

# The sociolinguistic situation in Andorra: results of different studies

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## Summary

This article brings together the approaches and concerns, methodologies and analyses of three pieces of sociolinguistic research on the linguistic state of affairs in Andorra, subsequent to the *Pla d'andorranització* (Andorranisation Plan) initiated in the seventies. These are two academic theses and the results of a sociological survey. These three pieces of work have quite different objectives and methodologies and draw quite different conclusions. German Volker Lixfeld (1982) produced a thesis on the languages of Andorra, and Pere Notó (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1983) wrote his thesis on the psycho-sociolinguistic situation in the educational sector, and finally there are the interesting aspects examined in the survey by Emili Boix and Jaume Farràs carried out in 1992 on children and young people attending Andorran schools. The fast-moving demographic, economic and social changes in the country provide the background to these studies.

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*"The Principality of Andorra (468 km<sup>2</sup>) had 46,166 inhabitants in 1989 (1989 census), of whom 10,938 (24,3%) had Andorran nationality. Some 44.5% of the population of the Principality were Catalan-speaking, a figure which had been swelled by the large number of immigrants from Catalonia.*

*The way of life has changed very rapidly. In forty years Andorra has gone from being a poor country, with an economy based very largely on agriculture and livestock, to having a per capita income of 15,403 dollars in the year 1987, with an economy based on the tertiary*

sector (77% of the population). An area that thrives on tourism and commerce, it receives visitors from many different countries. According to figures issued in 1986, these were mainly from France (43.56%) and Spain (35.67%) followed at a distance by Belgians (6.13%), Italians (3.9%), British (3.53%) and Germans (2.11%). Spanish and French are therefore the languages most used by visitors. In fact, almost everyone in Andorra speaks these two languages, which are almost always *llengües d'educació* (that is, Andorrans use Spanish or French to speakers of these languages out of courtesy).

The seven parishes into which the Principality is divided exhibit different demographic and sociolinguistic characteristics.

The only official language is Catalan, with every right to be so. It is the language used by all departments of the Administration and has to be used in any communication with them. Official forms are in Catalan and this language has to be used in all official demands: This circumstance is not felt to be an imposition, rather it is the way it has always been and no one has suggested anything else" (See Ganyet, R. et al.: "La situació lingüística a Andorra, Catalunya Nord, la Franja i l'Alguer", coordinated by Mari, I. (1992): *La llengua dels països catalans*. Barcelona, Fundació Jaume Bofill, pp. 87-88).

## 1. General introduction

With these introductory words and with some data on each of the parishes regarding its demographic make-up in terms of more or less indigenous or foreign extraction<sup>1</sup> the authors present a barium meal picture of the Andorran linguistic situation at the time of writing. "In general," they observe, "both Catalan and French have lost considerable ground to Spanish, which has emerged as the lingua franca in the large urban areas".

They continue with a rapid presentation of the educational structure and system which revolves around three types of schools: there were on the one hand, schools depending on the Spanish government<sup>2</sup> consisting of a primary school in every parish and an *institut* (sixth form college) at Aixovall. Spanish was used preferentially in writing and teaching in these schools, even though the students might talk in Catalan outside the classroom, and some teachers –appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs- taught partly in Catalan.

Secondly, there were the French schools with a similar level of coverage: one French primary school in each parish and a large lycée in Andorra la Vella, with French-speaking teachers to guarantee the learning of French language and culture. While for a number of years the aim seemed to have been achieved of having French as the language in general use in all areas of life at the lycée, above all in the corridors and the playground- this had been lost again in recent decades in favour of Spanish.

Lastly, there were three confessional (Catholic) schools: one at Santa Coloma and the other two at les Escaldes, with a tendency to follow the pattern of Spanish education with the difference being that the language used in class was the language of the teacher and school activities were in Catalan. For several years Catalan had gradually been being introduced into the classroom on a triple front or strategy: working to increase knowledge, use and correctness when teaching students about Andorran culture and institutions.

In order to endow students with knowledge of specific cultural elements of Andorran society, in 1982 the Government set about creating the Escola andorrana (Andorran school). The precedent for this was a report issued in 1972, compiled by the Consell General de les Valls. The intention was to introduce a programme of *Andorranisation* of the French and Spanish in order to ensure knowledge of the Catalan language, as well as familiarity with the geography, history and institutions of the country, a commendable way of preserving its identity.

