

# Catalan or Spanish? Language Choice from Home to School

Carles de Rosselló i Peralta  
Universitat de Barcelona

## 1. Presentation<sup>1</sup>

The aim of this article is to present the results of a study carried out among a preadolescent group of students in Barcelona. We will try to quantify their daily usage of Catalan and Spanish. For this purpose, we consider dyadic interactions in both codes (between two people) as the unit of analysis. The main hypothesis is that the *Catalan subordination norm* (Vila 1996: 185) is not extensible to all educative centres of Barcelona and its metropolitan area. The existence of such norm is tightly linked to *a*) the environmental linguistic condition, *b*) the linguistic condition of the school, and *c*) the sociolinguistic composition of the classroom. We will further clarify these concepts.

One of the original features of this research is the variable used to analyse the results in section 4.4 (*Catalan usage through domains: from family to school*). Social network studies have developed rapidly since the forties (Boissevain 1987; Li Wei 1987), but within the Catalan sociolinguistic tradition its use is still limited. By definition, social networks are the ties established by one person (ego), both with the closest as well as the most distant individuals with whom interactions are maintained. Because the quality of ties varies according to the feelings of ego towards a person, Milardo (1988) distinguishes between *exchange networks* and *interactive networks*. Exchange networks are composed of people, usually relatives and intimate friends, with whom ego exchanges criticism, help, advice, or support. On the other hand, interactive networks are formed by people from whom ego does not expect any compensation even though he interacts with them on a daily basis. For reasons explained in section 4.4, the type of network considered in this paper is the exchange network. The structure of the subjects' networks was delineated in the course of the participant observation that took place in the school over a period of four months (see section 4.1 *Methodology to collect data* for further details). In fact, as Li Wei *et al.* (2000: 192) point out, social networks analysis "can be carried out only after a period of ethnographic observation in the community, in order to discover basic patterns of interaction and informal social organisation".

## 2. Description of zone, school and class-group

Sant Andreu de Palomar is located in the northeast of Barcelona. Its population is 49,766<sup>2</sup>, of whom 60.3% were born in Barcelona. By geographic origin, the second most important contingent are those coming from Andalusia (9.2%), the third contingent are those born within Catalonia (7.7%) and finally those natives of Castille and Leon (5.2%). Sant Andreu changed dramatically as a result of the immigration of the sixties. Beyond population increase, change resulted in an important transformation of the neighbourhood's appearance. Thus, while the historical settlement remained stable enough, both from architectural and social composition point of view, the new settlement welcomed foreign population in large quantities. The linguistic division into two sections was the first consequence of these changes: the historical settlement consisted of people who lived in Sant Andreu all their lives, mostly Catalan-speakers; in the new area the people arriving from other parts of Spain, were Spanish-

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<sup>2</sup> Data from "Departament d'Estadística de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona" (1997).

speakers. By no means are these two sections clearly distinguishable, and in fact, this division has been fading away as time goes by. Nevertheless, one may still hear one language more than the other depending on the part of the neighbourhood he is in.

The Baliarda School is located in the predominantly Spanish-speaking area of Sant Andreu. Three main reasons justify the election of this school as a subject of research: first, in comparison with surrounding teaching institutions, the Baliarda has just one classroom per academic year and a low number of students which allowed us to observe their behaviour more closely. Second, the chosen classroom had a favourable linguistic composition: seven children had Catalan as their first language, nine had Spanish and three came from bilingual families. The third reason was that the Baliarda school, following the linguistic educative policy of the Catalan government, has a long tradition of teaching Catalan and nowadays this language is present in all school domains.

Students were selected from the sixth grade class which is their final year of primary education. There were nineteen pupils (7 boys and 12 girls) all between 10-11 years of age. With a few exceptions, the majority of the group were brought up together since they were three years old. Sixteen of them lived in Sant Andreu, two in adjacent neighbourhoods and the last one near downtown Barcelona. Geographical proximity allowed the students to see each other during off-school time and share free time activities or study together at the public library.

