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Production and judgment of linguistic devices for attaining a detached stance in Spanish and Catalan

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Abstract

Mastery of expository text construction is a major expectation of all formal educational environments. These texts approach the discussion of topics from a detached stance, with limited intervention of specific participants and avoiding markers of personal involvement. Speakers/writers need to learn that such detachment constitutes a feature of the expository genre, as well as the particular way in which their language encodes the various means for (down)grading agency. We report two studies that aimed to explore the development of a detached stance in the expository genre from a cross-linguistic perspective. Study 1 examined the productive linguistic resources used by 70 (Iberian) Spanish monolingual and 67 Catalan/Spanish bilingual participants for expressing degrees of detachment in expository texts (N = 137) at different ages/schooling levels (grade school, junior-high, high-school, and university). Study 2 examined the off-line preferences of 62 Spanish-monolingual and 62 Spanish/Catalan bilingual participants (N = 124) at grade school, junior-high, and high-school in a preference judgment task. Production results (Study 1) showed that participants across age-groups and languages used linguistic options that fit the detachment requirements of expository texts. However, younger participants used phrase-level (local) detachment devices to a larger extent than those involving a rearrangement of argument structure (non-local devices), which showed a protracted development. This age effect was moderated by the modality of text production: Non-local devices were more typical of written texts. Language differences revealed a more detached stance in Catalan than in Spanish. Preference-judgment data (Study 2) revealed that younger participants more readily accept non-local devices as the most suitable choice for expository text construction. The complementary results from production and judgment data point at fundamental differences between language use and language awareness with regard to the demands of the expository genre.

Keywords: Detached stance; Expository texts; Catalan; Spanish; Oral and written production; Discourse development

1. Introduction

The construction of a text is a complex task that mobilizes different kinds of knowledge, processes and strategies. Speakers/writers must come to grips with content—events, participants, ideas, scenarios—, communicative purposes, actual or potential interlocutors, on-line processing constraints, and a diversity of linguistic resources and rhetorical options. Any language provides its speakers/writers with a range of ways of showing the degree of involvement of

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participants in the events reported or the ideas being discussed, which combine lexical items and grammatical morphemes in various construction types. In other words, each language deploys a set of means for speakers/writers to show the extent to which he/she is involved in the situation being described. Therefore, speakers/writers need to learn that such detached stance constitutes a feature of the expository genre, as well as the particular way in which their language encodes the various means for downgrading agency.

The goal of the reported work is threefold. Our first aim was to identify the linguistic resources (Iberian) Spanish- and bilingual Catalan/Spanish-speaking children, adolescents, and adults deploy on-line—for speaking and writing—to express detachment when discussing a topic. Our second aim was to investigate speakers/writers' off-line preferences for the same linguistic resources, when required to select among alternatives the option they considered most appropriate for completing a written expository text. Our third aim was to compare naturalistic production and judgment of the same devices in two closely related languages, Catalan and Spanish, by speakers/writers at four different age/schooling levels.

To meet these goals, two studies were conducted. In Study 1, participants were shown a non-verbal video film displaying a series of conflicts at school and were then asked to write an essay and give a talk discussing their ideas on the topic. In Study 2, a different set of participants completed a preference judgment task, in which they were required to select one out of three options for expressing detachment in the context of an expository text on the same topic. In this way, we were able to contrast production and judgment of a specific type of linguistic resources which are essential to the construction of expository texts.

1.1. Encoding a depersonalized stance in expository texts

Expository discourse has been described as the use of language to convey information (Bliss, 2002; Nippold and Scott, 2010). Expository texts constitute a 'macrogenre' (Grabe, 2002) that includes several subgenres that range from research papers to the discussion of personal views and claims. When discussing ideas, speakers/writers center on a topic with the aim of exposing the topic and subtopics, so as to construct them in the addressee's mind (Berman and Katzenberger, 2004; Britton, 1994; Havelock, 1986). Expository texts are supposed to approach this discussion from a detached stance, diminishing the intervention of specific participants/entities and personal involvement. In this sense, the linguistic resources that serve to express a depersonalized stance (henceforth, *detachment devices*) function as a genre feature that accounts for the peculiarity of expository genre.[4] This feature is reinforced in the written modality. The greater detachment of written language is conceived of as resulting from the distance in space and time between text producers and text receivers (Olson, 1977). However, the characteristics traditionally attributed to written language clearly do not apply uniformly to every written genre (Besnier, 1988). Studies on written texts fulfilling different functions in a variety of social contexts showed that it is not modality of production *per se* but its interaction with genre and the sociocultural context that brings out a more involved or detached stance (Besnier, 1988; Biber, 1989; Tannen, 1982). The discussion of a topic mobilizes resources for depersonalization and these are enhanced in writing. In effect, when comparing written narrative with written expository texts, the latter appear as the preferred site for rhetorical devices for attaining a detached stance (Berman and Ravid, 2009; Tolchinsky and Rosado, 2005). The two studies we present here focused on the linguistic resources speakers/writers use to express a detached stance in the context of expository texts contrasting spoken with written text production.

The term *discourse stance* defines ''a linguistically articulated form of social action'' (Du Bois, 2007:139); that is, a linguistic as well as social act to be interpreted within the scope of language, social interaction, and sociocultural values. Taking a stance necessarily involves evaluation and/or assessment. Specific acts of stance-taking allow the speaker/writer to focus on a defined target, and to activate socially relevant values in order to appraise the meaning and implications of specific events and participants (Du Bois, 2007).

A key aspect of the text-embracing notion of discourse stance is *perspective* (Berman et al., 2002; Berman, 2005). The term *perspective* is used to express the particular aspect from which a (cognitive) scene is viewed; the grammatical subject and the grammatical direct object constitute the nuclear elements which express such perspective (Fillmore, 1977). One of the components of perspective is *agentivity* because it expresses the degree of involvement of the participants in the scene (Berman, 1993; Berman and Slobin, 1994).

Consider the following sentences (1a and 1b) that were written by the same 12-year-old girl to illustrate variations in agentivity,

[4] The term ''genre feature'' is inspired in Biber's ''register features'', which are linguistic features that distribute differently in different genres. Biber (1995) uses the term *register* ''as the general cover-term associated with all aspects of variations in use'' (1995:9). In the present paper, we adopted the definition of genre suggested by Biber in his 1989 work, as text categorization based on external criteria relating mainly to author/speaker's purposes.

(1a) *Entonces, mi amiga y yo nos fuimos cada una para nuestro lado.*
'Then, my friend and I CL-we went each other to our side.'
[12, f., narr. sp.][5]

(1b) *Hay alumnos que son despreciados por otros compañeros.*
'There-are pupils that are despised by other classmates.'
[12, f., exp. sp.]

In both sentences the girl refers to certain difficulties that happen among students. In (1a), however, two specific protagonists (the writer and her friend) are personally involved in the difficulties the writer is describing, whereas in (1b) the two protagonists are far less specific, they are referred to by a plural noun with a general reference (*alumnos* 'pupils', and *compañeros* 'classmates'). Moreover, in (1a) the writer uses an active construction, whereas in (1b) an existential construction is used for introducing the entity affected by the event, and a passive construction for the unspecified agent.

Thus, agentivity is a property of propositions that reflects the degree of involvement of the participants/entities in the situations being described (Comrie, 1976[6]). Variations in agentivity create a more or less detached stance. These variations may be realized by various resources along the dimensions of word morphology, lexicon, syntax, and semantic content.

