V. CATALAN STUDIES

LANGUAGE

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(This chapter covers the years 1966 to 1968)

I. PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

A. Badia Margarit, ‘Predominio de las vocales abiertas € y Ò en catalán de Barcelona’, RFE, xlix, 1966 (1968), 315–20, exemplifies the phonemic value of [€] and [Ò] in ECat. by means of a set of well-known contrasts of the type /deu, deu/ Dèu, deu, or /dona, dona/ dòna, dona. He points out that the degree of openness of [€] and [Ò] is greater than that of the non-phonemic [€] and [Ò] of, e.g. Spanish, and that in ECat. borrowings from Spanish there is no sort of correspondence between Cat. [€] and Sp. [€], or Cat. [Ò] and Sp. [Ò]: the tonic € or Ò of the borrowing is regularly assigned the value [€], [Ò], e.g.: desde luego [dèzda lwègu], bueno [bwènu]. Given that ECat. speakers when asked to pronounce their vowel-system regularly produce the series [a, i, ò, u], that ECat. learned words regularly show [€] and [Ò] in, e.g. comèdia, misteri, Antoni, and that ECat. pronunciation of eccl. Latin equally regularly shows [€] and [Ò] under the stress, Badia suggests this may throw some light on the evolution of E > € > ò in the ECat. domain. Three things immediately spring to mind: (1) what happens in, say, Italian? (2) what happens in WCat.? (3) why not also Ô > Ò > ò in ECat.?

The same scholar, in ‘Función significativa y diferencial de la vocal neutra en el catalán de Barcelona’, RFE, xlvi, 1965 (1966), 79–93, attempts a partial rebuttal of E. Alarcos Llorach’s denial of phonemic value to [ə]. Badia finds two sets of circumstances: (1) where [ə] occurs in polysyllabic words as a conditioned variant of [€], [€] or [a], e.g. da [da] but darè [dàrè] — or sent [sen] but sentim [sentim] — an alternation which lies at the source of Alarcos’ assertions, and (2) where [ə] occurs obligatorily in monosyllables and contrasts meaningfully with [€], [€] or [a]: a [ə] but ha [a], he [€] — or te la (+ verb) [tə la] but tela [telə]. The question is of course not
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entirely one of stress: if one stresses te in, e.g. Has dit te o de? the result will still be [tə], and a meaningful contrast will still exist between this and tè [tɛ] ‘tea’; similarly under Badia’s first head emphatic pronunciation will still render [ə] in, e.g. a reply [ɛ dit ʃərɛ] to a question Has dit faré o veuré? A point which comes to mind is the contrast between tonic [ə] or [o] and atonic [u], on which for symmetry’s sake one would like to try out Badia’s technique; it works perfectly well under head (1), e.g. porta [pɔrtə] vs portar [purtá], but it is difficult to find minimally contrasting pairs under (2).


2. Morphology and Syntax

Only two items of major import have come to our notice. In the first, ‘Nuevos datos sobre el imperativo segunda persona plural en catalán’, BSCC, xliii, 1967, 153–77, J. Gulsoy draws attention to OCat. imperative plural forms in -d/-t, and suggests they derive not from the pres. indic. or subj. (which is the modern Cat. state of affairs) but from Latin forms in -te. Using examples from a number of early literary and non­literary texts, G. points to a goodly quantity of imperat. forms in -d/-t, at first competing with others in -ds/-ts (-tz) and later with forms in -u. He objects to the explanation of imperat. -d/-t as a regression from indic. or subj. -ds/-ts (-tz) — after the style of -m < -ms < *mus — in that logically one would expect to find at least some cases of a regressive -d/-t in the indic. and subj. also; the only example he finds, no digat (14th-c. Miracles de la Verge Maria, ed. P. Bohigas, Barcelona, 1956) he suggests may be an error. As regards the fact that imperat. -d/-t forms are found most frequently in OCat. before a following enclitic