

## REVIEW

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VANN, E. ROBERT (2009): *Materials for the Sociolinguistic Description and Corpus-Based Study of Spanish in Barcelona*, Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 300.

Robert E. Vann has written a book about Spanish dialect in Catalonia. Spanish dialectology has hardly dealt with this subject. This work is very important in Hispanic linguistics due to the issue and the corpus. In the first part, Vann tells us about Catalan context and his research methodology. He explains different studies about Spanish language in Catalonia and he introduces their most remarkable contributions. Moreover, he synthesizes Catalonia's history, because it is essential in order to understand the current social and cultural Catalan situation. In the second part of the book, he speaks about his research and includes the two transcriptions which are the base of this study.

Not only will find linguists this work useful, but also people working in different fields and disciplines. Moreover, the author writes with a clear and pedagogical style. For these reasons, an extensive public can consider this book functional.

The work tries to reflect the use of Spanish in Catalonia. It also provides documentary resources for studying colloquial Spanish spoken in social groups in Barcelona. Besides, Vann summarizes the history of Catalonia, showing that during the last century, Catalan language lived a problematic situation. Under Franco's time, speaking Catalan was punishable by fines and incarceration. During this time, the language was proscribed in all contexts, event in private areas.

Vann explains linguistic ideologies as well. The author demonstrates how interactions between the Catalan (linguistic and political) habitus and the linguistic and political-economic markets manifested themselves in the practice of speaking either Catalan or Spanish. Within the community investigated in Barcelona, language's use is influenced by its history of exposure to Catalan and Spanish.

The speaker's social identity and his behaviour are crucial in Vann's book. In the first part, he informs about different topics associated with symbolic capital, some ethnolinguistic identities, several discussions about language contacts, etc.

The author presents several corpora of Spanish developed in Catalonia (among others, Sinner 2004, Hernández García 1998, and Atienza et al. 1997). He orders each corpus with chronologic criteria and shows some calques observed in these corpora. He organizes these calques in different sections, according to the language's fields (among others, semantic-pragmatic or grammar). He says that these forms only exist in the Spanish variety of Catalonia. However, he doesn't comment them extensively. Regarding this part, his analyse isn't very detailed and he only shows them briefly.

This book is particularly interesting because Vann comments different techniques in data collection and corpus' analyses. He was very rigorous with scientific methodology. The data were obtained by recording the spontaneous conversations of three members of two groups (in total, six people). Vann bases his study on two different social networks. In general, in similar researches, data are usually collected in an answer format. In the study of oral language, this book gives a new point of view. He also offers useful recommendations for digitizing and annotating texts. The corpus has been digitalised, which allow new studies to other researchers.

At the end of the book, the author details individual information about the subjects of his study and their network. The study is based on two young women: Monica and Silvia. From the Vann's point of view, they are very different, because they belong to contrastive contexts.

Monica is a 23-year-old woman who lives in an upper class *castellano* neighbourhood of Barcelona (les Corts), whereas Silvia is a 21-year-old woman who lives in an upper-middle class Catalan neighbourhood of Barcelona (Sant Andreu). Monica has received a degree in economics from the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona and now she is a doctoral student in sociology. Silvia is a junior in Catalan philology at the University of Barcelona. The author remarks some differences between the two universities: University of Pompeu Fabra and University of Barcelona. Pompeu Fabra is a public university, but it functions as a private Catalan university and is considered as such by many people. On the contrast, the University of Barcelona is a prestigious and popular public centre that is relatively inexpensive. Usually, the members of Monica's groups are students in Pompeu Fabra, but the members of Silvia's groups are friends from the neighbourhood, who usually take part in a religious and cultural organization.

During the interview, Vann asks different questions related with the use of language and their national ideology (how many people speak Catalan in their family or friends group and why, what is their opinion about independence for Catalonia, etc.). Separately, the author interviews Monica with two friends, and Silvia with two friends. The first conversation has an hour and the second one has an hour and half. They were recorded in 1995.

Despite the significance and the quality of this work, Vann's study can open several controversies, because he uses some stereotypes when he chooses the interviewees of his research. He only analyses two people, who maybe are not very representative of Catalan society.

In the end, the book includes the research's transcriptions. Vann underlines *catalanisms* (words or expressions which are from Catalan language), but he doesn't study them. The author say nothing about them: he only remarks them in the texts. In spite of that, this work has an outstanding scientific value and it is an important contribution to study of Spanish language in Barcelona.