1.2. Types of detachment devices

Previous studies on Spanish and French (Jisa and Tolchinsky, 2009; Tolchinsky and Rosado, 2005), have identified a set of resources for downgrading agentivity based on both referentiality and discourse criteria (Fernández-Soriano and Táboas, 1999; Hernanz, 1990). Such resources were shown to have a crucial effect on the distinction between the personalized perspective of personal-experience narratives and the more distanced, impersonal perspective of expository discourse. Within the repertoire of devices for detachment that was initially identified, a crucial distinction between *local* and *non-local* or *clause-level* resources was introduced (Jisa and Tolchinsky, 2009), driven by the differences between the sentential contexts and the operational costs involved in each case. Local detachment devices are those which involve a lexical/morphological selection of the agent and take place within a noun phrase. In contrast, non-local detachment devices involve the manipulation of the clause argument structure and take place in the realm of the clause. Local and non-local detachment devices may also be argued to differ in terms of short-term and/or working memory demands. It has been claimed that processes that involve mental transformations, such as the rearrangement of a series of components, are more cognitively demanding than those involving the insertion or deletion of elements, without altering the order of constituents (Cowan, 2008). Therefore, it could be argued that the use of local devices, which simply involves the choice of certain lexical or morphological items at the phrasal level, should be less cognitively costly than the use of clause-level devices, which require manipulation of argument structure at the clause level.

Non-deictic use of 2SG, 1PL and 3PL verb person (see example 2), use of collective noun phrases (NPs), and of universal quantifiers (3), were considered to be local resources because the downgrading effect obtains from the use of morphological or lexical elements in otherwise active constructions. In contrast, *se*-marked constructions (4) or periphrastic passives (5) were considered to be non-local resources because in these constructions the downgrading effect obtains from the rearrangement of the argument structure of an active rendering. Ser-marked passives are the closest, in Spanish, to English ''syntactic'' or ''verbal'' passives (Keenan, 1985), while *estar*-passives can often be translated into English *get* passives.

(2) *Cuando llegas a un colegio nuevo, te aíslan.*
'When (you) arrive at a school new, (they) CL_2SG cut.off_3PL.'
'When you arrive at a new school, they cut you off.'
[16, f., exp. sp.]

(3) *La gente discute por este tipo de problemas.*
'DET people argue about this type of problems.'
[Adult, m., exp. wr.]

(4) *Se pueden solucionar las cosas*
se-CLI.can solve the things
'Things can be solved'
[Adult, m., exp. wr.]

[5] A participant ID is provided for all the examples included. The numbers indicate the age in years, except for the adult group ('adult'); f stands for female, and m stands for male. Narratives and expository texts are referred to as 'narr' and 'exp' respectively, and 'sp'/'wr' are used to identify spoken and written production.

[6] Comrie (1976) uses the term *situation* to refer to a state (BE), activity (DO), or event (BECOME or HAPPEN).

(5) *Personas que no son aceptadas por algún defecto*
'People who not are accepted for some defect'
'People who are not accepted because of some defect'

[16, m., exp. wr.]

We also considered the role of existential constructions (6). These impersonal, uninflected verbal forms head a subjectless structure that contains an NP argument, and typically introduce it in the context of discourse. These constructions were taken to represent an in-between category, since, in spite of globally affecting sentence structure; their detaching effect does not involve the rearrangement of an active structure.

(6) *En este instituto hay alumnos que tienen problemas de este tipo*
'In this high-school there.are students who have problems of this sort'

[16, m., exp. wr.]

1.3. The development of a detached discourse stance

Studies in Romance languages have shown that already at age 9 speakers/writers are able to encode a depersonalized discourse stance in expository texts. Moreover, there is a general increase with age (and increasing experience with academic texts) in the overall use of detachment devices. Spanish speakers, however, rely more on local resources and on existential constructions than on non-local devices and, local devices become productive earlier than non-local devices involving the rearrangement of argument structure. Although, non-local resources are part of the repertoire of Spanish speakers/writers at age 9, and even earlier, they are considerably scarcer. Studies have shown that both the rate of occurrence and the variety of the resources that are used by the same speaker/writer increase with age (Jisa and Tolchinsky, 2009; Tolchinsky and Rosado, 2005).

However, extant knowledge on the development of a detached discourse stance is based solely on production data. As in other domains of language (e.g., phonology, syntax) or language acquisition (e.g. Clark, 1993 for first language acquisition; Gass et al., 1999 for second language acquisition) speakers' judgment of adequacy of rhetorical devices may differ from their actual use of these devices in on line performance. The present paper, thus, intends to replicate studies on the naturalistic production of detachment devices, while complementing them with preference-judgment data.

1.4. Detachment in Spanish and Catalan

Spanish and Catalan are structurally very much alike, and a detached stance can be attained through similar lexical, morphological, and syntactic resources. The language-specific use of local and non-local resources at speakers/writers' disposal for achieving a detached stance should thus reflect stylistic traits associated with each language. Some indications of rhetorical preferences despite structural similarities were found when comparing Spanish with French. Despite the fact that both are Romance languages, which share multiple structural features, in French the use of periphrastic passives is favored over the use of *se*-construction. In contrast, Spanish informants tend to prefer *se*-constructions over periphrastic passive constructions (Jisa and Tolchinsky, 2009). In Spanish, and especially in Catalan, the use of the passive voice is explicitly discouraged in style manuals (Coromina, 1991), in spite of being a well-documented, genuine Romanic form (Batlle, 2002; Coromines, 1991; Mendikoetxea, 1999). The alternatives to passive voice in Catalan include left-dislocated structures or constructions with impersonal clitic *es/se* (Campos, 2004; Vallduví, 1992).

The current study should enable us to pinpoint differences in rhetorical preferences in spite of structural similarities. If selection among options is chiefly constrained by the structural closeness of the two languages, no significant differences should emerge in the use of these devices; if, on the on the contrary, speakers/writers are chiefly guided by rhetorical preferences, we should find differences between the two language groups. It is important to note at this point that the Catalan speakers included in the study, as most Catalan speakers in Catalonia, are bilingual Catalan/Spanish. Catalonia is a fully bilingual community, where Spanish and Catalan coexist as official languages, with Catalan being the language of schooling throughout compulsory education. Both languages have traditionally influenced each other and both characteristically show traces of diachronic influence.

1.5. Description of the studies

We first set to establish the extent to which Spanish- and Catalan-speaking participants differ in their use of local and non-local linguistic devices to attain a detached stance in a discourse genre that is known to elicit such devices. We do so from a developmental perspective, examining the use of the target resources at different ages/schooling levels (grade school, junior-high, high-school, and university). In addition, we analyzed the effect that the modality of text production (spoken vs. written) might have on the expression of such devices. Finally, we then focused on whether speakers/writers show similar

off-line preferences for the same set of devices. The two studies that were carried out targeted the same linguistic devices, as dependent variables, and shared age/schooling level and language as the independent variables, but differed in the elicitation method. Note that a different, though comparable, group of participants formed part of each study.