Mixed families (that is, where couples were from different language groups), had led to the existence of many couples with mixed language use, and led to many different options or results, usually favourable to extension in the use of Spanish, depending on the parish, level of education and occupation of the parents among other variables. That is, many linguistic

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<sup>1</sup> Spanish immigration into the most populated urban areas: Andorra la Vella (39.7%), Escaldes Engordany (22.9%) and Sant Julià de Lòria (11.8%). French are found above all in Pas de la Casa, where it is possible to live totally in French, and there are elderly British people in Ordino and Massana.

<sup>2</sup> They opened in 1930. The Catholic school Col·legi Sant Ermengol opened in 1966 and the Institut Janer two years later. The Escola Meritxell was set up in 1972 to educate special needs children.

situations at family or individual level were resolved in favour of Spanish or French, depending on the parameters and the demographic and sociolinguistic structure of each of the parishes and urban areas. At the same time there was continuing pressure from the surrounding environment deriving from the French- and Spanish-speaking communities.

## 2. Justification

Thanks to the publication in *NOVES SL. Journal of Sociolinguistics*, Winter 2002 of the article by Marta Pujol and Montserrat Badia, "The studies implemented by the Andorran administration as a point of reference for linguistic planning", it was obvious what had to be done. There was a clear need to make available the analyses, results and conclusions of the other previous or subsequent studies, carried out with or without the support of the Andorran institutions, and with or without academic aims.

In this article we present three studies which are markedly different from each other, and not easily compared in terms of approach, objectives and research methodology nor of the final results achieved. These are the doctoral theses of Volker Lixfeld and Pere Notó, and a research project –carried out under the auspices of the Institut d'Estudis Andorrans- directed by Emili Boix and Jaume Farràs. They were completed before the macro research projects carried out by the Andorra government. What still remains to be done, undoubtedly in some subsequent monograph is the analysis of all materials that have been collected and processed by students of the University of Perpignan, in the context of the laboratory directed by professor Bernardó.

## 3. Volker Lixfeld *Les llengües d'Andorra: Les relacions entre les estructures socials i les lingüístiques en un estat multiètnic*<sup>3</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

In 1982, in the prologue to his doctoral thesis, pioneer Volker Lixfeld, a researcher from the University of Bochum, stated that "in the present work, the intention was to set out to describe the linguistic situation in the Pyrenean state of Andorra", by means of "an exhaustive written interview, and an oral interview". According to the Introduction, he saw in Andorra "an ideal research area for discovering the relationship between the linguistic phenomena and socioeconomic, political and cultural factors."

Like many another explorer, Lixfeld fell in love, so to speak, with this micro-state –the second smallest in Europe, both in terms of its geographical area and population- nestling, as it does, among the valleys of the Pyrenees. He adopted a line of investigation that was relatively new, in a territory which, according to the introduction, "had been ignored until now by linguists and sociologists, alike".

A country where Catalan was the official language, but not the only medium of communication, where the indigenous population constituted less than 30% of the total 30,000 inhabitants of the country (at the time) and where the constant need for labour and the legend that the economic possibilities of the little state were limitless, all seemed to work in detriment of the Andorrans (and of Catalan?), ... a country where the official teaching of the Catalan language was all but non-existent, in which a part of the foreign-born population denied that they even *understood* Catalan, where both young children and adults could be designated partially illiterate in their native language, and where a complex political system made it difficult to adapt its structures to the social needs of the 20th century, ...". Andorra was, at that moment, such a population. It was multiethnic and "multilingual with a growing foreign-born population in which the official language has always been Catalan but never the only language in which its inhabitants communicate", as the prologue duly pointed out.

From a scientific point of view, Andorra seemed a veritable gift for that German researcher. In fact it was a gift for any explorer working in any scientific area... A few years earlier it had been the target for the anthropological gaze focused on it by the American researcher Stancliff, when he wrote his doctoral thesis on Andorran customs entitled *Cultural and Ecological Aspects of Marriage, Succession, and Migration in a Peasant Community in the Catalan Pyrenees*, defended in 1966 at Columbia University.

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<sup>3</sup> We have available to us a typed version in Catalan translation, kindly provided by Mr. Albert Pintat several years ago in connection with research on the Usage, knowledge and ideologies of Andorran secondary school pupils.

Andorra was not just attracting tourism, the financial sector and consumers, but also scientists and scholars, too. And that had important effects... the Andorran state was receiving an inrush of migrants<sup>4</sup>, was the goal for thousands of tourists annually, and as official as the Catalan language might be, people were not using it too much. Andorra had ceased to be that rural society, almost monolingual in Catalan, that it had been at the beginning of the 20th century, to become a place where multilingualism was the rule, where people were bilingual above all in Spanish and there was extreme growth in the tertiary (or services) sector thanks to tourism, especially from the 60s onwards.

