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# Culture & Power

Culture and society in the age of globalisation

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**Major films and minor languages:  
Catalan speakers and the war over dubbing Hollywood films**

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**Dubbing in Catalonia: an overview**

Dubbing was introduced in the 1930s by the Hollywood studios as part of their commercial policy to secure the European markets for their products. The practice of dubbing into Spanish Castilian and other languages spoken in Spain began at the onset of the second Republic (1931-6) and, despite the problem of faulty lip synchronization, which would only be solved for good in the late 1940s, it was welcome with relief by the mostly illiterate Spanish audience (Àvila 1997: 45). Later, Franco's regime (1939-75) turned dubbing into an instrument of political control in imitation of Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy (See Ballester 1995 and 2000). As Rosa Agost notes, dubbing tends to create the illusion that a foreign production is national, thus contributing to erasing unwanted cultural differences (1999: 42), which was quite convenient for the dictator. A legal order of 23 April 1941 made dubbing all foreign films into Spanish Castilian compulsory and prohibited subtitling, which would only be eventually reintroduced in the late 1950s limited to foreign films shown in small art-house cinemas. Films could not be dubbed, in any case, into any of the other main three languages spoken in Spain: Catalan, Galician and Basque.

A new phase in the history of dubbing in Spain opened after Franco's death with the establishment of the public regional televisions in the early 1980s. With the

consolidation of democracy, the repressed Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalisms re-emerged, rejecting the homogeneous, right-wing Spanish nationalism imposed by Franco's regime. The Constitution of 1977 reorganized the Spanish territory into 17 new autonomous regions or *autonomías*: the 3 historical nations, which are bilingual communities, plus 14 former regions with more moderate nationalist urges, or none at all some of them also bilingual. The new nationalist regional governments, especially the Catalan Generalitat, tried to 'normalize' the use of the local languages, which had been practically erased from all manifestations of public life. The nationalists aimed, and still do so, at convincing the speakers of the minor language in their community that its use in public institutions is natural and necessary. When the central government authorized the regional governments to found their own television channels and radio stations the *autonomías* with urgent nationalist agendas saw in this a unique opportunity to consolidate their linguistic policies. Dubbing suddenly became a vital issue as foreign films and programs became the main bait to lure audiences into watching the new media.

Many people, including a large number of Catalan speakers, were initially quite sceptical about the success of the regional public TV channels, considering Catalan generally unsuitable for media use and, specifically, for dubbing films and TV programs. Audiences seemingly felt that only Spanish Castilian had media glamour, whereas Catalan was regarded as a language for domestic use. This attitude gives an accurate indication of how successful Franco's linguistic policies were in undermining the self-confidence of Catalan speakers. TV3, the first public channel entirely in Catalan, soon proved that Catalan has charms of its own by broadcasting in prime time the then extremely popular American series *Dallas* dubbed into Catalan. This drew large audiences, including many spectators who could understand Catalan but didn't speak it, and showed that Catalan dubbing worked to everybody's satisfaction. Twenty years later, TV3 and its companion channels K3 and Canal 33, still offer all their programs in Catalan.

Paradoxically, the same audiences that habitually watch films in Catalan on TV (and it must be noted that TV3 leads ratings in Catalonia) choose to see films in Spanish or with Spanish subtitles in cinemas. In fact, the ratings suggest that Catalan audiences select their programs *regardless* of the language and the particular TV channel showing them, which means that TV3's success is based on the quality of its offer, and not on its linguistic policies. Catalan citizens still feel that cinema is quite another matter, as, first, there is no Catalan film industry that deserves that name, and, second, there is no regular supply of films dubbed into Catalan for cinema release. It is tacitly understood that Spanish Castilian is the 'natural' language of cinemas, while television is the domain of Catalan dubbing, always seen as secondary to Castilian.

Catalonia, a country of 6,000,000 inhabitants (roughly the size of Denmark) makes up 1% of Hollywood's global market.<sup>1</sup> Catalan is spoken in other regions of eastern Spain (Valencia, the Balearic Islands) and southern France, which means that the potential film market for Catalan is larger: between 7,500,000 and 10,000,000, depending on the source. Catalonia alone is actually the sixth European market in number of spectators and the tenth by box-office takings, above, for instance, states like Austria or Greece. It is also a very important market within Spain, generating 25% of the distributors' total income. This does not mean, however, that spectators in the Catalan speaking areas prefer to see films in Catalan. The citizens with children educated in public schools, in which teaching is mostly done in Catalan, are the firmest supporters of dubbing, but, otherwise, very few spectators choose to see films dubbed into Catalan. This is so because even though Catalan is understood by 90% of the population only a minority considers it their first language. For most Catalan citizens everyday life is bilingual with a clear predominance of Castilian over Catalan.