In Study 1 we used a naturalistic text construction task to identify the detachment resources speakers/writers deploy when discussing a topic, comparing local to non-local devices, to determine the effect of age/level of schooling, modality of production (spoken vs. written), and language (Catalan vs. Spanish) on the use of these resources. We predicted that the use of the two types of devices—local and non-local—would increase with school level, but local devices would be more frequently used by younger participants than clause-level devices. Moreover, the use of devices for attaining a detached stance would be sensitive to modality. In line with previous studies (e.g., Berman and Ravid, 2009; Tolchinsky and Rosado, 2005), we expected that participants would use all these devices more frequently in the written rather than in the spoken modality. Given the structural, typological, and genetic closeness of Spanish and Catalan, we expected no cross-linguistic differences.

Because production data often provides a partial and sometimes impoverished view of speakers/writers' sensitivity to the function of specific linguistic devices, a second aim of this paper was to complement it with judgment data. It might be the case that speakers/writers have a clear notion of the contribution of these linguistic devices to create a detached text, in spite of using them scarcely. For this reason, we designed a second study that addressed participants' explicit choices, from a set of rhetorical alternatives, in order to get "a good expository text". We assumed that, by taking into account both production and judgment data, we would obtain a more complete picture of the development of a detached stance in Spanish and Catalan.

Consequently, in Study 2 we used a structured preference judgment task to determine participants' offline preferences for the same detachment devices analyzed in Study 1. The effect of age/schooling level and language on participants' choices was also examined. The purpose was thus to complement our findings on text construction with information about explicit choices, which may reveal participants' awareness of the adequacy of linguistic devices for creating a detached stance in an expository text.

2. Study 1

2.1. Participants

Seventy native speakers of (Iberian) Spanish and 67 Catalan/Spanish bilingual speakers participated in the study. The Spanish sample was recruited and tested in Cordova (Andalusia), and the Catalan sample was recruited and tested in Barcelona (Catalonia). Participants from the Spanish group were monolingual speakers, and those from the Catalan group were Catalan-Spanish bilingual speakers whose home language was Catalan and who were attending schools where Catalan was the language of instruction. They were divided into four age groups: grade school, junior-high, and high school students, and university adults.

The Spanish sample was formed by 20 grade-school children (10 boys), mean age: 9;7 (range 9;0–11;1); 20 junior-high students (10 boys), mean age: 12;8 (range 12;2–13;8); 20 high school students (10 boys), mean age: 16;10 (range 16;2–17;10); and a group of 10 university adults (10 male), mean age: 22;2 (range 18;11–28;4). The Catalan sample was formed by 18 grade-school children (9 boys), mean age: 10;0 (range 9;6–10;9); 19 junior-high students (7 boys), mean age: 12;11 (range 12;4–13;4), 20 high-school students (8 boys), mean age: 17;1 (range 16;3–18;10); and a group of 10 university adults (5 male), mean age: 22;0 (range 19;1–24;2).

Participants were from middle-class backgrounds and well-educated, according to the mother's education level. They were selected at their schools by their teachers, who were instructed to choose them according to these criteria. To ensure the accomplishment of these criteria in participants' recruitment, participants were administrated a sociolinguistic questionnaire. It included questions about their parents' profession, their home literacy habits, whether parents were helping them with their homework, and the kind of joint activities they made with their parents. Questions also inquired about bilingual participants' language use, such as what was the language of communication with their parents, brothers and sisters, and schoolmates; whether they read books in Catalan or Spanish; and if they did homework in Catalan or Spanish.

2.2. Materials and procedures

The same tasks for data elicitation were adopted in both language groups.[7] Participants were first shown a 5-min video film without words, depicting various types of conflict situations in a school setting: moral, social, and physical. After

[7] The current study formed part of a larger cross-linguistic research project on "Developing Literacy in Different Contexts and Different Languages" funded by a major grant from the Spencer Foundation, Chicago, 1997–2001, Ruth Berman, PI, conducted in seven countries with native speakers of: Californian English, Dutch, French, Hebrew, Icelandic, Spanish, and Swedish. See Berman (2008) and Berman and Verhoeven (2002) for details.

watching the video, they were asked to tell and to write a story about a personal experience in which they had been involved, that presented a similar conflict or problem to those shown in the video (spoken and written personal-experience narrative texts) and also to give a talk and write a composition discussing the topic of conflicts at school (spoken and written expository texts). This yielded a total of four monologic texts from each participant. Participants were tested individually by the same experimenter in each language group (one experimenter collected all the Catalan data and another one the Spanish data). The four tasks were administered in two sessions, and the order of administration was counterbalanced. In the present study, we examined only spoken and written *expository* texts produced by the Spanish and the Catalan groups. The study thus involved three independent variables: language, Spanish and Catalan; modality of production, spoken and written; and age or level of schooling—grade school, junior-high, high-school, and university adults. The corpora of texts analyzed were therefore constituted by 274 texts divided equally between the two modalities (spoken and written). There were 134 texts in Catalan and 140 texts in Spanish.

2.3. Categories of analysis

All productions were transcribed and coded using CHAT format (CHILDES project, MacWhinney, 2000). The unit of transcription was the clause, as a unit of event construal (Berman and Slobin, 1994). The study focused on the two main types of devices for expressing detachment: local devices, which affect verb morphology or the lexical element (NP) functioning as the agent—i.e. non-deictic use of verbal person, collective nouns, and universal quantifiers, as described in the previous section; and non-local (clause-level) devices, which involve a rearrangement of argument structure—passive voice and *se*-marked constructions. Finally, we included existential constructions *hay/hi ha(n)* as an in-between category, with features of both local and non-local devices. Two authors coded all target constructions and differences were resolved through discussion until 100% agreement was reached.

Coding of specific expressions (in a form/function approach of the kind adopted here) is the necessary outcome of textual analysis, rather than an application of automatic procedures based on surface morphosyntactic forms. The coding of target devices frequently required taking into account the texts in which they were used.

2.3.1. Local devices

When counting non-deictic uses of person in verbal morphology, we considered all utterances in which no specific referent could be identified in the text. This procedure required, apart from the identification of all these instances, a careful look into each of the text transcriptions, in order to make sure that the reference was clearly generic and/or non-referential, and that the subjects/agents were not mentioned at any point in the text. Sometimes agentivity may not be realized by verb morphology, typically in verbs whose subjects are not agents (e.g., unaccusative verbs, such as *gustar* 'to like' or *doler* 'to hurt/feel pain'). In such cases, agentivity is conveyed by clitic pronouns. We therefore counted nonreferential uses of 2SG, 1PL and 3PL clitic pronouns functioning as notional agents. On the other hand, universal quantifiers, collective nouns, and plural nouns with generic reference in subject position were counted. We considered universal determiners with a distributive value: *cada persona es responsable de*. . . 'each person is responsible for. . .', *cadascú* 'each one/everyone', and we furthermore included the case of *ambdós/ambdues* 'both'. We also counted collective nouns, such as *la gente* 'people' and noun phrases with generic reference, such as *los alumnos* 'pupils' whenever they referred anaphorically to a referent already identified in the text. The underlying goal in the coding of these morphological lexical devices was to cover all the range of utterances that implied a detached stance realized by a specific morpheme or lexical item, cautiously avoiding an overestimation of resources.