### **3. Expectations and limitations of the school in Catalonia**

The control of the educational system was one of the main objectives of the new Catalan government formed at the end of Francoism. Parallel to the negotiations with Madrid to achieve full competences, a debate inside the Parliament of Catalonia took place to reach a consensus on a linguistic normalization law (Argelaguet 1999). This law has had a very important influence on education. The objective of the Catalan population was, and is still today, to guarantee the learning of both Catalan and Spanish with a preferential usage of the former as the language of instruction.<sup>3</sup> For two decades the Catalan school system tried hard to instigate a triple action for the acquisition of linguistic competence: to recover the minority language, to teach both official languages, and to polyglotize students in different foreign languages. Moreover, there is a fourth expectation which is understood as also being the responsibility of the school: the strengthening of Catalan as a language of interpersonal use among students. However, several scholars have demonstrated that an increase in linguistic knowledge and the predominant use of a particular code as the everyday language of instruction are not necessarily key factors to adopt a code for interpersonal uses (Vila 1996; Heller 1994, 1999; Vila i Vial 2001).

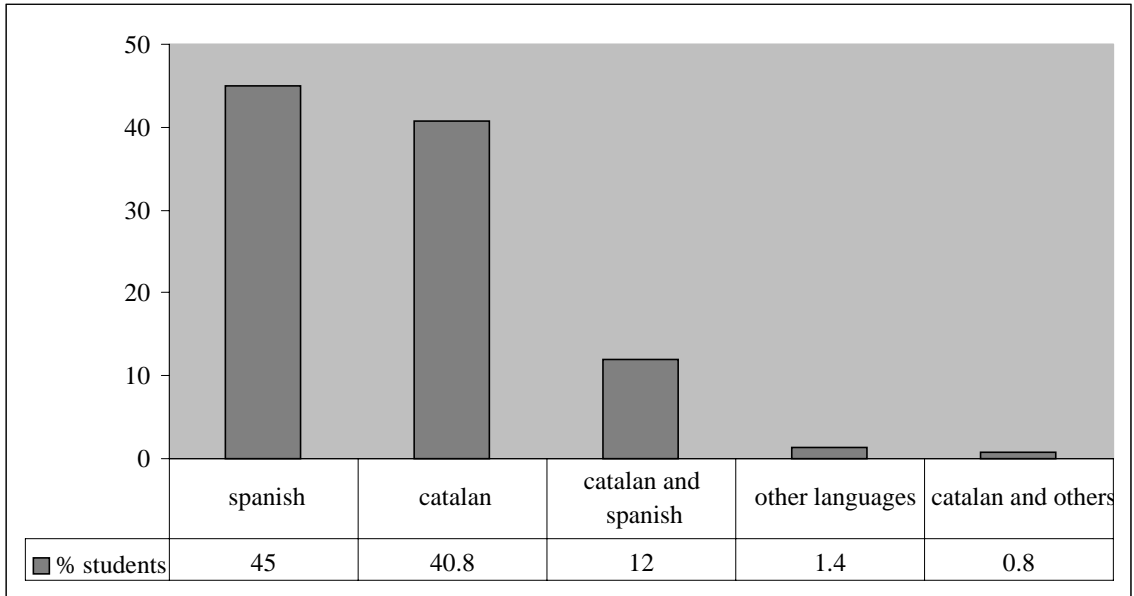
According to the census of 1996, around 80,000 students of primary and secondary education between the ages of 5 and 19 declared they could not speak Catalan (Vila 2000: 57). Because of the geographical distribution of Catalan society, these students live essentially in Barcelona and its metropolitan area. The importance of this figure should be noted: first, because the school is the main institution of bilingualization which means that not colloquializing Catalan at school would make its full acquisition in other social domains more difficult. Second, Barcelona and its metropolitan area is the most densely populated territory where Catalan is spoken, and therefore it is here where the future of the language will be decided to a great extent. Then the fact that in many schools of Barcelona and its metropolitan area the language of the subjects is Catalan while Spanish is the principal language on the playgrounds leads us to talk about limitations: which factors impede the school from adopting Catalan as a language of interpersonal use at a higher level than the present one?

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<sup>3</sup> The new Act on linguistic policy, 7 January 1998, corroborates this consensus: article 20.2 declares that "Educational establishments at all levels shall make Catalan the vehicle of normal expression in their educational and administrative activities, both internally and externally". On the other hand, article 21.3 defends that "the teaching of Catalan and Castilian shall be guaranteed in the curricula, so that all children, whatever their usual language may be when starting their education, can normally and correctly use both official languages by the end of their compulsory education".