To redress this situation the Generalitat established in 1989 a subsidy system to progressively introduce Catalan dubbing in cinemas. The problem with this system, renewed in 1999, is that the criterion to decide which films qualify to receive public money is quite erratic to say the least. Political opponents often hinted that dishonest distributors use the subsidy system to make up for easily foreseeable losses, petitioning the Generalitat for public money to be invested in dubbing films with little chance of popular success. The publicity for these failed films, based on the supposed allure of the Catalan dubbing, has in addition the undesirable effect of linking the concepts 'uninteresting film' and 'Catalan language' in the mind of prospective audiences. The subsidy system has also another important disadvantage since the public money invested in publicizing Catalan film versions benefits the Spanish versions. A spectator interested in a particular film will see it in the nearest cinema, whether the film is shown in Catalan or not. Similar problems affect the hire and sale of the video versions of the films dubbed into Catalan. The Generalitat is more optimistic about DVD, yet so far very few carry Catalan dubbing or subtitles in this language.

There is a parallel subsidy system to help make Catalan films but since the subsidy is granted on linguistic grounds and not as part of an arts policy, in practice this means that films made in Catalonia but spoken in Spanish Castilian should not qualify for aid. The Generalitat's policies are not always consistent as regards this factor but in some extreme cases the Catalan government has conditioned the granting of a subsidy for films spoken in Spanish to the pre-release of a version dubbed into Catalan, as it is understood that public money should support the *language* rather than film making.

Practically nobody agrees with this narrow linguistic criterion, especially because the small size of the market for films in Catalan means that the money invested in them is wasted. Every year between 80 and 90 new films in Spanish are released; the figure for Catalan films is only around 5, mostly co-produced with TV3. In 1999, for instance, out of more than 28 million tickets sold in Catalonia, only 602,143 were tickets to see films in Catalan, just a tiny 2,12% of the total (125.630 for Catalan films, 476.513 for foreign films dubbed into Catalan).<sup>2</sup> Given this situation, the Generalitat has relented, changing the definition of Catalan film from film spoken in Catalan to film made in Catalonia to simplify the access to subsidies. Pujol's government also started investing more money into TV movies made for Catalan TV3 and shown always dubbed into Catalan though they may be originally filmed in Castilian as co-productions with other regional channels.

### Global markets and local realities: the battle over dubbing in Catalonia

The battle over the Generalitat's decree deserves being recounted in some detail to get a full panorama of the whole war. In June 1998, the Generalitat presented a project for a new decree,<sup>3</sup> framed by the Law of the Usage of Catalan, by which half the copies and 25% of the sessions showing major foreign films (meaning those with more than 16 copies distributed in Catalonia) should have to be exhibited in Catalan under penalty of a substantial fine. This decree, it must be stressed, did not aim at counterbalancing the influence of English, but of Spanish, as films are mostly released in Catalan cinemas dubbed into this language rather than Catalan, as I have already noted. The project was supported by the right-wing, Catalan nationalist party in power (Convergència i Unió), the republican independents (ERC) and, in principle, the Catalan socialists in the opposition (PSC), though they later withdrew their support. The Spanish Government party, the right-wing Spanish nationalist PP, immediately reacted against the projected decree, on the grounds that it was just another proof of Pujol's constant attempts to manipulate culture and business for his own nationalist interests. The film distributors and exhibitors agreed with this view and repeatedly showed in the media their mistrust of Pujol's intentions.

A reformed second version of the decree was passed by the Catalan Parliament with the votes of Convergència i Unió and ERC in September 1998, and its execution fixed for 9 March 1999. In January 1999, though, the Spanish branches of the main Hollywood distributors (Fox, Columbia, UIP, Disney and Warner) together with the six independent or minor distributors grouped under the label *Fedecine* (Triplemures, Columbia Tristar, Leader Films, Lauren Films, Wanda

Distribución and Alta Films) started a foretold war. The first step was a threat to bypass the decree, if it ever became legal, by releasing less than 16 copies of any major film. Next, the distributors sued the Generalitat in the Catalan Supreme Court of Justice. The Asociación Catalana de Exhibidores Cinematográficos (ACEC) and the *Gremio Provincial de Empresarios de Cine*, the actual cinema owners, joined the suit, as well as *Convivència Cívica Catalana*, an association supposedly favoring bilingualism but acting in the interests of nationalist Spanish Castilian speakers.