2.3.2. Non-local devices

Non-local devices included, on the one hand, passive voice constructions and, on the other hand, *se*-marked impersonal constructions. With regard to the coding of the passive voice, we counted all instances of *ser* and *estar*-passive voice constructions, which are the most frequently used passive-voice auxiliaries. We also counted other auxiliary or aspectual verbs that may appear in passive constructions, such as *venir* 'to come', *tener* 'to have', and *acabar* 'to finish' (Mendikoetxea, 1999). Occurrences of past participles without an inflected verb were considered as passive-voice constructions with verb ellipsis, in line with much of the literature (e.g., Jisa and Viguié, 2005). This analysis leaves aside the question as to how to interpret the (elided) auxiliary—*ser* or *estar*—, although it is usually retrievable from context. In short, each possible type of passive (*ser*-marked; *estar*-marked; passives with other verbs, with or without overt agents; and participle passives) was coded separately, although they will be considered as a group in the analyses. With regard to the coding of *se*-marked constructions, we counted *se*-marked passives, which take a patient perspective; *se*-marked impersonals with agent removal; and *se*-middles, which take a theme perspective. Although counted separately, these structures will be analyzed as a group, following Bartra (2002).

2.3.3. Existential constructions

All instances of the existential constructions were counted. In Spanish, the existential construction is formed by the verb *haber* and, in Catalan, by the verb *haver-hi.* In both cases such verbs are followed by a NP complement. In both languages existential constructions are used to introduce new referents, although Catalan *hi ha* 'there is/are' may also serve to talk about previously mentioned arguments, whose existence is known by both speaker and hearer. The scope of the existential construction in Catalan is, therefore, broader than in Spanish.

2.4. Results

Because speaker–writers produced texts of differing length, all analyses were performed on mean proportions of each device type over the total number of clauses in a given text. A series of repeated-measures ANOVAs with one within-subjects factor, modality of production (spoken, written), and two between-subjects factors, language (Spanish, Catalan) and age (grade-school, junior-high, high-school, and adults), were conducted. Moreover, we ran two separate repeated-measures ANOVAs (one for each language group), with the same factors as above and *device type* (local, non-local, existential) as an additional within-subjects factor. The goal of these last two analyses was to determine speakers' preferences for the use of the various devices as a function of the main variables of the study, that is, the way the different types of devices are distributed by age and modality of production. Tests are significant at the .05 level, and all focused contrasts, post hoc analyses, and follow up *t*-tests were computed with the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons.

We predicted a general increase with age in the use of all detachment devices, but we did not have a specific prediction for language effect. We expected that written texts would present a more detached stance than the spoken ones. As for the distribution of the different types of devices, we predicted an interaction between age and device type: local devices, which achieve a detached stance through morphological or lexical means, were predicted to be preferred over other types of devices, especially by the youngest age groups. Contrarily, non-local devices, which require clause reorganization, were predicted to be the preferred choice over other device types by the older age groups. Given the mixed local/non-local nature of existential constructions, they will be presented as a separate category in subsequent analyses.

2.4.1. Effects of modality of production, language, and age on the detachment devices

Tables 1a and 1b show the descriptive statistics for every group of devices in Spanish (Table 1a) and Catalan (Table 1b), and Tables 2a and 2b show their corresponding subtypes (for Spanish and Catalan, respectively), in each modality, and age

Table 1a
Mean percentages of detachment devices by age group and modality in Spanish.

School level	*n*	Local devices		Nonlocal devices		Existentials	
		Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)
Grade school	20	11.25 (14.77)	17.84 (23.16)	3.74 (9.34)	5.96 (11.70)	6.00 (9.66)	4.13 (7.22)
Junior high	20	23.66 (26.59)	21.06 (13.48)	5.67 (8.31)	7.15 (8.21)	4.44 (4.66)	5.11 (8.20)
High school	20	17.43 (10.65)	12.47 (10.69)	4.95 (3.69)	12.03 (8.85)	5.60 (6.10)	2.91 (4.04)
Adults	10	21.14 (17.62)	30.43 (33.80)	9.58 (9.31)	10.62 (9.14)	2.35 (3.35)	2.32 (2.35)
Total	70	17.98 (18.72)	19.02 (20.28)	5.47 (7.84)	8.69 (9.76)	4.92 (6.70)	3.80 (6.26)

Note: Percentages calculated over total number of clauses produced. Local devices = use of verbal person + collective nouns and universal determiners + nouns phrases with generic reference; nonlocal devices = passive constructions + impersonal constructions.

Table 1b
Mean percentages of detachment devices by age group and modality in Catalan.

School level	*n*	Local devices		Nonlocal devices		Existentials	
		Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)
Grade school	18	26.85 (25.18)	20.47 (39.65)	11.02 (14.94)	7.80 (15.06)	3.39 (7.78)	5.88 (13.17)
Junior high	19	56.83 (92.03)	21.08 (18.85)	12.62 (15.39)	5.86 (6.38)	13.54 (14.96)	7.86 (9.23)
High school	20	28.25 (37.45)	18.32 (16.70)	8.75 (7.68)	16.95 (15.72)	7.94 (8.93)	5.63 (5.45)
Adults	10	19.31 (13.40)	13.74 (19.69)	13.99 (12.58)	28.20 (37.85)	6.81 (7.17)	3.11 (4.15)
Total	67	34.65 (55.75)	19.00 (25.32)	11.24 (12.81)	13.03 (19.95)	8.14 (11.02)	5.95 (9.01)

Note: Percentages calculated over total number of clauses produced. Local devices = use of verbal person + collective nouns and universal determiners + nouns phrases with generic reference; nonlocal devices = passive constructions + impersonal constructions.

Table 2a
Mean percentages of detachment subtypes by age group and modality in Spanish.

School level	*n*	VP		COL + UD + NPG		*Se*-marked		Passives		Existentials	
		Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)
Grade school	20	8.61 (14.70)	13.46 (23.93)	2.64 (5.36)	4.37 (7.26)	2.67 (8.45)	5.19 (10.12)	1.07 (2.86)	0.77 (2.37)	6.00 (9.66)	4.13 (7.22)
Junior high	20	16.33 (25.80)	12.66 (15.50)	7.32 (8.92)	8.40 (9.33)	4.73 (8.16)	5.50 (8.14)	0.94 (2.36)	1.65 (3.93)	4.44 (4.66)	5.11 (8.20)
High school	20	11.47 (10.43)	6.93 (10.88)	5.97 (5.00)	5.54 (4.72)	4.03 (3.68)	7.99 (7.61)	0.92 (1.37)	4.01 (3.59)	5.60 (6.10)	2.91 (4.04)
Adults	10	17.13 (18.82)	25.54 (34.99)	4.01 (2.47)	4.89 (3.78)	9.15 (9.54)	4.17 (3.08)	0.43 (0.58)	6.45 (7.77)	2.35 (3.35)	2.32 (2.35)
Total	70	12.85 (18.19)	13.09 (21.20)	5.13 (6.41)	5.93 (7.01)	4.57 (7.60)	5.93 (8.09)	0.90 (2.10)	2.76 (4.60)	4.92 (6.70)	3.80 (6.26)

Note: Percentages calculated over total number of clauses produced. VP = use of verbal person; COL = collective nouns; UD = universal determiners; NPG = noun phrase with generic reference.

Table 2b
Mean percentages of detachment subtypes by age group and modality in Catalan.