### 3.2 Research objectives and hypothesis

As aspects to consider in his thesis, Lixfeld enumerated (page 78):

-The linguistic knowledge of the most numerous ethnic groups (native Andorrans, French, Spanish).

-Modalities of language use.

-Attitudes of members of these groups towards the co-existing languages and the evaluation they made of the other linguistic groups, as well as their linguistic awareness and knowledge of Andorra and Catalan. The specific problem of the process of linguistic and cultural integration.

He proceeded immediately to formulate more than twenty hypotheses relating to four main areas:

1. In Andorra, the type of multilingualism differs according to ethnic group. These differences become evident when comparing the achievements of Andorrans, Spanish, French and Catalans in the skills of comprehension, speaking, writing and reading.

2. Code switching, he argued, only happened in isolated cases. In inter-group communication, Andorrans resorted to the language of the interlocutor. Spaniards (non-Catalan Spaniards) and French people only rarely used Catalan.

3. Many if not most Spaniards and French are against the exclusive use of the Catalan language in public institutions, especially education. This is where prejudices came to the surface, negative attitudes towards Catalan and the country's history, institutions and current problems, and the idea that Catalan is a minor language, all too often referred to as a "dialect" or "patois".

4. There is (was) little inclination on the part of the newcomers to adapt linguistically and culturally to the Andorran society.

### 3.3 Methodology and data collection: the conducting of 20 in-depth interviews

Lixfeld turned to methodology which was both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative part of his approach was a questionnaire containing 51 questions, some closed, the rest open, in a document of eleven pages. This was administered to inhabitants aged over 18, Spaniards, French and native Andorrans, selected at random, forming a proportional and stratified overall sample of 600 persons which was his theoretical sample<sup>5</sup> (2.6% of the population, see page 104), according to the following dependent variables: parish of residence, sex and age. At the end of the questionnaire there was a space for interviewees to put their final comments.

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<sup>4</sup> See the unpublished report by George Tapinos, (dated 10 December 1987) : *Rapport sur l'immigration en Andorre. Diagnostic et perspectives*. Carried out by the Andorran government.

<sup>5</sup> There are apparently no explicit references in the thesis to reliability and margin of error for the sample.

**Technical details of Lixfeld's thesis: 1981**

Geographical area	All the parishes of Andorra, except Pas de la Casa
Universe	Residents aged over 18 years (22,869 persons)
Sample size	600 <sup>6</sup> chosen (2.6% of the population)
	Random extraction, stratified by parish, sex and age
Type of interview	Structured interview, lasting 60-90 minutes. In Catalan, Spanish and French. Twenty unstructured interviews, carried out by the author
Field work	10-12 months, in 1981, carried out by the author

The questions asked have / had as their basic aims (Cf. page 86):

- Gauge linguistic knowledge of Catalan, French and Spanish of the sample.
- Determine the use made of each of these, and the situations in which switching occurs, if it occurs at all.
- The attitude, linguistic awareness and knowledge that interviewees have / had of Andorra and the Catalan language.

Table 1, below, shows the distribution of the population of Andorra, over the age of 18 (at that time), for each of the parishes, plus their origin. This, facilitated by the Andorran authorities, formed the basis for Lixfeld's sample. We add the actual number of those extracted for the sample and those actually interviewed for each parish.

**Table 1. Population of Andorra aged over 18, by parish (16/10/80)**

	Native Andorrans	Spaniards	French	Total	Envisaged sample	Actual sample
Les Escaldes	1,091	4,602	288	5,981	157	66
Canillo	316	180	69	565	15	9
Encamp	528	1,681	625	2,834	56	25
La Massana	383	680	182	1,245	32	15
Ordino	237	177	58	472	13	3
Andorra la Vella	1,456	6,972	625	9,053	238	96
St. Julià de Lòria	744	1,775	200	2,719	71	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,755</b>	<b>16,067</b>	<b>2,046</b>	<b>22,869</b>	<b>582<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>259</b>
Percentage	20.79%	70.25%	8.95			

Source: Figures calculated from the data in the thesis

*The in-depth interviews:* Parallel to this, twenty unstructured interviews were carried out and recorded on tape. These featured very general questions (Cf. page 101).

*Grosso modo*, the interviews were concerned with:

- General information about the interviewee: place of birth, years of residence in Andorra, profession, reasons for immigrating, etc.
- Their relationship with Andorra and the Andorrans, and also with the Spanish and French.
- Linguistic knowledge, use and attitude to Catalan.
- Exchange of opinions regarding massive immigration and the eventual integration of the migrants.
- Knowledge of the Catalan language.