The main argumentation of all these entities was that the Generalitat's decree was illegal, especially as regarded its capacity to impose fines established by articles 14 and 15. The Law of the Usage of Catalan, they argued, included articles about the offer of subsidies to help popularize dubbing into Catalan but lacked a specific reference to a fines system. A decree framed by this law could hardly seek to impose fines. The appeal to the court of justice was made formal, it must be noted, after serious threats by the majors to stop the distribution of films in Catalonia in *any* language, a form of blackmail supported by concerned officials of the American government monitoring the crisis from the embassy in Madrid and from the USA. Other significant episodes happened in the meantime, such as Buenavista's (i.e. Disney) refusal to dub *Pocahontas* into Catalan, despite having just received 20,000,000 pesetas (about 100,000 \$ or 125,000 euros) from the Generalitat to dub *Mulan*.<sup>4</sup> Disney's unyielding attitude further convinced the Generalitat of the absolute need to abandon subsidies in favor of fines.

President Pujol tried another approach in January 1999, sending the author of the controversial decree, the Counselor of Culture in the Catalan regional government Joan Maria Pujals, to secret interviews first with the American ambassador in Madrid, and next with Jack Valenti, then president of the Motion Pictures Association of America, in Washington. Pujals failed to secure either official or business support, since the Americans refused to negotiate under the threat of fines. In the meantime, Mariano Rajoy, then Vice-president of the Spanish Government publicly condemned Pujol's attitude, noting that even though Hollywood films are only dubbed into a few of the more than 80 languages spoken in Europe all Europeans seem perfectly content with the situation. Rajoy also warned Pujol that Catalonia was setting a bad example that could be followed by other 'misguided' minor language communities in Europe, creating conflict where there is none. Rajoy's stance officially certified the fact that the Spanish government had in practice sided with the Hollywood distributors and against Pujol's claims, as it was to be expected given the government's centralist policies. There was, in addition, a nagging suspicion that the hostility to Catalan dubbing came from the Madrid delegations of the American majors rather than from Hollywood itself.

In February 1999, the Catalan Supreme Court accepted the argumentation of the majors and the decree was suspended. The first crucial battle had been technically lost but the Catalan government was not ready to give in yet. The Generalitat simply delayed the enforcement of the decree to July 1999 and tried in the meantime two new strategies. On the one hand, it tried to change the legislation on the uses of Catalan so that a system of fines could be legally introduced. This politically unwise revision was eventually abandoned, as it gave the Generalitat an undesirable authoritarian profile. On the other hand, President Pujol opened a round of negotiations with the distributors to define a new subsidy policy. In July the Generalitat suspended the decree again until June 2000, as the negotiations to renew the subsidy system seemed to have entered a promising phase. In September 1999, coinciding with the onset of the election campaign for the Generalitat, President Pujol offered the distributors a formal return to the pre-decree agreement of 1989<sup>5</sup> and money to subsidize 18 new releases. Pujol's political detractors criticized his offer to pour more public money into the laps of greedy corporations like Disney and reminded the general public that, in any case, the Generalitat could not command any respect from the majors. Despite Pujol's generosity, Fox, for instance, had refused to dub a single copy of *Titanic* into Catalan.

The election was duly won, President Pujol kept his post for a new, final mandate but Counselor Pujals was dismissed and replaced by Jordi Vilajoana, the former head of the corporation that runs the public Catalan media. By May 2000 Vilajoana announced the definitive abandonment of the offending decree and the establishment of a new subsidy policy based on commercial criteria, following a document signed in the electoral period.<sup>6</sup> This policy would involve, essentially, films for children, as they are an audience that cannot follow dubbing and that is educated mostly in Catalan. As the Generalitat's official report on linguistic policy explained, the new procedure was to guarantee "the incorporation of Catalan to the companies' dubbing policy in a systematic way (not sporadic and always dependent on the Generalitat's previous petition, as it's been so far), though focused on a limited number of titles" (Generalitat 1999). Those who took direct part in the conflict have repeatedly claimed that even though the decree had to be abandoned, at least it opened a much needed dialogue which was previously impossible due to the resistance of the majors.

