolidated the discipline's name. Pragmatics became a recognised area of investigation.

an interdisciplinary "programme" and refrained from making any suggestion about what the area should be called, although he did express his own personal liking for the term *stylistics*, the term which Aracil had proposed. Viana (1986) took up the thread of discourse first isolated by Aracil and Salvador and showed the effectiveness of recourse to pragmatics to make sense of the interpretative aspects of discourse. Two terms appeared in this work which subsequently came to be most used in the field of Catalan research, to refer to the area of pragmatics (or at least to one of the possible approaches to this area): *pragmatics* and *discourse analysis*. Payrató (1988: 14), lastly, reviewed the ideas of Aracil, Salvador and Viana and called for a discipline "straddling pragmatics and sociolinguistics"[7]. At the same time that Aracil was expressing the need for an interdisciplinary perspective on language use, a work appeared which paved the way for functional and anthropological approaches to pragmatics: *Signes, llengua i cultura* (Serrano 1980), a personal view of Catalan culture seen from the semiotics paradigm, with elements drawn from studies on non-verbal communication.

In 1981 Rigau published *Gramàtica del discurs*, a revised version of her doctoral thesis (1979, *Aspectes d'una gramàtica generativa del discurs o text*). In this book, which could be considered the work which began a more linguistic orientation within Catalan linguistics, Rigau produced a synthesis of the most significant terms and the theories in the field of text grammars. She noted the need to describe and explain from several different angles to be able to arrive at a theory of discourse which could be formalised. Two aspects of this work are particularly noteworthy: in the first place the positive evaluation made of generative semantics, which reflect the fact that on the international level there was an opening up, a readiness to consider text and other disciplines from the more orthodox positions of formal syntax and semantics; secondly, the presentation of the speech act theory of Austin and Searle and, for the first time in Catalan, a treatment of Grice's conversational maxims. Three years later, Cabré (1984) presented her ideas on the general area of discourse analysis which linked up with the work of Rigau. Cabré delegated to pragmatics the more linguistic aspects of the investigation of languages in context. She then situated fairly and squarely within the ambit of discourse analysis a good part of the trends and focuses (including from within linguistics) which, from the wider perspective of pragmatics as described earlier, fit into the process by which this discipline came into being. The latter include Harris's discourse, Benviniste's utterance theory (*enonciation*), Austin and Searle's speech act theory, Foucault and Pêcheux (etc.) and their theory of ideologies. This work contributed to the diffusion of linguistic and philosophic models which had already been presented by Rigau, and to which was added the theory of ideologies and a reference to sociolinguistics models.

3.2 Expansion

The decade of the nineties was the period of expansion of pragmatics studies in Catalan language research. In 1990, two facts marked the beginning of this new stage: (*a*) the publication of a monographic issue of the journal *Caplletra* on "Discourse analysis", which had actually been compiled and edited towards the end of 1989, and (*b*) the celebration, in Barcelona, of the third conference of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA). As a result of these events, the research, the teaching programmes, research publications, the setting up of groups and the organisation of activities (series of talks, seminars…) all with a pragmatics orientation, grew progressively.

Caplletra's monographic issue served to present some of the basic concepts of the analysis of discourse (Salvador), linguistic pragmatics (Bassols) and conversational analysis (Cots, Nussbaum, Payrató and Tuson), at the same time as there was an exploration of certain connections between syntax and discourse (Viana, Cuenca) and between language and literature (Conca and Carbó). The third IPrA conference had substantial repercussions on the institutionalisation of Catalan pragmatics. Here for the first time scholars of Catalan came together from such diverse areas of interest as pragmatics, conversation and discourse. It was also a real opportunity to participate directly in the formation of a relatively incipient field (recall that this was the *third* conference).

