

L'EXPRESSIVITAT EN LA GRAMÀTICA DEL CATALÀ: EL CAS DELS INTENSIFICADORS

EXPRESSIUS

Expressive modifiers in Catalan

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Abstract: In this talk I will describe the set of Catalan expressive modifiers, which provide a subjective assessment of the speaker that does not affect the truth conditions of the sentence, namely expressive meaning. The expressive value of these elements can be encoded in pure expressive intensifiers, such as *fotut -da* 'fucking' or *panyeter -a* 'fucking', which lack descriptive meaning, and mixed expressive intensifiers, such as *maleït -ida* 'damn', which together with the expressive meaning, still convey some descriptive meaning. I will show that the shift from mixed to pure intensifiers is taking place at different paces for different items, with clear syntactic consequences.

Finally, I will show that descriptive and normative reference works have not been particularly generous in the treatment of expressive modifiers, which is a very unfortunate situation, for they are an especially important part of the creation of expressions connoted in colloquial Catalan. Hence, a careful description of these forms can be useful in the task of recovering a Catalan colloquial register which is both genuine and lively.

Keywords: expressive meaning, descriptive meaning, modification, colloquial Catalan