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Yo en plan: oh wow madre mía – animation and stylization of reported speech on Twitter

Although reported speech is frequently used in computer-mediated conversation (*CMC*), the characteristics of its use in this specific communication context have not yet been investigated systematically. This paper seeks to fill this gap by analysing the use of reported speech on Spanish Twitter by exploring, on the one hand, lexical, orthographic as well as (typo)graphic strategies Twitter users employ to introduce and animate reported speech in their tweets. On the other hand, stylization strategies, including code-switching, will be investigated. The analysis is based on a large corpus of Spanish tweets captured in 2020, where passages of direct speech introduced by the quotatives *como*, *tipo* and *en plan* were examined with regard to the typographical means used to introduce the quoted segment as well as different strategies of animation and stylization. Results show that the animation strategies are mostly "translated" from phonic realizations (e.g. case-shifting evoking loudness, letter repetition signalling lengthening, emojis representing facial expressions and gestures), while stylization strategies comprise code-switching, the integration of (Spanish as well as English) discourse markers, the use of substandard registers and of *CMC*-specific phenomena, e.g. abbreviations like *k* or *q* replacing *que*.

1   Introduction

Reported speech is a widely investigated phenomenon, both in spoken and in written conversation. However, despite its frequency in online communication settings, the use of reported speech in computer-mediated conversation (*CMC*) in general[1] as well as on social media in particular has not yet been investigated adequately (but see Wikström 2019). This is even more true for Spanish-speaking online communities, which have not yet been analysed.

The analysis of reported speech in *CMC* seems particularly interesting with regard to the strategies used to mark and to represent reported speech: Since *CMC* is based on the graphic medium,[2] it can be assumed, on the one hand, that users give priority to strategies widely used in other "written" contexts, where punctuation signs like colons or quotation marks indicate changes concerning the enunciative instances. On the other hand, *CMC* very often takes place in rather informal communication contexts. We can therefore presume that users take greater liberties with regard to the "traditional inventory", omitting some elements and adding others. Especially *CMC* offers an interesting repertoire of additional strategies like capitalization or the insertion of emojis and similar graphic elements.

Against this background, this paper seeks to analyse the use of reported speech in a large corpus of Spanish tweets by exploring two central questions: Which (lexical, orthographic, typographic and graphic) strategies do Twitter users employ to introduce and to animate reported (direct) speech in their tweets? And: Which stylization strategies, serving to "establish quotes as belonging to a particular character, but also to modify the reported utterances in ways that support the narrator's own aims" (Günthner 2000: 11) can be found in Twitter data? Specific emphasis is put on the phenomenon of code-switching. The tweet in (1) illustrates that code-switching seems to be a fairly frequent stylization strategy in the context of reported speech: The user

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[1]   The use of quotatives like *all* and *be + like*, mainly in instant messaging services, has been investigated by Rickford et al. (2007) and Jones / Schieffelin (2009).

[2]   The term *medium* is used here in the sense of Koch / Oesterreicher (2012: 443) in order to "differentiate between the *phonic* and the *graphic* code as the two forms of realization of linguistic utterances".

inserts the English interjections *oh* and *wow* immediately at the beginning of the quoted passage in order to underline his enthusiasm triggered by the idea that he might have lost weight.[3]

(1)   [preceding "introductory" tweet by the same user] La manera en la que me acabo de pesar después de dos meses y he adelgazado 😊

Yo en plan: *oh wow madre mía cómo he adelgazado tanto*??? Lo que he adelgazado: medio kilo. (@ultxxx, 20.12.2020)[4]

Fig. 1: Screenshot illustrating the tweets in (1)

Our study is structured as follows: Section 2 contains an introduction of basic concepts as well as an overview of previous studies. In Section 3, we will describe the compilation of the Twitter corpus and present the design of the corpus study. Finally, Section 4 is dedicated to the presentation and discussion of the results of the corpus study.

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[3]   This particular tweet illustrates perfectly different levels of "staging" that are characteristic for a certain type of reported speech on Twitter: The reported utterance is introduced by a preceding tweet that "sets the scene" and ends with a punch line revealing that the impression of weight loss was a mere illusion. The attitude of excitement of the reported speaker is illustrated by two posing photos of the corpulent drag queen Eureka O'Hara, who refers to herself as a "big girl" on her corsage.

[4]   To protect the privacy rights of the users, we have anonymized the usernames as well as the profile pictures belonging to the tweets cited in this article: While we blurred the profile pictures, we maintained the first three letters of the usernames (which are introduced by @) and replaced the rest of the name by *xxx*.

2   Basic concepts and previous studies

In the present study, we favour a broad understanding of the concept of "reported speech". Based on the enunciative model of Authier (1978: 11), we will use *reported speech* as a cover term to designate a communicative act CA_0 referring to another communicative act CA_1, which differs in at least one of the following aspects from the original act: the speaker, the hearer, the communication situation including the time and place of enunciation, the (phonic or graphic) code of the utterance or the utterance itself (cf. Grutschus 2021a: 158).

Following Tannen's idea of reported speech as "constructed dialogue" (Tannen [2]2007), we do not limit ourselves to previously uttered speech, but also include invented, negated, hypothetical and future speech events in our analysis. Furthermore, we take into account the representation of (unuttered) thought, often presented as "inner speech" (cf. Barbieri 2005: 228). Finally, we also consider instances of "choral dialogue", e.g. utterances introduced by *most people say*. For reasons of coherence, we limit our study to direct speech.

In numerous publications, the practices for marking reported direct speech in written contexts are described only in passing.[5] Relevant strategies seem to be situated mainly on the typographic level, where colons, quotation marks and the use of italics are used to indicate changes on the enunciative level. Dialogic passages including several turns are further delimited with the help of hyphens or line breaks.

Besides the mere introduction of reported (direct) speech, we are particularly interested in *CMC*-specific strategies of animation and stylization. The term *animation*[6] refers to the delivery of reported speech, more specifically to "any feature of the report that performatively dramatizes some aspect of the quotee's supposed original utterance beyond verbal content (e.g. attitude, facial expressions, vocal qualities, etc.)" (Wikström 2019: 123). These paralinguistic and nonverbal cues can be complemented by shifts in pitch or register, expansions of pitch range, increasing or decreasing loudness, and tempo shifts (cf. Grutschus 2021a), that are used to animate spoken reported speech. Equivalent animation strategies in the graphic code are mostly restricted to specific text types like comics and can comprise changes in font style, size or colour (cf. Grutschus / Kern 2021).[7] In his analysis of reported speech on Twitter, Wikström (2019) shows that *CMC* and specifically communication on social media platforms offer specific affordances allowing the users to employ different types of animation strategies.

Wikström (2019: 128-140) differentiates between four types of animation categories. Given that our own corpus analysis will mainly rely on these categories, we will present them in some detail. The first category, lexical animation, comprises "emotive uses of lexical or semi-lexical items such as abbreviations [like *lol* or *wtf*, A.G.], onomatopoeia [like *ahah*, A.G.], and discourse markers" (Wikström 2019, 128). Furthermore, word repetitions and "non-lexical 'nonsense' items" as in (2) form part of this category.