The battle over the decree created a considerable political stir, as can be seen by the press articles defending positions for and against it,<sup>7</sup> but failed to engage the interest of the Catalan citizenship at large. The Plataforma per la Llengua, one of the few citizens' pressure groups that supported the decree, issued a populist manifesto in its favor—a document which ultimately defended Catalan dubbing rather than dubbing (Plataforma 1999)—but appeared to be preaching only to the small minority of the already converted. It was somehow felt that civil society had no saying in the matter and that, as the representative of the Catalan people,

the Generalitat should have the last word about dubbing, whether this was expressed through legislation or through subsidies.

This popular indifference, bemoaned by the defenders of the decree, is quite surprising in view of the turn later taken by the issue of dubbing. A significant episode in this intermittent war broke out in mid-November 2001, when Warner announced its decision not to dub into Catalan *Harry Potter: The Philosopher's Stone*, the film adaptation of the first book in the popular series by J.K. Rowling. As Fox had done in the case of *Titanic*, Warner simply rejected the subsidy offered by the Generalitat, wrongly believing there would be no popular reaction against this decision. Significantly, Warner's representative in Madrid was Luis Fernández de Carlos, president of the distributors' association that had sued the Generalitat over the decree, which suggests that some kind of retaliation against Pujol has been involved in the case. Whether in Madrid or in Los Angeles, Warner failed to take into account the fact that about 200,000 copies of the four books of the *Potter* series had been sold in Catalonia in Catalan translation—as many as in Spanish. Suddenly, Warner found itself forced to face the reproaches of all the political parties (united for the first time), an energetic campaign by Plataforma de la Llengua and other citizens' entities, and, what is more important, the complaints of many parents of disappointed children, all threatening to boycott the film release if only on a personal basis. They flooded Warner's L.A. offices with more than 10,000 e-mail messages, which convinced Warner's executives that an apology was due. Since it was too late to dub copies into Catalan before the film's release in Spanish, Warner finally agreed to exhibit a few copies subtitled in Catalan (all expenses paid by them) and to dub into Catalan the future sequels of the film.<sup>8</sup>

It must be noted that popular protest was directed against Warner—against Hollywood, generally—but also against the Generalitat, as many Catalan speakers consider its linguistic policies regarding cinema too frail. The most habitual reproach was, in this case and in others, that the Generalitat *must* command the respect of the majors, if possible through legislation, paradoxical as this may seem given the limited popular support to the ill-fated decree and the low attendance figures for films in Catalan. The key factor that has altered the attitude of the citizenship seems to have been the need to defend the right of Catalan *children* to enjoy *Harry Potter*—and, implicitly, any other films for children—without linguistic impositions dictated by business interests. If they have read the book in Catalan, the argument runs, surely children also have a right to see the film in Catalan. Ironically, while the Generalitat's representatives failed to secure Warner's collaboration after eight long months of negotiations, the public outcry led Warner to accept a new compromise in just a week, which has begged the question of why the official negotiations were so badly mismanaged. The impression, at any rate, is that this episode will mark the direction of all agreements over dubbing for the

Catalonia is a *bilingual* community where everybody speaks a major world language: Spanish. For the Generalitat, the majors should ideally treat Catalonia as they would treat a small monolingual state but, of course, this is just a utopian ideal—and Quebec, after all, not quite a suitable example, for its local language is French and not an endangered minor language. No other business sector treats Catalonia with this perspective—pop music, for instance, is practically monopolized by English—though it is quite true that of all the multinationals that operate in this nation Hollywood is the one that shows less respect and tact for its linguistic reality.

Right in the middle of the first crisis discussed here, Daniel E. Jones, a professor of communications at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona concerned that Catalonia would eventually become just “a Chicago suburb”, made an appeal to adopt urgent measures of cultural protection instead of politically biased decrees. He suggested, first following the example of France, which has poured great amounts of public money into national audio-visual products; second, establishing business alliances with other Mediterranean regions and countries and, finally, demanding the support of the Spanish State and the European Union (1999: 58). Yet, public money, as can be seen, cannot quite counteract the problem of the size of the market and, in any case, France is never a good example to follow as, on the one hand, it has a much higher percentage of box-office takings for its local products—the French are, apparently, more patriotic cinema-goers—and, on the other hand, its industry offers a wide range of films. The alliances with other countries in, presumably, co-productions, do not eliminate the issue of dubbing: in fact, they complicate it, given the habitual mixture of languages used by actors in these international films and the subsequent need to dub them all. As for the support of the Spanish State and the European Union, the idea is just another piece of wishful-thinking, given the hostility shown by the former and the lack of interest of the latter in the crisis over the decree.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the establishment of a strong European film industry that can compete with Hollywood is impossible, given the linguistic fragmentation of the European Union. Cultural diversity is a most valuable treasure that must be protected but it is quite ‘inconvenient’ as regards the progress of an alternative film industry: European co-productions actually tend to use English as a lingua franca. The impact of American films is so immense that all hopes of a competitive local industry, whether Catalan or European make little sense. This is in itself quite a paradox, for many Hollywood films survive today thanks to foreign box-office takings, not to mention the fact that Hollywood constantly imports the most talented European filmmakers, or that many of its films are English-language versions of previous box-office hits in other European languages.