In the first place there is a demolinguistic factor: because of the migratory streams arriving in Catalonia from monolingual Spanish-speaking regions from 1955 to 1975, there are currently more children with Spanish as their first language than Catalan. According to the latest data provided by the Catalan Teaching Service, during the school year 1995-96, the group of children born in 1992 were distributed linguistically as follows:

Table 1. *Distribution of students according to their family language*



Source: Torres (2001)

Most linguistically homogeneous couples have chosen to transmit their own code to their children, and this explains that in schools from the metropolitan territory, where the contingents from Andalusia, Aragon, Castilla, etc. were established, there is a higher Spanish-speaking than Catalan-speaking population.

The second cause must be related to what Vila and Vial (2001) denominate, on the one hand, the environmental linguistic condition and, on the other hand, the linguistic condition of students. The former refers to the linguistic context that surrounds the school, because if it is tended to Catalan, achieving the use of this language will be easier, and vice versa. Following Vila and Vial, we can determine the environmental linguistic condition from the census information.

Table 2. *Comparison of the averages of knowledge of Catalan in Barcelona and the neighbourhood of Sant Andreu de Palomar relevant to the population over 2 years of age in 1996.*

	Understand	Can speak	Can read	Can write	Don't understand
Sant Andreu	97,0	78,5	76,3	45,8	3,0
Barcelona	96,4	77,7	76,0	45,5	3,6

Source: data provided by Idescat

The percentages of Sant Andreu regarding linguistic skills are slightly above the city average. Social use of Catalan and Spanish is absolutely present in the daily life of the neighbourhood, and also in the students' life from the class we are analysing because almost everyone lives in Sant Andreu. On the other hand, the students' linguistic condition relates to the polynomial family – individual – language – school. Family is the basic linguistic reproduction tool, and the child adds linguistic models that are the platform for their relationships with their companions. Because of this, the sociolinguistic

composition of the classroom is a decisive factor to understand in what direction linguistic contacts are solved.

The third cause could be determined by the psychological side of sociolinguistics, that is, the interpersonal accommodation theory from Giles *et al.* (1973). Several studies carried out in monolingual territories demonstrated that the way of talking changes depending on the interlocutor. So, it is possible to imitate the regional accent, to adapt speech rhythm or to respect silence turns with the purpose of reducing differences between the interlocutors, and at the same time to be positively appreciated. Giles (1973) studied how this relation between similarity-attraction works among members of different ethnolinguistic groups and reached the same conclusions: interpersonal adaptation, or in other terms, linguistic convergence, follows social approval. Traditionally in Catalonia, the rule that has prevailed between members of the two predominant linguistic groups is the convergence towards Spanish. This is so because both groups perceive Spanish as the neutral code, one that everyone understands and speaks, and so, it is the language that offers more guarantees for success in interpersonal communication.

The final cause links the choice of standard or colloquial form with a code choice. Bastardas (2000 [1996]), distinguishes between institutionalised (formal) and individualized (informal) communication. The basis of differentiation is that not all communications can be attributed to the same social plane, and that leads us to talk about functional distribution depending on the language. For example, in a conversation between a teacher and a student, a higher level of formality will be demanded than in a conversation between two friends on the playground. So, vertical interactions (teacher-student) are outlined in the formal plane. To maintain conversations in the formal plane involves, from a linguistic point of view, adopting the standard. If the teachers are responsible for teaching language in the most formal variety, they cannot be the ones who transmit the colloquial variety because this is reserved for horizontal interactions (the two friends in our example). So, horizontal interactions tend to be solved in Catalan and this increasing image of Catalan being linked to the school's academic life has been observed for a long time. On the other hand, Spanish has reached positions as a principal language in horizontal interactions.

## 4. Presentation of the data

### 4.1 Methodology of the data collection

Ethnographic research allowed us to observe the students in different contexts within the school, from the most formal situations in the classroom to the most informal context on the playground. As a basic criterion the following factors were determined: if the language of the relationship was consistent in three contexts in which the investigator was present, then the code of interaction between both students could already be consolidated. As claimed by Vila (1996: 193), in Catalonia, the linguistic choice is negotiated at a personal basis and is constant across space and time. If there were less than three collected observations, the cells within the following tables remain empty. Subsequently, the students were given a questionnaire, based on similar ones used in prior research (Vila 1996), whereby the goal was that every student could relate to everyone within his nuclear family and his interactive social network with one of the two languages, or both languages if this was the case. In the interviews carried out afterwards, the aspects of the linguistic choice within each interaction became more determined.

