

Sociolinguistic attitudes towards *en plan*:
An emerging quotative discourse marker in Peninsular Spanish
Juan M. Escalona Torres and Megan Di Bartolomeo Indiana University

It has been shown that sociolinguistic attitudes toward the speech of adolescents and women tends to be the target of stigmatization. For instance, studies on attitudes toward innovative quotative discourse markers in English (e.g. Buchstaller, 2014), Dutch (e.g. Van Alphen, 2006, 2008), and Hebrew (e.g. Maschler, 2002; Ziv, 1998), report a common trend: innovative quotatives similar to *be like* are negatively associated with younger female speech. However, no research has focused on the level of awareness of quotative discourse marker *en plan* or on the emerging attitudes toward this expression, a gap that is addressed by the current study. This study contributes to the literature on social meaning as reflected in implicit and explicit attitudes toward a discourse marker in a Romance language.

- (1) y yo **en plan** “por qué no le das el teléfono joder?”
and I en plan why not CLITIC.IO.3SG give.PRES.2SG the phone damn
“...and I was **like**, ‘dammit, why don’t you just hand her the phone?’”
(Palacios Martínez, 2014, p. 441)

We aim to examine the ideologies associated with the use of *en plan* in Spain. We adopt Buchstaller’s (2014) matched-guise test and explicit attitudinal survey, with which she analyzed the attitudes toward *be like* in English. The instrument was administered via Qualtrics and included a matched-guise test, an attitudinal survey, and a personal information questionnaire. The participants in this study include 48 native speakers of Peninsular Spanish (35 female, 13 male) within the age range of 23 and 62 (mean of 33.33, median of 30). The matched-guise test consists of two written dialogues (Dialogue 1 and Dialogue 2). Each dialogue has two versions: one in which the speaker uses a canonical quotative construction and another using the interpolation of innovative quotative *en plan*. The dialogues were distributed among participants so that each participant saw two different dialogues, one with the canonical forms and one with the innovative form. Participants evaluated both the social characteristics and personality traits of the speakers in each dialogue. They were also given an attitudinal survey asking them to explicitly evaluate the uses of *en plan* according to personality traits, social characteristics, and occupation. In the last portion of the survey, they self-evaluated the use of *en plan* in their speech. Lastly, they responded to an open-ended question on their opinion of *en plan*. The answers were coded as positive (e.g. ‘Me gusta porque es sencilla y dinámica’ *I like it because it’s simple and dynamic*), negative (e.g. ‘No me gusta. Me parece una expresión poco precisa’ *I don’t like it, it seems like an unprecise expression*) or neutral (e.g. ‘No la uso. Me da igual.’ *I don’t use it. I don’t care.*).

The results of the present study generally align with those found in the previous literature (e.g., Buchstaller, 2014; Maschler, 2002; Van Alphen, 2006, 2008; Ziv, 1998). Results from the matched-guise test indicate that *en plan* is significantly associated with positive solidarity traits (e.g., extroverted $p < .001$; popular, happy, and good sense of humor $p < .05$) and negative power-related traits (e.g., uneducated and irresponsible $p < .001$; unprofessional $p < .01$; unintelligent $p < .05$). Furthermore, the results of a Pearson’s Chi-square Test show a significant tendency to implicitly judge *en plan* as characteristic of younger speech (Dialogue 1 with *en plan* $p < .01$, Dialogue 2 with *en plan* $p < .001$), however no implicit association towards gender or

region is found. Unlike previous studies (e.g. Buchstaller, 2014), younger participants and male participants have more drastic judgments of *en plan* use (i.e., judging more clearly from one attribute to another), while older participants and female participants had more neutral judgments.

With regard to the explicit attitudinal survey, the results suggest that participants associate the use of *en plan* with younger, female, Spanish, and urban speakers. Additionally, *en plan* was not perceived as being used by educated speakers nor speakers of the working class. Furthermore, when asked to list occupations and personality traits for users of *en plan*, participants name occupations commonly held by younger age groups (e.g., store clerk, waiter/waitress) and named personality traits associated with negative traits related to articulation (e.g., chatterbox, less articulate) and positive socialization traits (e.g., extroverted, kind, social). The results showed that participants are likely to either have a neutral opinion (N = 22/48, 46%) or a negative opinion (N = 21/48, 44%) of the discourse marker. Finally, most participants with a neutral or positive view of *en plan* claim to use *en plan* either frequently or sometimes, while those that claim to never use it have a more negative view of the quotative discourse marker.

Our study, likely to be one of the first to focus on the social meanings of *en plan*, finds that participants implicitly and explicitly associate the use of *en plan* as an icon of youth speech. The explicit survey showed a strong association with female speakers and negative attributes related to articulation (e.g. poorly articulate) and social attributes (e.g. chatterbox). The use of quotative discourse marker *en plan* has developed a similar ideological trend to *be like* and other innovative quotatives across languages said to originate in female adolescent speech. Thus, our study provides further evidence for the stigmatization of the speech patterns of younger and female speakers in a new linguistic and cultural context.

Selected References

- Buchstaller, I. (2014). *Quotatives: New trends and sociolinguistic implications*. Malden: Wiley Blackwell.
- Jørgensen, A. M. (2009). *En plan* used as a hedge in Spanish Teenage Language. In A. B. Stenström & A. M. Jørgensen (eds.), *Youngspeak in a multilingual perspective* (pp. 95–111). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Maschler, Y. (2002). On the grammaticization of ke'ilu ('like', *lit.* 'as if') in Hebrew talk-in-interaction. *Language in Society*, 31, 243–276.
- Palacios Martínez, I. M. (2014). The Quotative System in Spanish and English Youth Talk: A Contrastive Corpus-Based Study. *Miscelánea*, 49, 95–113.
- Van Alphen, I. (2006). Ik had zoiets van 'doei'. Interactioneel sociolinguistische aspecten van van-citaten. [I was like 'bey'. Interactional sociolinguistic aspects of van-quotations.] In T. Koole, J. Nortier and B. Tahitu (eds.), *Artikelen van de Vijfde sociolinguistische conferentie*, (pp. 29–42). Delft: Eburon.
- Van Alphen, I. (2008). Het zijn niet mijn woorden hoor'. Gender and (pseudo-)citaten. [These are not my words hey, Gender and pseudo-quotations]. *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies, Themanummer Taal*, 11, 37–52.
- Ziv, Y. (1998). Hebrew *kaze* as discourse marker and lexical hedge: Conceptual and procedural properties. In A. H. Jucker and Y. Ziv (eds.), *Discourse Markers: Descriptions and theory* (pp. 203–221). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.