(2)   @user ikr? i was like *wejkljwlek* (Twitter corpus example cited by Wikström 2019: 129)

The second category, "orthographic animation", contains respellings that are mostly cases of letter repetition. The repetitions generally, however, do not systematically correspond to length-

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[5]   For instance, Klewitz / Couper-Kuhlen (1999) examine the written representation of reported speech only to compare it with its prosodic representation.

[6]   Wikström (2019: 123) points out that the terms *demonstration* (Clark / Gerrig 1990), *enactment* (Good 2015), and *mimesis* (Buchstaller / D'Arcy 2009) are largely equivalent to the term *animation*.

[7]   Wikström (2019: 123-124) underlines that in text types with more conventionalised (typo-)graphic realizations, animation strategies are generally replaced by specific communication verbs like *shout* or by adverbials like *angrily* in the following example: "He shouted 'shut up, godammit!' angrily".

ening on the phonic level (cf. Darics 2013). Thus, the function of letter repetition is not to be interpreted as a 1:1-transfer[8] from the phonic to the graphic medium (in the sense of a 'transcription'), but should rather be understood as a means of rendering oral 'expressivity' in a written context (cf. Wikström 2019: 142).

Wikström's third category is labelled "typographic animation" and comprises the use of uppercase to represent changes in loudness or intensity (cf. Wikström 2019: 133). Typographic cues also include emoticons.[9] Finally, the use of "emphatic punctuation" (Wikström 2019: 135) and of hashtags also fall into this category. The last category, "graphic animation", considers the animation of reported speech by integrating emojis as well as (embedded or hyperlinked) graphics, images or GIFs.

In Wikström's corpus of English tweets compiled in 2012, typographic animation was the most frequent category, while graphic animation ended up in last place. Given the expansion of the use of smartphones and thus the much easier availability of emojis, the ranking of the categories may have shifted since then. The analysis of a more recent corpus therefore seems useful.

While we do not expect significant differences between Wikström's English corpus and our Spanish corpus as far as animation strategies are concerned, we do expect to find language specific characteristics concerning stylization practices, an area that has not been covered in Wikström's analysis. *Stylization* can be described as involving "reflexive communicative action in which speakers produce specially marked and often exaggerated representations of languages, dialects, and styles that lie outside their own habitual repertoire (at least as this is perceived within the situation at hand)" (Rampton 2009: 149). In her studies on stylization phenomena in reported speech in spoken German, Günthner (2002) also picks up on the idea of exaggerating certain features. She furthermore emphasizes the fact that not only sociolinguistic variables can serve as a starting point for stylization processes, but that stylization can also be based on characteristics of certain speech acts such as reproaches or requests, defining stylization as "punktuelle Überhöhung bestimmter Gestaltungsverfahren zur Kontextualisierung einer spezifischen sozialen Orientierung auf die porträtierte Figur beziehungsweise deren (kommunikative) Handlung" (Günthner 2002: 61).[10]

Günthner (2000; 2002) was able to underline the central role of stylization in reported speech. Her corpus studies also have shown that, in phonic realization, stylization is often marked on the prosodic level, especially involving changes of voice quality. Our corpus study will show whether the tweets display graphic equivalents to the prosodic cues.

3 Corpus and Methodology

Our analysis is based on a large corpus of Spanish tweets captured via the DMI-TCAT software (see Borra / Rieder 2014) in December 2020.[11] During 24 hours, every available occurrence of the Spanish expressions *como*, *tipo* and *en plan* published in a tweet was retrieved automatically. The following table illustrates the absolute frequencies of the three expressions and reflects important differences in terms of polysemy, showing the need for efficient disambiguation strategies:

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[8] Sometimes referred to as "remediation", cf. Wikström (2019: 142).

[9] Wikström (2019) thus opposes "common" ASCII-emoticons and Unicode emojis like 😊, which are classified as "graphic animation" cues (see below).

[10] '[S]elective exaggeration of certain linguistic features in order to contextualize a specific social perspective on the portrayed figure or its (communicative) action.'

[11] I would like to thank Jörn Preuß from the Collaborative Research Center *Media of Cooperation* (SFB 1187) at the University of Siegen for his technical support while building the corpus.

Tab. 1: Absolute frequencies of the expressions before disambiguation.[12]

Quotative	Absolute frequency of occ.
en plan	3.813
tipo	10.133
como	549.278

We chose to build our corpus on the basis of the three abovementioned quotatives to mirror the research design of Wikström (2019), whose corpus was based on the quotative construction *be + like*. The choice of quotatives over communication verbs like *decir* seems to increase the chances to obtain as many contexts of direct speech as possible. In addition, the consideration of three different quotatives opens up the possibility to compare different constructions with regard to the associated animation and stylization strategies.

A comparison of the three quotatives offers the possibility to check whether certain characteristics established for spoken contexts equally hold for graphic realizations. For instance, De la Torre / Siebold (2020: 239) have been able to show that *en plan* as a quotative contributes to a livelier presentation of the reported utterances. A similar tendency concerns *como*, which introduces more frequently reported utterances with a prominent prosodic marking (cf. Grutschus 2021b: 425). Among the three quotatives, *tipo* seems least inclined to introduce (stereo)typical utterances serving to depict specific speakers (cf. Grutschus in prep.). This suggests that animation and stylization strategies may play a lesser role in reported utterances introduced by *tipo*.

Due to the considerable differences in terms of frequency, we followed different disambiguation strategies to filter out relevant quotative contexts. Regarding *en plan* and *tipo*, where the proportion of quotative readings compared to non-quotative readings (see below) seemed to be rather high, we chose to analyse 1.000 randomly selected occurrences. As for *como*, the proportion of quotatives was so low that only a few relevant contexts could be found among 1.000 randomly selected occurrences, we decided to focus on more specific quotative constructions including *ser* and *estar*, notably *es/son/estaba(n)/fue(ron) como*.[13] Especially *ser + como* in the present tense was still very frequent (more than 41.000 occurrences for *es/son como*), so that we restricted the analysis to 1.000 randomly chosen occurrences of the two constructions, while we studied the entirety of the search results for *estaba(n) como* (865 occ.) and *fue(ron) como* (199 occ.).

The second stage of rough disambiguation consisted in filtering out improper word forms like *estereotipo* (instead of *tipo*) or *en planteamientos* (instead of *en plan*). At the same time, erroneously collected Portuguese and Catalan cognates, especially for *tipo*, as well as occurrences of *tipo* forming part of the username (e.g. *Elsupertipo*, *maltipo*, etc.) were sorted out. Table (2) shows the absolute frequencies after a rough disambiguation as well as the results of a more fine-grained semantic disambiguation.

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[12] The table only shows results for Spanish occurrences, as the DMI-TCAT search mask allowed Portuguese as well as Catalan cognates to be filtered out quite efficiently.