These interviews were carried out with people employed in different activities. Ages ranged from 19-65 years, ten were men, ten women, with different lengths of residence in the country, six were French, six were Spanish, and eight were Andorrans.

<sup>6</sup> The text does not make it clear what the final theoretical sample was. Page 83 speaks of 600 interviewees, as does page 104, while page 102 refers to 400 offset printed copies of the questionnaire. When the sample was constructed, did the author perhaps envisage 200 additional addresses to allow for replacements? Later on, on page 105 and subsequent, where the total sample is given by parish, the total arrived at is 382, the figure we use in table 1. This is far from constituting 2.6% of the population!

<sup>7</sup> 18 cases are missing, apparently corresponding to the inhabitants of Pas de la Casa.

Fieldwork lasted almost a year, since Lixfeld himself delivered the questionnaire personally to the interviewees and arranged to collect it subsequently. He obtained only 259 completed questionnaires, despite his considerable efforts to obtain a greater number than that. Lixfeld felt that the time needed to answer it -between 60 and 90 minutes- was a dissuading factor in getting people to participate. There were also wrong addresses, changes of addresses and refusals to answer.

### 3.4 Results and conclusions

Analysis of the data on knowledge: Lixfeld noted that by 1982 (the year he was writing up his thesis) all Andorrans were bilingual, and often trilingual. Passive knowledge of Catalan was more or less adequate among the non-Catalan speaking Spanish immigrants, and poorer among immigrants of French origin. He went on to describe the multilingualism of Andorra as heterogeneous, given the numerous groups of foreign-born residents. He refers to what he calls instrumental multilingualism for certain speakers, for the Andorrans and Catalans, but also for the French and Spanish people who knew Catalan. He also refers to the multilingualism as limited, given that it exists only among the population that had been brought up in Andorra and knew the languages that coexist there.

He noted that the command of these languages varied markedly not only from one linguistic group to another (that is, between French, Spaniards and Andorrans) but also within these groups. While all Andorrans could be considered bi- or trilingual, the Spanish -with the exception of the Catalans- and the French, had little active knowledge of the Catalan language. He stated that the Catalan population of Andorra was generally bilingual in Catalan and Spanish, and showed greater ability in Spanish in the written mode. The French population of the Principality tended to be monolingual in French, and where there was multilingualism, this was usually receptive, asymmetric, and with a clear preference for Spanish.

The French above all -but also a certain number of Spanish- wanted to maintain their mother tongue, to the point of positioning themselves (especially in the case of the French) in opposition to the consolidation of Catalan in Andorran public life, particularly in the education system. Despite that, a great majority of those interviewed approved of their children learning Catalan. Another finding was that all too often there were unfavourable language attitudes to the generalised use of Catalan evinced by the French, Spanish and even some of the Catalan-speaking migrants, who yet did not hesitate to use Spanish in out-group communication.

Difficulties in the way of learning Catalan most mentioned were the short time the interviewees were resident in Andorra, although in some cases this was actually 8 years or more, and the fact that Catalan was not in any way *necessary* to be able to live in Andorra, where Catalans and Andorrans used Catalan little in inter-group communication, especially where there were interlocutors whose knowledge of the language were insufficient.

He noted that Andorrans and Catalans evinced more language loyalty toward their own speech. While, as he saw it, the latter saw the language as a way of showing that they belonged to the same ethnic group as the Andorrans, the feeling of "Andorranness" of the former was arguably derived from or based on other elements such as the prestige, status and privileges that their group enjoyed as a result of having Andorran nationality.

Andorrans and Catalans certainly wanted the immigrants to be integrated, without their losing their mother tongue. And it was with this aim that a trilingual education system was set up in Andorra, where each child could receive an education in their own language up to a certain age.

The influx of immigration during the eighties, the tendency to interference and language contact, the intensity of such contact between the main language groups -Spanish, Catalan and French- and the desertion of many Andorrans and Catalans from the ranks of Catalan speakers, seemingly posed a threat to its continuing existence. It was against this background that, just a few years after Lixfeld's research, the Andorran Government adopted a more decided language policy (*política lingüística*) by means of advertising campaigns, the school system itself, and the media, all with the aim of improving knowledge of Catalan for all, and communicated loud and clear the idea that Catalan was necessary for inter-group conversation in Andorra.