Both in the situations observed by the researcher (observed usages), and in the questionnaires (declared usages), five possibilities of code choice were given: C (in Catalan); C(e) (mostly in Catalan); C/E (sometimes in Catalan and sometimes in Spanish); E(c) (mostly in Spanish); E (in Spanish). This methodological choice has both an advantage and a disadvantage that cannot be disregarded. The gradation in five options makes it easy to quantify the use of Catalan and Spanish but the choice of each one of the five options especially in the declared usages corresponds to the subjective perception of each informant. A bias is unavoidably produced as we can see in the following cases

In the first case, Sandra should be incorporated in the family bilingual group because she declared that with her parents she used both languages equally. She was finally categorised as a member of L1

Spanish: first because she said that members who speak exclusively in Spanish formed her family network. Thus it seems difficult for Sandra not to use Spanish while talking to her parents. Moreover in Catalonia it is absolutely infrequent for interactions to be in different codes between parents and children. Second, the interview conducted after the questionnaire elicited the following response:

“At my house my mother sometimes responds to me in Catalan when I am doing my Catalan homework; when I am with my father, everything is in Spanish”.

Looking at this response we can see that it is only with the mother and depending on the context that this student uses Catalan at home. To put it briefly, we can affirm with certainty that Sandra overvalues the productive use of Catalan in her family context. The second case is similar to the one just discussed: the informant claimed that both languages are used with her parents despite her social network being clearly Spanish. Again the interview conducted after the questionnaire gives us the information, which categorises this student into the L1 Spanish group:

CRP: Do you speak Spanish or Catalan at home?

Marta: Spanish

CRP: In Spanish, I see. Listen now...do you think you speak better Spanish or Catalan?

Marta: I believe Spanish because it's been a while since I've spoken Catalan, and I've lost the practice.

Finally the case of Montse is similar to those of her friends but the difference from the other two is that the revision of the interview did not provide any decisive element to place her in one linguistic group. In other words, it has not been possible to determine the value of the declared data. The suspicion of bias between real use and perception are based on two facts: first, the Catalan of the informant had several phonetic aspects typical of people who have Spanish as L1; second, all the interactions between her friends were resolved in Spanish. Because we could not value the declared data, this has been the only person excluded from the analysis in the section of Index of Oral Production in Catalan (see section 4.4). However, she has been kept in the study of the intergroup and intragroup code and classified as L1 Spanish.

#### 4.2 Index of Oral Production in Catalan

Classifying the students according to their linguistic origin does not require the use of both languages in a greater or lesser degree, since the usage is restricted to several determining factors. The Index of Oral Production in Catalan (IOPC), based on the *Catalan Output in the Family Index* (Vila 1996), has been used to quantify the number of interactions in Catalan and Spanish in the three domains we are studying: the nuclear family, the exchange network and school. Based on the declared usages in the family core shown in the exchange network questionnaire, and on the observed usages in school, the students' language choices were scored as follows:

C = 1 (an exclusive use of Catalan);

C(e) = 0,75 (a major use of Catalan);

C/E = 0,5 (a similar use of both languages);

E(c) = 0,25 (a major use of Spanish);

E = 0 (an exclusive use of Spanish).

To calculate the IOPC scores, the answers to the question “in which language do you speak to relatives and friends?” were added and divided by the total number of people mentioned. In spite of the

possible simplification of the facts that these indicators could lead to, we will still use the IOPC to establish the same criterion to categorize the linguistic contact phenomenon.

The classification was carried out according to the initial language of each student (all following tables depend on this). Students who scored less than or equal to 0.25 were considered L1 Spanish; those who scored between 0.26 to 0.74 were considered family bilinguals; and those who scored equal to or greater than 0.75 were considered L1 Catalan.