[13] As the corpus had not been lemmatized, we had to restrict our search to certain word forms that frequently serve to introduce direct speech. This also explains the limitation to the present and *pretérito simple*-forms of *ser* and to the *imperfecto*-forms of *estar*: The missing tenses (i.e. *ser* in *imperfecto*-forms and *estar* in present and *pretérito simple*-forms) were also documented in the corpus, but overall less frequently used in quotative function.

Tab. 2: absolute frequencies resulting of subsequent stages of disambiguation.

Quotative	Frequency after rough disambiguation	Number of non-quotative occurrences[14]	Number of re-tweets among quotative occurrences	Number of unique quotative occurrences
en plan	935	795	30	110
tipo	966	790	58	118
como	1.613	1.437	55	121

The goal of the semantic disambiguation was to single out all the contexts where the three quotatives introduced reported (direct) speech as defined above. The example (3) shows a typical quotative context, where (*fue*) *como* introduces an answer the daughter most certainly only thought by herself in response to her mother's reproaches:

(3)   un día mi madre me dijo que soy una desapegada y que desde los 11 años voy a mi bola y *fue como* 🤔🤔🤔 hm..... qué motivos puede tener una niña de 11 años para sudar de su madre?? 🤔🤔 (@APLxxx, 20.12.2020)

Among the non-quotative uses are, on the one hand, occurrences where *tipo* and *como* are used literally, as illustrated in (4) with *tipo* meaning 'guy' and in (5), where *como* appears with a purely comparative meaning.

(4)   RT @Bubxxx: Que voz éste *tipo* por favor! (@MrHxxx, 20.12.2020)

(5)   RT @delxxx: Pues si no es *como* en las películas yo no me caso (@Marxxx, 20.12.2020)

On the other hand, *en plan*, *tipo* and *como* frequently appear as pragmatic markers with functions that can be traced back to a comparative meaning (cf. Mihatsch 2020: 141), denoting semantic approximation (cf. 6), focus marking (cf. 7) or exemplification (cf. 8).

(6)   @dolxxx Hija la misma nariz o sea todo todo sois súper parecidos *en plan* primos (@lagxxx, 20.12.2020)

(7)   RT @_Laxxx: Eso de que me hable gente que lleva sin preocuparse por mi años para preguntarme qué tal todo es *como* muy gracioso. (@rauxxx, 20.12.2020)

(8)   siempre que veo a estos perros me da por ponerles nombres potentes, *tipo*: Abaddón, Absalom, Astaroth, Samamiel, Dahaka, etcétera. [...] (@Chexxx, 20.12.2020)

To avoid duplicates, the corpus was filtered for retweets. In cases where the original tweet was not part of the corpus, e.g. because it had been posted prior to the 24h time window of the corpus collection, we took into account the earliest retweet.[15]

As a final step, we decided to sort out contexts where *tipo*, *en plan* and *como* exclusively referred to (nonverbal) images or animated GIFs linked to the tweet. Although, as illustrated in (9) and in Fig. 2, markers like *tipo* introduce an attitude that could as well be expressed verbally, e.g. by spewing out swear words, it is the lack of verbal content that seems to make a direct comparison more difficult.

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[14]   As retweets have not been recorded separately for this category, the numbers include retweets.
[15]   Cf. the examples (4), (5), and (7), where the abbreviation *RT* indicates that these are retweets.

(9)   @Axexxx Se te sale el cubrecama a la media noche y vos *tipo*… (@Caaxxx, 20.12.2020)

Fig. 2: Screenshot illustrating the tweet in (9)

In contrast, quotatives referring to images with verbal content like *tipo* introducing the utterance "No hay duda, eres emo" that appears in the photo linked to the tweet illustrated in (10) as well as in Fig. 3 remained in the corpus.

(10)   Fíjate que la mayoría de la ropa que compre [*sic*] era oscura , negro, gris, azul marino
         Y mi mamá *tipo* : (@Julxxx, 20.12.2020)

Fig. 3: Screenshot illustrating the tweet in (10).

The different disambiguation and filtering procedures lead, as indicated in the rightmost column of Table 2, to surprisingly similar numbers of occurrences for the three quotatives, which should make a direct comparison much easier. However, due to the diverging procedures of sample creation, we will be unable to make reliable comparisons concerning the overall frequencies of the quotatives under investigation.[16]

4 Results of the corpus study

In accordance with the research questions raised above, the corpus study is divided into three parts. Firstly, we investigate different cues Twitter users employ to mark the introduction of reported (direct) passages into their tweets (cf. Section 4.1). Secondly, we consider animation strategies (cf. Section 4.2), before finally taking into account different stylization phenomena, with a special focus on code-switching practices (cf. 4.3).

4.1 Introduction of the quoted passages

Before analyzing specific animation strategies inside the quoted passages, we are interested in the different (typographic) cues users rely on to mark a change on the enunciative level, indicating the beginning of a quoted passage.[17] At first glance, one would not expect to find an elaborate typographic marking, given that, even after the character limit for a single tweet has

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[16] The restriction to 1st and 3rd person contexts as well as to specific tenses for *como* do most certainly have an impact on the nature of the quoted passages that have been integrated into the corpus.

[17] We only considered the beginning of the reported passages and did not record systematically whether the righthand boundary of the quotation was marked typographically.

been doubled to 280 in 2017, the insertion of typographical signs like quotation marks or hyphens requires a switch to the keyboard with numbers and punctuation signs, at least on a smartphone. Users accessing Twitter from mobile devices can therefore be expected to use punctuation signs only with restraint, whereas, at least for this particular group, a switch from lower case to upper case (or vice versa) seems much easier.[18]

Against this background, it comes as a surprise that the tweets with typographic markers signalling the presence of reported (direct) speech clearly outnumber the tweets with unmarked quoted passages. As can be seen in Fig. 4, the corpus shows slightly diverging tendencies between the three quotatives: While over two thirds of the quoted passages introduced by *en plan* comprise typographical introduction marks, this is only the case for 56% of the contexts in which *como* is used.
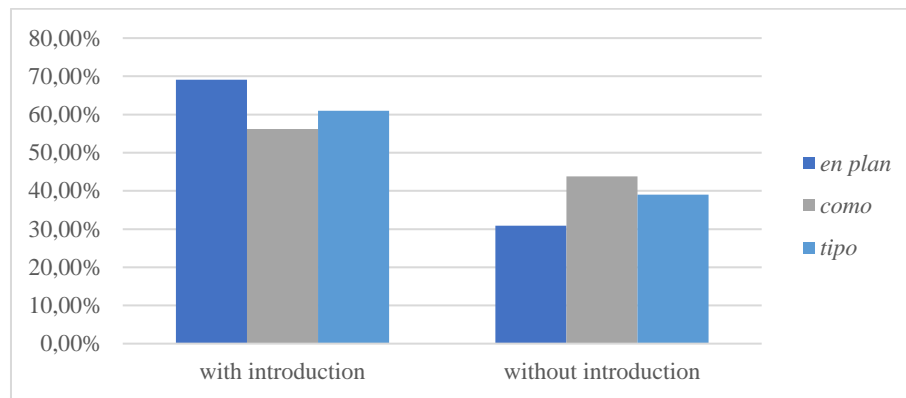