As a result of the Barcelona conference, and the interests of different sorts that began to take shape over the course of the previous decade, groups were formed to organise exchange of experiences (for example the Grup d'Estudis de Pragmàtica, now defunct, coordinated by Lluís Payrató; or the discussion groups of research groups sharing interests

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[7] See also Payrató ([1989] 1992).

more or less related to pragmatics: Xarxa temàtica La variació lingüística: dialectologia, sociolingüística i pragmàtica (http://www.ub.es/filcat), in existence since 1995; Xarxa temàtica d'Estudis del Discurs (http://www.upf.es/dtf/xarxa/pral.htm), since 1997, Xarxa temàtica Coneixement, llenguatge i discurs especialitzat (http://www.iula.upf.es/xtc/xtc preca.htm, since 1999). It resulted too, in the drive to create oral and written corpora (Corpus de Català Contemporani de la Universitat de Barcelona[8], Corpus Textual informatitzat de la Llengua Catalana at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans[9]), and in the launching of projects financed by the public administration which has enabled various groups of researchers working from different perspectives to begin systematic investigation of the use of the Catalan language. Some of these projects seek, as their primary objective, to build written or oral corpora of the Catalan language, which will enable systematic description of the language, including those we have mentioned above and others which are not in the public domain[10]. Still others have specific research aims which we discuss in Alturo (forthcoming).

At the same time, the teaching of pragmatics as a university subject is increasing. There are the courses at first and second cycle level dealing specifically with this field (Pragmatics and Colloquial Catalan, at the University of Barcelona, Applied Catalan Pragmatics, at the University of Lleida, Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis applied to Catalan, at the University of Alacant), as well as the components within university subjects, the latter as diverse as Uses and Registers of Catalan, Catalan Semantics, Applied Catalan Linguistics, Catalan Language, Rhetoric, Seminars on the Philosophy of Language, Grammar of Discourse, and so forth. In third cycle studies (that is, postgraduate studies), we have such university courses as Dialectology and Pragmatics (University of the Balearic Islands), Pragmatics of Literature (University Jaume I), Semantics and Pragmatics (University Pompeu Fabra), Variation and Registers (University of Barcelona), etc. The outcome of this growing presence of pragmatics at university level, in the form of university courses, was the production, over the course of the nineties, of some thirty doctoral theses on pragmatics,[11] a total which was still less than what is found in other areas of Catalan language and literature.

The appearance on the scene at this time of a new, miscellaneous range of journals on Catalan language and literature (*A Sol Post, Journal of Catalan Studies, Llengua i Ús, Articles de Didàctica de la Llengua i de la Literatura, Llengua i Literatura, Zeitschrift für Katalanistik*) made it easier for an increasing number of articles to see the light of day on the subject of Catalan pragmatics. In particular, the issuing of a number of different monographic editions, of these and other journals with a longer tradition, indicated the growing interest that there was for studies of language use, particularly in relation to discourse. See, for example, the

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[8] The Corpus de Català Contemporani at the Universitat de Barcelona, CUB (Boix 1996, Alturo, Boix and Perea 2002) is the first public corpus of the oral language to be made available to researchers, initially through personal contacts with the principal investigator and more recently thanks to the issuing of a selection of materials on CD-Rom (Payrató and Alturo (ed.) 2002, Viaplana and Perea (ed.) 2003, Alturo, Bladas, Payà and Payrató (ed.) 2004 [in press]). In connection with the CUB there is also the sample of conversational texts from the Oral Registers Corpus at the Universitat de Lleida. (http://www.udl.es/dept/filcat/unic/cor)

[9] The Corpus de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans began to be compiled in 1985, a process which was completed in 1997. It contains 3,399 literary and non-literary written texts, produced between 1832 and 1988 (Rafel 1994). While this corpus (http://pdl.iec.es) was created with exclusively lexicographic aims, it constitutes an essential source of data for the study of written Catalan genres during the 19th and 20th centuries.