#### 4. Pere Notó's thesis<sup>8</sup> on *La identitat andorran des d'una perspectiva psicossociològica* (Andorran identity from a psychosociological perspective)

##### 4.1 Theoretical framework, hypothesis and objectives

Andorra was the subject, at about that time, of a psycho-sociolinguistic thesis, in this case focussing in the first instance, on the entire elementary school population of Andorra. Notó set out to observe and discover, via the analysis of these children, what he called Andorran social identity, a notion that was constructed in conceptual space at the meeting point or intersection between the psycho and the social. This was so since it was related to the experience and knowledge that people have of specific social groups, and to the specific way individual members of these groups have of experiencing and emotionally evaluating their belonging to the group or community.

What the researcher wanted to do was to determine at what stage of personal development this social identity emerged among the children and young people of this tiny country, employing a series of tests and experiments clustered around three areas of interest: capturing the knowledge that children and young people of their signs and symbols of identity, in order to take a closer look at their capacity for social representation of the country where they lived and determine the attitudes shaping the socio-centralism of these children. Thus the world of adults was left to one side, as an object of observation; instead Notó concentrated his energies on the captive audience or population of the school setting and very specific age groups.

This notion would ideally allow Notó to refer to the social representation of the children's Andorraness in terms of emotional and intellectual ties. At the same time as mechanisms which drive individuals within reference groups and groups of belonging, created the conscious feeling of belonging to a group, a community. Or, if the opposite was the case, the feeling of being excluded from specific groups, societies or communities.

This was a social identity, as he argued, that will become more evident "in a group of specific signs and symbols that produce a determined set of attitudes that are similar across a given group" and accordingly Notó sought to know the knowledge that students had of their specific symbols. An identity –according to Linton- that was forged during the first few years of childhood, when the complex processes of socialisation moulded the defining bases of the personality, temperament and culture, along with the feeling of belonging to a specific identity, language or nation.

From this analytical perspective, Notó sought to grasp the components which forge Andorran social identity, to determine what the constituents of this Andorraness are which bring together the ties and forms of belonging to one and the same identity, community and state nationality. Understood from the psychosociological point of view, this notion of nationality forms part of Andorran social identity since it contains relevant traits in common across the group in question. These include linguistic traits, which cause the individual to feel he or she belongs to the same collective consciousness, rooted in the same territory, country and nation. It is in this context that the author takes advantage of the contribution to be made by sociolinguistics –and in the case of Andorra, there are some highly distinctive features in terms of the language (languages) and constituent signs of basic social identity: In Andorra, Catalan is the sole official language and is the language of the country. However, Andorran society has a very high incidence of multilingualism in the home, the school, the street, commerce, the media and in social and political life, all these being very active agents and means of socialisation.

Notó saw that there was a close relationship between the degree of awareness of social identity and level of oral and written ability of Andorrans in their native Catalan. He realised, too, that the greater the level knowledge of oral and written Catalan, the better the knowledge of the other languages taught and used in the Principality: French and Spanish. He could establish quite clearly that it was time to forget once and for all the widespread prejudice and fear that studying more than one language at a time could negatively affect children's learning processes.

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<sup>8</sup> *La identitat andorran. Una recerca psico-sociològica*. Bellaterra, 1983, Department of Psychosociology. See also "Andorra 80. Una recerca psico-sociolingüística" in *Treballs de Sociolingüística Catalana*, no. 4, 1982. Cf. similarly, "Andorra 80. Una recerca psico-sociolingüística i les seves repercussions", paper given by P. Notó and M. Panyella at the Second International Conference on the Catalan Language" 191, Girona, pp. 294-299.

Thus, among the most specific aims and objectives in Note's work were the need to examine this collective awareness of identity among young Andorran children, as well as gauge levels of oral and written skills, not only in Catalan, but also Spanish and French in Andorra. Hopefully, in the medium term, this would lead to the setting up of a large data source to be able to monitor and evaluate the process of Andorranisation among children and young people of the country.

#### 4.2 Methodology

On the operative level, Notó designed the project to have two stages or phases: firstly administering the questionnaire during school year 1980-81 to all school children in Andorra la Vella (the largest town in the Principality) representing some 40% of the total -and then secondly continuing during school year 1981-82 with the remaining pupils in the country. So in this case there was no sampling, and no qualitative interviews, since the objective was to analyse the entire captive school population.

Note's research was based on a battery of different tests and varied texts which he intended to administer to all elementary secondary school pupils. In practice, however, this was not possible<sup>9</sup>, and he was only able to collect results from children attending Andorran grant subsidised schools as well as some of those attending schools on the Spanish model during school year 1980-81.