Fig. 4: Proportion of quoted passages with(out) explicit marking

Fig. 5 displays the specific typographic cues used to introduce the quoted passages.
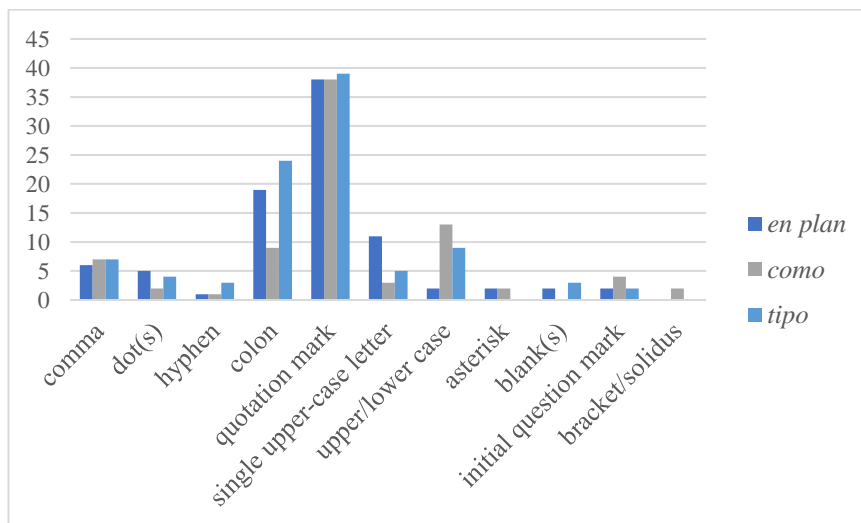

Fig. 5: Absolute frequencies of introductory cues for *en plan*, *como* and *tipo*

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[18] Unfortunately, our data do not allow to determine whether the tweets were sent from a mobile device or from a computer. In the absence of such evidence, we can only assume that the significant increase of people who access the internet exclusively via their smartphone, that has been identified in the 2018 *PEW* study among US-citizens between 18 and 49 (see https://www.pewresearch.org), is a tendency that is reflected in our data as well.

A brief look at the overall frequencies shows that certain quoted passages are introduced by more than one cue. Among them, only a very small proportion follows the example of the standard typographical marking for written direct speech (cf. 11), consisting of a colon, followed by quotation marks and an upper-case letter at the beginning of the quoted passage.

(11)   Elsa dijo: "Mi hermana está aquí" (RAE / ASALE 2010: 833)

None of the examples in the corpus exhibits all three characteristics, but a combination of two of them is quite frequent. The following examples show that, in combination with what appears to be the prototypical cue, *i.e.* quotation marks, the corpus reveals occurrences containing either a colon (cf. 12) or an initial upper-case letter (cf. 13).

(12)   RT @Retxxx: Al coronavirus le descubren una nueva cepa o mutación cuando los contagios aumentan, *tipo*: "la gente está como muy relajada. Hay que espabilarla". (@cmoxxx, 20.12.2020)

(13)   Se imaginan que un día conozca a Nicho pero no pronuncie Nicho como Nicho si no literal Nicho... Y Nicholas se quede *en plan* "Quién vergas es Nicho?" Y pues yo 🤡 porque si me creo capaz kdjsjsjaja (@__hxxx, 20.12.2020)

In contrast to what has been outlined above, switches from lower case to upper case and vice versa only play a marginal role in the corpus. They appear, as illustrated in (14), slightly more often with *como* and *tipo* than with *en plan*.

(14)   Me dio risa esta escena porque Porco se puso a llorar y Marcell fue *como* HOLA REINER HAY QUE TENER UNA CONVERSACIÓN SERIA AQUÍ, AHORA, EN ESTE MOMENTO 👀 👀 👀 👀 👀 (@rulxxx, 20.12.2020)

The only noticeable difference between the three quotatives appears to be that *como* is rarely followed by a colon, whereas *tipo* (cf. 15) and *en plan* are regularly followed by this punctuation sign.[19]

(15)   RT @Natxxx: Como novia soy *tipo*: Amor te traje esto porque un día dijiste que te gustaba y así me dejan ir. (@lilxxx, 20.12.2020)

4.2   Animation

As outlined above (cf. Section 2), our analysis relies on the four types of animation elaborated by Wikström (2019), comprising lexical, orthographic, typographic and graphic animation. Table (3) provides an overview of the features associated to the different categories.

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[19]   This difference could possibly be explained by the fact that speakers imagine *tipo* and *en plan* as being followed by a major prosodic break. However, in the absence of empirical studies, we are, as of yet, unable to prove this assumption.

Tab. 3: overview of the features associated to the four animation categories.

Animation type	Features
Lexical animation	▪ Interjections: *a(h)*; *o(h)*; *eh*; *uh*; *(h)ay*; *ey*; *guau*; *na(aa)hh*; *uff*; *hala*; *bua(a)*; *ups*; *meeeh*; *wow*; *awwww*; *aja* ▪ Onomatopoeias: *jaja*; *jeje*; *haha*; *mm*; *mimimi*; *fua*; *pfff*; *pum*; *grrrr*; *jums* ▪ 'Nonsense'-items: *jsjjsj*; *jsksjd*; *ksjsjsjsj*; *jdksjsk*; *jasjhs*; *jfhebwojfnewo* ▪ Word repetitions: *sisisi*; *nico nico nii* ▪ Acronyms: *wtf* ('what the fuck'); *OMG* ('oh my god') ▪ Stage directions: **se baja los pantalones**
Orthographic animation	▪ Shortenings: *q* ('que'); *k* ('que'); *d* ('de'); *m* ('me'); *t* ('te'); *porq* ('porque'); *vd* ('verdad'); *bb* ('bebé'); *QLO* ('culo') ▪ Phoneticized respellings: *WOOOOW*; *chikassss*; *vezzzz*; *kheeee* ('qué') ▪ Other non-standard spellings: *xiaooo/xaoooo* ('ciao'); *aki* ('aquí'); *lxs* ('los/las'); *+* ('más')
Typographic animation	▪ Case alternation: *es como WOOOOW* ▪ Marked use of punctuation: *!?!?*; *……*; *????* ▪ ASCII-emoticons: *:D*; *:(*; *:3*; *Q.Q*; *o.o*; *xDDD*; *uwu*
Graphic animation	▪ Emoji: 😍💖; 🤔; 😦; 🔥; 😳; 🥳; 😊 ▪ Images (embedded or hyperlinked) ▪ GIFs

As can be seen from several examples in the table, a single lexical element may present features pertaining to more than one category. Thus, examples with animation features signalling prosodic prominence like *WOOOW*, were categorized as cases presenting both orthographic (the letter repetition emulating lengthening) and typographic (shift to upper-case letters) animation. Taking into account the quoted passage as a whole, the proportion of assignments to more than one animation category increases even further. The corpus contains a certain amount of quoted passages combining three different categories.

As illustrated in the following example, the analysis revealed a certain number of quoted passages combining two or even three animation categories. For instance, in example (16), lexical animation (in the form of the interjection *aaa*) is associated with typographic animation (the emoticon *:pp*, representing an outstretched tongue and thus expressing the provocative attitude of the quoted writer(s)) as well as with (iterated) orthographic animation in the form of letter repetitions.