[10] For example the Corpus Textual Especialitzat Plurilingüe at the University Pompeu Fabra, which contains written texts in five different languages (Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German) in the following specialised areas: economy, law, the environment, medicine and information technology (http://www.iula.upf.es/corpus/corpus.htm); see also the *Tipotext* corpus, a sample of non-fictional texts was compiled by the Teaching Bureau of the Secretary for Language Policy of the Generalitat of Catalonia (Artigas coord. 1999); additionally, there is the Arxiu audiovisual dels dialectes catalans de les Illes Balears, at the University of the Balearic Islands (Corbera 2002, 2003), which features conversations between adult speakers in the Balearic Islands and which in the future can be consulted, subject to certain restrictions, by interested researchers.

[11] See the list of theses and dissertions on Catalan Philology (1981-1998) compiled by the Department of Catalan Philology at the University of Valencia (http://www.uv.es/filcat/investigacio/tesis.html) and the data base of doctoral theses TESEO, among other sources of bibliographical information. Not surprisingly the majority of these were supervised by the researchers who launched Catalan pragmatics in the eighties: Bassols, Cabré, Cuenca, Payrató, Salvador, Tuson, Viana… Additionally, work on the pragmatics of Catalan proceeded, in some cases, through contrastive comparison with other languages (Vallduví 1992), a potential approach which would be increasingly adopted towards the end of the decade.

monographic issue on *gramàtica textual* of the journal *COM Ensenyar als adults* (Supplement no. 8, 1991), and three monographic editions of the *Caplletra* journal: one entitled *fraseologia* (no. 18, 1995), another entitled *variació lingüística* (no. 25, 1998) and, lastly, a monograph entitled *pragmaestilística* (no. 29, 2000). In some cases, the publication of articles and reports was in direct response to the interest in possible application of pragmatic findings on discourse in the field of language teaching. Publications of this kind included monographic editions of *Articles de Didàctica de la Llengua i de la Literatura* on *La diversitat discursiva* (no. 4, 1995), on *La construcció del discurs escrit* (no. 5, 1995), on *La interacció verbal* (Verbal interaction) (no. 6, 1995), on *L'oral formal* (Formal oral) (no. 12, 1997), on *Els textos acadèmics* (Academic texts) (no. 13, 1997), on *La intertextualitat* (Intertextuality) (no. 14, 1998) and on *La narració* (Narration) (no. 16, 1998).

At the same time, a number of different manuals, collections of essays and compilations of articles came out which contributed to the dissemination of (knowledge on) aspects of the pragmatic perspective. Among the most relevant were: *Text i ensenyament. Una aproximació interdisciplinària* (Camps *et al.* 1990), a collection of articles on text linguistics applied to teaching; *De la frase al text. Teories de l'ús lingüístic* (Castellà 1992), an overview of theories on language as an instrument which has become a reference manual in university studies; *De retòrica. La comunicació persuasiva* (Laborda 1993), which considers language as an instrument for control over others; the adaptation, to Catalan, of the book *Elements de lingüística per al discurs literari* (Maingueneau and Salvador 1995), a manual which indicates the bridges that there are between linguistic theory and the analysis of literary discourse; *Anàlisi de la conversa* (Tuson 1995), an introduction to the linguistic, sociocultural and cognitive mechanisms that come into play in oral communication; *El significat textual* (Artigas *et al.* 1995), in which different writers consider text as a meaningful product of a communicative act; *Models textuals. Teoria i pràctica* (Bassols and Torrent 1996), a theoretical presentation of text types orientated toward the practice of expressive skills; *Raons relatives* (Viana 1997), an essay on pragmatic thought with interesting notes on conversation, courtesy, the opposition between relativism and empiricism, *enonciation* and metaphor; *Oralment. Estudis de variació funcional* (Payrató ed. 1998), the first ensemble of studies on functional variation in Catalan based on an oral corpus;[12] *Text i gramàtica. Teoria i pràctica de la competència discursiva* (Conca *et al.* 1998), a manual for university-level teaching of the Catalan language which presents concepts of fundamental importance for the systematic analysis of discourse (mechanisms of reference, connection, coherence, appropriateness, etc.); *Llengua catalana III. Anàlisi del discurs* (Payrató 1999[13]), also a manual for university teaching; it looks at pragmatics from a broad perspective, one which is especially sensitive to the connections between linguistic research and text studies; *Introducció a la fraseologia. Aplicació al valencià col·loquial* (Sancho 1999) and *El discurs prefabricat. Estudis de fraseologia teòrica i aplicada* (Salvador and Piquer ed. 2000), two significant publications on the theoretical and applied study of phraseological units; and, lastly, *Sobre l'escriptura* (Toutain 2000), an essay on writing, with a worthwhile commentary on argumentation and the links that can be discerned between coherence and style.