#### Technical details relating to Notó: 1983

Setting	The schools of all parishes in Andorra
Universe	All school population
Type of questionnaire	Battery of tests and varied texts
Fieldwork	School year 1980-82

#### 4.3 Results and conclusions

In the main conclusions, the author states that the school pupils of Andorra have considerable knowledge of certain specific aspects of Andorran identity, of their history, flag... However, he also notes that, paradoxically, they show little sociocentricity, compared with other communities. He relates the lack of such sociocentricity –a common element of the social identity of people in countries with a more defined political framework -to the co-sovereignty under which Andorra has functioned since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and to the low percentage of native-born Andorrans in the population. One only has to remember the vertiginous demographic growth the country has experienced over the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with continuing waves of immigration. This explains why the Principality now has 70,000 inhabitants in contrast to the little more than 6,000 that there were until the sixties.

Around 1958 the transformation of the country's commerce had already begun. A commercial structure was emerging that was vulnerable and yet an attractive magnet for finance. In a very few years Andorran society yielded to the processes of change to tertiary economic activity sweeping aside the little that remained of the old Pyrenees society and the traditional way of life analysed by Stancliff. A country on the border between larger countries, Andorra would from now on offer everything, from relaxation, skiing and tourism, to shopping in extensive commercial centres where, significantly, one can find everything from post cards of the Eiffel Tower, to post cards of (highly Spanish) *Sevillanas*, taking in pictures of blatant Andorran culture on the way. The sociolinguistic situation of such a society is necessarily complex, even if Catalan is the sole official language.

Notó also noted that in the analysis of comprehension of standard or literary written texts, comprehension of texts in Catalan was usually lower than comprehension of texts in Spanish for Andorran children. It is very likely that this lack of knowledge and greater uncertainty in the case of Catalan bears a direct relationship to the scant presence of Catalan in the classrooms at that time, apart from the fact that probably these texts distributed to the students were very different from one language to another.

It should be pointed out, lastly, that this research was not at all comparable to Lixfeld's work, since however close they may be in time and place, they used very different

<sup>9</sup> See Torres, J.: "Les enquestes sociolingüístiques catalanes del 1974 al 1984" in *Treballs de Sociolingüística Catalana*, no. 7, 1988, p. 69.

methodology, and the aims and objectives were different too, as were the segments of the population studied and the collection and analysis of data employed.

## **5. The Sociolinguistic study by Emili Boix and Jaume Farràs on Usos, coneixements i ideologies lingüístics dels joves de secundària andorrans (Use, knowledge and linguistic ideologies of Andorran secondary school pupils)**

### *5.1 Introduction, justification and objectives*

This work was designed and formalised in 1991, under the auspices of the Institut d'Estudis Andorrans, and was based in part on the fascination exercised by Andorra's genuinely bipolar structure -astride the French and Spanish states both geographically and politically. It was also in part a response to the recent drafting of the Andorran constitution, to the existence of large groups of immigrants (constituting the majority of the population) and the consequences that these socio-political and demographic facts could have on the current *de facto* social multilingualism to be found in the Valleys.

We found it useful to take a close look at Lixfeld and Notó's work on the most notable aspects of the sociolinguistic situation in this tiny country, and the processes of construction of its social, economic, cultural and political identity. In addition to having this information on the main trends in terms of language knowledge and use among the overall population of Andorra, we are also aware of other contributions to our knowledge of the construction of (Andorran) identity among school children. We were interested to know if there was still a comparative lack of knowledge of (written) Catalan compared with the solid knowledge of Spanish and French exhibited by many inhabitants and students of Andorra. It would be useful, we thought, to observe the phenomena of language contact and interference together with code-switching, common as these are in the day-to-day language use of the streets and squares, the classrooms and families, deriving, as they do from very extensive multilingualism especially among native Andorrans. We also wanted to determine if there are still unfavourable attitudes to Catalan among the foreign population in Andorra, especially in the case of French speakers, and we wanted to take a close look at whether the new waves of immigration (the Gallicians and the Portuguese) are being assimilated, especially via school system.

We wanted, lastly, to find out whether Catalan was functioning as inter-community *lingua franca* in a country -the only country, in fact!- where Catalan is the sole official language. And yet where, paradoxically, changing circumstances make it not strictly necessary to refer to such sentiments, facts and phenomena in Catalan. This in a country where there are many Catalans and Andorrans, and these latter are virtually the only *de facto* multilingual speakers in Andorra who are capable of resolving satisfactorily any situation in one or more languages other than their own. Thus they often relinquished their one and only official language in favour of Spanish. This paradox would seem to have perpetuated itself several years later, with the habitual use of other languages also in contact between generations of young people of foreign origin. The presence of a long-established if shrinking number of French speakers in the country, and the influx of Gallicians and Portuguese, did not alter the fact that they all ended up in the playgrounds and corridors speaking Spanish, a language which is not exactly official or even co-official in the Valleys, nor in many cases the language used at home.