> (16) Harta de ver este tipo de tweets porque literalmente *es como* "aaa sólo chikassss :pp" Bitch stop. STOP. (@conxxx, 20.12.2020)

Fig. 6 shows that the three quotatives differ regarding the presence of animation: While the majority of quoted passages introduced by *en plan* do *not* present animation features, *como* displays a proportion of animation of almost 73%.
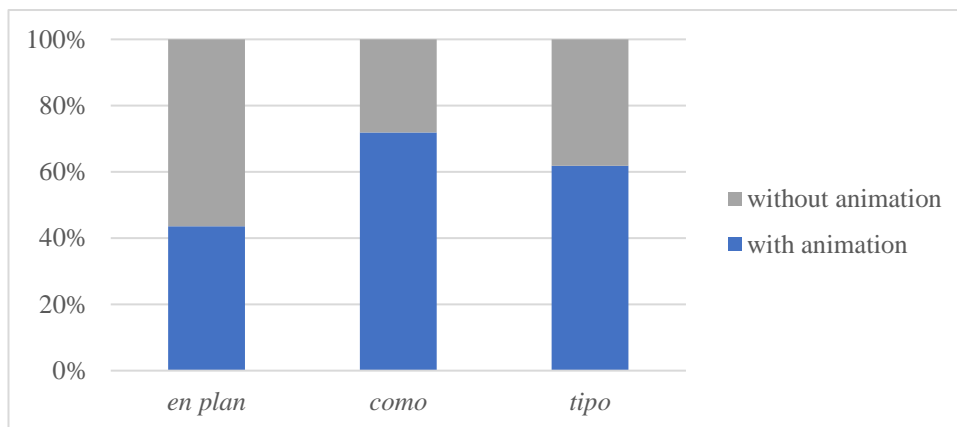
Fig. 6: Proportion of quoted passages with and without animation

Furthermore, Fig. 7 reveals two main differences between the three quotatives regarding the distribution of the four animation categories: Firstly, reported passages introduced by *como* contain a large amount of lexical animation. A more detailed look into the occurrences in Section 4.2.1 will show whether the lexical items preceded by *como* show further similarities. Secondly, *tipo*, compared to *en plan* and *como*, introduces a surprisingly large number of quotes comprising orthographic animation.
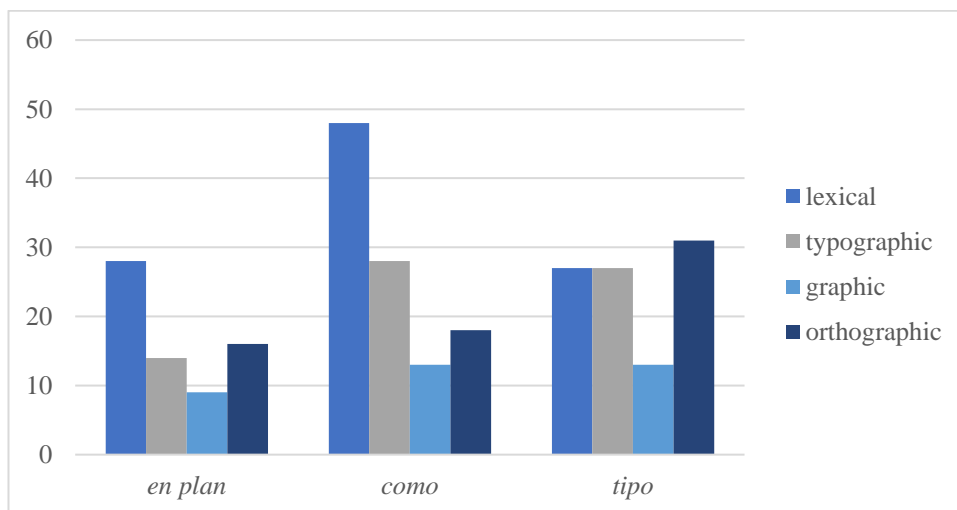

Fig. 7: Absolute frequencies of distribution of animation categories among the three quotatives

Against the background of multiple category assignments of both entire quoted passages (see 16) as well as single lexemes (cf. *WOOOOW*), the following analysis of the individual animation categories will be of qualitative nature rather than of quantitative.

4.2.1 Lexical animation

As shown in table (3), the lexical animation category comprises the largest number of feature types compared to the other animation categories. Among them, interjections represent the largest subcategory. The interjections in our corpus include frequent and polyfunctional Spanish interjections like *a(h)*, *e(h)* and *(h)ay* as well as interjections borrowed from English like *ups* or *wow*. As illustrated in (17), interjections mostly occur at the lefthand boundary of the quoted passage, both serving as a marker of turn-taking and setting the emotive tone of the reported utterance.

(17)   Cuando vi la publicación de Ariana yo estaba como *hay* re linda y no vi el anillo o sea re elevada andaba JAJAJAAJAJ y después entré a tw y fue como SE VA A CASAR (@fooxxx, 20.12.2020)

The emotive meaning of onomatopoeias equally serves to underline the "tone" of the quoted segment. Onomatopoeic elements imitating laughter like *jaja* or *jeje* occur right at the beginning of the reported utterance. As illustrated in (18), they rarely refer to actual laughter but rather express an attitude of disdain or resignation.

(18)   Ayer fui a depilarme y la tipa me contaba que le pidieron casamiento y le regalaron un auto, yo tipo *jajaja* que bueno a mi me dejaron, que año de mierda ahre (@jadxxx, 20.12.2020)

The only acronyms documented in the corpus correspond to the anglicisms *wtf* ('what the fuck') and *OMG* ('oh my god'), which are mainly introduced by *como* and never cooccur with *en plan*. Both acronyms are used in the same way as interjections and onomatopoeias: They are placed at the beginning of the reported utterance and thus "announce", in the case of *wtf*, an undertone of indignation illustrated in (19), where the reporting speaker expresses her outrage about the soberness of a marriage proposal.

(19)   mi cuñada me contó que mi hermano le dijo un día oye y si nos casamos? y eso fue todo y yo estaba como *wtfff* ke wea este qliao (@swaxxx, 20.12.2020)

The few occurrences of *wtf* introduced by *tipo* are, as illustrated in (20), holophrastic in nature.

(20)   no blda había leído si los personajes de twitter tuvieran victorius y yo etaba tipo *wtf* (@icrxxx, 20.12.2020)

The remaining subtypes of lexical animation correspond to a very small number of occurrences in the corpus. While stage-directions and word repetitions barely exceed the level of *hapax legomena*,[20] "nonsense-items" like *JFHEBWOJFNEWO* illustrated in (21) require a more detailed explanation.