Table 3. *Classification of the students according to their initial language*

	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
		IOPC		IOPC
$\leq 0,25$ (L1 Spanish)	Jordi Víctor Edu	0 0,12 0	Sandra Montse Míriam Marta Irene Eli	0,12 0,07 0 0,20 0,16 0,25
0,26 – 0,74 (Bilingual family)	Sergi David	0,45 0,5	Cristina	0,5
$\geq 0,75$ (L1 Catalan)	Genís Lluc	1 1	Esther Núria Àstrid Alícia Pilar	0,83 1 1 1 1

### 4.3 Data analysis

Once the students were grouped according to their initial language, the next stage consisted of observing the interaction code in dyadic conversations among them as represented in the following implicational scale. Out of 342 possible interactions, 254 were collected (74.2%): 80 in Catalan (31.5%), 2 mostly in Catalan (0.8%), 6 with constant code-switching (2.4%), 6 mostly in Spanish (2.4%), and 160 in Spanish (63%). The students were grouped in accordance with the usage of both languages: the more to the top-left, the more use of Catalan; and on the contrary, the more to the bottom-right, the more use of Spanish.

#### 4.3.1 Intragroup language relation

Intragroup language refers to the code used by members of the same linguistic group to interact between themselves. Through in-group code relation analysis we will observe if there is any modification in traditional language choices. Patterns of use for the two majority languages in Catalonia within intragroup interactions have remained very stable (Vila 1996) and there are no signs of a possible change: Catalan is the language of interaction among Catalan-speakers while Spanish is the one used among Spanish-speakers (see tables 4 and 5).

*Implicational scale. Language of interactions in dyadic conversations among students*

	pil	ast	lluc	ali	nur	est	gen	Ire	san	eli	jor	cri	dav	edu	mar	mir	ser	mon	vic
pil		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		C	C	E(c)		C		C	
ast	C		C	C	C	C		C		C	C		E(c)	E				E	
lluc	C	C		C	C	C	C		C		C	C	C/E	C/E	C	E	E	E	E
ali	C	C	C		C	C	C	C	E	C	C/E		E					E(c)	E
nur	C	C	C	C		C		C	C	C		E	C(e)	C	E	E	E	E	
est	C	C	C	C	C		C	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	C	E	
gen	C		C	C		C							E	E	E	E	E	E	E
ire	C	C		C	C	E						E	E	E	E	E		E	E
san	C		C	E	C	E				E				E	E			E	E
eli	C	C		C	C	E			E		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
jor		C	C	C/E		E				E			E	E	E		E	E	
cri	C		C			E		E					E	E	E	E	E	E	E
dav	C	E(c)	C/E	E	C(e)	E	E	E		E	E	E		E	E	E	E	E	E
edu	E(c)	E	C/E		C	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	E	E	E	E
mar			C		E		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	E	E	
mir	C		E		E	E	E	E		E		E	E	E	E		E	E	
ser		E	E		E	C	E			E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	
mon	C	E	E	E(c)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
vic			E	E			E	E	E	E		E	E	E				E	

Table 4 shows the language used in dyadic interactions between the Catalan-speaking students. During data collection, attention was not paid to who started the conversation therefore table 4 can be read both vertically and horizontally. Another reason to examine the table from top to bottom or left to right is that all L1 Catalan members interact between themselves exclusively in Catalan. Specifically, out of 42 possible interactions, 38 were collected (90.4%) which reveals the consistency of Catalan as the in-group language.

Table 4. *Intragroup language of relation between L1 Catalan students*

	ESTHER	GENÍS	LLUC	NÚRIA	ÀSTRID	ALÍCIA	PILAR
ESTHER		C	C	C	C	C	C
GENÍS	C		C			C	C
LLUC	C	C		C	C	C	C
NÚRIA	C		C		C	C	C
ÀSTRID	C		C	C		C	C
ALÍCIA	C	C	C	C	C		C
PILAR	C	C	C	C	C	C	

On the other hand, out of 72 possible interactions between L1 Spanish students, 53 (73.6%) were collected. Just like those students with Catalan as their initial language, between their L1 Spanish classmates the usage of Spanish is also absolutely consistent.

Table 5. *Intragroup language of relation between L1 Spanish students*

	SANDRA	MONTSE	JORDI	MÍRIAM	MARTA	VÍCTOR	IRENE	EDU	ELI
SANDRA		E			E	E		E	E
MONTSE	E		E	E	E	E	E	E	E
JORDI		E			E			E	E
MÍRIAM		E			E		E	E	E
MARTA	E	E	E	E			E	E	E
VÍCTOR	E	E					E	E	E
IRENE		E		E	E	E		E	
EDU	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E
ELI	E	E	E	E	E			E	

Table 5 reflects how the actual school model, with Catalan as the main language of instruction, does not mean the abandoning of Spanish by children coming from families who have Spanish as the first language. So, it is clear that among L1 Catalan and L1 Spanish students, the mechanisms that allow each group to work internally with their own code are perpetuated.