Analysing this extensive range of multilingual usage and observing the situations in which this occurred was a difficult if fascinating task. We placed our trust in the statistic torture of matrices of data, and in the qualitative analysis of interviews, to be able to unravel the tangle of reasons, as far as was possible, for this resorting to language switching with such ease.

### *5.2 Methodology and methods of data collection*

The data for this research derive from the quantitative survey of practically the whole of the school population of Andorra between the ages of 13 and 18 years. Containing more than 200 questions, the questionnaire was answered by almost 1,300 students. The research data also includes the materials generated by around thirty semi-directed interviews, carried out with young people from a range of different backgrounds that make up the linguistic demography of

Andorra. Both sources constitute the raw material, the corpus with which we worked to produce the different sections of the research.

**Technical details of the research by Boix and Farràs: 1992**

Setting	The schools of all the parishes in Andorra
Universe	School population aged 13-18 years
Type of interview	Structured questionnaire, lasting approximately 50 minutes, given during an hour-long classroom lesson. 1,397 questionnaires administered. 30 unstructured interviews, carried out by the authors
Field work	January–February 1992

*5.2.1 The survey*

The questionnaires were aimed at all eighth year students attending secondary EGB school courses, both FP (non-university stream) and BUP-COU (academic or university stream) students. We wanted to restrict the universe (population) to school attenders and not resort to any sampling technique, since this was, after all, a relatively small population. We accepted that on the date arranged with head teachers for the conducting of the interviews, some students would be absent, or that some group might be away on a school trip or skiing holiday. In the latter case, an effort was made to arrange another date on which to come and give the questionnaire.

The large number of students at the French Lycée, furthermore, meant that it was debatable whether we could interrupt the smooth functioning of the school to carry out an interview with the school's entire student population. The idea of a random sample similarly meant interfering with the class group for the duration of the interview, and this neither we nor the head teachers thought was indispensable nor advisable. For that reason we opted for administering the questionnaire to 14 class groups proportionally distributed across the various years and teaching levels. Normally the questionnaire was given by a member of the research team in almost all instances

There is one more observation to be made regarding the French lycée. The differences between the Spanish and French educational system meant that students of the same age (13-14) had left primary education and begun to attend the Lycée when, according to the Spanish system they were still attending primary school. It was, therefore, to achieve homogeneity of the population by age, that we also interviewed students of the second cycle of EGB in all other schools.

The age segments of students in question and the completed questionnaires are from school year 1991-92 and from the following schools:

Spanish school, Andorra la Vella	79
Spanish school, Sant Julià	49
Lycée Comtes de Foix	322
Sant Ermengol	238
Sagrada Família	33
Col·legi Janer in Santa Coloma	140
Spanish school in les Escaldes	30
Spanish school in la Massana	19
Spanish Instituto	339
School in Encamp	43
School in Pas de la Casa	5
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	<b>1,297</b>

*5.2.2 Semi-directed interviews*

The qualitative research, carried out by means of semi-directed (semi-structured) interviews, was designed to act like a funnel. Starting with very open questions, the interview become increasingly restricted to and centred on very specific behaviour, attitudes and opinions relating to the sociolinguistic situation closest to the interviewee. The age group in question included

many of the young people affected by the problem of obtaining of Andorran nationality under the restrictive Law of 1975.

We looked for possible interviewees using the snowball technique until we had interviewed 15 Catalan speakers, 2 bilingual Spanish/Catalan families, 9 Spanish speakers, 1 Francophone, 2 Portuguese speakers, 1 bilingual from a Spanish/Portuguese family and 1 bilingual from a Spanish/French family.

### *5.3 Results and conclusions*

Some 57% of the students had been born in Andorra. One in four of the rest of the students were from Catalan-Valentian speaking areas of Spain. Those born in the rest of Spain constituted less than 10% of the total, and those born in France constituted little more than 3%. Their parents' generation, on the other hand, were newcomers to Andorra in the majority of cases. Only around 10% of fathers or mothers were native-born Andorrans. One out of three of the parents came from somewhere in the wider Catalan-speaking area including Andorra and around 41% were from Spain. Those from France amounted to 4% overall. This amalgam of origins makes it difficult to find offspring of native-born Andorran parents (only 4.5% of our total) or of mixed couples (12.2%) such that more than 80% of the parents of these students were of foreign origin.