School level	*n*	VP		COL + UD + NPG		*Se*-marked		Passives		Existentials	
		Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)	Spoken *M* (SD)	Written *M* (SD)
Grade school	19	23.87 (25.05)	18.21 (15.38)	2.98 (4.30)	2.26 (4.69)	9.13 (14.85)	6.97 (13.06)	1.89 (4.14)	0.83 (2.48)	3.39 (7.78)	5.88 (13.17)
Junior high	18	47.79 (79.58)	15.38 (16.76)	9.04 (15.99)	5.70 (7.00)	4.75 (7.75)	2.79 (3.34)	7.87 (12.59)	3.06 (5.26)	13.54 (14.96)	7.86 (9.23)
High school	20	24.89 (35.76)	13.53 (12.49)	3.36 (3.62)	4.80 (6.86)	5.91 (5.89)	9.09 (7.94)	2.84 (3.22)	7.86 (10.39)	7.94 (8.93)	5.63 (5.45)
Adults	10	16.08 (13.21)	11.29 (17.16)	3.23 (3.30)	2.45 (3.25)	11.23 (11.66)	16.36 (17.20)	2.76 (2.05)	11.84 (21.74)	6.81 (7.17)	3.11 (4.15)
Total	67	29.80 (49.18)	14.98 (23.07)	4.85 (9.32)	4.02 (6.02)	7.24 (10.36)	7.82 (11.16)	4.00 (7.58)	5.21 (10.96)	8.14 (11.02)	5.95 (9.01)

Note: Percentages calculated over total number of clauses produced. VP = use of verbal person; COL = collective nouns; UD = universal determiners; NPG = noun phrase with generic reference.

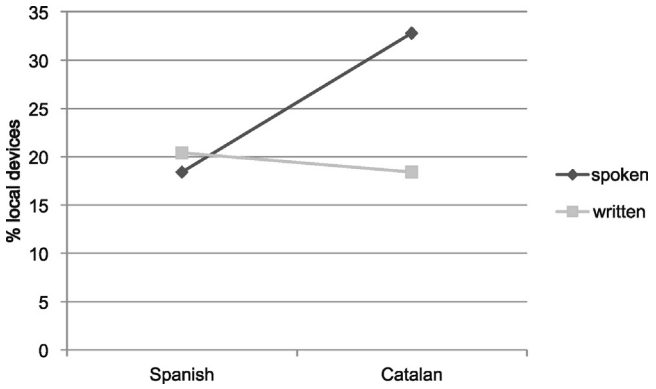

Fig. 1. Language × modality interaction in the production of local devices.

group. Local devices presented a significant interaction between language and modality, $F(1, 129) = 4.76$, $p = .031$ (Fig. 1). Follow up *t*-tests revealed that Catalan participants used significantly more local devices than Spanish participants in their spoken texts, $t(80.12) = 2.33$, $p = .023$. No other significant main effects or interactions were found for local devices. A more fine-grained analysis of the different subtypes of local devices (use of verbal person, and collective nouns and universal determiners) indicated that the use of verbal person followed virtually the same trend as the local devices category, with a significant interaction between language and modality of production, $F(1, 129) = 4.71$, $p = .032$, as the only significant effect. Meanwhile, the proportion of collective nouns and universal determiners was affected by age, $F(3, 129) = 5.07$, $p = .002$. Post hoc analyses revealed that there was a significant increase from the grade-school group to the junior high group, but no other contrasts were significant.

In short, the use of local devices for detachment was not sensitive to age differences, with the minor exception of collective nouns and universal determiners, increasing with age. Differences as a function of language were found for spoken texts only: when producing spoken expository texts, Catalan participants used local devices more than Spanish participants. No effect of modality of production in the use of the local devices group was found.

A main effect of language was found for non-local devices, $F(1, 129) = 9.50$, $p = .003$, with Catalan participants making a more extensive use of such devices than their Spanish peers. Non-local devices were also influenced by the modality of production and were more typical of written than spoken texts, $F(1, 129) = 4.89$, $p = .029$. Moreover, there was a significant main effect of age, $F(3, 129) = 3.48$, $p = .018$. Post hoc tests showed significant differences between the group of adults and those of grade-school and junior-high students, meaning that older participants included more non-local detachment devices in their texts than younger ones. Finally, a significant interaction between modality of production and age was found, $F(1, 129) = 4.16$, $p = .008$ (Fig. 2). Follow-up *t*-tests showed that high-school and adult participants included more non-local devices in their written texts, though this pattern was significant only for the high-school group $t(39) = 3.43$, $p = .001$. Younger children, on the other hand, did not seem to be sensitive to the constraints imposed by the different modalities of production and produced similarly detached texts in either modality. Finally, a one-way simple

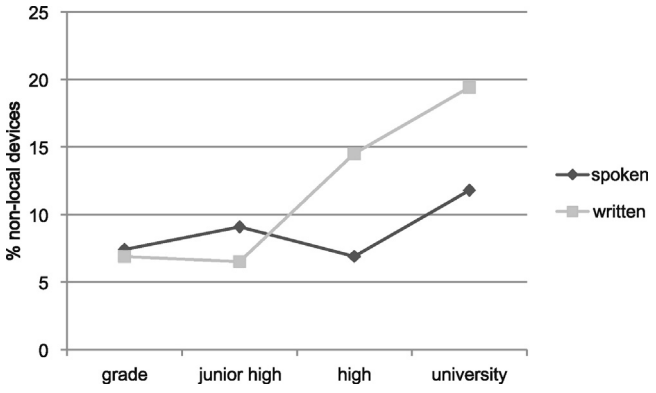

Fig. 2. Age group by modality interaction in the production of non-local devices.

effects ANOVA revealed a significant effect of age in the production of non-local devices only in written texts, $F(3, 136) = 4.91$, $p = .003$, with post hoc tests indicating that significant differences hold for the contrasts between the adult group and both grade-school and junior-high children.

A detailed look into the different subtypes of non-local devices—passive voice and *se*-marked constructions—indicated that, when considered separately, passive voice was affected by the same effects as the non-local devices group as a whole. Catalan participants included more passive voice constructions than their Spanish peers, $F(1, 129) = 10.42$, $p = .002$; also, written texts included a higher proportion of this construction than spoken texts, $F(1, 129) = 7.28$, $p = .008$. Finally, there was a significant main effect of age, $F(3, 129) = 3.78$, $p = .012$. Post hoc tests showed significant differences between grade-schoolers and university adults. In addition, there was a significant interaction between age and modality of production, $F(3, 129) = 6.52$, $p < .001$. Follow up *t*-tests indicated that the youngest age groups, grade-school and junior-high children, included more passive voice constructions in their spoken texts, while the high-school students and adults used passives in their written texts more often than in their spoken texts. Nevertheless, the simple effects analysis was significant only for the high-school group, $t(39) = 3.03$, $p = .004$. Furthermore, one-way ANOVAs to test the simple effect of age in each modality of production indicated that age was a significant factor in the written modality, but not in the spoken one, $F(3, 118) = 6.20$, $p = .001$. According to post hoc tests, the significant contrasts for the written modality were between high-school students and grade-school children, and between adults and both grade-school and junior-high students. In short, although most of the trends found in follow-up tests for passives did not turn out to be significant—most likely as a result of loss of statistical power—, they fit the pattern described above for the entire set of non-local devices.

Se-marked constructions showed to be influenced only by a reduced set of the effects found for the whole set of non-local devices. A main effect of language was found, $F(1, 129) = 4.49$, $p = .036$, with Catalan participants producing a higher mean proportion of impersonal constructions in their texts. Additionally, a marginally significant main effect of age was observed, $F(3, 129) = 2.66$, $p = .051$, mostly stemming from a significant difference between the group of junior high and the adults group—according to post hoc tests—, with older participants producing more *se*-marked constructions on average than younger ones.