Another interesting element of analysis is the linguistic behaviour of the family bilinguals. Those were the students who declared that Catalan and Spanish had an important presence in the entirety of their usual conversations inside the nuclear family. Therefore, despite this bilingualism within the family, table 6 demonstrates how all-dyadic interactions present a homogeneous behaviour of convergence to Spanish.

Taula 6. *Language of intergroup relation between family bilingual students*

	SERGI	CRISTINA	DAVID
SERGI		E	E
CRISTINA	E		E
DAVID	E	E	



We understand that this last table is the one that questions openly the capacity of influence of the actual school system over the student's linguistic behaviours. Furthermore, due to the teacher's role as an indispensable tool in giving students linguistic competence and as the referent interlocutor in Catalan, clearly there are social, linguistic, and psychological factors operating on the person that escape the grasp of academic control.

Looking at the results obtained, the more plausible reasoning to explain the convergence to Spanish, in addition to the restrictive school factors shown in section 3, is the careful observation of the oral production index inside the nuclear family. The values of IOPC revealed that none of the three people who spoke to us, coming from linguistically mixed families, obtained more than 0.5 points: while two students (Cristina and David) express that there is a similar use of both codes in their respective familiar nucleus, Sergi is bilingual with a tendency to Spanish (0.45 points). Looking at Table 6, it seems obvious that family bilinguals categorize themselves as Spanish speakers, and in consequence, they use Spanish for intragroup interactions.

Since there is no additional research that corroborates or refutes this tendency among students from linguistically mixed families, we suggest the following reasons to explain their linguistic behaviour: A first argument could be that there is no correspondence between the real use of both codes and their perception. In fact, we would have to categorize people from Table 6 as members from the L1 Spanish group. Otherwise, we talk about the slant we found between real use and perception. A second argument could be that to produce interactions in Catalan between two family bilinguals, they would have scored higher in the index of oral production in nuclear family (nobody is over 0.5). In other words, if there is any doubt about the linguistic origin of the interlocutor, due to characterising phonetic features for example, the negotiation is probably going to be solved in Spanish. Finally, a third explanation is that the students are simply influenced by the tendency of the majority of their schoolmates.

#### 4.3.2 Intergroup language relation

In this section we will see which language is chosen for outgroup dyadic interactions. Family bilinguals have been gathered along with L1 Spanish students, since in-group behaviour in both cases is identical, as we have already shown. In out-group interactions, the sociolinguistic norm that has been ruled is that language choice is based on linguistic convergence towards Spanish (Boix 1993). In other words: the Catalan-speakers are the ones who overwhelmingly code-switch. More recently, Vila (1996) renamed this linguistic accommodation *Catalan subordination norm*. This norm remains in force, despite the spread of reading and writing skills between L1 Spanish youngsters but it is subject to important nuances.

Out of 84 possible dyadic interactions, 57 were collected (see table 7). They are distributed in the following way: 21 (36,8%) in Catalan; 1 (1,8%) mostly in Catalan; 3 (5,3%) with constant codeswitching; 3 (5,3%) mostly in Spanish; and 29 (50,9%) in Spanish.

Table 7. Language of intergroup relation between L1 Spanish- family bilinguals , and L1 Catalan

		Students of L1 Spanish and family bilinguals											
		eli	ire	san	jor	cri	dav	edu	mar	mir	ser	mon	vic
Students of L1 Catalan	pil	C	C	C		C	C	E(c)		C		C	
	lluc			C	C	C	C/E	C/E	C	E	E	E	E
	nur	C	C	C			C(e)	C	E	E	E	E	
	ast	C	C		C		E(c)	E				E	
	ali	C	C	E	C/E		E					E(c)	E
	est	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	C	E	
	gen						E	E	E	E	E	E	E

The rate of usage of Catalan between intragroup members observed in school is clearly superior than in other social domains of Barcelona and its metropolitan area. Nevertheless, the number of interactions resolved in Catalan is not uniformly distributed between L1 Spanish and family bilingual students. Eli and Irene are the ones who use their L2 more to talk to their Catalan-speaking classmates. On the other end Víctor is the one who only uses Spanish in the three interactions collected. This does not imply that he was not capable of speaking Catalan, since this was the only code used by the teachers and by the researcher himself. Among L1 Catalan members, Pilar makes use of Catalan consistently in all of her interactions. And as we can see in the table above, this behaviour promotes the adoption of Catalan by Spanish-speakers and family bilinguals. Lluç, Núria, Àstrid and Alícia also resolve their intergroup interactions to a large extent in Catalan, and only Esther and Genís converge, almost systematically, to Spanish.