97% of those interviewed said that Catalan was the official language of Andorra and 81% were of the opinion that those normally resident in Andorra should be able to speak it. 41% said they intended to live in Andorra in the future, while 12% stated they did not. A majority of those asked, however, stated they were not sure, and that "it depended".

A larger percentage of students learned to speak Spanish first (35%), read it first (34%) or write it first (23%) rather than Catalan, a smaller percentage learned to speak Catalan first (21.9%) read it first (21%) or write it first (20%). As regards French, the proportion speaking it first was some 4%. This figure increases when it comes to reading and writing to around 14-15%, which would indicate that, in the Andorran setting, this is a language learned basically at school, not in the family.

The close and permanent heterolinguistic contact explains the existence of a third of students in favour of the use of two or more languages at the same time. This would suggest that they do not experience serious linguistic difficulties when reading school books or reading during leisure time, going to the theatre, watching films or listening to records. Close to 30-40% prefer to do these things in Spanish compared to 15-20% on average who opt for Catalan. French has even fewer adepts.

In the replies to other questions they indicate that the level of comprehension of Spanish (94%), speaking it (87%), writing it (76%) and reading it (87%) is in every case superior to the level for the same skills in Catalan (90%, 77%, 61% and 79% respectively) and not surprisingly in French only comprehension and reading reached 40% at the maximum level of competence. With this self-assessment of linguistic skills and abilities it is also understandable that 47% of the interviewees prefer to do their exams in Spanish rather than Catalan, whereas only 28% would prefer Catalan for this. However, the open questions were answered in that language in 93.5% of cases.

Fearfulness or linguistic insecurity regarding knowledge of Catalan is once again to be seen in the three languages that they find most useful in their daily lives in Andorra. Almost two thirds put Catalan first compared to 30% who put Spanish first.

In the family setting, around 80% of situations could be handled in Catalan or Spanish, so to speak in an even-handed way. Another forty or so different social situations in the street or at school among friends would be more likely to be done in Spanish, except where the interlocutor's language would be a decisive factor tipping the balance in favour of Catalan: Catalan-speaking teachers, teachers of Catalan, Catalan-speaking neighbours, colleagues, etc. The questionnaire also had some questions on the sources of information of these students, looking at their habits of cultural consumption, the newspapers and magazines read, radio and television tuned into, and the frequency with which this was done, and in what language.

Some other questions sought to uncover prejudices students had about the good or bad manners associated with monolingual use of either Catalan or Spanish. We wanted to find out their opinion about the right way to act in a meeting where there were participants who had little knowledge of Catalan. Changing to French or Spanish under such circumstances was thought necessary by only one out of five interviewees. This reply contrasted –we thought- with the most usual and interiorised (automatic) behaviour patterns of a large section of the Catalan-speaking community (including those who spoke Catalan as their first language).

The opinion that Catalan will predominate in the future in Andorra is widely held (70% of cases), as does the notion that those who know Catalan have greater job opportunities (82%). However, only one out of four students thought that Catalan should be the only language, the language used monolingually for primary and secondary school classes. Half thought that everyone in Andorra should speak it. How easily they leave this for the future to take care of! Meanwhile, more than half preferred to see films in Spanish rather than Catalan or French.

54% of the interviewees declared they felt themselves to be Andorrans above all else, around 18% said Spanish, 13,5% affirmed their Catalanness, and less than 3% of students said they felt French more than anything else. These figures need to be clearly borne in mind, along with other socio-demographic variables when analysing and interpreting all the data in depth.

In the course of the qualitative research, we found that, overall, the young people interviewed expressed a certain uneasiness due to uncertainty over how and when the legal and social recognition of Andorra could be achieved. We noted, too, a certain compartmentalisation of the different socio-cultural groups that there were, perhaps as a result of the dearth of mechanisms that would combine interests and the perceived lack of shared social spaces. Only a progressive and comfortable process of integration of the flood of immigrants together with the creation of shared spaces where Catalan could be used with complete naturalness, and the acquisition of shared symbols, will be able to reduce the distances perceived by the interviewees. There are still not enough of such spaces and integrating elements for all inhabitants, and it should not be forgotten that any measure promoting linguistic Andorranisation will need to be accompanied by other social and cultural support. It has been worth the while giving this brief outline, not least for all those who answered the questionnaire, and said that they would like to know the final results we obtained.

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