Our last type of detachment device was the existential construction. Catalan participants used this structure more often in their texts than their Spanish counterparts, $F(1, 129) = 5.00$, $p = .027$, but no age or modality of production effects were found, as well as no significant interactions.

To sum up, Catalan speakers used more non-local devices to get a detached stance in their texts than their Spanish counterparts, both in written and in spoken texts. In general, non-local devices seemed to be a feature of written, rather than spoken texts. In contrast to local devices, the use of non-local devices did show a developmental pattern, which was moderated by the modality of text production. Specifically, their use increased with age, though mainly in *written* texts. In this sense, the passive voice may be regarded as the prototypical means for achieving a detached stance in written expository text construction. This finding parallels those of Van Hell et al. (2005) and Reilly et al. (2005).

2.4.2. Use of detachment devices in each language

As mentioned above, the distribution and relative importance of each type of device was evaluated for each language separately. Both analyses showed that assumptions of sphericity had not been met and, for that reason, corrected Greenhouse–Geisser degrees of freedom, and their associated *p* values, are reported. In Spanish there was a significant main effect of device type, $F(1.56, 103.15) = 41.22$, $p < .001$, and this was also the case in Catalan, $F(1.27, 79.95) = 15.72$, $p < .001$. Paired contrasts indicated that, for both language groups, local devices were the most preferred option followed by non-local devices, while existentials were the least preferred choice. In addition, a significant interaction between device-type and modality of production was found in Catalan only, $F(1.21, 76.11) = 5.34$, $p = .018$. Follow-up *t*-tests revealed that, when Catalan participants produced spoken texts, they preferred local devices over both non-local, $t(66) = 3.81$, $p < .001$, and existential devices, $t(66) = 4.00$, $p < .001$, but the contrast between non-local and existentials was non-significant. On the other hand, when producing written texts, Catalan participants no longer preferred local devices over non-local ones, although locals were still preferred to existentials, $t(66) = 4.09$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, non-local devices were used significantly more than existentials, $t(66) = 2.72$, $p = .008$.

In a nutshell, Spanish preferred order was local > non-local > existentials, whereas in Catalan the order of use was constrained by modality of production: in spoken texts local devices outnumbered both non-local and existential-construction devices; in written texts there were no significant differences between local and non-local devices, which were both preferred over existentials.

2.5. Discussion

In order to determine the effect of age, language, and modality of production in the use of different means for detachment, we grouped the different resources into local and non-local, according to the type of syntactic operations they

involve. We deliberately left the existential construction separate, given that it presents features of both the local and non-local types. As a general note, it should be stressed that Catalan participants produced more detachment devices of every kind than their Spanish peers. Given that the set of detachment devices is virtually identical in both languages, such differences need to be interpreted as the result of language-specific stylistic preferences and conventions for achieving a detached stance. The fact that no significant interactions between language and age were attested indicates that such language-specific traits had already been acquired by our youngest participants.

Local devices were present in the repertoire of our speakers/writers from the youngest age group, and did not show significant developmental changes. Non-local devices, on the contrary, did appear to constitute a protracted development and were used significantly more by our older participants in both languages. This age effect was moderated by the modality in which texts were produced: The significantly increasing proportion of non-local devices as a function of age took place in written texts. Therefore, according to our data, non-local devices are typical of the written modality in expository text production, and have a longer developmental route than local means for achieving a detached stance.

Existential constructions were only sensitive to language differences. The different scope that existential constructions have in Catalan and Spanish might explain the observed differences. Nevertheless, the hybrid nature we assumed for existential constructions was supported by our data, since they did not align with the results found for either local or non-local devices.

The examination of the specific constructions in each group of devices revealed somewhat ''prototypical'' constructions for each one. The use of verbal person emerged as the local means *par excellence*, while *ser*-marked periphrastic passives best represented non-local devices.

Speakers/writers of all language groups and schooling levels showed preferences for some specific means of detachment over other alternatives. Broadly speaking, local devices were the means most frequently used across the board, followed by non-local devices, and existentials. In Catalan written texts, however, the use of non-local devices increased to a point in which they were no longer distinguished from local devices as for their frequency of use. Notably, the language-specific preferences that were seen in, for example, the overall use of detachment devices, did not hold in terms of the distribution of the different detachment devices: Participants from both languages showed the same patterns of preference from the youngest age group. In sum, linguistic structures that involve a minimal syntactic operation were preferred over arguably more complex, clause-reorganizing options. Nonetheless, with age speakers/writers learn that the very nature of expository written texts demands the use of linguistically more detached options. In this sense, we would argue that non-local, clause-reorganizing devices for achieving detachment constitute a distinctive feature of proficient written expository text production in Catalan and Spanish, with the passive voice as their prototypical construction.

3. Study 2

3.1. Participants

One hundred and sixty grade-school, junior-high, and high school students were recruited for this study. The *Spanish group* was constituted of 89 native speakers of (Iberian) Spanish who attended five different schools in Barcelona where Spanish was the language of instruction. The *Catalan group* consisted of 71 Catalan/Spanish bilingual students who attended school where Catalan was the language of instruction. Data for the Spanish group were collected in a school attended by the children of Spanish native speakers who were temporary residents in Barcelona. Sixteen participants whose L1 was neither Catalan nor Spanish were excluded from further analyses to make sure the sampling was from a homogeneous population.

The remaining subsample (n = 144) participated in a text-recognition activity, in order to ensure that they were able to recognize an expository text. Four texts were selected from the Spanish and Catalan written texts corpora, respectively (total = 8 texts). The texts were selected by the authors after consulting the teachers, to determine whether the texts were suitable to students' level. All four texts had been produced by Study 1 high-school participants. In each language group, three texts belonged to the expository genre and one text was a narrative. Both text types dealt with the topic of 'conflicts at school' and were corrected for grammatical errors, spelling, and punctuation. The teacher read aloud the four texts to the class and asked them to identify the text they judged to be different from the others. Students had a copy of each text while the teacher was reading. Twenty participants who failed to single out the text that differed from the other three were excluded from all analyses. The final data set consisted of 124 participants, 62 in each language group.

The final Spanish group was formed by 23 grade-school students (10 boys), mean age: 10;0, range: 9;4–10;6; 14 junior-high students (6 boys), mean age: 12;8, range: 12;4–13;3; and 25 high-school students (12 boys), mean age: 17;2, range: 16;4–18;10. In the final Catalan group, there were 18 grade-school students (8 boys), mean age: 10;1, range: 9;6–10;6; 22 junior-high students (9 boys), mean age: 12;7, range: 12;3–13;1; and 22 high-school students (11 boys), mean age:17;1, range: 16;3–17;8.

3.2. Materials and procedures

A preference judgment task was designed to evaluate participants' explicit choice of the linguistic resources that better suit an expository text. To warrant ecological validity, a text produced by one of the participants in Study 1 constituted the basis for the preparation of the task materials. Each author selected 3–4 texts from among the Catalan and Spanish corpora of Study 1, with the premise that they included as many of the target constructions as possible. The final text, which had been written by a monolingual Spanish-speaking, high-school student, was chosen from the shortlist by consensus. Adaptations to the original text involved corrections of spelling and punctuation errors, as well as its translation into Catalan, with the necessary adjustments for grammar and style, but keeping the same target constructions and the same type of distracters in each item (see Appendix 1a and 1b, for a sample of the Catalan and Spanish instruments, respectively). The task was moreover tested in a pilot study including 16 participants from grade-school level and 26 from high-school level. Half of them were Catalan/Spanish bilingual speakers and attended schools where Catalan was the language of instruction, and the other half were native speakers of Spanish and attended schools where Spanish was the language of instruction. This pilot study revealed that the task was adequate and only trivial corrections to the original texts were done.