Data from Table 7 leads us to two conclusions. First, looking at these results we can hardly assume that among those students the Catalan subordination norm is met. Spanish is the code of relation in 50.9% but Catalan reaches 36.8%. Thus, intergroup encounters do not end up converging automatically to Spanish but this variation is wider. In fact, only Genís and Víctor, interestingly enough two intimate friends, follow the Catalan subordination norm. On the other hand, the results completely prove Giles' interpersonal accommodation theory. Necessity for diminishing differences implied that either L1 Catalan or L1 Spanish family bilinguals students adopt an intergroup language. We insist, nonetheless, that convergence far from being resolved always in Catalan is rather bi-directional: if any L1 Catalan member does not follow the traditional pattern of convergence in Spanish, their interlocutor will be impelled to converge in Catalan.

The table below describes interactions between L1 Spanish and family bilingual students. The only language used is Spanish (21 interactions out of 27). This leads to a disturbing conclusion: Catalan is *only* present at those interactions where there are L1 Catalan members.

Table 8. *Language of the intergroup relation between L1 Spanish and family bilingual students*

		L1 Spanish students								
		san	mon	jor	mir	mar	vic	ire	edu	eli
Family bilingual students	ser		E	E	E	E			E	E
	cri		E		E	E	E	E	E	E
	dav		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E

#### 4.4 Use of Catalan by domains: from the family to the school

Apart from studying the use of Catalan and Spanish in the school domain, we used a questionnaire to ask the informants to relate to people who configure their nuclear family and the exchange network with the use of both codes. The move from private to other progressively more public domains allows us to quantify whether the number of interactions in Catalan and Spanish befits percentages shown inside the school. We have delimited the composition of the exchange network to those family members and friends (not including those from the class-group) who have very close and affective ties with the informant and with whom they meet at least once a month following Li Wei's methodology (1994).

In addition to Catalan and Spanish use in the nuclear family domain, the exchange network domain and the school domain, in the following tables, another column labelled *Catalan Interactions Gain at School* has been added. In this column, we try to observe if the step from nuclear family to the school implies an increase or a decrease in the number of interactions in Catalan. The decision of leaving the exchange network to measure the number of interactions is justified by what Lesley Milroy (1987) refers to as *weak ties*. These are particular of communities where the population is socially or geographically mobile, and where people establish a great number of ties. In a city like Barcelona,

people can add a friendship to their exchange network, but, for different reasons, it may easily come from outside. To keep an approximate number of contacts for every student, it is important not to include exchange network values in the last column.

#### 4.5.1 Members with Catalan as initial language

Table 9 shows that Catalan is the predominant language of interaction for the nuclear family and exchange network of the L1 Catalan members. This great presence of Catalan is reduced in several degrees between equals within the school (see column *Classmates*). These results imply that there is a decrease in the number of interactions in Catalan at school for all members with Catalan as their initial language as none of them reaches the values of the nuclear family (nor the exchange network). Indeed, these students stop producing an average of 32 points of interactions in Catalan from the nuclear family to the school.

Table 9. *Index of interactions in Catalan within the nuclear family, the exchange network and the school between L1 Catalan students*

	Nuclear Family	Exchange Network	Classmates	Interactional gain of Catalan in school
<b>Pilar</b>	1	1	0,95	-0,05
<b>Àstrid</b>	1	0,95	0,75	-0,25
<b>Núria</b>	1	1	0,70	-0,30
<b>Lluc</b>	1	1	0,69	-0,31
<b>Alícia</b>	1	1	0,67	-0,33
<b>Esther</b>	0,83	0,58	0,44	-0,39
<b>Genís</b>	1	1	0,36	-0,64
<b>Average</b>				-0,32