(21)   @th_xxx RECUERDO QUE GROVER SÍ SE DIO CUENTA DE QUE A PERCY LE GUSTABA Y FUE COMO *JFHEBWOJFNEWO* AMO (@whyxxx, 20.12.2020)

It is impossible to attribute a specific meaning to this kind of letter sequences. The only recurring characteristic of the patterns seems to be that they alternate letters usually typed with the right hand with letters typed with the left hand. It can therefore be assumed that these are cases of "keyboard mashing", occurring, as described by the *Urban Dictionary*, "in times of frustration, anger, boredom" as "an attempt to relieve stress" and thus forming part of a broader complex of remediation strategies (cf. Bolter / Grusin 1999).

4.2.2 Orthographic animation
The occurrences categorized as cases of orthographic animation feature non-standard spelling which can, generally speaking, be defined as a "change in a word's orthographic form as com-

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[20]   The corresponding lists in Table 3 are, as a matter of fact, exhaustive.

pared to traditional writing" (Kirsten-Torrado 2017: 255). Animation in this specific context can, on the one hand, be seen as a performative dramatization of the quoted passages as far as phoneticized respellings (see below) are concerned. On the other hand, the term *animation* is also used in a broader sense in order to refer to orthographic designs evoking specific writing styles or attitudes associated with *CMC*. Spelling adaptations in the context of *CMC* are usually associated with the concept of "texting language"[21] (Kirsten-Torrado 2017: 253) and are related either to the limit of characters in certain messaging services (which equally holds for Twitter, as discussed above) or to an increase in terms of speed or ease of typing. Although we did find respellings that can be related to economic factors (see below), prototypical cases of "texting language" in quoted passages only occur on a metadiscursive level like in (22), where the utterance "sé que tú no sabes más que yo" is reported using "texting language":

(22)   @liaxxx Justo eso decía yo el otro día, cuando éramos jóvenes escribíamos tipo "*s q tu no svs + q yo*", sin embargo, no íbamos por la vida diciendo que así se tenía que escribir en general porque ahorraba tiempo. Lo de hoy es ridículo, la tiranía de los menos. (@malxxx, 20.12.2020)

The respellings documented in the corpus were classified as belonging to three subcategories. The first comprises different cases of shortenings, which can be attributed to economic factors. Shortenings mainly occur in the form of initialisms, where only the onset of a word is maintained. This concerns mostly monosyllabic words like *que* (<q>, cf. 23), *de* (<d>), *te* (<t>), *me* (<m>), etc., and, although to a lesser extent, disyllabisms like *porque* (<pq>/<porq>) or *verdad* (<vd>).

(23)   [preceding tweet by another user] POR QUE NADIE HABLA DE LO HERMOSA QUE ESTÁ VESTIDA (@espxxx, 21.12.2020)
         tipo… MAMA MIRA *Q* LINDO LO *Q* TIENE PUESTO (@morxxx, 21.12.2020)

The second subcategory contains phoneticized respellings, i.e. orthographic adaptations based on the relationship between pronunciation and spelling. Among these respellings, cases of letter repetition are most frequent in our corpus and mainly concern vowels. Vowel repetitions mostly simulate lengthening, either corresponding to prosodic prominence, where they are often associated to case alternations to resemble yelling like in (24), or to evoke an "imploring" realization like in (25).

(24)   RT @Walxxx: Se acuerdan del
         HABILITADO #PasaporteExpress
         HAHAHHAHA era algo *tipo*, Run bitch *RUUUUUUUUUN* (@Manxxx, 20.12.2020)

(25)   @nisxxx Ay pobre los ojitos de sufrimiento en la segunda foto en plan "*nooo* no quiero *mamiiii Q.Q*" (@Nosxxx, 20.12.2020)

Finally, the third subcategory comprises "symbolic respellings" without phonic alteration. They mainly concern the substitution of graphemes (cf. Androutsopoulos 2000: 522), in particular the replacement of <qu> by <k> illustrated in the following example.

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21   Besides the term of *texting*, a number of similar terms refer to the same phenomena, e.g. *textisms*, *textese*, *txtspeak*, etc. (cf. Kirsten-Torrado 2017: 254).

(26)   fue gracioso como la encontre xq estaba con kevin a punto de tirar una toalla y sentarnos en el campillo y fue como
-este parece un buen sitio no hay piedras se ve bonito nos ponemos *aki*
-hay una rata muerta (@pagxxx, 20.12.2020)

While shortenings and phoneticized respellings occur with comparable frequency in combination with the three quotatives, symbolic respellings are almost exclusively introduced by *como*.

4.2.3 Typographic animation

Although the number of occurrences with typographic animation is relatively high (cf. Fig. 7), there does not seem to be much variation as to the typographic features themselves: the corpus only comprises three subcategories (cf. Table 3).[22] Firstly and most frequently, typographic animation relies on punctuation features, including question marks, exclamation marks and suspension points. The following example illustrates an excessive use of question marks that are repeated eight times, helping the speaker to stage her angriness.

(27)   @itzxxx @insxxx @100xxx Reaaaaal Mi cara fue como qué*????????* 🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥
(@edixxx, 20.12.2020)

Secondly, typographic animation can rely on case alternation. In our corpus, this feature plays a less important role than in Wikström's analysis. This mainly has to do with the fact that we discarded cases in which the reported passage as a whole was characterized by a switch to upper or lower case (cf. example 14), as those case alternations were classified as typographic cues marking the mere introduction of reported speech (cf. Section 4.1). Case alternation was exclusively categorized as an animating feature when it concerned only selected elements of the reported passage. As illustrated in (28), it serves primarily to make lexemes or short phrases prominent, thus being functionally equivalent to a prosodic prominence.

(28)   Siempre digo eso cuando me dicen que todos los asiáticos son iguales, tipo, *OJALÁ* todos fueran iguales pero iguales a Jin (@arixxx, 20.12.2020)

Thirdly, the corpus comprises a few occurrences of ASCII-emoticons with animation function. Vertical emoticons like *:D* animating a grin of the speaker reporting her own (inner) speech in (29) are slightly more frequent than horizontal emoticons like *Q.Q*, which animates the crying eyes of the child whose begging is reported in example (25) cited above.

(29)   @luhxxx Encima yo estaba como: "Ay, Siren está evolucionando. Le está yendo todo bien. :D"
(@Altxxx, 20.12.2020)

The emoticons appear systematically at the end of the reported segment. This peripheral position seems to be the result of a remediation process, in the course of which nonverbal information, which is transmitted, in phonic face-to-face-communication, simultaneously to the verbal information, is not only recoded, but also rearranged into a linear order.

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[22] Compared to Wikström's (2019) analysis, that revealed five types of typographic features, we did not find occurrences characterized by an excessive use or a lack of spacing. Likewise, we could not detect cases with a marked use of asterisks or hashtags.

4.2.4 Graphic animation

Among the features categorized as graphic animations, emoji are by far the most frequent ones. Although emoji (deriving from Japanese *e* 'image' and *moji* 'character', cf. Dürscheid 2021: 502) are not *per se* restricted to the expression of emotions,[23] their use in the corpus seems, however, more or less limited to the animation of emotions both of the reporting and the reported speaker. According to Unicode statistics,[24] smileys like 😁 or 😍 are the most popular type of emoji, and this tendency also applies to the use of emoji on Twitter.[25] Correspondingly, their emotive function[26] seems of primary importance in our corpus, justifying their categorization as animation features. Just as mentioned for emoticons (cf. Section 4.2.3), emoji can be seen as "visual means to convey prosodic meaning" (Danesi 2020: 95).