Each sentence in the text had three alternatives for completion. For example, in the first sentence the alternatives for completion were an existential construction, a verb inflected for 1PL, and a verb inflected for 2SG. Participants were asked to select one of the three possibilities in each sentence. There was a total of 19 sentences/items for completion. Sixteen items included the same devices used by speakers/writers in Study 1: local devices (8 items in the Spanish version of the task, 9 items in the Catalan version); non-local devices (8 items in the Spanish version, and 7 items in the Catalan version); and existential (2 items in each version). This distribution of target resources intended to mirror the general distribution of the detachment resources observed in production study (Study 1).

Similarly to Study 1, local devices included use of verbal person, universal quantifiers, and collective nouns or lexical NPs with generic reference. Non-local devices grouped impersonal and passive voice constructions. In addition, the group of local devices in both the Spanish and the Catalan instrument also included three items to test speakers' sensitivity to nominalization, another important genre feature (Biber, 1995). Nominalization is a type of word formation process in which a verb or an adjective (or another part of speech) becomes a noun and may be therefore function as the argument of verbs or of a preposition (Chafe, 1985). Because nominalizations had not been analyzed in Study 1, all statistical analyses were run twice, including and excluding such items. Since results did *not* differ, the most inclusive version (i.e., those with the nominalization items) will be presented in the next section.

The task was administered in groups by the teacher. After presenting the texts to be completed, the teacher delivered the following instructions,

> *We want to write a good expository text and need your help. Read carefully the following text and select, among the three options that you are given in each case, the one you consider the best one. In general, you will see that all options are equivalent; you should choose the one you consider most appropriate to get a good expository text*.

Each participant selected individually what s/he regarded as the most suitable choice for an expository text. The complete procedure lasted no longer than 50 min.

Correct answers—that is, selecting the most detached device out of the three alternatives—were given 1 point, while selecting a less detached option resulted in a score of 0 for any given item. It should be noted that all alternatives constituted grammatically adequate options in each language. However, discursive competence and knowledge of genre-appropriate constraints should guide participants to select the most detached option of the alternatives provided in each item. Final scores for each participant were the raw number of correct responses, thus ranging from 0 to 19. The task showed acceptable reliability levels, Cronbach's α = .78, for Catalan, and Cronbach's α = .76, for Spanish. However, Item 3 (universal quantifier) was found to have a negative item-total correlation in the questionnaires of both languages, so it was dropped from further analyses increasing reliability to α = .79, in Catalan, and α = .78, in Spanish.

3.3. Results

In line with Study 1, participants' choices were analyzed in terms of the influence of language, and age/schooling level. Modality of production was not a factor in this study, having established that *written* expository texts embody the highest demands for the expression of a detached stance. In this sense, subsequent analyses were ran to answer two main research questions: (1) do children's number of correct responses to a task tapping preferences over different detachment devices vary as a function of language and age/schooling level? And (2) does the ability to recognize the best choice to achieve a detached stance vary as a function of type of resource? (Table 3).

A two-way ANOVA revealed a main effect of language, $F(1, 118) = 7.08$, $p = .009$, where the Catalan group outscored the Spanish group. There was also a significant main effect of age, $F(2, 118) = 82.49$, $p < .001$, whereby mean scores

Table 3
Preference judgment task: mean scores and SDs by language and age group.

School level	*n*	Catalan *M* (SD)	*n*	Spanish *M* (SD)
Grade school	18	8.28 (2.47)	23	7.13 (1.87)
Junior high	22	13.68 (3.23)	14	11.36 (2.79)
High school	22	14.45 (2.32)	25	14.32 (2.10)
Total	62	12.39 (3.78)	62	10.98 (3.85)

Note: Range 0–18.

Table 4
Preference judgment task: mean scores and SDs for each device type.

		Local *M* (SD)	Nonlocal *M* (SD)	Existential *M* (SD)
Spanish				
Grade school	23	31.52 (15.93)	44.57 (14.01)	52.17 (31.90)
Junior high	14	56.25 (20.66)	68.75 (20.07)	67.86 (37.25)
High school	25	68.50 (16.97)	89.50 (12.85)	82.00 (24.50)
Catalan				
Grade school	18	38.89 (17.15)	51.59 (12.14)	58.33 (42.88)
Junior high	12	71.21 (20.48)	80.52 (18.99)	81.82 (29.05)
High school	22	81.31 (13.01)	81.17 (15.52)	72.73 (33.55)

increased with schooling experience. Post hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that all age groups differed significantly from each other ($p < .005$). No significant interactions between age and language were attested. Our data suggest that, on the one hand, the Catalan group was more sensitive to the expository genre demands for a detached stance than the Spanish group. On the other hand, participants' awareness of genre-appropriate constraints continues developing until late adolescence.

In order to test participants' accuracy in each type of detachment device, one-way repeated-measures ANOVAs were run for each language and age group, separately. Table 4 shows the mean percentages of correct responses for the different types of devices (local, non-local, and existential). Results indicate that in the Catalan group there was no significant main effect of the type of device in the mean percentage of correct responses. Conversely, within the Spanish group there was a significant main effect of the type of detachment device, in the grade school, $F(1.56, 34.37) = 5.33$, $p = .015$, and the high-school subgroups, $F(1.22, 29.34) = 7.60$, $p = .007$. Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons revealed that grade school children had fewer difficulties to identify non-local and existential devices than local devices as the most detaching device. Similarly, high-school students had fewer difficulties to correctly identify non-local rather than local devices as the best choice to achieve a detached stance, but average accuracy to choose existentials did not differ significantly from either local or non-local devices.

To sum up, all participants obtained higher scores with age and schooling. However, for the Catalan group we found (1) a main effect of language on the mean scores, and (2) no significant differences as a function of the type of target device on the mean percentages of accurate responses. This means that, from the youngest age, participants in the Catalan group were more able than participants in the Spanish group to identify the most detached alternative for the construction of an expository text. Finally, the results obtained for the Spanish group indicate that participants more readily selected non-local devices as the best choice to fit an expository text, in spite of the fact that non-local devices constitute a protracted development in expository text *production* (in line with the findings of Study 1 above). Clearly, there seems to be an early awareness of the vital role these devices play to achieve a detached stance in an expository text.

3.4. Discussion

Study 2 set out to examine participants' awareness of the specific linguistic devices that contribute to create a detached stance in expository written texts. Preference judgment tasks, such as the one presented here, are a useful tool to help understand what people know about a certain domain of knowledge, in this case text construction, even when they have not yet attained a level of performance to match their knowledge. In particular, we intended to determine whether

participants could select the best—i.e., the most detached—alternative in a text completion task. Our results suggest quite robustly that the awareness of the linguistic means for attaining a depersonalized stance in the context of an expository written text is acquired early, increases with age, and continues to develop until late adolescence.

In addition, participants in the Catalan group outperformed those in the Spanish group, a result that resembles the findings of Study 1 with respect to the differences between the Catalan and the Spanish group (see General Discussion below). The Spanish group in Study 2 obtained lower mean scores in the task, and showed a marked preference for non-local devices. In fact, it is only with time that these speakers recognize the detaching power of existential constructions and local devices, which are precisely the most widely used in production (see Study 1).