This situation of blatant cultural colonialism will not be solved in the near future unless, as Jones suggests, the European Union intervenes to stimulate a better mutual knowledge of the many diverse European film markets, which does not seem to be a political priority, not even within Spain. Actually, Catalonia’s unbalanced bilingualism has to contend not only with its own social reality but with prejudiced attitudes by Spanish monolingual speakers outside Catalonia who do not see why speaking Catalan is necessary at all, a position quite close to the feelings of the previous state government presided by José M<sup>a</sup> Aznar. The Generalitat’s solution—if you cannot make major films in a minor language, have major films speak your own minor language—aims at guaranteeing spectators with a nationalist linguistic awareness a freedom of choice, no matter whether this is still required by few, among all this indifference towards the minor European languages. As the *Henry Pottery* case shows, dubbing films into Catalan might be in the future a practice as habitual as translating foreign books into the same language. Yet, while spectators may demand freedom of choice, which is always a desirable goal, neither legislation nor nationalist ideologies of any sign can ever convince them that they *must* include Catalan in their options. The subsidy system will have to make do until audiences decide what kind of film market they wish to enjoy in Catalonia, something they cannot do now. Clearly, without a certain presence of Catalan in cinemas, no such decision can be reached in fairness but, it must also be clear that business and politics will have to accept whatever choice audiences eventually make.

## Notes

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near future, although the issue of why public money should be spent in subsidies must still be solved.

The conflict over the decree was, then, not so much a matter of principle as one of form: distributors will eventually offer a percentage of films in Catalan regularly in the same way that they are offering subtitled films, that is to say, on demand. The Generalitat miscalculated the effect of its decisions, thinking that it could force distributors to choose this path before it suited them for commercial reasons, and also seemingly forgetting that cinema exhibition is a business, unlike the public Catalan TV channels, which are branches of political power. Curiously enough, few people raised their voices to suggest that the root of the problem is not film distribution but film exhibition, since, ultimately, the decisions about which version to see are taken by spectators when they actually buy a ticket. The general impression is that, given the choice, spectators prefer Spanish, which means that cinema owners offering films in Catalan for political rather than commercial reasons lose business. This should entitle them to receive subsidies, though, so far, these factors has not entered the debate.

### Chicago Suburb

During the days of the *Harry Potter* crisis there were constant references in the media to Quebec, a bilingual territory larger than all the areas where Catalan is spoken but with a similar number of minor language speakers. Quebec was presented as a model in its official and popular defense of the rights of the minority of French speakers as against the majority of Canadian English speakers. Press articles and TV programs discussed the benefits of Quebec's legislation, which makes French dubbing compulsory, and the fact that these laws have been obeyed by Hollywood without any fuss. This is specially surprising if we consider that the expenses cannot be recouped in France and other French-speaking territories, for Quebecois French is a dialect of its own with distinct features, as different from European French as Mexican Spanish is from Spanish Castilian. Quebec's case is, however, quite exceptional. In most European countries, either monolingual or bilingual, big or small, subtitles are preferred to dubbing. On the other hand, while Quebec has a high level of autonomy within Canada, Catalonia's own autonomy is quite limited. Even supposing that the legislation desired by the Catalan nationalists could be enforced, the Catalan market is, in practice, a segment of the Spanish market. This means that, in the unlikely case that all films were released in Catalan in Catalonia, spectators would probably desert cinemas in favor of national television or videos in Spanish,<sup>9</sup> for it is widely felt that long-lasting habits cannot be broken overnight and in isolation from the rest of the state.