At first glance, the use of emoji seems to be very similar to that of emoticons. However, a more detailed analysis reveals two differences in particular. Firstly, while emoticons are rather used as single items, emoji are more likely to appear in small groups.[27] Secondly, contrary to emoticons, emoji are not only used at the rightmost periphery of the reported utterance, but they can also appear at the beginning or in the middle of the quoted passage. Multiple occurrences of emoji located in more than one position often indicate irony (see the highly exaggerated example 30) or accompany rhetorical questions like in example (3) cited above.

> (30)   RT @nmrxxx: Algunas tias son como: ohhhh😍😆😆💖💖habeis visto??? 🙄🙄mi novio lleva una semana sin cagarse encima 😳😳💖💖💖 creo que tengo el mejor (@Gabxxx, 20.12.2020)

The emoji used in the corpus mostly correspond to smileys or gestures like 🙏. The only images that do not refer to persons, i.e. hearts (💖, cf. 30) and flames (🔥, cf. 27) equally express emotions like love and anger and thus clearly have emotive functions.

The corpus comprises only a handful of embedded images or GIFs,[28] both working on a similar principle: They stage an avatar representing the reported speaker, be it a randomly chosen middle-aged woman staging the "mother" in Fig. 3, be it an actor like Dwayne Johnson acting genuinely surprised in Fig. 8.

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[23] Dürscheid (2021: 501) points out that the phonetic similarity with the word *emoticon* is purely coincidental.

[24] Cf. https://home.unicode.org/emoji/emoji-frequency/ (28/07/2022).

[25] Cf. https://blog.emojipedia.org/emoji-use-in-the-new-normal/ (28/07/2022).

[26] Besides the emotive function, Danesi's study of the semiotics of emoji also identifies a phatic function which seems less relevant in the context of reported speech, as it refers e.g. to emoji serving to open a message on a friendly tone (cf. Danesi 2020: 19).

[27] This may be due to the fact „that emoji are more readily producible on a smartphone" (Wikström 2019: 136), but might also be attributable to the greater readability of grouped emoji as compared to groups of emoticons.

[28] The acronym *GIF* is derived from *graphics interchange format* and refers to images „which consist of multiple frames – often sourced from film or television – giving the appearance of a short, looping video" (Wikström 2019: 137).
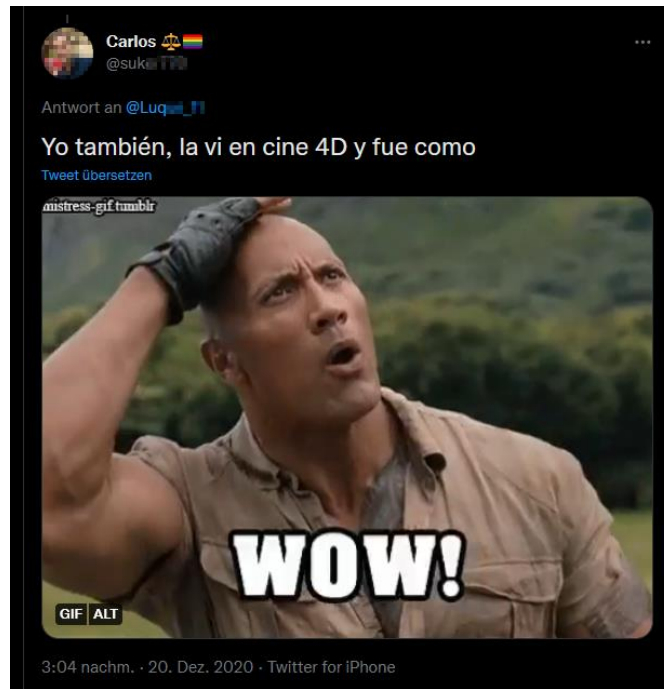
Fig. 8: Screenshot illustrating the use of GIFs to animate reported speech

4.3   Stylization, oralization, and code switching

As of yet, stylization practices in reported speech have not been analyzed in the context of *CMC*, although studies taking into account *CMC*-related regiolectal or colloquial respellings do exist.[29] The three quotatives differ only slightly regarding the introduction of stylized occurrences: Almost half of the occurrences introduced by the three quotatives feature stylization. As illustrated in Fig. 9, clearer differences emerge when the combination of animation and stylization cues is observed: While the quoted passages introduced by *como* feature stylization and/or animation in 90% of the cases, almost one third of the occurrences introduced by *en plan* are "neutral" as far as animation and stylization are concerned.
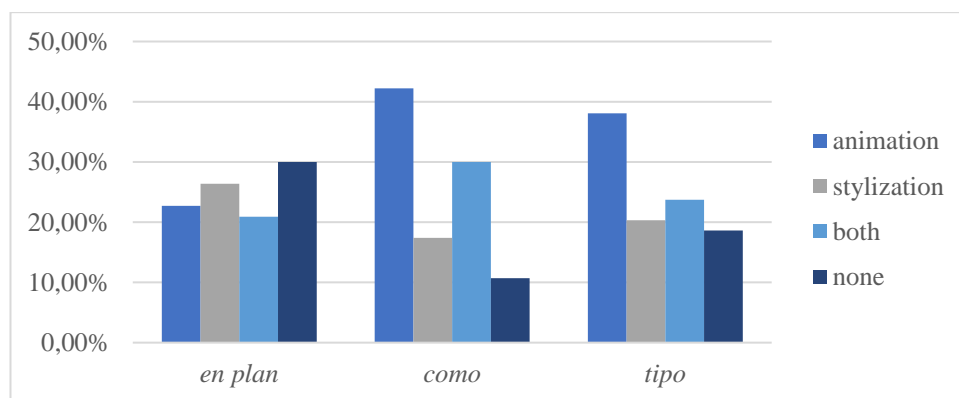

Fig. 9: Proportions of occurrences featuring stylization, animation or both

The concept of *stylization* has been introduced above (cf. Section 2) as a "specially marked […] representation of languages, dialects, and styles" lying "outside th[e] […] habitual repertoire [of speakers]" (Rampton 2009: 149). Given that we have very little information allowing us to

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[29]   Cf. Androutsopoulos (2000) for German.

determine the "habitual repertoire" of the reporting speaker[30] and no possibility to sociolinguistically locate the reported speaker, we will interpret this criterion rather broadly.

As a first step, we will consider the representation of dialects inside the reported segments. It is noteworthy that the reporting speakers do not make use of phoneticized respellings, although they could be applied easily and effectively.[31] Instead, dialectal stylization is mostly based on lexical shibboleths. As far as the limited context of the tweets allows for such conclusions, the quoted passages do not contain exaggerated representations of dialect speakers. The regional variants in the reported segments rather seem to contribute to the informal character of the reported utterance.[32]

The following example allows us to illustrate our observation. The speaker represents a vocal message sent to him by his phone. The message "literally" ("literal fue como") starts by addressing him as *wey* ('buddy'; 'mate'), which constitutes a typically (informal) Mexican form of address.[33] The use of *wey* serves to underline the friendly and empathic attitude of the phone and does not seek to portray the voice assistant as a speaker of Mexican Spanish.