A good indicator of the extent to which Catalan pragmatics expanded at the end of this stage were the large number of publications on Catalan presented at the conference of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA) held in Budapest in the summer of 2000 (Bassols, Bladas and Payrató, Cuenca and Torres, Oller, Pérez, Ribas, Torras, Viana).

3.3 Consolidation?

2001 saw the beginning of a discernible new stage, still underway, which began symbolically with the production of a book by a Catalan author which *explicitly* states (in the title) that it is a "pragmatics" manual: *Les claus de la pragmàtica* (Bassols 2001). It remains to be seen if this is really a stage of consolidation for the field of Catalan pragmatics. Not being able to distance ourselves sufficiently, at the present time we can only note the trends for the future that appear to be emerging.

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[12] The corpus featured in this volume is the pilot corpus which marked the beginning of the work on the Oral Registers Corpus, a subdivision of the Corpus de Català Contemporani (Corpus of Contemporary Catalan) at the Universitat de Barcelona (COR-CUB) (Alturo, Bladas, Payà and Payrató ed. 2004 [in press]).
[13] Subsequently revised and reissued as *Pragmàtica, discurs i llengua oral. Introducció a l'anàlisi funcional de textos* (Payrató 2003).

On the one hand, it would seem that a certain consolidation is occurring in the various general lines of research which had already emerged: in the first place there is *pragmatic linguistics* (or *pragmalinguistics*), represented in this stage by such publications as the manual by Bassols (2001) and by formal research on grammaticalisation, on utterance models, on information structure, etc.,[14] which include, in differing proportions, aspects of the philosophical and linguistic traditions within of pragmatics, and new theoretical models such as constructions grammar and the theories arising out of cognitive linguistics; in second place, *l'anàlisi del discurs*, as a perspective which emphasises, in particular, the social and cultural aspects of communication (including work which adopts the critical discourse analysis model, and intercultural pragmatics studies); and, lastly, *pragma-stylistics,*[15] an approach which stands astride linguistics and literary disciplines and which includes research on terms like discourse markers, genres and text types, or other issues which link it with discourse analysis (such as the relationship between discourse and cultural models). The very necessary link between theoretical research in these fields and the need to resolve problems of communication in language use result in many of the studies along these lines adopting an *applied* perspective (especially with reference to formal language, translation, and the needs and demands of intercultural communication in such fields as education or healthcare, etc.).

On the other hand, there seems to be an increasing trend to studies of *contrastive* nature. This in turn may be the result of increasingly positive evaluation of multilingualism together with the effect of interculturality, favoured, at university level, by the definition of educational objectives in cross-disciplinary areas of competence within the context of the European educational system. Examples of this trend include the monographic issue no. 30 of *Caplletra* on *contrastive analysis* (2001), or the existence of research projects based on multilingual corpora, such as the Multilingual Specialised Text Corpus of Barcelona's University Pompeu Fabra (see note 12), or the audiovisual corpus of texts in Catalan, Spanish, English and German within the VARCOM project (*Variation, multimodal communication and multilingualism: discourse styles and linguistic ideologies in oral texts*), at the University of Barcelona, (Payrató, Alturo and Juanhuix 2003).

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[14] See Alturo (forthcoming) on focusses of research interest in studies on Catalan pragmatics.
[15] The term *pragmastylistics* was suggested by Leo Hickey, and adopted in the monographic issue, *Caplletra* 29 (2000), referred to above.

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