In contrast, the Catalan group accepted as suitable the whole range of devices. Two lines of rhetorical preferences emerge from these results: on the one hand, the Spanish group more readily opted for a type of devices that typically appear later in development. On the other hand, the Catalan group was more flexible when it comes to judging appropriateness of lexical and syntactic detachment devices. Given that rhetorical flexibility is usually associated with mastery of metalinguistic skills (Ravid and Tolchinsky, 2002), and that bilingual speakers typically exhibit higher levels of metalinguistic awareness in comparison with monolinguals (Bialystok, 1986), we believe that the language differences observed could be attributed to our participants' linguistic backgrounds (Met and Galloway, 1992).

The distinction between local and non-local devices is confirmed by the results of this preference judgment task. Participants soon realize that, for a text of this sort, non-local devices seem more appropriate than local alternatives and, therefore, they occupy the first positions in their list of preferences. Finally, non-local devices, the most popular device type in Study 2, constituted both the type of device less frequently produced and the one to show the most protracted development in the production of expository texts by the same type of speakers/writers.

4. General discussion

Spanish and Catalan speakers display a different behavior when creating a detached stance in expository texts than when judging for appropriateness of detachment devices for this type of text.

When speakers/writers produce an expository text, local devices are preferred over devices affecting argument structure in the two languages analyzed. They are the most frequently used by the youngest group and this preference does not change with age and/or schooling level. However, this is not the case when they are asked to judge what is the most adequate option for an expository text. In other words, Catalan and Spanish speakers are able to identify which linguistic forms best fit the communicative requirements of expository written discourse but these forms are not the ones most frequently used by speakers/writers when it comes to spontaneous production. The lack of a device-type effect, in the case of the Catalan group, and the significant advantage of non-local devices over local ones, in the case of the Spanish group, point at fundamental differences between use and awareness with regard to the demands of the expository genre. What is judged as more detached does not necessarily correspond to what speakers/writers would use when producing a text.

Both the selective preference for non-local devices shown by Spanish speakers and the acceptance of multiple types of devices as suitable for creating a depersonalized perspective shown by Catalan speakers constitute a landmark in the configuration of speaker/writers' linguistic development (Berman and Nir-Sagiv, 2010; Berman and Ravid, 2009; Tolchinsky, 2004; Tolchinsky et al., 2005). In the first case, the development results from incorporating new forms (i.e., passives and *se*-marked constructions) for producing detachment—first in judgment and then in production. In the second case, opting for both local and non-local devices for detachment implies incorporating new forms and assigning new functions to already acquired forms (i.e., local resources). Thus, in the two language groups we witness major developmental changes toward an increase in the use of syntactically more complex constructions and, in the case of Catalan, also toward higher rhetorical flexibility. The bilingual condition of Catalan speakers might facilitate such rhetorical flexibility, whereas general characteristics of linguistic development are likely to explain Spanish speakers' sensitivity for more complex constructions emerging first in judgment and then generalizing to production.

On the other hand, the results of studies 1 and 2 confirm the special status we claimed for *hay/hi ha(n)* existential constructions: while in production data they display a behavior relatively similar to the one shown by local devices, in the case of judgment data they tended to align with the pattern shown by non-local devices, and this holds for both languages. The differences in production observed for Catalan and Spanish are accounted for in the discussion of Study 1. Further research is needed in order to ascertain whether the finding on *hay/hi ha(n)* are related to its quasi-obligatory status of in presentational contexts.

Results of Study 1 showed that, across the board and against our predictions, speakers/writers do not take a more detached stance when writing as compared to speaking. Rather, devices involving more syntactic work (i.e., non-local) are the ones that occur more frequently in written than in spoken texts, with Catalan speakers making a more productive use of such type of devices. This is in line, however, with what was found for Dutch by Van Hell et al. (2005) who, contrary to expectations, did not find differences in the use of personal vs. impersonal pronouns between oral and written texts. Written expository texts are the privileged site for syntactically more complex means for creating a depersonalized stance

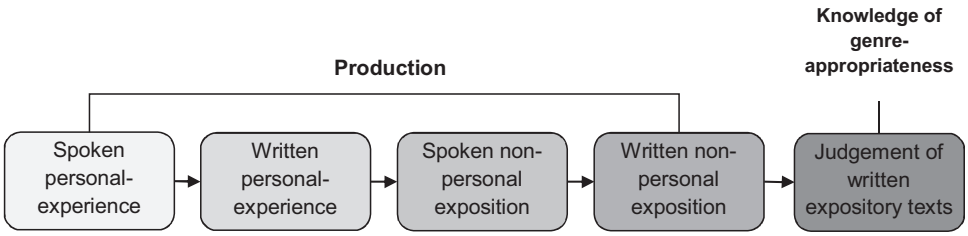

Fig. 3. The detachment continuum.

as they are for heavy subjects (Van de Kopple, 1994), for denser NPs (Ravid et al., 2002), or connectivity devices (Aparici, 2010).

Our findings need to be interpreted in light of the combined effect of modality of production, genre constraints, and (meta) linguistic abilities. When asked to judge the most appropriate device for attaining a detached stance, participants were capable of identifying the most detached, albeit syntactically more complex, stylistic options, but they were not prone to using them productively. We would like to suggest that a **detachment continuum** is a convenient way to accommodate these findings. This continuum (Fig. 3) is, on the one hand, sensitive to genre- and modality demands during text production, showing how the different combinations of those two types of demands result in the more or less detached stance that speakers/writers typically adopt. On the other hand, the detachment continuum also shows the consequences of language users being free from the demands of (spoken or written) text construction. In such contexts, speakers may ''focus-on-form'' and rely solely on metalinguistic awareness to a maximum extent and, what is more, they need not pay any consideration to issues related to syntactic or other sources of complexity. Contrarily, the multiple demands of text construction—which are among the greatest for expository text production (Berman and Nir-Sagiv, 2007, 2009a,b; Johansson, 2009; Nippold, 2004, 2007; Verhoeven et al., 2002)—may make speakers/writers apply their own standards for genre-appropriateness to a lesser extent. In sum, judgment tasks allow speakers to apply their most strict criteria for genre appropriateness.

In conclusion, metalinguistic skills can be argued to be a decisive factor in the successful management of modality of production and genre constraints, linguistic skills, and genre-appropriateness criteria. Not surprisingly, research on metalinguistic awareness has shown that it is developmentally regulated and presents a considerable degree of individual variation (Kess and Hoppe, 1985; Schütze, 1996). In this sense, the apparent contradiction between what the findings from Study 1 (production) and those of Study 2 (judgments) may be resolved by participants having more or less opportunities to apply their metalinguistic skills.

Finally, our findings are well in line with previous studies showing that the comparison between production data and judgment data draws a complex picture where metalinguistic awareness and production do not necessarily go hand-in-hand and therefore reveal important linguistic distinctions (e.g., Rosado, 2006). Therefore, in trying to get a full picture of speakers/writers' linguistic competence on a certain domain, it is imperative to draw upon both types of data. Ways of using language are shaped by the dynamics of cultural values and the perspectives and communicative aims of the speaker (Slobin, 2003). The confrontation of metalinguistic and production data reminds us that the development of the linguistic repertoire is at a crossroads of genre, modality of production, and accessibility to metalinguistic criteria.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2013.10.004.

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