> (31)   LAJDAKDHLAGDLAHSKSJ Amo mi celular Literal fue como "pues *wey* a esta hora debería estar sonando la alarma pero pues ya andas despierta, pa que lo hago?" (@zorxxx, 20.12.2020)

The use of *tipo* as a quotative marker seems restricted to Argentina (cf. Grutschus in prep.). It is therefore hardly surprising that reported speech introduced by *tipo* frequently features expressions that are characteristic of Argentinian Spanish, like *flaco* used as a hypocorism by the reporting speaker in (32) while addressing her husband.

> (32)   @Weixxx @Azuxxx No sé pero *tipo* Discúlpame *flaco* pero no SOS sephiroth para que me casé con vos (@B3Axxx, 20.12.2020)[34]

As a second step, we analyse the representation of registers, that largely seems to take place on the lexical level as well. The corpus mainly comprises examples of vulgarisms, that mainly serve expressive functions. Thus, in example (33), the vulgar lexemes *cojones* and *jodida* are used while reporting an utterance ascribed to Clark Kent, the alternate identity of the comic hero Superman. The expressions clearly do not serve to stylize Clark Kent, usually depicted as a well-mannered "nice guy", as rude, but rather to intensify Kent's surprise as he discovers Lex Luthor's unexpected defensive power.

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[30]   Although Twitter users have the possibility to indicate a location in their user profile or to mention their country of origin or residence by adding a flag to their username, this information is voluntary (*i.e.* not systematically available) and cannot be considered a reliable basis for a sociolinguistic analysis.

[31]   For instance, by spelling *esto* <ehto>, the process of debuccalization of coda /s/ characteristic – among others – of coastal regions in Latin America can be evoked easily.

[32]   Cf. the concept of the *variety chain* ('Varietätenkette') elaborated by Koch / Oesterreicher (^{2}2011: 14), that allows to model the functional replacement of a certain (type of) variety by another (type of) variety.

[33]   More frequently realized as *güey*, cf. *DRAE s.v.* GÜEY.

[34]   This example also features the only morphosyntactic cue documented in the corpus, i.e. the use of *voseo* (*sos* expressing the second person singular of *ser* and *vos* used as the subject pronoun of the second person singular). Although the use of *voseo* is predominant only in certain regions of South and Central America, its use in the corpus does not seem aimed at stylization, but rather reflects the unmarked use that is part of the "habitual repertoire" of the reporting speaker.

(33)   RT @Olixxx: Clark teniendo que llamar a Diana *en plan* "hola querida puedes explicarme POR QUÉ *COJONES* Lex Luthor sabe pelear como una *JODIDA* AMAZONA". (@Chixxx, 20.12.2020)

In contrast to the representation of regional varieties, the representation of low registers some-times relies on morphosyntactic cues like the use of ethical dative ("venir*me*") in (34) and the substitution of the plural imperative form *id* by the infinitive form *ir* in (35) (cf. Koch / Oester-reicher ²2011: 257).

(34)   @Al_xxx Y esos hijueputas que ahora todo se lo achacan a long Covid. Malparidos, son *tipo*: "yo ahora no puedo durar más de 1 minuto culeando antes de *venirme*, el long Covid es real, cuídense mucho 😖". (@croxxx, 20.12.2020)

(35)   @NICxxx pensaba que iba a poner algo *en plan* "*iros* a la puta mierda" (@pedxxx, 20.12.2020)

As a preliminary conclusion, we can emphasize that the representation of dialects and registers in the corpus does not serve to contextualize the reported speakers on the basis of their geo-graphical or social origin, but rather to create a colloquial "tone" otherwise characteristic of informal oral exchanges. Rather than to speak of *stylization*, it thus seems more appropriate to classify the phenomena discussed above as cases or *oralization*.

However, the term of stylization seems all the more valid for the third and last group of occur-rences to be analysed, *i.e.* cases where the reported utterances contain code-switching (exclu-sively to English). While no difference between the three quotatives could be observed regard-ing the representation of dialects and registers, code-switching is more frequently introduced by *como* than by *en plan* or *tipo*.[35] The choice of anglicisms in the reported segments can be described as stereotypical in the sense that code-switching seems restricted to a rather small number of types. These include interjections (particularly: *wow*, cf. the title example in (1)), acronyms like *wtf* (cf. 19), terms of address like *bro* (cf. 36) or *girl*, and interrogative structures like *(say) what?* (cf. 37).

(36)   Cogió mi mejoamigo estaba con el móvil y yo *en plan bro* atiende a la peli […] (@ismxxx, 20.12.2020)

(37)   Por otro lado yo ni sabía que la Ari ya tenía novio 🐺 y cuando le vi el anillo en la foto fue *como wait what*? Cuándo cómo? Quién? Dónde? (@Nevxxx, 20.12.2020)

Alongside code-switchings of single phrases, the corpus also contains examples comprising complete as well as more complex utterances like in (38).

(38)   @AR0xxx SIIII
y yo estaba como\\,THATS NOT A REAL PROBLEM 😭 (@Nikxxx, 20.12.2020)

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[35]   It seems tempting to assume that *como*'s affinity towards (English) code-switching is based on the resemblance between quotative *como* and the equivalent English quotative construction *be + like*. However, it has not been established that quotative *como* constitutes a loan translation from English. On the contrary, the works by Mihatsch (2020) showing parallel processes of pragmaticalization across various languages make a direct in-fluence seem less likely.

5   Conclusions

The present study aimed to answer two central questions: (1) Which strategies are employed by Twitter users to introduce and to animate reported speech?, and (2) What are the stylization strategies used on Spanish speaking Twitter? Concerning the introduction of reported passages, the corpus study did not reveal substantial differences between Twitter uses and other graphically realized text types: Quotation marks were, alongside with colons, the most frequently used introductory cues. As to the animation strategies documented in the corpus, our analysis has shown that lexical animation cues like interjections constitute the most frequent category. In this respect, our results differ from Wikström's (2019) findings based on a corpus of English tweets, where typographic animation (e.g. case alternation) was found to be the most frequent category. Regarding the stylization strategies documented in the corpus, they played a lesser role than expected. Functionally speaking, code-switching (to English) seems to be the only "real" stylization strategy, while the representation of dialects and registers are rather aimed at "oralization".

Our analysis aimed further to elaborate differences between the three quotatives under investigation, i.e. *como*, *en plan* and *tipo*, regarding the different animation and stylization strategies. The corpus analysis has shown that *como* covers the broadest spectrum of strategies: it is followed both more systematically and by a broader range by quoted passages comprising animation and stylization. While previous studies of phonically realized reported speech seemed to indicate that *tipo* less often introduced animated and/or stylized quotations, the occurrences documented in our corpus showed that *en plan* was in fact the quotative introducing least often animated and/or stylized reported speech.

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