#### 4.5.2 Members with Spanish as initial language<sup>4</sup>

As it is expected, the members of this group basically use Spanish within their nuclear family. At the same time, in contrast to their L1 Catalan companions, they claim to use their L2 with their parents, brothers and sisters to a greater extent. The exchange network is basically Spanish-speaking for these students, with the exception of Marta and Víctor. Ironically, they both use Catalan in the classroom to a lesser extent even though our data shows that they speak more Catalan outside of school. As we have seen before, we are in front of a class-group where the Catalan subordination rule is not carried out, but at the same time, an average of only 0.07 points of the gain of Catalan interactions is still insufficient. It is insufficient for students such as Jordi, Edu and Míriam, who score 0 points in the nuclear family and in the exchange network and who get low results compared to their classmates. Therefore, it seems quite difficult that all Spanish-speakers of this classroom successfully colloquialize their L2, while this option is more feasible among L1 Catalan members except, perhaps, for Pilar.

Table 10. *Index of interactions in Catalan within the nuclear family, the exchange network and the school between speakers of L1 Spanish*

	Nuclear Family	Exchange Network	Classmates	Interactional gain of Catalan in school
<b>Jordi</b>	0	0	0.25	0.25
<b>Sandra</b>	0.12	0	0.30	0.18
<b>Irene</b>	0.16	0	0.33	0.17
<b>Edu</b>	0	0	0.10	0.10
<b>Miriam</b>	0	0	0.09	0.09
<b>Eli</b>	0.25	0	0.28	0.03
<b>Marta</b>	0.20	0.25	0.08	-0.12
<b>Víctor</b>	0.12	0.41	0	-0.12
<b>Average</b>				0.07

<sup>4</sup>As mentioned previously, Montse has been excluded from this analysis. Her score among her classes was 0.07points.

### 4.5.3 Family Bilinguals

Data for family bilinguals confirm interactions in both languages not only with parents but also with siblings and other relatives who live at home. But it is worth noting that this linguistic heterogeneity of the exchange network<sup>5</sup> does not modify the number of interactions in Catalan at school. With regard to the nuclear family, bilinguals lost 37 points of the mean of interactions in Catalan.

Table 11. *Index of interactions in Catalan within the nuclear family, the exchange network and the school between speakers from bilingual families*

	Nuclear Family	Exchange Network	Classmates	Interactional gain of Catalan in school
<b>Sergi</b>	0.45	0.5	0.08	-0.37
<b>Cristina</b>	0.5	1	0.17	-0.33
<b>David</b>	0.5	0	0.15	-0.35
<b>Average</b>				-0.35

## 5. Conclusions

In this article we have categorized students according to their initial language. This classification has allowed us to confirm that in the intragroup domain Catalan is the code used between Catalan-speakers while Spanish is used between Spanish-speakers. We have also stated that the linguistic habits of bilingual families are resolved in Spanish. We think that the data on family bilinguals is important, given that their linguistic behaviour in this classroom creates an imbalance in the number of interactions in favour of Spanish. If we corroborate this tendency of bilinguals in other studies, we would see how the L1 Spanish group is getting bigger. And this fact, in practice, would imply an even more favourably pronounced movement towards the use of Spanish. However, at present, this is a mere hypothesis.

In the intergroup domain, the Catalan subordination norm can only be applied to two students (Víctor and Genís), if we understand it as the automatic convergence in Spanish. This data contrasts to the ones reached in Vila and Vial's study (2001), where linguistic convergence in Spanish was observed in almost all interactions. This leads us to believe that the Catalan subordination norm is not applicable to all the encounters of members with different initial languages. More accurately, it is restricted to determined sociolinguistic factors, such as the everyday language of instruction, the linguistic composition of the classroom, and by extension that of the school, as well as the presence of both languages in the neighbourhood. If further research confirms our data, it will then validate Woolard's claim (1989: 69) that for L1 Catalans "Catalan should be spoken only between Catalans".

This cannot stand in the way of reiterating the fact that the teaching of reading and writing only is insufficient for Catalan to be adopted as the main language of interaction. Therefore, communicative strategies should be established in order to develop the L1 Spanish students' oral capacity. Without an educative linguistic policy that aims to strengthen interpersonal Catalan usage, there will not be a shift in the rates of use of both languages.

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<sup>5</sup> David only included one person in his exchange network while Cristina mentioned up to ten.

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