For Hollywood, the dream scenario is a situation in which dubbing and subtitling are made unnecessary because audiences all over the world understand English—a kind of return to the universality of silent films. Hollywood puts up with the cost of dubbing because, after all, this practice was popularized by Hollywood itself to cement its hold over the European market in the 1930s. In strictly business terms, though, subtitling makes much more sense today as it costs less than a tenth of dubbing, leaving aside the question of the spectator's right to enjoy a film in all its artistic integrity. Not even dubbing of the highest quality—the habitual in Spain—can help manipulating dialogue in the process of translation.<sup>10</sup>

Ironically, the defense of dubbing made by Pujol's government springs ultimately from a mixture of Hollywood's 1930s business policies and the ideas that the fascist governments of Franco, Mussolini and Hitler used to impose dubbing. President Pujol, of course, was careful to distinguish between the situation of compulsory monolingualism that these dictators established with the obligatory collaboration of the film industry and his own efforts to strike a balance in a complex bilingual situation born ultimately out of Franco's regime. For him and for most Catalan nationalists, the language is the most evident manifestation of Catalan identity. While a Scotsman needn't speak Gaelic to feel fiercely nationalist, the persons that define themselves as Catalans but speak only Spanish Castilian are quite a problem for Pujol's nationalists, who constantly hesitate about the place they should occupy in their nationalist project. So are the Catalan citizens that understand bilingualism as the right to use both languages equally in all areas and who complain that, after all, their taxes are paying for public TV, schools and administration exclusively in Catalan. Even more 'problematic' for Pujol were those bilingual speakers who believe that the situation is perfectly balanced and it is, thus, unnecessary to make any extra effort for Catalan. In fact, personal experience contrasted with other spectators' suggests that one may remember a film for a long time but soon forgets the language it was seen in, even in the cases of subtitled films, odd as this may seem.

In a speech about Europe, globalization and identities, pronounced by President Pujol at the Center for European Studies of Harvard on 18 April 2000, when the crisis over the decree had been already solved, he insisted again on the issue of dubbing. "Seen from the perspective of the world market and globalization this may seem ridiculous" Pujol acknowledges, "but it is important for us, precisely because it is a matter of identity" (Pujol 2000). This speech may have aimed at seeing the complicity of Harvard, where culture rules, in the struggle against Hollywood, where money rules. For the distributors, of course, national identity is an irrelevant matter, an idea that Pujol resists. What counts is the loss of a percentage of benefits that dubbing into Catalan entails.<sup>11</sup> If the majors could blackmail the Generalitat into withdrawing the decree this is, after all, because

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4. This led to the establishment of a citizens' pressure group within the pro-Catalan association Plataforma per la Defensa de la Llengua to protest against this decision, the first sign of any kind of popular support for the decree.



5. This agreement offered subsidies to dub certain films selected by the Generalitat. Official subsidies comprise still today the whole expenses for dubbing and making copies of the films, and half the expenses for publicity and advertising.
6. The corresponding government order had been signed on 20 December 1999. The total amount spent in the year 2000 in subsidies was of 192 million pesetas (practically 1 million \$ or 125 million euros). Whereas in 1999 distributors offered 10 films dubbed into Catalan and 1 subtitled, in 2000 the dubbed films were 19, plus 2 subtitled, some of them distributed by the five majors.
7. The newspaper in Catalan *Avui* published the most militant opinions in favor of the Generalitat, followed by *La Vanguardia* (in Spanish). *El Mundo*, close to the Spanish government, was very critical of Pujol's methods.
8. The crisis was important enough to make it to the pages of the *Financial Times*; Leslie Crawford's article "Catalans subdue film giant into dubbing *Harry Potter*" (November 24 2001) is, not, however, sympathetic, suggesting that politicians should accept once and for all the current bilingual situation as it is.
9. Maybe the experiment should be tried for a couple of weeks, to see how audiences respond and thus clarify the reality of the market. It must be noted that practically all (stage) theaters in Catalonia offer productions in Catalan, whether original or in translation. Spanish is used in theaters mainly by visiting national companies, or those from other areas of Spain. There is hardly any theater in Spanish for children.
10. See Luque (1990) and Chaves García (2000) for Spanish, and Izard (1992) for Catalan. The Generalitat has regulated film translation through a Committee of Linguistic Normalization that has published a set of rules to be followed for TV and films (*Criteris*, 1997).
11. Paradoxically, Catalonia itself is not too keen on the products of the other bilingual nations in Spain, which could well be shown on Catalan TV but never are. The same can be said about the audio-visual production of other European countries, which has a very limited exhibition.

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